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Calvert County Times

THURSDAY, JULY 10, 2025

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**Townsel Resigns for
Hartford, CT Job**

**Governor Appoints
County Treasurer**

**Chesapeake Beach
Councilwoman Resigns**

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“IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT THIS NEWS WAS NOT SHARED DIRECTLY WITH STAFF AND STAKEHOLDERS...”

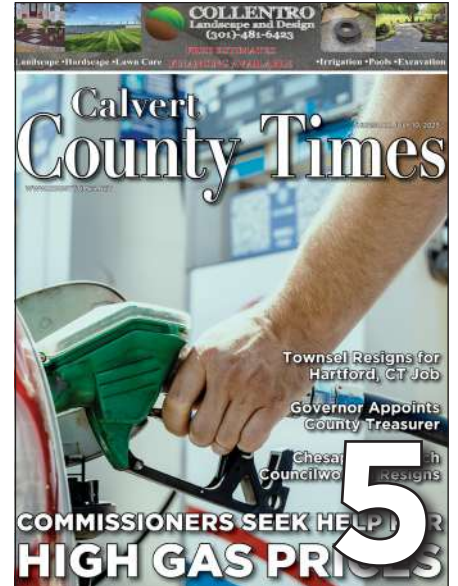
SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT JANA POST ON SUPERINTENDENT DR. ANDRAÉ TOWNSEL'S RESIGNATION



LOCAL 4
School superintendent resigns



LOCAL 5
Dolina named new County Treasurer



ON THE COVER
Commissioners appeal to attorney general for answers on Calvert's gas prices

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, JUL 10	FRI, JUL 11	SAT, JUL 12	SUN, JUL 13
AM Thunderstorms Hi: 83° Lo: 72°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 87° Lo: 72°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 86° Lo: 72°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 86° Lo: 72°
MON, JUL 14	TUE, JUL 15	WED, JUL 16	THU, JUL 17
Thunderstorms Hi: 85° Lo: 72°	Scattered Storms Hi: 85° Lo: 73°	Scattered Storms Hi: 87° Lo: 73°	Thunderstorms Hi: 88° Lo: 73°

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Townsel Resigns for Position in Hartford, CT

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The announcement from Hartford, CT on July 1 that Dr. Andraé Townsel would be that city's new superintendent of schools sent shock waves back to Calvert County. The Calvert County Board of Education had no inkling that Townsel, who had a year left on his contract, would be leaving. Subsequently it has been reported that Townsel had applied at school districts other than Hartford.

The school board hastily called an executive session and thereafter board President Jana Post posted the following statement: "We want to acknowledge that Dr. Townsel has accepted a new position in Hartford, CT. While we recognize the significance of this professional opportunity and wish him well in his future endeavors, it is unfortunate that this news was not shared directly with staff and stakeholders prior to its public release.

"We understand that transitions in leadership can raise questions and concerns. Please know that the Board of Education is meeting to seek legal counsel and to carefully consider the next steps. Our goal is to ensure continuity and a smooth transition as we prepare for the 2025-2026 school year.

"We are committed to maintaining transparency and open communication throughout this process and will share updates as they become available."

At the request of The County Times, Post further clarified, "Townsel is our Superintendent until we appoint an Interim. This will happen at our first August board meeting."

With the 2024 election of three new board members, the school board this year has taken a sharp turn toward a more conservative philosophy. Post, when asked if that had anything to do with Townsel leaving, replied, "He did not indicate that his leaving was a result of this board.

On July 1 the Hartford Public Schools issued the following statement, "After a lengthy process of gathering stakeholder input, a nationwide search that included the review of 40 applicants, and a comprehensive interview process of the top applicants, the Hartford Public Schools' Board of Education is pleased to announce Dr. Andraé Townsel as the Superintendent of Hartford Public Schools.

"Dr. Andraé Townsel was born and raised in the beautiful city of Detroit, Michigan. As a student-athlete at Cass Technical High School, and graduate of Detroit Public Schools, he earned a football scholarship

to Howard University in Washington, DC—a path that ultimately led him to earn a Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral degree from the esteemed institution. Dr. Townsel began his educational journey in the District of Columbia and has since held nearly every position in the K–12 education system, including student teacher, teacher, head coach, assistant dean, dean of students, central office specialist, assistant principal, principal, assistant superintendent, and now a highly effective superintendent. His well-rounded experience, combined with a deep commitment to educational excellence and student success, has made him a respected and transformational leader in every district he has served.

"Currently serving as Superintendent of Calvert County Public Schools in Maryland, Dr. Townsel has been recognized for exceeding expectations in leadership, elevating the district's ranking to the fourth-best in the state. He was unanimously elected President of the Public School Superintendents' Association of Maryland for the 2024–2025 school year. Known for his bold vision, student-centered leadership, and signature motto—"Set the bar. Meet the bar. Exceed the bar. Raise the bar!"—Dr. Townsel brings passion, innovation, and results to every school community he leads.

"Hartford Public Schools Board Chairperson, Jennifer Hockenhull, believes Dr. Townsel is a great fit to serve the district as its next leader.

"The Board is incredibly excited to welcome Dr. Andraé Townsel as our new Superintendent," said Jennifer Hockenhull, Board Chairperson. "We were looking for a seasoned leader, and Dr. Townsel brings not only a wealth of experience from districts similar to ours but also incredible energy and a clear commitment to championing our district's future. We are eager to work alongside him."

"Dr. Townsel looks forward to working with the Board of Education, parents, staff, students, and the Hartford Public Schools community on a shared vision of providing the very best educational experiences for all students.

"I am honored and excited to serve as the next Superintendent of Hartford Public Schools. This is an incredible opportunity to work collaboratively with students, families, educators, and community partners who are deeply invested in the success of our schools. Together, we will enhance the student experience and raise achievement in academics, athletics, and the arts across the district. I look forward to build-

ing on Hartford's rich legacy and setting a bold vision for our shared future," said Dr. Townsel.

The Hartford Public Schools' Board acted officially with a unanimous vote in favor of Dr. Townsel for the role of Superintendent at a Special Meeting held publicly on July 1st.

"Dr. Townsel will spend the next few weeks meeting with individuals and connecting with groups, as well as engaging in town halls before the start of the 2025-2026 school year. His official starting date is pending. He succeeds Dr. Leslie Torres-Rodriguez, who held the role of Superintendent since December 2017, after joining the district in an academic leadership role in 2015."

Hartford Mayor Arunan Arulampalam (a Democrat), said, "Dr. Andraé Townsel brings a wealth of experience as an educator and leader, and his track record of elevating district performance and supporting students makes him an outstanding choice to serve as the new Superintendent of Hartford Public Schools. This is a critical moment for our school system. We are hard at work adapting and innovating to address our city's most pressing educational challenges, including moving forward with the recommendations of the Blue-Ribbon Commission on Education my office launched last year. I'm confident that Dr. Townsel's numerous roles throughout the K–12 system, including his distinguished work as Superintendent of Calvert County Public Schools in Maryland, have left him uniquely qualified to build on



Dr. Andraé Townsel

Hartford's recent progress.

"I look forward to collaborating closely with Dr. Townsel as we work alongside our great teachers, administrators, and Board of Education to ensure that every Hartford student has access to a high-quality education and the opportunities they deserve. The city stands ready to support him in this vital role, and I am excited for what we will accomplish together on behalf of our children and families."

Dr. Townsel did not respond to a request from The County Times for an interview.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

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Governor Appoints County Treasurer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners announces Gov. Wes Moore has appointed a candidate they recommended, Amanda Dolina of Chesapeake Beach, to serve as Calvert County treasurer, filling the vacancy left earlier this year. Dolina's appointment became effective July 1, 2025, and she will serve the remainder of the unexpired four-year term through the 2026 general election.

Dolina, founder of West Bridge Finance Solutions in Chesapeake Beach, brings more than 15 years of experience in public finance and community service to the role. She is a certified public accountant (CPA) and certified associate in project management (CAPM), with a Bachelor of Science in accounting and a minor in finance from Salisbury University.

She serves on the board of the Republican Women Leaders of Calvert County and is an active contributor to nonprofit financial education through her publications and speaking engagements.

As county treasurer, she is responsible for overseeing the collection and disbursement of county funds and maintaining financial accountability in service to Calvert County residents.

"I am honored to serve Calvert County in this capacity and look forward to continuing the work of responsible fiscal stewardship," Dolina said. "Calvert County is



Amanda Dolina

more than just where I live; it's where I've built my accounting firm, raised my family and found community. It is my privilege to humbly serve the people of Calvert County as their treasurer."

The Calvert County treasurer is an elected position. In accordance with Maryland law, the office will be on the ballot during the November 2026 general election.

Press Release from Calvert County government

Attorney General Asked to Probe High Gas Prices

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) has heard the complaints loud and clear. Although they say they have no control over it, the commissioners have asked Maryland Attorney General Anthony Brown to investigate why gas prices in Calvert County are consistently higher than surrounding counties.

The letter to Brown, dated July 2, said, "We write on behalf of several concerned constituents of Calvert County who are facing a significant and persistent disparity in gasoline prices compared to neighboring counties. We respectfully request that your office investigate this matter and assist in identifying potential remedies to alleviate the financial strain on our residents and local businesses.

"Residents have raised numerous concerns about the noticeable difference in fuel prices between Calvert County and adjacent areas such as St. Mary's and Charles counties. While daily fluctuations in gas prices are expected, they hold that Calvert County consistently experiences higher costs. For example, as recently as June 12, 2025, reports indicated that the average price per gallon in Calvert County was approximately \$3.24, while in St. Mary's County it was about \$2.94 and in Charles County, it stood at \$2.97. This difference of around \$.30 per gallon places a substantial burden on our community.

"The persistently higher fuel prices in Calvert County have a tangible impact on our working families, daily commuters and the operational costs of our local businesses. The financial well-being of our constituents is a primary concern and while we are focused on policies that promote



Attorney General Anthony Brown

affordability and accessibility within the limits of our local authority, the complexities of fuel pricing warrant a more comprehensive review.

"Given your Office's longstanding commitment to consumer protection and its authority to investigate matters of this nature, we believe your involvement would be invaluable. We respectfully request that the Office of the Attorney General examine the factors contributing to the gas price disparities in Calvert County and determine if any practices warrant further action.

"We are prepared to provide your office with any additional information or support needed for such an inquiry. Thank you for your time and consideration of this critical issue. We look forward to the possibility of working with you to address the concerns of our shared constituents."

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Solomons Sewage Overflow Contained

A sanitary sewer overflow was reported to the Calvert County Department of Public Works, Water & Sewerage Division on July 5 at approximately 11 a.m. The leak was located at 14261 Solomons Island Road adjacent to the parking lot on the north side of Solomons Island. The Solomons Boat Rental is located next to this parking lot.

Approximately 7,800 gallons of untreated wastewater discharged into the Patuxent River.

The Calvert County Department of Public Works, Water & Sewerage Division responded promptly to contain and mitigate the overflow. Flow was brought under control, and by 12:45 p.m., the affected area had been disinfected with lime. At no time was there an impact on the water and sewer

service for customers.

Signage has been posted at the treated area. The Calvert County Health Department and Maryland Department of the Environment have been notified of the release. The Calvert County Health Department, Division of Environmental Health advises avoiding direct contact with the water in the area for the next few days due to the potential presence of wastewater.

For questions, please contact the Department of Public Works, Water & Sewerage Division at 410-535-3491, or email WaterandSewerage@calvertcountymd.gov.

Press release from Calvert County government

Golf Summer Camps Available in Calvert County!

Youth camps at **Mellomar Golf Park in Owings** teach campers the **fundamentals**—swing, chipping, pitching, putting, rules of play—through **fun and engaging games** with the chance to **win prizes**

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- **Spots available throughout the summer!**

Register online at MellomarGolf.com/youth
Youth camps offered in conjunction with Chick-Fil-A of Prince Frederick and Rita's Ice of Dunkirk



Health Department Veteran Wins Tobacco Prevention Award

Calvert County Health Department Supervisor of Health Promotions Tammy Halterman was chosen on June 25 to receive the Joan Stine Award for Leadership in Tobacco Prevention and Control. The prestigious award was presented at the Annual Maryland Tobacco Control Conference in Baltimore.

Halterman has worked in tobacco control for over 25 years. She supervises and assists with the Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation Program, the Tobacco Enforcement Program, the PATCH program, the Cannabis Awareness Program, the Tobacco, Diabetes, and Chronic Disease Program, and so much more.

