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“THE BUSINESSES ... AND THE CITIZENS OF THE TOWN HAVE REALLY STEPPED UP.”

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LOCAL 7

School board approves efficiency study



**A NEW E4
IN A NEW BUILDING**

ON THE COVER

Commissioners hold first meeting in new county administration building



COMMUNITY 9

Leadership program participants learn about local agriculture

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, NOV 20	FRI, NOV 21	SAT, NOV 22	SUN, NOV 23
Cloudy Hi: 50° Lo: 44°	PM Showers Hi: 58° Lo: 50°	AM Clouds/PM Sun Hi: 57° Lo: 38°	Sunny Hi: 57° Lo: 42°
MON, NOV 24	TUE, NOV 25	WED, NOV 26	THU, NOV 27
Partly Cloudy Hi: 60° Lo: 44°	PM Showers Hi: 59° Lo: 53°	AM Showers Hi: 65° Lo: 46°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 52° Lo: 34°



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Commissioners Begin New Era in New Building

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

“Today marks a new era in Calvert County Government as we move into this new space,” said Commissioner President Buddy Hance, sitting on a new dais and overlooking a crowd sitting in a new, much larger, meeting room.

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) were meeting for the first time on Nov. 18 in the new 103,000-square-foot, four-story, \$40 million County Administration Building that now dominates old town Prince Frederick’s skyline.

Hance said, “Recently we vacated the courthouse, which has served as the home base for county government for over 200 years. And, if you think back over the decisions that were made in that space on Calvert County’s future over all those decades and commissioners serving the citizens of Calvert County, it’s truly humbling.”

He added, “As we left that space, to think about what occurred in that room over the period of time, and to think that those decisions are still in place today and have made the county what it is today.”

“Today we’re in this new space that future boards will make decisions that will also shape Calvert County’s future. For nearly three centuries we’ve been here in Prince Frederick operating as county government. The courthouse burned down twice, so we lost a lot of historical records because of those fires. But we’re moving forward and this space that we’re in today has been a wonderful addition in just the past month when the first departments started to move in for the first time.”

Hance said, “Citizens can come into this new building, especially if you need a permit, and every service you need to get a building permit is right here. There’s no more where you need to be and figure out who you need to see.”

Hance noted, “I can’t thank enough JR. Cosgrove, director of public Works, who oversaw this project. It was a massive undertaking for us. The building came in under budget, not quite on time, but almost, but it turned out great. And we have to thank all the directors of the different agencies for their help.”

He said, “Moving in was very smooth transition. IT (Information Technology) has been in this space for two months, making sure everything goes on smoothly, got all our employees connected appropriately. I expected hiccups and bumps, but at least I don’t know of any. If they happened, they weren’t very challenging.”

Hance looked out over an audience of county dignitaries, many of whom spoke.

Former county administrator Terry Shannon said, “I just want to say I’m very honored to be here this morning and this building is beautiful. Congratulations to staff. You do have a wonderful staff. And Happy Thanksgiving.”

Just retired county administrator Mark Willis said, “My hat’s off to staff. Without staff pulling together the way that you did and with the commissioners providing the guidance that you have provided the entire time. And I’m talking from day one, you were



involved in this. You knew what was going to happen and ultimately, what you directed staff to do, was to make communication better on behalf of the citizens of county. And that’s exactly what’s happening. They can walk into this building, ask for the services that they require, and they walk out with an understanding of how they’re going to obtain that with full involvement from staff.”

Former county commissioner and deputy county administrator Wilson Parran said, “I served as a county commissioner for eight years, and two of my fellow commissioners are here with us today. Congratulations! This has been a long time coming. It’s been a lot of tough decisions that you have to make in terms of prioritizing to determine what’s the most important project for the county at the time. And this is a wonderful location and a wonderful building that will serve our citizens for many years to come.”

Former commissioner Pat Biehler said, “It’s an honor and a pleasure to be here today. First of all, I’d like to thank you all for all the improvements that have been done in St. Leonard. It’s been an outstanding job that has been done.”

He added, “I want to thank Public Works, the water division, and the contractor. St. Leonard really has come a long way in the last couple of years. It’s been a long haul, but it’s turned out beautiful.”

About the new building, Buehler said, “I served from 1990 to 2000, and we actually purchased the property that this building setting on. It’s one of the first things we did. And we knew at some point in time the county was going to have to build, and our plans were at the time for us to tear down the existing building that was here and rebuild it. This turned out beautiful.”

Former commissioner Susan Shaw said, “I think it’s a testament to the continuity of how things work in Calvert County that we have so many past commissioners here. Those of us who served in this job know, David Hale (former commissioner president) used to call it a ‘zero sum game,’ that you’re constantly balancing the needs of the community against the money that you have or don’t have. And that is the biggest challenge for those people who think that this

building wasn’t needed. They didn’t try to juggle things all over the place at the courthouse to try to make it work, from giving the county administrator a little tiny office because that’s the only space that we had available, to the commissioners being in offices with no windows.”

Former commissioner Jerry Clark said, “I was commissioner for 12 years. I’d just like to point out one thing. Right now, you have 34 years’ worth of commissioner experience in this room for the first district commissioner, myself and Commissioner Buehler and Commissioner Hart. We know (there’s) a lot of good things down here. We want to thank you for everything you’ve done in the first district in advance. We’d like to thank you for everything you’ll do in the future for the first district, which hopefully will be soon.”

He added, “What a wonderful day. I can remember the day we sat in the commissions room and started talking about this building. It was many years ago, and we were all kind of just beating our head. We put it into CIP and then 2008 hit and 2009, and we pushed out everything, pushing out hundreds of millions of dollars’ worth of projects to make the budget balance.”

He added, “I want to thank you for the job you do. You are living up to the tradition. You weren’t elected for the easy votes. You’re elected to make the hard votes, the ones that we expect you to make, whether we agree with you or disagree with you.”

Former commissioner Kelly McConkey said, “I remember when our board, started this project and it was going to go over on Dares Beach Road. And I’m glad that the board decided to put it here. It was going to save a lot of money. The place turned out fantastic. I’m actually jealous because I feel like I was in the slums across the state compared to here.”

The tragic fire that displaced 25 people in Chesapeake Beach was on the minds of many people who attended the first meeting in the new building, including town Mayor Bruce Wahl. He said, “As many of you know, we had quite a tragedy in Chesapeake Beach yesterday with a fire at Courtyards of Fishing Creek. One whole building has

been destroyed. Fortunately, nobody was injured. One person lost a pet, which she’s very distraught about. But, other than that, the community has really raised up and is helping everybody. I was sworn to secrecy not to tell you who was taking care of everybody, because they don’t want to be glorified for that, but the businesses in the town have really stepped up, and the citizens of the town have really stepped up. And fortunately, all of the people that were residents of that building are safe in the town.”

Regarding the new building, he said, “This is fantastic. And so, congratulations and we appreciate it.”

North Beach Mayor Mike Benton quipped, “I’m so happy that you’re almost as nice as our town hall.”

He added, “Seriously, what an amazing building. I haven’t gone on a tour yet, but if it’s like what we see here, it’s absolutely amazing for the residents.”

He added, “(You) stepped up and made the toughest call probably in a long time. So, congratulations.”

State’s Attorney Bob Harve said, “We’ve spent a lot of time talking about what a wonderful building this is, but I think we all know that this building wouldn’t mean anything without the people who work here, the people who have gone before. And the people who we here now. You know, there’s a phrase, ‘public service.’ I think the citizens of Calvert County know that in this building, they receive public service from the employees, from the commissioners, from the people who are standing up in front of us.”

Sheriff Ricky Cox, who hopes to have a new headquarters of his own someday, also added his condolences to the fire victims.

He said of the building, “It’s awesome (for) the people and the citizens. It’s good for them. That one stop shop, they can come and get what they need. But they’ll stop coming to the sheriff’s office thinking that’s a county service company over here. The staff did well. We have good employees that work for our country and made this building what it is today. I always like moving forward and it’s good to see everybody in this room.”



CALVERT COUNTY INFORMATION & EVENTS

Calvert County Government will be responsible and accountable to all citizens of Calvert County; provide high quality, effective and efficient services; preserve Calvert County's environment, heritage and rural character; foster opportunities for responsible and sustainable residential growth and economic development; and support Calvert County's essential institutions and keep them strong.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Meetings are open to the public and subject to change. Watch here: [YouTube](#) | [Meetings on Demand](#) | Comcast channel 99 or 1070 HD

Board of County Commissioners Meeting

Next meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 2, 2025, 10 a.m.
Commissioners' Hearing Room, 150 Main St., Prince Frederick



Calvert County Seeks Community Reviewers for CRRF Grant Applications

The Calvert County Department of Community Resources is seeking volunteers to serve as community reviewers for the Community Reinvestment and Repair Fund (CRRF) grant awards. This short-term volunteer opportunity supports equitable investment in community programs and services in Prince Frederick and Lusby.

This commitment requires approximately five hours total, completed at your own pace between Nov. 17 and Nov. 30. Find more details at [calvertcountymd.gov/CountyTimes](#).



Calvert County Government has now settled into the new Calvert Administration Building (CAB) at 150 Main St., Prince Frederick.



Calvert County Government Relocates Payment and Document Drop Boxes

The Calvert County Department of Public Works, General Services Division, announces that document drop boxes for several county departments have been relocated from 205 Main St. (Courthouse Square) to the new Calvert County Administration Building (CAB), located at 150 Main St. in Prince Frederick. For more information see [calvertcountymd.gov/CountyTimes](#).



Register by Dec. 1 for the CALVERT COUNTY HOLIDAY PARADE

The Calvert County Department of Parks & Recreation is now accepting entries for the 2025 Calvert County Christmas Parade held on Saturday, Dec. 13, from 10 a.m. to noon in downtown Prince Frederick. Find more details at [calvertcountymd.gov/CountyTimes](#).



Thanks for Giving Me a Home! Celebrate National Adopt a Senior Pet Month from Nov. 1-30

Linda L. Kelley Animal Shelter

In honor of National Adopt a Senior Pet Month and Thanksgiving, all adoption fees will be waived from Nov. 1-30. Animals of all ages and personalities are available for adoption, but fees are waived for those 8 years and older.

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Survey Open for Calvert County Land Preservation, Parks & Recreation Plan (LPPRP)

The Calvert County Department of Parks & Recreation invites citizens to provide input on the Land Preservation, Parks & Recreation Plan (LPPRP), a five-year strategic plan that guides land conservation, park improvements, recreation opportunities and open space priorities throughout the county.

Citizens can provide input by taking a survey addressing the conservation and development of outdoor recreation opportunities in Calvert County over the next five years. See [calvertcountymd.gov/CountyTimes](#) for the survey.



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School Board Changes Public Comment Policy

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

When the Calvert County Board of Education was barraged with complaints about removing their antiracism policy, one of the criticisms was that they made the decision before the public had a chance to speak at the public comment portion of the meeting.

The board heard those complaints and at their Nov. 13 meeting changed their policy accordingly.

Now the board will hold the first meeting of the month as a business meeting at which they make decisions. At those meetings, the public forum will be at the beginning of the meeting before votes are taken.

The second meeting of the month will be a work session at which decisions will be made. At those two meetings, public comments will be held at the end.

For both meetings public comment will still be held to two minutes each and no more than 30 total.

The change was brought up by board member Joseph Marchio, but the actual suggestion for what was finally approved came from board Vice President Lisa Grenis.

In making the decision the board looked at what other school boards are doing. President Jana Post said, "In looking at some of those other boards of education, they only have public comment at the meeting at the beginning of the month. The second meeting is considered a work session where they don't have public comment because it's strictly just a work session."

Board member Melissa Goshorn was

reluctant to remove the second public comment session. She said, "I understand what we're trying to do, but as somebody who was a regular public commenter in these meetings for many, many years, my schedule might not align. And there could be things that somebody in the community has to share that might not be specifically related to a policy that we have on the agenda or a decision that we're making."

Interim Superintendent Dr. Marcus Newsome said, "I have worked with a number of boards, and we have a variety of approaches. The one I feel is probably more effective for a school district of this size and the demographics would be to schedule one business meeting per month, where you would focus on policy, allow the public to speak at the beginning of the meeting so that their comments could possibly influence the decisions of the board, also be considerate of those who have families and children at home. And I think it's an opportunity to demonstrate the transparency and trying to work collaboratively with the board. And then the second meeting would be strictly a work session where the board could dig a bit into some of the topics."

Grenis offered the compromise agreed to. "What about the possibility of having public comment at the beginning of our business meetings, but public comment at the end of our work sessions. That way they get to speak at all of them, but we get to hear their voice before we put something up for vote. I think that's more transparent than voting and then hearing public comment."

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Ward Farm Construction to Begin

The Calvert County Department of Parks & Recreation announces that site preparation, including staking out work areas, bringing supplies to the site and setting up temporary facilities, begins this week at Ward Farm Recreation and Nature Park. Construction is scheduled to begin in late November on a new multipurpose community building and restroom facilities.

Ward Farm Recreation and Nature Park is located at 10455 Ward Road, in Dunkirk.

The need for a restroom facility in the lower parking lot was identified in the park's master plan. This, coupled with the need for community buildings and a permanent early voting facility in District 3, inspired the design.

The facility will feature 2,000 square feet of programmable indoor space plus an additional 1,000 square feet of unenclosed outdoor area. Three restrooms, including men's, women's and family spaces, will

also be available year-round.

