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St. Mary's County Times

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2020

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Feeding the Hungry

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“WE’RE NOT IN ANY ACUTE CRISIS.”

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WEEKLY FORECAST

Thu 12/3 53° 40°F Mostly Sunny	Fri 12/4 55° 44°F PM Showers	Sat 12/5 56° 38°F Rain	Sun 12/6 51° 37°F Partly Cloudy
Mon 12/7 48° 30°F Partly Cloudy	Tue 12/8 46° 30°F Mostly Sunny	Wed 12/9 51° 35°F Partly Cloudy	Thu 12/10 52° 37°F Partly Cloudy

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COVID-19

Positive Cases

Deaths

As of December 2

St. Mary's 2382

62

Information provided by St. Mary's Health Department

Brewster: Vaccine Could Come By Month's End

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

After announcing that vaccines to combat the spread of COVID-19 are expected to arrive by the end of December, Dr. Meena Brewster, county health officer, told elected county leaders that she understood some people would be concerned about the safety of the remedy.

The issue was the extreme speed with which the vaccines, two so far, that have been developed without the extensive clinical trials usually associated with such medicines.

Target populations who are designated to receive the vaccine first will be inoculated at drive-thru mass vaccine events, Brewster said, with dates and locations still to be determined.

As more vaccine supplies came to St. Mary's, residents could get their inoculations at the health department in Leonardtown, and, eventually Brewster said, at their doctor's office or pharmacies.

The earliest vaccines anticipated to arrive here are the one created by Pfizer, which requires two-doses several weeks apart and is described as "ultra-cold" and the other from Moderna, which also requires two doses.

Getting vaccinated at the health department means pre-registering for the event, Brewster said, which could be done at www.marylandvax.org.

"There's a segment of our population who are not in favor of vaccines," said Commissioner Eric Colvin, who called the development of the vaccines "herculean"

and "unprecedented."

"But that could make people a little nervous... that there's been no long-term tests whatsoever on these effects of these."

"This pandemic is different than the norm," said Brewster in response. "This is a new virus."

"There's a lot of newness when it comes to managing a pandemic... we don't have the benefit and luxury of years of data."

Such new vaccines as these, Brewster said, were often developed with data and methodology drawn from other, more established vaccines.

She noted that heavy funding from the Trump administration was instrumental in helping with the rapid development of the vaccines, which she also called "unprecedented."

"I can understand why this makes people uncomfortable," Brewster said of concerns over vaccine safety.

A state committee was meeting as of Dec. 1, she said, to determine the first two phases of the vaccine distribution, which would likely include high risk medical and hospital staff and first responders as the first to be inoculated.

Others in the first tier would include older adults who live in congregate or overcrowded settings as well as those in jails, detention centers and prisons.

Judiciary members were included as well as those with comorbid and underlying conditions that put them at significantly higher risk of death from COVID infection.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Commissioners Get School Budget Preview

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Last fiscal year the Commissioners of St. Mary's County allocated about \$109 million to the county public schools as their share of the overall operating budget; School Superintendent Dr. J. Scott Smith told them Tuesday that the fiscal 2022 budget will be asking for an additional \$4 million to honor a four-year negotiated agreement with teachers, administrators and other system employees that promised them a step increase in pay and a 1.75 percent cost of living increase.

That agreement was ratified back in March.

But the actual increase over last year's budget request was \$9 million, bringing the requested county allocation to \$118 million for a total operating budget of \$233 million.

Smith said \$4 million of the \$9 million requested increase would be for the negotiated agreement, and the remainder would be for possible budget cuts by the state and federal government by \$2.5 million and \$88,000 respectively due to reduced student enrollment.

"Usually half of that cost would be carried by state and federal revenue sources," Smith said. "But we have absolutely no idea what next year will bring."

The state is facing budget shortfalls in the

billions due to lost revenue from the COVID-19 emergency shutdowns and while they are obligated by law to provide a per-pupil allocation based on enrollment, Smith said, that count is down by about 400 students.

The original tally by the school system for the increase for the negotiated agreements was \$4.8 million, but, Smith said, their financial projections show they will be able to save a little more than \$803,000 in employee attrition and retirements.

"I'm glad you foretold the situation we're looking at, that we have no idea what the future revenue holds so far," said Commissioner Todd Morgan at the Dec. 1 joint meeting with the school board. "That four-and-a-quarter increase you're getting, considering the marketplace today, is extremely generous."

