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Calvert County Times

THURSDAY, JULY 11, 2024

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**North Beach Hires
Town Administrator**

**Solomons Seeks Grant
for Rescue Boat**

**Dunkirk Motorcyclist
Killed in Crash**



LUSBY VILLAS DRAW FIRE

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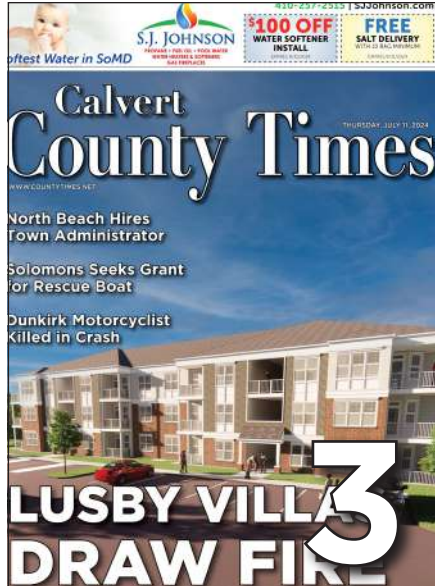
“WE ARE JUST AS GOOD AS THE REST OF THE COUNTY.”
COMMISSIONER MIKE HART ON HIS AREA — SOUTH COUNTY



LOCAL 5
Grant money needed for rescue boat



LOCAL 6
Commissioners approve appeals board rules change



ON THE COVER 3
Residents angered over proposed apartment complex project

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, JUL 11	FRI, JUL 12	SAT, JUL 13	SUN, JUL 14
Partly Cloudy Hi: 89° Lo: 73°	Thunderstorms Hi: 79° Lo: 73°	AM Thunderstorms Hi: 90° Lo: 74°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 93° Lo: 75°
MON, JUL 15	TUE, JUL 16	WED, JUL 17	THU, JUL 18
PM Thunderstorms Hi: 96° Lo: 76°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 96° Lo: 76°	PM Thunderstorms Hi: 95° Lo: 75°	Scattered Storms Hi: 85° Lo: 70°

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Citizens Denounce Lusby Apartment Project

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

A large crowd packed into the Southern Community Center on July 9 for an informational meeting on the proposed 276-unit garden apartment project called Lusby Villas. Dozens of people spoke during the two-and-a-half-hour meeting with the overwhelming majority speaking against over traffic, infrastructure, school and crime concerns.

Director of Planning and Zoning Mary Beth Cook said, "From 1967, which was the first year that Calvert County had zoning to 1984, the zoning ordinance allowed multi-family attached dwelling units, which are also known as apartments in the R-2 zoning district only. That was the only place it was permitted. In 1984, the regulations and the maps changed to create a town center zoning districts, and that was regulated by the Calvert County Zoning Ordinance until each town center master plan and zoning ordinance was created. So, from 1984, when the town center was created, this property was put in the town center and apartments could have been built because it was a permitted use."

Cook explained, "In 2005 there was a memorandum of understanding, which was approved by the Planning Commission in March of 2021. The concept plan was approved for the development of this site as apartments by the Planning Commission. And in May of 2024, the subdivision preliminary plan was approved by the Planning Commission."

That memorandum provided that the



developer donates two acres for public use in exchange for being allowed the density he could have gotten for the entire property.

The development process is fairly far along with only one more approval needed, from the planning commission for final subdivision approval at their Aug. 21 meeting.

The informational meeting was called by Commissioner Mike Hart, who said, "There's five county commissioners and there's seven members of the planning commission. And all the blame and everything that goes with it lies right there. They're really good folks. They really are. I understand the frustration in the room because I'm with you on that. And, no disrespect, I know there's always differing views. There are some people for things, some against. I've always believed we're a bedroom community. I've been on the record for that for years. There's over a thousand apartments going to be in Prince Frederick before we know it. Over a thou-

sand. How many do we need?"

He added, "Every time I turn around, there's another apartment project. Maybe there's a line of Calvert County residents standing in line saying, I need an apartment. I don't know. But they don't come and see me. I can tell you that the people that come see me, they're like, Mike, I don't want it."

Commissioner Catherine Grasso said, "I decided to do my own investigation. I decided to dig and dig deep with how this started, where we are now. And I have to agree with Commissioner Hart that we do not have the infrastructure."

Even though the commissioners don't have a vote on the project, they came in for considerable criticism from the speakers. One speaker charged several of the commissioners with a conflict of interest for receiving campaign contributions from the developer and said they should recuse themselves.

In addition to the two commissioners, three planning commission members spoke. Cook said those less than majority numbers were by design to avoid a quorum by the two bodies.

Planning Commission Chairman John Toohey, who lives in Lusby and who has supported Lusby Villas in previous votes, said, "I sat on the committees and the sessions that we had to plan this town center 25, 30 years ago. And at that time, the idea of apartments came into the plan, and I was one of the folks that was against those apartments at that time. What changed my mind was the folks that addressed the issue and said, it's not for others. It's not for different people. It's not for somebody outside of town. It's for us because we have a life cycle. That means that sometimes we rent and sometimes we own."

Planning commissioner members James McQueen and Chris Gadway spoke against the proposed project.

Calvert Citizens United representatives Myra Gowans and Joshua Johnson said they had filed an ethics complaint against a planning commission member. Although they did not identify that member, based on their description of the person as being female and a real estate agent, that member would have to be Lisa Williams, a previous supporter of Lusby Villas.

Lucy Far said, "I know a lot of people

may disagree, but I love the fact that the county is continuing to grow because I was born and raised here, so my roots are here."

But most speakers expressed concerns similar to Joan Buck, who said, "I have heard everything tonight and we, the citizens of Calvert County, should be concerned. But first of all, I feel that everyone, as far as the county commissioners, should be listening and taking everything into account, what has been said tonight, because we have voted for you and you should be working for us, the people, to do your best to ensure that things are happening that's best for our community and for the people that live in the community. So, I do want to challenge you to take everything that you have heard back and take it into consideration and how it affects us here in Lusby."

"And for the people and the citizens of Lusby, I want to say this to you. This is what you have heard. This project will affect our waterways. We don't have the infrastructure in place right now for a project like this. Yes, it will affect traffic patterns and traffic on the Thomas Johnson Bridge. Yes, it will affect supply and demand even in our grocery stores. And yes, it will affect nature, in our wildlife. Yes, it will increase crime in our area here. And yes, it will require more public service as we get more crime and everything in the area."

"So, this is what I want to challenge you with, citizens of Lusby, citizens of Calvert County. Do not sit on this. Let your voices be heard. Go to whatever meetings there may be because we are fighters. Let us do what we need to do to ensure that the people that we have hired for us as our voice, to ensure that they're doing what they are supposed to do for us."

The concluding speaker, Corinne Hart, a retired school nurse, talked of the lack of infrastructure for first responders. Then she said, "We need to get ourselves together and we need to be able to be prepared to take care of our community. Now, I can't do that anymore. I'm not a nurse at Dowell anymore. I got cancer. So now I'm home doing my own fight. But I am counting on you to make this right. Please tell our commission, our planning board, our educational community, we need you to make this right."

Hart said in conclusion, "I can't tell you how much it means for you guys to show up. You know, there's people that say Lusby doesn't show, and when you see our high schoolers out there and how we travel, we do show. I don't know what it is. It's been since I was a kid, but at some point, enough's enough. You know, we are just as good as the rest of the county. I just want anything, no matter what is in this county, just to be done right."

He added, "All I'm asking of any project. Do it right. That's all. Because we deserve that."

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North Beach Hires Former County Official To Be First Town Administrator

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Town of North Beach has announced that Linda Vassallo will be its first Town Administrator. The town, in a press release, said, "This pivotal milestone in administrative leadership marks a significant step forward for our community. With Vassallo at the helm, the town is poised to evolve and adapt to meet modern challenges while preserving the unique qualities that make North Beach special. Her expertise and vision will drive innovative solutions and strategic initiatives, ensuring the town's growth and prosperity for years to come."

The press release went on to say, "Vassallo brings a wealth of experience in local government and business to her new role, where she will oversee the day-to-day operations of the town and work closely with Mayor Mike Benton and Town Council."

"We are thrilled to welcome Linda Vassallo as North Beach's first Town Administrator. This pivotal step signifies our commitment to enhanced governance and community development," said Benton. "Linda's extensive background in public service and proven leadership abilities make her the ideal candidate to help guide our town as we continue

to build on our strengths and embrace new opportunities for the benefit of every member of our community."

Vassallo previously served in several leadership roles with Calvert County government where she held the position of Deputy County Administrator, Director of the Department of Communications and Media Relations, and Director of the Department of Economic Development.

The press release said, "Vassallo worked alongside a team of professional leadership to help earn the county's first triple-A credit rating from all three credit rating agencies in 2016 and served as the utility relations representative throughout her tenure."

While economic development director, Vassallo helped secure the Cove Point LNG Payment in Lieu of Taxes [PILOT] which was to be followed up after five years with a revised payment method based on property tax assessment. That PILOT expiration contributed to the significant budget shortfall experienced by the county in the budget which became effective July 1.

Vassallo also held several positions with private sector organizations supporting federal government functions in public information, public affairs, and marketing roles, including the United States Enrichment

Corporation (Centrus), Science Applications International Corporation and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, the press release stated.

"I have been incredibly fortunate throughout my career to work and learn from so many talented individuals," Vassallo said. "I am deeply honored and grateful for the opportunity to serve as the first Town Administrator of North Beach. I am excited to embark on this journey to support the residents in making meaningful contributions our community."

Vassallo earned her bachelor's degree in Mass Communication from Towson University. She is a 2007 graduate of Leadership Maryland and 2020 graduate of the Academy of Excellence, Maryland Association of Counties. She is a past member of the Leadership Southern Maryland (LSM) board, past president and member of the LSM Leadership Circle, prior board member to the Patuxent Partnership, the Maryland Economic Development Association, past president of the Southern Maryland Economic Development Association, and former member of the Public Relations Society of America.

"I am honored to join the Town of North Beach and look forward to working with



Linda Vassallo

the Mayor, Town Council, and residents to achieve our shared goals," Vassallo said. "Together, we will build on the town's rich heritage and ensure a vibrant future for all."

dickmyers@countytimes.net



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Grant Sought to Help Pay for New Solomons Rescue Boat



By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) has approved applying for a federal grant to help defray the costs for a new rescue boat for the Solomons Volunteer Rescue Squad and Fire Department (SVRSFD).

The commissioners have allocated \$1 million for this purchase in the approved Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 capital budget. The current price for replacing Boat 3 is \$1.2 million.

But Grant Writer Barbarea Warner explained to the BOCC on July 9 that the purchase price does not include “the trailer, the boat lift, the storage, or the sophisticated CBRNE detection and protection equipment.”

She explained, “CBRNE stands for chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear. So, the detection equipment would detect vapors or spills, et cetera. The protection of a filtration system on the cabin of the boat. And that is for our first responders.”

