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Calvert County Times

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2024

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**BOE Candidates Opt
Out of Forum**

**School Safety Committee
Members Appointed**

**Battle Creek Nature Center
to Be Rebuilt**



**COVE POINT ANTES
\$60 MILLION
PER YEAR**

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LOCAL 6
Changes proposed to comprehensive plan



LOCAL 7
Nature center will be rebuilt

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WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, SEP 12	FRI, SEP 13	SAT, SEP 14	SUN, SEP 15
Mostly Sunny Hi: 79° Lo: 63°	Mostly Cloudy Hi: 80° Lo: 63°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 82° Lo: 63°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 81° Lo: 64°
MON, SEP 16	TUE, SEP 17	WED, SEP 18	THU, SEP 19
Showers Hi: 77° Lo: 65°	Rain Hi: 75° Lo: 65°	Showers Hi: 76° Lo: 65°	Showers Hi: 76° Lo: 64°

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County, Cove Point LNG Owners Settle Payment Dispute

Agreement to Run Through 2038

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Calvert County appears to have resolved the key issue that led to their budgetary problems for the fiscal year that began July 1. The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) announced on Sept. 10 the settlement with the owners of Cove Point LNHG Plant that calls for a payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) of \$60 million annually for the 2023-2038 tax year period.

The lack of a new PILOT caused the state to reduce education funding to the county by \$22 million because the property tax payment for Cove Point that replaced the PILOT caused the county's wealth in the eyes of the state to blossom. The settlement appears to have averted that issue for future years. The county will attempt to get the state to give back that lost \$22 million.

Special Projects Program Manager Ashley Staples-Reid told the commissioners, "Cove Point LNG, the first liquefied natural gas (LNG) export facility on the East Coast located in Lusby, is owned and operated by Cove Point LNG, LP, a Delaware Limited Partnership, a subsidiary of Berkshire Hathaway Energy (BHE). The facility site is located on approximately 1,000 acres of land, has a storage capacity of 14.6 billion cubic feet and a daily send-out capacity of 1.8 billion cubic feet. Its ability to perform all the functions of a LNG facility including import, export, vaporization and send out and liquefaction makes it unique among US LNG terminals."

She went on to say, "BHE has offered a PILOT agreement of \$60 million annually for the 2023-2038 Tax Year period, which would expire on June 30, 2039. A section has been incorporated into the PILOT to automatically renew for an additional five years unless either party notifies the other of their intention to not renew. For Tax Year 2023, BHE has paid their assessed amount of \$58,690,136.73 to the county. If the proposed PILOT is approved, BHE will pay an additional \$1,309,863.27 to align with the terms of the PILOT. If automatically renewed, then the PILOT Payments shall continue to apply to each subsequent year in the same amount as in the effect for the year preceding the renewal."

She added, "So long as the state wealth formula remains unchanged from its last revision in 2018, the PILOT revenue will not be included in the calculation of the county's wealth."

Staples-Reid explained, "In June of 2013, the Maryland General Assembly authorized the Board of County Commissioners of Calvert County to enter into a payment in lieu of taxes agreement with the owner of facility for the liquefaction of natural gas. So once that authority was obtained in November of 2013, the BOCC did hold a public hearing and received public comment and then approved a local ordinance to exercise that authority. And then subsequently we assigned a PILOT agreement with Dominion at the time, Cove Point



Cove Point LNG Plant

LNG, approved a five-year PILOT followed by a nine-year tax credit."

She noted, "The PILOT did provide a one-time payment of \$25 million at the start of the PILOT with an annual \$15.1 million on the then existing natural gas import equipment and then provided...an annual amount for the expansion property. And then after that five-year period, which did end June 30th, 2023, there was a tax credit which provide a 42 percent tax credit on new and repurpose equipment for nine years."

When the PILOT expired on June 30, 2023, Staples-Reid said, "The county requested an assessment of the property with the State Department of Assessments and Taxation. I do want to note here that the state does not do assessments on property when it is in a PILOT agreement. There's no need to because there's no need to assess its value when there's already a fixed rate with the PILOT agreement. However, with this PILOT, we did have a note saying that the state could do an assessment upon request. So, we did put in that request in tandem to that request. The BOCC at the time had also instructed staff to do outside consulting, to get a consultant to do an independent assessment of the property as well. Consultants were vetted over the summer of 2021, and then a contract was signed with George Sanpello, LLC in November of 2021."

Staples-Reid said, "We worked with Cove Point in order to get some vital data in order for them to do their independent assessment. Cove Point was very forthcoming. They also acquired information with FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission) and US Department of Transportation in order to come up with their assessment. They did have an assessment that did come back.

There was some discrepancy, and some discussion in regards to what the county thought the value was and what Cove Point thought the value was."

She said, "Unfortunately we did not come to an agreement on that assessment by the expiration of the PILOT. After that expiration period, the state did do an assessment, and the county did request an administrative hearing to review that assessment."

The state and county had different assessment figures. She said, "The county noted an appeal of that decision to the Tax Court of Maryland and has received a trial date for October 2025." But to avoid that, the agreement was reached.

Staples-Reid said in not having a PILOT, "The main thing that has happened is our impact to the wealth formula. So, the Maryland State Department of Education in coordination with the Department of Budget Management and the Department of Legislative Services calculates, distributes, and monitors state aid for local jurisdictions and their school systems. When our PILOT agreement was signed in 2013, Maryland's system for funding education was based on full-time equivalent student enrollment and local wealth, which was meant the sum of net taxable income, 100 percent of the assessed value of the operating real property of public utilities, 40 percent of the assessed value of all other real property and 50 percent of assessed value of personal property. So, the county's wealth did not include amounts paid under the PILOT, because those are exempt from taxation and are not assessed so long as the agreements are in place. So that goes back to where our PILOT had expired, and we did not have a renewal in place. That impacted our wealth."

Although the county will attempt to recoup that \$22 million, Staples-Reid said, "There's no assurance that we are going to get that \$22 million cut back. But a PILOT agreement is the best option in regards to saving our wealth formula and deferring continued cuts to state aid when it comes to education."

Danny Woods, vice president of operations for Cove Point LNG, said, "I'm proud to be in this community as a resident of Calvert County. Certainly proud of what Cove Point LNG does each day. We continue to export clean energy around the world. We've actually delivered to over 30 different countries, reducing millions of tons of air emissions throughout the world. And just happy to have that in our backyard as a Calvert County resident."

He added, "We're looking forward to the continued partnership here with the county and our organization."

Commissioner President Buddy Hance said, "We appreciate the jobs you provide and the tax revenue that you provided the county. And I want to thank you for the negotiations that took a lot of time and effort on both our parts. I was always told a successful negotiation when neither party gets everything they want. So, this was a, a successful negotiation and just for those out there listening, you have been concerned about what we're doing. In negotiations we did have an NDA (non-disclosure agreement); we weren't allowed to talk about it, we don't negotiate in public. So, until this point we really couldn't talk about a lot of things."

Hance added, "I think that we came to a final conclusion that meets both of our needs."

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Three School Board Candidates Opt Out of Forum

Hosted by Concerned Black Women

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Three of the six candidates for Calvert County Board of Education in this year's election have opted not to attend a candidate's forum sponsored by the Concerned Black Women of Calvert County (CBW). The forum is Sept. 26 at 6 p.m. at the Prince Frederick library.

The organization on their Facebook page said, "CBW's mission is to address issues in the community that include education, health, economic well-being, and improving the quality of life for African American women and their families. We are changing the trajectory of African American families."

They said, "Three candidates declined our offer three times after being given three different dates to attend."

The organization said, "We invite the entire community to attend this forum to understand who wants to represent Calvert County in support of the African American family unit and education."

The candidates opting out are Melissa Goshorn, Paul Harrison, and Joseph Marchio. Those are the three candidates endorsed by the Calvert County Republican Central Committee (CCRCC).

Joshua Johnson, CCRCC president, wrote on their website, "We have learned that we cannot rely on the federal government or the state to fix Calvert County problems, WE MUST FIX THEM! The CCRCC team is dedicated to delivering wins for Calvert: exposing the CCPS budget slush fund, maintaining the Republican voter registration lead, and a 2022 virtual sweep of electing Republican candidates to county positions (Sheriff, State Attorney, Treasurer, 5 Commissioners, and 2 Board of Education (BOE) members). We do have differences of thought; we are not like leftwing Democrats; we embrace free thinking. Steel sharpens steel, debate is a virtue, division is the Left's weapon of choice; we must unify in order to WIN! Unify around our Core Calvert Values! The fight is here and now; we didn't ask for it but together we have to be the ones



Melissa Goshorn

to answer the call.

"The CCRCC looks forward to being stewards of the county: with you and for you! The #1 priority is taking back the schools for our children and grandchildren. We need to carry forward the victories of 2022, when we went 2 for 2 electing conservative Board of Education members. This year it is vital we go 3 for 3 in electing and holding all five BOE positions! The night is darkest before the dawn, dawn is coming!"

The other three candidates are Mike Shisler, incumbent Antoine White, and Jeanette Flaim.

The Democratic Central Committee does not have endorsements on its website.

In response to the invitation, Goshorn wrote, "Thank you so much for inviting me to participate in the Concerned Black Women of Calvert County forum on September 24th. I deeply appreciate the work you do and the opportunity to engage with our community."

"Unfortunately, I have already committed to three other forums and must balance my campaign responsibilities with my family obligations. As much as I would love to participate, I'm unable to commit to this event. I hope you encourage your members to attend one of the other three forums being held or one of my many community events."



Paul Harrison

"Thank you for your understanding, and I hope to see you at one of the other three forums I will be participating in."

Harrison told The County Times, "CBW was the last organization to organize a candidate forum and the first two dates they picked were already taken. League of Women Voters invited us more than two months ago and we're all going to that event. I know for me, I still have a daughter in high school, a full-time job in DC, and normal life commitments. In fact, I did not



Joseph Marchio

refuse to participate in the third attempt at a CBW forum date picked for the eve of the County Fair, I just had yet to respond when the CBW distributed a very hostile graphic that I refused. That move was dishonest and revealed their partisan motives."

As of deadline, Marchio had not responded to The County Times request for comment.

dickmyers@countytimes.net



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Route 231 Improvements Remain in Doubt



Planner III Jessica Gaetano



Public Works Director J.R. Cosgrove

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Safety improvements along the Route 231 corridor remain in jeopardy amid a shortfall in state transportation funds and the priority being given to the replacement of Key Bridge in Baltimore.

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) hope to make the case for the needed safety improvements when the state transportation secretary and his entourage make their annual trek to the county in two weeks.

Planner III Jessica Gaetano told the BOCC on Sept. 10, "The CTP (Consolidated Transportation Plan) is Maryland's six-year capital budget for transportation projects. Last year, the MDOT (Maryland Department of Transportation) expressed major budgetary constraints and increasingly limited funding available to distribute capital projects. This year's CTP prioritizes rebuilding the Francis Scott Key bridge while improving transportation options to lessen the impact on the roadway network from the bridge being unavailable. The CTP promotes safety as a primary criterion in all their project support and investments. Unfortunately, in this year's draft CTP, the safety improvements along the MD 231 corridor are subject to potential deferral, subject to system preservation program fund allocations in the Final CTP. Calvert County will continue to receive routine maintenance projects focusing on pavement resurfacing, guardrail replacements, and traffic signal upgrades."

