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St. Mary's County Times

THURSDAY, JULY 4, 2024

WWW.COUNTYTIMES.NET



**Schools Examine
Cell Phone Policy**

**Vehicle Fees See
'Substantial' Increase**

**Life Sentence Issued
in 2022 Stabbing**

FREEDOM FEST KICKS OFF THE FOURTH

BLESSED IS THE NATION

Billy Graham, when asked by a foreigner visiting the United States what the Fourth of July meant to him, stated the following:

"July 4th commemorates the day in 1776 that our nation declared itself to be an independent nation, and no longer a colony of England. On that date, a number of our leading citizens signed what is known as the Declaration of Independence, stating our determination to become a free country. Our independence did not come easily; only after several difficult years of war would it finally be won. Nor were our first years as a nation free from problems and controversies (as is still true). But our forefathers were determined to establish a free and democratic system of government, and the Declaration of Independence (together with our Constitution and the Bill of Rights) became the foundation for this. They have stood the test of time, and on July 4th we give thanks for the wisdom and faith and courage of those leaders.

"Although it is not a religious holiday like Christmas or Easter, for many Americans July 4th is a time to reflect on God's goodness to us as a nation. Molded into the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia (which proclaimed our independence) are these words from the Bible: **'Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof' (Leviticus 25:10, KJV)**. Our legal system reflects our Judeo-Christian roots.

"While we look with gratitude to the past on this July 4th, may we also look in faith to the future, and commit it and our lives to God and His will. The ancient words of the Psalmist are still true: **'Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord' (Psalm 33:12)**."

—Published by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

As The Mission works towards finishing the rehab of our new facility locally in Lexington Park, please consider supporting this ministry so that we can continue to serve local folks that need help and most of all to tell them of the Love of Christ and his Gospel message.

Have a wonderful and safe 4th of July from all the staff and volunteers of The Mission.

*God Bless St. Mary's County,
Richard Myers
Co-Founder, Vice President & Executive Director*



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“THE INCREASES ARE NOT MARGINAL...”

DEL. MATT MORGAN ON THE INCREASES IN FEES FOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION AND OTHERS



LOCAL 5
Schools examine cell phone rules



LOCAL 5
Board of Appeals holds off on apartment project



ON THE COVER
Uncle Sam welcomes the county to Freedom Fest

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, JUL 4 Mostly Cloudy Hi: 93° Lo: 74°	FRI, JUL 5 PM Thunderstorms Hi: 93° Lo: 77°	SAT, JUL 6 PM Thunderstorms Hi: 91° Lo: 73°	SUN, JUL 7 Mostly Cloudy Hi: 90° Lo: 71°
MON, JUL 8 Partly Cloudy Hi: 90° Lo: 73°	TUE, JUL 9 PM Thunderstorms Hi: 91° Lo: 73°	WED, JUL 10 Scattered Storms Hi: 84° Lo: 70°	THU, JUL 11 Scattered Storms Hi: 84° Lo: 70°

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Friday and Sunday

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MAJOR FESTIVAL PARTNERS

Work Group Examines Cell Phones in Schools



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

A newly formed working group of school staff, parents and students have come together to examine the effects cell phones have on the school day and how their presence can be better managed by the school system, Superintendent Dr. J. Scott Smith announced last week.

Smith briefed the St. Mary's County Board of Education on the progress of the work group at the board's June 26 meeting in Leonardtown.

The work group met on the same day as the school board and one week prior on June 13.

"We're talking about all of the overwhelming data that demonstrates while the cell phone is an incredibly productive technology tool that makes us feel connected to others and secure, is a real challenge in all high school, middle school and even some elementary school settings," Smith said.

Florida already bans cell phones in schools, Smith continued, and California is considering following suit.

"And New York City public schools, over one million students, it looks like they're going to be banning cell phones," Smith said. "It's the right time to really be talking about it."

Whatever the school system decides on the future of cell phones in schools, the superintendent said, the decision must come after

much deliberation from all those involved.

Part of that end decision means coming "up with a workable plan to help them feel comfortable if their child doesn't have their cell phone with them every second of every single day," Smith said.

The working group should be able to provide the school board with a presentation on their findings in July, said Smith.

Smith noted that neighboring Calvert County schools recently banned cell phones activated in class rooms as well as students wearing hoodies in class.

Smith said learning to cope with cell phones would help students, parents and staff better connect and have more meaningful interactions with each other.

"We'll probably follow a similar suit for cell phones but we need to be sure we're talking to everybody," Smith said. "Often times we may feel as though we are connected in a digital space that's not necessarily what any research shows."

Smith said the COVID-19 pandemic gave the school system a crash course in how to operate virtually in the digital realm but now since coming back together, students, teachers, parents and staff must refocus on personal interaction.

"We need to make our message more about... being able to enjoy being with other human beings," Smith said. "It's an integral part of what we're all about."

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Brandie

EDELEN

Board of Education



Mom of 6
Former Public School Teacher
Certified in Special Education
Small Business Owner
Adjunct Professor at CSM

As a mom and a teacher, I witness firsthand some of the biggest challenges impacting our students and teachers.

I have a vested interest in seeing our schools overcome these obstacles that are keeping kids from reaching their full potential.

~ Brandie Edelen



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Brandie Edelen for St. Mary's County Board of Education

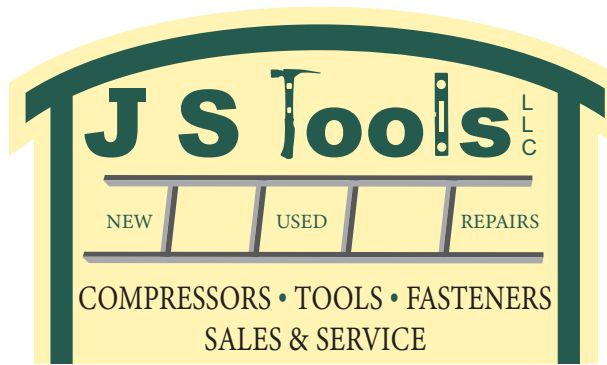
By Authority of Friends of Brandie Edelen for Board of Education, Luis Mejia Treasurer



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DEALS RUN THROUGH JULY 31ST OR WHILE SUPPLIES LAST

School Board Approves Automation Upgrades

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The county school system currently uses a building automation system (BAS) to allow the headquarters office to remotely control any number of a school building's functions from lighting and heating and air conditioning to security but the system needs upgrading.

Late last week the school board voted unanimously to spend a little under one million to hire an outside company — Custom Tech LLC — to modernize and maintain the system.

The current system is antiquated, Dr. J.R. Beavers, Director of Maintenance, told the board members.

The system is "made up of a variety of proprietary and non-proprietary controls installed over the last three decades," Beavers' presentation documents state. "BAS controls require software updates and some of them cannot receive current updates due to their age.

"Because of that we are still operating four Windows-based servers that are running Windows 97, XP, and Vista in addition to a

virtual server. This also means that our BAS operator logs in to five different platforms and views data in five different formats depending on the school that is being viewed."

Automation makes the school system "incredibly effective and efficient," Beavers said, which is why the upgrade was necessary.

"We're getting it done but it's a struggle with our current system," Beavers said.

With the upgrades, he said, the school system could accomplish its automation goals on one digital platform instead of many antiquated ones.

The deal includes software as well as hardware upgrades, Beavers said, and maintenance services for several years.

"I think it's going to take a year for the project," Beavers said of the upgrade, noting that Custom Tech LLC was the sole bidder. "Competition would be nice but we're comfortable with Custom Tech."

Custom Tech is the school system's current automation service provider, and has been for several years, Beavers said.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Vehicle Fees See Massive Increases

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Of the hundreds of new laws that went into effect in Maryland July 1 several of them were fee increases, including for vehicle registration, that will continue to grow revenues as the years progress.

"As directed by state law, the MVA is required to adjust vehicle registration fees that will help provide critical revenue for the Transportation Trust Fund, which ensures all of the state's infrastructure is in a state of good repair," Motor Vehicle Administrator Chrissy Nizer said in a statement made in May. "In order to make these new fees as affordable as possible, the MVA is now offering customers the convenient option to choose either a one or two-year registration at time of their renewal."

A two-year renewal, which has been the customary method of renewing a vehicle's registration, now costs \$221 for a passenger car weighing up to 3,500 pounds, according to the MVA's latest schedule of fees.

That same sort of renewal for a car up to 3,700 pounds now rises to \$241; any passenger cars weighing more than 3,700 pounds now increases to \$323 for a two-year renewal.

Fee hikes for trucks are even more dear at \$267.50 to \$297.50 every two years depending on weight.

Del. Matt Morgan (R-Dist. 29A) said such vehicle registration fee increases disproportionately affect more rural areas like St. Mary's because of the lack of public transportation and reliance on personal motor cars.

"I've heard political operatives use the excuse of increasing taxes to justify increasing education funding," Morgan said in a social media post. "However, this fee was increased to backfill budget holes in the Transportation Trust Fund caused by overspending and over-subsidizing mass transit."

