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Calvert County Times

THURSDAY, JANUARY 15, 2026

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**Grant Will Address
Childhood Poverty**

**Prince Frederick Plan
Calls for Slower Growth**

**FrogWatch Study
Highlights Rare Species**



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“ACOUSTIC MONITORING ALLOWS US TO DOCUMENT SPECIES THAT ...OFTEN GO UNHEARD BY HUMANS”

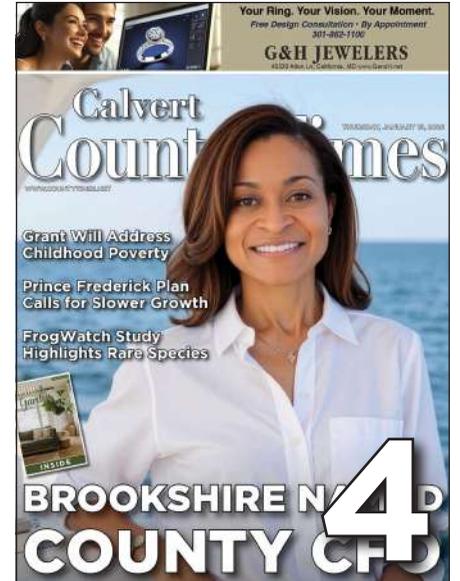
MATT NEFF, CURATOR OF ESTUARINE BIOLOGY AT THE CALVERT MARINE MUSEUM, ON A RECENT STUDY CONDUCTED AS PART OF FROGWATCH 2025



LOCAL 4
Town Center plan emphasize slower, more focused growth



COMMUNITY 7
Collector donates thousands of fossils to Calvert Marine Museum



ON THE COVER
Commissioners introduce new county CFO

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, JAN 15	FRI, JAN 16	SAT, JAN 17	SUN, JAN 18
 Mostly Sunny Hi: 37° Lo: 23°	 Partly Cloudy Hi: 38° Lo: 32°	 AM Clouds/PM Sun Hi: 47° Lo: 30°	 AM Snow Showers Hi: 34° Lo: 22°
MON, JAN 19	TUE, JAN 20	WED, JAN 21	THU, JAN 22
 Mostly Sunny Hi: 39° Lo: 17°	 Sunny Hi: 27° Lo: 17°	 Mostly Sunny Hi: 36° Lo: 29°	 Mostly Sunny Hi: 43° Lo: 29°

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Calvert County Signals Tighter Growth Controls, Names New CFO

By Marcia Hart
Contributing Writer

Fiscal restraint, slower growth and an emphasis on local control shaped discussion Tuesday, January 13, 2026, as the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners kicked off their first meeting of the new year.

During the meeting, commissioners introduced the county's new chief financial officer, advanced updates to the Prince Frederick Town Center Master Plan, approved the release of opioid settlement funds for local treatment efforts, adopted a proclamation recognizing the nation's upcoming 250th anniversary and outlined legislative priorities as the Maryland General Assembly begins its session in Annapolis.

Together, the actions reflect a county government focused on managing growth pressures, strengthening financial oversight and preserving both local authority and historical legacy.

New CFO Introduced as Budget Planning Begins

Commissioners formally introduced Malena Brookshire as Calvert County's new chief financial officer. Brookshire, a Prince Frederick resident, assumed the role earlier this month and brings decades of experience managing large public-sector budgets.

Her background includes service as chief financial officer for AmeriCorps, along with senior financial leadership roles at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Board President Earl F. "Buddy" Hance Jr. said Brookshire's appointment comes as the county begins looking ahead to future budgets and long-term financial obligations. Hance noted that fiscal discipline and careful planning will be increasingly important as the county balances operating costs, capital needs and debt service amid economic uncertainty.

Brookshire will oversee county finances and play a central role in shaping the fiscal 2027 budget, which commissioners said will require a careful balance between maintaining services and controlling long-term costs.

Master Plan Emphasizes Slower, More Focused Growth

Public hearings on Chapters 1 and 2 of the Prince Frederick Town Center Master Plan, which outlines how the county seat should grow in the coming decades, also took center stage at the meeting.

Hance said commissioners continue to hear residents concerned about the pace of development and the strain it places on schools, roads and public services. He emphasized the updated plan reflects a deliberate move away from widespread expansion and toward more concentrated development patterns, often referred to as growth "nodes."

Under the plan, growth would be steered toward areas better suited to support it, while clearer limits would be placed on expansion elsewhere. Commissioners indicated future development proposals will be expected to demonstrate that infrastructure can accommodate additional demand.

Key elements of the updated plan include reduced residential density in certain areas, an increased emphasis on walkable, mixed-use development and reinforcement of the growth boundaries established in the county's 2019 Comprehensive Plan.

Hance said the goal is not to stop growth altogether but ensure it occurs in a way that is sustainable and aligned with existing infrastructure capacity.

Opioid Settlement Funds Released for Treatment Programs

The board unanimously approved a budget amendment transferring \$154,500 from the county's Opioid Litigation Fund into

active grant accounts. The funds come from national settlements with opioid manufacturers and distributors and are restricted by law for use in opioid prevention, treatment, recovery and remediation efforts.

Commissioners said the Department of Community Resources will distribute the funds to support evidence-based programs addressing substance use disorder.

Hance said the board has a responsibility to ensure settlement dollars are used carefully and for their intended purpose, emphasizing the importance of investing in programs that produce measurable outcomes for individuals and families affected by addiction.

County Recognizes America's 250th Anniversary

During the meeting, the board also adopted a proclamation recognizing the upcoming 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States, which will be commemorated nationwide in 2026.

This action highlighted Calvert County's colonial roots and historical significance during the Revolutionary era, noting that the anniversary presents an opportunity for education, reflection and community engagement. Commissioners encouraged local organizations, schools and residents to participate in commemorative efforts tied

to the milestone.

Legislative Priorities Outlined Ahead of Annapolis Session

As the Maryland General Assembly begins its 90-day session, commissioners outlined several legislative priorities that could affect Calvert County.

Commissioners indicated the board opposes the Maryland Transit and Housing Opportunity Act, expressing concern that the proposal could weaken local authority over zoning decisions, including parking requirements and residential density standards. Also emphasized was that local governments are best positioned to assess infrastructure capacity and community needs.

Commissioners also reaffirmed their intent to protect Calvert County's share of Highway User Revenue, which supports road maintenance and transportation improvements across the county.

Throughout the meeting, commissioners returned to a consistent theme of balance—balancing growth with infrastructure, development with community character, fiscal responsibility with future needs and forward planning with historical preservation. The actions taken Tuesday underscore a county government focused on stewardship of its finances, land use and legacy.

Overnight Work Planned for Thomas Johnson Bridge

Flagging Operations Begin Sunday Night

The Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration will begin routine structural and maintenance work on the MD 4 Bridge over the Patuxent River (Governor Thomas Johnson Bridge) at the Calvert/St. Mary's County line beginning Sunday, January 18. The nighttime work will continue through late February, weather permitting.

Crews will close a single-lane and alternate traffic in the open lane using an overnight flagging operation Sunday through Thursday, 10 p.m. until 5 a.m. the following morning. This work includes bridge joint seal replacement, metal welding and other repairs.

Portable variable message signs will be placed to make travelers aware of the lane closure. Work will be performed by contractor Covington Machine and Welding of

Annapolis.

Overnight travelers should plan extra travel time to cross the bridge. This work is necessary to ensure a safe and reliable transportation system. Drivers are asked to stay alert, stay focused, look for reduced speed limits as well as driving pattern changes, and slow down in construction zones.

The State Highway Administration is Serious About Safety. Pedestrians and motorists are urged to remain alert and avoid distractions when traveling through the work zone. Motorists should obey all posted speed limits. Motorists can dial #77 on their mobile devices for roadside assistance.

For a list of all major State Highway Administration projects, news and travel information, visit roads.maryland.gov.



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Calvert Awarded ENOUGH Grant

Calvert County has been awarded \$39,485 from the Governor's Office for Children's Engaging Neighborhoods, Organizations, Unions, Governments and Households (ENOUGH) Local Management Board (LMB) Capacity Building Grant.

This funding will support the county's LMB infrastructure and planning efforts to strengthen community-driven strategies that address childhood poverty and improve outcomes for children and families.

In May 2024, Gov. Wes Moore signed the ENOUGH Act into law as a state-led response to alleviate childhood poverty. The initiative provides resources to communities through partnerships with community organizations, non-profits and anchor institutions to improve the quality of life for Marylanders experiencing multi-generational poverty.

Priority areas for fiscal year 2026 include:

- Strengthening LMB capacity to lead and coordinate multi-sector partnerships
- Supporting data-driven planning and

community needs assessments

- Engaging residents, service providers and anchor institutions in the development of Neighborhood Action Plans
- Aligning local strategies with state-wide ENOUGH goals focused on education, health, economic stability and community safety

The funding is intended to support upstream planning and systems-building efforts rather than direct service delivery, helping communities implement effective, long-term solutions to reduce childhood poverty.

The Calvert County Family Network (CCFN) serves as the Local Management Board for Calvert County, working with public and private partners to ensure children and families thrive.

For more information about CCFN, visit www.CalvertCountyMd.gov/91/Calvert-County-Family-Network-CCFN or call CCFN at 410-414-5997. For more information about the ENOUGH Initiative, visit <https://goc.maryland.gov/Pages/enough-initiative.aspx>.

