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THURSDAY, AUGUST 29, 2024

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**Bid Approved to Finish
FDR Boulevard**

STUDENTS RETURN AMID MOLD CLEANUP



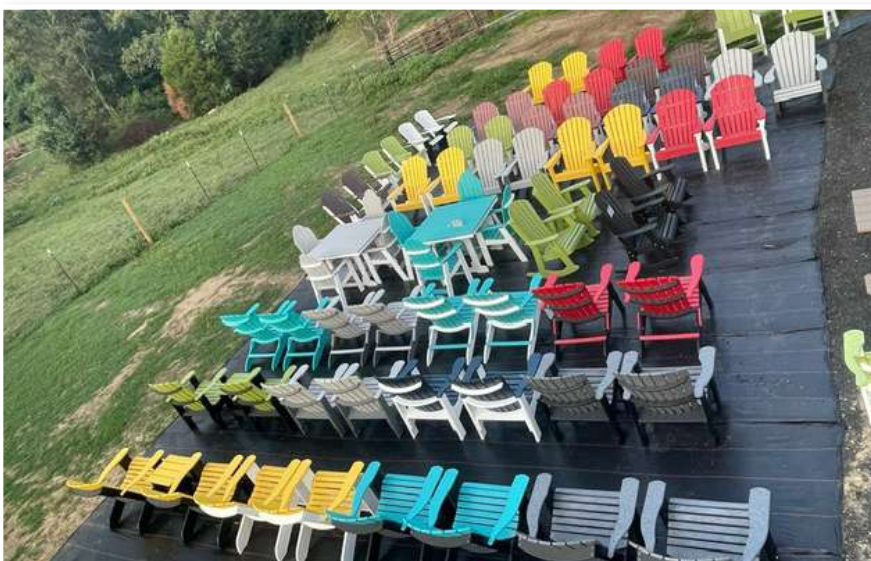
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“WE HAVE A LOT OF KITTENS ...OUR OLDER ANIMALS, THEY NEED LOVE AND CARE, TOO.”

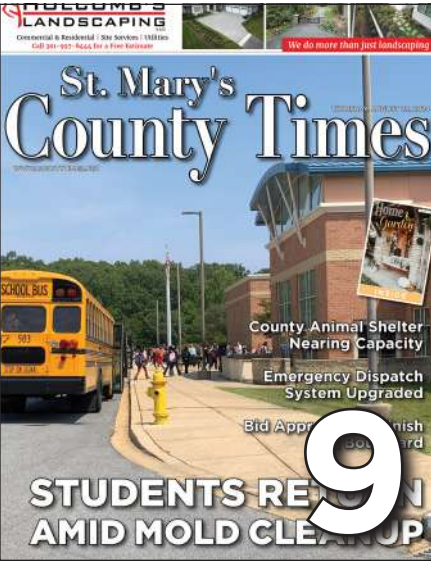
DES DIRECTOR JENNIFER AUBERT-UTZ ON ADOPTION FEES BEING WAVED IN AUGUST FOR THE COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER



LOCAL 5
Sheriffs close another major drug case



LOCAL 8
Commissioners approve final leg of FDR Blvd.



ON THE COVER 9
Mold remediation continues at Esperanza

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, AUG 29 Partly Cloudy Hi: 88° Lo: 68°	FRI, AUG 30 Scattered Storms Hi: 81° Lo: 68°	SAT, AUG 31 PM Thunderstorms Hi: 86° Lo: 70°	SUN, SEP 1 Scattered Storms Hi: 83° Lo: 68°
MON, SEP 2 Partly Cloudy Hi: 80° Lo: 59°	TUE, SEP 3 Partly Cloudy Hi: 75° Lo: 58°	WED, SEP 4 Partly Cloudy Hi: 76° Lo: 58°	THU, SEP 5 Partly Cloudy Hi: 76° Lo: 60°

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County Animal Shelter Needs Community Help

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

For the remainder of August, the county's Animal Adoption and Resource Center in California is waiving all adoption fees in hopes of relieving some of the space constraints in the facility.

The center is nearing capacity with 78 cats, 20 dogs, one rabbit and three guinea pigs up for adoption according to the latest listing on the county's website.

"This time of year, we have a lot of kittens," said Jennifer Aubert-Utz, director of the Department of Emergency Services, which oversees the adoption center in a video recorded message on the county's YouTube channel. "We have some puppies that need homes and our older animals they need love and care, too."

Those who come to the county's animal shelter should prepare to spend some time there to find their new pet friend.

"Love at first sight my not always be the right fit for the pet," Aubert-Utz said. "Our folks here are really talented; they study the animals, they get to know them."

"They help pair them with the right owner."

The local animal adoption center is partnering with Maryland 3000, a group operating with the Baltimore Animal Welfare Alliance (BAWA) with the goal of finding homes for at least 3,000 homeless shelter animals throughout Maryland.

"There are a lot of great pets that are waiting for their forever home," said County Commissioner Eric Colvin during the Aug. 27 business meeting of the Commissioners of St. Mary's County. "Maybe your kids have gone back to school and you're working from home and you realize the house is



Maple Bacon is one of many animals up for adoption

a little empty during the day.

"You should get a dog, you should get a cat, or one of the other animals they have."

Giving a pet a loving forever home would be a reward unto itself, Colvin said.

"You will be paid back many times forward," Colvin said.

The adoption and resource center is located at 22975 FDR Boulevard in California.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

St. Mary's Girl Wins Top Honors at State Fair

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

A 9-year-old Mechanicsville girl has won the top award for her prize Angus steer — a steer named Festus, weighing in at 1,305 pounds — at the Maryland State Fair.

Kinsley Farrell joined the local 4-H chapter just last year, her grandfather Jay Farrell told The County Times, and with this year's project — Festus — she attained championship standing.

"It's very impressive," Farrell said of his granddaughter's work. "It took my son 10 years to win it [champion angus heifer] when he was showing."

Kinsley's cousins Haley and Peyton Hutmaker, 12 and 9 respectively, also showed lambs and pigs at the state fair, their grandmother Justine Farrell said, and did well in their respective classes, though they didn't win a prize.

Kinsley will show Festus at the St. Mary's County Fair coming up later in September.

"It feels awesome," Kinsley said about her recent win. "I washed him every other day, I walked him every day, I fed him and I watered him."

Along with the championship, she also took second place in her class for showmanship, or how she handled and worked with her animal.

She said she hoped to earn similar honors at the county fair next month.

Her steer is named for a character from the legendary television show "Gunsmoke," she also has two other bovines named Marshal Dillon and Miss Kitty.

These characters are also in Kinsley's favorite song "Should've Been A Cowboy" by country star Toby Keith.

"That's Kinsley's theme song," her



Kinsley Farrell

grandmother said.

Kinsley had to keep to an arduous schedule to take care of Festus, her grandfather said, to prepare the massive steer for his big showing at the State Fair.

"It's a tremendous amount of work," he said. "They work with them every day."

"They have to brush them, clean them... clean out their stalls," Jay Farrell said. "They have to walk them, exercise them and train them for the show."

Jay said the family has a long tradition of being in 4-H and still works in agriculture and livestock part time.

"We all grew up in 4-H," Jay said. "John and Ann Richards [who have long volunteered at the fair] were my 4-H leaders."

Jay is the now the vice president of the fair's board of directors.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Major Drug Arrest Over a Year in the Making

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The recent arrest of three men, all family members, on charges of drug dealing and illegal weapons possession was a major operation, said sheriff's office Lt. Brian Fennessey, a senior member of the agency's vice narcotics unit.

"The case itself started more than a year ago, in May of 2023," Fennessey told The County Times.

Fennessey said the three men — John Kevin Fitzgerald Reed, 60, James Nathaniel Reed, 77, Francis Lavern Reed, 55, all of Mechanicsville — were "not the usual faces we're used to seeing in our news feeds."

"They're significantly older than other drug dealers and users," Fennessey said. "It speaks to the fact that drugs can come from any community, anywhere."

The three men, one of whom, John Kevin Fitzgerald Reed, already had a drug distribution conviction from 2006 in St. Mary's for which he served one year in jail, were all major players in the local drug trade, Fennessey alleged.

In this case, approximately one-and-a-



half kilos of cocaine were seized; it is one of only a handful of times in the last few years local authorities have confiscated drugs in such large quantities.

The first time a seizure of that size was made in St. Mary's, Fennessey said, was about four years ago of three-and-a-half kilos of cocaine.

"That was an astronomical amount," Fennessey said.

Deputies recently also seized about one-and-a-half kilos of fentanyl in another major warrant service over several properties.



The cocaine seizure in this case took place in December, Fennessey said, and led to more recent warrant services.

The initial seizure took place at a family-owned piece of land in Mechanicsville that has been known to vice/narcotics investigators for almost 20 years now, said Fennessey.

This was the fourth time a warrant had been served there, the narcotics lieutenant said.

"It's not an easy place to get to," Fennessey said. "It's not easy to surveil."

Such cases have to be pursued carefully, he said, since officer resources were limited

and defendants had grown more and more crafty in hiding drugs and guns.

They either create special hiding spots in their homes under floors or in walls, Fennessey said, or simply reside in one place and sell from another cache site known only to them.

"Whenever we serve a search warrant, they always get discovery," Fennessey said. "They watch what we do and they adapt."

Along with the cocaine, the sheriff's office investigators seized more than 455 grams of cannabis, over 500 various unprescribed pills, more than \$17,700 in U.S. currency, 15 firearms, and thousands of rounds of ammunition.

All three suspects are prohibited from possessing firearms due to prior convictions, and two of the recovered firearms were previously reported stolen, the sheriff's office stated.

The operation was conducted with support from the sheriff's office Criminal Investigations and Patrol divisions, Emergency Services Team, Charles County Sheriff's Office, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF).

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New Emergency Dispatch System Finally Comes On-Line

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

For the past two weeks the county has been using a newly installed and upgraded computer-aided dispatch system (CAD) that it hopes will improve the efficiency with which emergency responders are chosen to respond and routed to calls for service.

The change has been about a quarter-of-a-century in the making.

"It's working well," said Shawn Davidson, county volunteer rescue chief. "We anticipated some hiccups but it's nothing unpredictable or insurmountable."

The old CAD system had been in use for 25 years, Davidson said, and first responders in fire, emergency medical and law enforcement had been finding ways of working with it — or around it, Davidson said — in recent years.

Some years ago, the county was grappling with updating and fixing problems with its emergency radio system, which is separate from the CAD though just as critical.

Only when that was accomplished, Davidson said, did the county turn to replacing the outdated dispatch system.

"The county prioritized fixing the radios first," said Davidson.

Perhaps the most salient new feature of

the CAD replacement is its ability to track on a computer screen for an emergency dispatcher the location of each emergency vehicle in the county.

The new system can effectively create a map of where the calls for help are coming from and locate the nearest vehicles that can respond, Davidson said.

"It takes a lot of guesswork out of the way we used to do it," Davidson told The County Times.

With the prior system, dispatchers had to match the location of the emergency with the nearest fire or rescue station but in some cases those stations could have been either under staffed or busy with another emergency call and unable to respond.

The new system automatically looks for the next closest station that can respond instead of the dispatcher going through what used to be known as a "roll call of stations" in an attempt to find someone who could answer the call.

"That used to delay response times by a significant amount," Davidson said.

It may still take an ambulance 20 minutes to get to an emergency call, he said, but it could have taken up to twice as long under the old system in some cases.

Each county emergency vehicle now has a mobile data unit (MDU) installed in it,

he said, which makes the vehicle tracking ability possible.

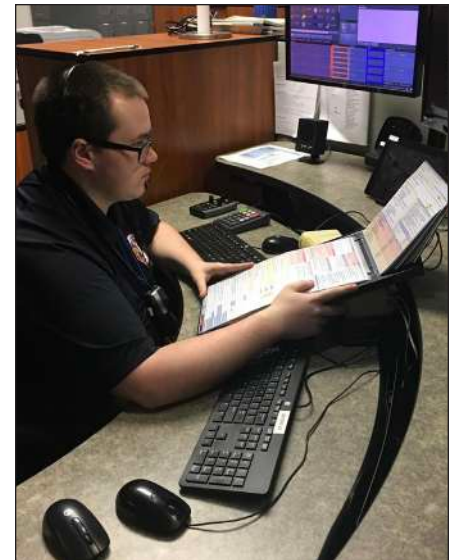
This MDU also allows the emergency response unit to communicate with dispatchers at the emergency operations center in Leonardtown, said Davidson. This has the added benefit of allowing for better organization of resources to respond to calls.