Construction is expected to be completed before early voting begins Thursday, June 11, 2026.

Development of Ward Farm is funded in large part through the Calvert County Youth Recreational Opportunities Fund (CCYROF), which was established in 2012.

Ward Farm Recreation and Nature Park opened to the public in 2022. Several passive and active amenities listed in the 2015 master plan are now available in the park, including athletic fields, a playground, a 10-hole disc golf course and a tot-lot playground.

For more information on the Ward Farm building project visit www.CalvertCountyMd.gov/WardFarmBuilding.

Press release from Calvert County Government

Chesapeake Beach Apartment Fire Under Investigation

Two Dozen People Displaced



Photo courtesy of North Beach Volunteer Fire Department



The Office of the State Fire Marshal is investigating a multi-unit apartment fire that displaced two dozen people and caused an estimated \$1.5 million in damages on Monday Nov. 17 in Chesapeake Beach.

At approximately 6:36 a.m. fire crews from Calvert County and surrounding counties responded to the 3900 block of Gordon Stinnett Avenue following reports of a fire. Firefighters observed flames throughout the courtyard area, which eventually spread into the attic and through the roof.

The fire destroyed 14 apartments and displaced approximately 25 occupants. All occupants were accounted for, and one was transported to the hospital for treatment. The fire also caused an estimated \$250,000 in content damage.

Deputy State Fire Marshals determined the fire originated on a first-level balcony in the courtyard area. The preliminary investigation indicates no evidence of a criminal act. High winds and the fire's exterior location contributed to its rapid spread and damage.

All fire companies in Calvert County including the North Beach Volunteer Fire

Department responded. The Calvert County Sheriff's Office assisted at the scene with the investigation.

The Town of Chesapeake Beach and the Calvert County Departments of Public Safety and Community Resources coordinated with the Red Cross, joining multiple community groups to assist those affected with immediate resources.

For those affected or displaced by the fire who have not yet been interviewed by the Red Cross, contact the Red Cross at 1-800-Red-Cross (1-800-733-2767).

Monetary donations, food and toiletries are being accepted at Bayside Baptist Church for immediate needs. To donate, visit www.baysidebaptist.com/give and select "Chesapeake Fire Relief Fund."

Donations for assistance with housing stability and long-term support are being accepted and coordinated by Calvert Family Advocates at www.calfam.org/donate.

The cause of the fire is under investigation.

Press releases from State Fire Marshal's Office and Calvert County Government

County Attorney Takes Job in St. Mary's

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), County Administrator Linda Turner and Calvert County Government staff "wish County Attorney John B. Norris III the best upon his departure to a new role in December," a press release said.

Norris is leaving to head the St. Mary's County Department of Public Works and Transportation. He was born and raised in St. Mary's County.

The release said, "Norris served with professionalism and distinction as the attorney for Calvert County Government for 14 years, starting in August 2011. Norris leaves Calvert County Government on Dec. 18."

The release goes on to say, "Norris brought to Calvert County a unique and powerful blend of technical and legal experience. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering and Technology before completing his Juris Doctorate, bridging both professions early in his career through a legal internship with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, where he advised on complex environmental law matters.

"He began his professional journey as a project engineer with NG&O Engineering, Inc., focusing on civil site design, permitting and development for industrial, commercial and residential projects. This technical foundation proved invaluable in his legal career, particularly in navigating the intricacies of land use, environmental regulation and infrastructure development."

As County Attorney, Norris has served as chief legal counsel for Calvert County Government, overseeing all legal affairs, "providing guidance on the county's most complex issues and supporting transparent, responsible governance. His work has ensured the county's compliance with state and federal law, strengthened policies and procedures and supported countless initiatives that have shaped Calvert County's



John Norris

progress over more than a decade."

"County Attorney John Norris is to be commended for his distinguished tenure with Calvert County and his excellent service to its citizens," said County Administrator Linda Turner. "The Calvert County Board of Commissioners, myself and Calvert County Government staff wholeheartedly congratulate him on his new venture in his professional career and thank him for his many years of faithful service to Calvert County."

Reflecting on his time with Calvert County Government, Norris shared, "Serving Calvert County has been a great privilege. I am deeply grateful for the 14 years I spent serving the citizens of Calvert County as County Attorney."

Throughout his tenure, Norris was widely recognized for his integrity, methodical approach and commitment to fairness. His combined expertise in engineering and law provided a rare perspective that strengthened the county's ability to evaluate projects, manage risk and uphold the highest standards of public service."

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School Board Approves Operating and Efficiency Study

Cost to be \$330,000



Back row (L to R): Joseph Marchio, Paul Harrison, Melissa Goshorn. Front row (L to R): Jana Smith-Post, Dr. Marcus Newsome, Lisa Grenis. Photo by Madalynn Emmett Photography

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of Education has approved an operating and efficiency assessment of six of its departments. Cost will be almost \$330,000. The study will be ready in time for the board to make decisions about the next fiscal year's budget.

The cost for the assessment by Public Works of West Chester, PA was three times the cost of the company that came in second in the ranking system used to evaluate the competing firms.

Supervisor of Finance Sheldon Taylor explained at the Nov. 13 board meeting, "An operating and efficiency assessment is an evaluation tool that provides insight on how effectively and efficiently, in our case our school district, uses resources to support education and organizational goals."

"Why do one here at Calvert County Public Schools?" he asked. "The assessment is a transparent way to provide a clear picture of how resources are currently used and assist with the FY 2027 through 2029 budget decisions by providing data driven information, supporting actual needs for our school district."

The primary focus areas are, he said, "Cost savings and resource optimization, operational effectiveness, alignment to the strategic plan, transparency and accountability." He said the final report will be posted on the school system website.

Departments to be studied are finance, human resources, information technology, instruction, special education, and student transportation.

Interim Superintendent Dr. Marcus Newsome said other departments weren't added in order to save costs for the study.

Newsome said of the winning company, "They've served over 200 jurisdictions. They've identified over \$1 billion in savings. Their clients have accepted 99.5 percent of their recommendations, and they've conducted the most statewide deficiency reviews in the nation, as well as in Maryland."

He said, "Their team is comprised of experts, including former Maryland super-

intendents, experts in education instruction, law policy, school finance, school operations, information technology, communications, and strategic planning.

"Public Works is committed to us that they will meet our expedited deadlines by delivering an interim briefing by mid-December, a draft report by January 15th, and a final report by February 12th. They also will ensure actionable recommendations for the FY 27 through 29 budget planning process."

Funding will come from the board's local budget.

The board has been critical of an audit previously ordered by the county commissioners. Newsome said, "I think the one that the commissioners did was just a performance review of finance for procurement. I think HR was included as well."

Board member Melissa Goshorn had sticker shock over the cost. She said, "Doing an official assessment is extremely important, but \$330,000 is a lot. It's definitely more than I'd expected. I don't know what I expected. It's a lot of money. I just have to say, there's general concern. Recently we have elementary schools that are already limiting copies that can be made on paper. So, if we can't make copies in elementary schools, but we can spend \$330,000 to find out we can't make copies in elementary schools."

Newsome said the board did have the option of selecting the second-highest ranked bidder at one-third the cost. But using an automotive analogy, Newsome said it would be a matter of picking a Mercedes-Benz or a Buick.

The average savings of Public Works studies has been two percent, although they could also say that more money needed to be spent.

Member Paul Harrison, an accountant, observed, "If they say... somewhere in the neighborhood of 2 percent, each point is \$2.8 million. So, if we cheapen out of the operational efficiency audit, I hate to leave \$2.8 to \$5.6 million on the table because we..."

School Board President Jana Post finished his sentence with "cheapened out."

The board unanimously approved the contract.

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CALVERT COUNTY POLICE BLOTTER

During the week of October 27, 2025 – November 2, 2025, Calvert County Sheriff's Office Deputies responded to 2,293 calls for service throughout the community, including, but not limited to:

- Check Welfare / Mental Health: 53
- Disorderly: 20
- Domestics: 15
- Motor Vehicle Crashes: 55
- Patrol Checks / School Checks: 1060
- Suspicious Persons / Vehicles: 26
- Traffic Complaints: 70
- Traffic Stops: 599
- 911 Hang Ups: 57
- ARRESTS: 53



Edwin Stanford Foote, Jr.

CDS Violation: 25-91620 On November 1, 2025, at approximately 10:24 a.m., DFC Crum conducted a traffic stop in the area of Rt. 4 and Oakland Hall Road in Prince Frederick for a traffic violation. Contact was made with the driver, **Edwin Stanford Foote, Jr.**, 35 of Lusby. An open-air sniff of the vehicle was conducted by K9 Zeus, who alerted to the presence of a controlled substance. A subsequent search of the vehicle revealed an electronic scale, a plastic straw, and a Ziploc bag, all containing a white powdery residue that tested positive for cocaine. Foote was taken into custody and transported to the Calvert County Detention Center, where he was charged with CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia and CDS: Possession – Not Cannabis.



Charles Raymond Corbin

Disorderly Conduct: 25-91125 On October 30, 2025, at approximately 6:02 p.m., Sgt. Durner responded to the area of Horseshoe Trail and Gunsmoke Trail in Lusby for the report of an intoxicated male in the roadway. Upon arrival, deputies observed **Charles Raymond Corbin**, 50 of Lusby, walking in and out of the roadway. Corbin was seen running in the

travel portion of the road, forcing vehicles to enter the oncoming lane to avoid striking him. Contact was made with Corbin, and deputies detected a strong odor of alcohol emitting from his person. Corbin's level of intoxication posed a danger to himself and others on the roadway. He was arrested and charged with Intoxicated Endangerment.



Michael Thomas Freeman

False Statement: 25-89990 On October 27, 2025, at approximately 6:43 p.m., Deputy Angell responded to the 8100 block of Woodland Lane in Chesapeake Beach for a report of a suspicious person. The complainant advised that a man had approached the residence, identified himself as a deputy with the Calvert County Sheriff's Office, and asked for an individual who did not live there. Deputies arrived on scene and made contact with the suspect, identified as **Michael Thomas Freeman**, 65 of North Beach, who was parked outside in a pickup truck. Freeman was wearing a body camera on his chest and displayed a gold badge, claiming he was there to serve a child custody order. Further investigation revealed Freeman was not affiliated with any law enforcement agency. He was placed under arrest and charged with Impersonating a Police Officer.



Latisha Chevonne Creek

Telephone Misuse: 25-90102 On October 28, 2025, DFC Newton responded to the 3400 block of Silverton Lane in Chesapeake Beach for a 911 hang-up. The caller reported there was no emergency. Deputies made contact with **Latisha Chevonne Creek**, who has a history of placing non-emergency 911 calls. Creek was advised that 911 is for emergencies only and that continued misuse could result in arrest. She had previously been warned by Deputy Angell earlier that morning and by Deputy Madura on October 25.

Approximately five minutes after deputies left the residence, Creek placed another non-emergency 911 call. She was placed under arrest and transported to the Calvert County Detention Center, where she was charged with Telephone Misuse.

Theft: 25-89929 On October 28, 2025, Deputy Fleenor responded to Weis Markets located at 210 Village Center Drive in Lusby for a reported theft. Investigation revealed **Jessica Nichole Anderson**, 36 of Lusby, loaded a cart full of groceries into a riding cart and unloaded them before returning to the store, filling a second cart, and exiting without making payment. The estimated value of the stolen items was between \$300 and \$400. Anderson was arrested and charged with Theft: \$100 to Under \$1500.



Quinn McDonald Bannister

Theft: 25-90269 On October 28, 2025, Cpl. Plant responded to Walmart at 150 N Solomons Island Road in Prince Frederick for a reported theft. Upon arrival, deputies made contact with **Quinn McDonald Bannister**, 61, of Prince Frederick. Deputies observed a large bulge in Bannister's waistband. When he lifted

his shirt, deputies recovered a hair trimmer, macaroni and cheese, and perfume concealed under his clothing. Wire cutters, which had been used to cut the cable securing the perfume display, were also located. Bannister was arrested and transported to the Calvert County Detention Center, where he was charged with Theft under \$100 and Malicious Destruction of Property under \$1,000.

Theft: 25-91647 On November 1, 2025, Cpl. Buckler responded to a residence along German Chapel Road in Prince Frederick, for the reported theft. The complainant reported an unknown suspect(s) stole two 120-gallon propane tanks from the rear of the residence. The estimated value of stolen property is \$2600.

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

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



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Letters to the Editor

Misleading information on data centers

Efforts by Calvert Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) to inform residents about the benefits of data centers are reducing rather than increasing the board's credibility regarding these facilities because key information that it provided was vague or misleading.