Halterman is well known throughout the state as the person who asks the questions others want to know but don't ask. One of her colleagues sums Tammy up perfectly. They stated "Tammy is nothing short of amazing in her ability to see the big picture and work on the small things that bring about BIG changes. And while she is working in Calvert County, she spreads the impact across Southern Maryland, supporting the rest of us."

Halterman has worked to improve public health through tobacco control policies. She



Tammy Halterman

has advocated to have local laws changed to enhance the enforcement of tobacco regulations in the county.

The health department says Halterman "is highly deserving of this award."

Press Release from Calvert County Health Department

Armory Road Construction Work Begins

Armory Square, LLC has entered into a public works agreement with Calvert County Government for the required improvements to the Armory Square development on Armory Road in Prince Frederick. Work was scheduled to begin Monday, July 7 and continue through Sept. 12, 2025, weather permitting.

During construction, a portion of Armory Road will be closed. Drivers are advised to use caution in the area and stay alert for detour information. Improvements will include, but

are not limited to, realignment, streetlighting, road and infrastructure improvements.

Questions may be directed to Armory Square LLC at 301-264-7829, or ebailey@generationprop.com.

For information on businesses in the Armory Square development, visit www.ChooseCalvert.com/WhatsGoingWhere.

Press Release from Calvert County government

Fines Increased for Sign Violations

Starting July 1, 2025, the fine for placing unpermitted signs in public right of ways has increased from \$25 to \$500 per sign.

Calvert County Department of Public Works routinely removes unauthorized signage within the county right of ways to ensure public safety and maintain the county's visual landscape. The removed signs are stored at the Appeal Landfill, located at 401 Sweetwater Road in Lusby for two weeks. Individuals and businesses may claim their signs during that time for a \$6 per sign fee.

Those that violate the signage permit will receive a civil citation from the Calvert County Attorney's Office, which carries a fine of \$500 per sign, whether or not those signs are retrieved from the landfill.

Unpermitted signs in the right of way pose a hazard to drivers and pedestrians. Signs can block lines of sight and can become dangerous debris if dislodged during inclement weather or roadside maintenance.

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners encourages all citizens to comply with the sign regulations within the Calvert County Zoning Ordinance.

If you require a sign permit, the process is designed to accommodate legal and safe placement. For more information on necessary permits for various types of work, visit the county's "Do I Need a Permit?" page.

Press release from Calvert County government.

Chesapeake Beach Councilwoman Resigns

Town Announces Replacement Process

The Mayor and Town Council of Chesapeake Beach have announced the resignation of Councilwoman Kathleen Berault, effective July 9, 2025. Councilwoman Berault shared the reasons for her decision during the May 15th Town Meeting, citing her upcoming move to Delaware to be closer to her spouse, pending the sale of their home.

In her time on the town council, Councilwoman Berault has exemplified steadfast dedication to public service. She has served not only as a councilmember but also as chair of the Planning and Zoning Board, a member of the Tree Board and the Board of Port Wardens, and as Town Council Liaison to the Green Team.

Prior to her tenure in Chesapeake Beach, Councilwoman Berault had an extensive and distinguished career in law enforcement. She began as a cadet with the Metropolitan Police Department in Washington, D.C., and later joined the Prince George's County Police Department, retiring after 20 years with the rank of Major. Her final command was with the Office of Professional Responsibility, overseeing the Internal Affairs Division, Departmental Shootings, and Use of Force Compliance.

Following her retirement from law enforcement, she continued her service at the federal level with the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA), overseeing IRS operations for more than a decade.

"It has been my great honor and pleasure to serve as a member of the Board of Port Wardens, the Tree Board, the Green Team, and most recently, the Town Council. Although it is bittersweet to leave Chesapeake Beach, I will always cherish the Town and its residents," said Councilwoman Kathleen Berault.

The mayor, town council, and Town staff extend their deepest gratitude to Councilwoman Berault for her unwavering commitment to the Chesapeake Beach community. Her service reflects the true spirit of public dedication.

"Thank you for your service, dedication, and words of wisdom that have made our community stronger. Your tireless efforts to preserve the natural beauty and character of the Chesapeake Bay will be felt for years to come," said Mayor Bruce A. Wahl.

In accordance with the town charter, the town council will appoint a replacement to fill the remainder of Councilwoman Berault's term.

Per the Town Charter section C-614 "Vacancies", the town council shall elect a qualified Town resident to carry out the unexpired term of office for Councilwoman Berault.



Kathleen Berault

According to an announcement from the town: "If you are a town resident and are interested in serving as a member of the town council, please submit the following to the Town Clerk, no later than July 31st.

1. Registration Verification for Town of Chesapeake Beach: Please provide full name (first, middle, last), residential address (physical address where you currently reside, PO Box not accepted), date of birth.
2. Statement of Interest: Provide all contact information and resume. Please include any relevant information.
3. Public Disclosure Form Requirement: Complete and submit a public disclosure form, accessible on the town website. If you complete the form via the online link it will be submitted directly to the Town Clerk at completion. If you would prefer to download the form, print it and provide it to the Town Clerk.

Information should be submitted to Sharon Humm, Town Clerk, at shumm@chesapeakebeachmd.gov or by contacting Town Hall at (410)257-2230.

The mayor and town council will interview town residents, who have been verified as registered town voters by the Board of Elections, and have submitted all required information during a town council Work session. It is expected that interviews will take place on August 12, 2025, at 6 p.m. with a final decision of the mayor and town council during the August 21, 2025 Town meeting. Meeting dates are tentative and could be adjusted.

Press release from Town of Chesapeake Beach

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CALVERT COUNTY POLICE BLOTTER

During the week of June 23, 2025 – June 29, 2025, Calvert County Sheriff's Office Deputies responded to 1,843 calls for service throughout the community, including, but not limited to:

- Check Welfare / Mental Health: 63
- Disorderly: 15
- Domestic: 24
- Motor Vehicle Crashes: 39
- Patrol Checks / School Checks: 760
- Suspicious Persons / Vehicles: 34
- Traffic Complaints: 78
- Traffic Stops: 347
- 911 Hang Ups: 93
- ARRESTS: 33

Burglary: 25-53335 On June 29, 2025, Detective Buck responded to the Kaine Building located at 65 Duke Street for a reported commercial burglary. The complainant advised that several suites, eight in total, had sustained damage to their doors, door frames, and locking mechanisms as a result of forced entry. A metal lock box containing cash was reported stolen. The estimated value of the stolen property is \$520, while the damage to the property is estimated at \$12,000. This case remains under investigation.

including underwear, batteries, sunscreen, and lighters, with a total value of \$306.31. Additionally, Brown was found carrying a bag containing a rock of crack cocaine, four glass smoking devices, six capsules of Fentanyl, four capsules of crack cocaine, and four capsules of Xanax. Both suspects were placed under arrest and transported to the Calvert County Detention Center. Greenan was charged with Theft, CDS:- Possession Not Cannabis, and CDS Possession of Paraphernalia. Brown was charged with CDS: Possession-Not Cannabis (x3), CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia, Theft: \$100 to Under \$1500- Shoplifting. Damaged Property: 25-51922 On June 23, 2025, DFC Dymond responded to the 3700 block of Hunting Creek Road in Huntingtown, for report of property destruction. The complainant reported an unknown suspect(s) damaged the fencing to her horse pasture enclosure. The estimated value of damaged property is \$300.00.

Damaged Property: 25-52633 On June 26, 2025, DFC Daily responded to the 8000 block of Cardinal Circle in Lusby, for the report of property destruction. The complainant reported a BB struck the victim's bedroom window damaging the screen and two panes of glass. The estimated value of damaged property is \$500.

Damaged Property: 25-53424 On June 29, 2025, Deputy Brown responded to Cove Point Pool, located at 800 Cove Point Road in Lusby, for the reported vandalism. The complainant advised a restroom stall door had been damaged and one of the shower curtains was ripped off a shower stall. The estimated value of damaged property is \$124.

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



Lauren Marie Brown



Kelly Greenan

CDS Violation:

25-52890 On June 27, 2025, Deputy Deinert responded to Walmart located at 150 N. Solomons Island Road in Prince Frederick for a reported theft in progress. The complainant advised that two females were actively stealing items from store shelves. Upon arrival, deputies made contact with **Lauren Marie Brown**, 38, of Leonardtown, and **Kelly Greenan**, 35, of Leonardtown,

as they attempted to leave the store with stolen merchandise. While at the service desk, Greenan dropped a burnt glass pipe on the floor. A search revealed stolen items

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Hospice to Restore Burnett Center Labyrinth

Public Encouraged to Participate



Nottingham Landscaping has prepared the ground near Hospice of the Chesapeake's Burnett Center for Hope & Healing in Prince Frederick, Maryland, for the labyrinth to be revitalized.

The revival of a sacred space dedicated to peace, reflection and healing for our community is underway at the Burnett Center for Hope & Healing, 4559 Sixes Road in Prince Frederick. The center is inviting the people of Calvert County and friends of Hospice of the Chesapeake to help lay small rocks that will mark the path of its restored labyrinth.

The organization is grateful for the exceptional work and shared commitment of Nottingham Landscaping. Their generosity, care and craftsmanship has prepared the ground and the design of the labyrinth. The next phase of the project will bring the community together to place light river rocks along the newly restored labyrinth path. This will take place from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on July 17. In the event of rain or extreme heat, a weather date of 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on July 24 has been set.

Whether you stay for just a few minutes or the whole morning, your presence mat-

ters. The rocks are small and manageable, making this a great opportunity for all ages and abilities to get involved. Each rock will be laid with love and meaning—a collective act of peace, remembrance and restoration. All tools, gloves, water and light snacks will be provided.

All volunteers need to provide are smiles and community spirit. Don't miss this chance to be part of something meaningful and lasting. Together, the community and Hospice of the Chesapeake can restore not only a labyrinth, but a space that will bring peace to many for years to come.

Though it is not required, to help the organization plan, it is requested that people register to participate via this link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0949ADA922A-0FAC0757450332-community>. For details, call 443-679-7436.

Press Release from Hospice of the Chesapeake

Annmarie Garden Voted National Hidden Gem

From the Getty Center's sun-soaked grandeur to the surreal spires of Watts Towers and the minimalist monoliths of Marfa, Texas, America isn't short on artistic landmarks that regularly grace Instagram feeds and coffee table books. But venture a little further off the map, and you'll find a weirder, wilder layer of creativity that rarely makes the travel guides — installations born of passion, obsession, and in some cases, fruit.

Rivers Art, a premium fineart printing provider, surveyed 3,002 art lovers to weigh in on which lesser-known landmarks they most want to experience in person. The result? A kaleidoscope of oddball, awe-inspiring, and deeply local art destinations - each one telling a story of place, purpose, and the strange joy of stumbling upon something unforgettable.

Two of the most coveted "off-the-ra-

dar" artistic landmarks in America is in Maryland: #26. "The Beacon" in East Baltimore and #52. Annmarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center in Solomons.

Annmarie is described as: "This forested sculpture park weaves art into nature with winding trails and a canopy of pine and oak. The works here range from whimsical ceramic totems to modern abstract steel forms and folk installations tucked between trees. One minute you're walking among dragonflies and birdsong, the next you're face to face with a painted concrete goddess or a towering woven nest. The garden invites slow discovery—there's no central plaza or grand entrance, just surprises waiting in the shade. It feels like the forest itself is quietly collaborating with the artists.

Press Release from Rivers Art

SHARKFEST! Coming to Calvert Marine Museum



Live sharks offer guests an up-close encounter with a real shark. Photo courtesy of Perry Hampton.

Celebrate the ultimate apex predator of the marine world at one of the Calvert Marine Museum's most popular events. SHARKFEST returns Saturday, July 12, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., with activities, crafts, and jaw-some fun for the whole family.

Sharks are among the ocean's most fascinating creatures, and SHARKFEST offers guests the chance to learn all about them. View live sharks up close at the outdoor Corbin Nature Pavilion and dive deeper through hands-on activities throughout the museum and grounds.

New this year:

- Piece together a shark fin puzzle
- Feel the difference at the shark skin learning station
- Investigate the weird world of shark parasites

Children can enjoy a variety of themed activities, including free face painting, fossil searching outdoors, and making a shark-themed craft to take home. While the Discovery Room will be closed for the day, guests of all ages will have plenty to explore.