"When I'm signed in [to the CAD system] I can see where everyone else is," Davidson said. "You can coordinate and see things better."

This could allow first responders to better understand where other emergency vehicles are in relation to theirs when they respond on scene and queue up accordingly. This could help avoid confusion and other hazards.

The new CAD system also allows dispatchers and emergency responders to see just what assets are available on a given vehicle. For example, if a paramedic signs onto an ambulance, their information appears on the computer screen of dispatchers and other emergency responders on the system through their terminal either in Leonardtown or individual units.

This way, dispatchers will know that a basic life support unit will have the ability to provide advanced life support efforts just by looking at their computer screen, for example.



A St. Mary's County emergency dispatcher

"We had nothing like that before," Davidson said.

He added that the Department of Emergency Services is still working out technical issues with the new system.

"We're still in the 'getting comfortable with it' phase," Davidson said. "But it's nothing that has impacted responses."

guyleonard@countytimes.net



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St. Mary's Co. 4-H Livestock Auction – SAT, SEPT 21, 2024 – 5 pm
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Commissioners Approve Bid for FDR Boulevard Completion



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

After years of slow and sometimes steady construction work, the county is finally ready to complete the final leg of FDR Boulevard — about one mile — that will connect Buck Hewitt Road in Lexington Park further south to Pegg Road just across from the main gate to Naval Air Station Patuxent River.

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County (CSMC) approved a contract with local contractor The Great Mills Trading Post to complete Phase 3B of the project this week at their Aug. 27 business meeting.

"This is quite a momentous day in my opinion because this is the final phase of FDR Boulevard, right?" asked Commissioner Mike Hewitt.

"It's the last one we have programmed," responded Brandon Hayden, the county's chief procurement officer.

Hewitt said there had been talk in county government circles of extending FDR Boulevard to Great Mills Road but that could once again come up as an option in the future.

government circles of extending FDR Boulevard to Great Mills Road but that could once again come up as an option in the future.

"But this will finally get the road all the way down to Pegg Road," Hewitt said.

The contract for the last leg of the road will cost tax payers approximately \$9.1 million, which Hayden said was a low price.

"This was under budget significantly," Hayden told the commissioners.

The county received three bids for the project, Hayden said, out of nearly 400 contractors who were made aware of the request for bids.

Any bid over the \$1 million mark had to be approved by the county commissioners according to county procurement regulations.

County planning documents state that the estimated time of the completion of the project to be 20 months, just under two years.

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Mold Clean Up Continues at Esperanza Middle School



Esperanza's 6th & 7th grade students returning to school on August 28



A mold abatement van outside the school on August 28

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The St. Mary's County Board of Education was set to mull the cost of the mold clean-up effort at Esperanza Middle School this week; staff estimated the bill at more than \$200,000.

Students in 6th and 7th grades were allowed back into school on Aug. 28, the same day as the board of education meeting, but 8th graders were housed at the University System of Maryland's Southern Maryland (USMSM) campus in California while the mold remediation continued.

The classrooms requiring mold mitigation are in the lower level of the building. A local clean-up contractor created a negative air pressure barrier using plastic polyethylene sheeting to seal off the affected areas, preventing the contamination of other areas. That means that part of the building will not be accessible and the school will not have the classroom space to bring all students back into the building, the school board reported.

Jennifer Consalvo, Principal of Esperanza Middle School said: "We are

grateful that USMSM is accommodating our students. They have been an excellent partner, providing state-of-the-art instructional spaces for our students and staff so that we can resume in-person learning."

Eighth grade teachers, along with support staff, such as an assistant principal, guidance counselor, nurse, and secretary will be on site each day at USMSM, supporting students.

Board staff stated that they had used the contract with Servpro of Rockville-Olney with the Montgomery County Government to quickly ascertain the service of the local Servpro here to do the work.

An outside contractor, KCI Technologies, Inc. (KCI) performed the initial examination of the mold, which was found just two days before students were supposed to return to school last week.

According to school system documents, Department of Maintenance personnel were replacing ceiling tiles at Esperanza just prior to school starting when mold was observed above the classrooms in the attic space where the mechanical utility lines are located.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Board Looks to Shift Funds for Piney Point Elementary Project

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The state has denied a second round of funding that the St. Mary's County Board of Education had planned to use to complete a renovation of the heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system at Piney Point Elementary School, so the board had on its agenda this week a plan to use funding from another project to complete the one in Piney Point.

This week school system staff requested the board send a request to the Commissioners of St. Mary's County for a budget amendment in the amount of \$1.4 million from their capital reserve fund to pay for the remainder of the project.

About \$2.1 million is available to use for the Piney Point project from the Lettie Marshall Dent Elementary School project, which is currently held in reserve by the state's Inter-agency Committee on school construction.

The staff is currently seeking approval to use those funds, school planning docu-

ments stated.

The remaining balance of \$1.4 million that is needed to complete the second year of funding for the PPES project will be requested from the Built To Learn Act funding allocation, which is overseen by the Maryland Stadium Authority (MSA) is a reimbursement program, which requires that the \$1.4 million be forward funded. This is why the school system will be requesting a budget amendment approval for this amount from the Commissioners of St. Mary's County (CSMC) capital reserve. Upon reimbursement from MSA the funding will be returned to the CSMC. The request was on the Aug. 28 school board meeting agenda.

The lack of funding for the project led to the delay of the first day of school there, with the school's open house taking place on Aug. 21 instead of the beginning of classes.

Classes resumed the following day on Aug. 22.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

County Government Labor Day Operations

All St. Mary's County Government (SMCG) administrative offices will be closed on Monday, September 2, 2024, in observance of Labor Day. Offices will resume normal operating schedules on Tuesday, September 3, 2024.

The September 2 closure also includes:

- All three St. Mary's County Libraries (Charlotte Hall, Leonardtown, and Lexington Park)
- All three Senior Activity Centers (Garvey, Loffler, and Northern), and there will be no home-delivered meals
- The St. Mary's Transit System (STS)
- Department of Recreation & Parks indoor programs and facilities
- The six Convenience Centers and the St. Andrews Landfill
- The Animal Adoption & Resource

Center

The following SMCG operations will be open on September 2:

- Great Mills Pool (11 a.m. – 5 p.m.)
- Wellness & Aquatics Center (6 a.m. – 12 p.m.)
- St. Clements Island Museum, Piney Point Lighthouse Museum, and the Old Jail Museum (10 a.m. – 5 p.m.)
- Wicomico Shores Golf Course (8 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.)
- Riverview Restaurant (9 a.m. – 3 p.m.)
- Elms Beach, Myrtle Point & Snow Hill waterfront parks (8 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.)
- Splash Pad at Nicolet Park (12 p.m. – 6 p.m.)

For information on St. Mary's County Government programs and operations, please visit: www.stmaryscountymd.gov.

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NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT AND NOTICE OF INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS

Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
Community Development Administration
7800 Harkins Road, Lanham, Maryland 20706

These notices shall satisfy two separate but related procedural requirements for activities to be undertaken by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (the "Agency").

REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS

On or about September 16th, 2024 the Agency will submit a request to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Baltimore Field Office for the release of Federal funds under the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (Title II of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act), as amended, to undertake a project known as:

Project Name: Great Mills Court & Joe Baker Village
45990 Great Mills Court and 21260 Joe Baker Court
Lexington Park, Maryland 20653
St. Mary's County

Rehabilitation of the existing buildings will involve replacing the building exteriors, new shingle roofs, new vinyl siding, and new energy star windows. Within the units, new cabinets, flooring including carpet will be upgraded. The site layouts resemble a typical rural apartment community with plenty of "green" space for residents to enjoy. Safe parking, safe traffic flow within the development and surrounding areas, and lighting for security.

Total estimated cost of the project: \$12,316,025.00

Total investment from the HOME Program: approximately \$500,000.00

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The Agency has determined that the project will have no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) is not required. Additional project information is contained in the Environmental Review Record (ERR) on file at the above address and may be examined or copied on weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any individual, group, or agency disagreeing with this determination or wishing to comment on the project may submit written comments to the Agency. All comments received by September 14th, 2024 will be considered by the Agency prior to authorizing submission of a request for release of funds. Commentators should specify which Notice they are addressing.

RELEASE OF FUNDS

The Agency certifies to HUD that Jack Daniels, in his official capacity as CDA Lending and Risk Director, Special Loans and Administration, Single Family Housing, consents to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to the environmental review process and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. HUD's approval of the certification satisfies its responsibilities under NEPA and related laws and authorities, and allows the Agency to use Program funds.

OBJECTIONS TO RELEASE OF FUNDS

HUD will accept objections to its release of funds and the Agency's certification for a period of fifteen days following the anticipated submission date or its actual receipt of the request (whichever is later) only if they are on one of the following bases: (a) the certification was not executed by the Certifying Officer of the Agency; (b) the Agency has omitted a step or failed to make a decision or finding required by HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58; (c) the grant recipient or other participants in the development process have committed funds, incurred costs or undertaken activities not authorized by 24 CFR Part 58 before approval of a release of funds by HUD; or (d) another Federal agency acting pursuant to 40 CFR Part 1504 has submitted a written finding that the project is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality.

Objections must be prepared and submitted to HUD in accordance with the required procedure (24 CFR Part 58), and shall be addressed to the HUD Baltimore Field Office, Bank of America Bldg. Tower II, 100 S. Charles Street, 5th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21201-2505, Attention: Ms. Ebony Madyum, Director, Community Planning and Development Division or E/mailed to Ebony.M.Madyum@HUD.gov. Potential objectors should contact HUD at 771-202-4018, to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

Jack Daniels
CDA Lending and Risk Director
Special Loans and Administration
Single-Family Housing
Jack.daniels2@maryland.gov

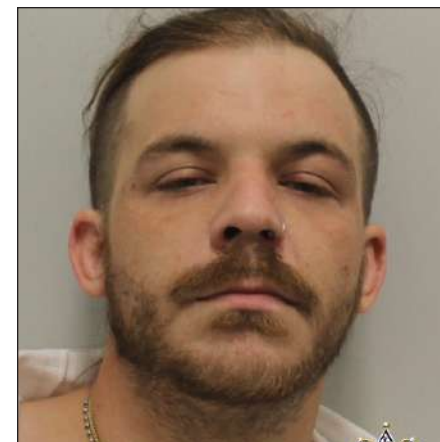
Sheriff's Office Captain Apprehends Escapee

At approximately 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday, August 27, 2024, officials in the St. Mary's County Detention and Rehabilitation Center (SMCDRC) were alerted that Jordan Poetzman, 29, of Leonardtown, removed his GPS monitoring device while attending court authorized inpatient treatment at a facility in California, MD.

Captain Richard Russell, Special Operations Commander for the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office, was off duty and returning from jury duty service when he heard the notification broadcast. He spotted the suspect while en route back to the office and, after a brief foot chase, successfully apprehended Poetzman at approximately 11:51 a.m.

"As law enforcement officers, we are committed to our civic duties both on and off duty," said Sheriff Steve Hall. "Captain Russell's actions exemplify our dedication to keeping our community safe, whether serving in court or responding to a call. His quick thinking and response highlight the importance of being vigilant and ready to act at all times."

Poetzman is incarcerated at the SMCDRC



Jordan Taylor Poetzman

while facing neglect of a minor, controlled dangerous substance possession charges, and traffic violation charges following a June 2024 arrest.

Deputies from the Patrol Division responded to the scene, and Poetzman was transported back to the Detention and Rehabilitation Center to face escape charges.

Wanted: Markko Darvelle Morsell

The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office is seeking the whereabouts of Markko Darvelle Morsell, 34, for escape. On August 22, 2024, while at his residence, Morsell removed his electronic monitoring device and fled the area. Morsell was on pretrial release, facing charges of three counts of second-degree assault, one count of theft of \$100 to under \$1500, and one count of arson/threat.