The commissioners funded the school system about \$4 million above the required maintenance of effort levels for fiscal 2021.

"We need about \$9 million more this year in new money from local sources if the state and federal government don't hold us harmless [due to reduced student enrollment]."

Smith said he expected the state to hold the county and other jurisdictions harmless to some degree since all were affected by COVID-19.

guyleonard@countytimes.net



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County Looks To Sustaining Contract EMS Aid



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The county's chief emergency response official said this week that the contract medics hired to support every rescue squad in the county are working well as an interim measure to ensure daytime calls for service are answered.

The question now remains how the county will fund this new aid system once the federal funding for it runs out by the end of the year.

Steve Walker, director of the Department of Emergency Services, presented options to the commissioners to keep the aid system running.

Every rescue squad has reported shortages in staffing exacerbated by COVID-19, with many of their older volunteers ceasing running calls to avoid possible infection.

Before it was installed, emergency response records reveal that response times ranged from 17 minutes, three minutes slower than the accepted standard, to up to 57 minutes in length.

County records also show that the incidents of rescue squads not responding to calls dropped precipitously once paid crews began daytime staffing around the county.

In September, for example, of the 1,216 calls to either of the two stations for the Lexington Park Volunteer Rescue Squad a total of 481 did not get a response, or almost 40 percent.

By November the non-response rate for the same organization dropped to just 21 percent after receiving day-timerequests of aid.

"There's no doubt it's working, and it works well," Walker said. "But, where do we go from here?"

One option to keep the contract employees in place would be to convert them – between 16 to 20 of them – to hourly employees, Walker said at the Dec. 1 meeting with the Commissioners of St. Mary's County.

"That would cut costs in half," he said.

Walker said the latest cost estimate for providing extra staffing through the contractor for the next year could

reach \$3 million.

Another option would be to provide additional staffing in Mechanicsville at Company 29 and at both Companies 38 and 39 in Lexington Park because of their higher populations, which would also reduce what the county is currently paying by about half, Walker said.

Walker, at an Emergency Services Board meeting on Monday, said billing for EMS calls could help sustain the aid to rescue squads but it would not be enough to fully fund the effort.

Earlier in the meeting Commissioner John O'Connor proposed a new local law that would establish the county commissioners as the authority over the provision of medical services here; this would allow the county to create a billing system for ambulance services.

The commissioners voted to take the measure to a public hearing on Jan. 5.

Pulling a portion of funding from the county's volunteer Advanced Life Support Unit (ALS) was also another option, Walker said, but he did not want to reduce staffing there.

O'Connor said ALS leadership had told him that they were not opposed to the additional funding given to them being used to supplement contract medics, as long as ALS response did not suffer.

"That is a conversation worth having," O'Connor said.

Walker also advocated raising the rescue tax to the highest rate for each of the rescue squads' territories as a way to fully fund the additional help along with EMS billing.

Using county fund balance was another, but not preferable, option.

"COVID has fouled everything up," said Commissioner Mike Hewitt.

"It's almost a perfect storm of problems this year," Commissioner Eric Colvin said.

Commissioners said they would continue to work on the issue in the coming weeks.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

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Hogan: Hospitals Plan to Meet COVID Surge



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Gov. Larry Hogan announced Dec. 1 that all hospitals in Maryland will have to come up with a plan to deal with the continued surge of COVID-19 cases by Dec. 8, to include adding or redeploying staff.

“We are concerned that our COVID-19 hospitalizations have increased 51 percent in the past two weeks,” Hogan said at a press conference in Annapolis.

Other coronavirus metrics have also worsened, Hogan said, including a statewide positivity rate of 7.33 percent and a new high of 34.4 new cases per 100,000 people.

As of Dec. 1, there were 1,583 hospitalizations related to COVID-19, Hogan said, the highest number since May 10.

There are 350 Marylanders in intensive care units, according to Hogan.

“Twenty-one hospitals have reached more than 90 percent of their capacity,” Hogan said.

There are 130 surge beds currently used at three special sites around the state, Hogan said.

So far, 4,156 people have died due to COVID-19 in Maryland, Hogan said, including its youngest victim, a one-year-old boy.