County Announces Martin Luther King Jr. Day Schedule

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners announces county offices will be closed Monday, Jan. 19, in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. In addition:

- The Appeal Solid Waste Facility, which includes the landfill and transfer station, and all county convenience centers will be open Monday, Jan. 19, with normal operating hours.
- The Solomons Septage Receiving Facility will be open Monday, Jan. 19, with normal operating hours.
- The Water & Sewerage billing and customer service office will be closed Monday, Jan. 19.
- Calvert County senior centers will be closed Monday, Jan. 19, and Meals on Wheels will not be delivered. Meal delivery is scheduled to resume Tuesday, Jan. 20.
- All community centers will be closed Monday, Jan. 19.
- There will be no county bus service Monday, Jan. 19; service will resume Tuesday, Jan. 20.
- Calvert Library locations will be closed Monday, Jan. 19. Downloaded materials and virtual services are available 24/7 at calvertlibrary.info/.
- The Linda L. Kelley Animal Shelter and Animal Control Division will be closed Monday, Jan. 19. Animal con-

trol officers will be available for emergencies at 410-535-3491.

- The Calvert Marine Museum and museum store will be open with normal hours Monday, Jan. 19.
- Annmarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center will be open with normal operating hours Monday, Jan. 19.
- Edward T. Hall Aquatic Center will be open Monday, Jan. 19, with normal hours.
- All recreation parks including Dunkirk District Park, Ward Farm Recreation & Nature Park, Hallowing Point Park and Cove Point Park will be open with normal hours Monday, Jan. 19.
- Chesapeake Hills Golf Course is scheduled to be open with normal hours Monday, Jan. 19.
- Flag Ponds Nature Park, Kings Landing Park and Battle Creek Cypress Swamp will be open Monday, Jan. 19, with normal operating hours.
- Breezy Point Beach is closed for the season.

Find information on Calvert County Government services online at www.CalvertCountyMd.gov. Stay connected with Calvert County Government through the mobile app, newsletters, social media and more at www.CalvertCountyMd.gov/StayInformed.

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CALVERT COUNTY POLICE BLOTTER

During the week of December 29, 2025 – January 4, 2026, Calvert County Sheriff's Office Deputies responded to 2,443 calls for service throughout the community including, but not limited to:

- Check Welfare / Mental Health: 49
- Disorderly: 7
- Domestic: 13
- Motor Vehicle Crashes: 35
- Patrol Checks / School Checks: 1280
- Suspicious Persons / Vehicles: 27
- Traffic Complaints: 65
- Traffic Stops: 517
- 911 Hang Ups: 43
- ARRESTS: 36

Attempted Burglary: 25-111678 On December 30, 2025, at approximately 11:34 p.m., Deputy Grabill responded to an apartment in the 3800 block of 27th Street in Chesapeake Beach for the report of a suspicious person. The complainant reported that two individuals wearing ski masks attempted to open the front door before fleeing the area. Surveillance video showed two male suspects approach the residence, attempt to open the door, knock, and then run away when a motion-activated light turned on. Suspect #1 was described as wearing a gray hoodie with matching sweat-pants featuring reflective markings on both legs and a ski mask. Suspect #2 was wearing a similar-colored ski mask and hoodie with dark-colored pants. A search of the area was conducted; however, no suspects matching the descriptions were located. The case remains under investigation.

CDS Violation: 25-111785 On December 31, 2025, at approximately 9:22 a.m., Cpl. Ward responded to the CVS located at 10095 Southern Maryland Boulevard in Dunkirk for a reported welfare check after a driver was observed nodding out inside a vehicle. During the investigation, a K9 scan of the vehicle resulted in a positive alert for narcotics. A subsequent search of the vehicle revealed cocaine and multiple items of drug paraphernalia. The passenger, identified as **Corey Carnell Thomas**, 45, of Prince Frederick, was taken into custody without incident. A search conducted at the Calvert County Detention Center revealed Thomas was in possession of marijuana. Thomas was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia, CDS: Possession Not Cannabis, and Possession of CDS While Confined.

CDS Violation: 26-000327 On January 1, 2026, DFC Hendrickson was conducting a patrol check at the 7-11 located at 15 N. Solomons Island Road in Prince Frederick when he observed a female inside a parked vehicle exhibiting erratic behavior. Upon contact, the driver showed signs of impairment and initially provided a false name. The driver was later identified as **Jamie Lee Lynn Prisk**, 35, of St. Leonard, who was found to have multiple open warrants. A K9 open-air sniff conducted by K9 Atlas resulted in a positive alert for narcotics. A search revealed

suspected cocaine, heroin and/or fentanyl, drug paraphernalia, and needles. Additional suspected CDS was located during a search at the Calvert County Detention Center. Prisk was charged with CDS: Possession – Not Cannabis, Possession of Contraband in a Place of Confinement, Fraud – Per Identification to Avoid Prosecution, CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia, and Obstructing and Hindering.

CDS Violation: 26-000756 On January 3, 2026, Deputy Campbell responded to the 7-Eleven located at 15 N. Solomons Island Road in Prince Frederick for a reported trespassing. Investigation revealed the subject had previously been trespassed indefinitely from the property. The individual, identified as **Matthew Leo Greening**, 37, of no fixed address, was advised of the trespass and taken into custody without incident. A search incident to arrest revealed multiple tear-offs and pieces of tin foil containing suspected crack cocaine residue, along with 19 Gabapentin capsules for which Greening had no prescription. Greening was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with Trespassing–Private Property, CDS: Possession Not Cannabis, and CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia (x5).

CDS Violation: 26-111690 On December 31, 2025, Deputy McIntosh initiated a traffic stop on a vehicle traveling at a speed exceeding the posted limit in the area of MD Route 4 South and Hickory Ridge Road in Dunkirk. During the investigation, deputies observed **Sheri Anne Manning**, 62 of Prince Frederick, holding a baggie containing a white, rock-like substance in her left hand and a glass smoking device in her right hand. A subsequent search revealed a plastic container in her pants pocket containing approximately 6.2 grams of cocaine. Manning advised that she travels to Washington, D.C., for the purpose of purchasing cocaine. Manning was taken into custody without incident and transported to the Calvert County Detention Center. While being processed, detention center personnel located an additional paper fold containing suspected cocaine in her front pants pocket. Manning was charged with CDS: Possession with Intent to Distribute Narcotics, CDS: Possession – Not Cannabis, CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia, and Possession of CDS While Confined.

CDS Violation: 25-001233 On January 4, 2026, DFC Huy initiated a traffic stop for an equipment violation. During the stop, the driver was identified as **Teresa Ann Tucker**, 62, of Upper Marlboro. An investigation revealed Tucker did not possess a valid driver's license and was driving while suspended. A K9 scan of the vehicle resulted in a positive alert for the presence of narcotics. A subsequent search of the vehicle revealed two glass smoking devices containing crack cocaine residue and a white rock-like substance identified as crack cocaine. Tucker was taken into custody without incident, transported to the Calvert County Sheriff's

Office, and charged with CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia and CDS: Possession – Not Cannabis.

Obstructing Justice: 25-111059 On December 29, 2025, DFC Hudson initiated a traffic stop for expired registration along Rt. 4 at German Chapel Road in Prince Frederick. During the investigation, the front-seat passenger initially provided a false name. The passenger was later identified as **Fernando NMN Euzman**, 42, of New Carrollton. A records check revealed Euzman had an active warrant through the Maryland State Police. He was taken into custody without incident and charged with False Statement to an Officer and Obstructing and Hindering.

Robbery: 25-111242 On December 29, 2025, at approximately 7:38 p.m., deputies from the Calvert County Sheriff's Office Patrol Bureau responded to the Verizon Wireless store located at 2969 Plaza Drive in Dunkirk for the report of a robbery that had just occurred. Investigation revealed a suspect described as a black male wearing a gray zip-up sweatshirt with the hood up, a blue surgical mask, and light-colored

jeans entered the store, cut multiple iPhone display devices from the wall, and fled the scene. The total value of damaged property is estimated at \$1,500, and the estimated value of stolen property is \$31,335.75. This case remains under investigation.

Theft: 25-111164 On December 29, 2025, Deputy Campbell responded to the 100 block of Potomac Court in Prince Frederick for a reported theft. The complainant advised that several cabinets and cabinet hardware were stolen from a residence under construction. The estimated value of the stolen property is \$7,056.37. The incident remains under investigation.

Theft: 25-111146 On December 29, 2025, Cpl. Ridgeley responded to the 400 block of Comstock Drive in Lusby for the report of a theft. The complainant advised that four SRT wheels and rims were stolen from a carport on the property. The wheels are described as five-spoke black SRT rims with Continental All-Season 40ZR20 106W XL tires. The estimated value of the stolen property is \$2,901.54. The case remains under investigation.

Legal Notices

C-SMMPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting Public Notice

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Calvert – St. Mary's Metropolitan Planning Organization, C-SMMPO, will conduct a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting at the Walter Francis Duke Terminal Conference Room located at 44200 Airport Road, California, MD 20619 on **Monday, February 2, 2026**, beginning at **3:00 p.m.** to **receive an update from the MPO Boundary Working Group and to discuss 2027 UPWP Funding**. The agenda can be viewed at <https://www.calvert-stmarysmpo.com/>.

This public meeting is required by law to accept public and staff comments. All members of the public and interested parties will have an opportunity to provide public comments regarding the TAC meeting agenda.

Comments may be submitted on or before **Friday, January 30, 2026**, and should be addressed to the Long Range Planning Division, **P.O. Box 653, Leonardtown, MD 20650** or to **Karly Maltby, MPO Administrator** via email at **Karly.Maltby@stmaryscountymd.gov**.

This meeting can be attended virtually, the Meeting ID is **430 427 6617**, the call-in number is **(301) 715-8592**. Zoom Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/4304276617?omn=89904715192>

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

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

Acoustic Frog Study Highlights Rarely-Observed Species

A recent scientific study led by the Calvert Marine Museum's Estuarine Biology Department has documented the species diversity of frogs and the presence of rare species across Southern Maryland and Virginia's Northern Neck, using nighttime acoustic recording technology to monitor amphibian calls.