Morsell is a black male, 6'3", weighing approximately 319 pounds.

Anyone with information about Morsell's whereabouts is asked to contact Detective Joseph Bowling at Joseph.Bowling@stmaryscounty.md.gov, or at 301-475-4200, ext. 1959.

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



Markko Darvelle Morsell (photo from 2021)

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

COMMISSIONERS OF LEONARDTOWN Fair Summary of Ordinance No. 224

Notice is hereby given that The Commissioners of Leonardtown have passed and the Mayor has approved, Ordinance No.224 Amendment to the Leonardtown Comprehensive Zoning Map. A fair summary will follow:

Ordinance No. 224- An ordinance for the purpose of updating the Leonardtown Zoning Map with the zoning for four recently annexed properties.

Ordinance No. 224 will become effective September 2, 2024. Full text of this ordinance may be obtained at the Town Office, 22670 Washington Street, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday or on line on the Towns website at www.leonardtown.somd.com.

By Authority: Laschelle E. McKay, Town Administrator



Letters to the Editor

'Eroding public trust in our educationl institutions'

I am writing to express my growing concern regarding the lack of transparency demonstrated by the teachers' union in their recent endorsements of political candidates. As a concerned member of our community and an advocate for fair and open processes, I believe that the current level of opacity undermines the integrity of the electoral process and erodes public trust in our educational institutions. EASMC, Education Association of St. Mary's County when endorsing a candidate will also fund these candidates, paying for mailers, social media ads.... How much money goes to these candidates and where does the money come from? The union is actively supporting specific candidates, yet the criteria and decision-making processes lack of clarity raises several questions:

1. Criteria for Endorsements: How does the union determine which candidates to support? What specific qualifications or positions are prioritized in these endorsements?
2. Decision-Making Process: Who is involved in the decision-making process? Is there a transparent, democratic procedure in place for selecting candidates?
3. Impact on Members: How are union members informed about these endorsements? Are there opportunities for members to provide input or voice concerns regarding the union's political support?

As an organization that represents educators and influences public education policy,

it is crucial for the teachers' union to operate with transparency and accountability. The union's decisions regarding political endorsements can have significant implications for educational policies and funding, and as such, these decisions should be made openly and with the input of its members. By addressing these concerns, the union can strengthen its credibility and maintain the support of its members and the community it serves.

I urge the teachers' union to take immediate steps to clarify its endorsement process and criteria, and to engage openly with its members regarding these important decisions. How much money is being spent on their campaigns? By doing so, the union can reaffirm its commitment to transparency and uphold the values of accountability and integrity that are essential to our democratic process.

This year the picks by the union are Josh Guy, a 22 year old that lives at home with his parents, Cathy Allen who is a democrat and Mary Washington also a democrat. EASMC like our current BOE is simply allowing themselves to be used as an arm to the state pushing an agenda without any consideration for our small community and our family values.

I encourage you to VOTE Brandie Edelen educator, parent and small business owner. Elena Brewer educator, and parent and David Drys financial wizard and parent. All Republicans who will stand up to support our community and its family values.

Angela Wathen
Coltons Point

Support for parents, in my own words

I participated in a public forum this week at Faith Bible Church Hall in Mechanicsville. A lot of questions were about the rights of parents in our public schools, curriculum concerns, and ways to encourage parents to get more involved in our public schools. I'd like to reiterate some of the positions I've held since the beginning of my campaign for school board.

As I said in my first campaign interview with the media in February, "Parents have a right to be heard. We need to work with parents, not against parents." I understand why parents are concerned with the health/sexual education curriculum. Last year, the Maryland General Assembly considered removing parental opt-outs from the sexuality/gender identity health curriculum. I opposed that measure and contacted my state legislators to voice my opinion. I supported parental opt-outs before my campaign even began, and continue to support

them today.

When it comes to the issue of making our school system more transparent and accessible for parents, I've advocated for a "one-stop shop" on the SMCPS website where parents can access curriculum information, school updates, volunteer opportunities, and incident data. The current website is difficult to navigate. Having a place where parents can access all the information they need, will help parents feel more connected to their child's education. If we're going to be serious about engaging parents, we need to focus on accessibility and transparency.

In conclusion, I invite, and welcome, any citizen of St. Mary's County to contact me with their concerns. I will continue to work hard to earn your vote in November.

Josh Guy
Candidate, Board of Education At-Large

If you would like to submit a Letter to the Editor,
please include your name & town of residence.

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To see more of my amazing friends also available for adoption, "like" us on Facebook @ Charles County Animal Care Center or view us on our website at <https://www.charlescountymd.gov/services/animal-care-control/animal-care-center>



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Retirees must identify and manage income sources

During your working years, you know where your income is coming from because you're working. But once you retire, you'll have to identify your income sources, know how much you can expect from them and know how to manage them to help support a retirement that could last two or three decades.

So, where will your retirement income come from? And what decisions will you need to make about these income sources?

Consider the following:

- **Retirement accounts** – If you've regularly contributed to an IRA and a 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored retirement plan, you likely have accumulated substantial amounts of money in these accounts — but during your retirement, you'll need to start tapping into them. In fact, once you turn 73, you're required to start taking withdrawals from some of your retirement accounts, with the amount determined by your age and account balance. You could take out more than these amounts (technically called required minimum distributions, or RMDs) but you can't take less without incurring penalties. Many people take out 4% of their balance each year, and this guideline may be reasonable, but everyone's situation is different. So, you'll need to weigh various factors including your age, health and other sources of income before deciding on an appropriate withdrawal rate.
- **Social Security** – You can start collecting Social Security at age 62, but your payments will be much higher if you wait until your full retirement age, which will be between 66 and 67. And your benefits will reach the maximum amount if you wait until 70 before collecting. So, your decision on when to take your benefits will depend on whether you can afford to wait, and for how long. In making this choice, you'll also need to consider your health and your family history of longevity. And if you're married, you may want to factor in spousal benefits when deciding when you should collect Social Security. A spouse can receive either their own benefit, based on their work record, or up to 50% of their spouse's benefit, whichever is greater. So, if one spouse has a much higher benefit, it may make sense for that spouse to delay taking Social Security as long as possible so that both spouses can receive bigger payments.
- **Earned income** – Even if you have retired from one career, it doesn't mean you can never receive any earned income again. If you have specific skills that can translate to part-time work or a consulting arrangement, you might want to consider reentering the work force in this way. With the added income, you might be able to afford delaying Social Security, and you would still be eligible to contribute to an IRA.
- **Supplemental lifetime income** – There aren't many guarantees in the financial and investment worlds — but one of them is the income from a fixed annuity, which can be structured to provide you with a lifetime income stream. Annuities aren't for everyone, however, and they do involve penalties for early withdrawals and lack of protection from inflation.

By learning all you can about your potential retirement income sources, and by understanding how to manage this income to your best advantage, you can help yourself achieve a comfortable — and more rewarding — retirement.

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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Wanderings of an Aimless Mind

by Shelby Oppermann



Up on the 'Hawaiian Blue' Roof

Well, my husband is in project mode around the house, inside and outside. Right now, he has a friend working on our old 16' x 20' shed or what we call the pool supplies shed. Though it also houses all the outdoor Christmas decorations and Christmas tree, and bikes (that never get used), and loads of other things just like everyone else's sheds I imagine. It is at least 20 years old and rotting in a few areas.



We have lots of trees around it, so the leaves just sit on top of that shed. Robert decided to have a metal roof put on to match his Mustang garage/man cave garage metal roof. The leaves and snow should just slide off of it now. And the color of the roof is called Hawaiian Blue, so I'm thinking we should sit up there one cool night and have a tropical drink to celebrate. The problem would be of course that neither one of us could actually get up or off of the roof. Maybe we could just have the drinks at sunset while gazing up at the Hawaiian Blue roof. Probably won't be that many more years before its time for Jerry to re-do the house roof and my workshop. House maintenance never ends for anyone.

Once my husband saw how nice the top of the pool shed looked he said, "Wow, now the rest of the shed looks really bad which led to our friend also getting ivory siding to match the garage and house. It is a similar situation to when we got the Mustang 5 years ago. My husband bought the Mustang first and then not long after said, "Now I need a garage for the Mustang". This is the way it goes in Suburbia. Every house you see has a minimum of one garage (with all the cars sitting outside of it because the garage is stuffed with all of the stuff we have to have, or think we have to have). And of course, you need a shed for the lawnmower and all the outside lawn maintenance items. And in our case, in addition to the Mustang garage, Pool supplies shed, and under deck enclosed lawnmower area, we have my 10' x 12' workshop, and naturally because of the Halloween Trails we have one really old shed that is the Halloween shed. The shed looks as scary as what is inside. It used to be his parents' shed when they lived with him a long time ago, and then his mom's shed when she lived with us after we were married.

Yesterday we went down to Brookline Metal Roofing LLC off of Ryceville Road on the Charles County side of Mechanicsville to look at what we could use on the ceiling over our woodstove where the paint had peeled off from how hot Robert keeps the woodstove. Brookline cuts and fabricates everything there. We are a 23 year married couple, and both been married before, so no decision comes easy to us...about anything. This seemed to amuse Rudy at Brookline immensely. (I forewarned you Rudy). Robert was originally thinking about putting siding on the ceiling, which was not sitting well with me, and then we "discussed" about having the fluted metal — like what you see on the lower part of the walls of some restaurants. I said I didn't want the basement looking like a restaurant with those wide fluted sheets. I did mention it would be nice if Rudy could see the ceiling in question for his opinion, and my husband responded with, "If Rudy would bring the cow we would cook him dinner". Rudy sensing marital discord had just the thing to show us. It was a narrow fluted sheet which had lots of colors to choose from. The next issue was color. Robert wanted silver or white and I was thinking about soot above the woodstove and wanted copper. Robert said of course she wants the copper she's an artist. Naturally we are getting copper, because I know neither one of us will be scrubbing a ceiling. All of this reminded Rudy of an old joke, his parting wisdom for us: "God made women beautiful so men would fall for us, and he made women dumb so we would fall for the men". We're not dumb I know and it's an old joke as he said, but maybe it's only for those initial first meeting moments that we are struck dumb with love.

To each new day's adventure, Shelby

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

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.

Judy Balta, 73



Judith Lynn Sanger Balta, "Judy", 73, of Valley Lee, MD, passed away on August 26, 2024, in Leonardtown, MD. Born on August 25, 1951, in Leonardtown,

MD, she was the daughter of the late Elaine Russell Sanger and the late George F. Sanger, Sr. Judy was the loving wife of Francis A. Balta, whom she married on May 10, 1978, in Leonardtown, MD. She is survived by her sister, Charlotte Greco of Ft. Myers, FL, her niece, Cindy Hubbard (Brad) of Flower Mound, TX, and her nephew Michael Greco (Khrys) of Ft. Myers, FL. Judith was preceded in death by her brother, Frank Sanger.

Judy graduated from St. Mary's Academy in 1969 and graduated from Mercy School of Nursing in 1972 as a registered nurse. She was a registered nurse at St. Mary's Hospital for 20 years and at Dr. Roach's practice for 14 years, before her retirement in 2000.

Judy enjoyed gardening and working outside. She had a life-long passion for Barbies, The Rolling Stones, and the Washington Redskins. During her years of retirement, she loved vacationing at the beach with her husband and spending quality time with family and friends.

The family will receive friends on Thursday, August 29, 2024 from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, MD, where a funeral service will be held at 10:00 AM in the funeral home chapel with Father David Beaubien officiating. Interment will be private.

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.

Rodney Haizlip, 76



Rodney Finch Haizlip, 76, of Mechanicsville, MD, passed away on August 25, 2024. Born on November 4, 1947, in Amagansett, NY, he was the son of the

late June Haizlip and the late Jack Haizlip. Rodney was the loving husband of Geraldine Haizlip, whom he married in 1971 in Caribou, ME. In addition to his wife, he is survived by his children, Mike Haizlip of Drayden, MD, Lori Haizlip of Mechanicsville, MD, and Lynn Haizlip Porter (John Porter) of Leonardtown, MD, his sister, Jacquie Withers of FL, his grandchildren, Chelsea Haizlip, Zachary May, and Jeremy Haizlip, and three great grandchildren. Rodney was preceded in death by his brother, Paul Haizlip, and his granddaughter, Katie Haizlip.