Gaetano said her role was to bring the highlights of the county ask from the state, but she quipped, "There's not really many highlights unfortunately."

She said last year "we expressed our gratitude for the continued funding and resources for the safety and geometric improvements

on the Maryland 231 corridor, which of course at that time did remain funded. So again, at this time it does remain unclear whether the 231 projects will continue to move forward. As I'm sure the board is aware, just in the past month we've had two serious crashes at or near one of the proposed project locations, which is the 231 and 508 intersection, which is the Adelina intersection. So, staff is working with the sheriff's office and the state police to get some crash data for you before the secretary comes."

County administrator Mark Willis said, "Specifically Adelina, it has a left turn lane now, but what they need is a wider bypass lane. There's a slope to the right of that that they really had to survey out. So, they've done that survey work and that project, to my knowledge, is still moving forward."

Commissioner President Buddy Hance said he was told at the Maryland Association of Counties meeting by the transportation secretary was "because of the lack of revenue, projects were being reevaluated and that if a project met the safety criteria, that project would move forward. I think that we were told in that meeting that they were going to look at those projects and see if they met that criterion."

Public Works Director J.R. Cosgrove said, "I spoke with the District 5 office on Friday afternoon about the 231 project. They currently show it as possibly being deferred funding. District 5 has not gotten word from Baltimore yet whether to move forward or not. So, they're continuing moving forward with the design of these projects, but they haven't gotten a definite yes or no, whether the money's going to be pulled or the funding's going to be pulled for these projects or not."

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Comprehensive Plan Changes Proposed

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Changes to the Calvert County Comprehensive Plan and several town center plans have been proposed to coincide with the update to the county's zoning ordinance now being circulated for comment in a second draft iteration.

Long Range Planner Tay Harris, in a memo to the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), wrote, "In response to the BOCC recent directives and updates, the Department of Planning and Zoning (P&Z) has implemented several key changes that will impact architectural reviews, density regulations and zoning designations within Calvert County."

Regarding the architectural review committee's elimination, Harris wrote, "On May 21, 2024, BOCC directed P&Z to eliminate the Architectural Review Committees (ARCs) for the county's seven town centers. The BOCC's intent is to streamline the development review process by allowing staff to perform administrative reviews in accordance with each town center's master plan and zoning ordinance."

On the proposed density in town centers, Harris said, "On August 20, 2024, as part of the Calvert County Zoning Ordinance Update, the BOCC directed P&Z staff to allow a maximum of no more than four units per acre in town centers unless the current allowable density is less than four units per acre."

Regarding the proposed change in designated zoning category, Harris wrote, "The current draft of the Calvert County Zoning Ordinance update proposes to change the designated zoning category for eight parcels. These parcels are currently zoned Industrial-1 District (I-1), Rural Community District (RCD), or Farm and Forest District (FFD). The change would rezone these parcels as Heavy Industrial District (I-2). The goal is to provide flexibility for businesses that generate little traffic, create high-paying jobs, and substantially contribute to the county tax base. These properties are located in southern Calvert County near existing infrastructure."

Harris explained, "The above-referenced requests may be processed as part of the ongoing Calvert County Zoning Ordinance Update. However, amendments to the Calvert County Comprehensive Plan, as well as the Huntingtown, St. Leonard and Solomons Town Center Master Plans, are also required. Pursuant to the Md. Ann. Code, Land Use Art., § 3-303, the Zoning Ordinance and the Town Center Master Plans must be consistent with the Calvert County



Commissioner President Buddy Hance

Comprehensive Plan. Prior to amending the Zoning Ordinance, P&Z staff recommends amending the Comprehensive Plan and the necessary Town Center Master Plans to reflect the above-referenced requests."

Director of Planning and Zoning Mary Beth Cook said, "The hope is that the process will go right in step with the update to the zoning ordinance because the comprehensive plan carries a 60-day review at the state level. We've worked that into our timeline and should still be on track to have the public hearing with the planning commission in November and the Board of County Commissioners in December."

Commissioner President Buddy Hance explained the reasoning behind eliminating architectural review committees. He said, "The reason we're doing that is because we can't get citizen participation. We talk all the time about all the boards and committees we have that have vacancies that we can't fill because citizens don't apply. Sometimes they apply, they don't show up. Part of the permitting process is you have to have an architectural review. The projects get held up because there's not a quorum at a meeting. So, they get delayed. And so, what we tried to do is figure out a pathway that doesn't impede projects, and still provides input for architectural review."

Cook added, "To let citizens know we're still going to do architectural review. Absolutely. It'll just be done in house."

To implement the changes the first step will be a joint work session with the commissioners and the planning commission.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Commissioners Appoint School Safety Members

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) at their Sept. 10 meeting selected the members of the new Student Safety and Well-Being Advisory Committee (SSWAC).

The members are: Dana Jones as chair of the committee; Guy Stephens and Leslie Irvin as District 1 representatives; Brandon Temple and Debora Harris as District 2 representatives; Marcus Newsome and Sinetra Bowdry as District 3 representatives; Jason Oates as the Calvert Education Association representative, Kadesha Pledger as the Calvert Association of the Educational Support Staff representative; First Sergeant Vincent O'Donnell and Corporal Nick DeFelice as the sheriff's office representatives; Sergeant Kenery Hunt as the Maryland State Police representative; Katelyn Liptak as the mental health and wellbeing professional representative, Denise Dickerson as the substance abuse treatment professional representative; and Joseph Pignataro as the Maryland Center for School Safety representative.

According to Deputy County Administrator Linda Turner, "Staff

received 42 applications from districts one, two, and three residents after a panel comprised of staff in the Office of the County Administrator, community resources, Calvert County Public Schools, and the sheriff's office graded applications. This panel interviewed the top scoring candidates from each district. Additionally, we received candidate recommendations from six recommending bodies, which will be highlighted in the recommendations today, that have seats on the committee."

Turner said, "On May 29, 2024, the BOCC adopted Resolution 09-24, which established the Calvert County Student Safety and Well-Being Advisory Committee to address increasing incidents in schools and concerns from parents, students, teachers, support staff and school administrators."

That came about out of concerns from staff, parents, and students about problems at Calvert High School.

Commissioner Todd Ireland said, "School has started and there's already been a few issues, so hopefully they can hit the ground running and make some decisions and make some changes."

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Calvert Author Publishes Collection of Short Stories

New Bay Books announces the release of *Loaded for Bear*, a collection of short stories reflecting the culture and ethos from the Maryland mountains to Chesapeake Bay, written by Maryland poet and author George Miller.

Loaded for Bear: Adventures and Misadventures from the Appalachians to the Chesapeake, is a collection of 16 short stories featuring characters that Miller, an economist and programmer, encountered or imagined over decades riding trains from his home in Cumberland, Md., to Union Station in Washington.

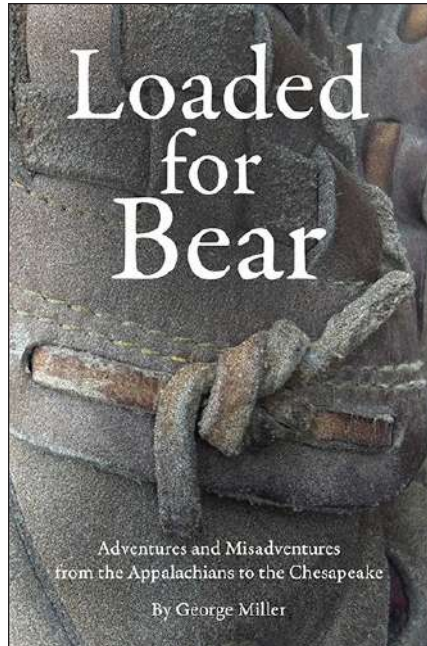
Miller acknowledges that several of the stories grew from personal experience. One such story revolves around the challenges for a barnyard neophyte who becomes the man of the hour in a ewe's breech birth.

In another story—from which the book's *Loaded for Bear* title derives—a 12-year-old delivering the morning paper is stopped by a car full of well-heeled men with guns, friendly fellows who turn out to be Pittsburgh Pirates out to do some hunting.

"George Miller is a weaver who celebrates life in a tapestry of compelling tiles that are anything but average," Don Shomette, an author and historian, writes on the book's back cover. "His soft humor, embellished with a topping of intimacy, soul and nostalgia, always rings true."

Loaded for Bear arrives amid a recent resurgence in short fiction. The short story as literary form experienced a decline starting in the mid-20th century, attributed to television and the demise of popular magazines. But short fiction is becoming prevalent again on bookshelves, in magazines and sometimes newspapers, fitting more comfortably with changing reader habits in people's busy lives.

"Accept an invitation from a writer of short stories and you will find that time



travel is a reality," said Sandra Olivetti Martin, publisher at New Bay Books. "Because short stories are short, the journey lasts only for minutes. But their reverberations often last far longer."

Miller is retired from Washington D.C. and daily rail travel and lives near North Beach.

He is the author of *The Best Free Verse Ten Dollars Can Buy*, a book of poems, *Cooper Finds Her Thermal*, an illustrated allegory, and other works. His writing has appeared in *American Writers Review* and other literary outlets. New Bay Books (NewBayBooks.com) is a partner publisher in Fairhaven, Maryland, with two dozen print and ebook titles in three years. Miller is available for interviews and can be reached at georgemillerbvm@gmail.com.

Press Release from New Bay Books

Nature Center to be Rebuilt



Now-destroyed Battle Creek Cypress Swamp Nature Center

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners is moving towards providing funding for rebuilding of the Battle Creek Cypress Swamp Nature Center, which was destroyed by fire. The commissioners held a public hearing on the funding request on Sept. 10 and will leave the record open for 10 days.

Parks and Recreation Director Robert Branham, in a memo, wrote, "On November 5, 2022, an electrical fire started in the basement storage room of the Battle Creek Cypress Swamp Nature Center facility, resulting in extensive damage. Based on initial assessments, all contents of the storage room, including all nature program equipment, materials and supplies, were destroyed. Water and smoke have damaged other basement and animal care room areas. Upstairs offices, classrooms and exhibit rooms also sustained smoke damage."

Branham said, "Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT) has provided an estimate for rebuilding the Battle Creek Nature Center after the fire. However, the building's design addressed the layout and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) upgrades required by new standards, requiring additional funding of \$250,000 above the LGIT estimate. Once the build is complete, the county can attempt to recover additional funds from LGIT. The county must complete the rebuild by mid-December to meet the deadline for LGIT to request additional reimbursement. The Department of Parks & Recreation staff, in coordination with the Department of Finance & Budget staff, have identified funding in the Capital Improvement Plan - CIP-000047 that can be allocated to this project. CIP000047 funds were appropriated for Chesapeake Hills Golf Course Improvements. Staff determined that it is in the county's best interest to complete the rebuild first, and any recouped funds through LGIT can be transferred back to CIP-000047."

According to his department, "LGIT provided a summary for the rebuilding to be \$542,065.65. We have been paid \$425,817.51 to date for the building renovations. After the construction is complete, LGIT will provide the balance of \$116,248.14."