The research, conducted during the 2025 FrogWatch season, was supported by a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust, with additional equipment provided by CHESPAX. Ten acoustic recorders were deployed at sites across the region to detect frog and toad species that are difficult to observe through traditional field surveys.

While the study did not detect the state-protected species researchers had hoped to document, the recorders confirmed Eastern spadefoot at five of the 10 sites—a rare find for animals that live underground and only emerge one or two nights a year to breed. The results of the study were recently published in the peer-reviewed scientific journal *Banisteria* and are available online at virginiannaturalhistorysociety.com/banisteria

"Acoustic monitoring allows us to document species that are active at night and often go unheard by humans," said Matt Neff, curator of estuarine biology at the Calvert Marine Museum. "These findings add valuable data about the distribution of rare amphibians in our region and help guide



Eastern spadefoot

future conservation work."

In addition to Eastern spadefoot, the study documented 10 additional frog and toad species overall. During the 2025 season, FrogWatch monitors submitted 1,263 FrogWatch observations, supplemented by 456 observations collected by the acoustic recorders, marking our most active season to date. Since 2013, the Southern Maryland (and surrounding DMV) FrogWatch chap-

ter, hosted by the Calvert Marine Museum, has recorded more than 5,400 frog call observations.

To make the research more accessible to the public, the museum has created a visually engaging poster summarizing the study's findings, partner organizations, and monitoring locations. The poster offers a concise overview of the project for audiences who may not wish to read the full

scientific publication.

Looking ahead, the FrogWatch program will expand in 2026 with new funding from the Cove Point Natural Heritage Trust, allowing researchers to deploy recorders at additional sites in Calvert County. The chapter is also working with Calvert County Parks and Recreation to monitor additional sites in the county. The upcoming season will also include targeted efforts to document Eastern Narrow-mouthed Toads and Carpenter Frogs, both are species of particular interest to regional researchers.

The Calvert Marine Museum will host and partner on several FrogWatch training sessions in early 2026 for community members interested in participating. Upcoming FrogWatch Trainings are below:

- Saturday, Feb. 7, 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m. — Virtual (Zoom), hosted by Calvert Marine Museum
- Wednesday, Feb. 11, 7–8:30 p.m. — Virtual (Zoom), Natural History Society of Maryland
- Sunday, Feb. 15, 2–3:30 p.m. — Kings Landing Park, Calvert County Parks and Recreation
- Wednesday, Feb. 18, 6:30–8 p.m. — Flag Ponds Park, Calvert County Parks and Recreation

You can register for the trainings or learn more here atcalvertmarinemuseum.com/511/FrogWatch

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Large Fossil Shell Collection Donated to Calvert Marine Museum



Rental truck filled with cabinets housing Barry Norbeck's fossil shell collection donated to the CMM.



Fossil barnacles and coral. Photos by Laine Gleisner-Ritchey.

Longtime fossil shell collector Barry Norbeck donated thousands of shells and other invertebrate fossils to the Calvert Marine Museum (CMM). This is the largest and most important local fossil shell collection ever received by the museum.

The collection is especially valuable scientifically for several reasons. Norbeck carefully documented where each specimen was collected, sought out even small and rare shells, and preserved material from sites that are no longer accessible due to shoreline armoring or development.

The Calvert Marine Museum gratefully acknowledges the generosity of Barry Norbeck in donating this collection. There is much to be learned from this world-class assemblage, and museum staff look forward to sharing its stories with the public.

Plans are underway to share highlights of the Norbeck fossil shell collection with the public during a special museum event in mid-June. Additional details will be announced in the coming months.

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

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



County Times

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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.

Logan Trossbach, 8



Logan Anthony Trossbach passed away suddenly on December 26, 2025, at Children's National Hospital in Washington, DC. He was eight years old.

Logan was born on December 31, 2016, at John Hopkins Hospital, in Baltimore City, Maryland, to Tracy Marie Payne and Joseph Anthony Trossbach. Logan was baptized at Children's National Hospital in the Washington, DC. He was a beloved student at Greenview Knolls Elementary School in Great Mills, Maryland.

Logan loved being outside, he was in the St. Mary's County Little League and he loved going to the playground. He was always ready to ride on anything with a motor, especially riding the tractor with Pop, and he was fascinated with motorcycles. He loved going fishing. Being outside brought him happiness, and his smile and energy were a light to all who knew him. When he was indoors, he loved playing video games especially Mario and pretending to play restaurant and serving you his food creations.

Logan is survived by his loving parents, Tracy Marie Payne and Joseph Anthony Trossbach; his sisters, Desiree Trossbach, Savannah Trossbach and Genevieve "Ginny" Trossbach; his grandparents Nancy Hopkins, Lawrence Pilkerton and Barbara and David Trossbach; his aunts and uncles, Chris Hopkins (Jennifer), Joseph Hopkins (Shirley), Alan Payne (Molly), Louise Pritchard (CP Cameron), James "Jimmy" Payne (Chris), Jennifer Payne, Barbie Hopkins, David Trossbach (Amber), Lisa Trossbach, Crystal Harris (Corey), George Harris (Mary), Joyce Johnson (Walter), Ann Simmons (Frank) and Ginger Long (Kenny); along with extended family and many friends who will forever cherish his memory. He is preceded in death by his grandfather Leroy Payne.

Family and friends will be received on Friday, January 16, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Brinsfield Funeral Home, 22955 Three Notch Road, Leonardtown, MD 20650. A funeral service will follow at 12:00 p.m., officiated by Pastor Dan Negroni. Interment will take place following the service at Charles Memorial Gardens, 26325 Point Lookout Road, Leonardtown, MD 20650.

Pallbearers will be his dad, Joey Trossbach, his uncles David Trossbach, Jimmy Payne and Alan Payne. Honorary Pallbearers are Desiree, Savannah, Ginny Trossbach, Chris Hopkins, Joey Hopkins, Matt Moore and Alexis Moore.

Donations may be made directly to Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A., to assist with funeral expenses.

Arrangements are being handled by Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.

Jennifer Huntington, 61



Jennifer Lynn Huntington, 61, of Avenue, MD, passed away unexpectedly on January 2, 2026. She was born on June 30, 1964, in Leonardtown, MD and was the youngest

daughter of the late Robert Joseph Arnold and the late Hilda Mae Goldsmith Arnold. She is survived by her sister, Barbara J. (Bobbie) Lacey (Jimmy), of Avenue, MD; nephew, Aaron J. Fenwick (Amanda); niece, Amy M. White (Donny), and many great nieces, great nephews, cousins, and friends. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Robert Wayne Huntington, whom she married on March 17, 1990, at Holy Angels Catholic Church, Avenue, MD; her fiancé, Wayne Bradley Edger, and brother-in-law, Joseph Anthony (Andy) Fenwick.

Jennifer was a lifelong resident of St. Mary's County, MD and graduate of Chopticon High School Class of 1982. She was employed as an office/medical assistant by various medical offices.

Jennifer started her 43 years of volunteer service in July 1982 with the Seventh District Volunteer Rescue Squad as a Junior member following in her father's footsteps. She was an EMT, a Lifetime member, Sunshine Committee Chairperson, long term Delegate to the Southern Maryland Volunteer Fireman's Association and the Maryland State Firefighters Association and served in previous years as Corresponding Secretary. She also volunteered with ACTS. In April 2023, she joined the Seventh District Volunteer Rescue Squad Auxiliary.

She enjoyed spending time with her family and friends and playing cards.

The family will receive friends on Monday, January 19, 2026, from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM, with EMS and Auxiliary prayers at 7:00 PM, in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, MD. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Tuesday, January 20, 2026, at 10:00 AM in Holy Angels Catholic Church, Avenue, MD, with Father Oberle officiating and Deacon Lloyd co-officiating. Interment will follow at Charles Memorial Gardens, Leonardtown, MD.

Serving as pallbearers will be Aaron Fenwick, Amy White, Donny White, Mike Abell, Jason Rice, and Brian Springer. Honorary pallbearers will be Natalie Thompson, Leanne Fenwick, Stephanie Buckler, and the members of the Seventh District Volunteer Rescue Squad and Auxiliary.

In lieu of flowers, we kindly ask for donations made to the Seventh District Volunteer Rescue Squad, P.O. Box 7, Avenue, MD 20609 and/or A.C.T.S., P.O. Box 54, Bushwood, MD 20618.

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

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

Hardy Simmons, 77



Leonard Harding "Hardy" Simmons, Jr., 77, of Clements, Maryland, formerly of Camp Springs, Maryland, passed away peacefully at his residence on January 5, 2026.

He was born in Washington, D.C. on July 4, 1948, to the late Leonard Harding, Sr. and Doris Earnshaw Simmons. He married Connie Marie Williams on Nov. 15, 1980. They shared 45 wonderful years together and especially enjoyed their trips to Williamsburg, VA.

After graduating from Crossland High School in 1966, Hardy worked at Pepco and he also was a welder. He worked for more than 20 years at Brandywine Auto Parts until his retirement in 2017.

Hardy is survived by his wife Connie, a son Leonard Harding "Traye" Simmons, III (Ronda) of Drums, Pa., a daughter, Carrie Lynn Hubert (John) of Prince George, Va., two brothers, Gary A. Simmons of Bovina Center, N.Y. and David A. Simmons (Mary) of Clements, Md. He is also survived by two grandsons, Timothy (Autumn) and Tyler (Hattie) Simmons of Drums, Pa., one granddaughter, Miranda Hubert of Prince George, Va., one great-granddaughter, Bexley Hubert of Colonial Heights, Va. and two great-grandsons, Rylan Faris of Colonial Heights, Va. and Owen Simmons of Drums, Pa. Also, two nephews, David E. Simmons of Summerville, S.C. and John L. (Chrissy) Simmons of Alexandria, VA.