"The increases are not marginal; they are substantial enough to strain the financial resources of many families in our community."

guyleonard@countytimes.net

JOSH GUY SCHOOL BOARD

Authority: Friends of Josh Guy;
Brandon Hoffman, Treasurer

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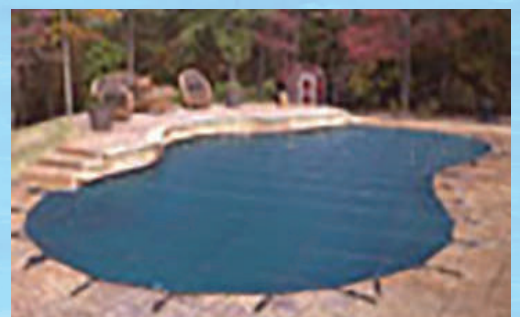


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Board of Appeals Holds Off on Park Place Appeal

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The county zoning appeals board continued its hearing to later this month regarding a concept site plan for 160 apartments for which the planning commission denied approval back in March.

The applicant for the Park Place Apartments project appealed the planning commission's decision, moving for what is known as a de novo appeal, or a case where the prior record was not considered in favor of a new one.

"You do not owe them any deference," said Deputy County Attorney to appeals board member Guy Bradley regarding what weight should be given to the planning commission's decision to deny approval back in March.

The project is proposed to be built in the Park Place development in California, which contains hotel, restaurant and defense contractor properties.

In his appeal, attorney for the applicant Christopher Longmore argued that in reaching their decision the planning commission considered information that was not part of the record for the case at hand, including the development of a separate parcel of land nearby.

"The planning commission failed to accept

the Traffic Impact Study, prepared by Traffic Concepts, Inc. and made part of the record, despite the fact that there were no credible, relevant or substantial evidence in the record to rebut the findings of said traffic study," Longmore included in his appeal. "The planning commission, in denying the application, took actions that went beyond their authority and role in reviewing a concept site plan, including... making determinations regarding traffic and other adequate public facilities criteria despite the fact that the St. Mary's County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance expressly designates that these decisions are to be made by the Planning Director as part of the final site plan approval."

Members of the planning commission expressed many concerns over the project, particularly on the stress it might put on public services such as schools and first responders as well as worries over adding more traffic to an already congested intersection with Shady Mile Drive.

After several hours of hearing testimony from the applicant's representatives on the nature of the development, as well as public comment, the appeals board voted to continue the hearing to their July 25 scheduled meeting.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

'Operation Dry Water' to Combat Boating Under the Influence

This holiday weekend, Maryland Natural Resources Police (NRP) anticipates more boaters on the water, and subsequently an increase in boating incidents and fatalities.

Because of the high volume of activity during the July 4 holiday, it's statistically one of the most dangerous times on Maryland's waterways. Boating while under the influence of alcohol or drugs remains a major issue not just in Maryland, but nationwide. In response, in partnership with the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, NRP will once again participate in the national Operation Dry Water, which includes heightened awareness and enforcement from July 4-6.

"The Fourth of July weekend is the busiest boating holiday of the year," said Natural Resources Police Col. Orlando Lilly. "NRP's presence on the water will be significant, with saturation patrols spanning nearly every county in the state. It's our goal to ensure the safety of everyone on the water, and our involvement in Operation Dry Water gives us opportunities to educate boaters on the dangers of drinking and operating, as well as removing unsafe and impaired operators from our waterways

when necessary."

Alcohol use is the leading known contributing factor in fatal boating incidents, while more than 90 percent of Maryland's fatal boating accident victims in the past five years were not wearing a life jacket.

During this period of heightened awareness and enforcement, NRP will prioritize educating boaters about safe practices, including the importance of sober boating. Boaters should expect increased patrols and vessel checks to prioritize the safety of those on the water.

NRP reminds boaters that the best way to enjoy a safe holiday weekend on the water is to remain sober – always have a "sober skipper" on board – and wear a life jacket at all times.

In Maryland, an individual convicted of operating a vessel on the waters of Maryland while under the influence of alcohol, or any narcotic, drug, or barbiturate, can face up to one year of imprisonment and revocation of their boating license.

More information about boating safety and regulations in Maryland along with Maryland boating accident statistics can be found by visiting dnr.maryland.gov/nrp.

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Great Mills Man Receives Life Sentence for Fatal Stabbing

State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling announced today that Cherron Montril Waul, 47, of Great Mills, Maryland, was sentenced to life in prison for the first-degree murder of a 33-year-old St. Mary's County man that occurred in the early morning hours of February 3, 2022.

"Mr. Waul lured the victim out of his home, then mercilessly stabbed him nineteen times, cut him an additional seven times, ultimately killing him," Sterling said. "The Defendant left the victim to die in the freezing cold and rain near Great Mills High School where he was discovered by a morning commuter."

State's Attorney Sterling added, "I want to acknowledge the incredible investigation and thank the entire law enforcement team, to include the crime lab technicians, patrol officers, and detectives who worked closely with the prosecution team. I'd further like to thank the legal administrators, prosecutors, victim witness coordinators, investigators, and members of the Evidence Review Unit who worked diligently with our law enforcement partners to ensure justice for the victim, his family, and our community."

Waul was convicted by a St. Mary's



Cherron Montril Waul

County jury of first-degree murder, following a three-day jury trial in April 2024.

Senior Assistant State's Attorneys Jeffrey R. Maylor and Donna C. Pettersen prosecuted the case on behalf of the citizens of St. Mary's County.

Detective Warren Forinash of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office was the lead investigator.

The Honorable Joseph M. Staloni presided over the case.

Identities Sought in Theft Case



The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office seeks assistance identifying and locating the individuals shown in these pictures in connection with a suspected theft from a local business. Video surveillance footage from the business shows the suspects smashing the front glass door with a cinderblock, stealing several items, and fleeing on foot.

If you recognize these individuals, please contact Deputy Myles Chase-Johnson at Myles.ChaseJohnson@stmaryscountymd.gov or 301-475-4200, ext. 8175. Please ref-

erence case number 32235-24.

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

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



Letters to the Editor

Independence Day nostalgia

Let me share with you what I saw last weekend. On Saturday, June 29th, my family and I attended the St. Mary's Freedom Fest. This is the first time in many years that we've had fireworks back at the fairgrounds, and I was excited to share this nostalgia with my wife and son. We arrived around 7:30pm, giving us plenty of time to find seats and good parking, and we were all happy there was a beautiful breeze blowing to help keep the temperature comfortable. My son and I went for a walk to decide what to grab for our late dinner, and we were quickly at a stalemate over our food choices. Thankfully we saw the Pizza Hotline trailer, and a pepperoni pizza is always a winner in our family! While relaxing in our spot while waiting for the sun to set we were able to enjoy HydraFX jamming out on the stage and watch the crowd continue to grow. We were joined by my son's best school friend's family and we watched the kids enjoy races with one of the members of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office—thank you officer for being such a great role model (and for occupying a large group of kids until it was time for fireworks)!

Finally, it was getting dark. The grounds were packed and everyone was chatting happily. All of a sudden I was able to hear the national anthem being sung, and I wasn't

the only one to hear it. I saw people standing and the crowd grew silent. I looked around at the crowd and realized everyone was standing, everyone was quiet in respect, and everyone was excited for the coming fireworks. And the timing was perfect. On the last refrain the fireworks kicked off and the looks of respect changed to looks of wonder and awe. At that point my son refused to sit back down as if he wanted to stay as close to the fireworks as possible. It is hard to calculate the value of the simple joy of sitting outside on a beautiful summer night watching a fun fireworks surrounded by family and friends, but the memories he will have are priceless.

As we were packing up and then driving home, I took a minute to appreciate the coordination and effort by many that goes into making events like that such a huge success. Numerous sponsors, our Department of Emergency Services, our Sheriff's Office and State Troopers, our incredible Fair board, and many others. I am excited for next year and being able to gather as a community to celebrate and enjoy time together. Happy Independence Day St. Mary's County!

Commissioner Eric Colvin

Gratitude from the Commission for Women

The St. Mary's County Commission for Women would like to express our gratitude to the Commissioners of St. County Commissioners, the Department of Aging & Human Services, our sponsors, nominators, nominees, judges, photographer, Dr. Patricia Watson, Pastor, scholarship supporters, the College of Southern Maryland and everyone who attended the 2024 Women's History Brunch that was held on Saturday, March 23, 2024 in California, Maryland. As we continue to recognize and praise all women in our community, special congratulations go to Mary Washington, the Ruth Bader Ginsburg Lifetime Achievement Awardee, Patricia Campbell, the Woman of the Year Winner, and Aubrey Williamson, the

Tomorrow's Woman Winner. We are also proud to honor posthumously Mrs. Frances Cullison as our Hometown Shero Awardee for her many years of services to the county. We recognize and thank all honorees for being a part of our brunch this year. Your support and everything you contributed helped make our event a huge success. This annual event is only possible because of the ongoing support from our St. Mary's County community. Thank you and we look forward to seeing you again next year!

*Members of the St. Mary's County
Commission for Women
Sent by Catherine Stewart*

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Thursday, July 1

3 p.m. - 7 p.m. Fourth at the Wharf - Family & pet-friendly event with a watermelon eating contest, crab derby, dog parade, food & activity vendors and more!