During the public hearing, Joseph Cormier

said, "I've attended field trips at the Learning Center at Cypress Swamp and enjoyed walking through the cypress trees on the trails with my family over the years. Once you get down in it, all the noise and hustle and bustle of Prince Frederick just fades away and you can just immerse yourself in and amongst those trees. It's truly a unique experience in Calvert, if not all of Maryland."

He added, "I fully support the upgrades to make the learning Center and the trails ADA accessible. As with every county facility, we have to move past the idea that any space is grandfathered and work to ensure that they are open accessible to everyone regardless of their mobility or lack thereof."

Also at the same meeting, a separate public hearing was held on the budget amendment for the Cove Point Park basketball courts.

Park Planner Stephanie Sperling explained, "The basketball courts located at Cove Point Park in Lusby are over 20 years old, well used and highly prioritized for replacement drainage. Issues around the court are causing erosion problems that threaten the integrity of the court surface. In June 2023, the Department of Parks and Recreation submitted a Program Open space (POS) annual program to the BOCC for approval. The program was then forwarded to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and the Maryland Department of Planning, to maintain eligibility for POS funds."

She said the county POS submission for 2024 included Cove Point Park for \$300,000. She said, "The Department of Parks and Recreation staff submitted a POS application to prepare the basketball courts at Cove Point Park, and including improving drainage, restoring the court surface and associated structures, and applying a court surface mural."

She said, "In May of 2024, staff received a letter from the MDNR and informing them that the Maryland Board of Public Works approved the request for POS local funds for \$300,000. The POS local funds require 25 percent match equal to \$100,000. Department of Parks and Recreation staff in coordination with the Department of Finance and Budget staff have identified funding."

dickmyers@countytimes.net

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CALVERT COUNTY POLICE BLOTTER

During the week of August 26, 2024 – September 1, 2024, Calvert County Sheriff's Office Deputies responded to 2,514 calls for service throughout the community including, but not limited to:

- Check Welfare / Mental Health: 80
- Disorderly: 10
- Domestic: 25
- Motor Vehicle Crashes: 45
- Patrol Checks / School Checks: 1250
- Suspicious Persons / Vehicles: 53
- Traffic Complaints: 66
- 911 Hang Ups: 68
- ARRESTS: 24



Karla Yamith Rodriguez

CDS Violation: 24-65881 On August 27, 2024, at approximately 12:35 p.m., M/DFC Bradley responded to Barstow Elementary School located at 295 JW Williams Road in Prince Frederick,

for the report of a disorderly subject. Upon arrival, contact was made with **Karla Yamith Rodriguez**, 34 of Prince Frederick, who was yelling and screaming profanities while smoking a cigarette in the school parking lot. Rodriguez ignored deputies commands and continued to scream and shout in front of citizens. Rodriguez's behavior escalated and was placed into custody. Deputies observed an open alcoholic beverage in the cupholder of the vehicle in plain view. A vehicle search revealed multiple tear-offs containing a white powder (suspected cocaine) totaling 12 grams. Rodriguez was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with Disorderly Conduct, CDS: Possession-Not Cannabis, CDS: Possession with Intent to Distribute Narcotics, CDS: Possession with Intent to Distribute: School Property and CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia.

Alcohol Violation: 24-67132 On August 30, 2024, Cpl. Bowlan responded to S. Solomons Island Road in the area of Nursery Road in Lusby, for a welfare check. Upon arrival, deputies observed **David Wayne Walton**, 42, of St. Leonard, lying in the grassy area with an open bottle of alcohol at



David Wayne Walton

his feet and a strong odor of alcohol emitting from his person. Deputies advised Walton to pick up his trash and vacate the area. Walton was then seen stumbling near the wood line and admitted to throwing his bottle into the woods. Walton was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with Intoxicated Public Disturbance.



Jonathan Alexander Gray

CDS Violation: 24-67251 On August 31, 2024, Cpl. Kelly initiated a traffic stop on a vehicle on Simmons Ridge Road in Prince Frederick, for an equipment violation. Contact was made with the driver, **Jonathan Alexander Gray**, 34 of Prince Frederick. Investigation revealed an open-air sniff of the vehicle resulted in a positive alert for narcotics. A vehicle search revealed a bag containing 3 Oxycodone pills and a cut straw with white powder inside. Gray was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with CDS: Possession-Not Cannabis and CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia.

Damaged Property: 24-6534 On August 26, 2024, DFC Hudson responded to the 2600 block of Sequoia Way in Prince Frederick, for the report of property destruction. The complainant advised an unknown suspect(s) damaged a mailbox and a bird house on the victim's property. The estimated value of damaged property is \$300.

Damaged Property: 24-65866 On August 27, 2024, Deputy Baxter responded to the Calvert County Sheriff's Office, located at 30 Church Street, for the report of property destruction. The complainant advised a political sign was defaced near Little Cove Point Road in Lusby, between 5 p.m. on August 25 and 12 p.m. on August 26. There were two signs also vandalized at the same

location in weeks prior. The estimated value of damaged property is \$150.

Damaged Property: 244-66700 On August 29, 2024, DFC Hendrickson responded to the 300 block of Serenity Court in Prince Frederick, for the report of property destruction. The complainant advised an unknown suspect(s) defaced the resident's air conditioner unit with profanities. The estimated value of damaged property is \$100.

Damaged Property: 24-67321 On August 31, 2024, Deputy Parrott responded to the 5400 block of Douglas Street in St. Leonard, for the report of destruction of property. The complainant advised an unknown suspect(s) ran into the stone entry wall that borders the driveway. The estimated value of damaged property is \$800.

Damaged Property: 24-67319 On August 31, 2024, Deputy Chase responded to the 4500 block of Sixes Road in Prince Frederick, for the report of damaged property. The complainant advised ten of the victim's Hemp plants had been damaged. The estimated value of damaged property is \$40,000.



Rayshaun Marrik Kelley

Disorderly Conduct: 24-67492 On August 31, 2024, Deputy DeSantis responded to the 400 block of Chestnut Drive in Lusby, for the report of a fight. Upon arrival, contact was made with **Rayshaun**

Marrik Kelley, 25 of Lusby. Kelley made multiple loud statements in an attempt to dismiss deputies while neighbors looked on. Kelley was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with Disorderly Conduct, Disturbing the Peace, and Intoxicated Public Disturbance.

Theft: 24-65949 On August 27, 2024, Deputy Smith responded to the Rod N Reel Marina West located at 4055 Gordon Stinnett Ave in Chesapeake Beach, for the report of theft. The complainant advised sometime between 10 p.m. on August 25

and 4 p.m. on August 27, an unknown suspect(s) stole six fishing rods off the victim's boat. The estimated value of stolen property is \$2,739.95.



Matthew Leo Greening

Trespassing: 24-65723 On August 27, 2024, Deputy Hill responded to the 7-Eleven located at 15 N. Solomons Island Road in Prince Frederick, for the report of a suspicious person. Upon arrival, contact was made with **Matthew Leo Greening**, 36 of no fixed address. Greening had been previously trespassed indefinitely from the property. Greening was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with Trespassing: Private Property.



Michael Joseph Keller

Trespassing: 24-67411 On August 31, 2024, Master Deputy Cress responded to the area of Town Center Boulevard in Dunkirk, for the report of a suspicious person. Upon arrival, contact was made with **Michael Joseph Keller**, 61 of no fixed address. Keller had an alcoholic beverage in his possession and had been previously trespassed from the property. Keller was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with Trespassing: Private Property.

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

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

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Calvert Community Calendar

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

Thu, Sep 12

Teen Fort Night Book Club

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

Activities, community, fun! We're building a REAL fort. in the library! Work together to build an epic fort, then relax and listen to an audiobook while looking up at the "stars." Prepare to be in full lounge mode. PJ's, sweats, pillows, sleeping bags, and stuffed animals welcome. Hot dogs & s'mores! For ages 13-18. Free event. Please register. 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Sat, Sep 14

Bark in the Park

Calvert Cliffs State Park
10540 H G Trueman Rd., Lusby
10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Come and meet some of the fabulous dogs the Humane Society of Calvert County has available for adoption. While you are at the park enjoy the beautiful scenery and miles of hiking trails.

The 3rd Annual "One More Light" Walk

14200 Solomons Island Rd S, Solomons
5:30-9:30 p.m.

Join us as the BecomeOne project presents an evening of Remembrance, Awareness, and Connection at the Calvert Marine Museum Pavilion in Solomons Island for the One More Light Suicide and Mental Health Awareness Walk! This event is completely free, ensuring everyone can attend without any financial concerns.

Experience Calvert Festival

North Beach
12-5 p.m.
Free

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

Pirate Day

Calvert Marine Museum
14200 Solomons Island Rd., Solomons
10 a.m.-3 p.m.

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

Garden Smarter: Can't See the Forest Through the Trees

Community Resource Bldg.
30 Duke St, Prince Frederick
10-11 a.m.

An in-depth study of the friendly competition between trees. Based on the book "Finding the Mother Tree" by Suzanne Simard. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Sun, Sep 15

Superhero Sunday

Ward Farm and Nature Park
10455 Ward Rd., Dunkirk
10 a.m.-1 p.m.
Free

Explore the amazing equipment we use and meet the heroes who keep our community safe! Enjoy a variety of games and activities that everyone will love. Discover how you

can become a part of our team and make a difference in your community. Wear your Superhero Sunday best and bring your camera! Event is hosted by Calvert County Parks & Recreation Northern District.

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

Watermen's Wharf at the end of
Solomons Island
12 p.m.

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

Mon, Sep 16

Veteran Career Club

Calvert Library Southern Branch,
13920 H. G. Trueman Road, Solomons
1-3 p.m.

Meet with a representative from Maryland Dept. of Labor Veterans Program for various employment services. 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Tue, Sep 17

Hallyu Club: For Asian Drama Fans

Calvert Library Twin Beaches Branch
4100 5th St., North Beach
6:30-8:30 p.m.

Discover a world of pop culture and vibrant

history whether it be Japanese, Chinese, Himalayan, Korean, Filipino or something in between. Connect with other and discover new Asian dramas & films. All fans are welcome! Walk-ins are welcome! Ages: 16+. 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Wed, Sep 18

One Maryland One Book Discussion

Calvert Library, Virtual
2-3:30 p.m.

Join us this month for a discussion of *What Storm, What Thunder* by Myriam J.A. Chancy. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Upcoming

Claws for Paws

Abner's Crab House
Chesapeake Beach
Saturday September 21
2-4 p.m. and 6-8 p.m.