All services will be private.

Memorial contributions can be made to Hospice of St. Mary's or the organization of your choice.

Vicki Cobbs, 73



Vicki Jo Cobbs, a loving mother and cherished friend, passed away peacefully, leaving behind a legacy of kindness and warmth. Born on April 4, 1951, in Seargent, Nebraska, to Keith and Eunice Chamley, Vicki embraced life with a spirit of love and compassion. A devoted homemaker for most of her life, she also treasured her time at the Harry Lundeberg School of Seamanship, where she enjoyed her work and formed lasting relationships.

Vicki found great joy in cooking and caring for her family, always striving to create a warm and welcoming home. She was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Chuck Cobbs, her youngest son, Timothy Cobbs, and niece, Whitney Rose Gravetter. Vicki is survived by her oldest son, Tommy Cobbs; her sisters, Candance Gravetter, and Jane (Jerry) Chandler, also of Kansas City,

MO; her brother, Steve (Terressa) Chamley of Council Bluffs, IA; and her cherished nieces, Claire Staub of Omaha, NE, and Ellen Tjaden of Council Bluffs, IA.

Vicki was preceded in death by: Keith Chanley, Eunice Theilmann

In recognition of Vicki's life and to honor the love she shared, prayers and services will be held at Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, MD, on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, at 10:00 AM, with Father John Nguyen Following the service, Vicki will be laid to rest at St. George's Catholic Church Cemetery, Valley Lee, MD. Her memory will be forever cherished by all who knew her. May she rest in peace.

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.

Kenny Abbott, 54



Kenneth Wayne Abbott, "Kenny", 54, of California, MD, passed away on January 9, 2026, at his home. Born on April 13, 1971, in Leonardtown, MD,

he was the son of Patricia Genevieve Abbott, of California, MD, and the late Lewis Edmund Abbott. Kenny was the loving husband of the late Rebecca Lynn Abbott, whom he married on May 1, 1998, in Leonardtown, MD, and who preceded him in death on June 20, 2019. In addition to his mother, he is survived by his daughter, Laura Richards (Kyle) of California, MD, his sister, Jennifer Scott (Abbott) of California, MD, and his nephew, Douglas Scott, of California, MD.

Kenny was a lifelong St. Mary's County, MD resident and earned his GED. He was a phone technician for Verizon for 28 years, retiring in September 2025.

In his spare time, Kenny enjoyed fishing, crabbing, kayaking, and music; he was currently learning the guitar. His favorite pastime was spending time with his loved ones. Kenny will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

The family will receive friends on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM, with prayers recited at 7:00 PM, in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, MD, where a funeral service will be held in the funeral home chapel on Thursday, January 22, 2026, at 10:00 AM. Interment will follow at Charles Memorial Gardens, Leonardtown, MD. Serving as pallbearers will be Ricky Johnson, Ryan Clarke, Shane Allen, Matthew Clements, Patrick Allen, and Walter Wyne.

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.

A View From The BLEACHERS



This Better Work

By Ronald N. Guy, Jr.
Contributing Writer

One season continues, several final chapters in another masterpiece are waiting to be written. Meanwhile, the main characters in next year's epic are involved in a high-stakes game of musical chairs, the outcome of which will produce a summer of speculation and storylines deep into the fall.

It is a strange concurrency that fractures the league and fanbases – one group lost in the moment, the other bidding a grateful adieu to a plagued present for the future's hope – but it is how every NFL season ends, and the next begins.

Black Friday madness is tempered now. Early mornings, long lines, high stress, disturbing videos of human mobs sprinting through department stores, and fights erupting over high-demand holiday merchandise are rare. Thankfully, on-line purchases, early release deals and Cyber Monday have cooled nerves and decentralized shopping. Conversely, the NFL's Black Monday, the day after the regular season ends, maintains all of its bite.

Six NFL head coaches were fired on this edition of Black Monday. With two other coaches already having been relieved of their duties during the season, a quarter of the league's franchises are now searching for new leaders. Mix in a few fired coordinators, general managers and staff upheavals accompanying head coaching changes, and chaos rules over a big wedge of the NFL pie. This sounds nuts, given the cohesion required to win NFL football games, but it is an annual league ritual as reliable as Yellowstone's faithfully bursting geyser.

One year ago, the Washington Commanders were wrapping up a 12-win season, Jayden Daniels had completed an historically prolific rookie campaign and the team was about to launch a playoff run that would include two road wins and the franchise's first conference championship game appearance since grunge music killed the hair metal era.

That same team is now exiting a dismal five-win 2025 season that saw Daniels play in just seven games and is processing the departure of offensive coordinator Kliff Kingsbury and defensive coordinator Joe Witt – an unimaginable scenario 12 months ago. Such is the fine line in the NFL, an acronym officially standing for National Football League but with a well-earned alternative meaning of Not For Long.

The realized fallout of Washington's collapse – changes in both coordinators – is significant, but the potential consequences are greater. Washington will find a new OC and DC. As of this writing, the former was already filled via an internal promotion: David Blough, previously the team's quarterbacks coach, will assume OC duties. A DC will be in place soon enough, perhaps by the time this column hits newsstands (I wish those still existed; at least paper boxes are strategically placed around Southern Maryland). The hires will be scrutinized near-term, but by minicamp in May, next season will be the focus.

About that: Next season, that is. Adam Peters and head coach Dan Quinn arrived in D.C. with much fanfare. The former was praised as a home run hire; the latter was hailed a proven commodity with a unique ability to connect with people. One year ago, their stocks could not have been higher. With the team's struggles, the failure of most of Peters's draft picks to make meaningful contributions, and now the ousting of two key staff members who were hired less than two years ago, Peters and Quinn occupy very hot seats.

Flip the roster. Make a few bold trades. Shuffle the depth chart. Stand in front of the media and talk to a plan and absolute alignment between general manager and coach (and by all means do it so politely and with such social savvy that it makes the trained eye question your sincerity). All good. But know that we know this: Blowing out your hand-selected coordinators two years in and a season after an NFC Championship Game appearance indicates internal chaos and the need for scapegoats. In Kingsbury and Whitt, Peters and Quinn found theirs. Fine...competition and unsatisfactory outcomes often demand big changes in any walk of life. But this better work. If things go sideways again in 2026, the stinky pile of blame gets dumped on Peters's and Quinn's doorsteps, and their doorsteps alone.

Send comments to RonaldGuyJr@gmail.com

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Putting your aging parents' wishes first

As your parents grow older, it may be time to talk with them about financial and aging issues, which may involve difficult conversations.

You'll want to be careful how you approach this. Mention ahead of time that you'd like to talk to them about their future plans and reassure them that you want to understand their wishes, so their affairs will be taken care of as they would like.

If your parents are agreeable, choose a comfortable location and ask whom to invite (or not invite). Then, think about how to open the conversation, preferably not with what they want to do with their money, as this could be interpreted as your seeking information about your inheritance or being skeptical about their financial decisions. Instead, build a broader discussion about their vision for their aging years. A series of shorter conversations may allow you to cover topics more comfortably rather than trying to solve everything at once.

Try to address these areas:

- **Health care** – Seek to learn whether your parents have established appropriate health-related legal documents such as a health care power of attorney, which gives someone the authority to make decisions about their medical care if they become unable, and a living will, which spells out the extraordinary medical treatments they may or may not want.
- **Independence** – As people age, they may begin to lose their independence. Have your parents considered options for long-term care, such as an assisted living community, a nursing home or a home health aide? If they plan to receive support from family members, do your parents' expectations match yours?
- **Financial goals** – Focusing on the personal and financial aspects of the legacy your parents want to leave can be a valuable conversation. Have they updated their will or other estate documents, such as a living trust? Have they created a durable power of attorney for a trusted family member to make financial decisions for them if they become incapacitated? Do they have the proper beneficiary designations on their insurance policies, retirement plan and bank accounts? If you position these issues around your parents having control over transferring their assets, rather than curiosity over "who will get what," you'll more likely have a productive conversation.
- **Last wishes** – You'll want to learn whether your parents have instructions in their will about their funerals and last wishes. Express that you or another close family member should know who is responsible for making sure their wishes are met in a timely fashion.

Money, independence and aging can be sensitive topics. You don't have to go it alone, though — enlist help from another close family member. Or, if your parents work with an attorney, financial professional or other trusted advisor, consider asking if they're interested in having them participate in your talks. You might even be able to introduce your parents to one of your advisors.

In any case, keep talking. These conversations can be challenging, but if handled correctly can be of great benefit to your parents and your entire family.

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

Contributed by David McDonough, Financial Advisor at Edward Jones Office located at 41680 Miss Bessie Dr. Suite 302, Leonardtown, MD 20650 301 997 1707

The Benefits of Residential Solar Energy

Solar energy panels have gained visibility in neighborhoods across the country. Where it once was a rarity to see solar panels on the roofs of homes, today a stroll or drive around a given community is bound to reveal a number of homeowners have made the transition to solar power. You may be wondering if the investment is worth it.

Solar panels harvest energy from the sun through the use of photovoltaic cells. These semiconductor materials absorb photons from the sun, and the photons release electrons from the atoms of the semiconductor material. According to Forbes, the flow of these electrons within the cell creates an electric current directed to circuits. Solar panels can be placed anywhere there is abundant sunlight, such as in open fields. In residential areas, they're most often placed on roofs to get the most sun exposure.

Although having solar panels on the roof may affect the aesthetic of a home, many people find the benefits far outweigh such issues. Consider these perks to going solar.