The cost of the extras is yet to be determined, although the CBRNE is estimated at around \$100,000.

The federal grant is for \$600,000 with a \$200,000 county match. If the total cost

comes in less than \$1.6 million, the county would reduce its total contribution of \$1 million by that amount.

Warner said the closest agency that has such a system is in Dahlgren, Va. The commissioners questioned the need, expressing concerns about the annual maintenance cost of the equipment, but Warner said the grant from the Fiscal Year 2024 Port Security Grant Program envisions having such equipment for port security.

Warner said, “In the port security grant, there are high priorities with that grant and the CBRNE equipment is one of those. But I honestly feel that that’s for our area, the things that we have and hosting two utility companies. I personally think that it’s a good thing to have. I’d rather have it and not need it than to need it and not have it.”

Of the Cove Point LNG Plant alone, Warner said, “Right now I believe it’s 95 or it’s the possibility of 95 [tankers] per year that we’re allotted.”

Warner said she would come back to the commissioners with more information on the annual cost of maintaining the equipment.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Huntingtown Barn Destroyed by Fire



Photo courtesy of the Maryland State Fire Marshal's Office

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

A fire on the 4th of July destroyed a large barn in Huntingtown. The barn at 541 Walton Road is owned by Michael Smith.

The Maryland State Fire Marshal’s Office reports the loss at \$100,000 to the structure and \$125,000 to the contents.

In a release the fire marshal’s office said, “The incident involved a fire in a large

barn located on the property. No injuries were reported. The incident remains under investigation. Anyone with any information regarding this incident is asked to contact the Office of the State Fire Marshal, Southern Regional Office, at 410-414-3600.”

The fire was reported by a passerby at 10:18 p.m. and Huntingtown Volunteer Fire Department was first due. It took 40 firefighters 10 minutes to bring the blaze under control.

Appeals Board Rule Changes Approved



Board of Appeals Chair Susan Hance-Wells



Board of Appeals Vice Chair Robert Carpenter



Board of Appeals member Jerry Clark



Board of Appeals member Thomas Ireland

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) on July 9 approved some rule changes recommended by the Board of Appeals (BOA). Most are routine, but one does deal with public notices.

Lisa Cress, clerk of the Board of Appeals, explained, "One noteworthy revision is Section 3-101, which is for public notices. Rules previously stated that cases that were continued or deferred, meaning the case was called to the board but it was not concluded, did not require new sign posting and notices were not recent to effective property owners. The rules now state that we will repost the sign with the new date and send new notices to all effective property owners for all cases. Whether they're new, postponed, continued, we are always looking for ways to improve and update the rules of procedure as needed."

Staff did take the opportunity to give a tutorial for the commissioners and the public about issues that the appeals board deals with.

Board of Appeals Coordinator Maureen Dull said, "General variance requests are typically for encroachment into building setbacks, to construct sheds, decks, or additions to a home. We have a large percentage of Critical Area variance cases because Calvert County is surrounded by water with the Chesapeake

Bay spanning the east side and the Patuxent River to the west. These are requests for impacts to the Critical Area buffer, expanded buffer, steep slopes, or to exceed the permissible lot coverage. We've also had a couple of requests to exceed the four-foot limit for fence height within the buffer."

She further explained, "Forest conservation requirements implement the provisions of the Maryland Forest Conservation Act — requests to remove specimen or monument trees and requests to encroach within forest conservation area. Setbacks fall under these requirements. Specimen trees have a diameter of 30 inches or more, measured at four and a half feet above the ground, or trees that have 75 percent or more of the diameter of the current state champion tree for that species. A champion tree is the largest of a species within the United States, the state, county, or municipality. We have not had any requests to remove champion trees.

"Monument trees are a national, state, or local champion tree. A tree having a diameter of at least 24 inches measured at four and a half feet above the ground or a tree having a diameter that it is at least 75 percent of the diameter of the current state champion of that species measured at four and a half feet above the ground."

She noted, "The board also hears cases for variances to the floodplain. The floodplain is defined as any area susceptible to being

inundated by water from any source such as the overflow of inland or tidal waters or the usual rapid accumulation or runoff of surface waters from any source. In the three plus years I've worked with the Board of Appeals, we have not had any of these requests."

She further explained, "Special exception requests are fun. These are typically for class two or three home occupations and requests to keep livestock on less than three acres. A home occupation defined in the zoning ordinance is any activity carried out for gain by a resident as an accessory use in the resident's dwelling unit. The definition does not apply to business activities on farms as permitted by the zoning ordinance. Approved Class 2 home occupations must be conducted entirely within a dwelling or accessory structure in a space not exceeding 600 square feet Inc. That includes storage. No outside storage is permitted, no items can be offered for sale or publicly displayed on the premises except those incidental to the services offered. And all required state and county licenses and permits must be obtained.

"A Class 3 home occupation must meet the same requirements as a Class 2. However, Class 3 permits the employment of up to two equivalent full-time employees in addition to the employees that are permanent residents of the dwelling in which the home occupation is located and allows onsite appointments of customers or clients."

Dull explained, "We receive lots of requests every year for livestock on less than three acres, primarily chickens, but some for goats and even cows. It has been mentioned that with the update to the zoning ordinance later this year, the requirement may be reduced to one acre. If that happens, we anticipate this will significantly reduce the number of referrals to the Board of Appeals.

She reported, "In special exception cases, the board almost always imposes conditions. The most prominent being that the special exception is not transferable, it is approved for the current property owner at the requested location."

Also, she said, "Alleged error cases are referred to the Board of Appeals. If an applicant believes they were denied a building permit or a determination by the zoning officer or another administration or enforcement of the zoning ordinance was incorrect," adding, "We've had a few decisions on alleged error cases in the last three and a half years. However, with the exception of one case that was upheld and one that lingered until this year and was settled through the courts, the rest were withdrawn by the applicants."

"Most of the cases that come before the board of appeals are approved," Dull said.

There is currently one vacancy on the five-member board and two alternate vacancies.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Dunkirk Man Killed in Motorcycle Accident

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Anne Arundel County Police Department Southern District officers responded on July 4 at 9:11 p.m. to northbound Route 4 (Southern Maryland Boulevard) near Talbot Road in Lothian for a crash involving two vehicles.

A Maryland State Police officer from the Prince Frederick Barrack reportedly came upon the scene of the accident. The investigation revealed a 2015 Dodge Charger was traveling northbound on Route 4 when the driver pulled off and proceeded to make a left-handed U-turn to southbound Route 4. At that time, a

2015 Yamaha motorcycle driven by Noah Allen Lee, 23, of Dunkirk was also traveling northbound on Route 4. As the Dodge Charger made its U-turn, it pulled into the path of the Yamaha motorcycle which was unable to avoid striking the Dodge Charger. Lee was pronounced deceased at the scene by Fire Department personnel.

The driver of the Dodge, Ronald Avery Weeks, Sr., 73, of Upper Marlboro and a passenger, Sharon Smith Weeks, 57, were transported to CalvertHealth Medical Center with minor injuries.

This crash is under investigation by the Traffic Safety Section of the Anne Arundel County Police Department.

Missing Swimmer Recovered Near Benedict Bridge

On Monday, July 8, 2024, at 7:26 p.m., deputies from the Calvert County Sheriff's Office Patrol Bureau responded to 6790 Hallowing Lane in the area of the Benedict Bridge in Prince Frederick, for a 911 hang-up.

Upon arrival, deputies determined the call to be for a potential missing person.

Investigation revealed, Alex Garcia-Lopez, 19 of Huntingtown, was swimming in the Patuxent River approximately 10-20 yards from the shoreline and at one point went underwater and never resurfaced. Sheriff's Office units along with Maryland

State Police canvassed the area. Members of the Prince Frederick and Benedict Volunteer Fire Departments, DNR, the CCSO Drone Unit, and the Calvert County Dive Team, responded to the scene and searched the area with negative results.

The body of Alex Garcia-Lopez was recovered in the vicinity of where he went missing shortly after 6 a.m. on July 10, 2024. Notification of next of kin was made and the body was transported to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in Baltimore for further investigation.

CALVERT COUNTY POLICE BLOTTER

During the week of June 24, 2024 – June 30, 2024, Calvert County Sheriff's Office Deputies responded to 1,670 calls for service throughout the community including, but not limited to:

- Check Welfare / Mental Health: 56
- Disorderly: 33
- Domestic: 32
- Motor Vehicle Crashes: 42
- Patrol Checks / School Checks: 721
- Suspicious Persons / Vehicles: 25
- Traffic Complaints: 80
- 911 Hang Ups: 79
- ARRESTS: 59



Aaron David Dickerson

Deputies arrived on scene and confirmed forced entry to the front door and the ATM had been damaged and attempted to be accessed by power tools. Deputies observed a vehicle fleeing the area at a high rate. An MSP Trooper attempted a traffic stop on the fleeing vehicle with lights and sirens activated, however, the suspect failed to stop and drove further into the neighborhood and eventually got stuck at a dead end. The driver fled from the vehicle into a wooded area. The front seat passenger, **Aaron David Dickerson**, 34 of Germantown, was positively identified as one of the suspects in the CVS burglary. Dickerson was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with Burglary-4th Degree/Tools. **Tevin Denzel Smith**, 31 of District Heights, was arrested on a warrant while conspiring to commit burglary at the CVS.



Kathleen Rene Magruder

Kathleen Rene Magruder, 36 of Lexington Park, who was displaying signs of impairment and was unable to safely operate a motor vehicle. A vehicle search revealed numerous cut straws, plastic containers with CDS residue, copper wire pads, and 2 crack pipes all covered with a white powdery residue (suspected crack cocaine). Magruder was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with CDS: Possession-Not Cannabis and CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia.

CDS Violation: 24-49562 On June 26, 2024, DFC Lee initiated a traffic stop on



Brian Edward McKay



Sommer Lee West



Charles Melvin Gross

powdery residue (suspected crack cocaine). McKay was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with CDS: Possession-Not Cannabis and CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia. West and Gross were also transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with multiple counts of CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia.



Brian Keith Sipe, Jr.

a vehicle in the area of Chapline Rd and N. Solomons Island Road in Prince Frederick, for multiple traffic violations. Contact was made with the driver **Brian Edward McKay**, 45 of Huntingtown, and occupants **Sommer Lee West**, 39 of Huntingtown, and **Charles Melvin Gross**, 69 of Huntingtown. McKay was displaying signs of impairment and was unable to safely operate a motor vehicle. A K9 sniff was conducted on the vehicle by K9 Rio resulting in a positive alert. A vehicle search revealed cut straws, steel push rods, a glass pipe stem, glass pipes, and copper wire all covered with white powdery residue (suspected crack cocaine). McKay was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with CDS: Possession-Not Cannabis and CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia. West and Gross were also transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with multiple counts of CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia.