3 p.m. - 8 p.m. Leonardtown Trolley running from Leonardtown Square to the Wharf (stops: Washington Ave @ Courthouse Dr; Washington Ave @ Shadrick St; Lawrence Ave @ Fenwick Street; Leonardtown Wharf)

Friday, July 5

10 a.m. - 7 p.m. Visit the Old Jail Museum & Leonardtown Visitor Center for FREE tours and extended hours for First Friday

2 p.m. - 5 p.m. Family Roller Skating at Leonard Hall Recreation Center

5 p.m. - 6 p.m. Audience Participation Drum Circle on the St. Mary's County Arts Council Lawn

5 p.m. - 8 p.m. Opening reception at the St. Mary's Arts County Council featuring "Meowsterpieces: A Cat Art Showcase"

5 p.m. - 8 p.m. Meet & Greet with Elizabeth Foster, a local artist, at St. Mary's County Arts Council

5 p.m. - 10 p.m. Ride the FREE Leonardtown Trolley

5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. MADE by you Parents Night Out

5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Live music at the Port of Leonardtown Winery featuring John Luskey Duo with Scratch Mobile Kitchen food truck on site



6 p.m. - 8 p.m. Live music featuring GrooveSpan in Leonardtown Square

6 p.m. - 8 p.m. Dolly Parton Paint Night at The Yellow Line

6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Sunset Cruise at Leonardtown Wharf with Fish the Bay Charters

7 p.m. - 10 p.m. Karaoke at Social with Invincible Entertainment and DJ Ernie

Saturday, July 6

9 a.m. - 10 a.m. Zumba class at Port of Leonardtown Park

10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Visit the Old Jail Museum & Leonardtown Visitor Center

2 p.m. - 5 p.m. Live music at the Port of Leonardtown Winery featuring Monkey Business and Heidi's Eats & Sage Treats food truck on site

5 p.m. - 10 p.m. Ride the FREE Leonardtown Trolley

6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Sunset Cruise at Leonardtown Wharf with Fish the Bay Charters

Sunday, July 7

8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sunday Brunch at Social Coffeehouse with live music

10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Visit the Old Jail Museum & Leonardtown Visitor Center

12 p.m. - 2 p.m. "Ice Cream Social-ization" at Earthwise Pet Leonardtown

12 p.m. - 6 p.m. Live music at the Port of Leonardtown Winery featuring Matt Guilherme and Cousins Maine Lobster food truck on site

2 p.m. - 5 p.m. Family Roller Skating at Leonard Hall Recreation Center

8 p.m. - 11 p.m. Game of Thrones - House of Dragons showing at Social Coffeehouse

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Talk to your family about wealth transfer

Are you anticipating an inheritance someday? If so, you may want to discuss it with your parents or other family members who may be leaving you the assets — because early, open communication will benefit everyone involved.

However, many people are reluctant to have these conversations. More than a third of Americans do not plan on discussing a transfer of wealth with their families, according to a recent study by Edward Jones in partnership with NEXT 360 Partners and Morning Consult. And the same study found that only about a quarter of Americans have actually discussed generational wealth transfer with their families.

Perhaps this low level of communication is not surprising — clearly, talking about wealth transfer and estate plans can be emotional. But having these discussions is important, for several reasons:

- *Strengthening family bonds* — Generational wealth transfer shouldn't be seen simply as a transactional event. By discussing your parents' plans and wishes, and your own expectations, you can build a sense of unity and shared purpose. And you can develop a common philosophy about how your family's legacy goals will be carried forward through the succeeding generations.
- *Avoiding unpleasant surprises* — If you or other family members are expecting a certain inheritance and things turn out differently, disappointment and bad feelings may occur. But this can be avoided by having a discussion beforehand that clearly outlines your parents' intentions. You still may not agree with them, but at least you'll know what to expect — and you won't make the mistake of acting in advance on any assumptions about what you'll inherit.
- *Developing appropriate strategies* — Passing on wealth to a new generation as part of an overall estate plan can be more complex than you might think. Are your parents using tax-smart strategies? Would they benefit from establishing a living trust? Are the beneficiary designations on their retirement accounts and life insurance policies accurate and up to date? If you suspect your parents may not have properly addressed these issues, you may want to bring up the benefits of working with an estate-planning attorney and a tax advisor.
- *Protecting against incapacitation* — Many people go through their senior years with few, if any, physical or mental impairments. But there are no guarantees. If one or both of your parents were to become incapacitated and unable to handle their financial affairs, it could cause serious problems with their wealth transfer and estate-planning goals. But if you can discuss your parents' plans with them while they are healthy and alert, you can encourage them to take the proper steps, such as reviewing outdated estate-planning documents and designating you or another family member as power of attorney to make health care and financial decisions on their behalf should they become incapacitated.

While the benefits of having wealth-transfer and estate-planning discussions are clear, starting the conversations can be tricky. You need to show that you want to initiate these talks because you're concerned that proper plans need to be in place and understood by everyone involved. If you have a good relationship with your parents, you should be able to start these conversations, but you'll still need to be sensitive when bringing up the subject.

One final word: Estate plans can take some time to develop — so, the sooner you have these discussions, the better.

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

Edward Jones, Member SIPC

Contributed by David McDonough

Financial Advisor at Edward Jones

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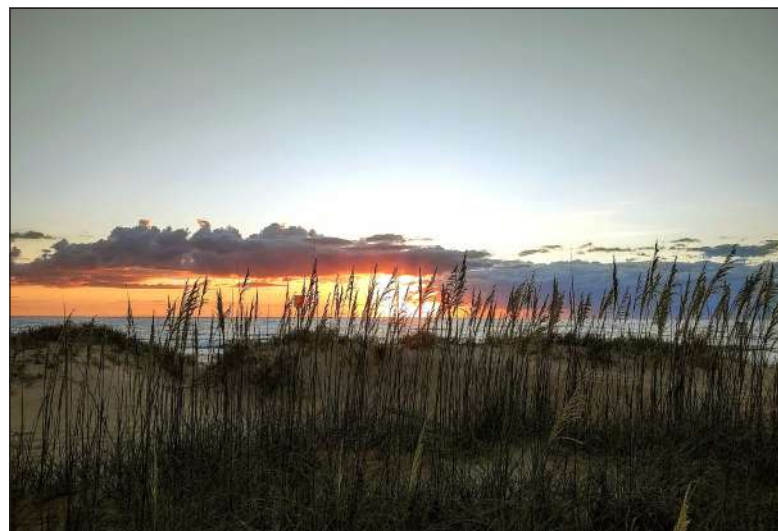
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Wanderings of an Aimless Mind by Shelby Oppermann



Back to the Place of the Constant Winds



The Outer Banks is such a calming place; perfect for reading and beach going. Yesterday morning, our first full day here, the winds were strong and the waves were high. The red flags dotted the dunes. My husband and I sat on the tall beach chairs in the deck quietly drinking our coffee. Each of us are gazing across the high dunes, with sea oats waving back and forth, to the ocean. I wonder what my husband is thinking, or rather I hope that he is truly thinking of nothing; just listening to the waves crash and letting the ocean breeze clear his head. No calls, no work for one week.

I, on the other hand, am trying hard to relax and enjoy the same blissful state of nothingness. When I look out at the ocean, I still see the beauty and force of the ocean, but I am also constantly looking for shark fins. And I worry... about lots of things like, "I hope that child doesn't go out to far", "Where are their parents?", "Those teenagers are too far out — I hope there is no riptide out there". Maybe it's just a mom/grandma thing I worry about our house at home, because I heard there were bad storms, and I wonder how many calls are on the answering machine. Gosh, can't I just relax??

The feeling is so different from when I was a preteen and teenager in Ocean City or Virginia Beach. My friend and I would be pretty far out from shore, but we didn't worry and my mother never seemed to worry. She would be sunning on the beach, not that she needed to with her dark skin that so many Hungarians seem to have. She may have kept an eye on us while we were in the water. We would end up so far down the beach and then have a heck of a time finding where my mother was set up. And I never worried about sharks, well at least until JAWS came out in 1975. But I think everyone worried about sharks after JAWS came out.

After this column is finished, I am going to forget about all those silly worries and just go down to the beach, smell the salt air, finish the suspense novel, "End of Story" by A. J. Finn that my oldest son gave me for my birthday, and give in completely to "The Salt Life" state of being you see on t-shirts and bumper stickers. There might be something to this way of life after all. I just had to stop for a minute and do the Coppertone spray on my husband real quick, as everyone else is heading down over the dune to the beach.

We have our dog Mindy with us too, and she has gotten a bit spoiled by being allowed to get on one of the couches like the other dog Lilly. At first my husband and I would say no to Mindy, but we were told by my step daughter and her best friend who is a member of the family who owns the beach house that her paternal grandparents built in 1948, that all dogs can get on the couches at the beach house. I suppose it is their vacation too.

Well, I am going to head down to the beach now also with book in hand and find a shady spot under the Shibumi tent and enter my own state of nothingness.

To each new year's vacation, Shelby. Please send your comments or ideas to: shelbys.wanderings@yahoo.com or find me on Facebook.



Saluting OUR FIRST RESPONDERS

FIRE

Career Firefighter Still Finds Time to Volunteer

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Garrett Tullos, 26, works as a career firefighter in Fairfax, Va. and doesn't want for emergency calls but still volunteers at the place where his love of firefighting started — the 7th District Volunteer Fire Department in Avenue.

The husband and father of two has been on the job in Northern Virginia for just about a year-and-a-half but he's been a firefighter for a total of seven years, cutting his teeth in the 7th District.

It all started when a friend encouraged him to come down to the firehouse, which was close by his family home anyway, and try the life of a firefighter out.

"So, I did, and I signed up," Tullos said. "I got my Firefighter 1 and 2 certifications... and I thought I wanted to do this as a job."

Tullos said he is never quite sure what he will see each day when he goes to work or volunteers to run calls at the 7th District station.

"It's always something different," Tullos said. "And you get to help people."

"I enjoy it, it's fun."