Rodney graduated from Princess Anne High School, Virginia Beach VA, in 1965, and attended Old Dominion University. He served in the United States Air Force for

20 years, from 1967 to 1987. Rodney was a management officer for the Department of Defense for 21 years until his retirement in 2009. He enjoyed bowling, golfing, pool, darts, softball, and fishing, and loved watching the NFL, with the New York Giants being his favorite team.

Contributions may be made to Hospice of St. Mary's, P.O. Box 625, Leonardtown, MD 20650.

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.

Gaye Dugan, 72



Gaye Frances Dugan, 72 of Leonardtown, MD passed away peacefully at home August 23, 2024 surrounded by her family. She was born February 14, 1952 in El Paso, Texas to

the late E. Tracy Smith and Charles Robert Lee. She grew up in a military household and lived throughout the US. She cherished spending time with her loving Grandparents, the late, Albert and Frances Borghi of Washington D.C.

In 1974, Gaye met the love of her life, the late Michael Wren Dugan at a party in Arlington, VA. They were married November 3, 1974, and were devoted to each other until his death on April 17, 2016. They moved around the US and Germany due to Michael's position with the Government until they settled in Leonardtown, MD in 2002 after Michael's retirement.

Gaye was a stay-at-home mother to their 4 children Jennifer, Michael, Molly, and Erin. She taught her children the value of education and led by example obtaining a bachelor's in liberal arts at Concordia University in 2001. Gaye went on to attend nursing school at the College of Southern Maryland and became a Registered Nurse in 2007. She worked at St. Mary's Hospital and then went on to work with the VNA. She was valued for being honest, forthright, spunky and inclusive. She enjoyed teaching and supporting her fellow nurses and is remembered as kind, fun, and no-nonsense by many of her co-workers. Gaye retired from nursing in 2016.

In retirement, Gaye enjoyed gardening, antiquing, spending time with her 4 children, their spouses and 6 grandchildren. She also enjoyed volunteering with St. Andrews Thrift shop and attending her Pilates classes. She is survived by her children and their spouses; Jennifer Dugan (Mark Anderson) of Haymarket, VA, Michael Dugan (Julie Bell) of Sharon, PA, Molly Dugan (Timothy Bromeyer) of Baltimore, MD, and Erin Dugan (Marc Denos) of Reisterstown, MD; her grandchildren, Ella, Violet, Madelyn, Ava, Wren, and Margaret and her sister, Susan Harp Silva of Leonardtown, MD. She is preceded in death by her husband of over 41 years.

A Funeral Service will be celebrated on

Saturday, September 7, 2024 at 11 a.m. at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 44078 St. Andrew's Church Road, California, MD 20619. Interment will follow in the church cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 44708 St. Andrew's Church Rd, California, MD 20619.

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

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

Charles Cumbow, 85



Charles Lee Cumbow, 85, of Leonardtown, MD, passed away on Friday, August 23, 2024, at St. Mary's Nursing Center in Leonardtown, MD. Born June 26, 1939, in Harvey, WV, he

was the son of the late Charles and Olive Mayme Fitzgerald Cumbow.

Charles retired with over 40 years of service as an aerospace engineer for the Department of Defense at Pax River. Until recent years, he was also a private pilot and aircraft and powerplant inspector.

Charles was a graduate of Spartan School of Aeronautics and Parks College of Engineering, Aviation, and Technology

at St. Louis University.

He was a long-term member of Lexington Park United Methodist Church, Lexington Park, MD.

Charles was preceded in death by his parents and two sisters, Betty Jo Moyer and Mary Ann Johnson. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Melinda, of Leonardtown, MD, and two children, Charles F. Cumbow (Susan) and Betty Anne McDonald (David); also surviving are two grandchildren, Olivia Cumbow and Charles F. Cumbow II.

The family would like to thank all the caregivers at St. Mary Nursing Center that assisted Charles over the last year.

Visitation for friends and family will be Thursday, September 5, 2024, from 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, MD, where a funeral service will be held at 2:00 PM in the funeral home chapel with Pastor Don Geller officiating. Interment will be held on Friday, September 6, 2024, at 1:00 PM at High Lawn Cemetery, Oak Hill, WV.

In lieu of flowers, please consider contributions to St. Mary's Nursing Center Foundation, 21585 Peabody Street, Leonardtown, MD 20650 or the 2nd District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad, 45245 Drayden Rd, Valley Lee, MD 20692.

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

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

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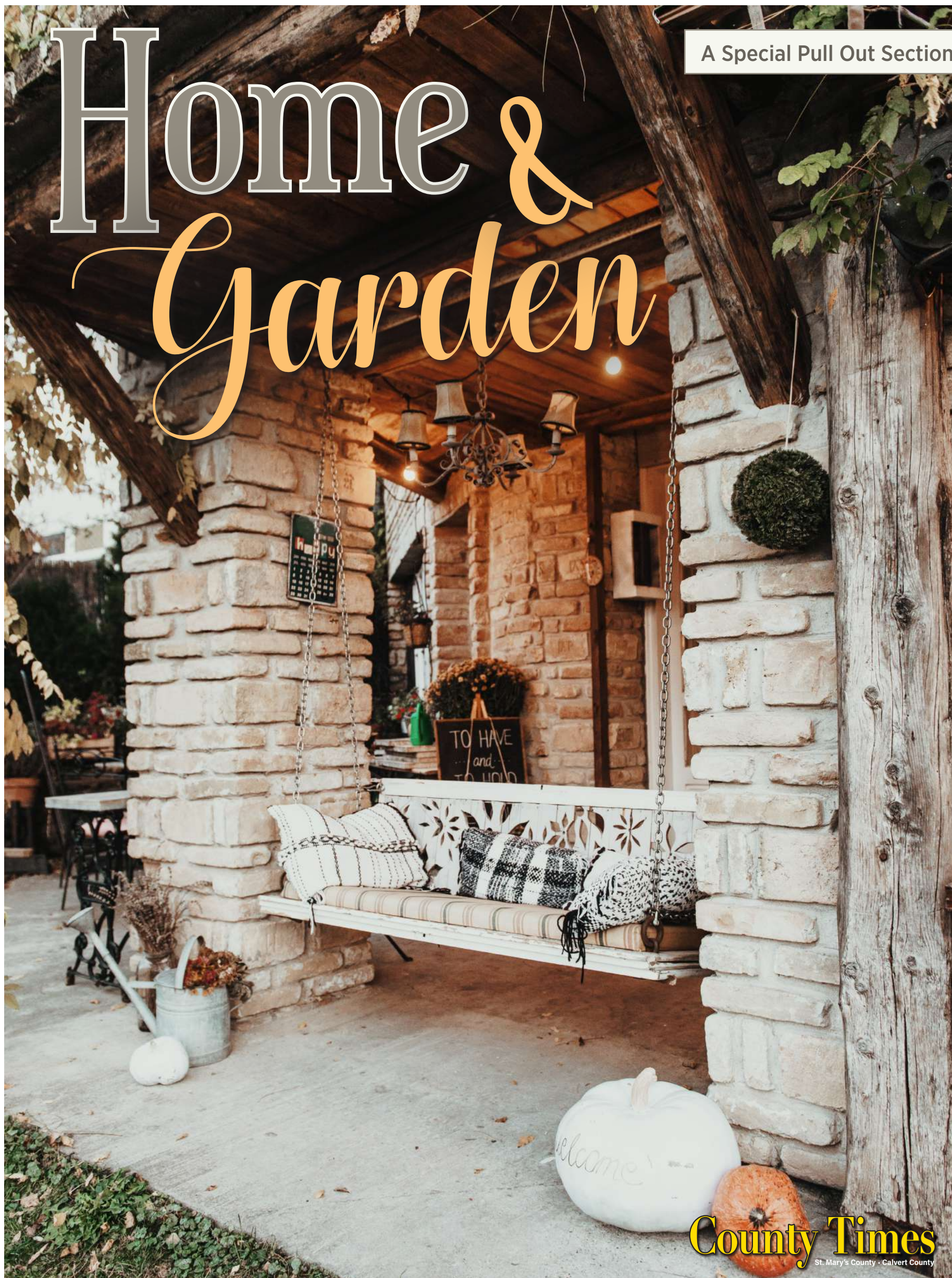
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How to Make a Home More Cozy

The meaning of the term “cozy” varies as it pertains to home decor. For some, cozy may mean intimate spaces with lots of quilts and throws. For others, cozy could indicate bright and airy spaces enhanced by plenty of fresh foliage.

Regardless of how they define cozy, homeowners typically want their homes to be inviting and comfortable. With that in mind, the following are some ways to impart a cozy vibe to any living space.

- *Make use of a fireplace.* Flames lapping wood (or faux wood in the event of gas-powered fireplaces) can put anyone in a tranquil state of mind. Fireplaces add instant ambiance and make great places for people to congregate and engage in conversation. During warmer months when the fire isn't blazing, decorative candles can be lit to mimic the same feel.
- *Add texture in the design.* Texture can be anything from a raised pattern on wallpaper to a knotty area rug to a mosaic piece of artwork. A home with texture tends to create cozier impressions than one with all sleek and smooth surfaces.
- *Enjoy a soft rug.* Although many design experts say hardwood floors or laminate options are easier for allergies and keeping a home clean, a soft rug underfoot can be welcoming. Rather than wall-to-wall carpeting, place area rugs in spots that can use some cozying up, such as beneath beds and even under the dining table.
- *Light candles.* The warm, flickering light of candles adds cozy vibes in spades. According to The Spruce and Paula Boston, a visual merchandiser for Festive Lights, candles can be used throughout a home to create instant atmosphere. Exercise caution with candles and fully extinguish them before retiring for the evening.
- *Update bedding for the season.* Crisp and light cotton and linen are cozy materials when the weather is warm. But when the temperature starts to dip, flannel or jersey bedding makes a bed that much more inviting, says



Real Simple.

- *Invest in lots of pillows.* Pillows can instantly make a spot more cozy, whether it's the living room sofa or an outdoor lounging nook. Look for materials that are durable for the space in which they're being used.
- *Think about warm lighting.* The transition from incandescent light bulbs to halogen and LED is beneficial from an environmental standpoint. However, LEDs illuminate with a more stark, blue light that can seem clinical in home spaces. Look for bulbs where the “temperature” can be customized. The more the color spectrum leans toward

warm light, the more cozy a space will feel. This can be enhanced by putting some lights on dimmer switches, and toning down the brightness as needed.

- *Install a bookshelf.* Even for those who are strict devotees of e-readers, a shelf full of actual books interspersed with some well-placed knickknacks can make a room feel more cozy. Books add texture, the feel of hallowed halls and libraries, and visual appeal.

Making a home more cozy doesn't have to be complicated. A few easy modifications can improve interior spaces.

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Frequently-Asked Questions About Garage Remodels



Homeowners tend to want to maximize all of the space they have in their homes. For some this may involve turning a garage from a utilitarian space into one that serves multiple purposes.

According to The Mortgage Reports, a home-buying and improvement resource, garage renovations can increase the value of a home and add living space. Garage remodels can create additional storage space, provide an area for a home gym or even create room for a home office. Prior to beginning a garage remodel, homeowners may have some common questions about the process.

- *How much does the renovation cost?* Several factors will ultimately determine the final price of a garage remodel, but HomeAdvisor says the national average for a garage remodel falls between \$6,000 and \$26,000. Most homeowners come in at around \$15,000 for a total garage conversion.
- *Will I recoup the investment?* A garage conversion adds value to a home if it creates new and usable living space. The firm Cottage, which pulled together a team of builders, architects and technologists, advises the average garage conversion provides an 80 percent return on investment. That ROI varies depending on location.
- *How can I upgrade the flooring?* Garages traditionally feature concrete floors. Although durable, concrete floors can feel damp, hard and cold underfoot. Both vinyl plank and epoxy flooring options can elevate the design and functionality of the garage.
- *Can I have the best of both worlds?* Sometimes a garage needs to serve many purposes. Lofting the garage means a homeowner can still park cars or utilize the lower space as a living area, all the while items are stored

overhead. Some flip this design scenario and have the loft area as a bedroom or finished living space, while the lower portion remains a traditional garage area. Another thought is to finish only a portion of the garage. This works well for two- or three-car garages where there will be room to park a car and the remainder will serve another purpose.