Disorderly Conduct: 24-50426 On June 29, 2024, DFC Grierson responded to the area of Sam Owings Road in Owings, for the report of a disorderly subject. Investigation



Hector Salvador Chumil-Ixcaya

revealed **Hector Salvador Chumil-Ixcaya**, 30 of Greenwich, CT, was stumbling in the travel portion of the roadway. Chumil-Ixcaya was instructed multiple times to stay out of the roadway, to which he failed to comply. Chumil-Ixcaya ran back into the travel portion of the roadway where deputies apprehended and transported him to the Calvert County Detention Center. Chumil-Ixcaya was charged with Failure to Obey a Reasonable/ Lawful order of a Law Enforcement Officer and Disorderly Conduct.

Damaged Property: 24-49379 On June 25, 2024, DFC Aley responded to the TJ Maxx located at 140 W Dares Beach Road in Prince Frederick, for the report of damaged property. The complainant advised while their vehicle was parked, it was keyed by an unknown suspect. The estimated value of damaged property is \$1,000.00.

Damaged Property: 24-49542 On June 26, 2024, Deputy Parrott responded to the area of Senora Lane and White Rock Circle in Lusby, for the report of vandalism and property destruction. The complainant advised unknown suspect (s) defaced the roadway and nearby speed limit sign with profane language in spray paint. The estimated value of damaged property is unknown at this time.



Jose Albino Baca

Disorderly Conduct: 24-49131 On June 24, 2024, DFC Grierson responded to the North Beach Welcome Center located at 9023 Bay Avenue in North Beach, for the report of a disorderly subject. The complainant advised a disorderly male was yelling at town employees and had ripped the soap dispenser off the bathroom wall. Contact was made with, **Jose Albino Baca V**, 61 of Chesapeake Beach, who continued to yell profanities drawing the attention of civilians on the boardwalk and in the park. Baca was apprehended and transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with Disorderly Conduct, Intoxicated Public Disturbance, and Malicious Destruction of Property/ Value less than \$1000.

Disorderly Conduct: 24-50203 On June 29, 2024, Master Deputy Wilder responded to Spring Cove Marina located at 455 Lore Road in Solomons, for the report of a disorderly subject. The complainant advised an intoxicated male was yelling and cursing at patrons on the pier. Investigation revealed **Benjamin Joseph Culbert**, 34 of Lusby,



Benjamin Joseph Culbert

was asked to leave the establishment multiple times and refused to comply. Culbert was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with Trespassing- Private Property and Disorderly Conduct.

Theft: 24-49359 On June 25, 2024, DFC Aley responded to the Calvert Medical Imaging Center located at 130 Hospital Road in Prince Frederick, for the report of a theft. The complainant advised an unknown suspect (s) stole the Imaging Centers money bag, sometime between 10 a.m. on June 20 and 3 p.m. on June 21. The estimated value of stolen property is \$1,653.97.

Theft: 24-49682 On June 26, 2024, Deputy Baxter responded to the 700 block of Rattlesnake Road in Lusby, for the report of a theft. The complainant advised while at Drum Point Clubhouse located at 465 Overlook Drive in Lusby, their wallet and its contents were stolen. The estimated value of stolen property is \$170.00.

Theft: 24-50059 On June 28, 2024, Master Deputy Aurich responded to A2O Fit located at 10406 Southern Maryland Blvd in Dunkirk, for the report of a theft. The complainant advised unknown suspect(s) stole 5 exercise mats from the side parking lot. The estimated value of stolen property is \$300.00.



Darla Jean Honaker

Trespassing: 24-49284 On June 25, 2024, Deputy H. Jones responded to Giant Food located at 11740 Rousby Hall Road in Lusby, for the report of trespassing. Investigation revealed **Darla Jean Honaker**, 67 of Lusby, entered the store after being trespassed indefinitely. Honaker was asked to vacate the premises to which she refused to comply. Honaker was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with Trespassing: Private Property and Failure to Obey Reasonable/Lawful order of a Law Enforcement Officer.

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

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

Calvert Community Calendar

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

Thu, Jul 11

Teen/Tween Game Night

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

Activities, community, fun! Use our Nintendo Switches or bring your own. Plus, tons of board games & pizza! No registration. Free event. 410-326-5289.
<https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Alzheimer's Caregivers Support

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way, & Zoom
6:30-8 p.m.

Get tips and support from other caregivers. Facilitated by Jeannette Findley & JC Hooker. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862.
<https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Sat, Jul 13

Sharkfest!

Calvert Marine Museum
10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Celebrate all things shark, all day, at CMM! Live sharks will be featured in the Corbin Nature Pavilion for viewing. Learn fascinating 'sharktoids', examine evidence of prehistoric sharks, and take a picture in the life-size jaws of a Megalodon shark. Food and drinks will be for sale on site. Strollers and carts are not allowed in the museum for SHARKFEST. We strongly recommend purchasing admission tickets in advance if you are not a member. Capacity is limited.

Open House and Tack Sale

Freedom Hill Horse Rescue
7940 Flint Hill Rd., Owings
3-7 p.m.

Join Freedom Hill Horse Rescue for our 2nd

Open House of 2024. There will be tours of the facility, meet and greets with the horses, and a short program on caring for horses. Our loft will be open to purchase the various items of tack on sale. Bring the family to meet our horses and learn more about Freedom Hill Horse Rescue.

Texas Hold'Em

St. Leonard Volunteer Fire Department
6 p.m.

\$85 buy-in for \$20k in chips. Rounds are 20 minutes each. Doors open at 5 pm; tournament starts at 6pm. BYOB, food and sodas will be available for purchase. See www.slvfd.org or Facebook group www.facebook.com/groups/500115481937635/ for more info. Chance for 50/50 included in your buy-in. Tables deal their own cards, dealers are not provided. Dealer provided for final table. Late Entries permitted until end 1st break, approx. 7:10 pm cut off. No rebuys. ATM on site.

Sun, Jul 14

Sunday Afternoons with Poppie

Calvert Marine Museum
1:30 – 2:30 p.m.

Make your Sunday afternoon memorable by coming to visit with our very own Pop Star, "Poppie," a Virginia opossum. You can join the Poppie paparazzi in the museum lobby with one of our educational interpreters, learn all kinds of fun possum facts, and visit the Museum Store for possum fan gear. Since the welfare of our animals is our primary concern, Poppie's ability to visit with her adoring public may occasionally be subject to change on short notice.

Mon, Jul 15

Teen Book Box Pickup

Calvert Library (All Branches)

July 15 - 31

During the summer, we will be checking out free boxes each month to teens who register. Inspired by subscription boxes like Loot Crate, each box will have a theme and contain a library book to borrow, a free book to keep, a fun activity, and a snack. The theme for July is "Summertime." 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Active Play-Active Fun!

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

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

SummerSTEAM

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
2:30-3:30 p.m.

Combat the heat and join our interactive SummerSTEAM hour as we explore biomes through books, and activities. For kids K-5th grade. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Wed, Jul 17

Food on the Farm

SMADC Office
15045 Burnt Store Road, Hughesville
5-8 p.m.

Aspiring farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs are invited to an informative workshop titled "Food on the Farm: Adding Food Sales to your Farm Plan," hosted by the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC), a division of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland. This comprehensive event aims to provide attendees with valuable insights and practical

guidance on incorporating on-farm food sales into their business strategies.

This evening workshop promises to be a must-attend for those looking to explore the world of farm-to-table businesses. Limited spots are available, so register now to secure your place at this enlightening workshop.

Tween Summer Book Fest

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

Join other book lovers during this fun summer book club! Each month we will read a new book and come together to discuss, play games and do activities. Did we mention there will be snacks?! The first ten (10) registrants get a copy of the book to keep! Contact your library branch at 410-257-2411 to pick up your book at least one (1) week before the event. July's book is the graphic novel Saving Sunshine by Saadia Faruqi. 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Upcoming

Family Fun Friday: Citizen Science

Calvert Marine Museum
Friday, July 19
9 – 11 a.m.

Ever wonder how you and your family can help the environment in a real and meaningful way? Citizen science projects are everywhere, you just need to know where to look and how to participate. This program will teach you just that. Not only will you learn how you can gather scientific data that assists researchers, but you can also make it an adventure that the entire family can share and enjoy!

Family Fun Friday is designed for families with children ages 5-12 and is an opportunity to enjoy the museum and a special program with activities and crafts that begin before the museum is open to the public. \$15 per person for non-members; \$12 per person for members; Fee includes museum admission.

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

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



County Times

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58														

- CLUES ACROSS
- CLUES DOWN
1. Book size

8. Indonesian Island

13. “The Sopranos” character

14. Plants often found in stews

15. Stern

19. Atomic #52

20. Often seen after a company name

21. Silk garments

22. Inhibiting hormone (abbr.)

23. Type of beer

24. Margarine

25. Throw lightly

26. Explains again

30. Raccoon-like animal

31. Sneaker parts

32. Platforms

33. Scored perfectly

34. One’s essence

35. Strikes with a firm blow

38. Makes tractors

39. Music term

40. Lack of energy

44. Vestments

45. ___ and feathers

46. Total

47. Gobbler

48. One with Japanese immigrant parents

49. Type of braking system (abbr.)

50. Home of Rudy Flyer

51. Manageable

55. Lugged

57. Irritated

58. Sea eagles

59. Warm seasons
1. About visual sense

2. Part of a horse’s saddle

3. In a way, interchanged

4. Rocker’s accessory

5. Very important person

6. It precedes two

7. Flavored

8. Musical notes

9. String instrument (slang)

10. Mister

11. Fine, light linen fabric

12. Absence of bacteria

16. Discounts

17. Area units

18. A description of one’s life

22. Gazelles

25. Plumbing fixture

27. Makes especially happy

28. One side of something many-sided

29. Frosts

30. Defunct monetary unit of Guinea

32. Female animal species

34. School terms

35. Written law

36. Unpleasant aroma

37. Nuclear weapon

38. One who challenges

40. Opposite of first

41. Able to be utilized

42. Less interesting

43. Implants

45. Canister

48. Gestures

51. After B

52. Romanian monetary unit

53. Long-term memory

54. Cash machine

56. The Volunteer State

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JUNE 27 SOLUTIONS														
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1	9	7	3	2	5	8	6	4
2	5	6	8	7	4	1	9	3
8	4	3	1	9	6	7	5	2

St. Mary's Community Calendar

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

Sat, Jul 13

East Coast Drifters Spring Open Car Show

Mechanicsville Moose Lodge
27636 Mechanicsville Rd., Mechanicsville
8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

All years Cars, Trucks & Motorcycles are welcome. Top 70 and several other awards. First 100 receive dash plaques. Registration \$20 at gate. Spectators \$5 (under 12 free) Registration cut-off Noon. For more info call: Chuck 301-751-5602 or Rich 240-538-4266 eastcoastdrifters.com

Pork Loin and Beef Sandwich Sale

American Legion Post 221
21690 Colton Point Rd., Avenue
11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

American Legion Post 221 is sponsoring a pork loin and beef sandwich sale. Pork loin, sliced roast beef, and BBQ beef sandwiches

will be sold on both Saturday and Sunday at American Legion Post 221 @ 21690 Colton Point Rd (Rt. 242), in Avenue, MD. The event will be from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and sandwiches will cost \$8.00 each. For more information e-mail us at alpost221@aol.com or call 301*481*6625.