Cool off and grab a bite from Dan D's Catering and Rita's Italian Ice, both on site throughout the event.

Don't miss three presentations in the Harms Gallery:

- "A Shark's Tooth Journey" – Meet the author
- "Meet the Aquarist" – Learn how we care for our marine animals

- "The Meg Talk" – Explore prehistoric sharks with Dr. Victor Perez

In addition, the museum is thrilled to welcome Tanya Griffin Houppermans, an internationally acclaimed, award-winning underwater image maker, shark naturalist, scientific diver, and explorer. Houppermans uses her stunning imagery and deep expertise to advocate for the ocean and its inhabitants through conservation and education.

The Museum Store will be fully stocked with shark-themed toys, books, and souvenirs. Museum members receive 10% off every day. Be sure to play "Guess How Many" for a chance to win a jaw-some prize that will make your day!

Advance tickets online are recommended. Museum members are free. Complimentary passes will not be accepted, and strollers or wagons are not permitted inside the museum during SHARKFEST.

The Calvert Marine Museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$11 for adults; \$9 for seniors, military, and veterans with valid I.D., AAA and AARP members; \$6 for children ages 5 - 12; children under 5 and museum members are admitted free. Proud participant in Museums for ALL. For more information about the museum, upcoming events, or membership, visit the website at www.calvertmarinemuseum.com or call 410-326-2042.

Press Release from CMM



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County Times

Calvert Community Calendar

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

Thu, Jul 10

Mad Science: Summer Fun

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
2–2:45 p.m.

Come join us to watch Mad Science and their “Things That Go Boom” show. We’ll learn the four signs of a chemical reaction through foaming and color changing experiments, balloon inflation, and, of course, some things that go boom! 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Game On! Pictionary Tournament: Teen night

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

Gather your friends for a fierce but friendly Pictionary tournament! Prizes, bragging rights, and pizza! Other board games available if drawing isn’t your thing. This event is run by amazing TACOS teen volunteers! For ages 13-18. Please register. 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Alzheimer’s Caregivers Support

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way and Zoom
6:30–8 p.m.

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

Fri, Jul 11

Pins and Needles

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
1–4 p.m.

Bring your quilting, needlework, knitting, crocheting or other project for an afternoon of conversation and shared creativity. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Sat, Jul 12

Sharkfest!

Calvert Marine Museum
10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Celebrate all things shark at the CMM! Live sharks will be featured in the Corbin Nature Pavilion, along with a full day of jaw-some fun. Get hands-on with shark-themed crafts and explore education stations with activities like shark skin exploration, a shark fin puzzle, and even a shark parasite investigation. Discover amazing “sharktoids” and examine evidence of prehistoric sharks. Food and drinks will be available for purchase on site. Please note: Strollers and carts are not permitted inside the museum during SHARKFEST. Capacity is limited—advance ticket purchase is strongly recommended for non-members.

Jigsaw Puzzle Swap

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
9 a.m.–12 p.m.

Bring your gently used puzzles and exchange them for new-to-you challenges. It’s a fun, eco-friendly way to refresh your collection and connect with fellow puzzle enthusiasts. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Sun, Jul 13

Creature Feature

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

Every second Sunday of the month, the CMM Education team will feature an animal in the museum lobby that is not normally on display. Learn about a new animal and discover the wonderful variety of the creatures found in our local estuaries. Take-home educational coloring pages will be available! Included with museum admission.

Guided Hike: Snacks at the Raft

American Chestnut Land Trust
676 Double Oak Rd, Prince Frederick

9 a.m.

Extra-long hike on the Parkers Creek Loop with a 30-minute stop at the Raft for photos & snacks. To register: form.jotform.com/250214598476161

Mon, Jul 14

JobSource Mobile Career Center

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

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

Tue, Jul 15

Neurodivergent Peer Support Group

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

Join us for an hour of neurodivergent peer support conversation. This group is a wonderful opportunity to connect with peers about the joys and struggles of being a neurodivergent, those exploring their identities on the spectrum, or autistic adult. We welcome everyone 18+ regardless of ability or diagnostic status. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Wed, Jul 16

Teen Book Box Pickup

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
Through July 31

During the summer, we will be checking out free boxes each month to teens who register. Inspired by subscription boxes like Loot Crate, each box will have a theme and contain a library book to borrow, a free book to keep, a fun activity, and a snack. Boxes can be picked up from July 16 to July 31.

The theme for July is “Summer Chills.” 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Book Discussion

Calvert Library Fairview Branch
Rt. 4 and Chaneyville Rd., Owings
& Zoom
2–3:30 p.m.

Please join us to discuss *Beach Read* by Emily Henry. A romance writer who no longer believes in love and a literary writer stuck in a rut engage in a summer-long challenge that may just upend everything they believe about happily-ever-afters. 410-257-2101. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Intro to Laser Etching

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

Come and learn how to design and etch on the Makerspace Laser Etcher. Each participant will be certified to use the laser etcher at the completion of the program and will take home a Bay-inspired design as a keepsake. All registrants must complete the online training for the laser etcher on the library’s webpage before the program. 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Tween Summer Book Fest

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

Plain Jane and the Mermaid by Vera Brosgol. Join other book lovers during this fun summer book club! The first ten (10) registrants get a copy of the book to keep! 410-257-2411. 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

On Pins & Needles

Calvert Library Twin Beaches Branch
4100 5th St., North Beach
1–4 p.m.

Bring your quilting, needlework, knitting, crocheting or other project for an afternoon of conversation and shared creativity. 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>

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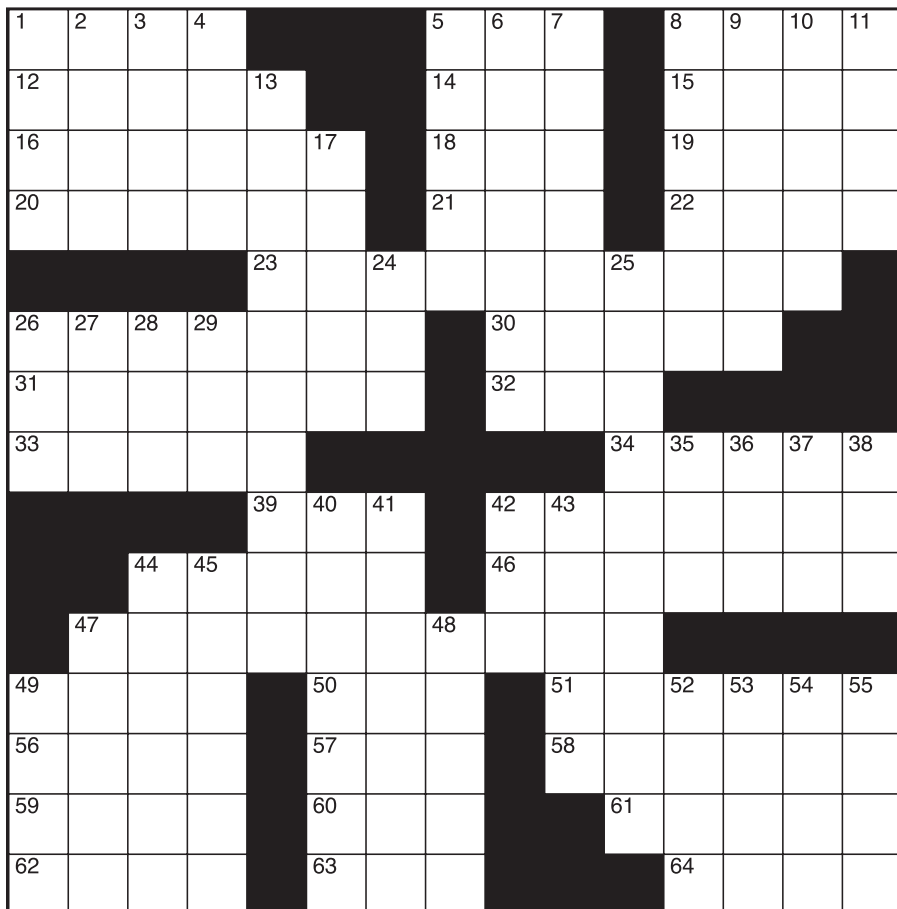
The County Times is a weekly newspaper providing news and information for the residents of St. Mary’s and Calvert County. The County Times will be available on newsstands every Thursday. The paper is published by Southern Maryland Publishing Company, which is responsible for the form, content, and policies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

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



County Times

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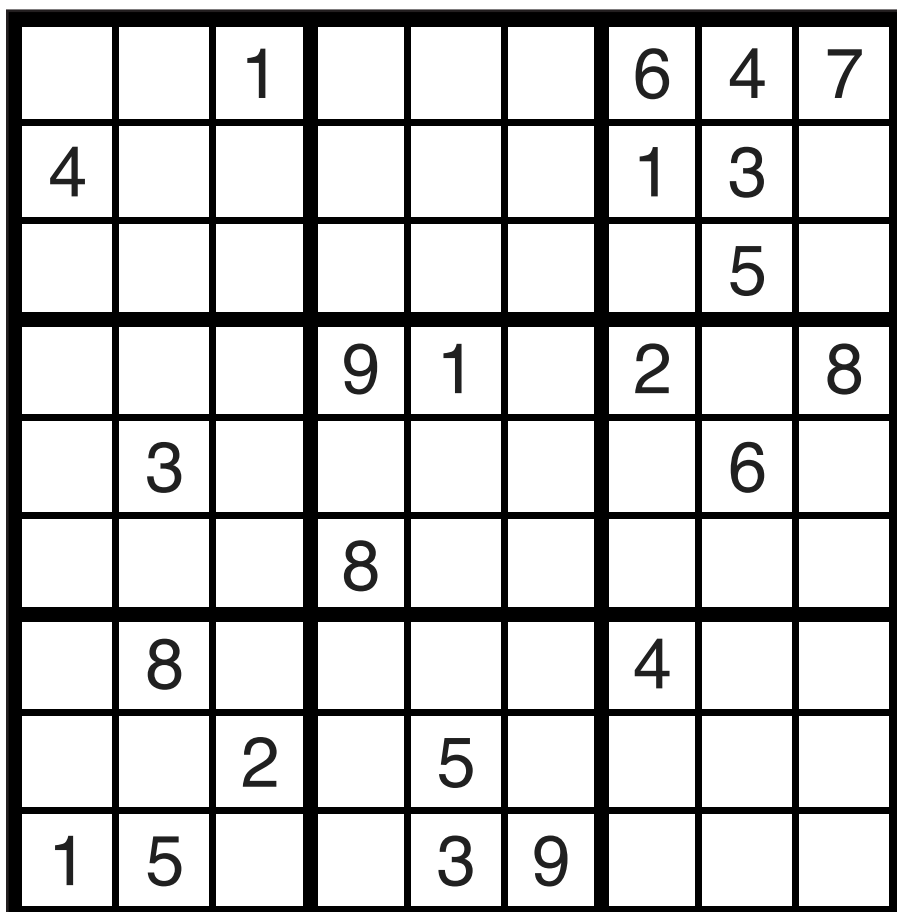


CLUES ACROSS

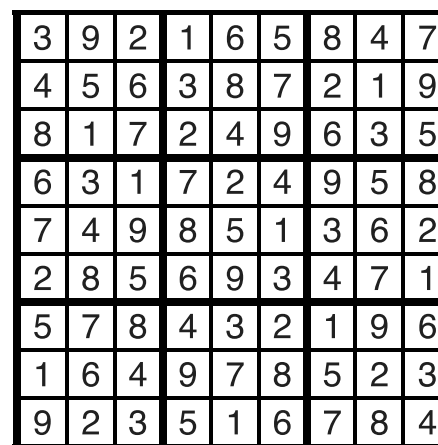
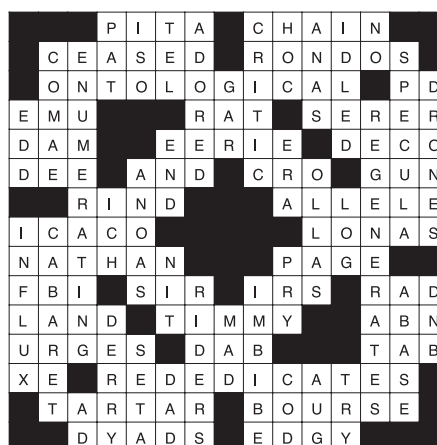
1. 50 percent
5. Records electric currents
8. Charlize Theron flick “___ Flux”
12. More frosty
14. Disfigure
15. Sky color
16. A thoroughfare in a town or city
18. Actress de Armas
19. Spend time in a relaxed way
20. California peak
21. Lodging option
22. Small amount of a thing
23. Expresses sorrow
26. Keeps an ear warm
30. Babies (Spanish)
31. A conceited and self-centered person
32. No seats available
33. Pouches
34. Hip joints
39. A place to bathe
42. Evading
44. Minute, one-celled unit
46. Losing one's hair
47. A country in W Africa
49. One point north of northeast
50. Pointed end of a pen
51. Extreme
56. Norse personification of old age
57. Doctors' group
58. Member of U.S. Navy
59. Mens' fashion accessories
60. A way to allow
61. Gloomy
62. Grads wear one
63. Between south and southeast
64. Jaguarundi cat