The county hosted an Information session on data centers at the Prince Frederick campus of the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) on September 29. Residents found that the BOCC's handout and statements by the featured speaker, Kelly Shultz, CEO of the Data Center Alliance, were inaccurate or incomplete. These inaccuracies included, but were not limited to:

- Creation of high paying jobs. The handout implied (but did not explicitly say) that these facilities would create many "well-paying skilled jobs." Ms. Shultz made a vague reference to 100 new jobs. But experience from other locations indicates that most jobs in new data centers have been for maintenance, not well-paid positions.
- Ground water consumption. The county handout was vague about how much water centers would need for cooling and implied that new facilities could use efficient waterless systems or closed loop designs to recirculate water. Local rumors report that data centers might use processed wastewater from the Lusby sewerage facility, but it's not clear that that amount of water would be adequate for cooling requirements or whether they would need to drill into local aquifers for more. Large withdrawals could not only lower aquifer levels, thus jeopardizing supplies to residents' wells, but also allow arsenic to migrate into our water supply.
- Increased electrical costs. Ms. Shultz made the most misleading statement of the event when she said that concerns about data centers increasing electrical rates were "fake." A study by the Energy Information Agency of electrical prices in our region reported that PJM Interconnection, the company that manages the transmission and pricing of electricity in 14 nearby

jurisdictions, including Maryland, saw increases of 15 percent to 20 percent between July 2024 and July 2025. The PJM Independent Market Monitor, an organization that studied PJM practices, found that PJM "led to customers being overcharged by a combined \$1.454 billion" over a two-year period. Another study by the Brattle Group, found that increased electrical consumption did not increase rates, but, rather, the need to maintain, build, and upgrade poles, wires, and other electrical infrastructure were responsible for increases. This is a distinction without a difference. New data facilities require much more electrical power and often need expensive transmission system upgrades. Historically, new centers have increased nearby electrical rates regardless of the financial dynamic: PJM mismanagement, increased power demands, or system upgrades – or all the above.

Ms. Shultz referenced "Quantum Frederick," a massive data center project in Frederick County, Maryland, managed by TPG (The Texas Pacific Group) Real Estate Partners. This project has a 2,100-acre campus and a fiber optic network to feed data to Northern Virginia and will require PJM to manage a huge increase in electrical consumption from a network with a relatively fixed generating capacity. So, when Quantum Frederick begins operations, Calvert residents are likely to see continued increases in electrical costs. The only thing that was fake on September 29 at CSM was not our fears about increases in electricity rates but, rather, Ms. Shultz's characterization of our fears as fake.

These are a few of the concerns raised by Calvert residents at the September 29 data center event. If the Calvert BOCC wants to generate support for data centers, it needs to insure that the information it provides is credible. Otherwise, these events will more likely result in residents opposing, rather than supporting, these facilities in the county.

Len Zuza
Solomons

Leadership Southern Maryland Digs into the Region's Agriculture



Farming 4 Hunger Executive Director Bernie Fowler, Jr. takes the Leadership Southern Maryland Executive Program on a tour of Serenity Farm in Benedict. Participants learn that Farming 4 Hunger does much more than supply food to those in need. Photo by Joe Mortensen

The Leadership Southern Maryland (LSM) Executive Program met in October for a day-long tour and exploration of Southern Maryland agriculture.

"The LSM Executive Program brings together community-oriented senior professionals who want to understand Southern Maryland better so they can serve Southern Maryland better," said Executive Director Dr. Sybol Anderson. "Our day-long study of Southern Maryland agriculture is an essential ingredient in understanding our regional identity."

The group convened at the Solomons Mission Center where executive director Kelly Ward, LSM '25 provided an overview of the organization's mission and programs, which include a community garden, food pantry, clothing bank, and more. Local and state agriculture specialists Caroline Trossbach (Calvert County Department of Economic Development) and Sydney Garner (St. Mary's County Department of Economic Development) followed with a survey of major features and issues in Southern Maryland agriculture.

The executives traveled to the Loveville Produce Auction to experience local agriculture commerce in action. Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC) executive director Shelby Hampton met the group at Serenity Farm in Benedict, Md., where they learned about the decades-long efforts of SMADC to support local farmers and watermen. A highlight of the day was learning about the mission of the nonprofit Farming 4 Hunger to serve those in need of fresh food in Southern Maryland.

The class also learned lessons in life and leadership with Farming 4 Hunger executive director Bernie Fowler, Jr. and his team.

Participants dug deep into intersections of agricultural industry practices and environmental sustainability efforts in an honest conversation about the 2025 Chesapeake Bay and Watershed Report Card with local farmer JR Cosgrove, LSM '22 (Horsmon Farm); watermen Capt. Simon and Rachel Dean (Patuxent River Seafood); environmental scientist Dr. Bill Dennison (Chesapeake Biological Laboratory); and state government representative Rachel Jones (Maryland Department of Agriculture).

The report card is published by the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science to provide transparent, detailed assessments of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. In the 2025 assessment, the Chesapeake Watershed scored a C+ overall (an improvement over 2024), but the Patuxent and Potomac Rivers scored D and D+ respectively, with trends in water quality showing only modest improvement in the Potomac.

Participants learned about collaborative efforts among farmers, watermen, scientists, and government to protect the watershed.

Leadership Southern Maryland's flagship Executive Program is an interactive and life-enriching nine-month, tuition-based "behind-the-scenes" experience designed to enhance the collaborative abilities of our region's top senior professionals. LSM welcomes mid- to upper-level executives representing diverse geographic locations, industries, professions, ethnicities, genders, and other backgrounds who are committed to addressing the community needs of Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties.

Press release from LSM

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Calvert Community Calendar

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

Thu, Nov 20

TACOS Teen Advisory Council of Students

Calvert Library Southern Branch
13920 H. G. Trueman Road, Solomons
5-6 p.m.

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

Teens! Calvert Library needs you! We want the library to be a safe space where teens can hang out and freely access books, information, and form community. TACOS meets monthly to help us with our events and services planning. You can receive one Service Learning hour for each meeting attended. 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Song Circle

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

Join us for a fun and creative Song Circle! Whether you're a musician, singer, or just love to hum along, this event is for you. Lead or learn folk and acoustic tunes in a casual, welcoming jam session. Bring your instrument, voice, or enthusiasm. Spectators are welcome to come enjoy the music, energy, and community spirit! 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Literary Bites

No Thyme to Cook
Solomons
6-8 p.m.

"Charcuterie Girl" by JA Wright, a culinary novel. Meet the author in person! Register to attend virtually at no cost. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Reading Buddies

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

At this event, elementary-aged children will do fun activities and read out loud to teen volunteers. Teen volunteers can earn

one service learning hour for participating. It's a great way to socialize and build reading confidence! 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

STEAMLab - Creating Tools

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

Become a scientist and explore topics related to STEAM! Build, code, count and create with different activities each session. Registration required, intended for scientists in grades 3-5. 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Calvert Toastmasters Open House

Extension Office meeting room
30 Duke St, Prince Frederick
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Join us to learn how Toastmasters can make you a more confident speaker. Lunch will be provided. Can't visit in person? email us at contact-1071664@toastmastersclubs.org for zoom codes.

Fri, Nov 21

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>.

Pink Friday: A Celebration of Small Businesses!

Calvert Museum Store
Noon-7 p.m.

Join the Museum Store for Pink Friday, a nationwide event dedicated to celebrating and supporting small and local businesses! Launched in 2020, this special day takes place annually on the Friday before Black Friday, encouraging everyone to shop small FIRST during the holiday season.

Pink is the new Black – so let's kick off the festivities! Explore Solomons with our event map, guiding you through all the participating Pink Friday shops. Enjoy exclusive deals, support your favorite local businesses, and collect fun pink swag as you shop from spot to spot!

Sat, Nov 22

ChangedStars – ADULT

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
1-4:30 p.m.

Come have fun with a science fiction role playing game for adults of all experience levels. Please register for this event. Local author, Leland Andercheck, will be facilitating an introductory session for ChangedStars, a science fiction tabletop role playing game. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Dungeons & Dragons – TEENS

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

Players ages 13-19 of all levels and interest are welcome. Registration is required. 410-257-2101. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Drop In Switch

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
2-4 p.m.

Have fun and make friends at this electronic twist on game night! Play games using the Nintendo Switch. Registration is not required. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Mon, Nov 24

STEAMLab Jr - Creating Tools

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

Become a scientist and explore topics

related to STEAM! Build, code, count and create with different activities each session. Registration required. Intended for scientists in grades K-2. 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Mindfulness Series: Meditation with Allie

Calvert Library Fairview Branch
Rt. 4 and Chaneyville Road, Owings
6:30-7:30 p.m.

Discover the power of presence with Mindfulness Meditation led by Allie. Begin with gentle guidance into mindfulness, sink into a soothing meditation, and close with space for reflection. Allie's warm, insightful approach invites you to find clarity, deepen self-awareness, and embrace moments of stillness and transformation. 410-257-2101. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Wed, Nov 26

Tech Help Drop-in Hour

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Learn how to troubleshoot and fix your tech problems with Calvert Library! Need help with your devices? Drop in to Calvert Library's open tech hours! We are pleased to offer personalized assistance with basic tech requests, computer and internet basics, e-Readers, Libby, Microsoft Office or Google apps, personal devices and more! While we are happy to schedule dedicated one-on-one tech trainings and offer tech help during all locations' open hours, these events are completely dedicated to you and your questions with no scheduling or appointment required. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

On Pins and 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>.



County Times

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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.

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St. Mary's Community Calendar

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

Thu, Nov 20

St. Mary's NAACP General Meeting

Church of the Ascension
21641 Great Mills Rd., Lexington Park
6:30 p.m.

Town hall style meeting. Come share what's important to you to help us shape and plan our goals for 2026 and beyond. Let your voices be heard. Get involved.

Sat, Nov 22

Thanksgiving 5K, Prediction 5K, & Fun Walk

St. Mary's City Visitor's Center
18751 Hogaboom Lane, St. Mary's City
9 a.m.

29th annual event. 100 percent of race proceeds are donated directly to Special Olympics of St. Mary's County. www.active.com/st-mary-s-city-md/running/distance-running-races/thanksgiving-5k-prediction-5k-and-fun-walk-2025

Sun, Nov 23

Community Thanksgiving Service

Hollywood United Methodist Church
24422 Mervell Dean Road, Hollywood
6 p.m.

Ongoing

39th Annual Holiday Show

North End Gallery
Nov. 25 – Dec. 31

FOUR and MORE Holiday Events:

- Open late during the Christmas Tree Lighting! Friday, November 28th thru 8pm.
- Support your local artists on Small Business Saturday. Open 11-5 p.m.
- First Friday, Dec. 5, holiday reception, 5 until 8 p.m.
- A Jewelry Trunk Show on Sunday, Dec. 7: featuring Mickey Kunkle, Judy Larsen, and Kennedi Milan

Show lead contact: Bea Poulin <president.northendgallery@gmail.com>

Upcoming

Scuba with Santa

College of Southern Maryland Wellness & Aquatics Center (WAC)
22950 Hollywood Rd., Leonardtown

Saturday, Dec. 6; 12 – 4 p.m.

St. Mary's County Government's Department of Recreation & Parks (R&P) is hosting Santa Claus for an unforgettable holiday experience. Join the professionals of Southern Maryland Divers for a short Discover Scuba course to learn the basics of scuba diving, then have your photo taken with Santa—underwater!

Registration is required, and participants must be age 8 or above. Anyone under 18 will need to have a parent on site to sign waivers.

Club Christmas Party

The Rex
Leonardtown
Dec. 11, 7-10 p.m.

Join the Republican Central Committee as we celebrate Christmas and the holiday season at The the Christmas season. Club Christmas Party. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Club President Deb Rey at 301-997-4183 or smrcpclub@gmail.com

Hearth & Home

Historic St. Mary's City
Nov. 28 & 29, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Celebrate the close of the museum season with historic food demonstrations. Bring a canned good for \$1 off admission.

Community Christmas Tree Lighting

Hollywood Volunteer Fire Department Social Hall
Saturday, Nov. 29, doors open at 5 p.m.

- Fire truck rides 5-5:45
- Make reindeer dust
- Write letter to Santa
- Goodie bag
- Light refreshments available
- Pictures with Santa

Cosmic Holiday Concert

Nancy R. and Norton T. Dodge Performing Arts Center
St. Mary's College of Maryland
47855 College Dr., St. Mary's City
Dec. 14, 3 p.m.

COSMIC will be joined by St. Maries Choral Arts this holiday season to bring you "Gloria," a joyful musical celebration! This concert will include individual performances by both the choir and orchestra, as well as several collaborations. Highlights include "Greensleeves," "O Holy Night," and of course, "Gloria," as part of a program that is sure to leave you feeling festive. As always, these concerts are presented free of charge with no tickets required, and donations are greatly appreciated.

ST. MARY'S COUNTY library

UPCOMING EVENTS



Adaptive Art Studio for Adults with Cognitive Disabilities

Learn about Fauvism, created by Henri Matisse. We'll have an example art piece to talk about and then we'll each create our own version of the piece! Leonardtown Library on Friday, November 21, 10 - 11:30 a.m. No experience needed and all materials will be provided. This program is intended for adults with cognitive disabilities and their caregivers. You will only need to register the adult participant not the accompanying caregiver on www.stmalib.org.

Author Fair

Learn from local writers and meet new ones! Learn about getting started writing, publishing, and more. No registration required for attendees. Charlotte

Hall Library on Saturday, November 22, 1 - 4 p.m. The St. Mary's County Library Author Fair provides an opportunity to meet local authors and browse their works. Authors will give a quick presentation on their writing experiences, and have an opportunity to promote and sell their work.

Thanksgiving Hours

All locations of St. Mary's County Library will close at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, November 26 and will remain closed on Thursday, November 27 and Friday, November 28 in observance of Thanksgiving and Native American Heritage Day. All locations will be open regular business hours on Saturday, November 29.

Lexington Park Chess Day: The Turkey Turney

A special edition chess day, featuring a chess tournament with a formal rule-set utilizing chess clocks and judging. Lexington Park Library on Saturday, November 29 from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Registration is required for competitors, format will be in quads, with a potential winner's quad with enough participants. 7.5 minute rounds. Quad winners and prizes will be available, as well as small participation prizes. 13 and under division and a 14+ division, maximum of 16 participants per division. Register on www.stmalib.org.