Potomac Jazz & Seafood Festival

St. Clement's Island Museum
38370 Breeze Point Rd., Coltons Point
Noon to 8p.m.

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

Main Event Line-Up (July 13, 2024):
1:00 p.m.—Latrice Carr Music Group
3:15 p.m.—Marcus Mitchell & Joi Carter
5:30 p.m.—Headliner—Julian Vaughan

TICKETS & INFO: [PJSF2024.eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/pjsf2024-tickets-758481281281)

28765 Three Notch Rd., Mechanicsville
9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Sun, Jul 14

All You Can Eat Home Made Home Style Breakfast

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

Menu: scrambled eggs, home fried potatoes, pancakes, French toast, sausage links, ham, bacon, creamed chip beef, sausage gravy, spiced applesauce, grits & biscuits. Drinks: Assorted juices, milk and coffee will be available. Children 5 & under are free

Wed, July 17

Fried Chicken Carryout Dinner

Thompson Seafood Corner

Thu, Jul 18

Coffee with the Sheriff

Loffler Senior Activity Center
21905 Chancellors Run Rd., Great Mills
10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Talk to Sheriff Steve Hall about your concerns and learn more about the community during Coffee with the Sheriff!



ST. MARY'S COUNTY

Library

UPCOMING EVENTS



Dancing by the Numbers: Summer Performance

Join Wolf Trap teaching artist Laura Schandelmeier for a deep dive into the world of dance... and math! Learn the elements of dance, move your body, and explore patterns and numbers in new ways. Two sessions: Lexington Park Library on Friday, July 12 from 10:30 - 11:15 a.m. and Leonardtown Library on Friday, July 12 from 2 - 2:45 p.m. Most seating will be on the floor- feel free to bring a blanket! Space may be limited and will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Summer Performing Arts events are supported in part by a grant from the St. Mary's County Arts Council. No registration

Inside the Vote: Understanding Your Officials' Actions in Congress

Wondering what Congress has been up to? GovTrack.us simplifies the law-making process and helps you understand what your lawmakers are doing. In this hands-on workshop, we'll explore GovTrack.us and its main features: identifying your reps, seeing how they vote, and learning about

Corazón Folklórico DC: Summer Performance

Let's dance together and celebrate the culture of Mexico! Watch Corazón Folklórico DC perform traditional Ballet Folklórico dances, and then join in to learn the dance! Two sessions: Mechanicsville Elementary School, in the gym on Friday, July 19 from 10:30 - 11 a.m. Most seating will be on the floor- feel free to bring a blanket! Second performance will be at Lexington Park Library on Friday, July 19 from 2 - 2:30 p.m. Summer Performing Arts events are supported in part by a grant from the St. Mary's County Arts Council. No registration.

K-Pop Party

Are you an ARMY? Carat? Blink or multi-

Lexington Park Chess Day

An all-ages chess social hang-out at Lexington Park Library on Saturday, July 20 from 1 - 3 p.m.! Drop in and out to play as needed, no experience required. Staff will be available to assist those who haven't played before. Small chess guides will be available to players for reference. Chess boards will be provided by the library, but feel free to bring your favorite set. Register on www.stmalib.org.

Managing Family Finances: Lunch & Learn Series

Learn how to best support your family on a budget! Pack a lunch and join Dr. Troy Anthony Anderson, financial wellness expert, as he reviews decisions and resources related to managing a household on a low income. We will explore the costs and benefits of DIY, and attendees will have the opportunity to evaluate the effects of

How to Buy Your First Home

Looking to buy your first home, but don't know where to start? Join Amy Scott, Broker/Owner with OE Realty, to learn more about the buying process: what to expect, how to prepare, and first-time buyer loan options that can stretch your dollar. Come ask us the hard questions! Lexington Park Library on Tuesday, July 16 from 6 - 7 p.m. Register on www.stmalib.org to receive a reminder email. Walk-ins welcome.

stan? Come show off your love of K-pop at our K-pop Party at Charlotte Hall Library on Friday, July 19 from 3 - 4 p.m.! Make bias buttons, try some popular Korean snacks, dance to K-pop music, and learn some intro Korean! Intended for Tweens and Teens. Register on www.stmalib.org.

their value clarification. We will also discuss the cost and benefits of the art of choosing. This interactive workshop is packed with practical, family-oriented exercises that will help you be the master of your own financial wellness. The Lunch & Learn series is a hybrid event at Lexington Park Library on Tuesday, July 16 from 12 - 1 p.m. If you are planning to attend virtually, be sure to register for the event on www.stmalib.org to receive a link to the online session. In-person walk-ins welcome. All registrants will receive a Zoom link the day before the session.

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DIGITAL COUPON **1.00** OFF TWO
FINAL PRICE **2/\$4**



46-Oz., Selected
Turkey Hill Ice Cream

2/\$7



19.6-Oz., Selected
Pepperidge Farm 3-Layer Cakes

3.98



19.1 To 19.3-Oz., Selected
DiGiorno Classic Crust Pizza

SALE PRICE **3.98**
DIGITAL COUPON **1.00** OFF ONE
FINAL PRICE **2.98**



Deli Fresh
Kretschmar Ham Off The Bone

5.99 Lb.



Deli Fresh, Selected
Kretschmar Turkey Off The Bone

5.99 Lb.

Bakery & Deli Fresh



4-Oz., Selected
JJ's Bakery Pies

5/\$4



50-Oz.
Cookies N' Creme Cake

11.98



6-Ct. Mini Sub Rolls Or 9-Ct.
Kings Hawaiian Slider Buns

4.48



8-In., Bakery Fresh Apple Or
All-American Apple Pie

4.98



Kretschmar
Yellow American Cheese

6.99 Lb.

Liquor, Beer, and Wine



10-Oz. Cans
24-Pack Bud Light

19.89



12-Oz. 30 Pack Cans
Miller Lite Beer

23.99



10-Oz. Cans, 12 Pack
12-Pack Coors Light Beer

10.99



12-Oz. 18-Pack Cans
Michelob Ultra Beer

14.99



12-Oz. Bottles
12-Pack Corona Extra

16.99



12-Oz. Bottles
12-Pack Modelo

17.99



1.75L
Smirnoff Vodka

18.99



1.75mL
Dewar's White Label

33.99



1.75L
Maker's Mark Whiskey

44.99



1.75mL
Seagram's VO Whiskey

20.99



1.75 L
Gordon's London Dry Gin

15.99



1.75L
Jim Beam

28.99



1.75L
Ketel One Vodka

34.99



750 ML
Chateau D'Esclands Whispering Angel Rose

16.99



750 ML
Lamarca Prosecco

14.99



750mL
Stoneleigh Sauvignon Blanc

12.99



750-ML
Cupcake Pinot Grigio

10.99



750mL
Coppola Cabernet Sauvignon Wine

11.99

Wines of the Month



750 ML
Casillero del Diablo

9.99



750mL
Tomasello Hard Cider

10.99



750mL
Tomasello Fruit Flavors

9.99

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.

Bernie Davis, 75



Leonard Bernard Davis Jr., 75, of Chaptico, MD, passed away on July 3, 2024, surrounded by his loving family. Bernie, as known by many, was born on December 13,

1948, in Chaptico, MD to Leonard (Len) B. Davis Sr. and Lillian (Brookbank) Davis. He was part of the first graduating class of Chopticon High School in Morganza, MD in 1966. He grew up as a farmer on his family's farm called Luckland in Chaptico, MD, where they raised tobacco, corn, and wheat. He joined the United States Army in January 1967, where he spent most of his time served in Germany during the Vietnam War. Bernie got out of the Army in January of 1970 to return home. Once home, he worked a couple of jobs in addition to helping on the family's farm. He started working for the Coca-Cola Company in La Plata, MD in 1970. Bernie started as a delivery route driver and moved up to a technician, and eventually became the Technician Supervisor. Bernie retired from Coca-Cola in December 2003 after 33 years of service.

On June 20, 1970 he married the love of his life Linda Ann (Bailey) of Loveville, MD at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Morganza, MD. Bernie and Linda spent 54 years of marriage together before his passing. They had a son, Brian Davis (Jessie), of Chaptico, MD on December 29, 1971. Additionally, they have four grandchildren, Chris (Vi), Natalie, Jimmy, and Bree. Bernie is survived by his brother, Tommy Davis (Beth) of Chaptico, MD, and many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Bernie cherished time with family and friends. He had many hobbies over the years, but especially loved golf, hunting, fishing, and crabbing. Bernie and Linda could often be found on a dance floor throughout their marriage, playing cards at one of their many friends' houses or riding around Luckland Farm on their mule to see what was happening.

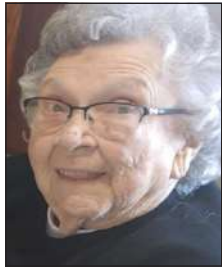
The family will receive friends on Wednesday, July 17, 2024 from 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, MD. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11:00 AM in Our Lady of the Wayside Catholic Church, Mechanicsville, MD, with Father Chip Luckett officiating. Interment will be private. Serving as pallbearers will be T.J. Davis, Carlos Acaron, John Bailey, Bradley Tippet, Gary Bowling, and Nick Garner. Old honorary pallbearers will be Butch Bowling, Gary Mattingly, Drew Tippet, Jimmy Garner, Alan Bailey, and J.P. Weber.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to A.C.T.S (A Community That Shares), P.O. Box 54, Bushwood, MD 20618.

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

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

Alberta Ridgell, 99



Agnes "Alberta" Ridgell, of Great Mills, MD passed away peacefully at her home on July 4, 2024. She was 99 years old.

Born March 19, 1925, Alberta was the fifth of 12 children born to the late George William Owens and Mary Lillian (Pillsbury) Owens.

Alberta was born and raised in St. Mary's County, Paw Paw Hollow, and attended Our Lady's Medley's Neck Catholic School, rowing across Breton Bay with her siblings. On July 4, 1943 she married A. Benedict "Dick" Ridgell at Our Lady's Catholic Church in Medley's Neck, MD. They celebrated almost 61 wonderful years of marriage before his passing on June 25, 2004. She worked at Cecil's Store in Great Mills as a newlywed, then was employed for over 37 dedicated years as a telephone operator with Bell Atlantic.