Quite a few of the officers at the volunteer station are career firefighters, Tullos said,



and they bring real value to the improvement of their volunteer cadre.

"That brings a lot of experience to the job," Tullos said.

When he first started training there it was the camaraderie between the volunteers that kept him coming back for more.

"The biggest thing that drew me in was that group of volunteers," Tullos said. "Who wouldn't want to fight a fire?"

Tullos still lives in St. Mary's and commutes to his job in Fairfax; it's a lot of time on the road.

With a family and a desire to continue volunteering, he's constantly on the move.

"It's finding balance," Tullos said of the toughest part of his job. "You want to run calls but you have your job and your family."

"But you've got to be ready, you've got to be available."

But Tullos said anyone who thinks about becoming a volunteer firefighter should just do it.

"Just get in," he said. "Getting in shape and all that comes with just showing up [to volunteer training]."

"We're really lucky, you don't have to pay for training."

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Paramedic Helps Lead County EMS

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Lt. Ashley Yost, a career paramedic in the county's Department of Emergency Services spends a significant portion of her day supervising the operations of rescue squads throughout the county as they are staffed by career emergency medical technicians (EMTs) but she still runs emergency calls to save lives.

"As a lieutenant I run all the priority calls from cardiac arrests to overdoses to car accidents," Yost, 30, told The County Times.

She started as an EMT 13 years ago, she said, when she got inspiration while working at a restaurant in California.

"My first job was at Nicoletti's," Yost said. "And members of the Lexington Park Volunteer Rescue Squad used to come in there a lot for lunch and they convinced me to join."

She signed on, got training and got a baptism by fire on her first day.

"My first day volunteering I had a CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) case," Yost said. "I got bitten by the [EMS] bug and it never stopped."

She started volunteering when she was 17, she said, when it was much easier to do

so; she's seen the volunteer culture suffer much under the demands of the economy exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It's the overall culture, there's not as much of a drive to volunteer now," Yost said. "It's fewer and far between now getting new, younger folks."

The most rewarding part of her job, she said, was being there for people when they needed help the most.

But that aspect also turned into the toughest part of the job quite often.

"Getting to be there for someone, no matter how small their issue is, it's the few times we get to see the outcome, that makes it worth it," Yost said.

One such instance, Yost said, where she knew she made a difference was when she helped deliver a baby in a living room.

She continued: "You're being there for everyone's worst day over and over again."

"They're at their worst and you have to be at your best."

Yost was born and raised in St. Mary's County and graduated from Leonardtown High School; she earned a degree in emergency medical services from the College of Southern Maryland.

She encouraged people to continue to volunteer for rescue squads, though the



demands of training were high.

"Start, keep going and never give up," Yost offered as advice. "The schooling is hard and it only gets harder; the calls and hours are hard."

"But, it's very rewarding."

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POLICE

Deputy Loves Protecting St. Mary's

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Deputy First Class (DFC) Travis Wimberly spends most of his time patrolling the streets of Lexington Park, working with fellow deputies to interdict as many illicit narcotics as they can during night time hours, and frauds, burglaries and other complaints during the day time shifts.

He is a six-year veteran of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office, and, aside from a stint with the corrections department in Charles County, has spent much of his adult working life in service of the law.

But he also grew up working on the water.

"I don't know much else other than St. Mary's County," Wimberly told The County Times. "I grew up on the water and I still oyster in the winter."

It's a tough balance, being a deputy and a commercial waterman, but Wimberly said he does it by earning up enough leave during November and December.

"It's a nice break to step back from it [law enforcement]," Wimberly said. "I love being in the police, but I love being on the water."

"I enjoy helping others; I'm serving the community I live in."

When he's on the clock for the sheriff's

office, he tries to focus as much the drug problem, particularly opioids like fentanyl as well as other drugs such as crack cocaine, he said.

"During the night shift, we're able to get out and target the high crime areas," Wimberly said. "That's what we love doing the most."

He said working a 12-hour shift can be tough but being on the job in St. Mary's has its benefits.

"The county really supports law enforcement," Wimberly said. "If it's hot outside, someone will come up and give me a bottle of water."

The most rewarding part of his job, Wimberly said, was answering the call of people who may have never had to call the police before, but now were in fear.

Their gratitude, he said, was reaffirming of their work.

"We're like their savior when we show up," Wimberly said. "It's the people who really need our help and have nowhere else to turn."

Having to answer calls involving children, he said, had to be the toughest.

"Any critical incident involving children... you just have to get through it."

He encourages anyone who wants to join law enforcement to make sure they can commit to it fully.



"It's a great career," Wimberly said. "Having a community that likes you makes things a lot easier."

"Make sure your heart is in it; you're not just doing it for a job."

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Bud Blanke, 79



Henry Ronald "Bud" Blanke, 79, of Hollywood, Maryland passed away peacefully on June 12, 2024, at St. Mary's Hospital, Leonardtown, Maryland. He was surrounded by his loving family. Henry was a member of the Church of Christ.

Henry, affectionately called "Bud" all of his life, was born in Staton Island, New York on November 13th, 1944. He was the son and youngest child of the late Henry August Blanke and the late Regina Cecilia Blanke, of Englewood, Florida.

Bud was also predeceased by two brothers, George R. Blanke, John H. Blanke; three sisters, Joan Larsen, Millicent Brady and Carol Hand; one infant granddaughter, Jennifer Anne Blanke.

Bud is survived by his loving wife, Linda "Lin" Blanke of Hollywood, Maryland with whom he was married for over 58 years; two sons, James Ronald Blanke, (Christy) of Clayton, N.C., John Walter Blanke, (Lisa) of Clayton, N.C.; two grandchildren, Michael Sean Blanke, of Melbourne, Fla.; and Tiffany Rene Paunovic, (Alex) of Newland, N.C.

Bud is also survived by five great-grandsons, Owen Alexander Paunovic, John Isaac Paunovic, Charles Henry Paunovic, Samuel James Paunovic, and William Jacob Paunovic, all from Newland, N.C.

Many nieces and nephews, whom he loved dearly, are included in the family that he adored.

When Bud was 10 years old, in 1955, his father, who was a Lieutenant Detective in the New York Police Department, retired and Bud and his parents moved to Englewood, Florida. It was here Bud spent the remainder of his childhood years. He enjoyed swimming, boating in the creeks, walking on the white sandy beaches while looking for shells. After graduating from Venice High School, he joined the U.S. Navy.

After a year stationed at Eglin Air Force Base, Valparaiso, Florida, Bud was transferred to Patuxent Naval Air Station. It was during this time that Bud met, courted, and married his wife, "Lin".

During his tour at "Pax River", Bud's first child, "Jimmy" was born at the naval air station hospital.

After his military time was completed, Bud and his family moved back to Florida and he started his employment at Pratt and Whitney Aircraft Company in West Palm Beach. His first job there was repairing and maintaining Pratt and Whitney aircraft engines. While working for Pratt and

Whitney, Bud was given the opportunity to receive formal schooling and training in the machining trade which he enjoyed learning. Bud's second son, "Johnny" was born during this time in Pahokee, Florida.

After his employment for nine years with Pratt and Whitney, as a machinist, Bud was offered and accepted a position with NAWC, Patuxent River Naval Air Station, at Patuxent River, Maryland. He retired in August, 2010, after 40 years of civil service at the level of Model Maker.

Bud lived his life as a Christian man, husband, father, and grandfather. When he was living in Florida, at 27 years old, Bud accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as his Savior and was baptized into the Church of Christ. He spent his life living to the best of his ability, the Christian values he had learned through the New Testament of scriptures in which he believed.

Bud enjoyed his retirement life. He always had a "project" in the works or he was learning about some "new thing" on the market. He loved science, and the History Channel. He loved working on his computer. Bud just loved learning. He loved life in general. HE enjoyed boating on the creeks or riding his motorcycle down abandoned paths in woods. He had a private pilot's license so he loved flying over the landscape and islands of St. Mary's County.

Bud loved the simple things of life the

most. He loved mowing the lawn and smelling the freshly cut grass. He loved nature, trees, plants, and flowers. He loved wildlife and respected them and he loved domestic animals, especially dogs. Bud never missed a chance to reach down and smell the roses in his yard. Simple things to him were joy.

When his sons were young lads; Bud designed and made an outdoor, gasoline driven three car freight train, complete with tracks for them. It encompassed about one fourth of an acre in the back yard. He enlisted "Jimmy" to paint the engine, flat bed, and caboose. "Johnny" worked with his dad on fabricating and assembling the tracks and trestle. When the train rolled on the track; at certain intervals, a relay and the horn would blow the flatbed car was used to haul chickens around the yard and the chickens loved it. What memories Bud has left for his children!

Bud's sons and grandchildren had many experiences with their "Pop" or "G-pa" about projects they shared together in the garage or out in the back yard from overhauling car engines, building go carts, to camping stories. They have many stories with a lot of laughter and these precious memories will sustain them in Bud's absence.

Bud was a shy and humble man. He was quick to help someone and slow to judge. He chose not to be materialistic or preten-

Continued on page 22

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In Remembrance

Continued from page 20

tious in any way. If Bud helped anyone, for whatever reason; he did it in silence. He fervently believed in the Holy word of Matthew Chap. 6:1-3.

Bud was slow to judge other people. He believed that every person on Earth has trials, tribulations, storms, fears, and problems that at some time, seem unsurmountable. Bud believed there was good in everybody and that we have to take the time to find it and spend less time in judging people.