500 by 5 Celebration!

Wherever you are on your early literacy journey, come celebrate our 500 by 5 program participants with us! We will

have a special storytime, get creative with crafts, and have a dance party! Charlotte Hall Library on Tuesday, November 25 from 10 a.m. - 11 a.m. No matter whether you have completed the program or are just getting started, we want to celebrate early literacy with you! Reading with your child helps to get them ready for school, increase vocabulary and speech skills, improve logical thinking, and encourage a love of learning. Register on www.stmalib.org.

Closed for Staff Training on December 5

All locations of St. Mary's County Library will be closed on Friday, December 5 for staff training. All locations will be open regular business hours on Saturday, December 6.

Continued from page 15

who approached both service and leisure with passion, integrity, and joy. His legacy of love, curiosity, and perseverance will live on in all who knew him.

Family invites friends to a memorial gathering on November 24, 2025 at 10:00am with a Mass of Christian burial starting at 11am at St. John's Catholic Church, 43950 St. John's Road, Hollywood, Maryland 20636. Interment will follow in the church cemetery.

Condolences may be left for the family at www.brinsfieldfuneral.com.

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

Pat Lyon, 89



Patricia Long Lyon passed away peacefully in Fredericksburg, VA on November 4, 2025. Pat was born in Leonardtown, MD on June 22, 1936.

She is survived by her children Rosemary Lyon of Latrobe, PA, Linda Lyon Parker (Kerry) of Alexandria, VA, Patricia (PJ) Lyon-Patterson (Fred) of Berlin, MD, Sharon James of Mayking, KY, Janet Lyon of Houston, TX; her grandchildren Jesse (Bubba) Lyon, Kasey Lyon Hatcher (Trey), Aaron Mauck (Paige), Holden James, Jarrett Patterson (Juliana); great grandchildren Jackson, Easton, Savannah, and Delilah Hatcher.

She is survived by her sister Helene

Farrall of Bushwood, MD, along with four nieces and one nephew; her sister-in-law Mary Jean Lyon of Bethesda, MD; a special cousin Brenda Lyon Gardiner; and her long-time best friend from childhood Thomas Harold Rice of Interlaken, NY.

Pat was preceded in death by her son Richard Lyon, Jr; parents William Blair Long and Rose Alberta Thompson Long; and the father of her children James Richard Lyon, Sr.

She grew up in Faulkner, MD, graduating from Archbishop Neale Catholic School in La Plata, MD and attended St. Ignatius Catholic Church at Chapel Point, MD. She worked as a substitute teacher and as an aide at Leonardtown Elementary School. She co-owned The Fabric Nook and worked at the Fashion Center in Leonardtown, MD. She later worked for Patuxent River and Dahlgren DOD contractors in the technology field where she made many friends during her 18-year tenure before retiring in 2002.

Pat had a passion for genealogy, reviving plants and flowers, photography, solving crossword and jigsaw puzzles. She also enjoyed crocheting, a craft she learned from her Grandmother Thompson. Summers at Chapel Point were among her fondest memories, where she enjoyed swimming, roller skating, and participating in church and fire department picnic dinners.

She spent the last two years thriving in assisted living where she made new friends and participated in various activities. The family would like to thank the Spring Arbor Fredericksburg community for the care and friendship they provided.

The family will receive friends on

Tuesday, November 25, 2025, from 9:30 AM to 10:30 AM, in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, MD, where a funeral service will be held in the funeral home chapel at 10:30 AM, with Deacon Joe Lloyd officiating. Interment will follow at Sacred Heart Catholic Cemetery, Bushwood, MD.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to a charity of your choice.

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.

Shirley Wood, 81



Shirley Faye (Guy) Wood, beloved wife, mother, grandmother and great grandmother, passed away peacefully surrounded by her family on November 13, 2025.

She will be remembered as a beautiful soul — kind, gentle, devoted to her family, and compassionate to all she met. Her legacy of love, strength, and grace will live on in every heart she touched.

Born on September 21, 1944, in Leonardtown, MD, Shirley was the daughter of the late William Leonard and Margaret Cornelia (Bowles) Guy. She was the devoted wife of Hamilton E. "Bubba" Wood, Sr. with whom she shared sixty-four years of marriage. Together, they built a beautiful life and a family filled with love.

Shirley devoted herself to raising her children until her youngest entered school. At that time, she began her second career in the St. Mary's County Public School System, Food Services Department. She worked at several schools and eventually became the Food Service Manager at Oakville Elementary School until her retirement in 2010. "Ms. Wood" as the children called her, cared deeply for the students and treated every child with love and kindness.

She had a passion for gardening and spent countless hours creating and tending to her beautiful gardens. She cherished camping trips with family and friends and never passed up a chance to "pull the handle" or scratch a ticket in hopes of winning a few

coins. In her earlier years, she enjoyed softball, bowling, and was always ready for a good game of Pitch. Above all, her greatest joy in life was simply being with her family.

Shirley's memory will be cherished by her children, Hamilton E. "Tony" (Sandra) Wood Jr., William F. "Billy" (Cathy) Wood, and Deborah F. "Debbie" (Timmy) May; her grandchildren, Kyle (Brittani) Wood, Melaney (Vince) LoPiccolo, Kourtney (Billy) Rabbitt, Corey (Erica) Wood, Derrick (Leah) May, Kaitlyn Wood (Brad Sullivan), and Jeremy May (Shannon Hill); and her great grandchildren, Kayleigh, Kaiden, Kinsley, Kashton, Kamden, Wesley, Emma, and another great granddaughter soon to arrive, all who lovingly called her "Maw" and brought her endless smiles and joy. She also leaves behind her siblings: Margaret Ann (predeceased Leonard) Harding and William Leonard (Betty Jean) Guy.

The family will receive friends for visitation on Thursday, November 20, 2025, from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM, with prayers recited at 7:00 PM, in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, 41590 Fenwick Street, Leonardtown, MD 20650. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Friday, November 21, 2025, at 10:00 AM, in Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, 28297 Old Village Road, Mechanicsville, MD, 20659, with interment to follow at Mt. Zion United Methodist Church Cemetery, 27108 Mt. Zion Church Road, Mechanicsville, MD 20659.

Serving as pallbearers will be Kyle Wood, Corey Wood, Derrick May, Jeremy May, Billy Rabbitt, and Vince LoPiccolo. Honorary pallbearers will include her granddaughters: Melaney LoPiccolo, Kourtney Rabbitt, Kaitlyn Wood, great grandchildren: Kayleigh Rabbitt, Kaiden Wood, Kinsley Rabbitt, along with Brittani Wood, Erica Wood, Leah May, Shannon Hill, and Brad Sullivan.

Memorial donations may be made in Shirley's name to ACTS - A Community That Shares, Mechanicsville Rescue Squad, or American Cancer Society.

May her soul rest in eternal peace, and may her love continue to shine through the lives of those she so deeply cherished.

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.

In Memory of

Mary Catherine Kane

Sept. 18, 1924 – Nov. 22, 2019



It's been six years since you went home to Heaven. Over the years we still talk and think about the wonderful days that we shared with you, Mama, with all the love and support that you gave us. We know that in your heart, when you went to be with your loving Father in Heaven, that you were complete because you knew we could take care of ourselves. Mama, you did real good.

**We love and miss you,
Ellen and Larry**

ERIC KELLY

7/3/61-11/20/20

*It's been five years
since you left us.*

We miss you every day. You are forever in our hearts and thoughts. You will never be forgotten.

*Love,
Mom, Yvonne, Shayna and Jeremiah*



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.

Scotty Roysden, 55



Clifford "Scotty" Scott Roysden, Jr., 55, of Hollywood, Maryland, passed away peacefully at his home on Veteran's Day, November 11, 2025, surrounded by his wife and son.

Born in Marietta, Georgia on September 3, 1970, he was the beloved son of Clifford Scott Roysden, Sr. and Linda Faye (Brooks) Roysden. Scotty was a proud resident of St. Mary's County for the past 28 years, where he built a full and meaningful life rooted in love, family, and friendships.

A devoted husband, father, and friend, Scotty married Christina "Christy" Marie (Vansant) Roysden, on August 21, 1993 in Stockbridge, GA. Together, they shared 32 wonderful years of marriage, raising their son, Brennan Roysden, and building a home filled with love and laughter.

Scotty earned a Master's Degree from Tulane University while supporting NAVAIR/NAWCAD at NAS Patuxent River. He was also a proud Navy veteran, having served his country with honor and commitment. Scotty was a talented woodworker and owner of Hickory Landing Woodworks, LLC, where his skills and dedication were admired.

Scotty was a member of Hollywood United Methodist Church and found joy and fellowship in his community living by the values of kindness, service, and humility.

A man of many talents and interests, Scotty loved woodworking, fishing, and spending time boating, playing golf, and cheering for his favorite team, the Georgia Bulldogs. Scotty especially loved watching Brennan participate in any sport he chose including baseball, golf and currently wrestling.

Scotty is survived by his wife, Christy, son, Brennan, his mother, Linda Roysden, his sisters, Sherrie Webb (Steve) and Theresa Ebert; his brother, James "Jimbo" Roysden (Rachel), his mother and father in-law, Pamela and Tyler Vansant, and sister in law Melissa Crimlinger (Ryan). He is also survived by nieces and nephews, Kyle, Kali, Tyler, Morgan, Avery, and Gavin, along with many aunts, uncles, cousins, and longtime friends. The Family's loyal dog, Dean Martin, will miss Scotty sharing his potato chips.

He was preceded in death by his father Clifford Scott Roysden, Sr., who now welcomes him home.

Scotty will be remembered for his integrity and boundless love for his family. His memory will live on in the wood he shaped and the lives he touched.

A celebration of Scotty's life will be held Thursday, November 20, 2025 at 1200 at Hollywood United Methodist Church, 24422 Mervell Dean Rd, Hollywood, MD 20650, officiated by Pastor Matthew Tate. Visitation with the Family will precede the funeral service from 1000-1200.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made in Scotty's name to Charlotte Hall Veterans Home, 29449 Charlotte Hall

Rd, Charlotte Hall, MD 20622.

Condolences may be left for the family at www.brinsfieldfuneral.com.

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

Joan MacMillan, 85



Joan Carol MacMillan, 85, of California, Maryland, passed away peacefully on November 11, 2025, surrounded by her loving family.

Born on March 9, 1940, in Alexandria, Virginia, Joan was the daughter of Clarence Minor Madison and Ada Gertrude (Edwards) Madison. She was raised with strong values of family, kindness, and hard work—qualities that became the foundation of the life she built and the love she poured into everyone around her.

Joan spent her life devoted to her family and community. A dedicated homemaker, she created a warm and welcoming home where generations gathered, celebrated, and felt unconditionally loved. Her steady presence, gentle nature, and thoughtful spirit touched everyone she knew. She married the love of her life, Robert Bruce MacMillan, with whom she shared 52 years of marriage with until his passing in 2017.

Throughout her life, Joan enjoyed the comfort of community and connection. She treasured her time with family, loved sharing stories, crocheting, going to the beach, and never missed an opportunity to support and encourage the people she cared about. Her quiet strength and kindness will be remembered always.

Joan is survived by her children, Susan Buehler (Brad) and John MacMillan (Georgia); her siblings, Betty Durand and Barbara Wever; her grandchildren, Courtney Dagenhart (Will), Taylor Fitzpatrick (Ryan), Madison Buehler, Kate MacMillan, and Brynley MacMillan; and her great-grandchildren, Luke and Bowden Dagenhart.

She was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Bruce MacMillan, her siblings, Emily Tydings, Lois Flynn, Harold Madison (Patricia), and Steve Madison (Tina).

A memorial service will be held on November 22, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. at Community With a Cause Global Methodist Church. Family and friends are invited to gather in remembrance of Joan's life, her love, and the legacy she leaves behind.

Joan will be dearly missed, but her compassion, warmth, and the many beautiful memories she created will continue to live on in the hearts of all who knew her.

Memorial contributions may be made in Joan's name to Hospice of St. Mary's, P.O. Box 625, Leonardtown, MD 20650 and St. Mary's Nursing Center, Inc., 21585 Peabody Street Leonardtown, Maryland 20650.

Condolences may be left for the family at www.brinsfieldfuneral.com.

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

Charles Archer, 95



Charles Madison Archer, 95, passed away peacefully on September 29, 2025. Born August 2, 1930, in Towanda, Pennsylvania, he was the son of the late Madison and Elizabeth Archer.

Charles grew up in Monroeton, PA, and graduated from Towanda High School in 1948. Shortly after, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy, where he began what would be a lifetime of service, innovation, and adventure. He attended the Aviation Electronics School in Memphis, TN, and was designated an Aviation Electronicsman. He was later assigned to Attack Squadron 15 (VA-15) at NAS Jacksonville, FL, where he served on two Mediterranean cruises.

In 1952, while serving aboard the USS Wasp, tragedy struck when the ship collided with the USS Hobson, leading to the loss of 167 sailors—an event that deeply marked his service years. In 1953, Charles transferred to the Naval Air Test Center at Patuxent River, MD, where he specialized in radar and sonobuoy testing. It was during this time that he met Margaret, who became his wife and lifelong partner.