Benefitting the Humane Society of Calvert County. All you can eat crabs for \$60 a person. Includes one order of hush puppies per person, soda, tea, water. Cash bar available. 50/50 drawing and raffle items. Tickets available at humanesocietyofcalvertcounty.org

Artsfest '24 Fine Arts Festival

Annamarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center
13470 Dowell Road, Solomons
Sept. 21 & 22

Celebrate the visual and performing arts with 170+ artists booths, 40+ performers on four stages, activities for kids, and more! Food and drink will be available for purchase. Advanced tickets purchase online. \$10/person (\$12 at the gate, if not sold out), kids 11 & under free; members free

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

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



County Times

P. O. Box 250 • Hollywood, MD 20636



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- CLUES ACROSS**
1. Engine additive
4. A type of test
8. Curtail
10. Irish surname
11. The opposite of good
12. Got rid of
13. Central parts of a church building
15. Stylistically
16. Intestinal
17. Negative potential outcomes
18. Lived up to a standard
21. Snag
22. Time units (abbr.)
23. Ad ____
24. “Partridge” actress Susan
25. For each
26. ____ Paulo, city
27. League titles
34. More intensely black
35. Slang for lovely
36. Petrarch is known for them
37. Old Eurasian wheat
38. Body part
39. Swedish rock group
40. They’re worth avoiding
41. Rising and falling of the voice
42. Wings
43. Enzyme import for respiration
- CLUES DOWN**
1. Idyllic
2. South Pacific island nations
3. Shrub of the olive family
4. Boundaries
5. Encircle
6. Weights
7. Samberg is one
9. Sheep sound
10. European country
12. Respected group of people
14. Trigraph
15. Prosecutors
17. Assign a nickname
19. Huge size
20. Partner to cheese
23. Fastballs
24. Principle underlying the universe
25. Distinct units of sound
26. Title of respect
27. Against
28. Foot (Latin)
29. One point east of due south
30. Concerning the blood
31. Type of pentameter
32. North American peoples
33. Layers of rock
34. Georges ____, French philosopher
36. Lengthy tale

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SEPTEMBER 5 SOLUTIONS

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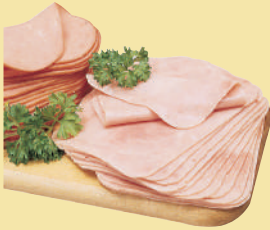


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Brut Rose

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Yellow Tail
Wines

6.49

750mL
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Moscato d'Asti

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750mL
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750mL
Joel Gott
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750mL, J. Lohr
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St. Mary's Community Calendar

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

Fri, Sep 13

COSMIC Symphony Season Kickoff Event

Corinthian Yacht Club
48555 Bean Rd, Ridge
6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Grab your tickets at www.givebutter.com/cosmickickoff to our Season Kickoff event on 9/13! Tickets are \$40 per person. Advance sales only. No tickets will be sold at the event!

COSMIC Symphony is Southern Maryland's only Community Orchestra and we perform free concerts throughout the year. See our website www.cosmicsymphony.org for details.

What your ticket gets you:

Wine
Food from Blue Wind Gourmet
Music from David W. Cook and COSMIC Musicians

Free Raffle Ticket
All the insider info about this season

Fall Carnival

Hollywood Volunteer Fire Dept
24801 Three Notch Rd, Hollywood
6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Rides, games, food, and prizes. Friday and Saturday from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., Sunday from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Only games/rides for small children will be operational. \$10 ARM BANDS. Free kids bike raffle each night.

Sat, Sep 14

Summerseat Farm's Annual Yard Sale

Summerseat Farm
26655 Three Notch Rd., Mechanicsville
8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Summerseat Farm will be hosting our annual yard sale to benefit the farm. Household, yard, gardening, collectibles, furniture, garage, tools, decor, and so much more will be available.

Need an extra boost of energy to complete your shopping? We got that covered with our popular bake sale table.

Artillery of Point Lookout (Living History Program)

Point Lookout State Park
11175 Point Lookout Rd., Scotland
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Please make sure you come inside the park. The private display outside the park is NOT part of this event. This event will represent the artillery and infantry of Point Lookout. Demonstrations and exhibits will be presented by living history interpreters and will include living history, scheduled small arms and artillery demonstrations; women and

children civil war era activities; and tours of historic Fort No. 3. Saturday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Pork Loin and Beef Sandwich Sale

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

Pork loin, sliced roast beef, and BBQ beef sandwiches will be sold on both Saturday and Sunday. Sandwiches will cost \$8.00 each. For more information e-mail us at alpost221@aol.com or call 301*481*6625.

Band of Brothers PTSD / Suicide Prevention Support Group

The Flashback Restaurant
21797 Coral Dr N, Lexington Park
9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

For more information call 240-476-2721

ST. MARY'S COUNTY Library

UPCOMING EVENTS



Adult Crafternoon: Good Luck Charm Keychains

Do you love making art and trying out new projects? Come hang out and make crafts without the pressure to be perfect. Friday the 13th doesn't need to be all bad luck! Come string together charms (and even make some of your own) to ward off any negativity and keep the good luck coming. Leonardtown Library, Friday, September 13 from 2 - 3:30 p.m. Materials will be provided. This program is meant for adults, but no prior skills in crafting are needed. Register on www.stmalib.org.

Monarchs in Maryland: Citizen Science

Marylanders! Help us fill the void of data on monarchs in our state. Also if weather and butterflies cooperate, we will tag and release monarchs outside at Lexington Park Library on Saturday, September 14 from 2 - 3:30 p.m. Paula Becker of Maryland DNR - Wildlife and Heritage Service will discuss the Featured Project on Maryland Department of Natural Resources Community Science page: The Integrated Monarch Monitoring Program (IMMP). The Integrated Monarch Monitoring Program is a national program to collect milkweed, nectar plant, and monarch

use data from various land-use types and regions. This information is vital to shaping our understanding of how monarchs interact with their environment, documenting conservation efforts, and tracking the population and its habitat as they change over time. Register on www.stmalib.org.

Celebremos el mes de la Hispanidad: Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month

Let's celebrate the start of Hispanic Heritage Month! Join us at Lexington Park Library on Sunday, September 15 from 1:30 - 4:30 p.m. to experience music, arts & crafts, photo wall, sweet treats, and more to celebrate the rich culture of the Hispanic community. All are welcome to celebrate the start of Hispanic Heritage Month! Enjoy music, light refreshments, a photo wall with props, arts & crafts, and more. Celebrate the rich contributions and positive influence the Hispanic culture has made. Register on www.stmalib.org.

The Black Diamond Incident: Local History Talk

Karen Stone, Division Manager of the St. Mary's County Museums, will give a special seminar on our local history at Leonardtown Library on Tuesday, September 17 from 6 - 7:30 p.m. It has always

been said that not a single life was lost during the hunt for John Wilkes Booth. This is said with pride, as it should be. If only it were true. In the 1860's, life on the Potomac River was quite different than it is today. Instead of the calm open waters, the river was the frontline of battle. The Potomac was the main lifeline out of Washington D.C. and for the federal government it was the dividing line between the warring sections of the North and South. This is a story of that river, and of the men whose lives were lost in the aftermath of the Civil War, in the hunt for the presidential assassin John Wilkes Booth. This is for those 87 men and their families, so that they will no longer be forgotten. This event is part of the Southern Maryland 250th Semiquincentennial, Maryland 250th, and America 250th celebration, commemorating Southern Maryland's contributions to our nation's founding. Register on www.stmalib.org.

St. Mary's County Court Help Clinic

The St. Mary's County Circuit Court offers a free Family Law Self Help Legal Clinic to provide legal assistance/advice regarding family law. Come for a one-on-one session with an attorney to discuss matters such as custody, visitation, divorce, child support, name change, guardianship, and

domestic violence. Lexington Park Library, Wednesday, September 18 from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. First Come First Serve. No appointments - walk-ins only.

One Maryland One Book: What Storm, What Thunder Discussion & Mini Book Craft

Each year, thousands of Marylanders come together to read the same book. Come ready to discuss this year's selection on making a better world for tomorrow and make a keychain to remember it by at Leonardtown Library on Saturday, September 21 from 10 - 11:30 a.m. This year's One Maryland One Book selection, chosen by Maryland Humanities for the theme of "restorative futures," is *What Storm, What Thunder* by Myriam J. A. Chancy. You can find a physical copy of the book in our catalog or download a digital copy on Libby or Hoopla. Come ready to discuss the book and its themes with other community members from various backgrounds. During the discussion, we will make a miniature book keychain to commemorate your participation in this year's One Maryland One Book program and serve as a reminder to do what you can to help others and better our community and the world. Register on www.stmalib.org.

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The Pros and Cons of Two Popular Reception Meal Options

Couples planning a wedding undoubtedly know that the food and drinks served at wedding receptions are major factors in how much guests enjoy the celebration. After all, hungry, thirsty guests will not be having fun.

According to the resource *Wedding Forward*, the national average cost per head at wedding receptions in the United States is \$90. The wedding planning resource *The Knot* estimates that roughly 29 percent of a couple's budget will go toward catering.

With so much money on the line and hungry guests to feed, couples face many decisions regarding their wedding day menus. Among the first questions a catering hall manager may ask is which type of dinner service couples prefer. Venues typically offer buffet and plated options, and the following can help couples choose which style is for them.

Plated service

A plated meal consists of all guests being seated and served a formal dinner, which usually includes an appetizer and entrée. A key benefit of this type of meal is that it ensures everyone eats at the same time. Guests sometimes pre-select their food options on the R.S.V.P., which means that catering halls have advanced knowledge of food allergies or special needs. Or they select from a predetermined menu at the reception. Plated dinners are efficient and



can keep the wedding running on schedule.

Plated service features only a select number of meal options, which can be a negative for some couples. Guests cannot sample a few other things as they might like with a buffet. More servers are needed for plated service, so staffing costs may be more for

this option than they are for buffet service.

Buffet service

A wedding reception buffet features various foods in chafing dishes at a single centralized buffet station. While guests sometimes serve themselves, typically waitstaff spoon

portions onto guests' plates. There tends to be more variety with a buffet, and this option may feel more relaxing as well. Buffet meals encourage guests to mingle and provides an opportunity to sample different foods.

Some people don't relish carrying dishes of food back to tables and risking spillage on formal clothing. Buffet also is less formal than a plated dinner. Buffets may even be more costly, since catering halls need to have a greater amount of food ready. There may be long wait times for buffet as well.

Additional options

These are not the only meal services available. A new trend for weddings is food station service. This is similar to a buffet, but has different stations situated throughout the room to avoid bottlenecks. Food stations can be themed, with Mexican offerings at one station and French delicacies at another.

Some couples choose to eschew traditional dinners altogether. In the event of a wedding that takes place early or late in the day, a brunch or even a simple cocktail party with passed bites may be preferable.

Couples should consider food service as they plan their weddings, and choose an option that fits their wedding budgets and visions.

How to Curate Your Reception Playlist

After a formal wedding ceremony, complete with processional and "I dos," comes the part of a wedding that enables the happy couple to brush off the last vestiges of jitters and celebrate. A wedding reception marks the culmination of months or even years of planning. Oftentimes a hundred guests or more gather to dine, dance and toast to the prosperity of the newlyweds.

Certain components of a reception will prove more memorable than others. Food is one such element. The other component that tends to make a lasting impression is the music, which means couples curating reception playlists should do so with care and consideration.

Deejays and live bands can help couples choose music that fits the mood. But couples also can consider these tips when curating their reception playlists.

- Calculate your needs. Couples may wonder just how many songs they need for a standard reception. Unless you're working with extra-long songs, like "Paradise by the Dashboard Light" or "Bohemian Rhapsody," most songs are around three minutes long. That means for a four-hour reception you'll need roughly 80 songs. However, plan for moments such as speeches/toasts and other breaks.