Alberta loved her family and enjoyed Sunday gatherings at their summer home on the water in Ridge. Having been "born with a softcrab in her mouth", she loved all local seafood. Every Sunday her husband and her sister, PeeWee, would go crabbing and then everyone would come to enjoy their catch. She was an excellent cook and was known for her crab muffins and delicious coconut cakes. She canned produce, made jellies and applesauce for many years. She crocheted many afghans during the cold winter months. She enjoyed planting flowers, especially dahlias and peonies, and making her home look pretty. She took several trips to Florida in retirement to see her brother, Ralph, her only sibling to move permanently from the county. She also enjoyed bus trips to local dinner shows and theaters.

Christmas was Alberta's favorite holiday and she loved to decorate, especially with poinsettias, cardinals, and deer. Her Christmas Eggnog is a secret recipe, but the nog was shared with family and friends. She had a cat by her side her entire life, and she loved them all.

Alberta was a devout Catholic and volunteered numerous hours with the Ladies of Charity at Holy Face Catholic Church in Great Mills, serving on the altar guild for many years. She donated flowers from her gardens and wreaths made from wild greenery to make the church beautiful. She was a Lady Belle with the St. Michael's Council of the Knights of Columbus. She could always be found in the kitchen up to her elbows in flour on Fried Chicken Sunday.

Alberta is survived by her sister, Janice T. "PeeWee" Ivancik of Lexington Park, MD, sister-in-law, Emily Owens of Mechanicsville, MD and many nieces, nephews and extended family. In addition to her parents and husband she is also preceded in death by her siblings: George "Snooks" Owens, Ralph M. Owens, James "Jimmy" Owens, Mary Lillian Goddard, Catherine "Queenie" Pilkerton, Joseph "Joe" Owens, Bernard X. Owens, Josephine "Josie"

Quade, Harold "Shorty" Owens, Robert "Lightning" Owens; and her half siblings, Abell "Rip" Owens and Ethel Bowles.

Family will receive friends of Alberta on Tuesday, July 16, 2024 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Holy Face Catholic Church, 20408 Point Lookout Road, Great Mills, MD 20634. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated by Reverend Scott Holmer at 11:00 a.m. Interment will follow at Our Lady's Catholic Church - Medley's Neck Cemetery in Leonardtown, MD 20650.

Serving as pallbearers will be John Ivancik, Little Johnny Ivancik, Leroy Owens Jr., David Browne, Wayne Marble, and Bobby Mattingly.

Donations may be made in Alberta's name to Holy Face Catholic Church or Hospice of Southern Maryland.

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

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.

Donna Sheridan, 81



Donna Lee Clevenstine Sheridan, 81, of Solomons, Maryland, passed away on June 23, 2024, in Prince Frederick, Maryland. She was born on September 21,

1942, in Washington, D.C to the late Crider Clevenstine and Ruth (Bierly) Clevenstine.

Soon after graduating from Oxon Hill Senior High School in 1960, Donna joined the business world as a secretary/staff assistant for a Washington, DC, printing company. She retired as a Customer Service Representative from the Kelly Publishing Company after many years of service. Donna enjoyed her job and the people with whom she worked. She also enjoyed her life apart from work to the fullest. As a member of the Shillelaghs Travel Club, she traveled extensively and always with good friends and sometimes family.

Donna was also a huge supporter of animal rights, adoption, and care. As an example, she once flew to Best Friends Animal Society sanctuary in Utah to work as a maintenance volunteer for a week. Over her lifetime, Donna rescued numerous cats leaving only her beloved Cocoa and Angel behind at her death.

She is survived by her sisters, Linda Kay Kromer (Mark) of Owings, MD, Jean Ruth Clevenstine (Raymond) of Rosehaven, MD, nieces and nephews Bernard Matthews (Laurel), Jeffrey Matthews (Jessamyne), great nephew Jacob Matthews, great niece Madelyne Matthews, her stepdaughter June Lee Boothby, and her cat children, Cocoa and Angel. She was preceded in death by her parents and her life partner John Boothby.

Donna was beloved by all of her family and friends. Her humor and quick wit and her ability to make anyone smile will be sorely missed. A 10:00 a.m. visitation will precede a memorial service to celebrate Donna's life on July 16, 2024 at 11:00 a.m.

at the Brinsfield Funeral Home at 22955 Hollywood Road in Leonardtown, Maryland, in lieu of flowers, donations may be to the Friends of the Linda L. Kelly Animal Shelter, P.O. Box 143, Sunderland, MD 20689.

Joseph Wathen, 85



Joseph E. Wathen, "Poppa Joe", 85, of Leonardtown, MD, passed away on July 3, 2024, in Leonardtown, MD, surrounded by his loving family. Born on August 16, 1938,

in Orville, MD, he was the son of the late Addie Martha Burch Wathen and John Briscoe Wathen.

Joseph was the loving husband of Patricia Wathen, whom he married on March 22, 1997, in Avenue, MD. He is survived by his children, Joseph Wathen of Mechanicsville, MD, David Wathen of Avenue, MD, JoAnn Wathen of Mechanicsville, MD, Nancy Wathen of Rock Hall, MD, Lisa Burch (Eddie) of Pittsburgh, PA, and Michael Wathen of Edgewater, MD, step-children, Gene Wathen (Tina) of California, MD, Terry Wathen of Mechanicsville, MD, Debra Lathroum-Bacon (Steve) of Tall Timbers, MD, and Kevin Lathroum (Beth) of Leonardtown, MD, seven grandchildren, Jeffrey Wathen, Ashley Barber, Patrick Quade, Kylie Duncan, Hunter Wathen, Kennedy Bacon, Lilly Lathroum, and three great-grandchildren, Tyler Wathen, Ayden Wathen, and Kayden Fenwick, and his siblings, Doris Harding of Newburg, MD and Joyce Wheeler (Tommy) of Hollywood, MD. He was preceded in death by his siblings, John Wathen, Leonard Wathen, Robert Wathen, Waynard Wathen, Delores Callanan, Elwood Wathen, Betsy Tippet, Roy Wathen, Tom Wathen, Cecelia Howe, and Madeline Morgan.

Joseph was a lifelong resident of St. Mary's County, MD and attended Margaret Brent School. He was a Waterman and Farmer for 62 years, retiring in 2015.

The family will receive friends on Wednesday, July 10, 2024, from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM, with prayers recited at 7:00 PM in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home Leonardtown, MD, where a funeral service will be held on Thursday, July 11, 2024 at 10:00 AM in the funeral home chapel with Father David Beaubien officiating. Interment will follow at Charles Memorial Gardens, Leonardtown, MD. Serving as pallbearers will be Gene Wathen, Kevin Lathroum, Steve Knott, Robbie Copsey, Raymond Harding, and Ralph Wheeler.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Leonardtown Vol. Rescue Squad, P.O. Box 299, Leonardtown, MD 20650 and/or 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.

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2.48



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2/\$3

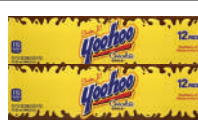


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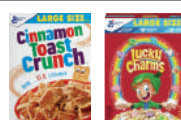


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The Tackle Box Fishing Report

By Ken Lamb
Contributing Writer

There is good action for cobia chasers in the lower bay. The big fish are approaching the Middle Grounds, The Target Ship, and the Mud Leads. Most fishermen are setting up chum lines and using cut bait (alewife). There has been success with live eels in the chum. Trollers using big surgical hose lures have also scored. The idea is to get to the fishing grounds at daybreak and set up the chum. The wind tends to build in the mid-day and making the process untenable, and the heat builds to intolerable levels.

The bluefish and spanish mackerel have yet to manifest themselves in our waters. We are hoping for big schools to show up soon. The hot, salty water is a boon to the mackerel.

The spot are everywhere and growing fast. By September we should have plenty of jumbos.

Puppy drum are in the creeks and rivers in record numbers from 6 to 15 inches. The keepers (18 to 27 inches), referred to as "Slot Reds" are being caught daily.

Perch are plentiful in creeks and rivers for bottom fishermen and lure casters. Beetle Spins and other small spinner baits tipped with peeler crab, fish bites, bloodworm or other incentives are key.

Flounder are now in the mix with redfish, rockfish, bluefish, and sea trout for jiggers and lure casters in the mouth of the Potomac.



Makhai Hanna caught this slot redfish in St. Inigoes Creek on the Fourth of July with peeler crab.

There are rockfish in the rivers around structure for lure casters, but the action is dusk and dawn. The midday heat drives them out of the shallows to sulk in deep water. Trollers can score with small umbrella rigs and tandems. The fish are on the bottom; bring out the heavy trolling sinkers.

Snakehead and catfish are always available above the Benedict Bridge in the Patuxent and the 301 Bridge in the Potomac. They love fresh cut alewife.

A View From The BLEACHERS



TWO RIGHTS

By Ronald N. Guy
Contributing Writer

July 4th: a day for chests to swell, let our American pride shine and stand in awe as Old Glory flies. It is one of the precious few days on the calendar that transcends individual differences and focuses attention on a common history and cause.

That all happened last week. Fireworks were lit. Hot dogs were grilled. Rumor has it many, many beers were consumed. But this 248th birthday for our great, powerful and fragile nation landed with a heavier-than-usual conscience.

America's might and bombast too often conceals our democracy's uniqueness and vulnerability. We have formally split just once, a conflict that, for some, retains a peculiar significance. Our unity however, has waxed and waned many times over United States' nearly quarter millennium of existence. Truth be told, our stitching is now strained.

The flag that flew over Fort McHenry during the War of 1812, the one that Francis Scott Key observed and that inspired his writing of the Star-Spangled Banner, resides at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. It is enormous, majestic, awe-inspiring; it is also a very delicate piece of cloth, sewn together long ago by Mary Pickersgill in Baltimore. It is the perfect symbol of America and the perfect metaphor for the "handle with care" warning that should adorn the Constitution's footer.

Something big is going to happen in November. Regardless of your chosen side, if either just yet, it is difficult to feel confident about the next four years. If you do, you're either in a fog or have gotten into enough of some special bootleg Independence Day elixir to make sense of things (please share!). For the vast majority, particular those who have had the privilege of voting for many candidates over many decades, this is a sobering time. Like any moment in history, we are confronted by an assortment of complex challenges: Ukraine, the Middle East, China's ambitions with Taiwan, the border, climate change, sticky post-COVID inflation and a higher interest rate environment, wealth concentration and Social Security solvency. Quite a list. And it would be completely understandable to conclude that, no matter the election results in November, we will be left with leaders who will fail to meet the challenge – a troubling reality that will have searching for respites, if not our passports.

Referring to his concerts, Tom Petty once said, "If people forget about their problems for two hours, I've done my job." For anyone who's been lost signing a song while cruising a quiet road, absorbed by a killer album or mesmerized by a live performance, Petty's quote perfectly captures the power of music. The jazz of New Orleans. The blues from the Mississippi delta to Chicago. Nashville and the Grand Ole Opry. Rock and Roll. Motown. Reggae. Soul. Pop. Punk. Metal. Hip Hop. Any and all genres across decades and generations. The most fantastic of diversions.