Charles was honorably discharged from

the Navy in 1955 and transitioned to civilian life, where he continued his career in aviation and defense. He worked with antenna testing and later became a Range Safety Officer and Project Coordinator at the Chesapeake Test Range. After 39 years of service, he retired from Civil Service in 1987, though he continued working for another decade as a government contractor.

In retirement, Charles pursued his many passions. He was a dedicated bicyclist, racing almost every weekend and even competing in Europe, including races in Russia and Austria. In 2011, he proudly won the Gold Medal for his age group in the Delaware Senior Olympics 20K Road Race. He was also an avid fly fisherman, a lover of jazz and big band music, and a wine enthusiast. His keen interest in collecting stamps grew into an impressive and substantial collection.

Charles is preceded in death by his beloved wife, Margaret Archer, his brother Robert Archer, and his sister Margaret Wood.

He is survived by his son Kyle Archer (Amy), his daughter Jodi Weakland (Paul), and his grandsons Ryan and William. He also leaves behind his sister Jane Kintner, his brother Tim Archer, and many other family members and friends who will cherish his memory.

Charles will be remembered as a devoted family man, a lifelong learner, and a man

Continued on page 16

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www.mgfh.com



Southern Maryland *Farm & Country* *Christmas Auction*



Saturday, December 6, 2025 - 9 AM

- ◆ Locally-Made, Evergreen Wreaths & Centerpieces
- ◆ Locally-Grown Poinsettias
- ◆ New Tools/Items ◆ New Toys
 - ◆ Handcrafted Quilts
 - ◆ Furniture & Crafts
 - ◆ Lawn/Garden Items
 - ◆ New Household Items
 - ◆ Camping/Sporting Items

Consignments of New, Quality Items Accepted.

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Auctioneers: Ronnie Farrell, Randy Farrell, Jason Farrell and Zach Shelley.

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Thank you for supporting our auction and our local craftsmen & producers.

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Auction Preview & Early Registration - Friday (Dec. 5th - 3 to 7 pm.

Unable to make it to the auction? Stop by Friday evening for assistance with absentee bidding.

Expected and Early Consignments Include: Locally-crafted, Live Evergreen Wreaths and Centerpieces (including 1, 2 & 3 Candle Centerpieces); Locally-Grown Poinsettias (various sizes, colors); Hand Painted Signs by D. Poe (including "Leonardtown Carnival" and "St. Mary's County" signs); New/Reclaimed Furniture/Crafts (including items from HSK – Kurtz Furniture & others): Cedar Chest, Wine Rack (from reclaimed sewing base), Lazy Susan, Hall/Sofa Table, Walking Sticks, Hall Tree and more; New locally-made Poly Furniture from Willow Farm Outdoor Products & others such as: Rocking Chairs, Glider Rockers, Picnic Table; Handcrafted Quilts; New/Unused IRGC80 Golf Cart (by Ingersoll-Rand); Razor Battery-Op Youth Quad Ride-On; Iron Silhouettes (Wagon Wheels, Snowmen, Trees); Variety of New Items & Tools such as: Fiskars Aluminum Shovels, Electric Trailer Jacks, Rechargeable Chainsaws, Drones, Husky Tool Pouches and Work Bags, Milwaukee Hole Saw Kit, File/Storage Cabinet, "Grease Monkey" Gloves, Hand Warmers, Voltage Testers, Craftsman Roller Work Seat, Dash Cameras, Irwin Vise Grips, Grease Guns, Tactical Flashlights, Plier Sets, Tire Repair Sets, 6pc Solar Sets, Levels, Tool Cart, Fire Pits, Car Wash Soap, Milwaukee and DeWalt Tools (variety of tools including drills, saws, blowers, chainsaws, and more), Coolers, Meat Grinders, Pyrex Sets, Cast Iron Pans, Nostalgic Signs, Wrangler Travel Cases, Winter/Holiday-Themed Inflatables, 4 pc. Husky Ratchet Straps, Juicer, Winchester Boots, Wood Framed Laser Cut Hunting-Themed Signs, Fishing Reels, Air Hose Kit, Nerf Toys, Variety of other Toys, Items and Much More!

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November 29th

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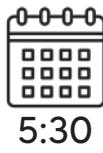
ENJOY OUR VINTAGE CHRISTMAS DECOR, UNIQUE GIFT IDEAS AND FABULOUS ANTIQUES

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Lexington Park Library: 21677 FDR Blvd



Scan for info



Christmas Tree & Menorah Lighting

Saturday, December 6



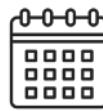
Free Hot Chocolate

From the Lexington Park Rotary Club



Sing-Along Carols

With The Nightingales



Holly Days Extravaganza

1-4 p.m.

Sunday, December 7



ACTIVITIES

- Selfies with Santa
- Crafts for all
- Kids' Activity Zone

HOLIDAY MARKET

- cocoa bombs
- holiday decor
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- and more!

Generous Sponsors:



Annual Christmas Open House

November 22nd & 23rd

SAT / 10am - 6pm

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- ~ Christmas Decor
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Gingerbread Lane
December 5, 2025 to January 5, 2026



Hosted by the
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BUSINESS ASSOCIATION
VisitLeonardtownMD.com

Thursday Night Lights in Leonardtown



December 4, 11 & 18, 2025
Most Retail Locations Open til 7pm

Take a stroll through Leonardtown, enjoy the Holiday lights and do a little late-night shopping at one of these locations.

- Old Jail Museum
- St. Mary's Arts Council Gallery
- Fenwick Street Books
- Crafts N Stitches
- The Craft Guild Shop
- New View Fiberworks
- Shepherds Old Field Market
- The Griffons Court
- Quality Street Kitchen
- Kings of Cards
- Sneades Ace Hardware
- Marie & Nash
- Happy n Zen
- Method Gym

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S O F MARKET



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Unique Mini Mall Experience!
Over 90 Small Business Shops & Services!
Unique Gift Ideas and Stocking Stuffers!



Holiday Hours through December 24, 2025
Monday - Saturday: 10 AM - 7 PM
Sunday: 11 AM - 5 PM
Closed Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve: 10 AM - 3 PM

[f Shepherd's Old Field Market](#) [shepherds_old_field_market](#) [www.shepherdsoldfield.com](#)

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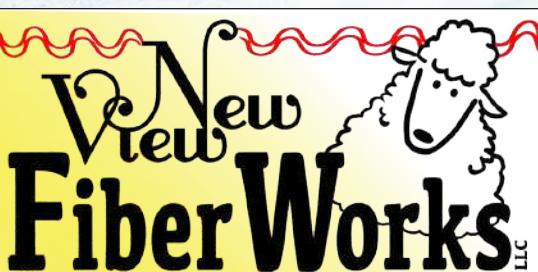
We host private events!

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SHOP SMALL – SHOP LOCAL!
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WED & THU 10–4
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Saturday 9am–6pm • Sunday 10am–2pm

Fresh Local Produce • Meats • Cheeses • Flowers • Clothing & Shoes
Open Every Weekend With Visiting Vendors

Holiday Events at Town Market

Fri., Nov. 28th Holiday market with The Grinch & Cindy Lou Who

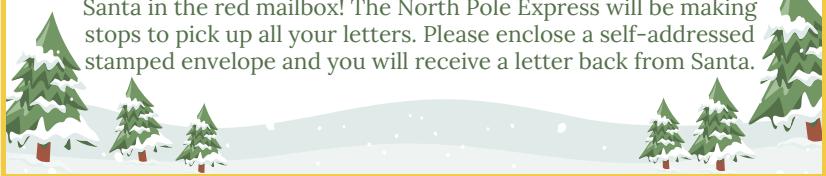
Sat., Nov. 29th Small Business Saturday with The Grinch

Sat., Dec. 6th Holiday Market & fur baby pictures with The Grinch

Sat., Dec. 13th Christmas Shopping Spree & visits with The Grinch

Sat., Dec. 20th Holiday Market & pictures with Santa

Nov. 28th – Dec. 21st Stop by Town Market and drop your letter to Santa in the red mailbox! The North Pole Express will be making stops to pick up all your letters. Please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope and you will receive a letter back from Santa.



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COOKIES WITH SANTA
DECEMBER 6, 13, & 20 | 12PM–4PM

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Thursday, Nov. 28

Noon - 3pm

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Wanderings of an Aimless Mind



Just One of the Best Anniversary Trips Ever!

By Shelby Opperman
Contributing Writer

I am still smiling from finally crossing off something off my bucket list that has been on there at least 20 years. We spent our 24th anniversary in Duck, NC in the Outer Banks from Friday through this past Tuesday. And on this trip we decided it was time to see the wild Spanish Mustangs of Corolla on one of the wild horse tours. We booked the Back Country Safari company tour which is a modified pick-up truck with two rows of bench seats facing each other. When they tell you to buckle up with the special seat belts you need to do it.



Our driver, whose name was Em or M, not sure, was the ultimate surfer dude adrenaline junkie who also has a degree in computer science. He was so knowledgeable and so funny. The two hour trip from Corolla and right on the beach part of Rt. 12 to just short of the fence in the water at the Virginia line was amazing. Those drivers have to navigate lone, condemned homes on the beach and ancient stumps in the sand and ocean from the maritime forest that once covered parts of the beach and hundreds of feet into where the ocean is now.

When we got to the beach road he said that you will notice that there are really no rules, that there will be 4 or 5 lines of cars and not always are they on the right side of the road. I thought we were in England for a bit. Cars were stopped right by the waves either fishing or picnicking while trucks, cars, and tour trucks zoomed (between 15 and 35mph) around them. It was crazy, but exhilarating. Most of the people on our tour, including my husband, were freezing, but I was loving the fresh, biting air – it was like Mindy having her head out the window of the car. The day was extremely windy as evidenced by the thousands of knots in my hair at the end.

Our driver told us at the beginning of the tour that there was always a chance that we might not see any wild horses at all, but I was having such a good time that I wasn't too worried. After the first part of the tour alongside the ocean, Em drove us up and over the sand dune into rental neighborhoods of the beautiful homes on stilts you see throughout OBX. But these neighborhoods were off the beaten track with bumpy, hilly sandy roads that you only get to from the beach road. He said a few people live there year round and have to be pretty hardy souls. I have no idea if they are able to get deliveries or anything else. In this neighborhood of about 700 homes was where we first saw the Mustangs munching on sea oats and whatever else they could find in yards. The rich chestnut and ebony colors in the sun were beautiful.

After riding further into the sandy woods and roads, he said this is where the real loners live year round that don't want to be bothered by people. There were a lot of crazy sculptures and vehicles put together from scraps all over. We drove by Dennis Anderson, the Gravedigger's house with his signature green color on the house and fencing. I was wondering how our driver knew where he was going through these miles of sandy roads when we came upon quite a few of the Mustangs. They don't seem to be fazed by anything and would move slowly and stare at us. We couldn't go forward because of this, so we were able to get some up close and personal photos before the driver had to back up down the road. I loved seeing all the horses, and to be this close was unbelievable. What a great trip. If you haven't taken the tour, please book it as soon as you can. What they call the shoulder seasons like early spring and late fall are the best since he said its total bumper to bumper traffic during the summer. Of course, we also had great romantic meals, spa days at The Sanderling Resort where we stayed and other amazing day trips during our time there, but my mind will always go back to those beautiful wild horses.

To each new day's adventure,
Shelby

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

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HAPPY THANKSGIVING!



Beer, Wine and Liquor



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19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	1	2

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MEET CODY

Hi, I'm Cody, an exuberant, fun-loving kitty ready to leap into your heart! I'm a 3-year-old boy and I'm the total package. I'm great with kids, other animals, and I always use my litterbox like a champ. My favorite pastime? Chasing toys with strings and showing off my best high jumps! When playtime's over, you'll find me snuggled up on a comfy blanket, purring contently.

If you're looking for a handsome, playful, yet cuddly companion, then I'm your guy! Come meet me today. Adoption hours are Mon-Fri 11am-4pm and Sat 10am-3pm. To see more of my amazing friends also available for adoption, "like" us on Facebook @ Charles County Animal Care Center or at <https://www.charlescountymd.gov/services/animal-care-control/animal-care-center>



MEET AVA

This gorgeous 5-year-old Lab mix is as sweet as she is chatty — she loves to "talk" and share her opinions. Ava is a total people-lover, but she has a special soft spot for the fellas! She does well with most dogs and enjoys playtime, though her confident personality can come off a little bossy. Ava is also okay with cats and is learning great manners in her foster home. She's working on sharing food and treats with other animals — she's a little protective of her goodies sometimes, but she's improving every day. If you're looking for a loyal companion with lots of love (and personality!) to give, Ava might just be your perfect match. If you are interested in meeting with Ava or learning more about her please contact Animal Relief Fund (ARF) at 301-866-0303 or visit www.animalrelieffund.org



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HELP US FEED LOCAL FAMILIES

COMPASSIONATE HEARTS FAMILY RESOURCE NETWORK INC.

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

- Donate online — every \$25 feeds a family of four
- Drop off non-perishable food items, toiletries & household items



WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT

This holiday season, Compassionate Hearts Family Resource Network Inc. is collecting donations to help provide warm meals, clothing, and essential toiletries to families in our community.

EVENT DETAILS:

Tuesday, November 25, 2025
| 12-3 PM
@
Lexington Park Public Library —
Meeting Room B
21677 FDR Blvd, Lexington Park,
MD 20653

Visit compassionate-hearts.org or
scan the QR code to give today.



For questions or information please
contact Iris 240-572-0541

★ All cash donations are tax-deductible.