- Pair songs with key elements. Traditional weddings have certain mini-events within the receptions. Music enhances these moments. Jot down



ideas for the following components:

- » Bridal party entrance
- » Couples' entrance
- » First dance (wedding song)
- » Mother/son, father/daughter dances
- » Cake cutting song
- » Garter/bouquet toss songs
- » Spotlight dance

- » Any other special element

- Select calm dinner music. After a day rushing around, most guests are looking forward to sitting down, conversing and, of course, eating. Cocktail hour and dinner music should be at a low volume and not too fast-paced. It certainly shouldn't drown out conversation.

Musician Peter Lee Johnson performs violin covers of popular Top 40 songs, and his music may be an option when choosing songs to accompany food service. Postmodern Jukebox is a group of musicians who take modern songs and give them a bygone flair. Their tunes also can be fitting.

- Tie the music to the theme. Weddings that follow a specific theme, such as a beach wedding, can be enhanced by music that coordinates to that theme. Think steel drum bands, Hawaiian stylings or even Beach Boys surfing songs.
- Be mindful of older guests. Some seniors may appreciate modern music, but they also may want to hear songs from the era when they were growing up. Pepper the song list with options across various decades to keep as many people on the dance floor as possible.
- Select a classic first dance song. Some couples opt to go trendy when selecting their wedding songs. However, certain songs have withstood the test of time. Such options include "Have I Told You Lately That I Love You," "Here and Now," "Stand by Me," "Amazed," or "Just the Way You Are."

These tips can help any couples put together a wedding reception playlist that will help to create a memorable celebration.

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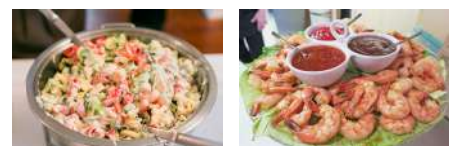
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Dig into These Wedding Cake Options

Something sweet comes near the end of a wedding reception and that is the joy the couple experiences knowing they have their entire lives ahead of them to enjoy together. However, there is another sweet treat that is shared near the conclusion of the wedding and it is typically served with tea and coffee: the wedding cake.

Wedding cake traditions can be traced back to the ancient Greeks and Romans. Cakes represented good luck and fertility for the couples tying the knot. The first wedding cakes were rather bland and breadlike, representing purity and virginity. Some were quite like the fruitcake now enjoyed during the holiday season. Eventually wedding cakes transformed into the sweet confections that are known today. The modern wedding cake as most know it debuted at the 1882 wedding of Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany. His wedding cake was actually the first to be completely edible. Previously, some cakes featured wooden broomstick pillars covered in icing, but the Duke's cake used a hardened type of icing, according to Edible Art Bakery and Dessert Café.

Couples today have many options when picking their wedding cakes. The following are some wedding cake tidbits to chew on.

- Couples can choose among various cake styles. Many opt for a classic style, which is typically a white or ivory tiered cake with simple, elegant



decorations. Rustic cakes may be much less ornate, while modern cakes may be rectangular or square and feature clean lines and minimalist decoration. The cake should fit the overall theme and scope of the wedding as it is another complementary component of the larger celebration.

- Wedding cakes can be quite costly. Wedding Wire estimates the average wedding cake costs around \$500. One way for couples to save on their cake is to have a faux cake on display, with one tier that is made from cake and can be cut. Guests will then be served slices of a sheet cake that is much less expensive.

- Couples have many flavors to choose from. Vanilla is classic and quite popular because it appeals to a vast number of people. Lemon, chocolate, and carrot are some other popular cake flavors.
- When it comes to frosting a cake, there are various outer coatings that will encapsulate the cake to make it both beautiful and durable. Buttercream, Swiss meringue, fondant, cream cheese, and ganache all can be used in various applications. Some bakers attest that Swiss meringue, due to the addition of egg whites, makes it a more stable option over traditional buttercreams, particularly during warm weather. Of course, couples can opt for a "naked cake," which usually has a scant amount of frosting so that the cake underneath peeks through.
- A groom's cake used to be tradition, but largely fell out of favor, although it is still alive and well in the American South. The groom's cake typically is less ornate than the wedding cake, and favors the groom's choices in style, interests and flavors.

Couples and their guests look forward to indulging in wedding cake near the end of the reception. The looks and flavors of a wedding cake can be as unique as the couple saying, "I do."



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Tips to Help Master Your Wedding Guest List

Weddings are such momentous occasions that it's no wonder couples want to share their big days with as many people as possible. Though a wedding where all friends, family members and acquaintances are in attendance may be a dream scenario, reality often calls for a more carefully curated guest list.

Data from The Wedding Report indicates that the average cost of a wedding is slightly more than \$20,000, though that figure could be substantially higher, or even lower, depending on where couples tie the knot. Both The Wedding Report and The Knot report that a wedding venue and catering make up a significant percentage of the overall cost of a wedding, with some figures indicating that these expenses account for around 65 percent of the final price tag. The number of guests couples will host on their wedding day will affect which venue they book and how much food and beverages they'll need to satisfy guests. Couples who hope to stay within budget can consider these tips as they try to build a guest list that won't break the bank.

- *Accept input.* Parents may no longer foot the entire bill for their children's weddings, but couples who are accepting some financial help from parents must also accept Mom's and Dad's input regarding the guest list. Even if parents' desired guests do not ultimately make the cut, it's best to

respect their wishes and consider who they want to invite. Couples who are financing their own weddings without outside help need not feel beholden to invite anyone who does not meet their invitation criteria.

- *Make a preliminary list without regard to budget.* Couples can have fun making preliminary guest lists without

considering their budgets. A preliminary list can serve as a solid starting point, and couples may even realize that their list is within budget. Once the preliminary lists have been created, couples can categorize guests (i.e., distant cousins, coworkers, etc.) and then work together to determine if any categories can be eliminated from the invi-

tation list. For example, couples who may be going over budget with their guest lists can each agree to remove distant cousins from their prospective invitees.

- *Seek advice.* Many couples face difficult decisions regarding their wedding day guest lists, so it can be helpful to speak to a recently married friend or relative to see how they handled paring down their guest lists. Some might have done it by category, while others might have limited guest lists to local friends and family. When taking this approach, couples can speak to friends about how they approached handling people who were surprised that they were not on the final list of invitees.
- *Throw a less formal party down the road.* A less expensive backyard barbecue within weeks of tying the knot can serve as a less costly alternative to a large wedding reception. Couples who take this approach can keep their wedding day guest lists to a minimum, but invite everyone they hope to see to a post-wedding day backyard barbecue or pot luck picnic so they can celebrate with everyone they love.

Curating a wedding day guest list is no small task. However, couples can try various approaches to keep a guest list more manageable and less expensive.



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How to Tame Wedding-Related Jitters



Nerves are to be expected when getting married. It is exciting to be engaged and realize you have met that special someone with whom you want to share the rest of your life. But anxiety may creep in as the big day draws closer.

A lot of planning goes into a wedding, and often the pressure that comes with trying to create the perfect day can overshadow feelings of love and excitement. That is when wedding jitters may crop up. Couples must recognize they're not alone if they feel a little uneasy as their wedding day draws closer. However, there are ways you can address and tame jitters both before and during the wedding.

Step away from wedding-related tasks

Chances are you have spent months with the wedding on your brain. In fact, it likely has consumed your daily life. Take a day or two to do something unrelated to the wedding, whether you're alone, with friends or with your future spouse. Attend a fun event, go out to dinner, queue up several movies for a night in, or take a small trip. Keep wedding details out of the picture while you're enjoying yourself.

Forget about being perfect

Wedding jitters often stem from being nervous about everything going to plan. You may put undue pressure on yourself to ensure everything is perfect. But perfection is impossible, and the sooner you accept that a thing or two will likely not work out, the less stressed you may feel.

You'll be surrounded by family and friends who will help you roll with the punches, whether that's a torn hemline or a missing buffet item. Guests are here to celebrate you, not pass judgment.

Discuss large changes to come

Some couples feel jittery because they haven't spoken about all of the changes ahead. These can include relocation, merging of finances and whether or not children are in your future, among other things. Stress can be tamed if you take a break from wedding planning and discuss these important topics.

Learn relaxation techniques

Learning to relax is important when dealing with anxiety. There are many different relaxation techniques to explore. Some include meditation, yoga, deep-tissue massage, exercise, or immersing yourself in a peaceful spot outdoors. Some people turn to reading or other hobbies to relax. Do not look to alcohol or medication as an outlet to alleviate stress.

Talk to someone

If anxiety about the wedding is eating you up, consider speaking with a professional therapist or even a close friend or family member. Sometimes a new perspective is all you need to calm the jitters.

Nervousness when planning a wedding is understandable. However, couples can take steps to tame jitters so they enjoy all that goes into tying the knot.



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Seven Reasons to Hire a Wedding Planner

The average cost of a wedding in 2022 in the United States came out to roughly \$30,000, according to a survey of 12,000 couples compiled by wedding planning site The Knot. The survey also found New Jersey and Massachusetts topped the list of most costly states to tie the knot.

When committing to as significant a financial investment as a wedding, couples may want to do all they can to ensure their big day is a hit. There are many advantages to hiring a professional wedding planner, who can take the stress out of a process that should be fun.

1. Serves as a sounding board: Wedding planners can take couples' ideas and turn them into reality. Seasoned planners know how to help a couple's vision come alive.
2. Lightens the responsibility load: A wedding planner takes time-consuming responsibilities off couples' plates. These can include scheduling appointments, dealing with vendors, conducting walk-throughs of locations, and more. This can be a big asset to couples who work full-time.
3. Offers a wealth of knowledge: A good wedding planner has years of experience handling weddings and will know which aspects will work and which may not. Also, a wedding planner can likely handle tasks expeditiously, while couples with no experience planning a wedding may not work so quickly.
4. Helps couples save money: Knowl-



edge and experience also comes with contacts in the industry that can help couples save money. The planner likely knows where to get the best deals, and may be privy to insider pricing and other discounts.

5. Serves as a buffer: While everyone wants weddings to be incident-free, conflicts can and do arise. A wedding planner can serve as a mediator or run

interference between challenging family members or even vendors.

6. Reduces overall stress levels: There's a measurable difference between the stress experienced by couples who don't hire wedding planners and those who do. The main goal of a wedding is for it to be memorable and for couples and their guests to enjoy themselves. By leaving the planning to someone else,

couples can arrive at the big day feeling more relaxed and ready to have fun.

7. There is an extra person around: Wedding planners can field questions or handle tipping and other tasks on the wedding day, freeing up time for couples to have fun.

Wedding planners can provide support, expertise, company, and industry contacts to make weddings go smoothly.