- *What are other ways to improve the garage?* Installing more windows or improving on the lighting in the garage can be important. The garage improvement experts at Danley's say window installation enables people to circulate air in the garage without having to open the garage door. Improving the lighting means the garage can still be enjoyed or utilized after dark. Spread out lighting in the garage, and use a combination of overhead and task lighting just as one would in the home itself.
- *How do I deter bugs or other pests from entering?* Insects often want to hunker down in garages, and they may find it easy to get inside a garage. Keeping the garage clean and organized is the best way to deter pests and to spot infestations before they become problematic, indicates Mosquito Joe pest control company. Reducing water and humidity in the space, weatherproofing at the base of the garage door and other entry spots and utilizing insect repellents to make the garage less hospitable also can decrease the risk of insect infestation.

Remodeling a garage can add value and plenty of usable space to a home. Whether a garage houses cars or hosts neighborhood game night, a garage renovation can be well worth the investment.



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Decorating Your Home for Halloween

Drive through a suburban neighborhood in October and it's likely you will find yards filled with inflatable witches, animatronic grim reapers and makeshift graveyards bearing witty sayings on tombstone and bony hands reaching out from the soil. Decorating for Halloween has become big business, with consumers spending a collective \$10.6 billion in this category in the United States in 2022, according to a survey conducted by Prosper Insights & Analytics and the National Retail Federation. In fact, decorations, particularly outdoor decorations, were the second most popular way to celebrate Halloween (candy still reigns supreme).

According to research by LombardoHome.com, which looked at Google searches across the country, Las Vegas, Denver, Baltimore, Portland, Oregon, and Seattle were the top five states that searched the most for Halloween decorations on average per capita. Carved pumpkins, skeletons and witch cauldrons topped the list of preferred Halloween decorations in America.

Halloween is an opportunity to pull out all the stops for this fun fall celebration. The following tips can help to turn any home into a Halloween haunt to remember.

- **Decide on a theme.** Most people fall into one of two camps when decorating for Halloween. There are those who want their homes to be frightening and full of horrific details, and others who prefer more of a fall harvest look. Identify your preferences and then



gather decorative items accordingly.

- **Shop early/late.** Ideally, the best time to buy Halloween decorations is the day after the holiday when prices get slashed (pun intended). This is the time to stock up on items for next year. You can save anywhere from 50 to 70 percent when buying late in the season. For those who need new items for this year's Halloween, craft stores and close-out retailers start putting out Halloween products in the middle of summer. Stock up as soon as you see items, as they're not likely to remain on shelves for long. By the time October

rolls around, decorations may be gone.

- **Subtle touches can work.** Though some people just love covering every square foot of a property with all things Halloween, it's also possible to make a big impact with minimal effort. Lighting, or lack thereof, can create a spooky atmosphere. Swap existing porch lights with yellow or even black lights so everything glows. Candles flickering can add mystery. Place some battery-powered or electric candles in windows for an eerie feel. Swap out your typical curtains with purple or black ones to drape the house

in even more spooky appeal.

- **Wait on the carved pumpkins.** Halloween seldom is complete without jack-o'-lanterns. But pumpkins often begin to degrade shortly after they're first carved. Use artificial pumpkins if you plan to decorate early; otherwise, wait until a day or two before Halloween to add freshly carved pumpkins to the Halloween scape. Children can come up with the design, but ensure only adults cut into the pumpkins.

Homeowners can quickly and easily transform their homes into spooky haunts this Halloween.

Safe and Effective Ways to Clean Up Autumn Leaves

Removing leaves from the yard is a task that homeowners must perform each fall. Thousands upon thousands of leaves can drop from a single tree. Multiply that by the number of trees on a property, and it's no surprise the task of leaf cleanup can seem so daunting. Furthermore, not all leaves are shed at the same time, so several cleanup sessions may be necessary before the last leaf is banished from the yard.

Just like removing snow, leaf cleanup can be a taxing job if done by hand. For people unaccustomed to exercise, cleaning up leaves can turn into quite a workout. According to the Discovery Health Calorie Counter, raking leaves for one hour can burn nearly 292 calories. Shoulders and arms will feel the burn. Raking leaves is considered moderate physical activity, similar to brisk walking. Those who find themselves straining or out of breath should take a break, and these tips also make the job safer and easier.

- **Wear layers when cleaning up leaves.** It may be cool at first, but it's easy to work up a sweat after raking for awhile. Layers can be peeled off so as not to get overheated or risk hypothermia from sweating in chilly temps.
- **Pay attention to your posture while raking.** James Weinstein, chairman

of the Department of Orthopedics at Dartmouth Medical School, recommends forming a wide base with the feet and holding the rake slightly toward the end of the handle with one hand three-quarters of the way down the handle from the other. Do not twist the spine; move your entire body. Avoid overuse of muscles on one side of the body by switching sides periodically.

- **Do not try to rake or blow leaves on windy days.** Wind will only make the task that much more difficult, which could lead to overworking oneself.
- **Avoid overfilling bags.** For those who plan to mulch and bag leaves, remember that compressed leaves can get heavy pretty quickly. Do not over-fill bags, as they can be hard to move or bring to a recycling center.

Using a leaf blower to push leaves into piles will reduce the strenuousness of the task, but leaf blowers can be heavy and noisy and gas-powered blowers can produce a considerable amount of exhaust.

Raking leaves can be quite a chore. It is important that homeowners take steps to prevent injury while cleaning up leaves in their yards.



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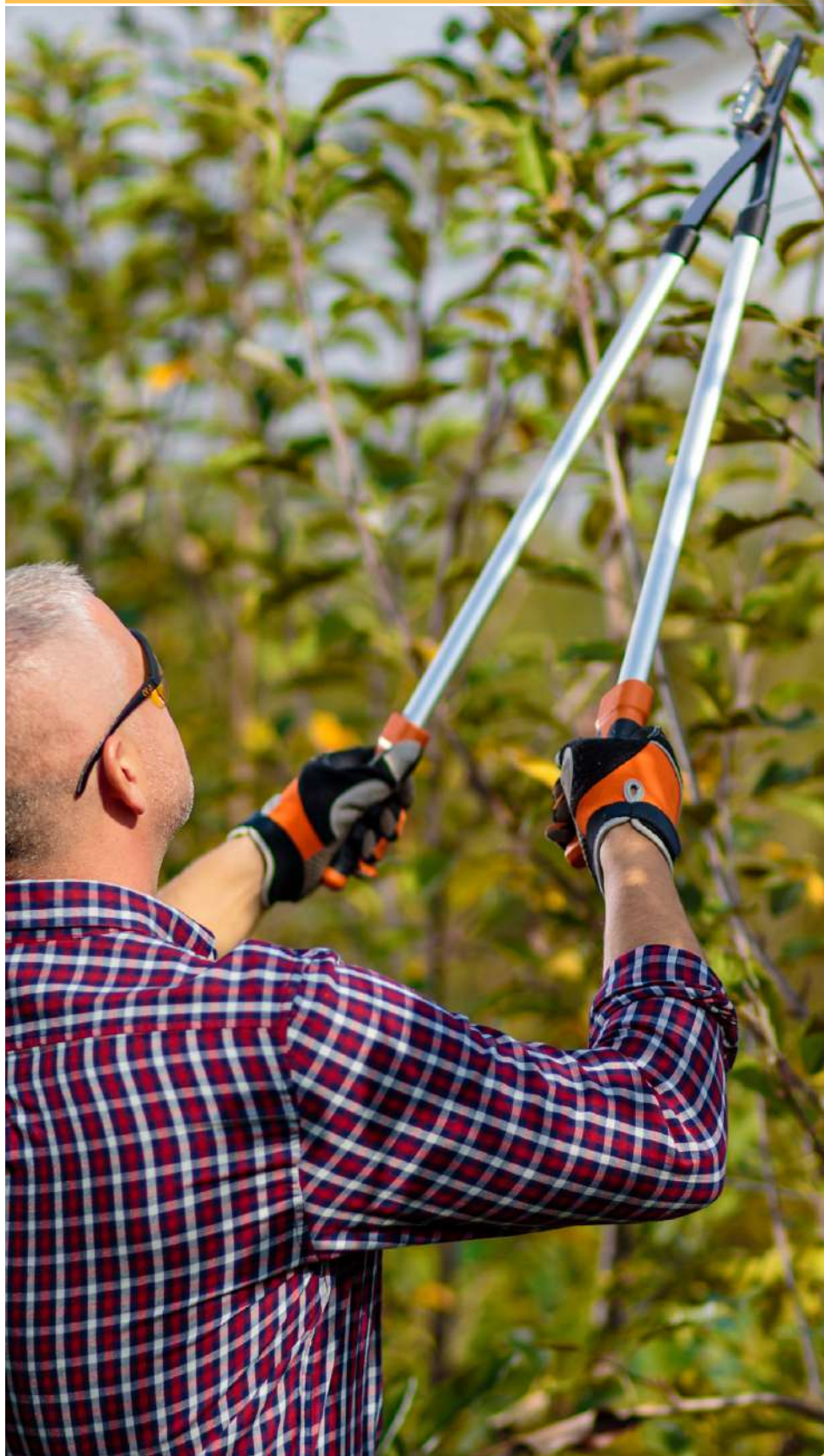
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Stay safe around power lines



As we slide into fall, many people are finishing projects around the house and yard in preparation for the coming winter months. It's important to stay safe and be aware of overhead power lines. Look up.

- Never climb power poles or transmission towers.
- Never climb trees near power lines.
- Keep equipment away from overhead lines when carrying ladders, pool skimmers, and pruning tools.
- If you are doing work close to power lines—such as trimming trees, working on your roof, or doing exterior renovations—keep yourself, your ladder, and anything you are handling a safe distance from the power line.
- Contact SMECO to disconnect power if you are doing work that requires close contact with overhead lines attached to your home.
- Use a licensed electrician for all electrical work.
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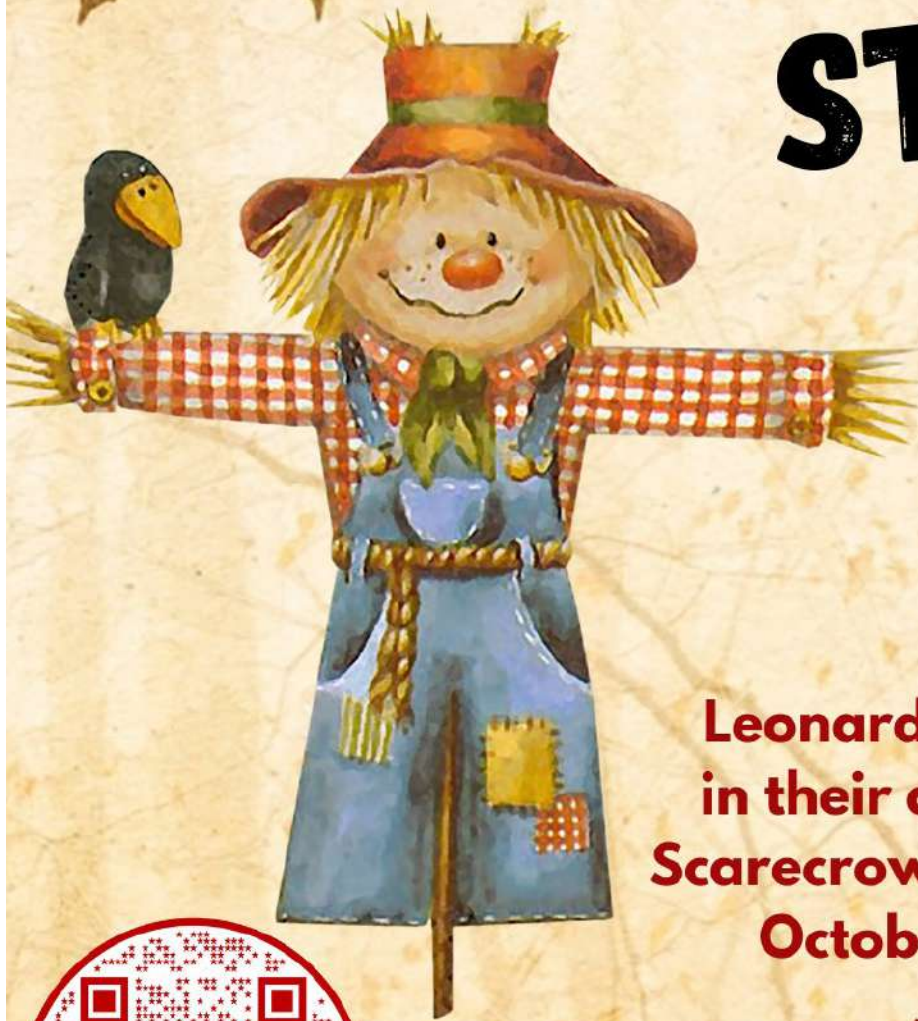
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Continued from page 15

Underground Railroad Tours

Saturday, September 7
Point Lookout State Park
 11175 Point Lookout Rd, Scotland

Meet at the Park Headquarters to caravan to tour historic sites throughout the park and hear stories about their Underground Railroad connections. The program is offered by the Friends of Point Lookout. There is an admission fee to the park.