At times, it may have seemed that Bud was a stern disciplinarian to his children and grandchildren. But he did this because he loved them and wanted them to learn Christian values or any other skills that he had learned over the years and wanted to share with them. He wanted his children to be prepared for adulthood and be prepared for marriage. Bud wanted his children to be able to support themselves, to support a family and to be productive citizens in our society.

He worked hard to support his family over the years and gave each of them a loving, secure home life. He always lived his life as a role model to them and to others.

Bud's family has been truly blessed to have had Bud as the head of the household, supporter, mentor, teacher, and protector. His loved ones will forever miss his presence.

To Bud, we wish you "Fair Winds and

Following Seas" until we meet you again in Paradise.

At Bud's request, all services will be private.

Rick Solomon, 57



Richard (Rick) LeRoy Solomon, Jr. of Lexington Park, Maryland passed away peacefully in his sleep on June 22, 2024. He was 57 years young.

Rick was born in Lexington Park, Maryland on October 26, 1966. His parents are Richard Solomon, Sr. and Jackolyn Solomon. Rick also has a sister, Cindy Lucas.

In 1984, Rick graduated from Great Mills High School in St. Mary's County, Maryland. He was employed as a helicopter mechanic at Patuxent River Naval Air Station with Dyn Corp Aerospace from 1987 until 1997.

Rick was married to Karen (Roken) Solomon on March 7, 1992 for 24 years. They had three children; Zachary Solomon currently living in Red Lodge, MT, Casey Solomon-Morris from Mt. Hood Parkdale, OR, and Benjamin Solomon from Steamboat Springs, CO. Rick raised his family in Berkeley Springs, WV and was employed at Whitetail Ski Resort in Mercersburg, PA. He

was involved with the community coaching football from PeeWee through high school, running the Biddy Buddy Basketball program for children grades K - 8, and leading the Morgan County Little League along with starting several travel baseball teams. One of Rick's passion was sports and seeing the children succeed.

Rick moved to Wrightwood, CA on September 11, 2014 to work at Mountain High Ski Resort. He returned to Lexington Park, Maryland in September of 2021 after spending some time with his son, Ben, in Florida.

Rick is survived by his father and sister along with his children; Zack, Casey, and Ben. He will be missed.

Family will receive friends for Rick's Celebration of Life on Saturday, June 29 from 10:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m., with service celebrated at 11:00 a.m. at Brinsfield Funeral Home, 22955 Hollywood Road, Leonardtown, MD 20650. The interment will be private.

Condolences to the family may be made at <http://www.brinsfieldfuneral.com>

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.

Charlotte Simpson, 64



It is with a heavy heart that we announce the passing of Charlotte Ann Simpson, 64, of California, MD on June 24, 2024.

She was born on November 15, 1959, to the late father, Wesley Kalb and mother, Dorothy Ann Wilson in Elkridge Maryland.

Charlotte graduated from Howard High School in 1978. She met her husband Randy in 1978 when he got a job where she was working at Woolworths. Where she made the first move and asked him on a date and the rest is history. They were happily married for 43 beautiful years.

She retired in 2004 to go on and really live her life and spend more time with her two children. Charlotte was a free soul and believed that you weren't living life right if you weren't going out and doing things that made you happy. She travelled all over to visit friends, family, and adventure. Some of

her favorite places to be were the NASCAR Hall of Fame in North Carolina, Bristol Motor Speedway in Tennessee, and Luray Caverns in Virginia.

NASCAR was a huge part of her life. She absolutely loved meeting all of the drivers and getting her picture taken with them and getting autographs. Charlotte was an avid Jeff Gordon Diecast collector. She was also a pioneer member of the NASCAR Hall of Fame where she even had part of her collection showcased for over four years. She made a lot of friends through her love of NASCAR who she would do absolutely anything for them if they needed, even when they didn't ask. One of her fondest memories was having her twitter handle be on one of Jeff Gordons cars that he ran during the playoffs in 2014. In 2015, Charlotte had the honor of being the Grand Marshal at Bowman Gray Stadium for a NASCAR race. Another fond memory was presenting Jeff Gordon with his lifetime membership to the NASCAR Hall of Fame in 2019.

Her newest hobby was collecting comic books and Stephen King novels. Whether it was going to the comic bookstore every Wednesday to pick up her new comics or going down to Charlotte North Carolina for a comic book convention. She especially loved meeting the writers and artists of the comics at the conventions she attended every year.

In her spare time, she spent it organizing her comics, collecting and repainting all of her mushrooms, catching up on her favorite TV shows, and her favorite thing, spending time with her cat Gabe. She would walk Gabe on a harness and leash just about every day and he meant the whole world to her.

She is survived by her spouse, Randell Hilton Simpson of California, Maryland, 2 children; Victor Alan Simpson and Brooke Lynn Simpson (Tyler Shotwell), her 3 siblings; Jennifer Kalb, Tiffany Kalb, and Jimmy Kalb, and her many nieces and nephews.

Family will receive friends on Wednesday, July 3, 2024 from 11:00 to 12:00 p.m., with a memorial service celebrated by Rev. Joe Orlando at 12:00 p.m. at Brinsfield Funeral home.

Condolences to the family may be made at <http://www.brinsfieldfuneral.com>

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.



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REMEMBRANCES
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St. Mary's Community Calendar

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

Thu, Jul 4

FREE Concert at the Leonardtown Wharf w/Midnight Sunsets

Leonardtown Wharf
5 p.m. to midnight

The Town of Leonardtown and the Leonardtown Business Association are proud to present a 4th of July Concert on Thursday, July 4, 2024 featuring Midnight Sunsets at the On the Water's Edge Concert Series at the Leonardtown Wharf (sponsored by Jimmy Hayden of RE-MAX/100 and Homes for Heroes—www.jimmyhayden-realtor.com).

Come by water or land—Bring your lawn chair or blanket and enjoy live music, sample award-winning wine from Port of Leonardtown Winery, purchase beer from the Leonardtown Volunteer Fire Department tent, and cool down with sweet treats from Frog Town Ice Cream.

This FREE event is open to the public. Save for later or send to your friends and family!

For more information visit: www.facebook.com/events/388524986981796

or www.visitleonardtownmd.com/leonardtownmusicfest

For questions, please call Aris Nazarova at 301-475-9791 or email aris.nazarova@leonardtownmd.gov

American Legion Post 221 Meeting

Post 221
21690 Colton Point Rd., Avenue
7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

American Legion Post 221 invites all active duty personnel and veterans to join us for our monthly meeting on the first Thursday of each month at 7:00pm. E-mail us at alpost221@aol.com or call 301*481*6625 for more information.

Mon, Jul 8

Pax River Quilt Guild Meeting

Good Samaritan Lutheran Church
20850 Langley Rd., Lexington Park
6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Pax River Quilters Guild will host its

monthly meeting which will include a speaker from Sleep in Heavenly Peace. Meetings are the second Monday of every month and feature guest speakers, show and tells, and other fun activities. Pax River Quilters Guild is a non-profit organization devoted to philanthropic quilting projects and promoting the skill of quilting. New members of all skill levels are welcome. For questions, email: prqgsomd@gmail.com

Website: paxriverquiltguild.com/

Vacation Bible School

First Missionary Baptist Church
46370 Pegg Ln., Lexington Park
5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

You are cordially invited to join us! Pastor Roderick W. McClanahan, will host In Person and Virtual Vacation Bible School July 9-12. The classes are for ages 4 to adults. The class virtual platform is Free Conference, the phone number is 617-691-8533 or virtual meeting ID: <https://join.free-conferencecall.com/fmbc0>.

For additional information please contact First Missionary Baptist Church at 301-863-8388.

Upcoming

Potomac Jazz & Seafood Festival

St. Clement's Island Museum
38370 Point Breeze Rd, Colton's Point
Fri, Jul 12
Noon to 8 p.m.

The 24th annual Potomac Jazz & Seafood Festival is back July 12-14, 2024, with the main event occurring at St. Clement's Island Museum (Saturday, July 13, 2024) and a kickoff concert at the College of Southern Maryland in Leonardtown (Friday, July 12, 2024) plus more fun all weekend throughout town! TICKETS & INFO: [PJSF2024.eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com)

Carry Out Chicken Dinner

Knights of Columbus Hall
16441 Three Notch Rd., Ridge
Sun, Jul 14
11:30 a.m.

\$15 for ½ chicken, potatoes, veggie, cole slaw and roll. Self-serve dining facilities available. Baked goods available.



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Calvert Community Calendar

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

Thu, Jul 4

Solomons July 4 Celebration

Solomons Island
10 a.m. – 10 p.m.

All events are FREE and open to the public. Festivities include a boat parade, youth bike parade, Historical Adventure Quest for kids with Revolutionary War reenactors, and free concerts with SOCIAL and the Calvert Brass Consortium. The day concludes with fireworks on the river at 9:15 p.m. For updates and a full schedule of events, visit www.Facebook.com/groups/SaveSolomonsFireworks

There is limited street parking on and around the island with overflow parking at Glascock Field for \$5 starting at 3 p.m. All proceeds from parking at Glascock Field will be donated to the Calvert High ROTC.

Trolley buses are planned to help transport visitors from Glascock Field and around the island.

For more information, email Kyle Webber at SaveSolomonsFireworks@gmail.com or SBA president Vandy Young at vandyoung@gmail.com

Fri, Jul 5

First Fossil Friday!

Calvert Marine Museum
1 – 4:30 p.m.