CLUES DOWN

1. Snakes do it
2. Hormone
3. The standard monetary unit of Turkey
4. Fixed charges
5. Electronic communication
6. Artilleries
7. "Strangers on a Train" actor Farley
8. Burning
9. Makes ecstatically happy
10. Greek liqueurs
11. Tropical Old World tree
13. Someone who takes vengeance
17. Style of cuisine
24. Select
25. Immunized against disease
26. Old world, new
27. Honorable title (Turkish)
28. Court case: ___ v. Wade
29. Supervises interstate commerce
35. Not divisible by two
36. Twelve
37. Commentator Coulter
38. Encourage
40. Plumbing fixtures
41. Early
42. One point north of due east
43. King of Thebes
44. Short-tailed martens
45. Impose a penalty on
47. Consort of Poseidon
48. A way to lessen
49. Brooklyn hoops team
52. Female of a horse
53. Do as one is told
54. A way to prepare meat
55. Unit of measurement



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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, Jul 11

Judged: Stories of Colonial Justice (and Injustice)

Historic St. Mary's City
5 p.m. & 6:30 p.m.

Ages 18 plus. What does justice look like—and who gets to define it? This adults-only walking tour brings real 17th-century court cases to life, tackling topics like enslavement, interracial relationships, and public scandal. Ends with a dramatic outdoor court hearing. \$20 / \$15 members. Preregistration required: 301-994-4372.

Opening of Disney's *Freaky Friday: The Musical*

Three Notch Theatre
21744 S. Coral Drive, Lexington Park
8 p.m.

The Newtowne Players present Disney's *Freaky Friday: The Musical*. Show times: Thursdays–Saturdays 8 p.m., Sundays 3 p.m., through August 3. Visit NewtownePlayers.org for tickets and more information. Adults \$20; seniors/students/military \$17; children 6-11 \$15; under 5 free (not recommended for young children)

Sat, Jul 12

Sharkfest!

Calvert Marine Museum
10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Celebrate all things shark at the CMM! Live

sharks will be featured in the Corbin Nature Pavilion, along with a full day of jaw-some fun. Get hands-on with shark-themed crafts and explore education stations with activities like shark skin exploration, a shark fin puzzle, and even a shark parasite investigation. Discover amazing “sharktoids” and examine evidence of prehistoric sharks. Food and drinks will be available for purchase on site. Please note: Strollers and carts are not permitted inside the museum during SHARKFEST. Capacity is limited—advance ticket purchase is strongly recommended for non-members.

Pork Loin and Beef Sandwich Sale

American Legion Post 221
21690 Colton Point Rd, Avenue
11 a.m.–5 p.m.

Pork loin, sliced roast beef, and BBQ beef sandwiches \$8 each. For more information e-mail us at alpost221@aol.com or call 301-481-6625.

SMTMD Contra Dance

Christ Episcopal Church Parish Hall
37497 Zach Fowler Rd, Chaptico
7–9:30 p.m.

The evening starts at 7 pm with a half hour beginner's dance workshop followed by live music performed by the SOMD Open Band and dancing from 7:30 to 9:30 pm. Check the website calendar for the lineup of dances and callers. Admission: \$8 for members; \$12 for non-SMTMD members; children 17 and under (when accompanied by a paying adult) and band members are

free. www.smtmd.org/new-events/

Sun, Jul 13

Carry Out Chicken Dinner

K.C. Hall
Ridge
11:30 a.m. until sold out

\$15 Dinner, 1/2 chicken, potatoes, veggie, cole slaw, roll. Self serve dining facilities available. Baked goods available for sale.

All-You-Can-Eat Breakfast

2nd District VFD&RS Social Hall
45245 Drayden Rd., Valley Lee
8-11 a.m.

Menu: scrambled eggs, home fried potatoes, pancakes, french toast, sausage links, ham, bacon, creamed chipped beef, sausage gravy, spiced applesauce, grits & biscuits. Assorted juices, milk and coffee will be available.

Adults \$14; children 6–12 \$7; children 5 & under are free. Proceeds from this fundraiser go to the 2nd District Volunteer Fire Department & Rescue Squad to continue keeping our community safe. Sponsored (and prepared) by the Auxiliary.

Mon, Jul 14

Red Cross Blood Drive

2nd District VFD & RS, Company 6,
5245 Drayden Rd., Valley Lee
1:30–6 p.m.

For more information, or to schedule your life saving donation, call 1-800-RED-CROSS or visit www.redcrossblood.org/ to download the blood donor app.

Ongoing

Hollywood Volunteer Fire Department Annual Carnival

Hollywood Volunteer Fire Department
24801 Three Notch Rd., Hollywood
July 10–13 and July 17–20
7–10 p.m.

Games, rides and many food options to choose from. Take a chance to win a Blackstone Griddle with accessories OR take a chance to win the Treasure Chest with prizes totaling \$6,000! We'll also be giving away six FREE bicycles each night to children age 12 and under.

Come on out and enjoy a fun night with family and friends!!

Teacher Appreciation Week

Historic St. Mary's City
July 15–19
10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Educators and one guest enjoy free admission to all sites with valid school ID. Thank you for your work in and out of the classroom!

ST. MARY'S COUNTY Library

UPCOMING EVENTS



Herbs in Disguise

You see them everywhere, but is a weed just a weed? In this virtual seminar, learn about the variety, beauty, origins and uses of common herbs that may surprise you. Virtual event, Tuesday, July 15, 5:30 – 7 p.m. Register on www.stmalib.org.

Growing the Flavor: Spices on the Move Series

Delve into the rich, flavorful world of herbs and spices! Visit the World on the Move page on www.stmalib.org to learn more about the World on the Move exhibit and additional Library programming. In this second installment of the Spices on the Move Series,

learn how to grow fragrant herbs and flavorful spices in your own home garden. Master Gardeners Linda Crandle and Sheila Milburn will teach you the steps to creating a successful, productive culinary herb garden - from starting seeds all the way through harvesting. Leave with the motivation, the know-how, and your own starter plant to kickstart a garden full of flavor at home! Your tastebuds will thank you! Lexington Park Library, Wednesday, July 16 from 6 – 7:30 p.m. Register on www.stmalib.org.

Art and Legacy: Black History Through Creative Expression

Explore the rich and diverse world of Black art in this hands-on workshop.

Charlotte Hall Library, Saturday, July 19 from 3 – 4 p.m. Discover the styles of iconic and contemporary Black artists, and let their work ignite your creativity. Create your own unique masterpieces inspired by these influential creators. All skill levels are welcome! Register on www.stmalib.org.

Beatbox Remix: Christylez Bacon & Qi Yu

Progressive hip-hop artist/composer Christylez Bacon is joined by guzheng (Chinese zither) artist Qi Yu for an innovative performance exploring cross-cultural collaboration through music. Elements of hip-hop, like human beatbox, rhyming, and storytelling, blend with elements

of traditional and modern Chinese music to create a unique experience spotlighting teamwork and creativity. Together, these two musicians blend genres and styles to bring a wholly original performance that pushes the envelope for musical collaboration. Most seating will be on the floor- feel free to bring a blanket! Space may be limited and will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

Lexington Park Library, Monday, July 21, 10:30 a.m.
Mechanicsville Elementary School Gym (28585 Three Notch Road, Mechanicsville) Monday, July 21, 2 p.m.

In Remembrance

Continued from page 19

11 great grandchildren, with an additional one due in October. He was the only living sibling in his family and is predeceased by his two brothers: Arthur (killed in WW2) and Lenwood (Tiny)(Lucy), and six sisters: Mary Burroughs (Mac), Bernadine Knott (Edward), Virginia Knott (Richard), Roberta Guy (Billy), Muriel Bowling (Eddie), and Carolyn Connelly (Tommy).

He attended Charlotte Hall Military Academy in Charlotte Hall, MD. He volunteered in the Merchant Marines from 1946 to 1948 where he graduated from U.S. Maritime School in St. Petersburg, FL, and served aboard U.S. Army transport (USS America) to Europe. He worked as a civilian at the Post Office at Patuxent River, MD for two years and then was drafted in the U.S. Army from 1950 to 1952 where he was stationed in Germany and received the Occupational Medal. He was in the Army Reserve until 1956. He was a student at Stayers Business College in Washington, DC in 1953. He was a Service Clerk for Westinghouse Electric Elevator Division in Washinton, DC from 1953 to 1956. He also was a painter on his days off. He became a Firefighter at the NAS, Patuxent River, MD, from 1956 to 1966, and was promoted to Supervisory Fire Fighter at AIR OPS at Patuxent River, MD in 1966 and retired in

1979. After his retirement from civil service, he worked on base in the Transportation Department driving a bus.

Archie loved having company at his house. He had a love for vehicles: a car that he won from WMJS Radio station and his Beardmore Taxi. He enjoyed oyster scalds, cookouts, playing cards, family gatherings, family trips, and watching the history channel. He was a charter member of the Mechanicsville Volunteer Rescue Squad, and a member of Mechanicsville Volunteer Fire Department and Hollywood Volunteer Fire Department. He is a lifetime member of the VFW Post 2632 and participated as a color guard for many years. He is a member of the Veterans of Helen, lifetime member of the American Legion, and Knights of Columbus.

The family will receive friends on Monday, July 14, 2025, from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM, with prayers recited at 7:00 PM in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, MD. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Morganza, MD on Tuesday, July 15 at 10:00AM, with Father Drew Royals officiating. Interment will follow at St. Joseph's Cemetery.

Serving as pallbearers will be Dale Pilkerton, Jr., Timmy Pilkerton, Randy Pilkerton, Kevin Pilkerton, Eddie Finch, Jr., Steven Kiley, and Ivan Wenger.

Honorary pallbearers will be Rachel Pilkerton, Kelly Kiley and his daily caregivers, all of whom have truly become family.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to The Veterans of Helen or St. Joseph's Catholic Church.

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.

Kathleen Norris, 79



Kathleen "Kathy" Marie Rush Norris, 79, of Hollywood, MD, passed away peacefully on July 4, 2025, in Leonardtown.

Born on June 29, 1946, in Madison, SD, she was the daughter of William Gordon Rush and Mildred Evelyn Peterson Rush. She married Raymond Norris at St. Thomas Catholic Church in Madison, SD on June 15, 1968, and they recently celebrated 57 years of marriage. She was the mother of Teresa Jones (Steve) of Hollywood, MD, Jennifer Viverette (Chris) of Lewes, DE, and Erin Eastburn (Doug) of Mechanicsville, MD. Kathleen was the sister of Betty Bauman (Ken), JoAnne Rounds (Craig), Bill Rush, and Patty Reistroffer. She is survived by eight grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. Kathleen was preceded in death by her parents and brother, Tom.

Kathleen graduated from Madison High School in 1964. She attended Mount Marty College and Black Hills State College. Kathleen moved to Hollywood, MD in 1968 and has been a resident of St. Mary's County for 57 years. She began her teaching career at St. Mary's Academy in 1977. She started at St. Mary's Ryken High School in 1981 and retired in 2001. Kathleen enjoyed spending time with her family and friends. She expressed her love by crocheting blankets and making her famous peanut brittle. Kathleen was kindhearted and always put others before herself. She was loved by many and will be greatly missed.

The family will receive family and friends on Tuesday, July 15, 2025, from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM, with prayers recited at 7:00 PM, in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, MD. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Wednesday, July 16, 2025, at 10:00 AM, in St. John's Catholic Church, Hollywood, MD, with Fr. Raymond Schmidt officiating.