Along with hospitals coming up with plans to deal with the surge in virus cases, Hogan said hospitals were to reduce the number of non-critical elective procedures, especially those that required a bed or ventilator.

To date the state has procured more than 6,000 surge beds, fast-tracked licensing for out-of-state or retired medical professionals to help treat patients and activated a reserve

medical corp.

Hogan called for medical professionals not already active to join the fight against the virus.

“We are currently in need of people with clinical backgrounds to staff our hospitals, nursing homes, testing sites and vaccination clinics,” Hogan said. “We are also contacting those individuals who have signed up for the Maryland Medical Reserve Corp.”

Hogan said the state was also requesting that college and universities develop “emergency policies and procedures” that award college credit to students who are willing to serve during the pandemic.

Hogan also asked that health care students in their final semester who have satisfied their graduation requirements be allowed to take an early exit and get expedited testing and licensing to more quickly enter the health care work force.

Hogan also called on counties to enlist health care workers such as school nurses or other county employees not currently deployed to help staff testing and vaccination sites.

He also asked hospitals to employ non-licensed people to perform less critical tasks to unburden nursing staff.

“We’re taking these steps to ensure that every Marylander in need of a hospital bed can get a hospital bed,” Hogan said.

There were 6,816 people in state hospital beds, Hogan said, and when that number reached 8,000 all hospitals would be required to expand their staffed bed capacity by 10 percent “within seven days of that trigger.”

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County Approves Nuisance Flooding Plan



Rt. 5 and Indian Bridge Rd. in Great Mills

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The county’s chief of public works said Tuesday that they have expanded the list of nuisance flooding sites throughout the county using enhanced research, including resident complaints, to not only find ways to mitigate the flooding problems inland and on the coasts but also to manage emergency response when flooding occurs.

“The short duration high intensity storms have been a real game changer this year,” said John Deatrick, director of the Department of Public Works and Transportation. “Apparently it does have something to do with the concept of climate change because the hotter temperature actually allows atmosphere to store more moisture and when colder air comes in behind it you get what you had [Monday.]”

The plan lays out steps that local public works and first responders would take in the event of different stages of nuisance flooding, such as establishing warnings to the community and closing down roads and public venues.

Should flooding begin to threaten lives or critical infrastructure it would no longer be considered a nuisance, according to the report, and the county would take stronger measures.

The report concludes that nuisance flooding will increase in the

future due to climate change elevating water levels.

“New areas will also become impacted leading to an increased number of businesses, residents and critical infrastructure at risk,” the report stated. “Public services will also be more frequently impaired as flooding increases.”

Mike Canova, senior program manager at county public works, said the report would be a “living plan” which the county would constantly modify and update to include new sites of flooding issues.

“We’ve got a lot of catching up to do,” Canova said, regarding predictions as to just how bad flooding was projected to be in St. Mary’s.

Commissioner Mike Hewitt said he took a hike with residents who live in the floodplain of McIntosh Run in Leonardtown and they showed him what they believed was the problem with constant, heavy flooding in the community.

In August, when Tropical Storm Isaias hit, the run quickly overran its banks to heretofore unseen levels.

“What was insightful to me was all the trees and logs in the run,” Hewitt said. “It’s creating an additional barrier for that water to flow through.”

“We need to clean those things out.”

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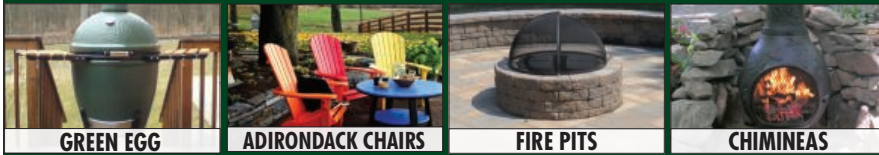
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This Oven Doesn't Cook Turkey: It Kills COVID.

A heat sanitization box designed and developed by entrepreneurs at TechPort, UAS Business Incubator and Community Innovation Hub of Southern Maryland, to assist front-line health care workers during the COVID-19 pandemic by making personal protective equipment (PPE) reusable was instrumental in yesterday's announcement on Dry Heat by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Officially titled the Semi-Automated Heat Bioburden Reduction Module, the 16-foot long, 8-foot wide, and 8-foot high "Hot Box" unit has undergone FDA testing while in use at the University of Maryland Charles Regional Medical Center during the past eight months.