Matching Funds Available for New, Expanding Farms

The Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC), a division of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, is excited to announce the 13th Round of the Southern Maryland Farmer Mini-Grant Program.

This program will award up to \$60,000 in matching funds to help both new and experienced farmers start, diversify, or expand their agricultural projects.

Applications are now open and will close on Wednesday, December 31st.

Applications for the mini-grants offer awards of up to \$3,000 per farmer and require a one-to-one dollar match. These grants are specifically designed to assist new and beginning farmers with small start-up projects, as well as to help experienced farmers (both urban and rural) diversify or expand their current agricultural businesses. All funded projects must be simple in scope and be completed within one year.

Grant funds can be used for a wide range of needs, including:

- Equipment and services to transition a farm's sales strategy (e.g., online sales,

home delivery, on-farm sales).

- Purchasing foundation livestock and plant stock.
- Marketing and promotion of current farm operations.
- New fencing for enhancement, expansion, or protection.
- Hoop houses and materials for value-added food production.
- On-farm upgrades to enhance food safety, packing, and production, including freezers and refrigeration.

Since its establishment in 2016, the Farmer Mini-Grant Program has funded 208 applications, awarding a total of \$361,763 to Southern Maryland farms.

Full details on the SMADC Southern Maryland Farmer Mini-Grant Program, including Round 13 Criteria, Guidelines, Eligibility, and access to the online application, are available on the SMADC website at www.SMADC.com under the "Farmer Resources" section on the Mini-Grants information page.

Press Release from SMADC

Enjoy the Best of Local Farms for the Holidays

The Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission, a Division of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, invites you to view the 2025 Southern Maryland Holiday Farm Guide available now to explore online at SMADC.com.

Looking for unique gifts, holiday décor, fresh farm foods and fun events to celebrate the season? Southern Maryland's farms and producers have you covered!

Browse the online 2025 Holiday Farm Guide to connect with farms and producers in Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Prince George's, and St. Mary's counties, plus regional wineries, breweries and distilleries, seafood producers, restaurants, stores and regional winter farmers markets offering Southern Maryland raised and made products for the holiday season and throughout the winter months.

The Holiday Farm Guide is packed with delightful farm-inspired ideas for your home and family. Browse through the engaging interactive pages to uncover a treasure trove of farm-made gifts like locally sourced honey, jams, pickles, goat's milk soaps, beeswax balms, and cozy accessories crafted from local wool and alpaca yarns. You'll also find the ideal locally grown Christmas tree, garlands, and wreaths to adorn your home, along with fresh ingredients for your beloved holiday meals—think winter pro-

duce, meats, poultry, eggs, cheese, and even local oysters, seafood, and artisan wines, beers, and spirits.

The guide also showcases farm-hosted tours and festive events for the entire family; immerse yourself in the season's magic at the region's Holiday Markets, and enjoy twilight strolls through gardens and nurseries transformed into sparkling winter wonderlands. Discover how to create your own holiday wreath and table centerpiece, or make new memories at a farm 'open house' featuring carolers, cookies, mulled cider, visits from Santa, and fun photo ops with ponies and horses. There's so much more to discover to ensure your holiday season is truly 'merry and bright'!

Did you know that every dollar spent at a local business yields about 67 cents for the local economy, while a dollar spent at a large chain store returns only about 43 cents. Support our communities by buying local with small businesses!

The 2025 Southern Maryland Holiday Farm Guide is available now to view on the SMADC website 'Get our Guides' page at SMADC.com. Look for the guide promotional cards at Southern Maryland participating farms, farmers markets and businesses.

Press release from SMADC

McKay House in Belize Honors Manning and Marilyn McKay

House Built by St. John's of Hollywood Mission Team

Volunteers from St. John's Parish in Hollywood last month helped construct a home for a needy mother and her child in Belize City, Belize in honor of the late James Manning and Marilyn McKay, founders of The County Times Newspaper.

The Commissioning Ceremony and mass for the Manning and Marilyn McKay House was held in Belize City on Oct. 11 at 5 p.m.

The McKay's had their roots in Hollywood and were always active in the local, county and church communities. They were a couple who exemplified the term partnership. Their faith-filled and quiet outreach to those in the community who needed help in meeting their family's food and clothing needs was not widely known. The McKay's gave unceasingly of their time, talent, and treasure.

The McKay's passed on their commitment to faith, support for the church and community to their children and family, as six of the St. John's volunteers are McKay family members.

The nine total volunteers were joined by Chris Kunze, SCN, who welcomed the opportunity to visit Belize after living there between 2006 – 2017. As the Associate Director at Camp Maria, Sr. Chris also enjoyed the opportunity to engage in mission work with her local community.

The family that the mission team built for was Ms. Eugenie (Jenny) and her seven-year-old son, Mario. Jenny was in an abusive relationship for many years and recently left this situation. She and Mario have been living with her mother in a very small home with several other family members.

Jenny works full-time at a factory making foam mattresses and attends online school in the evenings to complete her high school diploma. She has dreams of receiving higher education. She was selected as

a recipient based on her demonstrated perseverance, efforts to improve her situation, and the clear need for stable housing for her and her son.

The generosity of the St. John's parish and school have become this family's "village." Together with the team volunteers, those driving the volunteers to and from the airport, dress donations, the support of the children's choir and St. John's School alumni serving as lectors during the Mass, and financial donations during the annual collection, made this possible. Those who prayed for the mission and the safety of the volunteers closed the circle on this mission trip, made it possible, safe, and blessed.

In addition to helping build the McKay home, the volunteers had also brought plenty of shoes, books, composition books, pencils, balls, and beautiful handmade dresses donated from the "Dress a Girl Around the World" program for this mission effort.

The volunteers had a busy week. They enjoyed a tour of Belize City and visited a favorite local artist shop, Lizama's Woodcarving. The volunteers also visited the Hand in Hand Ministries (HIHM) Fowler Community Outreach Center.

The team spent time with the children in daycare and learned about the HIV/AIDS ministry. In the evenings, the volunteers learned more about HIHM's Building for Change Program, visited with the local SCNs, and relaxed to a performance by the Garifuna Dancers. They even visited one of the local firefighter stations.

The volunteers cherished the experience and will forever remember participating in the HIHM house build #549, the St. John's McKay House.

Submitted by Alicia Murphy for St John's of Hollywood



Volunteers from St. John's Parish and School in Hollywood traveled to Belize City in October to construct the Manning and Marilyn McKay House for a local family in need.



Members of the mission team gathered for the home's commissioning ceremony, Oct. 11 at St John's of Hollywood.

Two LHS Teams Take State Championships



Leonardtown High School field hockey captured the Maryland State Class 4A championship with a 3-1 win over Severna Park High School, Nov. 8 at Stevenson University's Stadium.



The Leonardtown High School boys soccer team won its second Maryland 4A State Championship Nov. 14, topping Walt Whitman High of Montgomery County 1-0.

Legal Notices

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR SAINT MARY'S COUNTY, MARYLAND CASE NO: C-18-FM-25-000650

TO: JEFFREY BAIER, UNKNOWN ADDRESS
IN THE MATTER OF BAILEY IRELAND BAIER

NOTICE OF PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME OF A MINOR (Md. Rule 15-901(d))

FOR CHANGE OF NAME TO: Bailey Ireland Hudgins

A petition to change the name of Bailey Ireland Baier to Bailey Ireland Hudgins has been filed with this court.

You must consent to (agree) or object to (oppose) the petition in writing no later than 30 days after being served (receiving) this notice and the documents filed in this case. **If you do not file a written consent or objection within 30 days of being served with this notice, the court will consider your silence to be consent and may grant the name change.**

You can use form CC-DR-063 (Parent's/Guardian's/Custodian's Consent/Objection to Change of Name of a Minor).

Any objection must be supported by an affidavit (a written statement signed by oath or affirmation) and served on all parties. (Md. Rule 1-321.)

Changing the name of the minor will not change any existing child support obligation or paternity.

Debra J. Burch
Clerk of the Court, St. Mary's County

COMMISSIONERS OF LEONARDTOWN NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Leonardtown Mayor and Town Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, December 8, 2025 at 4:15 pm at the Town Hall, 22670 Washington Street, Leonardtown, MD to hear comments on Resolution No. 2-25 request for Annexation of a parcel of real property consisting of 16.35± acres of land shown on Tax Map 32, Parcel 96, which property is contiguous and adjacent to the corporate boundaries of the Town

All interested parties are encouraged to attend or to submit written comments by 3:00 p.m. on December 8, 2025, to the Commissioners of Leonardtown, P.O. Box 1, Leonardtown, MD 20650. Special accommodation will be provided for people with disabilities upon request.

By Authority: Laschelle E. McKay, Town Administrator

COMMISSIONERS OF LEONARDTOWN NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Leonardtown Mayor and Town Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, December 8, 2025 at 4:30 pm at the Town Hall, 22670 Washington Street, Leonardtown, MD to hear comments on Resolution No. 3-25 request for Annexation of a parcel of real property consisting of 52.18± acres of land shown on Tax Map 41, Parcel(s) 235, and a parcel of real property consisting of 3.21 acres of land shown on Tax Map 41, Parcel(s) 266, which properties are contiguous and adjacent to the corporate boundaries of the Town.

All interested parties are encouraged to attend or to submit written comments by 3:00 p.m. on December 8, 2025, to the Commissioners of Leonardtown, P.O. Box 1, Leonardtown, MD 20650. Special accommodation will be provided for people with disabilities upon request.

By Authority: Laschelle E. McKay, Town Administrator

If you would like to place a classified ad or legal notice, please call the County Times at 301-373-4125 or email aldailey@countytimes.net



Letters to the Editor

'Local elections are where real change begins'

Once upon a time, St. Mary's County was a close-knit, rural community — a place where neighbors knew each other, traffic was light, and our local values guided local decisions. Sadly, that vision has been lost. Today, we find ourselves overtaxed, overdeveloped, and overcrowded, with many long-time residents feeling pushed aside in their own hometowns.

Our county leadership has failed us at every turn. They have allowed uncontrolled growth without the infrastructure to support it, burdened families and small businesses with higher taxes, and ignored the will of the people they were elected to serve. Too often, they bend to the state's agenda instead of standing up for what's right for our citizens. Leadership requires courage — the courage to say no when the state's plans don't fit our community's character or needs.

It's time for real change. I hope this letter inspires like-minded citizens to step up and run for County Commissioner or other local

government leadership positions. Even serving for one term — four short years — could make all the difference. We need strong voices willing to restore balance, protect what remains of our rural heritage, and fight for the St. Mary's County we remember and deserve.

Your vote matters. Local elections — especially the primaries — are where real change begins. If you can't serve yourself, please vote for candidates who will fight for our citizens, protect our way of life, and put people before politics.

If we don't take a stand now, St. Mary's County will be unrecognizable — not lost to time, but to weak leadership and outside interests. We owe it to our future generations to turn this around and preserve what's left of the place we all love and call home, or sadly there may be nothing left to preserve.

Angela Wathen

'How would it be during an actual emergency?'

In mid-October I tried to get in touch with the St. Mary's County Emergency Management Department. No one answered at the director's phone number. I left two messages in October and another message during the first week of November. None were returned.

On November 4th there was a Public Forum. I mentioned to the county commissioners during the Public Forum my displeasure about the lack of communication from the Emergency Management Department to the public.

None of the calls were during any county emergency. Therefore, I don't see any reason why the calls were not returned in a timely manner.

I had several issues I was trying to reach the EM Department about but never could reach anyone. And there was not an alternate number to call.

I hear that it is important to the Commissioners that their EM Department be accessible to the public. I will probably never know why our EM Department didn't reach out to me until nearly two weeks later. By that time I decided to reach out to MEMA instead. I know they are far more receptive than our County Emergency Management.

I am concerned about the continued talk of eliminating the Ten Mile Radius Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant (CCNPP) sirens. Once removed the public will be informed of an emergency by limited means. It is unlikely that many folks would even know of an emergency at the CCNPP. This is

because cell service in many parts of St. Mary's County is very poor. From time to time even radio station signals are poor. In fact, not long ago T-Bone and Heather were live on the radio talking about a vulture on top of the radio station antenna that may have been blocking the radio station signal. I admit, I was shaking my head when I heard about that news.

Over the above mentioned timeframe two Nor'easter storms went up the coast. One of the two was predicted to go up the Chesapeake Bay. Thankfully, it did not. However, there was significant erosion along the Western Shore of the Chesapeake Bay due to the storm surge and wind as the storms went up the coast. This produced hazards in the Bay, from branches and entire trees that were completely eroded from land.

Hitting a large branch or an entire tree with a boat will usually be a bad experience. And perhaps even deadly. In St. Jerome's Creek alone, I saw what I thought was just a medium sized branch in the creek. It turned out to be a tree. Well over 90 percent of it was underwater. It would have been nearly impossible to see it at night.

If our Emergency Management is not accessible during no emergency, how would it be during an actual emergency? Hopefully they will at least take care of St. George's Island.

Roy Fedders
Dameron, MD

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

Email: aldailey@countytimes.net
P.O. Box 250 Hollywood, MD 20636

County Times
ST. MARY'S • CALVERT

Lexington Park Man Sentenced for Sex Abuse, Child Porn

State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling announced on Nov. 18 that Robin Maudie Barahona Gonzalez, 37, of Lexington Park has been sentenced to 40 years in prison with 35 years of active incarceration and ordered to register as a sexual offender for life for the sexual abuse of a minor and possession of child pornography.