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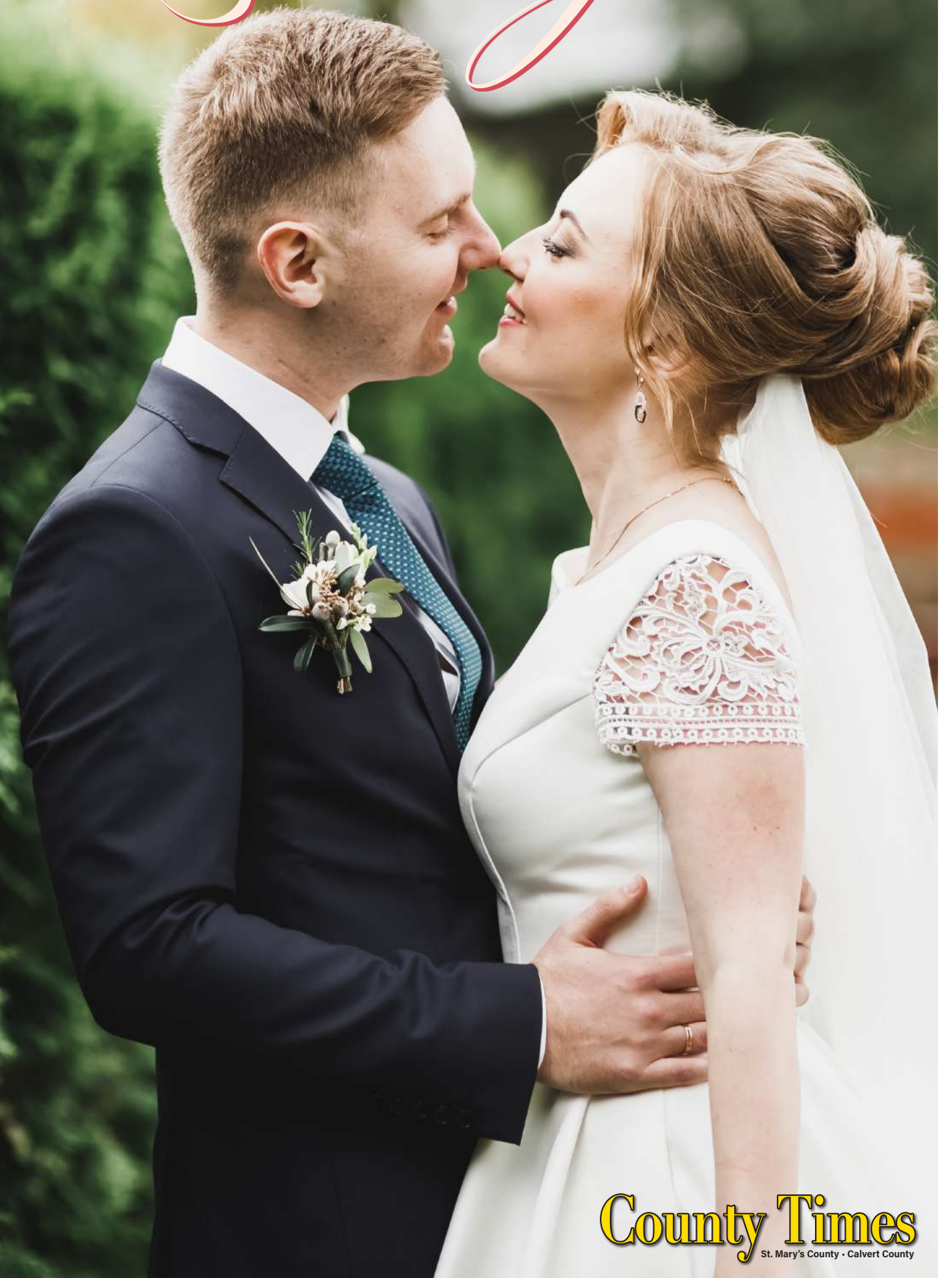


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What can insurance do for you?

It's probably not on your calendar, but September is Life Insurance Awareness Month. And it's indeed a pretty good idea to be aware of what life insurance can do for you.

Life insurance can help you in two main ways. First, life insurance policies offer a death benefit that can assist your family if you're no longer around. And second, some types of life insurance offer the chance to build cash value, which can work for you during your lifetime.

Let's look at the death benefit first. If something were to happen to you, your life insurance proceeds could help your family meet at least three major needs:

- *Paying a mortgage* – The biggest expense many families face is their monthly mortgage. If you weren't around, could your family continue paying the mortgage? Or would they have to move? With a sufficient life insurance death benefit, they could remain in their home, meeting the monthly mortgage payments, or perhaps pay off the loan entirely (although this might not be in their best financial interest).
- *Paying for education* – If you have young children, you may already be saving for their college education — because you know college is expensive. Without your income, would college, or some other form of post-secondary education or training, still be realistic? Again, the proceeds from an insurance policy could make the difference.
- *Paying off debts* – You might have a car loan, credit card debt or other financial obligations. If your surviving spouse is a joint account holder for these debts, they could still be liable for paying them off. But insurance proceeds could be used to retire the debts immediately, or over time.

All life insurance policies offer a death benefit. But permanent insurance, unlike term insurance, also offers the chance to build cash value — which can be a valuable supplement to your IRA and 401(k) or other retirement accounts.

A cash value policy such as whole life also can provide flexibility for changing financial needs or emergencies in retirement. And here's another key advantage: Because this type of policy provides fixed, guaranteed returns, it is not dependent on the performance of the financial markets and is thus insulated from the market downturns that can happen while you're retired. So, taking money from the cash value of your whole life policy may help you avoid selling investments that have temporarily declined in value.

Keep in mind, though, that the premiums for a cash value policy will generally be substantially higher than those for term insurance. That's why some people choose to "buy term and invest the difference" rather than purchase a permanent life policy with cash value. Whether this strategy is right for you depends on a few different factors, perhaps the most important of which is your ability and willingness to consistently invest the money you would have otherwise placed in a cash value policy.

In any case, should you choose cash value insurance, you generally have three ways to get at the money: withdrawals, loans or surrender of the policy. You'll want to weigh all the factors involved — including taxes and the effect on the policy's death benefit — when deciding on how to access the cash value.

Life Insurance Awareness Month ends on Sept. 30. But your need for life insurance, and the potential benefits it provides, can last a lifetime.

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

Edward Jones, Member SIPC

Contributed by David McDonough

Financial Advisor at Edward Jones

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Wanderings of an Aimless Mind by Shelby Oppermann



Clements Cuties Ready to Play Ball Against Childhood Cancer

I am trying to figure out if I have enough time this afternoon before the Tom Jones concert tonight (yes, he is still alive) at MGM Grand National Harbor to go to Hooks and Hangars to get Robert a new dress for the Clements Cuties event on Saturday. There should be some bright, summery, floral extra extra large dresses available there to keep him cool on the ballfield at Cryer's Back Road Inn in Compton. One year I found him a long Muumuu dress, but it split part way through the game. So, I have to make sure I find a dress for him that is flexible and breathable because even though he is normally a third base coach, Robert will also be involved in the skits during the game. And the skits are always so much fun to watch, especially when they get the audience and kids involved. The Women's All Stars usually have some devilishly good pranks to pull on the guys and in their dugout, though the guys retaliate pretty well.

I still have some baskets to finish for the brown bag auction table. A special thank you from Robert and I to April's Pool and Spa and my sister-in-law Pam for all they donated for the brown bag auction. Some years we receive almost 100 auction baskets, gift cards, and other handmade items from Clements Cuties families and friends. This year will most likely be the same amount. I believe there is a link on our Clements Cuties Foundation Facebook page with some photos.

We are grateful to all who have sponsored Rockin' Roberta this year which in turn goes to help this year's childhood recipients with cancer and also to our scholarship recipients. If you are planning on coming out for a full day of fun, this is the schedule of events for Saturday, and it looks like it is going to be a beautiful day. The Clements Cuties are prepping and getting ready to roll! Planning a fun show for you all in appreciation of your continued support to our recipients and their families!!

SATURDAY, SEPT 14th at Cryer's Back Road Inn

- 11:00 am: Gates Open
- 12:00 pm: Women's Rookie Game
- 2:00 pm: Women's All:Star Game
- 3:20 pm: Announcements Begin
- 3:45 pm: Parade Begins with all past and current recipients and The Clements Cuties.
- 4:00 pm: Cuties Arrive and show/Game Begins
- 8:00 pm: Wild Good Band plays at the After Party across the street at the Back Road Inn Pavilion

There will be food, refreshments, raffles, and Cuties merchandise available for purchase when gates open at 11. We have a lot of amazing items for our Brown Bag Raffles and Live Auction. Mark your calendars and come join us for an amazing event!!

Reminders:

- Parking and seating is limited. Get there early!
- Entry to all events by donation
- No outside coolers allowed!

But the main objective of all the skits, auctions, and year round events are the kids. These children have sometimes only known cancer in their young lives or have had their whole world of sports and activities suddenly turned upside down as pre-teens or teens when they receive a cancer diagnosis. We do this for them. This past year, we sadly lost one of this year's amazing recipients, Wyatt Griggs, long before a young person should leave this Earth. We went to a lovely memorial service for him on August 2nd. This year's other two recipients are Janelle Cheatham battling RETT Syndrome and Sebastian Roldan battling B-Cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia. Please come out and have fun while helping these courageous kids and families fighting cancer. I'll be selling T-shirts as always.

To each new day's advances against cancer, Shelby

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



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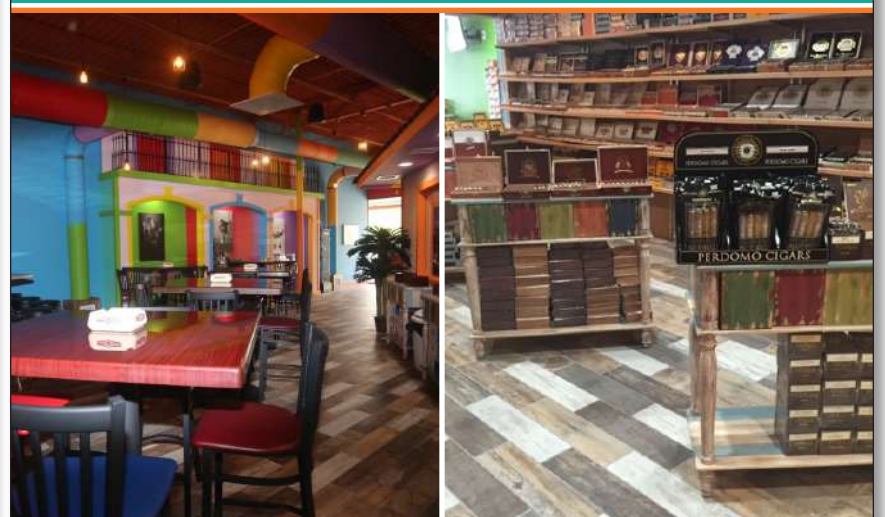
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MAY 18	Fenwick Street Books: Book Fair in LTown Alley 10 am - 4 pm			
MAY 18	On the Water's Edge Concert ft. Cover Your 6 Military Appreciation Concert 5 pm - 7 pm			
MAY 21	Third Tuesday Tunes in the Square ft. Chris Dean 10 am - 3 pm			
MAY 25	RenFest SOMD - Brudergarten & Viking Axe Throwing 10 am - 8 pm			
MAY 25	Leonardtwn Vol. Rescue Squad EMS Week Event 10 am - 3 pm			

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One Million Oysters for Breton Bay



Show your support for a cleaner, more vibrant, and healthier Breton Bay by joining us on September 21st!

Saturday at 10 am (rain date: Sunday, September 22nd at 10 am) join the St. Mary's River Watershed Association and Friends of St. Clements Bay at Abell's Wharf to plant a million baby oysters in the Breton Bay Oyster Sanctuary. Bring

your friends and join the fun!

Volunteers are required to wear closed-toed shoes and a life jacket. We will have extra life jackets, but bring your own if you can.