Recovery Fest

Saturday, September 7
 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Annmari Sculpture Garden & Arts Center
 13470 Dowell Road, Solomons

Come celebrate those in recovery! There will be food, kid-friendly games, giveaways, music and art. In addition, there will be a chance to win free food tickets. All ages are welcome!

UMCES Chesapeake Biological Laboratory's Open House

Saturday, September 7
 12 p.m. – 4 p.m.
UMCES Chesapeake Biological Laboratory
 146 Williams Street, Solomons
 Admission: Free

Join us for a family-friendly event at the

Chesapeake Biological Laboratory! Lots of hands-on activities, science demos and free giveaways.

Live Music — Groovespan

Saturday, September 7
 2 p.m. – 6 p.m.
Perigeaux Vineyards & Winery
 8650 Mackall Road, St. Leonard

Pet Day 5K Run/Walk

Sunday, September 8
 8:30 a.m.
North Beach Pier Pavilion

Come on out and run in support of the Humane Society of Calvert County, MD at the Pet Day 5K Run/Walk. Packet Pickup will begin at 7:30 a.m.

Dave Hill Comedy Show

Friday, September 13
 7 p.m.
The Rex Theatre
 22695 Washington Street, Leonardtown
 Admission: \$15+

Come out to The Rex Theatre for a comedy show by Dave Hill with host Jeff Ryan! The show is 21+ and starts at 7 p.m.

Dave Hill has appeared on Netflix's The Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt, Adult Swim's Joe Pera Talks with You Amazon's The Tick, Peacock TV's Girls5Eva, Comedy Central's

@midnight and Inside Amy Schumer programs, TBS' Full Frontal with Samantha Bee, TV Land's The Jim Gaffigan Show, and TruTV's Comedy Knockout among a bunch of others. He is a frequent on-air host for HBO and Cinemax and has been on channels like MTV, VH1, BBC-America, and the Sundance Channel.

Pirate Day

Saturday, September 14
 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Calvert Marine Museum
 14200 Solomons Island Road, Solomons
 Admission: Included with museum admission; members are free

Throw on your best pirate outfit and head to the museum for some jolly good fun. Make a pirate flag, build a toy pirate boat, get a pirate tattoo, and walk the plank! Sing pirate songs at 10:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 1:30 p.m., and 2:30 p.m.

FamilyFest on the Potomac

Saturday, September 14
 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Piney Point Lighthouse Museum
 44720 Lighthouse Road, Piney Point
 Admission: Free

Enjoy a day of family fun along the Potomac and at the Piney Point Lighthouse Museum with live music, food, vendors, displays, and various family activities. Admission is free for all! Donations and membership sales

from this event support the museum and historic preservation of Piney Point Lighthouse and grounds.

Event includes live music, kids' games & activities, a food truck, raffles, and free admission to the museum, lighthouse, and historic park.

All parking will be off-site at Piney Point Elementary with free shuttles providing transportation to the event. There will be no public parking at the museum except for vehicles displaying appropriate handicap parking permits.

Indigenous Heritage Day

Saturday, September 14
 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Historic St. Mary's City
 18751 Hogaboom Lane, St. Mary's City
 Admission: \$10 adult; \$9 senior; \$6 student; free to ages 5 and younger. Free to museum members.

Visit Historic St. Mary's City to celebrate and honor the lifeways of ingenious peoples. Learn skills, try crafts, and watch demonstrations of hide tanning, pottery, and cooking to gain a new appreciation for the people who called this land home before Maryland was founded, and the culture that still exists today.

Enjoy a performance by Mark Tayac and the Piscataway Nation Singers & Dancers at 1pm. From Tayac Territory (Port Tobacco, MD), Mark Tayac travels with the Piscataway Nation Singers & Dancers presenting a col-

Continued on page 18

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Carry out available.

There will also be a silent auction!

Continued from page 17

orful, educational, and entertaining pow-wow-style event featuring American Indian Dance, Drum & Song that tells of American Indian history, culture, and traditions.

10th Annual Hunters Bash

Saturday, September 14
12 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Calvert County Fairgrounds
140 Calvert Fair Drive, Prince Frederick
Admission: \$60 (\$30 Raffle Only Ticket, \$100 Table Reservation)

Auction with great items, games and more! Over \$20K in cash and prizes! Hosted by Prince Frederick Volunteer Fire Department and Ducks Unlimited. Admission ticket includes entry into main raffle drawing, food and beverage.

Experience Calvert Festival

Saturday, September 14
12 p.m. – 5 p.m.
North Beach
Admission: Free

Enjoy family fun activities and all the things that make Calvert County the place to visit! Start with family fun activities and continue throughout beautiful North Beach “The Jewel of the Chesapeake Bay”. Taste the flavors of Calvert-great seafood, locally brewed beer, vintage wine, children’s activities and more! Shop local businesses and enjoy the history and views that makes Calvert County so unique. Come early, stay late! Rain Date Sept. 15.

Live Music — Susan St. George

Saturday, September 14
2 p.m. – 6 p.m.
Perigeaux Vineyards & Winery
8650 Mackall Road, St. Leonard

Superhero Sunday

Sunday, September 15
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Ward Farm and Nature Park
10455 Ward Road, Dunkirk
Admission: Free

Explore the amazing equipment we use and meet the heroes who keep our community safe! Enjoy a variety of games and activities that everyone will love. Discover how you can become a part of our team and make a difference in your community. Wear your Superhero Sunday best and bring your camera! Event is hosted by Calvert County Parks & Recreation Northern District.

23rd Annual Calvert County Watermen’s Festival and Boat Docking Competition

Sunday, September 15
12 p.m.
Watermen’s Wharf at the end of Solomons Island

Annual festival best known for the Boat Docking Contest, during which work boats and charter boats compete within their divisions for cash, prizes and trophies. Never a dull moment, this is a spectacular event to watch! Beer, food and soft drink sales and exhibits by sponsors will also be available. Live entertainment will be provided by Deanna Dove, the Island Girl herself. This year’s activities feature a Buoy Toss Contest for kids 7 and under, a Small Anchor Toss (8-10 year olds) and a Large Anchor Toss for 11-14 year olds. Seating is limited — plan to arrive early!

St. Mary’s County Fair

Thursday, Sept. 19 – Sunday, Sept. 22
St. Mary’s County Fairgrounds
42455 Fairgrounds Road, Leonardtown

Enjoy four days of fun at the St. Mary’s County Fair! This classic fair is filled with rides, games, food, vendors, music, and so much more. Meet all sorts of farm animals in the barns, and browse the handiwork that’s been entered into a variety of competitions including home arts, farm and garden, arts and crafts.

Village Days

Saturday, September 21
10:00 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum
10515 Mackall Road, St. Leonard
Admission: free

This free drop-in event inside our Woodland Indian Village provides hands-on instruction on various topics including pottery, baskets, stone tools, fire, and hunting. This program is generously supported by the Friends of JPP

Artsfest ‘24 Fine Arts Festival

Saturday, Sept. 21 – Sunday, Sept. 22
10 a.m. – 5 p.m
Annmarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center
13470 Dowell Road, Solomons
Admission: \$10 in advance, \$12 at the gate if not sold out; kids 11 & under free; members free

Celebrate the visual and performing arts with 170+ artists booths, 40+ performers on four stages, activities for kids, and more! Food and drink will be available for purchase. Purchase advanced tickets online at annmariegarden.org; SNAP card holders, please email info@annmariegarden.org to inquire about reduced cost tickets.

Taste the Beaches

Saturday, September 21
11 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Chesapeake Beach

Taste the Beaches is a festival-themed free event sponsored by the Town of Chesapeake Beach to highlight local food, drinks, artists and businesses. The Town of Chesapeake Beach hosts the event at no cost to guests, moving the event each year at a hosting local restaurant to showcase all that the Town has to offer! This years event will feature live music from the Ryan Forrester band, free samples from our local restaurants sponsored by the Town of Chesapeake Beach, drinks and fun for the whole family!

Calvert County Fair

Wednesday, Sept. 25 – Sunday, Sept. 29
Calvert County Fairgrounds
140 Calvert Fair Drive, Prince Frederick

Come on our and join the fun at the Calvert County Fair! See website for daily schedule. <https://calvertcountyfair.com/>

Militia Muster

Saturday, September 28

Historic St. Mary’s City
47414 Old State House Rd., St. Mary’s City

Join the St. Maries Citty Militia, a 17th-century living history group, for a day of camp acitivities including cooking, gossiping, trades, and games. The Militia will also recreate the drills and battles of colonial Maryland. Please note, muster drills can be loud.

RiverFest

Saturday, September 28
Historic St. Mary’s City
47418 Old State House Rd., St. Mary’s City

RiverFest, a celebration of the St. Mary’s River and its watershed, is free and open to everyone! Discover 101 ways to protect and enjoy our waterways, enjoy live music and enjoy tours of Historic St. Mary’s City. Visit exhibits and vendors from Southern Maryland. Come face-to-face with birds of prey, snakes, terrapins, and other seldom-seen neighbors. Join the ceremonial Wade-In at 2 p.m.

Taste of St. Mary’s

Saturday, September 28
Leonardtown Square
22690 Washington St., Leonardtown

Spend your afternoon in the heart of Leonardtown for a delightful journey through the vibrant flavors of our region at the annual Taste of St. Mary’s. Local restaurants, food trucks, and specialty food and beverage businesses come together to showcase the delectable dishes that capture the essence of our diverse food scene.

Samples of local food and beverage specialties will be available for purchase. Free entertainment and activities for kids. Admission and parking are free. Chance to win gift certificates from area restaurants and caterers.

Live Music — Bob Hale

Saturday, September 28
2 p.m. – 6 p.m.
Perigeaux Vineyards & Winery
8650 Mackall Road, St. Leonard

Publisher
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General Manager
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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.

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8.99 Lb.
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\$10.99/Lb

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Fresh Chicken
Leg Quarters
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73% Lean
Fresh
Ground Beef
3.98 Lb.

Springer Mtn. Farms
Fresh Split
Chicken Breast
1.98 Lb.

12 To 16-Oz., Selected
Oscar Mayer
Sliced Bacon
4.98

1-Piece
Baby Back
Ribs
2.98 Lb.

11 To 12-Oz., Selected
Nathan's
Beef Franks
4.98

18.4-Oz., Selected
Prairie Fresh Prime
Pork Tenderloin
6.98

USDA Inspected, Bone-In
Boston Butt
Pork Steaks
2.98 Lb.

20-Oz., Selected
Hormel
Side Dishes
3.98

27-Oz., Hot Or Mild
Swaggery's Farm
Sausage Patties
6.98

5 To 8-Oz. Large
Snow Crab
Clusters
7.98 Lb.

1-Lb., 31/40-Ct.
Southern Seas
EZ Peel Raw Shrimp
5.98

Fresh
Cod
Fillets
9.99 Lb.

Fresh
Perch
Fillets
4.99 Lb.