"We are thrilled to reach this stage where all our hard work can now become accessible to health care providers throughout our nation," said Tommy Luginbill, director of TechPort. "What an incredible experience it has been to pull our Southern Maryland community together to produce an essential tool in this battle against the novel coronavirus."

As much of the nation began shutting down business to combat the novel coronavirus last March, Luginbill and Matt Hayes, founder and owner of Unmanned Propulsion Development, recognized that as TechPort entrepreneurs they were in an ideal position to help. Initially, they created masks, shields and gowns, but quickly realized materials would run out.

"The idea of constantly using PPE once and throwing it away was not sustainable," said Hayes, who paused his work on a hybrid gas and electric generator powered propulsion system, to lead development of the heat sanitization box and establish a nonprofit, Southern Maryland Loves You, to support the project. "We can keep producing things people can use once, or we could come

up with a way to reuse those things."

Hayes studied the characteristics of the virus, how to filter it and chemicals that would destroy it, part of a document he created on COVID-19 for engineers. It became clear that simple, universal heat was the way to go.

Eight companies were approached to help and two were a perfect fit: Burch Oil and Triton Defense, where the box was built. Capable of disinfecting 24,000 N95 masks per day, or other PPE equipment, the "hot box" can provide healthcare personnel the ability to reuse their gear at least 20 times, saving money and materials. It takes about one hour to cycle, not including the time to load and unload the PPE, Hayes says.

"We couldn't be prouder of this manufacturing triumph in Southern Maryland," said Chris Kaselemis, economic development director for St. Mary's County. "The way TechPort entrepreneurs collaborated with Burch Oil and Triton Defense in a moment of great need is a model for how business relationships can be effective and flourish in the future."

Local Maryland artists and musicians were instrumental in spreading awareness of the 'Hot Box' technology through multiple media platforms.

"Being able to sanitize and safely reuse our PPE has been a godsend during this intense time period when there is a strain on all health care facilities," said Dominic Fragan. "We know firsthand what an important and practical innovation this is for the ongoing pandemic."

In issuing the new policy on heat, the FDA notes that this guidance provides a policy for bioburden1 reduction systems that use dry heat to help support the single-user reuse2 of certain particulate filtering facepiece respirators3 (FFRs). This policy applies to FFRs that do not have exhalation valves.

Errata

We appreciate all of the comments on the story in the Nov. 12 edition about Radio in Southern Maryland. There were a few errors that were brought to my attention by readers that I attribute to brain freeze, an errant spell checker or my stupidity. They include:

- WMJS-LP is in the basement of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Prince Frederick, not Trinity Episcopal Church.
- KDKA, the first station, is on 1020 not 1120.
- WPTX started on the second floor of Jack Daugherty's Merchandise

Mart which later was sold to the Raley family and became Raley's Sales Center. Jack son Tom said his late dad did a daily morning show in the station's early days. Jack would go on to become a legendary banker in Lexington Park.

As I thought would happen, many have pointed out people who I should have mentioned. To all of those left on the cutting room floor, Happy 100th anniversary to all of you.

As we used to say, keep those cards and letters coming in (whatever they are).

Dick Myers



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MedStar St. Mary's Preparing for COVID Surge

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The chief medical and operating officer at MedStar St. Mary's Hospital, Dr. Stephen Michaels said this week that the hospital is preparing for the possibility of an increasing surge in COVID-19 cases, but the hospital is not inundated.

"There is definitely a surge, we're definitely seeing more [COVID] patients in the county," Michaels told The County Times.

The hospital is not reporting, however, the number of COVID patients at the hospital because it varies day to day and the number is so small it would require little effort to determine who in the community was infected, Michaels said.

"We just respect patients' privacy," Michaels said. "They're small numbers overall."

The hospital has adequate staffing, personal protection equipment (PPE), ventilators and other critical supplies, Michaels said, and was formulating plans mandated by Gov. Larry Hogan to deal with an anticipated COVID surge.

The hospital has 125 medical beds, not counting those in its emergency, ob-

stetrics or behavioral health wings, Michaels said, and had plans to use extra space to surge to 154 beds if needed.

Outdoor structures built for COVID contingencies offer an extra 20 beds, he said.