Sports wield a similar power to transcend all differences in race, gender, creed, or political persuasion, to distract from petty differences and offer a brief opportunity to bond with fans of similar allegiance. Attend any game. Look around – young, old, black, white, suburban and urban dwellers, people from all walks of life. Is there any blue v. red? Do any of those differences matter in that moment? No and no. All that matters is getting the "W" and dishing the "L" to the other team. Thousands of people, all divisions stripped away, perfectly united: it's the version of us our adversaries despise.

Humans...Americans...we've gotten a lot of things wrong. Many mistakes have been made. We've succumbed to ignorance, fear, hubris, power-lust and greed too many times. Politics are terrible and politicians, a profession requiring comfort with masks, alt-realities and truth-bending, aren't much better. Our history offers much to celebrate...and much to learn from. Someday, hopefully many moons from now, an advanced species will study our time on Earth, note our enormous potential and be puzzled by our failings. But the final report will conclude that we absolutely nailed two things – music and sports. In both, humans, and especially Americans, discovered their best selves, but curiously missed the opportunity for broader application.

Send comments to RonaldGuyJr@gmail.com



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JAZZ & SEAFOOD FESTIVAL

July 12-14



Sunday, July 14

JAZZIN' SUNDAY in town



Leonardtown All Day

Visitors are encouraged to end their Potomac Jazz & Seafood Festival Weekend on a high note by exploring the Town of Leonardtown with brunch, shopping, art galleries, historic sites, winery & more, including 3 jazz cruises setting sail from Leonardtown Wharf.



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Friday & Sunday Leonardtown JAZZ CRUISES Leonardtown Wharf



Leonardtown Wharf

Friday, July 12
3pm - 5pm

Sunday, July 14
11am - 1pm • 2pm - 4pm • 5pm - 7pm

Enhance your 3-day jazz weekend with an exclusive two-hour cruise on beautiful Breton Bay right from the Wharf in downtown Leonardtown while enjoying live jazz music from Marcus Mitchell, light seafood fare and refreshments (beer, wine and non-alcoholic beverages). You'll be joined by our very own Adrienne Michele, "Ms. Potomac Jazz," the Jazz Ambassador during the trip. Beer, wine and light fare will be provided.

Visit <https://JazzCruises2024.eventbrite.com> for cruise tickets & more information



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More info, tickets, discount packages, and more

Friday, July 12

Jazz Weekend WELCOME RECEPTION

featuring **Higher Standards**

FREE



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**The Inn at Leonardtown
2pm - 4pm**

Mix and mingle with fellow jazz lovers before heading into Leonardtown for the evening! Festival attendees can enjoy a free welcome reception with live music, drinks, and light fare after you

arrive for the weekend. This event is drop in open to all festival attendees and will feature food and drinks from Quality Street set in the beautiful downstairs lobby area of the Inn at Leonardtown.

Friday JAZZ CONCERT

featuring **Casual Groove**

**College of Southern
Maryland
Leonardtown Campus
5pm - 7pm**

Kick off your weekend with a FREE jazz concert on the campus lawn of the College of Southern Maryland Leonardtown Campus. Bring a lawn chair or blanket and enjoy the music.



FREE



SCAN FOR
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Saturday, July 13

THE MAIN EVENT



Opener **Latrice Carr** (1pm)

Second Act **Marcus Mitchell & Joi Carr**

Headliner **Julian Vaughn** (5:30pm)

**St. Clements Island Museum
12pm - 8pm**

Relax waterside on the museum lawn and enjoy great food and gorgeous views of the Potomac! Tickets required. Tickets will be on sale at the door if available. Get tickets at PotomacJazzFest.com at discounted rate until 7pm

Jazz Ambassador AFTER PARTY

featuring **Live DJ**

**Brudergarten Beer Garden
at Shepherd's Old Field Market
10pm - Late**

Keep the party going after the Main Event on the 2nd day of the 3-day Potomac Jazz & Seafood Festival with our official Jazz Ambassador, Adrienne Michele (Ms. Potomac Jazz), for the After Party! There will be a live DJ and food will be provided by from the Jamaican Grill. Free to attend; all food and beverage purchases are separate



NAVAL AIR STATION
PATUXENT RIVER

News

Naval Test Pilot School Changes Command



Cmdr. Travis Hartman, incoming commander to the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School, addresses the audience during a change of command ceremony held in the school's hangar at Naval Air Station Patuxent River in Maryland on June 27, 2024. (U.S. Navy photo by Erik Hildebrandt)

Cmdr. Travis Hartman took command of the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School (USNTPS) from Lt. Col. Aaron Kia during an airborne change of command ceremony at Naval Air Station Patuxent River on June 27.

Former USNTPS Commander Capt. Glenn Rioux, Military Director for Engineering at the Naval Air Systems Command, presided over the ceremony.

"We all know the documented attributes of your command, but those undocumented attributes stand out: courage, empowerment, resilience and effective communication," said Rioux on Kia's years at USNTPS. "Cmdr. Hartman, get ready for an amazing and humbling experience."

The in-flight exchange took place with Hartman flying an F/A-18 Super Hornet and Kia in a C-12 Huron.

Hartman, who is the 52nd headmaster for the school, assumes command after serving as the USNTPS executive officer for the past 18 months.

"I am honored to be counted [as part of the test community] and commit to 'embracing the orange' to earn my place in this much-respected company," said Hartman.

Hartman is originally from Missouri and graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 2005, and USNTPS in 2014 with Class 145. The tactical pilot began his flight test career with Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (VX) 23. In 2015, he earned a master's degree in engineering science from the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School. He served as department head with Strike Fighter Squadron 146 and deployed onboard USS Nimitz (CVN 68) before returning to VX-23. In 2021, Hartman reported to the Program Executive Office

for Tactical Aircraft Programs as deputy program manager for the Next Generation Air Dominance program (PMA-230). In 2022, he transitioned to USNTPS as executive officer.

"Command is truly the opportunity of a lifetime," said Kia. "It has been an honor to serve with [Hartman] and I'm excited to see you lead USNTPS into the future."

Kia, originally from Hawaii, is an Army acquisition officer and the third Army commander in USNTPS history. The rotary pilot commissioned as second lieutenant Army Reserve Officer Training Corps' Aviation Branch in 2004 with a bachelor's degree in aerospace engineering from the University of Southern California. He also graduated from USNTPS in 2014 with Class 145 and earned a master's degree in engineering systems from the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School in 2016. Prior to coming to USNTPS, he was assigned to the Advanced Aviation Assessment program where he developed weapon systems for U.S. Special Operations Command. Kia moves on to the Program Executive Office for Aviation at Redstone Arsenal in Alabama.

USNTPS is a component of Naval Test Wing Atlantic, the test wing under Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division. The school trains the world's finest developmental test pilots, flight officers, engineers, industry and foreign partners in full-spectrum test and evaluation of aircraft and aircraft systems. USNTPS is forefront in development of modern test techniques and leads aviation in standardization of flight test. It is the only domestic source of rotary wing test pilots serving as dedicated test pilot school of the U.S. Army.

Public Cooling Centers Available Through Sunday, July 14

Due to the high temperatures expected this week into the weekend, St. Mary's County Government is announcing the availability of cooling centers for the public. Residents who need to take refuge in a cool place can go to one of the following locations:

- **Charlotte Hall Library**
37600 New Market Rd., Charlotte Hall
9:00 AM – 8:00 PM Thursday
9:00 AM – 5:00 PM Friday & Saturday
- **Northern Senior Activity Center**
29655 Charlotte Hall Rd., Charlotte Hall
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM Thursday & Friday
- **Garvey Senior Activity Center**
23630 Hayden Farm Ln., Leonardtown
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM Thursday & Friday
- **Leonardtown Library**
23600 Hayden Farm Ln., Leonardtown
9:00 AM – 8:00 PM Thursday
9:00 AM – 5:00 PM Friday & Saturday
1:00 PM – 5:00 PM Sunday

- **Loffler Senior Activity Center**
21905 Chancellor's Run Rd., Great Mills
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM Thursday & Friday
- **Lexington Park Library**
21677 FDR Blvd, Lexington Park
9:00 AM – 8:00 PM Thursday
9:00 AM – 5:00 PM Friday – Sunday
- **Three Oaks Center**
46905 Lei Dr., Lexington Park
8:00 AM – 4:30 PM Thursday & Friday

The highest temperatures of the week are expected to be 106 degrees Fahrenheit. Be sure to take frequent breaks if you are working outside and to drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated. Visit ready.gov/heat for tips on staying safe during extreme temperatures. Always remember to check on your neighbors and loved ones, especially if they are elderly or have functional needs.

Visit <https://www.stmaryscountymd.gov/em> for more information on preparedness.

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BE MY MIRACLE AND PLEASE CHOOSE ME! ALWAYS OPT TO ADOPT, please don't shop!

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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County Times
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EXPLORE Leonardtown



LEONARDTOWN
Summer Calendar

WHARF | SQUARE | BUSINESS

JUL 12-14	Potomac Jazz & Seafood Festival: <i>Jazz Cruises at the Wharf</i> Various times
JUL 16	Third Tuesday Tunes in the Square ft Bradley Turner 12 pm - 1 pm
JUL 21	Military Appreciation Concert ft. Cover Your 6 5 pm - 7 pm
JUL 27-28	SMBC Boat Regatta 9 am - 4 pm
AUG 2-4	August First Friday All Weekend Check with businesses for times, specials, and activities

For all events & activities, visit:
www.VisitLeonardtownMD.com/EventsCalendar

SUNSET CRUISES @ Leonardtown Wharf



Cruise Breton Bay to
St. Clement's Island
with Captain Phil
select Fridays
& Saturdays



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Letters to the Editor

Cell phones in schools

Finally, various counties, including St. Mary's are reviewing their cell phone policy for their School System. It certainly took long enough. However, time will tell if they actually do anything about it. When I was on the Superintendent's School Safety Committee I made it clear that students with their cell phones in schools are not only a distraction for the students who are trying to get a good education but, they can also be used to organize fights and be used for cheating on tests, Cyber Bullying, Sexting and a wide range of other problems. Students have a hard time trying to focus on their work as it is. A wide range of distractions does not help.

People forget that there was a time that there were not "any cell phones in schools". If parents had a urgent need to talk to their child they could easily call the office at the school. They would contact the student and bring the student to the office for the call or relay the message if it was of such a severe urgency.

Some parents are under the belief that it is a "right for their child to have a cell phone in school during classroom hours". That could not be further from the truth. There is no State or Federal law that supports a parent's belief that a student must have a cell phone in school during school hours.

In addition, from an incident years ago, I recall a massive amount of disinforma-

tion from the students with their cell phones during a possible Active Shooter at their school. I was sitting with a Navy Captain at Pax River. His daughter repeatedly text him false information that she believed was true. Her information was probably from other students. It turns out the report was not true in any way and the students spread a wide range of disinformation. The disinformation that the students were spreading had to be checked out by law enforcement which took far more time than it should have. The police have to check out every report. No matter how large or small. In fact, some argue that students could have been charged criminally with making a false report.