We will unload 200 bushels of spat-on-shell (baby oysters) from trucks, load them onto work vessels, and transport the oysters by boat to their new home at Lover's Point.

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.

Pat Smith, 64



Edward Patrick Smith, "Pat" 64, of Mechanicsville, MD, formerly of Bowie, MD, passed away on September 5, 2024, in Hollywood, MD. Born on March 15,

1960, in Washington, D.C., he was the son of the late Donna (Moore) Smith and the late Eddie Mack Smith. Pat was the loving husband of Robyn (Klages) Smith, whom he married on October 2, 1982, in Kent Island Methodist Church, Chester, MD. In addition to his wife, he is survived by his son, Michael Smith, of Quimby, VA, his siblings, Cathleen Calixto of Crofton, MD, Colleen Neutzling of Crofton, MD, Matthew Smith of Brooklyn, MD, and Thomas Smith of Quimby, VA, his grandson, Riley Smith, of Loveville, MD, his father-in-law, Russell Klages, of Easton, MD, his brothers-in-law, David Klages of Pottsville, TX and Glenn Klages of Easton, MD, numerous nieces and nephews, and his faithful pocket bea-

gle, Polly. Pat was preceded in death by his siblings, Mary Albertson and Peggy Smith, and his niece, Kathryn Wilson.

Pat attended R.O.T.C at Laurel High School and went on to take Electronics Engineering Technology courses at Anne Arundel Community College. He owned Mobile Radio Services, LLC for 7 years, and was a Field Communication Supervisor for SMECO for 13 years.

Pat enjoyed muscle cars, car shows, and bluegrass music.

Contributions may be made to American Heart Association and/or the Hollywood Volunteer Fire Department.

The family will receive friends on Thursday, September 12, 2024 from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, MD, where a funeral service will be held at 10:00 AM in the funeral home chapel with Chaplain Marie Hankinson officiating. Interment will be private.

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

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

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



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New Contract Will Boost Electronic Attack Capability



The Navy awarded a contract for the engineering and manufacturing development of the Next Generation Jammer Low Band system, which will deploy on the EA-18G Growler (pictured). It is part of a larger system that will provide enhanced AEA capabilities to disrupt, deny and degrade enemy air defense and ground communication systems. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Nicholas Priest)

The U.S. and Australian fleets are one step closer to getting the next increment of the U.S. Navy's most advanced airborne electronic attack (AEA) system. The Navy awarded L3 Technologies Inc., Communication Systems-West a \$587.4 million contract Aug. 26 for the engineering and manufacturing development of the Next Generation Jammer Low Band (NGJ-LB) system.

"NGJ-LB will meet current and emerging electronic warfare threats and increase the lethality of 4th and 5th generation platforms and strike weapons," said Rear Adm. John Lemmon, Program Executive Officer for Tactical Aircraft Programs. "The Navy will partner with L3Harris to get this key capability into the hands of the warfighter."

The NGJ-LB is part of a larger NGJ system that will augment and ultimately replace the legacy ALQ-99 Tactical Jamming System on the EA-18G Growler aircraft. Using the latest software and Active Electronically Scanned Array technologies, NGJ will provide enhanced AEA capabilities to disrupt, deny and degrade enemy air defense and ground communication systems.

This latest increment will counter a larger capacity of adversary systems in the low-frequency electromagnetic spectrum.

NGJ-LB is scheduled to reach early operational capability in 2029.

The Navy originally awarded the contract in 2020. Following multiple protests, the Navy issued an amended request for proposals in 2023. This contract supports the final design efforts and manufacturing of operational prototype pods and system-level prototypes for the U.S. Navy and Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF). NGJ-LB is a joint cooperative program between the U.S. Department of Defense and the Australian Department of Defence.

"The contract award is a major step for our fleet as well as the RAAF," said Capt. David Rueter, Airborne Electronic Attack Systems Program Office (PMA-234) Program Manager. "Our partnership with Australia to develop the newest AEA jamming capability exhibits our joint commitment to ensure continued superiority over the electromagnetic spectrum."

PMA-234 is responsible for acquiring, delivering and sustaining AEA systems including the NGJ, ALQ-99, and ALQ-231 Intrepid Tiger Pod II. The program office provides combatant commanders with electronic warfare capabilities that enable operational mission success.

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St. Mary's Deputies Honored with Deputy of the Year Awards



Deputy Joseph Senatore (left) and Detective Sergeant Austin Schultz (right)

Two St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office deputies were honored as Deputies of the Year at the 2024 Maryland Sheriff's Association Professional Development Seminar in Ocean City, MD, on Monday, September 9, 2024. Detective Sergeant Austin Schultz received the Crime Prevention Award, and Deputy Joseph Senatore was recognized with the Traffic Safety Award.

Detective Sergeant Austin Schultz earned the large agency Crime Prevention Award, which recognizes individuals who make outstanding contributions to crime prevention through public safety education, innovative security techniques, effective policing strategies, or a notable single act of crime prevention. D/Sgt. Schultz was praised for his exemplary leadership, embodying the Sheriff's Office vision of innovative, community-oriented policing. As a founding member of the Criminal Intelligence Unit, he spearheads the Group Violence Intervention (GVI) Program, a collaboration with community partners to reduce gun violence. By engaging at-risk individuals and offering resources and support, Schultz's work has provided alternatives to those involved in firearm and group violence, significantly enhancing public safety.

Deputy Joseph Senatore received the large agency Traffic Safety Award, which recognizes officers who contribute to traffic safety through purpose-driven enforcement that addresses community issues through enforcement, commitment, and education. Since completing his Field Training Program in January 2023, Senatore has led traffic safety efforts, notably in the "Slow Down St. Mary's" initiative targeting speeding and reckless driving. His proactive approach, including over 1,500 vehicle stops and nearly 2,400 traffic violations, has helped reduce accidents and make local roads safer. Beyond enforcement, Senatore showed his dedication by assisting a traffic violator to get to a necessary medical appointment, highlighting his commitment to the community's well-being.

"Detective Sergeant Austin Schultz and Deputy Joseph Senatore's dedicated service is not only recognized by our community and office; law enforcement agencies representing the entire state of Maryland selected them for special recognition," said Sheriff Steve Hall. "They exemplify the very best of our agency's commitment to public safety and community service."

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Fire Destroys St. Inigoes Home



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

A Monday morning fire in St. Inigoes completely destroyed a single-family home but caused no injuries, investigators with the state fire marshal's office reported.

It took 45 firefighters to knock down the blaze; the action took about 45 minutes, fire marshals reported.

The home was close to the NAS Patuxent

River Webster Field Annex and the fire was discovered by an officer there, fire marshals said.

The cause of the Sept. 9 fire is still under investigation.

Anyone with any information regarding this incident is asked to contact the Office of the State Fire Marshal, Southern Regional Office, at 410-414-3614.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Bushwood Man Arrested Following Drug Investigation

During proactive traffic enforcement on Tuesday, September 3, 2024, Deputy Joseph Senatore of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office observed the driver of a Blue Ford Mustang fail to stop at a white-painted stop line and make an abrupt right turn onto Great Mills Road and travel westward at a high rate of speed. Deputy Senatore initiated a traffic stop on the Mustang, at which point the driver exited the vehicle and fled on foot.

After a brief foot pursuit, the driver was apprehended and identified as Deandre Terille Taylor, 35, of Bushwood. A K-9 unit was requested to search Taylor's vehicle, and K-9 Kyra alerted positively for narcotics. A subsequent search of the car revealed \$595.00 in cash, though no controlled dangerous substances (CDS) were located at the time.

While in custody, Taylor complained of a medical emergency and was transported to a hospital for evaluation. He left the hospital shortly after arriving. In the interim, deputies searched the area where Taylor fled, recovering a large quantity of CDS, including 80.6 grams of suspected crack cocaine, 0.8 grams of powdered cocaine, and 2.0 grams of fentanyl.

Detectives from the Criminal Investigations Division, who had already been actively investigating Taylor for suspected drug distribution activities, obtained search and seizure warrants for two residences and his person. The warrants were executed on Wednesday, September 4, 2024, at homes in the 42000 block of Calvert Circle in Mechanicsville and the 20000 block of Wolftrap Street in Lexington Park.

At the Calvert Circle residence, detectives recovered \$12,972 in cash, seven individually packaged bags of suspected crack cocaine totaling approximately 218 grams,



Deandre Terille Taylor (photo from 2023)

2.0 grams of suspected fentanyl, and various CDS paraphernalia. At the Wolftrap Street residence, detectives recovered 1,263 grams of suspected marijuana, a digital scale with suspected cocaine residue, shotgun shells, .44 magnum ammunition, and additional CDS paraphernalia. Taylor was not located at either residence.

On Friday, September 6, 2024, an arrest warrant was issued, and Taylor was found in Clements and taken into custody without incident. Taylor is being charged with four counts of CDS possession with intent to distribute, four counts of CDS possession - not cannabis, possession of narcotics production equipment, CDS possession of paraphernalia, and multiple traffic violations.

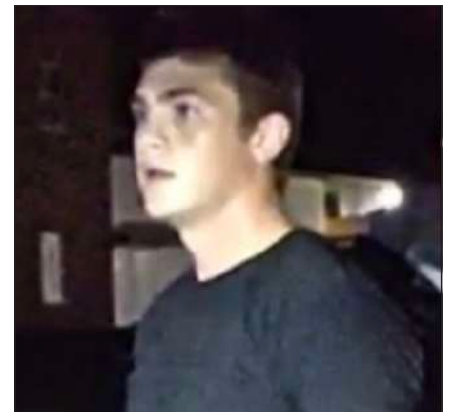
The suspect was transported to the Detention and Rehabilitation Center in Leonardtown.

Sheriff's Office Investigates Alleged On-Line Threats

Thanks to a tip from a watchful member of the public, the wanted subject Kevin Lee Bonnie, 21 has been located and is in police custody in St. Mary's County.

The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office, Charles County Sheriff's Office, and Calvert County Sheriff's Office are actively investigating recent social media threats made against children and police officers.

On Thursday, September 5, 2024 Bonnie posted multiple online statements expressing intent to harm law enforcement officers and children waiting at bus stops. He has had recent interactions with law enforcement officers in Charles and St. Mary's counties.



Kevin Lee Bonnie

Philip H. Dorsey III
Attorney at Law

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St. Mary's, Farmers Feed Hundreds

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

For just the third year in a row, Feed St. Mary's, the local hub for distributing food to food pantries, the county government and the University of Maryland's Agricultural Extension, gave out free fresh fruit and vegetables and protein to hundreds of county residents.

Droves of people created long lines to get the food Sept. 7 as volunteers worked to hand it out quickly; each person or family who came also received five pounds of chicken legs as a protein source, said Douglas Frederick, the board chair of Feed St. Mary's.

"It's an all-volunteer non-profit except for our warehouse manager and two assistants," Frederick said. "The numbers were down this year compared to last year, but it was still a successful event."

Last year more than 900 people came to the parking lot of Signature Lane in Lexington Park to get free, farm fresh produce, Frederick said.

This year that number had dropped to just over 800 people but those who came showed there was still a significant need in the community, especially amongst lower-income residents, to get better, nutritious food.