Earlier this week erroneous reports circulated that the hospital had reached what was known as Code Red status, essentially that they no longer had electronically monitored bed space.

The hospital did reach a Code Yellow status, said Michaels, which meant that local EMS providers had been warned that the hospital had four critically ill patients, though not from COVID, and that staff wanted more time to stabilize them before accepting anymore emergency cases.

"We've never been anywhere near the capacity of the hospital," Michaels said. "It had nothing to do with COVID-19."

The hospital's surge plan is due to the state by Dec. 8, per Hogan's order of Dec. 1.

"We're not in any acute crisis," Michaels said. "We're preparing for the potential that things can get worse."

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Fire Marshal Warns of Hoarding and Fire Risks

Six Marylanders lost their lives to fire in recent weeks, with hoarding conditions discovered in three during the course of the investigations. Hoarding is defined as collecting or keeping large amounts of various items in the home due to strong urges to save them or distress experienced when discarding them. This behavior can lead to the piling up of items like newspapers, magazines, empty containers, old clothing, paper, rotting food, animals, and occasionally animal manure inside or around a house. "Our biggest goal is the life safety and health of not only of the person living within the home but anyone living around them," stated State Fire Marshal Brian S. Geraci

According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), between three and five percent of the population struggles with hoarding, a mental disorder characterized by an individual's inability to discard personal possessions. The large amount of possessions fills a home and prevents the everyday use of the space. Excessive accumulation of material in homes poses a significant threat to firefighters responding to emergencies in these homes, as well as to residents and neighbors.

Hoarding increases the risk of fire ignition in a home because personal items may crowd cooking and heating equipment, causing them to catch fire. Occupants in

these homes are at risk during a fire because blocked exits may prevent their escape, or materials could fall on them. In addition, hoarding puts first responders at risk due to obstructed exits, falling objects, and excessive fire loading, and it impedes their ability to search out and rescue people and pets.

If you know someone who struggles with hoarding disorder, there are several ways that you can help:

- When speaking with someone who hoards, match the language of the person, and avoid using derogatory terms, such as "junk" or "trash." Focus on safety issues and small steps for addressing those issues instead of immediate, overwhelming cleanup.

- Help the resident make a home safety and escape plan. Stress the importance of clear pathways and exits.

- Contact your local fire department to alert them of your concerns. They may be able to connect you with a hoarding task force for additional help.

- Install working smoke alarms in the home. Test them at least once a month.

- Make a home safety and escape plan. Stress the importance of clear pathways and exits. Practice the plan often, and keep in mind that exit routes may change as new items are brought into the home.

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8x12	\$4.00	15x30	\$17.65
8x15	\$5.00	16x20	\$12.55
8x18	\$6.00	20x20	\$15.70
8x20	\$6.70	20x30	\$23.50
9x12	\$4.50	20x35	\$27.45
10x12	\$5.00	20x40	\$31.35
10x15	\$6.25	24x36	\$33.85
10x16	\$6.70	25x45	\$42.25
10x20	\$7.85	30x40	\$45.05
12x12	\$6.00	30x60	\$67.60
12x14	\$7.00	40x50	\$68.45
12x16	\$7.55	40x60	\$82.15
12x20	\$9.40		

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Cut Size	Sale Price	Cut Size	Sale Price
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10x12	\$9.80	30x50	\$107.00
10x15	\$12.25	40x60	\$162.95
10x20	\$16.35		
12x12	\$11.80		
12x16	\$15.70		
12x20	\$19.60		
12x25	\$24.50		
15x20	\$24.50		
15x25	\$30.65		
16x20	\$26.15		
20x20	\$34.70		
20x25	\$39.15		
20x30	\$47.00		
20x35	\$54.80		
20x40	\$62.65		

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No In-Person Learning Until Next Year

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Any hopes of students returning to in-person learning at school sometime this month have been dashed by rising infection rates of COVID-19 in St. Mary's, according to an announcement Tuesday by the St. Mary's County Public Schools system.

"We are going to remain virtual for the entire month of December," Superintendent Dr. J. Scott Smith told the Board of Education Wednesday morning. "We had originally said we were going to review the data and were going to consider resuming in-person learning instruction [by Nov. 30]."

"The data is such that it is prohibited."

Smith noted that as of Dec. 1, one day prior to the board of education meeting, that the positivity rate in St. Mary's had reached 10.8 percent, the highest level since May.