Fossil hunters, bring your fossil finds from the Calvert Cliffs or other local areas to be identified! This service is provided for free; however, admission fees apply for access to CMM exhibits.

Sat, Jul 6

TTRPGs for All

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
12-3 p.m.

Join our resident Game Masters (GM) to learn about and play various tabletop role-playing games (TTRPG) systems! All you need to bring is yourself! Meet other TTRPG fans to celebrate and try out different TTRPG systems. We will have four games to try out: Deadlands: The Weird West RPG (learn more)Monster of the Week (learn more)Rifts RPG (learn more)Teens in Space (learn more)This event is open to those ages 10 and up. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Rescheduled Chesapeake Beach Fireworks

Chesapeake Beach
Dusk

The Town of Chesapeake Beach sponsors the event in the center of town. The event was rescheduled from July 3 due to anticipated weather. Traffic Plan for Twin Beaches on the night of Fireworks: The traffic plan is set up to eliminate all left-hand turns on a portion of Route 261 going through the Twin Beaches, eliminating the need to stop traffic randomly and enabling traffic to flow with minimal stopping. The centerline of Route 261 will be blocked with delineation devices that will prohibit vehicles from making U-turns. Traffic north of Route 260 along Route 261 on the east side of Route 261 must make right turns and exit left on 5th Street to Boyd’s Turn Road to Route 260. Traffic on the west side of Route 261 must make a right turn and exit on 27th Street to G Street to Route 260. Traffic south of Route 260 along Route 261 on the east side of Route 261 must make a right turn and must turn left onto Route 260. Traffic on the west side of Route 261 must turn right and continue along Route 261 to Summer City Blvd or continue south to Ponds Wood Road and proceed to Maryland Route 4.

The town has added an additional weather delay date of Sunday July 7 to ensure the display can occur even if conditions are poor on Saturday.

Mon, Jul 8

JobSource Mobile Career Center

Calvert Library Fairview Branch
Rt. 4 and Chaneyville Road, Owings
1-4 p.m.

Stop by to visit the JobSource Mobile Career Center for your job search needs! Get job counseling and resume help, search for jobs and connect with Southern Maryland JobSource.. 410-257-2101. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Active Play—Active Fun

Calvert Library Twin Beaches Branch
4100 5th St., North Beach
2-4 p.m.

Come jump and play on our Active Floor—an interactive gaming system you play with your feet! You’ll be floored! 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Tue, Jul 9

Creature Feature

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

Come to the museum for the monthly mystery Creature Feature. Every second Tuesday of the month, the CMM Education team will feature an animal in the museum lobby that is not normally on display. Learn about a new animal and discover the wonderful variety of creatures found in our local estuaries. Take-home educational coloring pages will be available! Check our social media feed for the big reveal on Monday to find out what Tuesday’s Creature Feature will be! Included with museum admission.

Social Security: Retirement

Calvert Library (Zoom)
12-1 p.m. in English
1-2 p.m. en Español

The Social Security Administration provides protection for workers and their families. We invite you to this virtual presentation to learn more about retirement eligibility requirements, family benefits, options, and the application process. Presentation by Diana Varela, Public Affairs Specialist for the Social Security Administration followed by Q&A. This event will not be recorded. If you’d like to use the wifi and a library computer to participate in this Zoom event please call 410-535-0291. Partners 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Learn What You Love: Career Direction

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

Join Nikki Phillips, Career Advisor and Corporate Trainer, for an interactive workshop to explore your skills, strengths and values as they pertain to your career choices. The work will help you figure out a career pathway that fits. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Wed, Jul 10

Job Seeker Resources

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

Maryland Department of Labor, Veterans Program, Senior Community Service Employment and Job Service representatives will be in person to meet with those seeking employment or career change. Walk-ins welcome on the second and fourth Wednesday of every month. If you have questions or need more information about resources available, please contact Cheryl Thorne at Maryland Department of Labor (410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

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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

Comment Period Open for Prince Frederick Town Center Master Plan Draft

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

More than four years after the process began for updating the Prince Frederick Town Center Master Plan, with the pandemic interjecting itself early on, the document appears nearing the homestretch. The Calvert County Planning Commission, on a 4-2 vote, opened a 90-day window for public and agency comments after which they will hold a public hearing.

Staff had recommended a 60-day window and a September public hearing, but the majority of the commission opted for a longer period for public comment than the 60 days required by state law.

Planner II Kathleen Lockwood, in a memo to the planning commission, said, "The Department of Planning & Zoning (P&Z) initiated the update to the Prince Frederick Town Center Master Plan in January 2020 and held a series of open houses and workshops through March 2021. In July 2021, the Planning Commission directed P&Z staff to distribute the draft Plan Update for comments to adjoining jurisdictions and agencies per the Land Use Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. The comment deadline was September 1, 2021. The Department of Planning & Zoning presented the comments to the Planning Commission on September 15, 2021. The Planning Commission directed staff to compile comments by topic and voted to extend the comment period to October 1, 2021, and to convene a special meeting on October

27, 2021 to consider the comments. From November 2021 through February 2022, the Planning Commission considered comments from agencies and the public, requested information concerning development capacity and residential density, and directed staff to revise the draft Plan Update. In June of 2022, the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) held two work sessions to consider the Town Center expansion areas described in the 2019-approved Calvert County Comprehensive Plan, including the Prince Frederick Town Center expansion area. On November 2, 2022, the Planning Commission considered, accepted, and forwarded to the BOCC the consideration to eliminate or reduce the Huntingtown, Lusby, Prince Frederick, and Solomons Town Center expansion areas. On November 29, 2022, the BOCC voted to approve the amendments to reduce or eliminate the aforementioned Town Center expansion areas, including the reduction of the Prince Frederick Town Center expansion area. In 2023, P&Z commenced converting the draft Dunkirk and Prince Frederick Town Center Master Plans into flipbook format and to revise the draft Prince Frederick Town Center Master Plan Update per the 2022 Calvert County Comprehensive Plan amendment. In March 2024, P&Z staff presented a status of the flipbooks to the Planning Commission."

The draft plan has been reformatted to make it easier to digest. Department of Communications Graphic Design Program Coordinator Izumi Kawakami explained,

"I am new to Calvert County and the state of Maryland. My family and I moved here from Hawaii last year in August and I am so excited to move to a beautiful county, much of which reminds me actually of the island of Hawaii where we moved from. So that's really refreshing and reminds me of home. My situation is a little unique. I came into this role without any prior knowledge of the master plan process or even what a master plan is. So, I have definitely learned a lot while working with Kat on this project. I do, however, have an extensive background in graphic design and bringing visions to life, which I feel like is what we did with this project."

She added, "My main motivation while working on this master plan has really been to take the document in its text and map format and make it more accessible and engaging for the community who might be like me and not understand what a master plan is. And I hope that this flip book version, it's full of graphs as you can see, and colors and photos, and I really hope that it will boost engagement again among the community members."

Comments can be submitted in several ways:

- **Email:** TownCenterUpdate@calvert-countymd.gov
- **Mail:** Mr. John Toohey, Chair, Calvert County Planning Commission, 205 Main St., Prince Frederick, MD 20678
- **Fax:** 410-414-3092
- **Hand Delivery:** 205 Main St., Prince Frederick

All comments will become part of the public record for the Prince Frederick Town

Center Master Plan and Zoning Update. Public record documents will be made available to members of the public upon request.

The plan adoption process has several steps following the 90-day review and public hearing:

- The Planning Commission will review and consider comments on the draft plan.
- The Planning Commission will prepare its recommended plan and hold a public hearing before sending its recommended plan to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) for consideration.
- The BOCC will hold a public hearing on the plan to receive and consider written and oral public comment.
- The BOCC may then adopt the plan, modify the plan, remand the plan back to the Planning Commission or disapprove the plan.

The dates and times for any public hearings and deadlines for comment will be announced in future news releases, on the county website and on the county Facebook page. Questions may be directed to Tay Harris, long range planner, at 410-535-1600, ext. 2333, or Tay.Harris@calvertcountymd.gov.

For more information about the Town Center Master Plans, visit www.CalvertCountyMD.gov/TownCenters.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Townhouse Project Approved Amid Planning Commission Rift

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

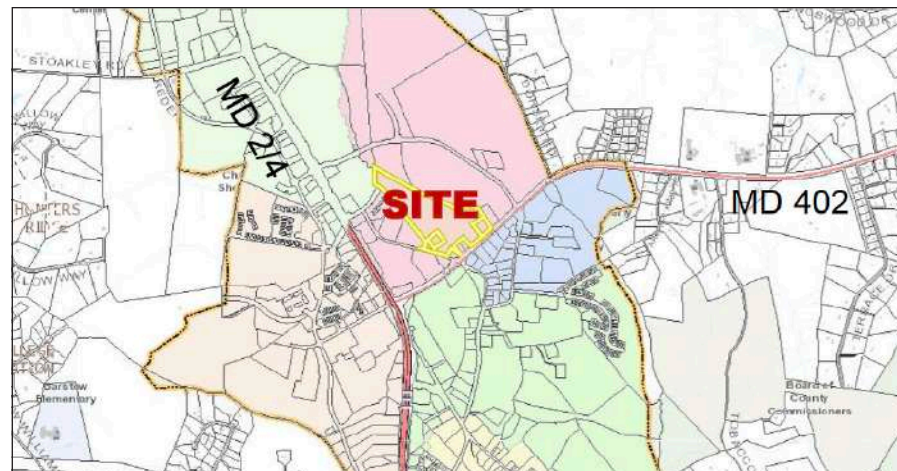
A proposed 79-unit townhouse development in Prince Frederick has underscored the continuing rift between pro- and anti-development factions on the Calvert County Planning Commission.