- **Save money:** One of the draws of solar power is the ability to save money on your monthly utility bill. Electricity costs seemingly rise year after year. The Solar Energy Industries Association® says the cost of solar has decreased by more than 70 percent in the past decade compared to the cost of electricity, which has risen about five percent. Over the course of a solar panel life span, which is typically between 25 and 30 years, it's possible to save



\$25,500 to \$33,000 on electricity.

- **More affordable:** As noted, the cost of installing solar panels continues to drop. Investopedia says up-front cost of a residential solar power system is between \$3,500 and \$16,000, depending on the size of the system. Energy.gov says the United States has extended the federal residential solar tax credit, and you can save a 30 percent tax credit on the cost of solar systems through January 1, 2033. Options abound for financing to make solar more affordable.
- **Increased home value:** According

to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, homeowners can increase the value of their homes by \$20 for every \$1 in savings on electrical bills from solar energy. Homes with solar panels sell 4 percent higher than those that don't have them.

- **Get paid back:** Solar incentives in some areas may enable homeowners to turn profits in addition to generating electric bill savings. Solar renewable energy credits compensate you for the electricity that the solar panel system generates.
- **Avoid disruptions in power:** Strong storms or even accidents that affect

power lines can knock out traditional electricity for hours. Battery storage combined with solar energy can be beneficial during a disruption in power, and eliminate the need to purchase a backup generator.

- **Protect the planet:** Burning of fossil fuels to generate power contributes to carbon emissions. Switching to solar can reduce carbon emissions and help prevent air and water contamination.

Solar energy panels are becoming more visible in residential neighborhoods thanks in large parts to the many benefits such panels provide.

Give Your Living Room a New Vibe

An "out with the old, in with the new" mentality can extend to people's visions for their homes. A home in need of repair or renovation can serve as a catalyst to take inventory of personal style and help make interior spaces reflect one's unique vibe.

A living room can grow stale over time and often serves as a catch-call for clothing, blankets, gadgets, and other items. Upon recognizing a living room has seen better days, individuals may decide it's time to give the space a new vibe. That transformation can start with these strategies.

Organize first

Clutter frequently is the culprit behind a living room that may not give off the vibe individuals desire. As families grow and people add belongings, space may be at a premium. Less is more has never been a more important concept. Remove extraneous items before purchasing new furniture or transitioning to a new design. You may even want to remove everything and start from scratch before reintroducing desirable elements to the space.

Seek the assistance of professionals

Some people are adept at decorating and designing spaces. But just as you wouldn't perform your own medical procedures, you should leave jobs like interior design and renovations to the professionals. Hiring a professional interior designer and contractors can really bring a living room together in ways homeowners may have never imag-



ined. These pros can build off of your ideas and truly create a space that may be worthy of a magazine spread.

Promote wellness

You may want to consider adding natural materials in the design to promote well-being. Eco-friendly furnishings, raw fibers and organic textures will create an environment from sustainable choices. Plenty of plants also can create a welcoming environment that helps you surround yourself with positive energy and the items you love.

Light it up

One of the easiest ways to transform a room's vibe is to utilize lighting. Change draperies to allow more natural light to shine in. Consider additional windows or skylights if yours is a particularly dark home. If you desire to create a more vivid or cozy ambiance, use a combination of accent, task and supplemental lighting in the space so there are no dim corners.

Create an industrial or urban vibe

Industrial-chic design celebrates the bones of a building. It's what makes city lofts so

appealing, with their exposed beams and brick. Even those who live in suburbia or out in the country can give a living room this look with subtle nods to the style. Unadorned windows, clean lines on furniture, oversized, gallery-style art, and metal accents can add touches of this popular look to your home.

Revamping a living room doesn't have to be difficult. With an idea in place and some professional touches, an entirely new vibe can be achieved.

Upgrade Your Home for Modern Living



Modern home features like this smart thermostat can offer both convenience and cost savings.

Remodeling projects allow homeowners to put their personal stamps on a property. In addition to choosing a color and design scheme that fits a particular aesthetic, homeowners may want to outfit their homes with various features that can make them more accommodating to modern living. Homeowners can use these ideas as a springboard for remodeling projects designed to modernize their homes.

- **Open floor plans:** Open floor plans remain coveted characteristics of modern home architecture. An open layout enables occupants to feel like they are enjoying spaces together without having to be on top of one another. Since sightlines are not obstructed in open floor plans, homeowners can enjoy a cohesive design style across each level of the home.
- **Eco-friendly features:** Eco-friendly features modernize homes and may even earn homeowners rebates from the government. From positioning rooms to take advantage of natural sunlight to using environmentally responsible materials and more efficient appliances throughout a home, modern homes can function with a much smaller carbon footprint than older structures.
- **Smart home technology:** A smart home is equipped with appliances and other devices that can be controlled remotely, typically from a phone or computer connected to the internet. Investopedia notes that smart home technology offers homeowners convenience

and cost savings. Smart home technology is available across a wide range of budgets, ranging from thousands of dollars for a complete home automation to roughly \$100 for a small change like a smart thermostat.

- **Accessibility features:** A home that can grow with its residents is advantageous. When choosing renovations, features like slip-resistant flooring, stylish grab bars and low-threshold or barrier-free showers can enable homeowners to age in place more comfortably.
- **Dual owner's suites:** Dual owner's suites can be an asset for couples who choose to sleep separately. The Sleep Foundation says individuals choose to sleep in different rooms for a variety of reasons, notably reduced sleep interruptions and improved sleep quality. Plus, an extra bedroom can come in handy when one person is ill or in the event a partner snores. Rather than one person in the relationship getting the "lesser" space, certain homebuilders now offer plans for dual owner's suites so both people get the features they desire in a bedroom.
- **Three-season room:** Many homeowners aspire to bridge the gap between the indoors and outside. Three-season rooms help transition from the yard to the interior of a home, and offer a touch of nature without the bugs or unpleasant elements.

A number of home improvements can bring homes up to the standards of modern living.

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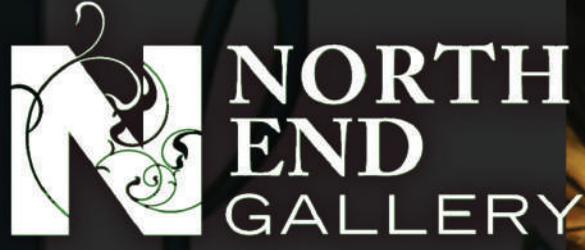
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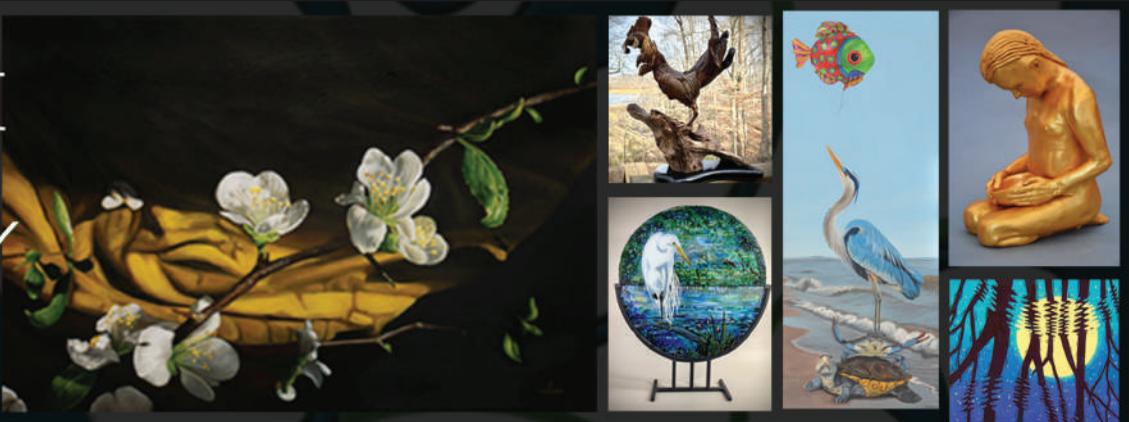
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Olympian Tanya Hughes to Deliver Keynote at MLK Prayer Celebration

Celebrate the legacy of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. during the 21st Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Prayer Celebration on Monday, Jan. 19, at St. Mary's College of Maryland. The celebration takes place in the Great Room of the College's Campus Center. Breakfast will begin at 6:30 a.m. and costs \$17.85 at the door. The program will begin at 8 a.m. at no cost, featuring a keynote address by Olympian Tanya Hughes.

Hughes, a St. Mary's County native, made history as one of the nation's top high jumpers, representing the United States at the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona.

In addition to her success in the Olympics, she is a NCAA Woman of the Year, four-time NCAA Champion, former corporate executive, and founder & CEO of Activate International and Sportspreneurs.

A graduate of Great Mills High School, Hughes is an ICF-credentialed, Georgetown-trained executive coach with a master's degree in global management from Thunderbird Global School of Management. She equips leaders and communities to translate purpose into disciplined execution—building clarity, governance, and operating rhythms that sustain impact.

As the keynote for the MLK breakfast, Hughes will deliver a faith-rooted message of courage, unity and servant leadership aligned with this year's theme, "Lighting the Way."

Other speakers/performers scheduled for Monday's program include Ellington Carthan, SMCM assistant professor of music; the St. Peter Claver Catholic Church Men's Choir; SMCM President Rhonda Phillips, Ph.D., FAICP; Rev. Greg Syler, Rector of Resurrection Parish and Priest in Charge at All Saints Oakley Parish; U.S. Rep. Steny Hoyer (D - 5th); a represen-

tative from SMCM's Board of Trustees; College of Southern Maryland's Black Student Union representative Dayshawn Rustin; Mia Bowers, president St. Mary's County NAACP; Kristia Watkins, president Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.®, Nu Zeta Omega Chapter; Rhythm Club of Spring Ridge Middle School.

The Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.®, Nu Zeta Omega Chapter is holding a donation drive at the event with the theme "Project Community Care: From the Cradle • To the Campus • To the Community."

AKA is collecting diapers for the Maryland Diaper Bank, non-perishable food items for the student pantries at St. Mary's College and College of Southern Maryland and hats & gloves (new) for the Robert J Fuller House.

A Day of Service is scheduled for the following Saturday, Jan. 24, at host sites including: St. Mary's County Arts Council, Three Oaks Center, Building Bridges Corp, Jamaur Law Foundation Inc, Pax River Naval Air Museum, Historic McConchie One Room School, Patuxent Habitat for Humanity, Lexington Park Library, and The Mission.

The Annual Southern Maryland Martin Luther King Jr. Prayer Breakfast draws community-wide attendance, including local government officials, religious leaders, and business persons. The event is sponsored by St. Mary's College of Maryland; St. Mary's County Branch NAACP The 7025; St. Mary's County Human Relations Commission; St. Mary's County Public Schools; College of Southern Maryland; Ivy & Pearls of So. Md. Community Charities; Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.®, Nu Zeta Omega Chapter and Unified Committee for Afro-American Contributions.

Bar & Grill Opens in San Souci Plaza



LUX Sports Bar & Grill in San Souci Plaza celebrated their Grand Opening last week. Commissioner Scott Ostrow is pictured with owners Tanya Dawkins, Leatrice Dawkins, Germaine Brady, & Raven Bowie. Photo by Ceandra Scott

Town Seeks Comment on Public Art Plan



Some of the proposed locations for public art projects

By Vada Mercer
Contributing Writer

Leonardtown is moving closer to adopting a new public art plan that would bring murals, sculptures and creative design into future development projects across the town.

A draft public art plan aimed at “integrating public art into civic construction” has been posted on the town’s website and is open for public comment through Feb. 2. If finalized, the plan would guide how Leonardtown incorporates local artists and creative projects into future development throughout the town.

The plan was developed with the help of public art consultants Jo Davis and Todd Bressi, who worked with town officials to outline how art could become part of everyday life in Leonardtown, from new buildings and walkways to parks, playgrounds and waterfront spaces.

Rather than treating art as something added later, the draft envisions creativity being embedded into new projects as they are designed. The goal, according to the document, is to help Leonardtown expand how it sees itself and how it is seen by visitors.

While the town has historically been known as “a most convenient place,” the plan imagines a future where Leonardtown is also “a most friendly place,” “a most welcoming place,” “a most creative place,” and “a most historic place.”

To achieve this, the draft identifies several key areas around town where future construction could double as opportunities for public art.

Among the larger proposals are an Ice House food hall and splash pad at the Leonardtown Wharf, along with a new amphitheater and conference hall at Tudor Hall. Plans also include a lawn and play area in West Fenwick, a gateway marking the future extension of West Fenwick Street at Route 5, a parking garage, and a Breton Bay Greenway trail that would extend from the Port of Leonardtown to the Wharf.

Each of these spaces is envisioned as a canvas for local artists and designers to add extra flairs of creativity throughout the town.

In addition to major construction projects, the plan proposes a series of smaller

“placemaking” efforts designed to bring visible, short-term creative energy into the town. These projects are meant to be quicker to implement and lower in cost, allowing Leonardtown to build momentum for its growing arts scene.

Several mural projects are outlined in the draft. One would be a postcard style “Leonardtown Welcomes You” mural placed along a key roadway entering town. Another would feature mixed media, combining paint and fiber, as the team noticed a high volume of fiber artists in the town when collecting data on local artists.

A “mural alley” is proposed for a block of Park Avenue, and the plan also encourages murals on smaller downtown walls themed around local history, the environment and creative practices.

The waterfront is another major focus. Two art-centered amenities are proposed for the Wharf, including a large-scale sculpture that would be visible from both land and water, creating a distinct, identifiable landmark. The plan also recommends incorporating art into the existing play area, using themes that connect children’s play with Leonardtown’s natural surroundings.

Some of the most engaging ideas come through in the proposed art-based activities. One placemaking project calls for a nine-hole mini-golf course that could appear in different locations around town. Another suggests a periodic “sculpture derby” in which artists would design human-powered vehicles and race them through Leonardtown’s streets. The plan also encourages local businesses to host rotating art exhibits, allowing storefronts and restaurants to double as informal galleries.

Artistically enhancing everyday amenities is encouraged as well, integrating artist designs to crosswalks and trolley stops. The town’s bulletin board could be replaced with a custom-designed artist kiosk, while one of the town’s alleys could be enhanced with sculptures and shaded seating designed by local creatives.

Together, the proposals aim to make art a visible and lasting part of Leonardtown’s identity, taking local artists’ talents out of galleries and filling the streets, bringing creativity to everyday life.

Steny Hoyer Retires After 45 Years in Congress

Rep. Steny Hoyer announced he will not seek reelection, ending a 45-year career as one of the most influential Democrats in the U.S. House.

Hoyer, 86, delivered an emotional farewell speech urging lawmakers to restore civility and uphold democratic principles.

A longtime St. Mary’s County resident, Hoyer was a constant presence at community events — from parades and school ceremonies to veterans’ gatherings — making him one of the region’s most recognizable public figures.

Throughout his tenure, he secured major federal investments for Southern Maryland, supporting military bases, transportation projects, and economic development.

His departure marks a major transition for Maryland’s 5th District after more than four decades of his leadership.

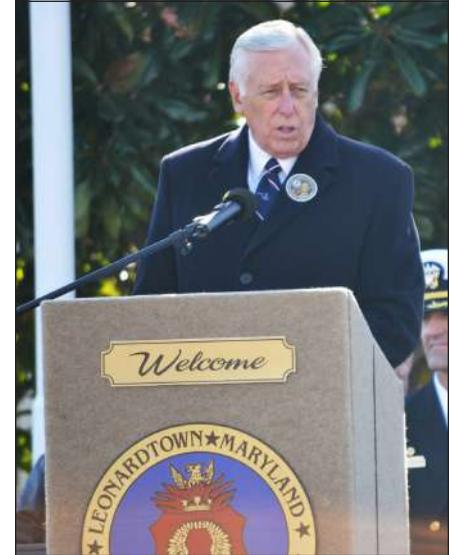


Photo by Ceandra Scott

County Government Operations for Martin Luther King Jr. Day

St. Mary’s County Government (SMCG) administrative offices will be closed on Monday, January 19, 2026, in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Offices will resume normal operating schedules on Tuesday, January 20, 2026.

The January 19 closure also includes:

- St. Mary’s County Libraries
- The Animal Adoption & Resources Center
- The Senior Activity Centers (Garvey, Loffler & Northern) and no home-delivered meals
- The St. Mary’s Transit System (STS)

The following SMCG operations will be open on January 19:

- Department of Recreation & Parks programs and facilities
- St. Clements Island Museum*, Piney Point Lighthouse Museum, and the Old Jail Museum
- The Convenience Centers and the St. Andrews Landfill
- Wicomico Shores Golf Course (normal hours); please note: the Riverview Restaurant is closed on Mondays

Note: the St. Clement’s Island Museum is operating on a limited basis due to construction.

Press release from St. Mary’s County Government

Overnight Work Planned for Thomas Johnson Bridge

Flagging Operations Begin Sunday Night

The Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration will begin routine structural and maintenance work on the MD 4 Bridge over the Patuxent River (Governor Thomas Johnson Bridge) at the Calvert/St. Mary’s County line beginning Sunday, January 18. The nighttime work will continue through late February, weather permitting.

Crews will close a single-lane and alternate traffic in the open lane using an overnight flagging operation Sunday through Thursday, 10 p.m. until 5 a.m. the following morning. This work includes bridge joint seal replacement, metal welding and other repairs.

Portable variable message signs will be placed to make travelers aware of the lane closure. Work will be performed by contractor Covington Machine and Welding of Annapolis.

Overnight travelers should plan extra travel time to cross the bridge. This work is necessary to ensure a safe and reliable transportation system. Drivers are asked to stay alert, stay focused, look for reduced speed limits as well as driving pattern changes, and slow down in construction zones.

The State Highway Administration is Serious About Safety. Pedestrians and motorists are urged to remain alert and avoid distractions when traveling through the work zone. Motorists should obey all posted speed limits. Motorists can dial #77 on their mobile devices for roadside assistance.

For a list of all major State Highway Administration projects, news and travel information, visit roads.maryland.gov.

Press release from State Highway Administration

Four Suspects Arrested Following Armed Robbery in California

On Sunday, Jan. 11, 2026, at about 6:05 p.m., deputies from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Patrol Division were summoned to the 44000 block of Redwood Lane for the report of an armed robbery. Deputies arrived and spoke with the victim, who reported an individual known to him had pointed a handgun at him and, along with another suspect, had taken cash and an expensive jacket before leaving the area in a green passenger car. Three suspects were apprehended and charged on Sunday evening.

Through investigation, patrol deputies located the vehicle of interest and observed three occupants inside. A traffic stop was initiated, and the driver was identified as Justin Tyler Chapman, 22, of Lexington Park; Brandon Rafael Adams Jr., 18, of Bowie, as the front-seat passenger; and Jevone Daevion Reid, 19, of California, the rear passenger. Detectives from the Criminal Intelligence Unit identified Reid as the suspect who reportedly pointed the handgun at the victim.

Following a probable cause search of the vehicle, deputies recovered a loaded Glock 23, .40 caliber handgun, and a 9MM handgun with a machine gun conversion device. The three suspects were arrested.