FARM to TABLE

Tender Sweet
In-Husk
Bi-Color Corn
3/\$1

5-Lb. Bag
Creamy
Russet Potatoes
3.48

Tangy
Fresh Large
Limes
3/\$1

3-Ct., Vine Ripe
Large
Slicing Tomatoes
3.68

Farmers Finest
Large Slicing
Cucumbers
.88

Whole
Seedless
Watermelon
3.98

FAMILY FAVORITES



22 To 28-Oz., Selected
Bush's Best
Baked Beans
2/\$5



9.5 To 20-Oz. Selected
Chips Ahoy
Cookies
2/\$5



12-Pk.
Yoo-Hoo
Chocolate Drink
5.48



7.5 To 8-Oz., Selected
General Mills
Bugles or Chex Mix
2/\$6



18-Oz., Selected
Sweet Baby Ray's
Barbecue Sauce
2/\$4



128-Oz., Selected
Arizona
Tea
2/\$7



.3 To 3.9-Oz., Selected
Jell-O Gelatin
Or Pudding
2/\$5



7-Oz.
Jet-Puffed
Marshmallow Cream
2/\$3

14-Oz. Spicy Brown Or
Heinz
Mustard
3/\$5

16-Oz.
A1 New York
Steakhouse Marinade
2/\$4

7.25 To 7.5-Oz., Selected
Betty Crocker
Suddenly Pasta Salad
2/\$4

9.4 To 14-Oz., Selected Velveeta Or
Kraft Deluxe
Macaroni & Cheese
2/\$7

16.5 To 19.25-Oz. Buffalo Ranch Or
Heinz Mashup
Mayochup Sauce
4.48

3.7 To 5.98-Oz. Maxwell House Or
Gevalia
K-Cup Coffee
6.98

24.5 To 30.6-Oz., Selected
Maxwell House
Coffee
10.98



30-Oz., Selected
Miracle
Whip
3.98

38-Oz.
Heinz
Ketchup
3.98

15-Oz.
Van Camp's
Pork And Beans
5/\$5

16-Oz. Creamy Or Crunchy
Food Club
Peanut Butter
2.28

5-Oz., Selected
Mrs. Cubbison's
Croutons
2/\$3

5 To 6-Oz., Selected
Pam Cooking
Spray
3.78

10-Oz. Bunker Hill Or
Castleberry's
Hot Dog Chili Sauce
.98

12 To 16-Oz., Selected
Hidden Valley
Dressing
2/\$7

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28	29	30	31	1	2	3

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Reddi Wip
Cream

2/\$6



8-Ct., Selected
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Go-Gurt

2.78



8-Ct., Cinnamon Rolls, Biscuits Or
Pillsbury
Crescent Rolls

3.48



52-Oz., Selected
Gold Peak
Sweet Tea

2/\$5



52-Oz., Selected
Simply
Juice

3.98



16-Oz., Selected
Dean's
Dips

2/\$4



48-Oz., Selected
Breyer's
Ice Cream

2/\$7



8-Oz., Selected
Cool Whip
Topping

2/\$4



24.5 To 40-Oz., Selected
Marie Callender's
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5.98



5 To 20-Ct., Selected
Nestle
Ice Cream

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7.5-Oz., Combination Or Pepperoni
Totino's
Pizza Rolls

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19.6-Oz., Selected
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Sheriff's Office Introduces School Resource Officers



The Calvert County Sheriff's Office would like to introduce our 2024-2025 Calvert County School Resource Officers (SROs).

Our SROs are hand-selected, specially trained, and assigned to protect and serve the education environment of Calvert County Public Schools (CCPS). SROs are more than law enforcers; they are mentors, educators, and counselors, who help to ensure the safety, security, and welfare of CCPS students and staff. CCSO SROs are excited for the new school year and to welcome back students!

Front L to R: DFC Durnbaugh (Northern Middle), DFC Clark (Huntingtown High), DFC Murphy (Southern Middle and St. Leonard Elementary), and DFC Parks (Windy Hill Middle, Windy Hill

Elementary, and Beach Elementary)

Back L to R: DFC Buckmaster (Patuxent Appeal Campus), DFC Hall (Mt. Harmony Elementary), F/Sgt. O'Donnell (Sunderland Elementary), DFC Krueger (Mill Creek Middle and Dowell Elementary), Sheriff Ricky Cox, DFC Spalding (Calvert Middle and Calvert Country), Sgt. Woodford (Mutual Elementary and Barstow Elementary), Cpl. Holt (Plum Point Middle, Plum Point Elementary, and Huntingtown Elementary), DFC Naughton (Northern High), DFC Childress (Patuxent High), and DFC Contic (Calvert High and Career and Technology Center).

Press Release from CCSO

Cruizin on the Rooftop



There were 77 cars at the Aug. 23 Rooftop Car & Truck Cruise Nite at Rod 'N' Reel parking garage by the Chesapeake Bay. Next cruise night will be Aug. 30, 4 to 8 p.m.

Purchase Price Increased for Land Preservation Programs

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) has established a new price per TDR (Transferable Development Right) for the Purchase and Retire (PAR) and TDR Reserve land preservation programs. The price has been increased from \$5,000 to \$6,000 per acre.

Rural Planner II Jennifer David explained at the Aug. 27 BOCC meeting, "The BOCC established the PAR Fund in 1992 to 'purchase, retire and permanently remove TDRs from the development rights market, thereby protecting additional farmland acres from development.' The TDR Reserve is a county-managed program that facilitates TDR sales between farmers and developers and acts as a revolving fund. Discussion: There is \$10,480,957.00 available for PAR Fund purchases and \$603,125.00 available for the TDR Reserve in the budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025. In recent years PAR has been funded by the combination of a small portion of the state agricultural transfer tax dedicated to agricultural preservation and contributions from the county's General Fund. Since 2021, the Agricultural Land Preservation Fund has received \$1.70 of each \$5 collected in recordation taxes to directly support land preservation in Calvert County. However, the FY 2024 Land Preservation Budget did not include those funds. On December 12, 2023,

budget amendment 2024-00156 was adopted by the BOCC restoring funding from the recordation tax to the Land Preservation Fund. The PAR funding for FY 2025 includes \$10,000 in intergovernmental revenue generated by the state agricultural transfer tax, prior year Agricultural Land Preservation Fund balances of approximately \$8,184,986, and \$2,900,000 in recordation taxes allocated from the General Fund to make the budget whole and correct the fund balance as a result of the FY 2024 budget adjustment. The TDR Reserve funding comes solely from the prior year's balance in the revolving fund. The Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board (APAB) recommends a purchase price of \$5,800 per TDR for the FY 2025 PAR cycle and the TDR Reserve. The APAB assessed TDR and land values when establishing their recommended price. There is a need to fairly compensate participants for the value of the land they have protected while seeking to reach as many applicants as possible and utilize the available funding to its maximum potential."

During the discussion Commissioner Mike Hart spoke in favor of the land preservation programs and favored providing more funding per TDR if that would further enhance their sales. However, staff told Hart that there wasn't much correlation between price and the number of TDRs sold in a given year.

There are approximately 6,000 TDRs

available for sale, with only a few hundred at most a year sold under the PAR program.

Hart said, "Why would government do this? Why would you take taxpayer dollars? Because once you start developing, there's this misnomer that taxes actually pay for all these services. They pay a portion. But as we've discussed in other budgets, just one child is \$8,000 county contribution, and that's going up every year. We're going to blink, it's going to be nine, \$10,000. So even though as painful as these tax bills, and trust me, I feel it, if your tax bill is six or \$7,000 and you have two kids in school, you know what I mean? We've had many, many discussions on services. So, where I'm going with this PAR piece is, I don't know how the agricultural community feels about this, but to me, I don't think we're putting enough incentive in there to start retiring some of these off."

After much discussion, it was decided to modestly increase the recommendation of \$5,800 per TDR to \$6,000.

Prior to the discussion, Commissioner President Buddy Hance and Commissioners Ireland and Cox reported that they or their families held TDRs.

But County Attorney John Norris stated, "All persons disqualified from participating under this subsection shall disclose the nature and circumstances of the conflict and may participate in the matter or act if the disqualification leaves the body with less than a quorum capable of acting within a reasonable



Commissioner Mike Hart

time. This conflict would continue until the next election, possibly after. So, we're recommending that the board continue to sit, and thank you for disclosing your conflicts as required by the ethics ordinance."

Hance said, "I haven't sold TDRs because I don't want to limit my options, because I have children and I have grandchildren. And when you start selling your TDRs, you've taken away those abilities. So, it's not all about money."

In the final unanimous vote, all five commissioners participated.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

CALVERT COUNTY POLICE BLOTTER

During the week of August 12, 2024 – August 18, 2024, Calvert County Sheriff's Office Deputies responded to 1,888 calls for service throughout the community including, but not limited to:

- Check Welfare / Mental Health: 80
- Disorderly: 14
- Domestic: 24
- Motor Vehicle Crashes: 33
- Patrol Checks / School Checks: 879
- Suspicious Persons / Vehicles: 25
- Traffic Complaints: 70
- 911 Hang Ups: 83
- ARRESTS: 33



William Allen Carter, Jr.

CDS Violation: 24-63071 On August 17, 2024, DFC Lewis and Deputy Tunnell initiated a traffic stop on a vehicle at the intersection of Main St. and N. Solomons Island Road in Prince Frederick,

for a suspended registration. Investigation revealed two halves of a pill, a steel razor blade, two blue capsules, and two cut straws with white powdery residue were located inside the vehicle. The driver, **William Allen Carter, Jr.**, 58 of St. Leonard, was arrested and transported to the Calvert

County Detention Center and charged with CDS: Possession-Not Cannabis and CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia.



Christopher Berry Walton

CDS Violation: 24-63377 On August 18, 2024, Deputy Daily initiated a traffic stop on a vehicle for multiple traffic violations at the Sunderland Park & Ride in Sunderland. Contact was made with the driver, **Christopher Berry Walton**, 49 of Chesapeake Beach and the passenger, **Meagan Marie Bailey**, 30 of Harpers Ferry, WV. Further investigation revealed three clear smoking devices with burnt residue, a



Meagan Marie Bailey

crack pipe, a push rod, and crack rocks were located throughout the vehicle. Walton was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center where he informed deputies he was possessing a plastic bag containing a large amount suspected crack (14 grams). Walton was charged with CDS: Possession

with Intent to Distribute Narcotics, CDS: Possession-Not Cannabis and CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia. Bailey was transported to CCDC and charged with CDS: Possession-Not Cannabis and CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia.



Ronald Lee Russey-Thyes

Property Destruction:

24-63164 On August 17, 2024, Cpl. Barger responded to the Calvert County Detention Center in Prince Frederick, for the report of property destruction. Investigation

revealed that inmate **Ronald Lee Russey-Thyes**, 25 of no fixed address, broke a sprinkler head off the wall while in a booking cell. The broken sprinkler head caused water to come out of the cell door and the fire alarm activated. Russey-Thyes was charged with Malicious Destruction of Property less than \$1000.00.

Resisting Arrest: 24-63257 On August 18, 2024, Deputy Campbell responded to the Prince Frederick Inn located at 75 Main Street in Prince Frederick, for the report of a suspicious person. Contact was made with **Quinn McDonald Bannister**, 59 of Prince



Quinn McDonald Bannister

Frederick. Bannister who initially refused to identify himself. Further investigation revealed Bannister had an active warrant for his arrest. Bannister became combative while resisting arrest. Bannister was

transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with Resisting/ Interfere with Arrest, Failure to Obey a Reasonable/ Lawful order of a Law Enforcement Officer, Trespassing on Private Property, and served his warrant.

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

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

Public Hearing Held on Local Bid Preference

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners is one step closer to enacting a policy that will give a bidding preference to local businesses. The commissioners held a public hearing on Aug. 27 on the proposal, at which three people spoke in support. County Attorney John Norris said the board would not be able to have an effective date for the regulations any earlier than Oct. 1, the date in which the legislation giving the commissioners enabling authority goes into effect.