Serving as pallbearers will be her grandchildren: Matthew Eastburn, Lyndsey Jones, Taylor Staley, Blake Jones, Rachel Eastburn, Abby Norris, Carly Eastburn, and Ava Viverette. Honorary pallbearers are her Best Friends: Sue Abell, Marcia Bald, Gigi Norris, Mary Ann Rymer, Joan Thompson, and Evelyn Wood.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Children's National Medical Center, Washington D.C., Hollywood Volunteer Fire Department, or The Tunnel to Towers

Foundation, Staten Island, NY.

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.

John Johnson



On 22 June, 2025, Horace L. "John" Johnson went home to be with the Lord. John was surrounded in death, as he was in life, by his loving family and dear friends. John and

his wife Betty of 71 years had lived in St. Mary's County 3 different times over the years with the first in the mid '50's when stationed here with the Navy. After assignments in Jacksonville FL and Brunswick ME, the family returned to Southern MD in 1965 where they homesteaded while John took assignments overseas and in Norfolk VA. Retiring in 1971, ADJC Johnson tried a few different vocations before returning to aviation maintenance as a Civil Servant, first as a mechanic and finally as a Quality Assurance Inspector at Force Warfare. In 1973, John and Betty lost their oldest son Bert in a car accident but in that grief, John found the Lord Jesus and his life's mission became grounded in scripture and specifically the command, "go and spread the Gospel!" In 1988, John and Betty retired and moved to Live Oak FL where they enjoyed an active life at Southside Baptist Church where they flourished as retirees that were full time Church Volunteers for 17 years. Due to health issues, John and Betty moved to the Southwest to live near their oldest son and his wife. They lived in Phoenix for 7 years but when the dry heat became too much to bear, the couple relocated back to Southern Maryland where they once again enjoyed an active church life at SAYSF Bible Church where John's Christian walk began.

John was preceded in death by his father, Bert I. Johnson and his mother Eulala Johnson as well as his oldest son Bert Douglas Johnson. John is survived by his loving wife, Betty, his sons Bruce Johnson (wife Tina), Oliver Johnson and Ben Johnson (wife Sharon) and daughter Beth Malcom (husband David). John is also survived by his grandchildren Michael Placencio (wife Susan), Andria Campbell-Harris (husband Bobby), Paul Malcom, Luke Malcom, Nick Shepherd, Sam Johnson, Calvin Malcom, Matt Donovan and Jacob Johnson. John is also survived by multiple great grandchildren as well as great great grandchildren.

While the family mourns the loss of such a wonderful patriarch, they are also glad that John is no longer suffering as he has no doubt heard "well done my good and faithful servant," from his Lord and Savior. A celebration of life will be held at SAYSF Bible Church on Wednesday 2 July at 6:00 PM. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to Hospice of Southern Maryland or SASYF Bible Church.

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In Remembrance

To schedule an obituary in the County Times, submit text and picture to aldailey@countytimes.net by noon on Tuesdays for publication on Thursdays. Any submissions received after this deadline may run in the following week's edition.

Mark Porter, 60



Mark Allen Porter, 60, of Hollywood, MD, passed away in the line of duty on July 1, 2025.

Born on March 12, 1965, in Frostburg, MD, to the late Theodore "Buck" Porter and Anna Betty (Rankin) Porter, he was the youngest of three, and was preceded in death by his sister, Rhonda Lee Porter. Mark was educated at Allegany Community College as well as Frostburg State University where he earned his bachelor's degree.

Mark married the late Carol (Ballew) Porter in 1996 and is survived by his stepchildren, Daniel and Darren Ballew, both of St. Mary's County, MD. Mark and Carol were devoted to each other for 29 years, sharing their love of law enforcement and chasing sunsets.

Mark was dedicated to protecting his community as well as his family. In his spare time, he enjoyed collecting Batman memorabilia, Invicta watches and police ornaments for one of his many Christmas trees. He had a love for WWE wrestling which provided him opportunities to transport many wrestlers to and from their events, which he greatly enjoyed. Unbeknownst to most, he was a fantastic artist, specializing in his favorite superheroes, musicians, and sports players — the Joker, Prince, and Dale Earnhardt, to name a few. Mark had recently discussed his plans for possible retirement (again) so he could venture to the many states he desired to visit.

Mark was quick-witted and was a proficient storyteller. If you had a listening ear, he would be sure to tell you as many stories as he could, sometimes in more ways than one. Most stories stemmed from his police career that began in St. Mary's County in 1987. He trained, mentored, and worked alongside hundreds of dedicated officers throughout his career. He was extremely proud of his blue family that he served until his death. Mark will receive the accolade of being placed on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Mark is survived by his sister, Donna "Dee" (Porter) Allison (Dave), of Lusby MD and his nieces Ronda Paul (Chris) of Lusby, MD and Dawn Robertson (Jacob) of Hollywood, MD. Mark had a special love for his great nieces and nephews, Khloe, Dean, Kamryn, Dale and Jacob II, as well as his grandson, Owen. For the past year of his life, Mark's friend, Heather, brought him happiness.

Mark will be missed tremendously by his family, friends, and his brothers and sisters in blue. His impact on St. Mary's County will be everlasting.

The family will receive friends on Tuesday, July 8, 2025, from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM, with prayers recited at 7:00 PM, in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, MD, where a funeral service will be held on Wednesday, July 9, 2025, at 10:00 AM in the funeral home chapel with Pastor Gwen Banks and Pastor Larry Crabtree officiating. Interment will follow at Charles Memorial Gardens, Leonardtown, MD.

End of watch, #44, you have been an amazing legacy to all.

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.

Bob Poe, 83



Barber Sinclair Webster Poe, "Bob", 83, of Drayden, MD, formerly of St. George's Island in Piney Point, MD, passed away on July 5, 2025, on the Poe Family Farm. Born on November 7, 1941, in Washington, D.C., he was the son of the late Agnes Madeleine Poe and the late Martin Webster Poe. Bob was the loving husband of the late Catherine Anne Poe, whom he married on July 14, 1962, in St. George's Catholic Church, and who preceded him in death on October 11, 2022. He is survived by his children, Michael and Julie Poe, of St. George's Island in Piney Point, MD, Gina and Brian Katafiaz of Drayden, MD, and Dale Rizzolo

of Leonardtown, MD. Bob is also survived by his siblings, Jerry Poe of Wilmington, NC, and Agnes and Clem Johnson of Hollywood, MD. In addition, Bob is survived by his grandchildren, Dillon Poe and Brandon Poe, both of Gates, NC, Tayler Denney of California, MD, Kai Denney of Drayden, MD, and Dana Katafiaz, as well as his granddaughter, Emma Katafiaz.

Bob was a lifelong St. Mary's County, MD resident. He graduated from St. Michael's in 1959. He went on to earn his Bachelor of Science and Mechanical Engineering from the University of Maryland. Bob was a Machinist and Mechanical Engineer for the Federal Government for 38 years, retiring in 1992. Bob was an avid waterman and enjoyed working the family farm. He thoroughly enjoyed being around family and friends.

The family will receive friends on Monday, July 14, 2025, from 9:30 AM to 10:30 AM, in Holy Face Catholic Church, Great Mills, MD, where a Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10:30 AM with Father Scott Holmer officiating. Interment will follow at St. George's Catholic Church Cemetery, Valley Lee, MD. A reception will follow.

Serving as pallbearers will be Brian Katafiaz, Dillon Poe, Brandon Poe, and Dale Rizzolo.

Contributions may be made to St. Joseph's Indian School, P.O. Box 326, Chamberlain, SD 57326 and/or Cross Catholic Outreach,

P.O. Box 273908, Boca Raton, FL 33427. 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.

Archie Pilkerton, 96



William Archie Pilkerton, Jr., 96, of Mechanicsville, MD, passed away on June 28, 2025, at Calvert Memorial Hospital in Prince Frederick, MD.

Archie was born on December 21, 1928, and was the son of the late William Archie Pilkerton, Sr. and Helen Mae Wood Pilkerton.

Archie is predeceased by wife, Mary Phyllis Pilkerton, whom he married at St. Joseph's Church in Morganza, MD, on September 26, 1953. They celebrated over 70 years of marriage prior to her passing on February 16, 2024. He is also predeceased by his son, Richard Steven Pilkerton. Archie is survived by his son, Dale Pilkerton, Sr. of Hollywood, MD, his daughter, Denise Finch (Eddie) of Mechanicsville, MD, and daughter-in-law Debbie Pilkerton. He is also survived by six grandchildren and

Continued on page 20

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If you're planning to retire within the next few years — or you've recently retired — market volatility may feel especially unsettling. After years of saving and planning, you're now entering a stage where your portfolio may shift from growth to providing income. The five-year window before and after your retirement date is especially critical — when market downturns can have an outsized impact on your long-term financial security.

While you can't control the markets, there are meaningful steps you can take to "stress-test" your retirement income, so it is not consumed entirely by market drops before you stop working.

- *Explore your short- and medium-term income needs.* One of the most important steps to take is to understand how much of your portfolio you'll need to rely on for income. It depends on your other income sources such as Social Security, IRAs, 401ks, pensions and wages if you work in retirement. You'll want to avoid taking too much from your portfolio in response to a decline because that could increase the likelihood that your money may not last through retirement. A financial advisor can help you determine your threshold for monthly withdrawals, based on your income needs, long-term outlook, inflation and risk tolerance.
- *Review your emergency fund.* Are you able to set aside at least three to six months' worth of essential expenses in cash or very low-risk investments? That could allow you to avoid digging too deeply into your portfolio or selling stocks or other volatile assets at a loss if the market drops. The income bridge from an emergency fund gives your longer-term investments time to recover and can reduce stress during down markets. You may even find you want more than six months in this fund to help weather emergencies, depending on your risk and your comfort level.
- *Review your mix.* As you approach or begin retirement, does your portfolio reflect your need for stability and income? You may need to reduce exposure to riskier assets such as stocks and increase holdings in more stable ones, like bonds or cash equivalents. Your ideal allocation depends on your risk tolerance, spending needs and other income sources. The goal is to shield your savings from major losses just as you begin drawing from them.
- *Consider market swings.* If the value of your portfolio dropped 20% tomorrow and stayed there for a period of time, would you need to change your lifestyle or spending immediately? Would you need to go back to work? If your answer is yes, revisit your asset allocation or spending plan. A more conservative approach may offer less upside but can provide greater confidence during the early years of retirement.
- *Assess your spending.* Even small budget adjustments can make a big difference, especially early in retirement. Do you need to consider postponing a major purchase or trimming discretionary spending? If you're still working, directing extra income into savings can help build a cushion. If you're already retired, keeping withdrawals as low as possible during market downturns can help support long-term sustainability.
- *Stay grounded — and get support.* Market swings are inevitable, but emotional reactions and risky investing can lead to costly mistakes. Don't abandon your investment strategy. Instead, focus on what you can control: your asset mix, spending and flexibility. A financial advisor can help you stress-test your retirement plan, evaluate your options and stay focused on your long-term goals — even when the markets are anything but steady.

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

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

A View From The BLEACHERS



Maybe Something Great

By Ronald N. Guy
Contributing Writer

Pondering Washington Wizards draft history is an act of self-loathing. What would provoke such an exercise? Excessive joy? Unrestrained optimism. A day simply too beautiful to tolerate? Some other idyllic moment so perfect that it demands a defacing smear of frustration, anger and sadness in a twisted grasp for psychological balance? Perhaps, but this situation lacks even those disturbing justifications. I do not stand at the edge of this endeavor, at the precipice of NBA darkness and prepared to descend into the bowels of Wizards drafts, seeking some evil counterbalance to a life going unnervingly well; rather, I am volunteering for this, risking the lancing of old, lived scars, all for the sake of a story.

A roll call of former Bullets/Wizards first round picks is a who's who of maybes and could-have-beens: John Williams, Harvey Grant, Tom Hammonds, Tom Gugliotta, Calbert Cheney, Jared Jeffries, Nick Young, Jan Vesely, Devin Harris, Troy Brown and Johnny Davis. Ugh. There's another list entirely of picks the team got right, but the players went on to have better success with other teams. Naming names: Rasheed Wallace, Richard Hamilton and Rick Mahorn. Let's get darker: the Wizards' first overall picks. Kwame Brown, short of a total bust, was a total disappointment; John Wall's career was derailed by injury after teasing sustained excellence. Had enough yet? No? Let's visit another Wizards draft sub-genre: The near-misses. In 1985, the Bullets drafted Kenny Green with the twelfth overall pick. Utah took some guy named Karl Malone at 13. In 1996, the Bullets traded the twelfth pick to the Cavaliers for veteran guard Mark Price. When Cleveland was on the clock, Kobe Bryant was on the board. He was taken 13th by the Hornets (later dealt to the Lakers). In 2009, the Wizards traded the fifth overall pick to Minnesota for Mike Miller and Randy Foye. Who would have been available to Washington had it retained that pick? Stephen Curry.