The Magnolia Ridge West project north of Dares Beach Road and east of Fox Run Shopping Center received preliminary subdivision plan approval June 26 on a narrow 4-3 vote, with new commission Chairman John Toohey having to cast the tiebreaker. The preliminary approval is the middle of a three-step process.

The opposition, which was based largely on traffic concerns, came in spite of the fact that zoning for the 26.3-acre site allowed for the project and State Highway Administration voiced no concerns with the project.

The county's Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance [APFO] does allow for denial of a project if public facilities, such as roads, are deemed inadequate. However, it was reported that the project had been submitted before the APFO rules were tightened.

Development Review Principal Planner Christine Finamore said that staff recom-



mended approval subject to several conditions recommended by agencies and the majority in their motion also adopted those conditions.

Commission member Chris Gadway noted that the project's engineer had previously asserted that it would improve traffic flow. Gadway wanted to know how that could be with the additional traffic volume. He also wanted to know if traffic from the Armory Square project was factored in.

Engineer Mike Lenhart explained,

"Magnolia Ridge Project and the Armory Square Project kind of came through the study about the same time. The Armory Square project actually included Magnolia Ridge as a background development in its traffic impact study. And the way it worked out was that it kind of moved forward. First it got approved. Magnolia Ridge did not have Armory Square as a background development. It did have Calvert Hills, it had Prince Frederick Apartments. And both of those projects have since been built out.

The Armory Square study that included Magnolia Ridge in the background was 430 some units, plus 100,000 square feet for a shopping center. It was vastly overstated what the traffic was for Magnolia Ridge in that development. And that study was reviewed and approved by State Highway. We've looked at traffic counts. State Highway Administration has traffic counts that were conducted within the past year at 2/4 and Fox Run and 2/4 at Dares Beach. Both of those traffic counts are actually the same volume of traffic or slightly lower traffic volumes than what was in our traffic study for this original project and so the levels of service today are actually slightly better than what they were in our original study. Slightly not much, but slightly."

Lenhart said the level of service for the 2/4 and Dares Beach Road Intersection would be D, the second worst, which prompted Gadway to reply, "I know a couple years ago when we talked about the AFOs, and I know that these came in before the APFOs, that we were very clear that D's would not be acceptable."

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Crab Prices Hit Historic Levels



By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The July 4th holiday weekend is historically the peak of demand for Maryland's succulent Blue Crabs. This year if you and your family choose to partake, you may be in for some sticker shock.

Abner's Crab House in Chesapeake Beach on June 30 reported a dozen large male crabs were running \$90 a dozen. Small females were \$45 a dozen and small males were \$30 a dozen.

If you prefer to bring your crabs home or to a nearby picnic table, Captain Smith's Seafood Market in Solomons on July 2 was offering a dozen large males for \$85 a dozen. Number 1 males are \$60 a dozen and Number 2 males are \$20 a dozen. Mixed females are also \$20 a dozen.

It's always a supply and demand situation on pricing and supply varies from year to year depending on weather and environmental factors. But a recent decision by the state of Virginia also has Maryland officials concerned about the impact on supply.

A press release from Maryland Department of Natural Resources said, "The Virginia Marine Resources Commission by a 5-4 vote repealed the longtime prohibition on dredging for blue crabs during the winter near the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. The Maryland Department of Natural Resources strongly disagrees with Virginia's decision.

"The Virginia blue crab dredge fishery has been closed for nearly 15 years as part of the overall cooperative management efforts with Maryland to ensure a sustainable blue crab fishery. A winter dredge fishery would target a population of majority female blue crabs at a critical stage in their life cycle before they spawn the next generation of crabs. According to the presentation given to the Commission by its staff, the winter dredge fishery was estimated to harvest 32 percent of the female crabs that are in the Bay at the start of the dredge season and up to 96 percent of the dredge fishery harvest is female.

"The Virginia Commission planned to meet again later this year to vote on regulations that would govern the state's blue crab dredge fishery.

"The prevailing opinion of the scientific community engaged in Chesapeake Bay issues, including the Commission's staff, recommended against this decision. Scientists cited an adult female population of blue crabs that has not hit desired target levels, in addition to concerns that it could negatively affect future spawns and

the blue crab population as a whole. The Commission also received 186 public comments on the proposal, all of which opposed opening the winter dredge fishery.

"The decision comes at a time when a stock assessment on the blue crabs of the Chesapeake Bay is underway. The significant effort will take into account decades of data on blue crabs to explore possible causes for low juvenile abundance and other challenges, as well as to determine new baselines for the management of blue crabs.

"The Commission voted to open the winter fishery with no consideration of compensating for the additional harvest of female crabs through reductions in other parts of the fishery, meaning female harvest will increase. A management approach that limits the harvest of female crabs resulted in a recovery of the blue crab population after a decade of low abundance in the late 1990s and 2000s and has been the framework for blue crab management since.

"In response to the decision, Maryland Department of Natural Resources Secretary Josh Kurtz issued the following statement:

"In Maryland we are committed to making management decisions based on data. The data show that female crabs are below target levels and lower than last year's abundance. We also see persistent below-average numbers of young crabs. The success of the species' recovery after a steep decline in the 2000s can be directly traced to Maryland and Virginia cooperatively managing blue crabs, especially females, based on science. Today's action by Virginia breaks with this successful approach.

"The timing of the decision is also poor because we are working on a new comprehensive stock assessment to account for changing conditions including warmer waters due to climate change, expanding populations of invasive predators such as blue catfish, and other advances in our scientific understanding. The Virginia Commission's unilateral decision will impact the species at a time when Marylanders are regularly sitting down to pick crabs with their friends and families. A decision of this magnitude should have only been made with the support of scientists, in close consultation with Maryland officials, and in response to a significant increase in the blue crab population. It's a bad day if you care about blue crabs. We are reviewing our options to ensure the sustainability of the blue crab fishery."

dickmyers@countytimes.net

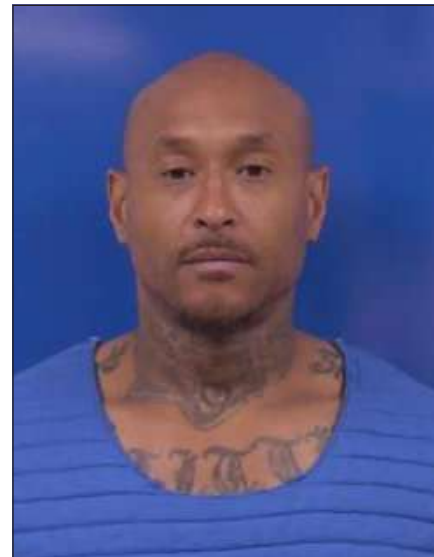
North Beach Homicide Under Investigation Suspect Charged

Deputies with the Calvert County Sheriff's Office Patrol Bureau responded on June 26 shortly after 9 p.m. to the 9500 block of Sea Gull Court in North Beach, for the report of a shooting. Upon arrival, deputies located an adult male victim suffering from a gunshot wound to the upper body. Deputies and EMS rendered first aid to the victim, William Lee Hutcherson, 39 of North Beach, who was later pronounced deceased on the scene.

A preliminary investigation revealed witnesses observed two adult males engaged in an altercation in the parking lot of the residence at which point the suspect then fired a shot striking the victim.

Calvert deputies were able to quickly apprehend the suspect, Anthony Wayne Simpson, Jr., 40 of Fredericksburg, VA. Simpson was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and is facing charges of Second-Degree Murder, First-Degree Assault, Second-Degree Assault, Use of a Firearm During a Felony/Violent Crime and Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon.

This appears to be an isolated incident. Detectives are continuing to investigate and ask anyone with information to please contact Detective M. Mudd at 410-535-2800



Anthony Wayne Simpson, Jr.

or via email at Michael.Mudd@calvert-countymd.gov. Please reference case # 24-49674. Citizens may remain anonymous through the 'Submit a Tip' feature on the Calvert County Sheriff's Office mobile app. To download, visit <https://apps.myocv.com/share/a39520678>. Tipsters may also email ccsotips@calvertcountymd.gov

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For more information, please visit:

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Fire and Rescue is a Family Affair

By Dave Spigler
Contributing Writer

Calvert County has a long history for its fine citizens assisting and caring for one another in times of tragedy and unfortunate events. The Calvert volunteer fire departments and rescue squads have earned outstanding reputations for their consistent rapid service and professional support when emergencies occur. Their crews are well trained and capable of handling difficult situations that may involve serious auto accidents, structures and brush fires, potential drownings, medical emergencies, and more. They remain at the ready should their assistance be required for all and any occasion day or night. They are severely dedicated to this work and never seek compensation nor recognition for their efforts. These volunteers are fully aware of the dangers involved, yet are motivated by the need to help others and the satisfaction it brings with a job well done.