The sentence comes after a 2022 investigation that ultimately led to Gonzalez's arrest and prosecution.

The court sentenced Gonzalez to the following:

- Sexual abuse of a minor: 25 years in prison;
- Possession of child pornography: 5 years in prison with 5 years of active incarceration;
- Possession of child pornography: 5 years in prison with 5 years of active incarceration;
- Possession of child pornography: 5 years in prison suspended

All counts were ordered to be served consecutively for a total sentence of 40 years in prison with 35 years of active incarceration.

Additionally, Gonzalez is required to register as a sexual offender for life.

"This defendant's repeated and egregious acts against a child are among the most serious and disturbing crimes we prosecute," said Sterling. "This sentence



Robin Maudie Barahona Gonzalez

delivers justice for the victim and protects other children from future harm."

Assistant State's Attorney Zachary Varda prosecuted the case on behalf of the citizens of St. Mary's County.

Detective Andrew Burgess of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office was the lead investigator.

The Honorable Joseph M. Stanalonis presided over the case.

Press release from St. Mary's County State's Attorney

Man Sentenced to Life in Prison for Attempted Murder

State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling announced Nov. 17 that Mark Albert Fenwick Jr., 33, of Annapolis, Maryland, was sentenced to life in prison, with 40 years of active incarceration for his role in a 2024 shooting in Lexington Park that left a victim with multiple gunshot wounds.

Following a multi-day jury trial that concluded in May 2024, a St. Mary's County jury found Fenwick guilty of attempted first-degree murder, first-degree assault, armed robbery, and theft.

"Although this Defendant was not the shooter, he contributed to a brutal and senseless attack that left a victim gravely injured," said Sterling. "This sentence ensures accountability and reflects our commitment to justice by prosecuting all violent offenders who participate in endangering our community."

Senior Assistant State's Attorneys Donna Pettersen and Lisa Ridge prosecuted the case on behalf of the citizens of St. Mary's County.

Detective Kortnie Marsch of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office served as



Mark Albert Fenwick Jr.

the lead investigator.

The Honorable Joseph M. Stanalonis presided over the case.

Press release from St. Mary's County State's Attorney

Arrests Made in Lexington Park Robbery, Stabbing

Deputies from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office arrested two suspects on Tuesday, Nov. 18, in connection with a robbery and stabbing that took place on Nov. 16. The arrests follow an investigation that began when deputies responded to a report of a suspicious incident on Spyglass Way in Lexington Park on Sunday, Nov. 16, 2025, shortly before receiving a second call reporting a walk-in assault victim suffering from stab wounds at the Bay District Volunteer Fire Department, also in Lexington Park.

The victim reported that while meeting with an acquaintance, multiple suspects confronted, robbed, and assaulted him before he was able to escape, return to his vehicle and drive to the firehouse for help. He was flown to a regional hospital, treated, and later released.

On Tuesday, deputies arrested Devonte Twain Harrod, 26, of Lexington Park, and a 16-year-old female in connection with the case.

The suspects were transported to the St. Mary's County Detention and Rehabilitation Center in Leonardtown, where both face charges of armed robbery, robbery, first-degree assault, second-degree assault, and theft of \$100 to less than \$1,500.

Law enforcement agencies are prohibited from publicly identifying a juvenile, even when charged as an adult, due to legal protections safeguarding the juvenile's identity throughout the judicial process.

The case remains under investigation. Anyone with information is asked to contact Detective Kortnie Marsch of the Criminal Investigations Division. Anyone with information is asked to contact Detective Marsch at 301-475-4200, ext.



Devonte Twain Harrod

8179, or by email at Kortnie.Marsch@stmaryscountymd.gov.

Tipsters can also submit tips anonymously:

- Text 847411, starting your message with "SMCSO", add a space, and then your tip.
- Online: Submit a tip through the Sheriff's Office website at www.FirstSheriff.com/tips.
- App: Send a tip directly through the SMCSO app. Download the free app from the Google Play Store or Apple App Store.

For those who prefer to make a phone call, tips can also be shared through the Crime Solvers line at 301-475-3333. With Crime Solvers, you never have to give your name. You may be eligible for a cash reward if your information leads to an arrest.

Press release from SMCSO

County Announces Thanksgiving Schedule

All St. Mary's County Government (SMCG) administrative offices will be closed on Thursday, November 27, 2025, and Friday, November 28, 2025, in observance of Thanksgiving and Native American Heritage Day. Offices will resume normal operating schedules on Monday, December 1, 2025.

The two-day closure also includes:

- All three St. Mary's County Libraries (Charlotte Hall, Leonardtown, and Lexington Park)
- All three Senior Activity Centers (Garvey, Loffler, and Northern), and there will be no home-delivered meals
- The St. Mary's Transit System (STS)

The following SMCG operations will be closed November 27 but open on November 28:

- The six Convenience Centers and the

St. Andrews Landfill

- Department of Recreation & Parks indoor programs and facilities
- St. Clements Island Museum*, Piney Point Lighthouse Museum, and the Old Jail Museum
- Wicomico Shores Golf Course and the Riverview Restaurant
- The St. Mary's County Animal Adoption & Resource Center

*Note: the St. Clement's Island Museum is operating on a limited basis due to construction.

For more information on SMCG programs and operations, visit: www.stmaryscountymd.gov or follow St. Mary's County Government on Facebook or Twitter (X) for regular updates.

Press release from SMCG

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County Appoints New Economic Development Director

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County (CSMC) are pleased to announce the appointment of Cynthia "Cindy" Greb as the new Director of the Department of Economic Development (DED).

Greb brings more than 40 years of experience in community and economic development, environmental land planning, and large-scale real estate and infrastructure projects.

Greb currently serves as Executive Director of the Center for Career and Professional Development at St. Mary's College of Maryland (SMCM), where she leads initiatives that connect education, workforce, and regional economic growth.

Greb's career includes leading major real estate development projects; managing natural resource and infrastructure projects on military installations; and championing regional land preservation alongside local, state, and federal partners. She has presented to local, state, and national organizations for more than three decades, contributing to zoning ordinances, comprehensive land planning efforts, and thoughtful development practices that balance growth and environmental stewardship.

Greb holds a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Science from St. Mary's College of Maryland, a Master of Science in Strategic Communication from the University of Maryland Global Campus, and a certificate in Residential Development & Site Planning from the Harvard Graduate

School of Design. She has also completed studies in Landscape Architecture at Rutgers University and is certified by the Maryland Department of the Environment and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Additionally, Greb has served on numerous boards and committees, including the Patuxent Partnership's SoMD 2030 Workforce Development Program, St. Mary's College of Maryland's Strategic Plan Implementation Committee, and the Maryland Higher Education Commission's Advisory Council on Workforce Shortage. She has also served and volunteered with the Historic Sotterley Board of Trustees, MedStar St. Mary's Hospital Foundation, and the St. Mary's County Community Development Corporation Board of Directors.

"We are excited to welcome Cindy Greb as our new Director of Economic Development," said Commissioner President Randy Guy. "Her deep roots in St. Mary's County, combined with her extensive experience in economic development, land planning, and workforce initiatives, make her an outstanding leader to guide our county's economic future."

Greb expressed her appreciation and enthusiasm: "I am honored to join St. Mary's County Government as Director of Economic Development and to continue serving my community. Our county is uniquely positioned with its strong workforce, innovative employers, and rich natural and cultural resources. I look forward to building on existing partner-



Cynthia "Cindy" Greb

ships and creating new ones to support sustainable growth, workforce development, and a resilient, thriving local economy."

Greb will assume the role of DED Director effective Dec. 2.

The Department of Economic Development works to strengthen St. Mary's County's economy by supporting existing businesses, attracting new employers and investment, promoting tourism and quality of life assets, and advancing strategic initiatives that foster a diverse and resilient economic base.

Press release from SMCG

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Hours: Mon. to Fri. 7:00 a.m. to 6 p.m. • Sat. 7:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. • Closed Sunday

New Director of Public Works & Transportation Named

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County (CSMC) are pleased to announce the appointment of John B. Norris III as the new Director of the Department of Public Works & Transportation (DPW&T). Norris brings a distinguished blend of civil engineering expertise, executive leadership, and public-sector legal experience that will strengthen the county's infrastructure planning, project execution, and daily operational services.

Norris began his career as a Project Engineer with NG&O Engineering, Inc., where he specialized in civil site design and permitting for industrial, commercial, and residential development. His technical experience spans road, bridge, and culvert design; stormwater management systems; and sediment and erosion control planning. His background also includes the preparation and review of hundreds of Environmental Site Assessments and the management of Conditional Use and Variance applications across multiple jurisdictions.

Building on a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering and Technology, Norris earned a Juris Doctorate and advanced his career by integrating engineering and environmental law. He served as a legal intern with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and later represented clients on complex environmental legal matters.

Since 2011, Norris has served as the County Attorney for Calvert County, and he previously served as the County Attorney for St. Mary's County. He is a member of the Maryland State Bar, the Calvert County Bar Association, and the St. Mary's County Bar Association.

"We are very pleased to welcome John Norris back to St. Mary's County Government," said Commissioner President Randy Guy. "His extensive background in engineering and law, combined with his years of public service, make him uniquely qualified to lead DPW&T."



John Norris

Norris shared his appreciation and enthusiasm: "I am deeply grateful for the 14 years I spent serving the citizens of Calvert County as County Attorney. Now, I am honored to accept the position of Director of Public Works & Transportation in St. Mary's County. This is a wonderful opportunity to leverage my background in both civil engineering and public law to make a direct, positive impact. I am excited to rejoin the St. Mary's County Government and get to work."

Norris will assume the role of DPW&T Director effective Dec. 19.

The Department of Public Works & Transportation oversees county infrastructure, transportation, roadway operations, construction, development review, building services, solid waste and recycling programs, and more. With Norris' technical expertise and proven leadership, St. Mary's County Government looks forward to continued progress in delivering reliable, high-quality public services.

Press release from SMCG

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Libraries to Distribute Surplus County Computer Equipment

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County have approved donating no longer used computer equipment to the St. Mary's County Library for their use and to distribute to county citizens in need of the equipment.

Director of Information Technology Bob Kelly told the commissioners on Nov. 18, "This nonprofit donation program was actually authorized by resolution by the County Commissioners of St. Mary's County in 2015. And within that resolution, it says, whereas an in-kind donation to a nonprofit organization or agency of surplus personal property. So, what's kind of implied is that we're giving this equipment to nonprofits for the purpose of helping the nonprofit specifically."

Kelly added, "After 10 years plus of having this program, I've noticed that in the last six months to a year, the response from the nonprofits is that the need isn't quite as relevant as it was when we originally started the program. So, we have this excess computer equipment."

That's where the library comes in. Director Michael Blackwell said, "They're Windows 11 machines, and as you're aware, the Windows 10 is no longer going to be supported by Microsoft. So, we anticipate there might be a demand among citizens who have older machines."

Blackwell explained, "The first place we'd like to be working is the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home. We send staff up there to do computer lessons and troubleshoot people's devices. And if there's any veterans who would like a Windows 11 machine, we'll take that up there, help them set it up and sort of set up the native Microsoft security."

He added, "We also have computer classes at St. Mary's Caring, and we do outreach there. So, that's another place where citizens might find that they could use a newer machine. We support information literacy, and if you're going to be an information literate consumer, what's going on in the world today, a nice machine would certainly help."

Blackwell noted at the Judy Center Early Learning Hub, "there are two families who are starting a workforce training program, and they could both use a laptop and that will be a small but ongoing demand."

And he added, "We, can use one of them



St. Mary's Library Director Michael Blackwell

ourselves. In our meeting rooms, people will want to do a program, and they'll forget to bring their device," adding, "We'd also allow people to check them out and use them in the library.

"And finally, we actually could use a few ourselves for assistant branch managers who are currently using tablets and could have a better work at home situation when they need to be calling into the office remotely if they had a laptop instead."

Kelly said the equipment is not only laptops but also things like printers and cables. He said, "We have a lifecycle replacement program that you fund, so that we replace equipment before it breaks because when equipment breaks, people aren't working and services are not being provided."

He said the computers are wiped clean of any stored information before being turned over to non-profits and the library.

Commissioner Mike Hewitt said before running for his first term he wasn't convinced of the need for libraries because everyone had a computer. And then he hung out at the old Leonardtown Library for a while and found out that wasn't the case, particularly for senior citizens and underprivileged.

He said one senior citizen told him he couldn't afford the cost of the internet provider.

"I became a big fan of a new Leonardtown Library after that day," he said.

dickmyers@countytimes.net



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County Times

Superintendent Blasts State Report Card

Criticizes Emphasis on Absenteeism

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The recent release of the annual Maryland Report Card for the state's school systems, and each of its schools, has prompted School Superintendent Dr. J. Scott Smith to rail against the program.

The report card shows that the elementary, middle and high schools do not meet the annual target for academic proficiency. The only target metric that St. Mary's County Public Schools (SMCPS) meet is elementary school "progress in achieving English language proficiency."

Each school is given a score of one to five stars, with none in the county achieving either a one- or a five-star. One school, Spring Ridge Middle School, got two stars. Leonardtown High School received four stars, while Chopticon and Great Mills got three stars.

Thirteen schools in all have four stars, an increase from 11 the previous year.

But Smith feels the star system is unfair in that it puts too much weight on chronic absenteeism. That's defined as missing two days a month.