The bottom line is that students with cell phones in schools never should have been allowed in the first place. It was a bad idea many years ago. And it remains a bad idea now. Again, there is no legal standing that supports a student with a right to have a cell phone on school grounds during school hours. In a 2014 Supreme Court ruling of Riley vs. California, a search without a warrant of a cell phone is unlawful. Even if it is a search after the arrest of the cell phone owner. Therefore, this becomes a no brainer that cell phones should be banned in Public Schools immediately.

Roy Fedders
Dameron, MD

Legal Notice

Notice is hereby given that the following vessel has been abandoned for more than 180 days on the property of: Janet Teeple Muller, 143 Peach Grove Lane, Clear Brook, VA 22624. Her phone number is 540 974-4024. The vessel is described as:

Boat Registration Number: MD1968 CB
Hull Identification Number: MDZ50389J773
Vessel Name: Graf Spee
Builder: O'Day, Dragonfly Sailboats
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Color: Green

Application for title will be made in accordance with Sections 8-722 of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Natural Resources Article if this vessel is not claimed and removed from the above property within 30 days of this notice.

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Launch of St. Mary's County Public Health Corps Announced

The St. Mary's County Health Department (SMCHD) has partnered with Assisted Management Solutions and Data Research Group to launch the St. Mary's County Public Health Corps. The Corps is a new opportunity for community members to develop skills in public health emergency preparedness and response, explore their interests in a public health career, and give back to their community as a public service volunteer. Assisted Management Solutions and Data Research Group have developed a technology platform to support the St. Mary's County Public Health Corps. Community members can register as volunteers and begin learning and contributing to their county.

The Corps technology platform uses Data Research Group's CRM, FlashPoint, to streamline community member registration and ongoing communication. SMCHD will offer training opportunities to volunteers to develop their skills in topics such as emergency preparedness and response and will mobilize volunteers to assist local public health needs, including for special events or community emergencies. The technology portal:

- Tracks training and service hours completed by Public Health Corps members
- Includes in-app license (certification) and skills verification
- Is compatible with smartphones and tablets
- Has an easy sign-up and communication process

To register for the St. Mary's County Public Health Corps:

- Volunteers must be at least 18 years old
- No medical experience is necessary, though there are specific volunteer categories for volunteers who have

different types of clinical training. Free training will be provided through the technology platform and in-person. Work is volunteer-hour eligible.

"For many generations, our exceptional community has been one in which neighbors pitch in to help neighbors. The new local Public Health Corps builds upon this spirit by giving us a way to get trained and ready for future public health needs while also developing a pipeline for our own local healthcare and public health workforce," said Dr. Meena Brewster, St. Mary's County Health Officer. "The St. Mary's County Public Health Corps is about jobs development, public service, and community resiliency. Our SMCHD team is pleased to partner with Assisted Management Solutions and Data Research Group in launching the technology to support the Corps."

"It has been a pleasure working with the SMCHD team on this development effort," said Lisa Gregory, President of Assisted Management Solutions. "SMCHD staff have demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to this project and we hope community members wishing to volunteer or engage in the health profession will find this new platform user-friendly and beneficial."

"We are pleased to partner with SMCHD on this very important effort," said Ed Burg, CEO and President of Data Research Group. "We are coupling the time-honored tradition of serving in the public health corp with 21st-century technology. Our aim is to more effectively engage with local individuals who have the experience and the desire to serve as volunteers in a number of different capacities."

Visit smchd.org/phc for more information about the St. Mary's County Public Health Corps.

Shooting Suspect Arrested

During the early morning hours of July 3, 2024, the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office apprehended Davione Syheme Mason, 23, of Lexington Park, MD, on a search and seizure warrant at a residence in the 46000 block of Flower Drive in Lexington Park. The warrant was served by detectives with the Criminal Investigations Division with assistance from the Emergency Services Team.

Detectives identified Mason as a suspect following a June 26, 2024, shooting incident in the 46000 block of Columbus Drive in Lexington Park. No injuries were reported, but the investigation revealed a bullet hole in a nearby residence, and several shell casings were located at the scene.

Mason was charged in the arrest warrant with Handgun on Person, Loaded Handgun on Person, and Reckless Endangerment for this incident.



Davione Syheme Mason

The suspect was transported to the Detention and Rehabilitation Center in Leonardtown where he is currently being held pending a bond hearing.

Sheriff's Office Investigating Shooting Incident

On Saturday, July 6, 2024, Deputies from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office responded to reports of shots fired in the 21000 block of Pacific Drive in Lexington Park.

Witnesses told deputies they saw individuals in two vehicles near Pacific Drive in the area of Columbus Drive as an occupant of one vehicle was shooting at the other vehicle. The vehicles were not located, and shell cases were recovered. No injuries were reported. One bullet was later located that had struck a residence in the area.

The Criminal Investigations Division has assumed the case, and anyone with

information about it is asked to contact Detective Benjamin Raley at Benjamin.Raley@stmaryscountymd.gov or by phone at 301-475-4200, ext. 8076.

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

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

Theft Suspect Sought

The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office seeks assistance identifying and locating the individual in this picture concerning a suspected theft from a local business. The suspect concealed items in a pocket and left the business in a gray passenger car.

If you recognize this individual, please contact Deputy Cody Donaldson at Cody.Donaldson@stmaryscountymd.gov or 301-475-4200, ext. 8184. Please reference case number 32216-24.

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

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



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Long-time Country Store to Close Its Doors



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The owners of Hill's Store in Helen, David and Joan Williams, announced this week their plans to close the store this fall.

"It is with great sadness to inform you all that David & I have decided to close Hill's Store come Sunday September 29," Joan Williams wrote in a social media post. "Our plans are to get through the horseshoe season."

The Williams' have owned and operated the store for more than 10 years; the store itself has been in the community for decades under different owners.

"This has been a hard decision but [we] feel it is best for us to do for ourselves & family," Joan wrote. "We have enjoyed our last 11-and-a-half years here and have made so many amazing friends and we have the best customers."

Hill's Store has long served as a social gathering spot for Helen and the surrounding community, hosting outdoor games such as horseshoes and cornhole tournaments.

The business sits immediately next to the Veterans of Helen Memorial as well, serving as a waypoint for visitors and tourists.

She said the future of the building is still undetermined.

"At this time, we have no plans for the space but we are up for entertaining leasing the area that we have," Joan Williams said.

Larry Hill's parents took over the operation of the store in 1939, he said, adding that it was "kind of a shock" to see that it would close.

"It was a bar and a country store," Hill told The County Times. "My dad added on to it twice."

In those days the bar was still segregated between white and black races, Hill said.

"My memories were that a lot of our clientele were black clientele who would work on the farms and in the community," Hill said. "They would come during the tobacco harvesting season and bring their families with them."

"When you run a country store like that our customers were like family."

Hill and his siblings grew up stocking shelves and filling kerosene cans and pumping gas, he said, helping to run the store.

They sold meats and sausage made with an old family recipe that is still sold there today.

"It's still a staple a lot of people look for," Hill said. "It's been a popular place for the local community over the years."

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Town Treatment Plant Expansion Passes Halfway Point

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The project to expand the capacity at the town's waste water treatment plant on Van Wert Lane has reached the 55 percent mark, it was reported at the Commissioners of Leonardtown meeting July 8.

Town Administrator Laschelle McKay said, however, that the project has experienced significant delays.

Its projected effective completion date was July 2 but now the completion date has been extended out to mid-December, she said.

"They have [sped] up a lot," said McKay, "We had a really bad lull in the spring getting some supplies and having enough workers there."

Construction crews have since made much better progress, she said, adding that the town has already spent \$7.9 million on the project.

McKay said \$7.4 million was yet to be

spent to finish the project.

The town treatment plant had an upgrade finished in 2018 that gave it enhanced nutrient removal (ENR) abilities but did not provide any additional capacity despite the expense. It was a state-mandated technology upgrade.

In 2019 the town realized it needed more treatment capacity to deal with the projected growth in town and set about searching for a construction contractor to do the job.

Michael Ronca and Sons, Inc. was chosen for the task in September of 2022 to expand the plant's capacity from 680,000 gallons treated per day to one million gallons treated per day.

McKay said with the expansion of the plant comes greater reporting requirement by the state for water quality.

The town also has need for a new water tower, the bid for which should go out on July 23, McKay said.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Commissioners to Host Public Forum on July 23

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County (CSMC) will host a Public Forum on Tuesday, July 23, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in the CSMC meeting room, located on the 1st floor of the Chesapeake Building, at 41770 Baldrige Street in Leonardtown.

Public Forums allow residents to speak directly to the Commissioners on topics of their choosing. Residents may offer appreciation, questions, or suggestions in a mutually respectful format. Those wishing to speak at the forum will receive up to three minutes to address the Commissioners.

Anyone wishing to provide more detailed feedback to the CSMC can do so at any time via:

• Email to: csmc@stmaryscountymd.com

• Mail to: Commissioners of St. Mary's County, P.O. Box 653, Leonardtown, MD, 20650

Public Forums are televised live on St. Mary's County Government (SMCG) TV Channel 95 and streamed live at: www.YouTube.com/@StMarysCoGov.

For information regarding the Commissioners of St. Mary's County, including meeting dates, documents, contact information, and more, please visit: www.stmaryscountymd.gov/csmc.

Follow SMCG on social media for regular updates at <https://x.com/StMarysCoGov> and <https://www.facebook.com/StMarysCountyGovernment>.

Night Construction Work Scheduled for Delabrooke Bridge

St. Mary's County Government's Department of Public Works & Transportation (DPW&T) is announcing upcoming construction and major repairs scheduled for the Delabrooke Bridge, located on Delabrooke Road, in Mechanicsville, from the intersection of Riverview Road north-eastward for approximately 500 ft, starting on Sunday, July 21, 2024, and continuing through Thursday, July 25, 2024, between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.

During these times, Delabrooke Road will be closed to through traffic at the bridge

crossing over Horse Landing Creek. Local traffic will be permitted only for access to residential entrances. Posted dates and times could be modified by weather conditions.

Drivers are asked to please remain alert for equipment, work crews, and changing traffic patterns. Message boards and signage will be deployed in the area prior to and during the project to serve as an additional reminder.

For additional information, please contact DPW&T at (301) 475-4200, ext. 3531.

Hearing on Car Dealership Plan Postponed



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Technical problems caused the public hearing portion of the July 8 planning commission meeting on a concept site plan for a combined Honda and Kia car dealership in California to be postponed to later this month when Patrick Mudd, of Mudd Engineering, the agent for the project could not hear dialogue between the commission and the applicant from his remote location.

The owner of the project is CMA Properties, Inc.

Many residents who live near the proposed project site had come to voice their concerns but planning commission chair Howard Thompson said the hearing could not proceed without all involved being able to take part properly.