"That means that one out of every 10 people that got tested was positive," Smith said.

The new case rate was actually dropping, Smith said of the latest data provided by the St. Mary's County Health Department, but was still high



at just under 22 people infected per 100,000.

"These numbers are going to change and... probably going to go back up because we had a lull in testing due to Thanksgiving."

The county was effectively double the positivity rate outlined in the state's recovery plan that would allow a return to in-person learning, either in hybrid fashion or a total return, Smith said.

The information on continuing virtual learning was sent out to all staff and parents on Tuesday.

The week beginning Nov. 22 also had the highest number of new cases

in St. Mary's ever since the pandemic was tracked here beginning in March with 262 cases of infection.

"When we get to numbers like this, it's just unchecked community spread," Smith said.

Winter sports, which were to start Dec. 7, have also been put on hold until January.

But, Smith said, there was "light at the end of the tunnel" as he expected school staff to be part of the first wave of vaccinations once it arrives in St. Mary's.

Dr. Meena Brewster told elected leaders this week she expected to see the first doses of two vaccines arrive

by or near the end of December to be disseminated over time to the general public after frontline personnel and those with critical conditions.

"All of this is voluntary," Smith said. "There will be no vaccination mandate from us locally."

By Jan. 4, Smith said, the system planned to begin bringing students back in stages to the hybrid model, assuming the risks were acceptable.

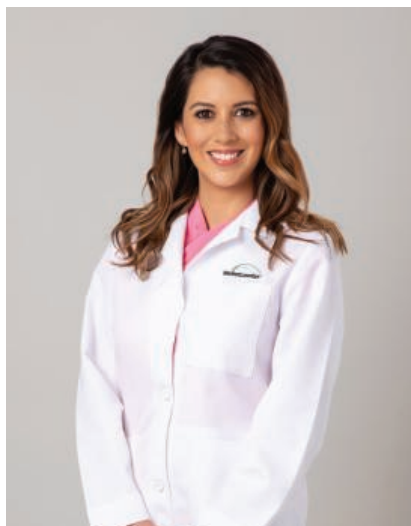
"It might be March before we get back to some semblance of consistent day to day operations," Smith said. "But we will get there."

"But we have to hold on."

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Ceremonies Recalls Those Who Have Passed

By Dave Spigler
Contributing Writer

With the sad passing of so many family and friends this year, much of it due to the complications created by the spread of the dreadful coronavirus, the celebration of All Souls Day took on a whole new meaning throughout the Christian world. This Holy Day also known as the "Commemoration of All The Faithfully Departed" and the "Day of the Dead" is a prayerful day of remembrance for the souls of those who have died is observed annually in early November by many denominations of Western and Eastern Christianity.

The traditions, practices, and beliefs associated with this day vary from religion to religion. Often the tolling of church bells, the lighting of candles, the baking of "Soul Cakes" for the children or the preparation of special breads and bakery goods coupled with much singing and praying mark this day as folks gather to remember long lost loved ones and neighbors. It is thought the giving of small cakes to the children who come to sing and pray for the poor souls led to the practice we now know as "Trick or Treat" celebrated as Halloween on the last day of October.

In Britain, folks gather at cemeteries at sundown to kneel at the graves of loved ones and anoint their tombstones with Holy Water. On the island of Malta



in the Mediterranean, people there celebrate with a traditional supper of roast pork. According to an old custom, a pig with a bell tied around his neck is allowed to roam freely throughout the villages where it is fed by the all of the locals, then slaughtered on this Holy Day and fed to the poor. The Philippines combines All Souls Day with All Saints Day that falls on the day before into a celebration of those souls that have passed away and have gone to Heaven. They observe this time visiting the graves of their family members and cleaning and repairing their tombstones. They will offer prayers, flowers, candles, and prayers and often stay well into the night holding family reunions with much merriment.

Here in America, the Catholic Church and Eastern Orthodox denominations have established the annual Feast Day of All Souls as November 2, the day after

All Saints Day. It is believed the coupling of these two days was originated to take into account the possibility that not all souls are able to gain immediate access to Heaven and will need more time and prayers from loved ones before gaining entrance through "the Golden Gates." Under Christian doctrine, these "poor" souls remain in a place called "Purgatory" until such time the Lord considers them full cleansed and worthy of this "award" hence the custom for much fervent praying for the dead on this Holy Day.