I bring up this sordid history, risking my wellness, because my kid, bless his heart, is so excited about the Wizards' youth movement and their last few draft classes. He sees only one outcome: The steady development of this young core and a team competing for a title in a few seasons. I, on the other hand, beaten down fan of this moribund franchise, see nothing but more false hope and wasted time following this second (or third or fourth) class NBA team. Trying to be a responsible adult here and not douse his youthful flame with middle age cynicism. So far, so good...but I'm weakening.

It's late one night and I'm watching a scroll of old NFL teams, players and personalities who emerged from obscurity to win Super Bowls. There was the coach in San Francisco with a slick new offense who quickly turned a losing team into champs (Bill Walsh). Another coach on the other coast lost his first five games and nearly got fired. He settled in, embraced a cast of veteran misfits and unheralded youth, and won the Lombardi Trophy in his second season (Joe Gibbs). A psychologically broken former number one overall pick cast off by his original team got a second chance at quarterback with a notorious franchise that seemed adrift. An injury gets him (Jim Plunkett) into the lineup and the rest (i.e. two Super Bowl titles) is history.

The trip down NFL memory lane caused reconsideration of my jaded attitude toward the Wizards. Wizards history validates my confidence that this current roster, half of whom can't legally drink, won't amount to anything of consequence. There is no logical reason for me to be hopeful — this is what I tell myself. My kid's faith, though, makes me wonder if there's actually no basis for my skepticism, as these players and this group have nothing to do any other in franchise history (other than the team affiliation); their destiny is their own to seek. Setting my burdens aside, this truth holds in life and in sports (as those aforementioned examples prove): It's a dynamic world of opportunities where anything is possible, maybe something great...even when you least expect it.

Send comments to RonaldGuyJr@gmail.com



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Enjoy live performances by **Casual Groove, Rebecca Jade, Andréa Lisa, and Chelsey Green**, as well as a variety of seafood vendors and activities.

Tickets: \$75 online until Friday at 8 p.m./ \$90 at the door



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Jazz Cruises with Captain Phil & Sax Appeal

Departs from St. Clement's Island Museum dock

Music on board by Sax Appeal Duet.

10 a.m. – 12 p.m. **Early Bird Cruise** featuring pastries and mimosas

SOLD OUT! 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. **Seafood Cruise** featuring seafood or chicken and wine

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The Potomac Jazz and Seafood Festival is a fundraiser for the Friends of the St. Clements and Piney Point Museums: proceeds support local museums.



CSM Grant to Help GED, ESL Students



The College of Southern Maryland (CSM) is a subrecipient of the first round of funding from Maryland's new Road to Careers initiative. In partnership with the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, CSM will lead a new Integrated Education and Training (IET) program for GED and English as a Second Language (ESL) students that combines foundational learning with job-specific training. The program is designed to help students quickly transition into the workforce with recognized credentials and real-world skills.

The \$24 million, six-year program, announced by Governor Wes Moore, aims to prepare 1,200 Marylanders for skilled jobs in transportation and construction while reducing barriers to employment and expanding access to opportunity.

"This initiative meets students where they are," said Ellen Flowers-Fields, Vice President of Continuing Education and Workforce Development at CSM. "We're helping learners move forward academically and professionally, all while building a strong pipeline of local talent for in-demand trades."

The CSM-led effort will serve up to 14 students in its first cycle. Over the course of 115 instructional hours, participants will build foundational math and language skills alongside technical training in construction trades core skills. Upon com-

pletion of the following courses students will earn the pre-apprenticeship workforce training certificate: OSHA 10-Hour Construction, American Traffic Safety Services Association Flagger, National Safety Council First Aid, CPR, AED, and Construction Trades Core Skills.

Students will also receive tutoring, books, and basic tools from CSM, and wraparound services such as transportation assistance, case management, and job placement support from the Tri-County Council.

"This is about changing lives and opening doors," said Ruthy Davis, Workforce Director at the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland. "Our adult learners are gaining confidence, skills, and a clear path into meaningful work that sustains families and builds communities. This initiative expands access to pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship opportunities, meets critical industry demand, and creates career pathways for Southern Marylanders who have historically faced systemic barriers to employment — including low-income individuals, justice-involved individuals, and English language learners."

To learn more about the Road to Careers initiative, visit labor.maryland.gov/employment/roadtocareers.shtml.

Press Release from College of Southern Maryland



Letters to the Editor

Distracted Driving

Distracted driving is on such a climb, I predict it will end up killing more people than drugged and drunk driving combined.

Years ago when I was a member of the State Regional Highway Safety Committee we were very aware of the problem with distracted driving. However, since then it has skyrocketed way past what we thought it would become. For example, there isn't one day that doesn't go by without seeing two, three or more people go across the center lane or on to the shoulder. Years ago to today, the big push still remains to get people not to drink and drive. There is an assortment of funded programs against drunk driving. However, you hear very little about any significant push against distracted driving.

In a recent study, seven out of 10 distracted driving cases are caused by people on their cell phone. I usually hear police or the media call it as "for an unknown reason a person went off of the travel portion of the road." They hit a tree, or building or a parked car. Whatever happened to be in the path of the car. When people hear the various different tones or rings that they have set for their cell phone, they can't resist to look, even though they are going 50 to 60 miles per hour down the road. For some reason, they assume nothing will happen to them. They figure if they look just a second, it will be fine. Or, accidents from their cell phone use while driving could never happen to them. It is always someone else. It couldn't be them.

How could they possibly go off the road or run head on in to another car, killing themselves and other people in a car?

Although the vast majority of cases of distracted driving are from cell phones, other known cases have been from a woman putting lipstick on while looking in her rearview mirror at 55 mph. Another case is a person taking his eyes off the road while reaching for a potato chip with cars stopping in the road directly in front of him. And another was looking at a computer screen while driving down Route 5. The first two of these resulted in accidents. The computer screen example did not.

The bottom line is people are addicted to their cell phones like crack cocaine. On June 30th I watched from a distance when a lady received a text on her cell phone as she was walking across a road that had cars going back and forth. I watched her stop in the middle of the road to look at her text. If that isn't addiction, I don't know what is.

There have been various psychological studies linking cell phone use to a wide range of health issues. But like a drug, people continue to turn to their cell phone addiction even though it can contribute to various health issues. The bottom line is when you pick up a cell phone you think you control it. But in reality, it really controls you!

*Roy Fedders
Dameron, MD*

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MEET NIMBUS

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MEET MARSHMALLOW

Marshmallow the 2-year-old Great Pyrenees is a sweet boy looking for someone who just wants to cuddle all day long. He loves a good walk and maybe a 20 minute zoomie session in the yard. He gives the best hugs and really loves to show off all of his tricks. Does great with kids and most dogs, not phased by cats and fairly low energy. If you're interested in learning more please check out our website www.animalrelieffund.org or contact 301-866-0303 to set up a meet and greet with Marshmallow.



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Summerstock Musical Coming to Chopticon High School



St. Mary's County Government's Department of Recreation & Parks (R&P) is thrilled to present *TARZAN®: The Stage Musical* this summer for the 43rd production of Summerstock. Performances will be held at Chopticon High School on July 18–20 and July 25–27, with a total of eight shows.

TARZAN®: The Stage Musical, based on Disney's 1999 animated film of the same name, is an unforgettable theatrical experience featuring high-flying excitement and heart-pumping hits. Fans of the animated film will enjoy recognizable songs from the animated film like the unforgettable "You'll Be in My Heart," along with nine new tunes.

This year's venue change to Chopticon High School ensures that the production has access to the best facilities to bring the jungle to life while Great Mills High School undergoes maintenance.

Ticket can be purchased online beginning July 1, 2025, and will also be sold at Chopticon High School the day of the

show, starting one hour before showtime. Don't hesitate as some shows may sell out in advance. Purchase your tickets online at www.stmaryscountymd.gov/summerstock.

Show times:

- Friday, July 18 & July 25 at 7:00pm
- Saturday, July 19 & July 26 at 1:00pm and 7:00pm
- Sunday, July 20 & July 27 at 3:00pm

Tickets are \$15 for ages 11+ and \$9 for children aged 10 and under. Both cash and credit will be accepted. All ticket sales are final and are non-refundable and non-transferable. For assistance with ticket sales, please contact R&P at (301) 475-4200 ext. 1800 or webtrac@stmaryscountymd.gov.

For general show inquiries or to learn how you can become a sponsor and show supporter, please contact our Summerstock Producer via email to Chris.Lengle@stmaryscountymd.gov.

Press release from St. Mary's County

County Hosts 'Junior Historian' Program

Designed for children aged 7 to 10, the Junior Historian Program at Piney Point Lighthouse Museum will offer an exciting blend of outdoor exploration and hands-on history lessons for three hours per day from July 28–31.

Our young adventurers will discover the past in a whole new way as they explore local history and nature. This program is a fantastic combination of learning, history, and outdoor activities.

Activities will include, but are not limited to, a hands-on archaeological dig, creating a river model, fishing, and crafting a bird or bat box. Upon completion of the program, each participant will receive a "Junior Historian" badge to commemorate their achievements.

"Because Piney Point has so many interesting things for kids to explore, we thought it would be great to continue to offer this fun, yet educational, multiday Junior Historian program for children during sum-

mer break," says Karen Stone, Manager of the St. Mary's County Museum Division. "With such a broad range of topics, they're sure to find lots of fun things to do while enjoying the outdoors at the lighthouse."

Parents are encouraged to book their child's spot soon, as each program is limited to 10 participants to give each child the best hands-on experience possible. Please visit: JuniorHistorianSummer2025.eventbrite.com to book; the cost is \$75 per child for the entire 4-day program.

For more information about the program, other educational activities at the museums, please email Olivia Flack with the Museum Division at Olivia.Flack@stmaryscountymd.gov.

For more information on Piney Point Lighthouse Museum, call (301) 994-1471 or visit www.Facebook.com/1836Light.

Press Release from St. Mary's County Museum Division

County Resident Pens His First Book

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

St. Mary's County resident Allen Troise, at the age of 77, has just published his first book and is in the process of writing two more. Retiree Troise moved from Long Island to St. Mary's County several years ago to be near his daughter. He lives in Wildewood.

At 12:05 AM is an idea that has been simmering inside Troise for a long time. It was prompted by the execution of Karla Faye Tucker in Texas in 1983, the first woman to be executed in that state since the Civil War. "She was a very, very innocent woman in my eyes," Troise said.

"Ten or 12 years ago, I just said, let me write something about her. And from there, this is what we have with this book," he said.

It's a book with a surprise ending, and Troise finally started writing the book several years ago with that ending as an end game. "I knew where I wanted to go with this from the very beginning, which helped me through the entire process," he said.

He has always been interested in writing even though his career path took him in another direction. He was constantly writing op-ed pieces to newspapers and occasionally getting published. He also authored two screenplays, which received awards but were never published. His new book was the subject of one of the screenplays.

"You're supposed to write the book first and then do a screenplay after that. But little did I know back then, I did a screenplay and then decided, now it's time to write the book." One of the other books he's now writing is based on the other screenplay.

His interest in doing the screenplays came from a personal interest in films, particularly older period pieces and a fascination for their historical detail.

After finally deciding to tackle writing the book that had been festering inside him, he spent much time at the library reading up on how to write a book. He also took an online course.

It also involved research on the crimi-

nal justice system, because one of his main characters, Mario, is a correctional officer who ends up being a warden at a prison.

"I had to learn more about the overall justice system, especially in Texas, which I learned quite a bit about," he explained.

While working for a builder he helped design an extension to a minimum-security facility on Long Island. In order to do the project, he said, "We needed to see what it was like in a prison and how things were operational, how everything was locked up. And you got a great idea of how things were put together."

His main characters in the book are Mario, the correctional officer, his wife Connie, and their daughter Ashley, later known as Ashley. It begins in a small town in New Mexico.

"I always had in mind of starting off with a family in the southern part of the United States. I always had that in mind. And I thought, how then do I get these two characters, which is Connie and Mario, in to develop my plot?"