"If we're going to do this, we're going to do it right," Thompson said.

The meeting has been rescheduled to July 22 to take public testimony.

The entire project would be more than 47,000 square feet in size on about eight acres of land near the intersection of Three

Notch Road and Route 4; the Honda dealership would be a one-story building of 27,242 square feet while the Kia dealership would be 20,296 square feet in size.

Some residents have already written into the planning commission regarding the project; one person supported it, though they said they would have preferred a local business take the site rather than one from outside the county.

CMA Properties, Inc., or Carter Myers Automotive Group, operates out of Charlottesville, Va.

Others opposed the large development. "These dealerships will have two tall buildings with almost 50,000 square feet of space and almost 600 parking spaces," wrote one person claiming to be a resident. "To me this sounds like too much traffic, noise and light pollution for our little neighborhood."

The writer of the letter said they were worried that the Woodland Acres community would become a "1.5-mile test drive loop for these two dealerships."

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RAC Project May Get New Location

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

After years of delays the Regional Agricultural Center (RAC) project that was supposed to have been built anew near the county's transfer station in Charlotte Hall may now take up residence at a vacant grocery store.

The announcement was made at the general meeting of the Tri-County Council of Southern Maryland (TCC) June 27.

TCC Executive Director John Hartline said no firm decision has been made, only that a RAC would be built in one location or the other.

"We are absolutely dedicated to completing one or the other of these projects," Hartline told The County Times this week.

There are several advantages to putting the RAC in the former Shoppers Food Warehouse and McKay's grocery store property, Hartline said, but he and other staff have been directed by the executive board of the TCC to come up with a proposed business plan for the alternate site, which sits just yards from the Charles County border, so they can bear out the strengths and weaknesses of each.

"We already have a lot of work done on [the first] RAC," Hartline said, noting that the project was already being referred to as RAC 1.0 and RAC 2.0. "They [the executive board] said they want this as soon as possible."



Hartline said he was looking to have the comparison analysis ready by July 25.

The first RAC site has been found to have several problems with it that have caused delays; Hartline said the latest issue was the sewer system.

Or, he said, the lack thereof.

Hartline said the first site would require the installation of what is known as a "best available technology" sewage system.

The TCC had paid for such a system to be installed at the Barns at New Market facility at a cost of \$350,000, he said.

"We would not be surprised if the cost

for the RAC was substantially a lot more money," Hartline said.

With all of the delays in getting the project started since the site had been chosen in 2019, Hartline said there was still more time to wait.

"With the first RAC... the earliest we would be able to move in would be by the first or second quarter of 2026," he said. "The advantage of the second site is that the timeline would be sped up by a fairly large margin."

"You could do a lot of what we want to do there in a matter of months, not years."

The primary role of the RAC is to be a processing facility for locally produced meats, many of which would be slaughtered at a nearby slaughter facility run in the Amish community in St. Mary's.

The facility would also provide a point of sale for some of those meat products as well as other value-added farm goods.

St. Mary's County Commissioner Mike Alderson was in favor of using the vacant building for the RAC.

"It's got the refrigeration we need and it already has a full butcher shop," Alderson said. "We have farmers from five counties waiting for this to open up."

One of the main issues, he said, was the question of ownership.

"The county does not want to hold a lease on that building," Alderson said. "We can't pay rent to somebody else."

"I'd like it to be an enterprise fund."

Alderson, who is the executive vice president of the Tri-County Council, said the vacant building was more appealing as well because of rising construction costs.

"To build from scratch right now would cost about \$8.2 million," Alderson said. "I'm 100 percent not comfortable with that; I do not want to build a new place."

"It's too much money."

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Michael David Bowen, Jr., 24, Great Mills, MD

Christopher Michael Laney, 35, Leonardtown, MD
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Continued Heat Scorches St. Mary's

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

High temperatures have driven St. Mary's County government to open up cooling stations and warn residents to avoid the blazing heat as much as possible. The county has opened the cooling centers through July 14 and has cited weather predictions showing heat indices rising past 100 degrees Fahrenheit this week.

Farmers have seen their crops wither as the sun scorches the ground.

"I'm praying to the Good Lord that we'll get some of that rain that's been predicted," said Jamie Raley, who heads the Maryland Farm Bureau and has farm properties throughout the county. "It's strange because earlier this year we had too much rain... seeds rotted in the ground."

The ground was so sodden during the winter that corn crops, one of the most important locally, were late being planted or failed entirely.

Now, farmers are watching some of those corn crops fail for lack of moisture.

"Some of those farmers aren't going to make their corn crop," said Raley.

The demand for locally grown and raised foods such as meats, produce, and seafood have only increased, Raley said, as customers want to have better knowledge of where and how their food is produced.

But the recent excessive heat is making it difficult for farmers to meet those growing demands.

Raley's own livestock have little to feed on naturally, he said, so he has had to resort to other means.

"I've started using winter hay to feed my cattle three weeks ago," Raley told The County Times. "The pasture has gone dormant; there's nothing for the cattle to forage."

Another local farmer, Barry Roach, who manages a farmers' market put it succinctly. "If it's not irrigated, it's hurting," said Roach. "It's tough; it's not good."

MedStar St. Mary's Hospital has also felt the strain from the heat.

"There has been an increase in heat related visits for the elderly, those with chronic illnesses, and the very young," said Dr. James Damalouji, the hospital's associate medical director. "Otherwise healthy individuals that have prolonged exposure to the heat without adequate hydration and protection from the sun are at risk for developing heat related injury, which can manifest in severe dehydration, sun burns, and kidney injury."

"Lack of air conditioning and prolonged exposure to the heat are significant risk factors for all ages, especially for patients with chronic respiratory and kidney disease."

The county health department is warning residents of the dangers of exposure to extreme heat and has offered advice on what to do to avoid it.

They advise staying indoors as much as possible and remaining on lower floors where cooler air tends to stay and to wear lightweight, light-colored, loose fitting



Many residents found relief from the heat at local swim clubs including the pool at Breton Bay Golf & Country Club. Photo provided by Breton Bay Golf & Country Club.

clothing that can better allow air flow and avoid retaining too much body heat.

While electric fans can offer some relief from the heat, the health department warns, they are not cool enough to prevent heat-related illnesses, so residents should take cool showers or baths to stave off overly high body temperatures or rely on rooms where they can take advantage of air conditioning.

Eating hot foods and heavy meals should also be avoided if residents plan prolonged exposure to the heat as they can increase your body's temperature, according to the health department.

The department also recommends scheduling outdoor activities before 10 a.m. and after 6 p.m., when temperatures are milder;

staying hydrated is always advisable as well.

Residents should also take care to take frequent activity breaks in the shade and drink water every 15 to 20 minutes to stay hydrated.

Very cold drinks, heavily caffeinated drinks, and alcohol should also be avoided, according to the health department.

Neither people nor pets should be left inside a parked car without adequate ventilation or air conditioning; pets should be brought indoors in times of extreme heat.

If pets are outside, they should have adequate water and shade to protect them from the heat, the health department stated.

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Family of Slain Teen Wins Case in Federal Court

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

More than three years ago, 16-year-old Peyton Ham was shot to death by a state trooper in his family's own yard in Leonardtown after he pointed what turned out to be a replica handgun at the law officer.

After months of investigations by the Maryland State Police and then State's Attorney Richard Fritz, Trooper Joseph Azzari was cleared of any wrongdoing in the shooting but Ham's family filed a civil rights suit against the trooper, claiming the trooper used excessive force in killing their son.

The U.S. District Court in Greenbelt quashed Kristee Boyle's, Ham's mother's, case but the case may have just had new life breathed into it after the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond, Va. said the lower court erred in its decision.

The latest ruling was issued July 9; the case was argued before the court May 10.

"The successful appeal highlights that our case was improperly dismissed, affirming the validity and importance of pursuing accountability and justice in cases such as this," Boyle wrote in a social media post. "This ruling grants us the opportunity to proceed to discovery and potentially obtain a new federal jury trial, ensuring that the truth is brought to light and that those responsible are held accountable."

When Azzari responded to emergency calls for a man at a residence on Hollywood Road with a gun April 13, 2021 he was confronted by Ham, who was pointing what



Azzari approaching Ham after firing the first salvo.

Azzari said he believed to be a handgun.

Azzari fired 15 times during the incident, the full capacity of his Glock 22 .40-caliber service weapon.

After opening fire on Ham with about 10 shots from his duty weapon, Ham eventually went to the ground, on his knees, dropping the replica pistol.

Ham was wounded and bleeding profusely but was said to have produced a knife and brandished it, according to the official report of the incident.

When Ham would not comply with the trooper's order to drop the knife he opened fire, striking Ham in the chest, killing him.

The trooper gave conflicting accounts of what happened just before firing the second volley of shots, the latest ruling from the court stated.

In one account, Azzari said he fired as

Ham was attempting to get up with the knife while in another, he said Ham was on his feet and coming towards him with the knife.

Eyewitnesses to the shooting said that Azzari fired while Ham was still on his knees.

Boyle said in her initial lawsuit that the conflicting accounts were reason to have her appeal granted but the court disagreed, saying that the mere fact that Ham had a knife was enough to put the law officer in lethal danger even if he was not moving towards him.

Boyle also asserted that she had been denied access to her son's full autopsy report, which could have further shed light on the case.

"That document could indicate that Ham was kneeling on the ground unable to get up at the time Azzari fatally shot him," the 4th Circuit ruling stated. "It could also indicate that the extent of Ham's injuries from the first round of shots would have made it

apparent to a reasonable officer that at the moment the second round began, Ham was unable to present any threat."

Two of three judges on the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals sided with Boyle in their majority ruling.

"On review, we conclude that discoverable evidence could create a material dispute of fact and thus the district court abused its discretion in denying Boyle an opportunity to conduct discovery," the 4th Circuit ruled. "Accordingly, without assessing the court's determination on the merits, we reverse its denial of Boyle's motion for discovery, vacate its grant of summary judgment to Azzari as premature, and remand for additional proceedings."

The 4th Circuit further chided the lower court's decision: "The district court also should have ordered the parties to proceed to discovery because the record presents a potential material dispute of fact," the ruling reads. "Azzari claims in his summary judgment declaration that Ham 'stood up with [a] knife in his hand and took a step towards him' when he shot Ham."

"[Michelle] Mills, an eyewitness, stated that Ham 'looked as though he was trying to stand' when Azzari shot him."

The ruling continued: "These accounts of the moments immediately preceding the use of force, the core issue in every excessive force case, directly conflict."

The case has been remanded back to the U.S. District Court of Maryland for further deliberations.

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MON, JUL 15 Mostly Sunny Hi: 96° Lo: 76°	TUE, JUL 16 Mostly Sunny Hi: 97° Lo: 77°	WED, JUL 17 PM Thunderstorms Hi: 96° Lo: 74°	THU, JUL 18 Scattered Storms Hi: 88° Lo: 79°

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