Prior to the public hearing, Director of Budget and Finance Bruce Miller read a memo that said, "In 2018, the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners requested and was given authority to apply a reciprocal preference when the warning contracts. The reciprocal preference requires that the county give a preference to a residential bidder over a non-resident bidder that is equal to the preference given by the county or state in which the non-resident bidder has its principal office to BRI bidders that have a principal office in that county or state. The county reciprocal preference is intent to help a Calvert County business that is being penalized for being a Calvert County business where the lowest bidder on a Calvert County job enjoys a local preference in its own jurisdiction and analysis of Calvert County's procurement activities

from 2022 to 2024 shows that despite the reciprocal preference, non-resident businesses prevail over local and both participation and amount awarded. Combining local preference policy policies with reciprocal preference considerations could help to level the field for local bus businesses, ensuring they have a fair chance in the competitive bidding process."

At the hearing, Calvert County Chamber of Commerce President/CEO Kathryn Maney said, "On behalf of the Chamber board of directors and our members, I want to thank the Board of County Commissioners and their staff for working with the Chamber and our partners, Calvert County Minority Business Alliance, and the Southern Maryland Minority Chamber of Commerce. Who would've thought we would've got here three long years, but we persevered."

Maney noted that the new program would be assessed in a year. "Who knows how this is going to work? It's new, right? Other counties have had it, they've had to turn it off. But I can see that this is a place that we can start bringing monies back for the government, for our vendors, our businesses, and I look forward to working with you on a continued basis to make sure that this works for all."

Gail Reed, a local school bus contractor, and Cynthia Thorne-Carter, owner of a transportation business, also spoke. Thorne-Carter, a chamber and Minority Business

Alliance member, said, "I just want to encourage you to give this policy a chance."

Commissioner President Buddy Hance said, "Statistics say that when we spend our money with local vendors, 80 percent of that money stays in the community. So, for some people out there to say you shouldn't be paying more or not accepting the lowest bid, the payback that we get more than makes up for the little bit of preference that we're going to give them."

The proposal as submitted by Miller, would be for solicitations under \$30,000:

- If a resident business is involved in the bid process, and their bid is not the lowest, the resident business shall be allowed a 5 percent local bid preference.
- If there is more than one resident business, the lowest resident business will be selected for the local bid preference. If this bidder declines, the process will continue until the resident business list is completed.
- If all local businesses decline, the contract goes to the lowest non-resident bidder.

For \$30,000 and over:

- If a resident business bidder is involved in the bid process, and their bid is not the lowest, the resident bidder may be allowed a 5 percent local bid preference, not to exceed \$25,000.
- If there is more than one resident busi-



Calvert Chamber of Commerce President/CEO
Kathy Maney

ness, the lowest resident business will be selected for the local bid preference. If this bidder declines, the process will continue until the resident business list is completed.

- If all local businesses decline, the contract goes to the lowest non-resident bidder.

The commissioners will keep the record open for at least 10 days before making a decision.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

157th Calvert County Jousting Tournament



AUGUST 31, 2024

Christ Episcopal Church

3100 Broomes Island Rd (MD 264) Port Republic MD 20676

410-586-0565

Jousting Begins 12pm

Bazaar & Children's Corner 10am – 2pm | Music in Colonial Church (air conditioned) 1pm – 4pm

Parish Hall Supper (\$28/adult, \$12/child, under 6 free) 2pm – 6pm | Boxed Supper 12pm – 6pm

Commissioners Replace Planner Lisa Williams

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) at their Aug. 27 meeting replaced Lisa Williams on the Calvert County Planning Commission with Dale Weems. Williams' first term ends on Sept. 1 and she had expressed an interest in being reappointed.

Williams term on the planning commission has been controversial, with her recusing herself on many occasions. Recently she has come under fire during the citizen outcry over the proposed Lusby Villas garden apartment project. An ethics complaint was filed against her over her alleged failure to report she was a licensed real estate agent on her financial disclosure form.

One of her most vocal critics, Myra Gowans, one the founders of Calvert Citizens United, spoke of her again at the Aug. 21 planning commission meeting after Lusby Villas prevailed by a 4-3 final vote (see separate story).

Gowans said, "You have a young lady sitting here that has been a licensed real estate agent and never disclosed it. If you look on the Ethics Commission forms on page six, she just says she works for GSA and her dad's firm BiltRite Homes. It's under law, under COMAR [Code of Maryland Regulations], the law for licensing and regulation, she has to report that. And she has to tell you at this meeting before she votes that she is a licensed real estate agent for anybody sitting in the audience so that they know. And that's a responsibility that she has."

At her last meeting and for the first time Williams spoke out in her own defense. She said, "I would like to respond on the record to prior statement made by Ms. Myra Gowans and Mr. Josh Johnson on behalf of Calvert County, Citizens United and Concerned Citizens of Calvert County at tonight's meeting as well as July 9th and July 17th meetings regarding my participation in the vote on the Lusby Villas Project. At the July 9, 2024, informational meeting and after my vote approving the preliminary subdivision plan for Lusby Villas on May 15th, 2024. Ms. Myra Gowans and Mr. Josh Johnson stated that and filed against me on behalf of Calvert County Citizens United and Concerned Citizens of Calvert County. Referring to a female member of the planning Commission and using the pronoun 'she' obviously referring to me. And I must

mention my name was posted in the Calvert County Times. Ms. Gowans stated that she was seeking through her ethics complaint to have my vote on the Lusby Villas preliminary subdivision plan nullified and to block me from voting on future matters. At the July 17th, 2024, meeting, Ms. Myra Gowans and Mr. Joss Johnson again stated along with Mr. Joe Kline, that I had a conflict of interest, which was in the subject of an ethics complaint."

Williams added, "Ms. Gowans recklessly alleged that I 'have not followed the law by not disclosing in my financial disclosure forms for 2022 and 2023, that my real estate salesperson license was in referral status.' Apparently, Ms. Gowans did not even bother to carefully read the financial disclosure form, which only requires disclosures of sources of earned income in applicable years. To the very best of my knowledge, the forms were properly completed and were submitted to the Ethics Commission for review every year."

Williams insisted, "Since my tenure on the board, my application to the Board of County Commissioners stated I was a real estate agent. During the July 9th, 2024, information meeting, Mr. Johnson stated that I had financial interest in the Lusby Villas because I was a real estate agent, and the Lusby Villas apartment project involved leasing and sale of real estate. The comment is also absurd and false. Lusby Villas is a proposed apartment project, so typically a leasing of apartments would be handled by a professional management company, not real estate brokers or agents. Let me make that clear, as I have no financial or personal gain whatsoever in Lusby Villas. Thus, I have no conflict of interest or appearance of conflict of interest."

Williams said, "During my four years of serving on the Planning Commission, I have always, always, always tried hard to disclose any interest in a matter that could be perceived or potentially perceived as a conflict of interest and have consulted with counsel for the planning commission many times to avoid any appearance of conflict of interest. I am proud of my four years of service and the integrity and character with which I have served as a member of the planning commission. As a member of the planning commission, I have a public duty to vote on matters properly before the planning commission unless I am prohibited from doing so."

She said county code says, "appointed official shall not participate in a matter if the appointed official has an interest in a matter of which the elected official reasonably may be expected to know. Interest is defined as any economic interest, either legal or equitable. As stated, I have no financial or other interest whatsoever in the Lusby Villas project. Any suggestion or innuendo to the contrary is simply false."

The appointment of Weems to replace Williams drew concerns from Commissioner Vice President Catherine Grasso and Commissioner Mike Hart at the Aug. 27 meeting.

Grasso said, "We should have clean commissions, clean boards. We have a young lady coming off, well she's off now, and her dad was a builder/developer, and she had to recuse herself numerous times. Last couple of times in votes that were pertinent, she did not recuse herself and the public was very upset about it. We got a lot of chatter about the fact that, who puts these people on these boards? Who are they in the pocket of? What I want to avoid is, I want to avoid the perception of anything out of the ordinary."

She said, "Now, Mr. Weems, great guy, but in the past five years he has pulled 27 permits. He does commercial and residential building. He's president of the building board, he's on the liquor board, he's on the architectural review, Waterman's Wharf oversight, and a part-time building inspector. And he will have to resign from the building inspector position. While I appreciate his ser-



Lisa Williams

vice to the county, the perception of us putting someone else on the board with another connection to building is not transparent. It's not something that I want to see. So therefore, my vote will be no for Dale Weems.

Commissioner Todd Ireland spoke in support of Weems. He said, "He's a person that has morals and he has high integrity. He's going to do the right thing. I know he'll do the right thing," adding "Dale's given back to his community his entire life. He cares about our county and he's going to do the right thing."

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Lusby Villas Receives Final Approval

Planning Commission Casts 4-3 Vote

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Planning Commission on Aug. 21 voted 4-3 on the subdivision plan for the Lusby Villas garden apartment project that was the final approval necessary for it to proceed. Commission Chairman John Toohey broke the tie and the same members voted the same way as they had in several other votes, including the May 15 preliminary site plan approval.

A petition with 1,200 signatures against the project was presented prior to the vote. Later in the meeting, Myra Gowans, who is consulting the community members who opposed the project, said, "I want to tell you, you guys just bought yourselves a lawsuit."

Before the vote, County Attorney John Norris told the planners that the property owner had executed the deed transferring two acres to the county that is intended as a village green for one dollar. That ratified a memorandum of understanding between the then planning commission and the property owner executed in 2005.

Commission member Chris Gadway, who has been the most vocal member against the project, said, "I personally believe that the planning commission is here to sit in representation, and I believe that planning commission members need to listen to the community and the people in the community and listen to their voices."

The commission was told that the density



Artist's rendering of the Lusby Villas apartment project

of the property is the same today as it was in 2005, and the project was allowed in the zone in which it is located. In all, 276 units are proposed.

After the vote, both County Commissioner Vice President Catherine Grasso and Commissioner Mike Hart spoke during the time set aside for public comment. Grasso said, "This is a comment in the form of a question, and this is for our county attorney. It's been my understanding that the Board of County Commissioners had no recourse to help our citizens with their dismay over what is being done to them. And John, we need to talk later. I certainly hope there's

nothing we could have done to help these people out."

Hart said, "The five county commissioners are elected to represent 90,000 people. Part of our duties are to put together a planning commission to help in those duties. State mandates the board, there's seven of you here. You are not beholden to time constraints, not beholden to any political pressures, but you are beholden to make sure it's done right."

David Bury addressed the lack of an updated traffic study. That is currently in the works, but the vote was taken anyway. He said, "Unfortunately now I think the

planning commission is in a very difficult dilemma regarding the traffic study. The original Lusby Villas traffic study, as submitted to you back on 15 May, was invalid under county regulations because the data underlying that study was too old. That led to a county commissioners request for a new traffic study, which is now under review."

He added, "So when you are voting to approve the development, that includes a statement that it conforms to the adequate public facilities ordinance, you do not have sufficient documentation based on a legitimate accepted traffic study to make that finding. Now I understand that the issue in front of the planning commission tonight is just a formal plat approval. So, you are not asked to actually approve the development in terms of adequate public facilities. And that opportunity for the planning commission was on 15 May, but the question still remains. You have not been able to get the right traffic data to be able to make a valid determination of conformity under the adequate public facilities ordinance. And because of that, I think that you probably have the legal responsibility to go back and assess whether adequate public facilities are granted."

Tracy Malloy, who presented the petition, said, "What I do care about is the future of Lusby and my son who's sitting back there; you guys just sat up there and voted his future down the toilet."

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“YOU GUYS JUST SAT UP THERE AND VOTED HIS FUTURE DOWN THE TOILET.”

LUSBY RESIDENT TRACY MALLOY ON IMPACT OF LUSBY VILLAS VOTE ON HER SON.



LOCAL 3
Lusby Villas approved on split vote



LOCAL 6
Preservation program price increased



4 ON THE COVER
Williams replaced on Planning Commission

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, AUG 29	FRI, AUG 30	SAT, AUG 31	SUN, SEP 1
Mostly Sunny Hi: 86° Lo: 69°	Scattered Storms Hi: 77° Lo: 68°	AM Clouds/PM Sun Hi: 85° Lo: 70°	PM Showers Hi: 84° Lo: 69°
MON, SEP 2	TUE, SEP 3	WED, SEP 4	THU, SEP 5
Mostly Sunny Hi: 80° Lo: 61°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 75° Lo: 59°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 76° Lo: 59°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 77° Lo: 60°

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