Early on the book, which is relatively short, Mario and Connie separate over what was a misunderstanding on her part that he was having an affair and a misunderstanding on his part that she didn't want to leave New Mexico to go with him to a better job. Their daughter was left behind not knowing her father.

"As I was writing this, I knew that I had to separate those two in order to make this work toward the ending. Again, always toward the ending."

He has had experience with book clubs, so he has written his book with them in mind. At the end of the book, Troise poses a series of questions that can be discussed by a club reading his book.

Troise grew up in the Bronx, New York, joined the Army out of school, got married when he got out and they moved to Long Island.

He was in the Army Band in the service. "When I got out, I thought I was going to make a fortune playing music with different bands. That didn't pan out. So I went into a

field that I knew all about, which was printing newspapers. That's what I did for a number of years and finally got into construction and spent 30 years doing that, building high rises in Manhattan."

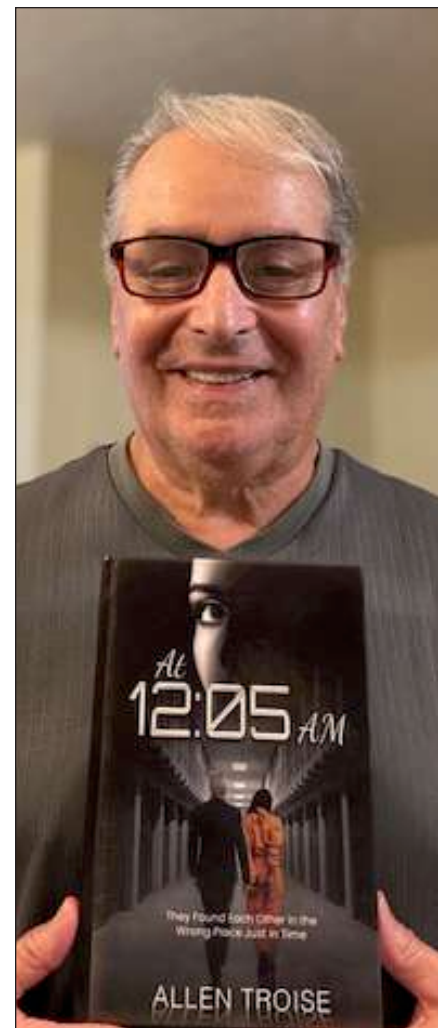
His wife died from lung cancer several years ago and then his son passed away. "I had these two tragedies, and with that, I was looking around in this large house that I lived in with my family, my wife and my son, and my daughter got married. So I came down here to Maryland."

And in the process he wrote the book which he began on Long Island and finished earlier this year. He researched and then hired a publisher, and they got it on Amazon, where either a hard or soft copy of his book, or a Kindle version, can be purchased today.

One of the books he is now writing is in third person about himself. "It's always been in my mind since I was a youngster about actually healing someone with a disability. I've always been sensitive to that. And I always said, how would I get this out to the public? I can't just run around saying, 'I want to heal you.' And so let me put it in writing."

Troise said, "I didn't write this to make any big money. I wrote it to pat myself on the back for all these years that I did it. And I'm so proud. This may sound conceited, but I'm so proud of myself that I got this out there."

dickmyers@countytimes.net



Allen Troise with a copy of his first book

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AUG 1-3	August First Friday Weekend All Weekend
AUG 9	Leonardtown's Got Talent (At Rex Theatre) 6pm - 8pm
AUG 30	Labor Day Concert w/ Fireworks 5pm - 9pm
SEP 5-7	September First Friday Weekend All Weekend

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NAVAL AIR STATION PATUXENT RIVER *News*

Kitts Relieves Somerville as Commodore of Naval Test Wing Atlantic

Capt. Daniel Kitts took over command as Commodore of Naval Test Wing Atlantic (NTWL) from Capt. Elizabeth Somerville at a change of command ceremony at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, July 2.

Rear Adm. Todd Evans, commander of Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division (NAWCAD), praised Somerville's years of service and dedication to naval aviation, and welcomed Kitts as her natural successor.

"Capt. Somerville's leadership at Naval Test Wing Atlantic is a consequential capstone to 26 years of honorable service," said Evans. "Naval aviation is more dominant and capable thanks to her efforts – and Capt. Kitts will advance that legacy."

Kitts, originally from Silver Spring, Maryland, is a U.S. Naval Academy and U.S. Naval Test Pilot School graduate with over 20 years of experience as a naval aviator.

"It is incredibly humbling and an honor to take the reins of Naval Test Wing Atlantic from Capt. Somerville," said Kitts. "Her leadership has made a lasting impact on the wing and her legacy will live on."

Kitts' most recent roles included serving on the Chief of Naval Operations' staff as the F-35C requirements officer, chief test pilot and commanding officer of Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (VX) 23, and as System of Systems Analysis, Modeling, and Integration military integrated product team lead at the Navy's Mission Integration and



Capt. Daniel Kitts addresses attendees after relieving Capt. Elizabeth Somerville as Commodore of Naval Test Wing Atlantic as Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division Commander Rear Adm. Todd Evans, left, and Somerville listen during a change of command ceremony at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md., July 2, 2025. (U.S. Navy photo by Todd Frantom)

Special Programs Office (PMA-298).

"As I take command of Naval Test Wing Atlantic, our mission is unchanged: we relentlessly champion our warfighters' needs by delivering premier, innovative test, evaluation, and experimentation expertise."

During the ceremony, Somerville thanked those whom she's served with as commodore and an array of shipmates past and present throughout the country.

"It has been a tremendous honor to have had the privilege of serving as your Commodore," said Somerville. "From east coast to west, you all represent the absolute finest in the profession of developmental flight test – you are all true experts in what you do."

Somerville, who retired from naval service, has commanded NAWCAD's developmental air wing – the Navy's largest – which conducts testing for every aircraft in the

Navy and Marine Corps, since August 2022.

"I thank you for your unrelenting professionalism in everything you do, and I cannot wait to see where Team Test goes next."

An EA-6B Prowler and EA-18G Growler naval flight officer, Somerville retires with 25 years of experience in operational and developmental aviation. The Massachusetts native deployed to support Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom in the Global War on Terrorism and flew with Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 141, where she led the Growler's maiden deployment aboard USS George H. W. Bush (CVN 77). She also served as commanding officer for two developmental test squadrons dedicated to weapons and tactical aircraft: Air Test and Evaluation Squadrons (VX) 31 and 23 and held various acquisition roles at Naval Air Systems Command. She is a U.S. Naval Test Pilot School graduate and earned bachelor's and master's degrees in aeronautical engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the Air Force Institute of Technology.

NTWL, a component of NAWCAD, supports the test and evaluation of the Navy's principal aviation systems, ranging from unmanned to rotary- and fixed-wing aircraft.

With facilities in Patuxent River; Lakehurst, New Jersey; and Orlando, Florida, NAWCAD advances capability and operational readiness for naval aviation.

PMA-265 Employee Earns Navy Award for Audit Excellence

The lead business financial manager (BFM) for the F/A-18 and EA-18G Program Office (PMA-265) received the 2024 Department of the Navy annual Financial Management Contribution to Business Processes and Internal Controls individual award during a ceremony June 18 at the Pentagon for her critical work resolving a material weakness flagged by Navy auditors.

Tess Butner used her financial expertise to spearhead the fiscal year 2024 walk-through with Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) auditors, presenting complex information clearly and effectively, which resulted in reduced auditing requirements and workload for program offices.

"Beyond simply guiding this audit to a successful outcome, Tess consistently elevates the standard of financial management, safeguarding our resources and streamlining our operations across the command," said Rear Adm. John Lemmon, Program Executive Officer for Tactical Aircraft Programs (PEO(T)). "This award highlights her dedication, leadership, and deep

technical knowledge, which she consistently demonstrated throughout the audit process."

Butner said she was humbled and thankful to be acknowledged among the many dedicated professionals.

"This recognition not only reflects the hard work and dedication I strive to bring every day but also motivates me to continue serving with integrity and excellence alongside my incredible team," she said.

Butner's leadership and business acumen shaped a command-wide process that now benefits 17 program offices across multiple PEOs and funding types. By implementing these improvements, programs have saved valuable time and resources, avoiding the need to submit labor-intensive documentation packages for numerous data lines.

"Tess's teamwork, communication and problem-solving skills transformed a potentially daunting process into a collaborative success for both the auditors and the NAVAIR team," said Tamara Cobaugh, lead BFM for PEO(T).

Senior leaders across PEO(T) and

NAVAIR have praised Butner's contributions as both impactful and impressive. Her ability to communicate complex financial concepts, collaborate effectively and drive successful outcomes has strengthened the command's audit posture and day-to-day operations.

Butner's work directly addressed the material weakness identified by the auditors while also enhancing the overall efficiency and accuracy of NAVAIR financial management practices. Her dedication and proactive approach continue to drive positive change, reinforcing the long-term resilience and reliability of the command's financial processes.

"A sound financial posture is foundational to our ability to support, sustain and advance critical naval aviation capabilities," said Capt. Michael Burks, PMA-265 program manager. "Tess's efforts ensure we remain audit-ready while enabling our team to deliver combat-ready aircraft that meet the evolving needs of the fleet."

As part of PEO(T), PMA-265 is responsi-



Tess Butner, lead business financial manager for the F/A-18 and EA-18G Program Office (PMA-265)

ble for supporting, sustaining and advancing the F/A-18A-D Hornet, F/A-18E/F Super Hornet and EA-18G Growler aircraft, providing naval aviators with capabilities that enable mission success.

St. Mary's Resident Named Miss Maryland



Photo by John A. Bone Photography

By Vada Mercer
Contributing Writer

Maria Derisavi, an Iranian American immigrant from Great Mills, will be the first St. Mary's County resident to represent Maryland in the Miss America competition this September.

Derisavi has committed herself to serving her community and ensuring accessible education through her initiative "Seize Your Opportunities."

Seize Your Opportunities, started in 2021, teaches a resilience development curriculum to thousands of students hoping to achieve their goals. Whether that be academic or personal success, the program teaches to remain resilient amidst difficult personal circumstances.

The title of the program was inspired by Derisavi's personal story as an immigrant. After moving to America from Kuwait at age nine, she was struck by the freedom and opportunity America offered, especially in contrast to the low expectations placed on women in her home culture.

"I saw the difference in opportunities that people across the world have, and I think it's really important that Marylanders seize those opportunities," she said. "Not just to build up their own future, but to hopefully help others one day."

Derisavi is the first Iranian American to win Miss Maryland, and she is proud to represent both her heritage and her home state. During her years in Kuwait, she never imagined herself pursuing higher education. Now, she is a recent graduate of the University of Alabama, earning both a Bachelor of Arts in International Relations and Chinese and a Master of Public Administration. She plans to use the \$11,000 scholarship money received from the Miss Maryland competition towards attending law school. If she wins the \$50,000 Miss America scholarship this September, it will go toward that goal as well.

She chose to compete for Miss America

because of her admiration for the organization and its participants, who she says have embodied the experience of being a woman in America. "They're so empowered," she said. "Wearing the things they want to wear, speaking about the causes they care about... I wanted to be just like them." The Miss America competition involves several phases: fitness, interview, on-stage question, evening gown, and talent.

This year, there were 18 women competing for the title of Miss Maryland. "They look at the girl in her entirety," Derisavi explained. "It's really about looking at the service that a young woman does."

Community service is a passion of Derisavi's, and something about St. Mary's County that she admires. "We have such a community focused county," she said. "I think a lot of the people I've met here are so service minded."

Derisavi hopes to bring the American dream to life on stage at Miss America. "I spent the first nine years of my life dreaming to be in this country, dreaming of having access to the liberty and the opportunities that are offered here in America," she said. "I think that I offer a representation of what is possible for young women who have that same dream."

She hopes to encourage more young women of St. Mary's County, from 14 to 27, to join the Miss America program. Not just for the prize money, but the essential life skills that being a participant teaches. In the months leading up to the national competition, Derisavi plans to stay active in local communities across the state. She hopes to use her title to spotlight service organizations, speak to students about goal setting and resilience, and continue promoting her initiative. Though she's now representing the entire state.

Derisavi says St. Mary's County will always be home. Her journey from a local student to a state titleholder serves as an example of what is possible through dedication and service.