Reid was charged with 12 counts, including

- Armed Robbery
- Possession of a regulated firearm by



Jevone Daevion Reid



Justin Tyler Chapman



Brandon Rafael Adams Jr.



Terrone Donte Milburn

- someone under 21 years of age
- Loaded handgun in vehicle
- Handgun wear/carry and transport in a vehicle on public roads
- Loaded handgun on person
- Wear/carry/transport a handgun on person
- Illegal possession of a regulated firearm
- Illegal possession of ammunition
- Use of a firearm during the commission of a felony/violent crime
- Assault first- and second-degree
- Theft of \$100 to under \$1500

Chapman was charged with seven counts, including

- Loaded handgun in vehicle
 - Wear/carry a handgun and transport in a vehicle on public roads
 - Loaded handgun on person
 - Wear/carry/transport a handgun on person
 - Possession of a regulated firearm after being convicted of a disqualifying crime
 - Illegal possession of ammunition
 - Possession of a rapid-fire trigger activator
- Adams was charged with 12 counts, including
- Armed robbery
 - Possession of a regulated firearm by someone under 21 years of age
 - Wear/carry a loaded handgun in a vehicle upon public roads
 - Wear/carry a handgun in a vehicle upon public roads
 - Two counts of wear/carry/transport a handgun on person
 - Possession of a regulated firearm after being convicted of a disqualifying crime
 - Illegal possession of ammunition
 - Use of a firearm during the commission of a felony/violent crime
 - Assault first- and second-degree
 - Theft of \$100 to under \$1500

The suspects were transported to the Detention and Rehabilitation Center in Leonardtown to await a bond hearing on Monday afternoon.

On Monday, Jan. 12, 2026, an arrest warrant was executed on a fourth suspect, Terrone Donte Milburn, 18, of Lexington Park.

Milburn was charged with 10 counts, including

- Armed robbery
- Assault first- and second-degree
- Use of a firearm during the commission of a felony/violent crime
- Possession of a firearm by a minor
- Loaded handgun in vehicle
- Handgun in vehicle
- Loaded handgun on person
- Illegal possession of ammunition
- Theft of \$100 to under \$1000

The suspect is currently being held in the Detention and Rehabilitation Center in Leonardtown.

The case remains under investigation, and anyone with additional information is asked to contact Detective Warren Forinash at 301-475-4200, ext. 8072, or by email at Warren.Forinash@stmaryscountymd.gov.

Tipsters can also submit tips anonymously:

- Text 847411: start your message with "SMCSO", add a space, and then your tip.
- Online: Submit a tip through the Sheriff's Office website at www.FirstSheriff.com/tips.
- App: Send a tip directly through the SMCSO app. Download the free app from the Google Play Store or Apple App Store.
- Phone: For those who prefer to make a phone call, tips can also be shared through the Crime Solvers line at 301-475-3333.

With Crime Solvers, you never have to give your name. You may be eligible for a cash reward if your information leads to an arrest.

Press releases from SMCSO

Legal Notices

C-SMMPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting Public Notice

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Calvert – St. Mary's Metropolitan Planning Organization, C-SMMPO, will conduct a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting at the Walter Francis Duke Terminal Conference Room located at 44200 Airport Road, California, MD 20619 on **Monday, February 2, 2026**, beginning at **3:00 p.m.** to **receive an update from the MPO Boundary Working Group and to discuss 2027 UPWP Funding**. The agenda can be viewed at <https://www.calvert-stmarysmpo.com/>.

This public meeting is required by law to accept public and staff comments. All members of the public and interested parties will have an opportunity to provide public comments regarding the TAC meeting agenda.

Comments may be submitted on or before **Friday, January 30, 2026**, and should be addressed to the Long Range Planning Division, **P.O. Box 653, Leonardtown, MD 20650** or to **Karly Maltby, MPO Administrator** via email at **Karly.Maltby@stmaryscountymd.gov**.

This meeting can be attended virtually, the Meeting ID is **430 427 6617**, the call-in number is **(301) 715-8592**. Zoom Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/4304276617?omn=89904715192>

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

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

TOWN OF LEONARDTOWN Administrative Assistant II Opportunity Available

The Commissioners of Leonardtown are seeking applicants for an Administrative Assistant II. The Administrative Aide II independently performs skilled administrative and clerical support functions in accordance with established procedures, policies, and practices, under periodic direction from a supervisor. Work involves answering telephones, engaging in frequent public contact, and requires initiative, independent judgment, attention to detail, and the ability to prioritize competing demands. The position provides highly responsible administrative support and assists with coordinating daily activities and operations of the Planning Department, including support for inspections and code enforcement functions as assigned.

Full-time position starting at \$46,000 and up based on qualifications.

Application deadline is January 30, 2026.

Email resume to: leonardtown.commissioners@leonardtownmd.gov

Residents Share Concerns Over Proposed Cannabis Growing Facility in Hollywood

By Tim Flaherty
Contributing Writer

While a wide range of topics were covered by speakers at Tuesday night's public forum hosted by the Commissioners of St. Mary's County in Leonardtown, the most talked about issue was a proposed cannabis growing facility in Hollywood.

Two firms, Blue Marble, LLC and Simply Grown Green, LLC, have filed preliminary plans with the St. Mary's Department of Land Use & Growth Management for a growing and processing facility to be built on the site of the old Southern Maryland Wood Treatment Plant along Rt. 235. Decades ago, that 94-acre site was subject to an expensive and controversial EPA Superfund cleanup effort after about 25 acres of soil there had become soaked with hazardous chemicals like creosote. The cleanup was concluded in 2005, but the property has remained unused since. The new plans submitted list the property as being just over 89 acres, 57.3 of which are zoned for industrial use. The rest is in the Rural Preservation District.

Hollywood Industrial Partners, LLC, owns the property, which it purchased in June of 2023. Maryland records show a principal address for them in Leonardtown, while applicants Blue Marble and Simply Grown Green are based in Prince Georges

County and Charles County, respectively.

"That (Southern Maryland Wood Treatment) destroyed that area and there's a lot of work that had to be done to reclaim it," said speaker William Newberry, who says he is a neighbor of the proposed cannabis site. "So, it's still a sensitive and fragile environment, and putting another chemical plant on that same spot is very unwise in my opinion."

Newberry pointed to noise and smells from a similar operation already in place in Abell as a reason for his concern. "I went there earlier today, and when I got home to Hollywood I could still smell it on me and my wife. And that was just standing outside of the fence for 10 minutes. So, I can just imagine how bad it would be having a facility in their neighborhood."

He further urged the commissioner to make sure the EPA and county health department were heavily involved in any review. "If this facility is permitted to proceed and is not built better than the Abell facility, it will definitely negatively impact the residents and other businesses anywhere nearby."

Another speaker, who identified herself as Kristen Curtis of Hollywood, spoke to concerns that the proposed operation will be close to The Center for Life Enrichment and residential housing. "These centers exist to provide a safe, supportive, stable environ-

ment for vulnerable individuals. Introducing an industrial cannabis operation nearby is incompatible with that mission and raises valid concerns about exposure, security, and overall well-being. The impact on property values cannot be ignored; many families have invested their life savings into homes in this area because it is perceived as safe, family-oriented community.

"A cannabis greenhouse," Curtis continued, "particularly one associated with strong and persistent odors, poses a real risk of lowering housing values and discouraging future homebuyers."

Another Hollywood resident, Sophie Newberry, echoed concerns about smells and property values, and added a twist about St. Mary's' military-based economy. "I ask the commissioners to carefully consider the impact on the residents who hold federal and military security clearances," she said. "For many families in this community, proximity to cannabis manufacturing operation, regardless of state legality, can create real lasting complications related to federal employment standards, background investigations, and career stability."

Ian Eglund of Lexington Park spoke to his desires for people to be free to start businesses, but at the same time had misgivings about the disconnect between state and federal laws concerning cannabis. "If I

did marijuana," he said, "it would end my career and probably give me a whole lot of legal trouble."

Other speakers, such as Micah Perry of Lexington Park, have doubts about the project because it is being pursued by out-of-county investors. "Can Simply Grown Green and Blue Marble guarantee that there will be precisely zero chemical pollution in the air and water? These organizations don't have an interest to the people," Perry continued. "They don't have an interest to the residents. They have an interest to themselves and to money."

Sarah Mulford Martin of Hollywood, who says she is a real estate agent, said her clients, "are strongly opposed to this not only from an environmental standpoint, but from a property value standpoint." She added, "They've already found 10 endangered or close to being endangered species in McIntosh Run, very close to where the ... to where the cannabis plant is going to be, already on a Superfund site. That has been proven to be an environmental issue."

The first step for the cannabis proposal is for it to be considered by the St. Mary's County Board of Appeals, which is required by the county's cannabis ordinance. It would then go on to a more traditional planning and zoning review.

21st Annual MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. Prayer Celebration

at St. Mary's College of Maryland

LIGHTING THE WAY: FAITH, HOPE & ACTION

Keynote address by **Tanya Hughes**

An Olympian and St. Mary's County native

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Campus Center Great Room

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Commissioners Give Official Approval to New Organization Supporting Animal Shelter

By Tim Flaherty
Contributing Writer

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County have approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that codifies the involvement of a new non-profit group that is supporting the St. Mary's County Animal Adoption and Resource Center (AARC) in California. The approval came Tuesday after the president of the new organization spoke before the commissioners during their regular weekly meeting. AROO, which stands for Animal Rescue Outreach Org, raises funds for the shelter, and provides extra manpower to assist the shelter in caring for and finding homes for homeless and lost pets that come to the busy shelter on FDR Boulevard.