"We want them to know they can have something nutritious for themselves and their families," Frederick said. "This allows them to save money so they don't have to make a decision between whether to buy food or pay a bill."



Photo by Ceandra Scott

During the year the Feed St. Mary's warehouse acts as a central location for many local food pantries to get food to in turn hand out to the needy; Feed St. Mary's is normally stocked from the Maryland Food Bank located in Baltimore.

But for this special annual event, the fresh produce is provided by the Amish and Mennonite farmers through the Loveville Produce Auction in Loveville.

Feed St. Mary's spent \$5,000 this year to provide the chicken for families at the event, Frederick said, while the county government partnered with the University

of Maryland Extension to purchase all of the fresh fruits and vegetables.

If donations, both monetary and in food, were large enough throughout the year, Frederick said Feed St. Mary's could provide such an event on its own.

But that has not been the case, making such partnerships vital to success, he said.

"We couldn't do it alone," Frederick said. "It's not enough to go it alone."

The demographic of the people who came to the Farmers Feeding St. Mary's event and their high number showed Frederick that there was still a significant number of res-

idents in need of a reliable supply of nutritious food.

"We were able to put a lot of smiles on peoples' faces," Frederick said. "It was young and old, all races, and kids with their parents."

"Everyone who was there could really use the produce available."

Frederick said he believed that economically disadvantaged people are more at risk of eating, unhealthy, overly processed or fast food because of its lower cost and relative ease of availability.

"It's a rarity they can come out and get... all of these things [fresh fruits and vegetables]," Frederick said. "They also might not have time to prepare fresh food because they may be working more than one job."

Ben Beale, the agricultural agent for the extension office, said the event helped local farmers as much as those who partake of the produce.

"We do a lot of nutrition education, so it was a natural fit," Beale said of the extension's participation in the event. "We try to time these events when we have a surplus of produce on the market."

"That provides a floor to the market so this helps farmers as well."

Beale said the extension office is anxious to continue keeping the fresh produce flowing for free to residents.

"It's a great partnership," Beale said.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Sell it - Buy it at Auction

Two Upcoming Auctions at the St. Mary's County Fair (Leonardtown, MD) to support our 4-H Youth!

St. Mary's Co. 4-H Cake Auction - FRI, SEPT 20, 2024 - 6:30 pm
St. Mary's Co. 4-H Livestock Auction - SAT, SEPT 21, 2024 - 5 pm
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Town Moves Ahead On Water Tower Project

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The Leonardtown Town Council approved a bid this week to begin construction on a water tower for the Meadows at Town Run community in the town limits.

Town Administrator Laschelle McKay told council members that three bids came in, with the low bid coming from Landmark Structures Limited Partnership at \$6.9 million.

Though it was the lowest of the three bids, McKay said, it was roughly \$900,000 over what the town had budgeted for the project, which included impact fees from new development construction and federal funds through ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) left over after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Interest accrued on the ARPA funding brought the difference down to just about \$800,000, she said.

She recommended taking money from the \$1.75 million on hand to construct the accompanying water well to complete the tower project first.

"We have to build the tower," McKay

said. "We can't build anymore there.

"We can't have any more projects so we have to do that."

She recommended waiting to put out the bids for the construction of the water well to find the true cost of that project and use interest accrued so far this year on other monies in the town's coffers to potentially pay for it.

"I think we'll be OK," said McKay. "We just have to keep moving on the water tower."

McKay further recommended that the council consider raising the cost of equivalent dwelling units (EDUs), or the amount of water an average home uses per day, from \$3,000 to \$6,000.

She said she would bring that proposal forward formally in October.

"That's to ensure the [current] town residents don't have to bear the debt service burden; it would just come from new growth," McKay explained.

The motion passed the council's vote unanimously.

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Planning Commission Holds Decision on Townhouse Project



An artist's rendering of Riverside Townhomes

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The members of the county's planning commission voted to continue their public hearing on the concept site plan for a 42-townhouse development in California at their latest business meeting.

The townhomes to be built by LAHACO Investments, LLC, would be 120 feet in length and approximately 20 feet wide and less than 40 feet in height.

The traffic study for the project states the development would have a strictly controlled right-turn-in, right-turn-out only access point on Three Notch Road despite its proximity to Three Notch Road's intersection with Route 4.

The project would be sited on the north-bound side of Three Notch Road just north of the intersection with Route 4.

According to the traffic study, entered into

the record by Lenhart Traffic Consulting Inc., the project would generate approximately 252 daily vehicle trips in addition to the traffic already in the area.

The traffic study reported this addition would amount to only a fractional increase in nearby area traffic.

After a nearly three-hour hearing in which planning commission members expressed concerns with how the traffic produced by the developer's project would meld with traffic patterns from other developments in the nearby vicinity — including a new car wash facility, COA Barrett, the engineering firm from Calvert County working for the developer, asked for a continuance of the hearing.

The planning commission unanimously agreed to continue the hearing to the body's Nov. 4 meeting date.

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Commissioners Hint at Budget Priorities

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

One county commissioner said this week that doing away with the county's energy tax was a distinct possibility during the upcoming budgeting process; Commissioner Eric Colvin said during the annual State of the County luncheon in Lexington Park that he supported cutting that tax in particular.

Commissioner Mike Hewitt, who said that the county's financial status remains strong, said at the Chamber of Commerce-sponsored event and earlier at the Commissioners of St. Mary's County business meeting that he still believed that taxes were too high on county residents and that there needed to be relief.

"I think there's support from all commissioners to get rid of the energy tax next year," Colvin said.

Commissioners admitted that tax revenues had increased on the backs of residents through increases in both their property assessments at the state's hands and by

commissioners' efforts by their raising the income tax rate last year as well.

"We've kept the same rate but our [property] tax revenues have increased," Hewitt said. "We didn't do constant yield; we've done that twice out of the last 10 years."

He hoped the commissioners would take that step to offer tax relief this coming budget cycle.

"Living in St. Mary's County is expensive... especially for seniors," Hewitt said.

The commissioners received praise and criticism earlier this year as the budget cycle came to a close for raising taxes on income.

The reason for doing so was to support the state-mandated increases in starting teacher pay.

But now, even Gov. Wes Moore, who has strongly supported the Blueprint For Education and its many mandates, has signaled to legislators that they will have to reexamine the sheer cost of the law.

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Animal Control Ordinance Focuses on Dog Breeding

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The county's animal control division is actively handing out information to anyone they know of involved in dog breeding and/or boarding about the application process for obtaining a commercial license to gain compliance with the recently enacted updated animal control ordinance, said county Animal Control Warden Joy Wilson last week.

"Until next year, there's not going to be a fee," Wilson said in a briefing before the county's Animal Control Advisory Board. "Because, there were no fees put into the new ordinances.

"So right now, it's free."

The newly revised animal control ordinances have proved concerning for some animal lovers, as they now require anyone with more than five dogs to obtain a kenneling license.

This especially worried animal rescue groups who encourage residents to foster dogs — sometimes quite a few at a time — at their homes in hopes of finding permanent homes for them among others willing to open their homes to the dogs.

These groups became concerned that they would not be able to afford such a license or comply with its mandates and have expressed as much to the Commissioners of St. Mary's County.

Private owners with more than five dogs were also worried, Wilson said at the Sept. 6 meeting.

"They were worried about all of us [animal control officers] rolling up onto their property



Animal Control Warden Joy Wilson

seeking out anybody who had more than five dogs and that's not the case," Wilson said. "We're trying to target this towards everybody who is breeding animals."

Wilson said, though, that animal control officers who arrived to a residence with more than five dogs in the instance of having received a complaint would still advise the owner they were required to obtain a kenneling license.

"We may ask you to register, but that's so we know how many animals are on the property," Wilson said. "If you're not breeding, you shouldn't be concerned."

"We're trying to have some oversight on the care of large numbers of dogs being bred."

These breeding operations, Wilson said, is "one of the things filling our shelter the fastest."

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Child Care Center Project Opens Spending Debate

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The county government held off on providing more funding for a new child care center for its own employees by authorizing an outside contractor to study whether the soon-to-be-vacant Leonard Hall Junior Naval Academy building would be a better option.

"I'm here asking for money," said Jim Gotsch, director of the Department of Public Works and Transportation to the Commissioners of St. Mary's County.

Gotsch said the day care center costs have continued to rise and the project requires about \$450,000 more to begin construction; the building would be a prefabricated modular structure to accommodate 73 children on the county government campus in Leonardtown.

Part of the plan meant taking approximately \$350,000 from cost savings from the Barns at New Market farmers market project in Mechanicsville and transferring it to the child care project.

The increase to \$450,000 to be used on the project is due to inflationary pressure, Gotsch told commissioners at their Sept. 10 business meeting in Leonardtown, though that amount would not cover the entire increase.

Gotsch proposed taking funding from DPWT programs — about \$210,000 in total — to help fund the installation of a storm water management pond and sidewalks and curb and gutter to support the day care center.

The size of the prefabricated, permanent structure would be 6,347 square feet, Gotsch said.

Commissioner Mike Hewitt opened the debate as he questioned Gotsch as to why it was estimated to cost \$3.95 million to renovate the building that currently houses Leonard Hall Junior Naval Academy, which did not need storm water management, curb and gutter and was more than 3,000 square feet larger than the child care center, but it would only cost about \$2.5 million for a brand new prefabricated structure.

The junior naval academy plans to vacate the space in the near future as their lease with the county has not been extended.

"We still have to do something with Leonard Hall one way or the other when we're done," Hewitt said. "One thing that drives me a little nuts is, this [child care center] keeps going up [in cost]."

"It's starting to smell a lot like the RAC [Regional Agricultural Center]."

Hewitt proposed holding off on making a decision on the child care center funding for 90 days until the true cost of renovating the Leonard Hall site was known.

Commissioner Eric Colvin said he was concerned with delays as switching to a study of the Leonard Hall building for a



Public Works Chief Jim Gotsch

child care center could take too much time whereas signing a contract with the modular building provider now would lock in a price.

"We'd be up and running next year," Colvin said.

Hewitt argued that putting in a modular structure, with no possibility of expansion for additional children, put the county in an inflexible position.

The Leonard Hall building could provide that advantage.

Hewitt was also concerned with the amounts of surplus money found by county staff through various branches of county operations that could be used to fund projects elsewhere.

"And that's troubling to this commissioner because it's taxpayer money," Hewitt said. "We find \$444,000 over at the salt storage facility, we find \$352,000 at the north farmers' building, we find \$54,000 at the Norther Senior Center, we find \$98,000 in the airport master plan."

"How much excess money does the county have laying around?"

The county is anxious to build the child care center as an incentive to recruit and retain employees as it seeks to fill long-standing vacancies.

Commissioner Scott Ostrow was also concerned with moving too quickly on the child care center project.

"We do this over and over again in county government," Ostrow said. "We build things too small."

"If even in five years we find out it's [the child care center] too small, then in my opinion, we've wasted money."

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ANIMAL CONTROL WARDEN JOY WILSON ON
THE NEW KENNELING LICENSE RULE



LOCAL 3
Child care facility sparks spending debate



LOCAL 5
Commissioners hint at possible tax relief



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**Child Care Center Sparks
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**Commissioners Hint at
Possible Tax Cuts**

**Animal Ordinance
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Photo by Ceandra Scott