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Man Convicted in Deadly Fentanyl Distribution Case



Damauriae Myzuan Jones

State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling announced on July 8 that a St. Mary's County jury convicted Damauriae Myzuan Jones, 26, of Lexington Park, of distribution of fentanyl and distribution of a counterfeit narcotic.

The charges stem from a December 21, 2023, incident in which law enforcement responded to reports of an unresponsive woman. Upon arrival, officers discovered the victim was deceased. A toxicology report confirmed the presence of fentanyl in the victim's blood. The medical examiner concluded that the victim's cause of death was fentanyl intoxication. Items recovered from the scene and tested by the Maryland State Police lab included a cut straw and pills appearing to be oxycodone that both tested positive for fentanyl.

An investigation revealed electronic payments and communications between the

victim and Jones regarding a narcotics transaction. These findings further corroborated that Jones distributed the fentanyl to the victim on the night of her overdose death.

"Fentanyl is killing people in our community, and this case is yet another heartbreaking reminder," said Sterling. "These deadly pills sold on the street are not prescribed by a doctor or regulated by the FDA. They are counterfeit drugs, 'fakes' that may look like prescription medications, such as oxycodone, but are laced with the deadly drug fentanyl."

Jones remains held without bond pending sentencing. He faces a maximum sentence of 40 years in prison.

Senior Assistant State's Attorney Lisa Ridge, Chief of Narcotics, prosecuted the case on behalf of the citizens of St. Mary's County.

Members of the Vice Narcotics Unit within the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office successfully investigated this case.

The Honorable Donnell Turner presided over the case.

*Press Release from St. Mary's County
State's Attorney*

Prosecutor Awarded for Legal Excellence

State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling proudly announces that Assistant State's Attorney Zachary Varda was selected as the 2025 Victoria F. Gelfman Legal Excellence Award winner. The award is named after Victoria "Vickie" Gelfman, 31, a passionate and deeply respected Howard County prosecutor who served from 2010-2014, until her tragic passing after her brave battle with leukemia.

The Gelfman Award is presented annually at the Maryland State's Attorneys' Association's Summer Conference to a rising star prosecutor who embodies the highest standards of public service, legal integrity, and commitment to the community.

ASA Zachary Varda was sworn in as a prosecutor with the St. Mary's County State's Attorney's Office in January 2023. Currently, ASA Varda is a part of the Special Victims Unit prosecuting mostly domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault, and animal cruelty cases. "Zachary brings both integrity and humility to every decision he makes," said State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling. "His relentless preparation and excellent courtroom presentations highlight his deep legal knowledge and commitment to justice."

In addition to his trial work, ASA Varda has demonstrated a sincere dedication to serving the community as he regularly volunteers at community events and actively participates in multidisciplinary teams focused on domestic violence and sexual assault response. "Zachary gives freely of his time and energy to advance justice, sup-



Assistant State's Attorney Zachary Varda receives the 2025 Victoria F. Gelfman Legal Excellence Award

port the criminal justice field, and improve our community," added Sterling. "He lives the values of this award, and I believe he is precisely the kind of public servant Vickie would have been proud to stand beside."

The St. Mary's County State's Attorney's Office congratulates ASA Zachary Varda on this tremendous honor and expresses its gratitude to the Gelfman family in addition to the Maryland State's Attorneys' Association for continuing to uphold the legacy of excellence and compassion that Vickie represented. Vickie left a lasting impact in the field of prosecution, and this award created in memory of her exemplifies prosecutors who serve with passion and dedication to public service, the legal profession, and the community.

*Press Release from St. Mary's County
State's Attorney*

Center Struggles Amid Funding Cuts for Homeless Programs

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Three Oaks Center in Lexington Park, which provides services to the homeless in Southern Maryland, is struggling to deal with cuts in federal and state funding for homeless services.

Their mission, according to their website: "Three Oaks Center offers programs that provide the homeless in Southern Maryland with housing, stabilization, assessment, and referral to appropriate resources so that they may return to living productive, self-sufficient lives in our community."

Three Oaks Executive Director Sasha Seenath, "Our emergency men's shelter is the project that's currently being impacted due to funding cuts and due to the government not having much interest in funding shelters. We had to do a transition from emergency men's shelter, which typically runs about \$34,000 a month for us to run that facility of 16 individuals, which is 24 7. But due to the fact that the funding is not being allocated for shelter services, we applied for funding to provide assistance to folks that are going to be considered for permanent supportive housing. So, they have to be chronically homeless with a diagnosed disability, we have to build a case to why they're eligible."

Seenath said as of this week there were 12 men in the shelter, of which five will continue to be housed there and for the other seven rental housing will have to be found. The good news, at least for now, she said, is that funding is available to cover the rent for those men. They are partnering with the Housing Authority to obtain the funding.

She explained, "The first site we ever had is on county property across from where Linda's Cafe used to be, where Royal Farms is now. That facility before the pandemic used to be...an emergency men shelter. We did meals and we did the Warm program in that site. Then it transitioned to permanent supportive housing. In 2020, we had to shut that system down and move all of the individuals living there because the health department wanted to use that site for isolation of any homeless that became positive with the virus."

So then, she explained, "We've come full circle. Once we were allowed to go back into that building, we used it to do medical respite care as well as emergency men's sheltering. Eight beds were medical respite and eight beds were emergency shelter. When the medical respite program ended last June, it converted to full emergency men shelter beds, which is available to all folks in the tri-County area, because we're serving the tri-county. However, we're converting housing, which is what the government wants to fund."

Seenath explained, "For example, if someone is disabled and they live on a fixed income, it's evident with the cost of living today, the economy and food insecurity and everything increasing, they typically cannot sustain themselves without some form of a subsidy."

On July 1, when the funding converted



Three Oaks Center

to permanent supportive housing, she said, "There's five individuals who are in the program right now who will be transitioning into permanent supportive housing at that site."

Rental housing in the community will have to be found for those who don't meet the definition of having a chronic disability.

Three Oaks has a veteran's program that so far has not been affected by funding cuts. Seenath said, "The building adjacent to the brick building is the Veterans Resource Center, where I have a staff of about nine to 11. We do all of the case management, intakes and assessments and case files."

But at the end of the day all of their funding, given the current federal government climate, is up in the air.

"I think everything is in jeopardy, to be honest," she said.

According to Three Oaks website, "The concept and need for Three Oaks Center was first discussed in 1991 by a handful of community leaders who saw the increasing incidence of homelessness among men as a major concern in St. Mary's County."

"In 1992, the group incorporated as a nonprofit, the first of a series of steps aimed at addressing the problem by concentrating energies and resources on the establishment and implementation of a transitional and emergency shelter for homeless men. Their vision matured in January of 1996 when the doors of the new facility on Lei Drive in Lexington Park were opened and the first individuals were served."

"In two years, it became clear through continuous local assessment that there was a need to expand supportive services and extend those new services to women and families. At this time, Three Oaks had only been providing these services to men."

"The center also recognized that many of the most vulnerable in the homeless population were suffering from severe mental illness. The center decided to make a special commitment to these people. In May of 1999, the center submitted a grant application to the United States Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the purpose of providing permanent housing to the mentally ill. Having been chosen to receive these funds, the center began providing those services in October 2000. Since then, the center has been

awarded five additional HUD Permanent Supportive Housing grants and are currently providing those additional services.

"In 2003 the Center purchased 10 sub-standard townhouses in Lexington Park for \$650,000 and then spent another \$100,000 rehabilitating them. This project now provides an additional 10 units of supportive transitional housing for families and also achieves the desired effect of significantly improving the neighborhood."

"The Center continues to participate in numerous community and agency meetings

in an attempt to explore new ways in which to assist the St. Mary's County community in providing much needed additional and improved services to homeless individuals and families. Three Oaks Center shares information and communicates regularly with other Supportive Housing providers in St. Mary's County with the idea that by working together, these organizations can maximize the amount of services provided while minimizing any unneeded duplication."

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Armitage Appointed Family Law Magistrate



Sue Ann Armitage

By Florence Ballengee
Contributing Writer

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County have announced the appointment of Sue Ann Lewis Armitage as Family Law Magistrate for the county. In a press release issued, they listed her duty will be to preside over cases such as domestic violence, divorce, child custody and visitation, and other family law matters. She will fill the position left vacant when Kevin Hill was appointed to the St. Mary's County Circuit Court.

Armitage has practiced law in St. Mary's County for more than 30 years.. She has her roots dug deep in St. Mary's County. Her mother was from St. Mary's and married Armitage's Navy father. Coming to Pax River with her father's transfer brought her mother back to her St. Mary's roots and meant that Sue Ann Lewis would be a St. Mary's girl.

She attended St. Michael's School in Ridge and graduated from St. Mary's Ryken in Leonardtown. While in high school she met another student named Dan Armitage but when they both graduated, they lost track of each other.

Sue Ann went off to University of Maryland in Baltimore and then on to University of Baltimore Law School. The years were filled with education and the years were filled with hard work. She did a variety of jobs including waiting tables and bartending. She also worked for a law firm.

When she returned to St. Mary's County she opened her own law practice. Along with establishing herself as a trusted advocate for her clients, she became known as a tireless volunteer who used her education

and experience to help organizations and individuals in need. She established herself as a "go to" person in the family law realm. In addition to being involved in law-related organizations, she volunteered where she could use her family law expertise to assist people in need.

Armitage is a particularly strong advocate for children and has received recognition awards for volunteer work on behalf of families. She is a recipient of the Maryland State Bar association's pro bono award and was named to the Daily Record's List of 100 women in Maryland and was named to the power list of family law attorneys.

Along with establishing her own law practice, she became reacquainted with Dan Armitage, who was himself fresh out of law school and was working as law clerk for Judge Marvin Kaminetz. They began dating, married and have been married over 30 years. They have one daughter, Sydney, who is married and lives in St. Mary's County with her husband Andrew Chesser.

Sue Ann Lewis Armitage is a natural for Family Law Magistrate. She has lived her work life as an advocate for families and children and has volunteered with the same drive and energy. She is a dedicated advocate for families in St. Mary's County and is a devoted wife and mother.

Remarking on her appointment as Family Law Magistrate, Armitage said, "I am honored to serve our community in a new role as the Family Law Magistrate. It has been a true privilege to advocate for so many wonderful individuals here and I look forward to bringing the same work ethic and integrity to this position."



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“IT HAS BEEN A TRUE PRIVILEGE TO ADVOCATE FOR SO MANY WONDERFUL INDIVIDUALS HERE.”

SUE ANN ARMITAGE ON BEING APPOINTED FAMILY LAW MAGISTRATE



LOCAL 5
Armitage named Family Law Magistrate



LOCAL 13
Federal and state budget cuts impact local services for the homeless



ON THE COVER
St. Mary's woman to compete in Miss America

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, JUL 10 AM Thunderstorms Hi: 83° Lo: 71°	FRI, JUL 11 Isolated Storms Hi: 88° Lo: 71°	SAT, JUL 12 Partly Cloudy Hi: 86° Lo: 72°	SUN, JUL 13 Partly Cloudy Hi: 86° Lo: 72°
MON, JUL 14 Scattered Storms Hi: 85° Lo: 71°	TUE, JUL 15 Scattered Storms Hi: 85° Lo: 72°	WED, JUL 16 Scattered Storms Hi: 87° Lo: 73°	THU, JUL 17 Scattered Storms Hi: 89° Lo: 73°

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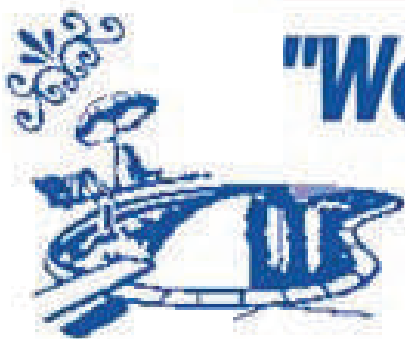
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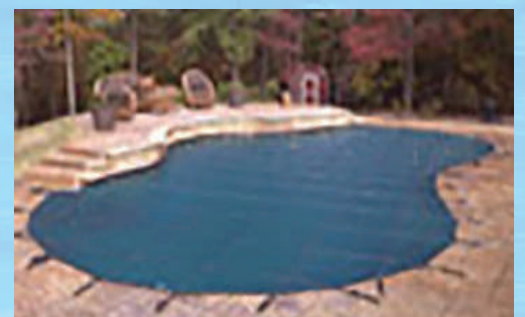


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**Man Convicted in
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