The Solomons community is especially benefitted by volunteers such as Carol Langley, a farmer along with her husband Tom, a new home builder. They raise horses, cows, sheep, chickens, cats, and a dog on their Lusby farm. Carol is not from here having been raised in Potomac before coming to Southern Maryland 50 years ago and starting a family. She went to work for the government while raising two daughters. Prior to retiring, she started to consider what to do with her extra time when not tending to the farm animals. It occurred to



her when looking at her daughters Leigh and Stacy and how happy they seemed doing volunteer work. They both joined the Solomons Volunteer Rescue Squad and Fire Department [SVRSFD] as teenagers. She saw how much they enjoyed serving the community and learning new skills. Daughter Leigh is now a mother of three and is a firefighter, EMT, and a lieutenant EMS officer with the St. Leonard Volunteer Rescue Squad. Daughter Stacy is the mother

of two and is also a firefighter, EMT, and a lifetime member of the SVRSFD.

Carol thought she would like to become an ambulance driver although she did not have a medical background. In 2017 she volunteered to join the Solomons team. On one of her first shifts as an aide an accident call came through and members around her started running past her and jumping on engines and ambulances as she stood there with her mouth open. A member yelled,

“Let’s go,” so she got into an ambulance and upon reaching the scene she took a stretcher over to the vehicle and watched as firefighters and EMTs jumped into action without any hesitation and quickly provided the necessary care required of them. She then realized she wanted to become an EMT like those who were performing these remarkable feats.

She signed up for EMT classes and has gained over 200 hours of training in addition to regular CPR training to keep her certifications current. Many of the courses she completed provided her with college credit hours. In the 10 years since her first accident call, she has gained a reputation on the Solomons team as one of their most dependable members willing to take any call knowing it could be messy or ugly. She is admired by her peers for her professionalism and outstanding dedication to her work. When asked what has been her inspiration, she claims it’s the example set by her daughters. She enjoys doing runs together with them. Additionally, it’s the idea that she is helping someone if only to hold their hand on the way to the hospital. One of her greatest joys occurred while teaching Fire Prevention at one of the local schools. She was showing the students the inside of an ambulance and the various pieces of equipment they use in caring for a patient. As she finished and was getting ready to leave, a young first grader ran up to her, hugged her and said, “Thank you!” This simple act convinced her of how much she loves her job.

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Cpl. DeFelice: It's About Community

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Editor's Note: For Independence Day we are honoring the many first responders in the community who insure we have the freedoms — life, Liberty and the pursuit of happiness — envisioned by our forefathers.

Calvert County Sheriff's Office Corporal Nicholas DeFelice was a self-described "knucklehead" in school, but when the opportunity came up to become a deputy he jumped at it because of "the ability to actually make an impact, to see people that I come into contact with and make a difference in the community in various capacities, whether that be a coach, whether it be actually working criminal investigations. I just think it's a unique place."

DeFelice was recently honored as American Legion National Law Officer of the Year in a ceremony at Stallings-Williams American Legion Post 206 in Chesapeake Beach. He also received several regional awards leading up to the national award.

He grew up in Owings and graduated from Calvert High School in 2002. He played lacrosse.

DeFelice's mother was a teacher in Prince George's County for about 37 years. His father was a corporate executive. No one in his family had ever been in law enforcement.

He explained, "I was a mediocre student at best, shaped by people like Keith Hicks, who was my D.A.R.E. officer and Rick Sneade, Calvert High School football coach, who took a vested interest in me."

He played lacrosse at a small college in North Carolina and graduated with a history degree. "I had teachers that were involved in law enforcement, sociology, criminal law. And that's something that piqued my interest."

When he returned to the county, his mother learned from then-sheriff Mike Evans of an opening, he applied and was accepted. "I kind of fell into being a Calvert County Sheriff's Deputy, much like people my age that left here that said they would never come back. And here I have been since 2007."

The sheriff's office has few vacancies, DeFelice said, "It's just a very unique agency because of all the people that work here from different backgrounds, various levels of education and work experience, and many family members also work in the county."

Of course, they make traffic stops and get



drugs off the street, but he noted, "We've also pursued since I've been here various programs that have started with the mobile crisis team," adding, "I was told to go to a mental health training in Harford County probably about nine years ago. And little did I know that that would've changed the trajectory of my career. I was interested in tactics and defensive tactics and investigations, but bringing that mental health component of understanding, maybe why people do the things they do, especially when people are in crisis, they don't really have control over that. So that's kind of the unique part that I've had, the opportunity to train. And then now I'm also teaching, bringing the rest of our agency on board."

So, after a time working road patrol he transitioned to criminal investigations. He said, "I learned in crisis intervention team training, it really assisted me with my interviews. And also at the time, I remember a specific week I had quite a few heroin or drug-related overdoses. And I was talking to family members, siblings, and loved ones of somebody who just lost somebody. And some of those techniques, some of those exercises that I learned helped me, and they kind of caught on. And we were introduced to the regional crisis intervention team. We were able to get on board with them and participate in. We do quarterly training, it's a 40-hour block of training for crisis intervention but is a secondary duty assignment for me and several others at the sheriff's office."

The team can be called to barricade situations, he said, "where we would have to, for lack of better words, negotiate or deescalate a scene that could potentially be volatile."



His nomination for the national American Legion award said, "Corporal DeFelice was selected and became a member of the Calvert County Special Operations team where he worked double duties, both fulfilling the role as a detective and a valued member of the SWAT team. After several years and various other duties, Corporal DeFelice was assigned to the centralized Special Operation Team where he found his new passion as a trainer, mentor and team builder."

"Corporal DeFelice's current official assignment within the Calvert County Sheriff's Office is as the first line supervisor for the special operations team. This role has put him as the Acting Team Leader for a wide range of operations including, serving of high-risk search warrants, barricaded subjects, missing persons searches, wanted persons searches, and waterborne operations along with a variety of mission sets."

"It was while in the role in June of 2022 that Corporal DeFelice was placed in a perilous situation during the serving of an arrest warrant and emergency petition on a subject. This high-risk critical incident was the result of the suspect pointing a pistol out of his window and threatening to shoot his neighbors within the townhome complex. During the early interaction with the suspect, he had fired several rounds at the special operations team members and fled to the upstairs of the town home barricading himself in a place of tactical advantage. As a trained crisis negotiator and crisis intervention-trained officer, Corporal DeFelice led the efforts at de-escalation in an attempt to safely take the suspect into custody throughout the night. Approximately 10 hours into the incident the suspect unexpectedly came down the stairs and with the pistol in his hand, turned to point it at the team members, some of which using the kitchen island as cover and concealment. Corporal DeFelice, always at the ready, was able to see and recognize the threat to the life of his himself and his teammates and before the suspect was able to take aim, fired his rifle

striking the suspect. This exchange drove the now injured suspect back upstairs where he was later located, and lifesaving measures were initiated. This courageous action by Corporal DeFelice truly shows the level of dedication to his craft and the safety of his teammates. If he had not been ready, if he had hesitated, if he had withdrawn with the threat presented itself, one of his teammates may have paid the ultimate price that day."

Part of DeFelice's community involvement included serving for five years as president of the local Fraternal Order of Police lodge.

He and other members of the sheriff's office provide training for members of community organizations. He said, "With our special operations team, we try to provide training to our community for everything from tourniquet training to, we call it now 'violent critical incident training.' And we've changed that from your traditional active shooter training based on national trends of like, if a person in crisis responds to a church or at a shopping center, what we want to do is prepare the citizens with a plan and also situational awareness."

DeFelice said, "We've evolved our program. It used to be like a two-hour presentation with hands on. What we found is doing a 35, 40-minute presentation, like a tabletop exercise, initially for stakeholders, if you're talking about a church's security team or ushers"

He observed, "Sometimes it's a difficult subject to talk about, and you have to relate to your audience. You don't want it to shock at all, but you also want to have people leaving empowered, situationally aware if they see something, obviously report it. A lot of these incidents, people do their homework on a site, or the threat might even come from within. So, we try to give people real data, but real solutions as well."

DeFelice cited the criminal justice program at the Career and Technology Academy with assisting in recruitment and also with enhancing the agency's visibility in the community. He said, "There's a pathway there. And I know Sheriff Cox was a student of that, a lot of members of our sheriff's office both here and even at the national level have been graduates of that program. I took several classes through that pathway"

Although his father did not have a law enforcement background, he was part of what encouraged him to get into law enforcement, "My dad is a 9/11 survivor, so he was at the Twin Towers when it was struck. So that, while I didn't go in the military, I was kind of inspired to make a difference. And then also him dealing with some of those, with the families and his own personal struggles and his growth as an individual that's also inspired me to help out other people and get involved in mental health."

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LOCAL6

Crab prices hit new highs



LOCAL7









Fire destroys Solomons home



ON THE COVER

EMS is a family affair in Solomons

WEEKLY FORECAST

<div>THU, JUL 4</div> <div></div> <div>PM Thunderstorms Hi: 92° Lo: 74°</div>	<div>FRI, JUL 5</div> <div></div> <div>PM Thunderstorms Hi: 93° Lo: 78°</div>	<div>SAT, JUL 6</div> <div></div> <div>PM Thunderstorms Hi: 91° Lo: 74°</div>	<div>SUN, JUL 7</div> <div></div> <div>Mostly Cloudy Hi: 91° Lo: 72°</div>
<div>MON, JUL 8</div> <div></div> <div>Partly Cloudy Hi: 91° Lo: 74°</div>	<div>TUE, JUL 9</div> <div></div> <div>Scattered Storms Hi: 91° Lo: 74°</div>	<div>WED, JUL 10</div> <div></div> <div>Scattered Storms Hi: 83° Lo: 71°</div>	<div>THU, JUL 11</div> <div></div> <div>Scattered Storms Hi: 84° Lo: 71°</div>



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