The school system's 6,905 students had an attendance rate of 91.9 percent.

Each grade level has a scoring system, and 75 percent gets a school a five-star rating. There is no flexibility. For instance,

Evergreen Elementary School got a score of 74.9 percent, earning four stars and just missing the top level by a tenth of a point.

Smith said, "So if that doesn't make sense to you, that's okay. It doesn't make any sense. You have points arbitrarily determined for ratings that go down, and schools can have different denominators."

He added, "So, some schools have a possibility of a hundred points. Some schools only have 85 points. Some schools might have less than that. If you had less than that, then everything carries with it a greater weight that's not accounted for. And then ultimately it's turned into a percent, which isn't rounded, which then has turned into a star. And most people would think that a five star means an A. So, you'd have like 90 percent and above. Oh no, a five star is a 75 percent. Why is it a 75 percent? We don't know. They've never really talked about why 75 percent."

"And Evergreen Elementary School's 74.9 percent isn't close enough. We also have a two-star school...at Spring Ridge. To be a three-star school (it) needed 45 percent, and they have a 44.8 percent. So, they miss being a three-star school by 0.2 percent."

Student Member of the Board said, "I went to Evergreen Elementary School when I was in elementary school, and then I went to Spring Ridge Middle School. And it never really came to my mind that there

was a difference in the educational quality, seeing phenomenal teachers, the phenomenal staff, our building service workers, our school maintenance, all that work together to make our schools what they are. And so, I don't really believe that the stars are representative of the hard work that we put in."

The school board was told at a recent meeting by staff that chronic absenteeism counts for 15 points of the score, while in elementary and middle schools, only 12.5 points goes for ELA (English) and 12.5 points for math.

A student could be counted as absent if they were out sick or for another valid reason.

Smith said, "The amount of work that all the teachers and support staff and counselors and psychologists and that we're all doing to move up this measure when there are reasons why children are absent from school. There are reasons, and whether it's lawful or unlawful or illness related or whatever, it doesn't matter. So, we're going to keep doing all the work that we're doing, because this is the single largest driver for why people aren't at the next level with the stars. If the chronically absent element was addressed and more successful, each one of them would move from four to five, from three to four, and from two to three."

Board member Mary Washington stood up for the emphasis on absenteeism. She said, "What's concerning to me is the

chronic absenteeism."

Washington said, "In elementary, even though 76.6 percent are not chronically absent, you have 24 percent who are chronically absent. That's a lot of students," adding, "That makes it difficult for the teacher because students aren't there to learn." She added the same concerns for middle and high school.

Washington added concerns about math proficiency, particularly in middle schools. "That's almost a national security issue, when we won't be having people who may have the necessary math skills to perform scientific, engineering, AI, computer technology."

She added, "I realized that everybody's doing everything that they can, and we need support from the parents to make sure the students get to school on time and they're ready and willing, and ready to learn math."

Board Vice President Cathy Allen added, "The fact of the matter is we have to report out things as they are given to us. I just don't think they're reflective of what's truly going on in our schools. And I think that's a huge problem. And the idea that to be absent two days a month, especially with the mental health issues that our students are facing, to say that's chronically absent, misses the point of taking care of our students."

dickmyers@countytimes.net

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at St. Mary's County Museums

EVENING TIDES: CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS

AT PINEY POINT LIGHTHOUSE MUSEUM

Saturday, November 29 • 5PM – 8PM

Join us for a festive holiday evening on the grounds of the beautiful historic park at Piney Point Lighthouse Museum, featuring kids' activities, craft vendors, and more.

301-994-1471 • Facebook.com/1836Light

FREE

FAMILY HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

AT PINEY POINT LIGHTHOUSE MUSEUM

Sunday, November 30 • 10AM – 5PM

We're kicking off the opening of the holiday season inside the museum and Keeper's Quarters here at Piney Point Lighthouse with family activities, refreshments and more.

301-994-1471 • Facebook.com/1836Light

FREE

STORYTIME & COOKIES WITH SANTA AT THE

U.S. COLORED TROOPS INTERPRETIVE CENTER

Sunday, December 14 • 1 pm – 3 pm

Join us for a free and festive Open House for all ages featuring Christmas storytimes, holiday cookies and refreshments, and more - including Santa and Mrs. Claus!

Facebook.com/USCTCenter

FREE

For more information, visit Museums.StMarysMD.com

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St. Mary's County
Museums



Celebrate the Magic of the Season in Leonardtown!



Christmas on the Square & Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony

Fri., Nov. 28th

4:30pm - 8:30pm



Small Business Saturday

Sat., Nov. 29th

All Day



Thursday Night Lights in Leonardtown

Dec. 4th, 11th, & 17th

Shop extended hours
until 7pm



Gingerbread Lane Holiday Stroll

Dec 5th - Jan 5th

All Day



Enjoy



Relax



Shop



Dine

New Owner Details Plans for Piney Point Terminal

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

A piece of property in St. Mary's County with a storied past is poised for a new lease on life.

Offshore Aviation Group (OAG), a company that has quietly operated out of an office at the Seafarer's International Union's Paul Hall Center in Piney Point for the last eight years, has announced the acquisition of the 320-acre Piney Point Fuel Terminal.

According to a press release, the company plans to transform the property into "a world-class center for unmanned systems development, testing, and operations, restoring the site's proud aviation and maritime heritage while positioning St. Mary's County as a global leader in next-generation technology."

The property was purchased by Steuart Petroleum Company in 1949. With a holding capacity as high as 500,000 barrels, the terminal was one of the largest in the United States. It has sat idle for many years.

It was the site of a torpedo factory during World War II and the battleground for one of the county's most hotly contested and politically charged episodes when in the mid 1970's Steuart attempted to locate an oil refinery there.

Then State Senator Paul Bailey introduced a bill into the Maryland General Assembly requiring a referendum on the issue. Even though Steuart launched an extensive advertising campaign, county voters on June 23, 1974, rejected the idea by 6,668 to 3,441 votes. The tide may have turned when a local, trusted physician voiced radio ads warning of cancer from the refinery.

Now, OAG CEO Robert Hicks told a recent town hall meeting at the Piney Point Lighthouse Museum, "The site has the potential of being unique in the entire world, and we want to promote that. It is a site that can advance not only the air technology, but the ground technology and the sea technology as well, into the next century."

"As part of its environmental and community commitment, the press release stated, "The project will involve completely removing storage tanks, and the entire pipeline that connected the facility to the pier on the Potomac River. OAG will re-open Piney Point Creek to local boaters and using the site for manned and unmanned systems test and evaluation and private sea-plane base."

"This is more than an investment in infrastructure — it's an investment in the future of St. Mary's County," said Hicks. "We are honoring Piney Point's legacy as a WWII naval test site while ensuring it remains a centerpiece for innovation, jobs, and leadership in unmanned technology."

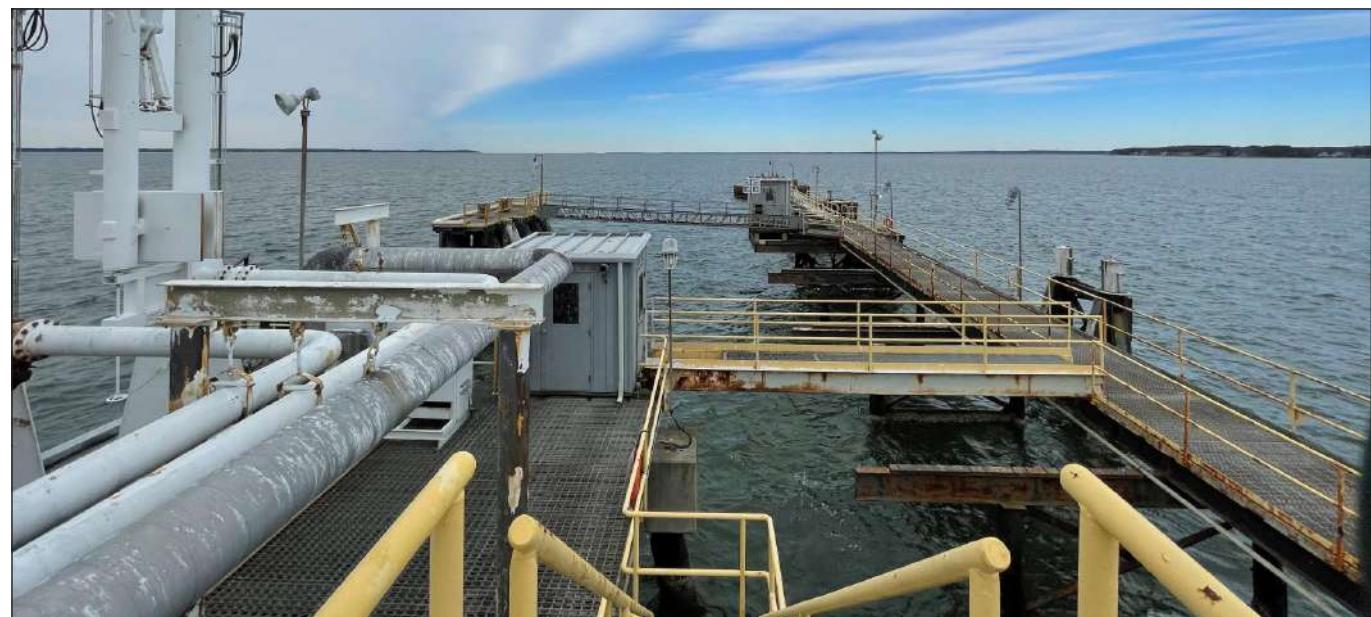
Hicks told the town hall attendees that the cleanup will be the responsibility of the previous owner. "They're the sellers. And it's a condition of the sale."

Offshore Aviation's plan includes:

- Expanding commercial manufacturing of OAG's 16 type, model, series Unmanned Systems to the site.
- Re-opening the runway and working with St. Mary's County, the Maryland Aviation Administration (MAA), and



Aerial view of Piney Point terminal. Photo courtesy of Offshore Aviation Group.



Plans for the site include revitalizing the existing industrial pier. Photo courtesy of St. Mary's County Historic Preservation Commission.

the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to establish a private use airport to support commercial manufacturing, test and evaluation, and maintenance.

- Building commercial hangars for defense contractors and universities for dedicated airspace and sea space for unmanned systems testing.
- Revitalizing the boat launch and 1200-foot industrial pier to serve Offshore Aviation's growing fleet of Offshore Supply Vessels, strengthening the region's maritime and logistics capabilities.
- Creating a partnership with local organizations such as the Paul Hall Center and the Friends of the St. Clements Island and Piney Point Museums to support community events and potentially collaborate on a water taxi project and development of a World War II heritage museum focusing on the US Naval Torpedo Test Squadron history.

Hicks said, "We expect the short-term impact to the area to be about 90 high paying jobs and about \$9 million in payroll annu-

ally...it's going to be an economic engine again, which it was for many, many years, but as you know, it's been dormant."

He explained, "I think the largest aircraft that we fly under a waiver is 120 pounds. So, we're building military grade drones, but these aren't necessarily aircraft that you would see on the battlefield. These are used for tests and evaluation. These are used for training. They're probably more in keeping with the size and scope of aircraft that you would equate to being remote controlled modeler type aircraft."

Potential seaplane activity is one of the concerns expressed by neighbors. Hicks said, "One of our ideas is to have Maryland's first private use commercial seaplane facility. This isn't something that's immediate, and it's not really a big impact, scary thing, where sea planes are going to be landing over your docks."

"We envision this more as a site where we could interest the community to come here for an event, essentially a seaplane fly in," he added..

Concern was expressed at the meeting

about the reopening of the runway. Critics wonder about the need for another general aviation field with St. Mary's Airport close by.

Hicks said, "St. Mary's County Airport is difficult because general aviation is based on the premise of see and avoid. And when you have a system introduced to a see and avoid structure, half of that system is not essentially looking out and avoiding the other pilots of aircraft that come in... So having the private airport here will allow us to monitor the traffic and to work with the Navy to keep our unmanned systems and the manned aircraft from coming into the same airspace."

Hicks said the general aviation operation would average five takeoffs and landings a month.

Commissioner Eric Colvin's district includes Piney Point. He spoke at the town hall meeting and has been generally supportive of the project when taking about it at commissioner meetings.

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“IT DOESN’T MAKE ANY SENSE.”

SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT DR. SCOTT SMITH ON STATE REPORT CARD'S RELIANCE ON CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM.



LOCAL 5

Superintendent criticizes state Report Card



COMMUNITY 12

Mission project honors McKay family



ON THE COVER

Redevelopment plans announced for disused Piney Point terminal

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, NOV 20	FRI, NOV 21	SAT, NOV 22	SUN, NOV 23
Cloudy Hi: 51° Lo: 44°	Cloudy Hi: 58° Lo: 51°	AM Showers Hi: 57° Lo: 38°	Sunny Hi: 57° Lo: 41°
MON, NOV 24	TUE, NOV 25	WED, NOV 26	THU, NOV 27
Partly Cloudy Hi: 61° Lo: 44°	PM Showers Hi: 61° Lo: 53°	AM Showers Hi: 65° Lo: 47°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 53° Lo: 34°



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St. Mary's County Times

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2025

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**School Superintendent
Rails Against Report Card**

**Libraries to Distribute
Surplus Computers**

**Mission Project Honors
McKay Family**

NEW LIFE FOR PINEY POINT TERMINAL