"We formed AROO last year," president and founder Doug Isleib told the commissioners, "and the reason we did, for two reasons: One, we're animal lovers. But the second is we are really fans and are appreciative of the shelter."

"The shelter is really well run. And the staff is tremendous. And the animals are really well cared for."

Isleib was introduced at the commissioners' session by Jennifer Aubert-Utz, the county's Emergency Services Director. Emergency Services oversees the operation of the shelter through its Animal Control Division.

Aubert-Utz told the commissioners that

the shelter had taken in over 2,900 pets in fiscal year 2025, which represents a year-over-year increase of about 65% from the previous reporting period. She said the shelter is currently on track to take in 3,400 animals in the current fiscal year. What are known as "owner surrenders," where a pet owner brings in an animal they can no longer care for, have nearly doubled over the past two years, according to figures provided by the AARC.

On a positive note, pet adoptions increased nearly 60% from 2024 to 2025. The "live release rate" improved from 82% to 89%, and the length of stay for the average animal fell by eight days for dogs and 11 days for cats. Isleib said the length-of-stay figure is very important, "because the longer animals are in the shelter the more stressed they become. It's hard on them, and it's also harder to get them adopted."

Isleib said he believes owner surrenders have increased dramatically due to pet owners "starting to understand that the shelter is a good place, they do good work and they'll take good care of their animals."

Aubert-Utz also noted that the uptick in surrenders seemed to spike when the federal government workforce was ordered back to the office. "A lot of people were working remotely, she explained. "We saw a big uptick at the same time. So, people, I guess traditionally, were taking care of their pets at home, and then they were left with what

do you do with your animal when you return to the workforce?"

According to Isleib "Our mission is to support the shelter by raising funds to augment the shelter's budget, and also by doing projects that that help either the shelter or the animals at the shelter." He told the commissioners that AROO uses social media to solicit donations, and that the organization will sponsor a golf tournament later this year that he hopes will raise between \$10,000 and \$20,000.

Commissioner Eric Colvin told his fellow board members that he sat down with Isleib and other AROO leaders several months ago to find out more about what the group is doing for the shelter. "They respect that we have a great animal shelter, and they want to make it the best in the state," he said. "I'm so I'm very impressed with all that you all have done," he said, turning to Isleib. "So, thank you for that."

Colvin gave one example of how volunteers can affect positive results with their involvement at the shelter. "We talk about all these different dogs and the different breeds and how they're pent up in these pens, but the volunteers are able to come in, walk the dogs, so it gets some of that energy out, calms them down a little bit, makes that dog much more likely to get adopted when someone comes in to see it versus a dog that's stressed out in a pen."

The AARC also takes in cats and a small

number of more exotic pets. Even farm animals can be housed in a nearby barn and receive care from the shelter staff.

Isleib went on to describe a variety of projects AROO and its volunteers will be working on in the coming year, and they include getting other organizations involved at the shelter. "We think that the shelter is a great place for Eagle Scout projects. We see possibly landscaping enrichment, places for the dogs, you know, benches, and ramps and stuff. We'd also like to get schools involved with the school kids in reading about the animals or learning about animals." He also spoke of a completely volunteer-funded Pet Food Pantry that helps families feed their animals. "It allows people who are struggling financially to keep their animals in their homes. They just come in and get dog food, cat food, cat litter. So, we think that's an important thing to contribute to as well."

Raising money for medical support for animals in the shelter is also a goal for AROO, Isleib said. He gave a recent example of a dog that was scheduled for euthanasia because it needed a tumor removed; an operation that far outstripped the shelter's limited budget for such things. AROO raised money to pay for the operation, and the dog was subsequently adopted by a local family with small children.

AROO's website can be found at www.aroostmarys.org, and they also have a Facebook page.

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Cash, Checks Accepted (no credit cards).







www.FarrellAuctionService.com
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Two Metcom Loan Applications Approved

By Tim Flaherty
Contributing Writer

At their meeting in Leonardtown on Tuesday, the Commissioners of St. Mary's County approved of two MetCom loan applications for financing through a Maryland's Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) loan program.

One loan, which will have a term of 30-years, will fund up to nearly \$36 million for previously approved MetCom capital projects, according to Deborah Settle, the Supervisor of Field Services. Settle was part of a team of MetCom officials who appeared before the commissioners.

The second loan, which will have a term of 10-years, will allow MetCom to borrow up to \$1.235 million dollars for vehicles and equipment, Settle told the commissioners.

Settle went on to explain that the capital loans will cover work on the Piney Point Force Main, the Forest Run Wastewater Pump Station, the Piney Point Wastewater Pump Station, and on the Southampton Revitalization project.

Commissioner Mike Hewitt questioned George Erichsen, the Executive Director of MetCom, on why wouldn't MetCom use existing reserve fund balances for vehicle

and equipment purchases.

Erichsen explained MetCom's thought process on using reserves and said, in part, "If we include vehicles as part of the reserve, then we will just borrow more for a different project. It's just a conscious decision on our part to borrow for the vehicles."

Hewitt also questioned the wisdom of borrowing lump sums now for several of the capital projects that won't begin construction for up to three years.

"Flexibility", Erichsen replied, "For example, if we have five projects that we borrow for DHCD, if one (bid) comes in under and one comes in lower, we're allowed to transfer the monies from that lower project into the project that came in over or higher."

"I think you've got a good plan," said Commissioner Eric Colvin after the discussion, "and I think you've kept your rate-payers in mind as you've developed it, so I thank you for that."

Colvin then made motions to approve both loan applications. Hewitt was the lone dissenter on the larger of the two proposals. He also voted against the smaller loan application and was joined in opposition by Commissioner Scott Ostrow. Both motions did pass the full board.

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“THESE ORGANIZATIONS DON'T HAVE AN INTEREST TO THE PEOPLE.”

LEXINGTON PARK RESIDENT MICAH PERRY ON THE PROPOSED CANNABIS FACILITY IN HOLLYWOOD



LOCAL 4
Commissioners approve MOU with non-profit in support of animal shelter



LOCAL 7
Leonardtown shares draft of public art plan



ON THE COVER
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MON, JAN 19	TUE, JAN 20	WED, JAN 21	THU, JAN 22
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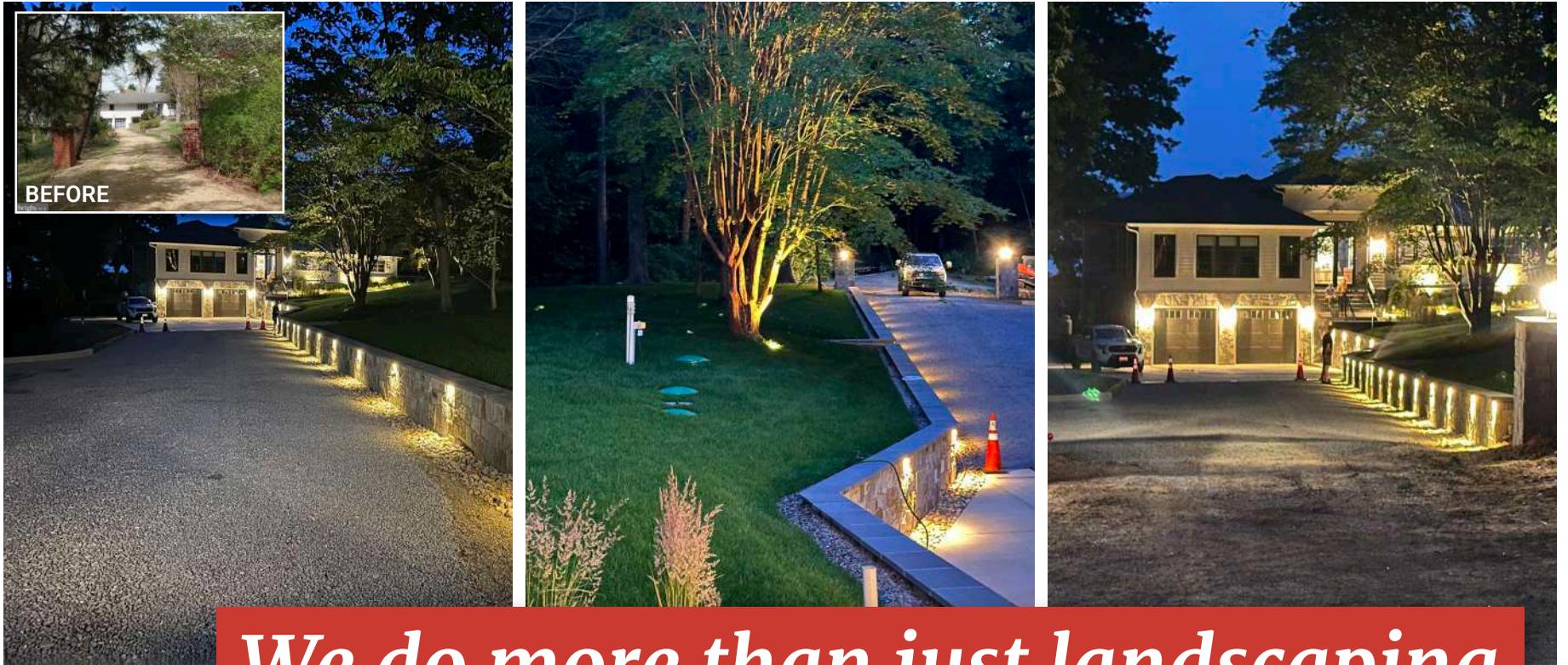
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St. Mary's County Times

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**Animal Shelter Non-Profit
Group Receives MOU**

**Two Metcom Loan
Applications Approved**

**Town Seeks Comment
on Public Art Plan**



INSIDE

CANNABIS FACILITY PROPOSED IN HOLLYWOOD