In Southern Maryland as in much of the country, All Souls Day is celebrated by religious services held by the various Faiths as a time to remember those thought to be suffering in Purgatory. Many churches throughout the tri County area scheduled prayer services with the lighting of candles for loved ones no longer with us. A special evening prayer vigil was held this month at the Youth Memorial in Great Mills to honor the memory of more than 200 young people under 18 years of age whose names are engraved on the monuments there. These children were from all over the area and of various beliefs and creeds whose lives were shortened by many tragic events. This candlelit event was well attended despite the weather and the social distancing protocol currently in place requiring the attendees to wear masks and

to stand at least six feet apart.

In Solomons, Father Ken Gill, Pastor of the Our Lady Star of the Sea Parish planned to conduct a full outdoor Mass at the Parish Cemetery among the more than 200 gravesites of deceased parishioners and loved ones on All Souls Day. However, the weather did not cooperate on the Feast Day, so the celebration had to be rescheduled. And on a truly beautiful Saturday Fall morning, Father Ken, assisted by Deacon Andy Geisz with the help of several Knights of Columbus, arranged to have an altar and lectern and chairs moved from the church to the cemetery. Chairs were arranged to ensure a safe distance between attendees. Prior to Mass, Father went to every gravesite with a blessing. A nice service in memory of all the souls buried there as well as all that have died in the recent past was celebrated by the folks in attendance. The morning was anything but somber!

This unique setting was made all the more beautiful by the first bright sun in days, pleasure boats getting underway in the harbor, folks strolling past with their dogs on a leash, and children running and laughing while bouncing a ball! This backdrop made for a good contrast for the real purpose for the service, to remember our folks who have gone before us yet remember the good times and memories they provided us as well.



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Veterans Honored with Quilts of Valor

As the USA honored all its veterans on Veterans' Day, PAX Sound of Freedom, the St. Mary's County chapter of Quilts of Valor, recognized two local veterans for their service to our country and their generosity to the St. Mary's chapter by providing financial support and allowing the group to hold monthly business meetings and quilt presentations in their facility.

Matthew Budde, a 20-year Navy retiree, and his business associate, David Stathem, a four0year Air Force veteran, were presented with Quilts of Valor in Lexington Park.

Matt joined the Navy as a 17-year old and retired as a Navy Chief Petty Officer. He served in Italy, Germany, the Naval Academy, the White House, and retired from PAX.

David served a four-year stint in the Air Force at Johnson Air Force Base in North Carolina and is employed by a government contractor at PAX.

Nationally, Quilts of Valor began in 2003 by Catharine Roberts at her home in Seaford, DE during her son's deployment to Iraq. Her son's deployment inspired her to come up with a means to welcome returning troops, including her son, to ensure they knew and felt the love and gratitude of our grateful citizens.

Quilts of Valor is an established non-profit 501(c)3 with a mission to support our veterans.

Catharine's idea swept across the country and the local chapter in St. Mary's County, Maryland, is PAX Sounds of Freedom. The group started its activities in 2017 and between 2017 to 2019, 94 quilts were presented to veterans but approximately 40 veterans are still on the waiting list. Thus far in 2020, 64 quilts have been presented as COVID restrictions have limited presentations.

COVID has also limited the ability to raise funds. In previous years the two big opportunities to raise funds were the St. Mary's County Fair and



Pictured left to right: Matthew Budde and David Stathem

the Oyster Festival (both were canceled for 2020). The generosity of the men honored with quilts, the Navy League, St. Mary's Knights of Columbus and individual contributions have made it possible for PAX Sound of Freedom to purchase fabric, battings and backs to continue its mission in the county.

The PAX Sound of Freedom group is headed by Sylvia and Gerry Lague, group leaders; Eileen Jones serves as secretary; and Cecelia Cooney is the treasurer. At the current time the group has 20 active participants. Sew-ins are held on the second Saturday of each month (excluding December) at St. George's Catholic Church in Valley Lee from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Presentations are held on the third Saturday of the month at 2 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church in Lexington Park. Additional presentations have been made on the fourth Saturday in Lexington Park. Special arrangements can be made in advance for personal presentations.

If you have any questions regarding Quilts of Valor, or would like to participate in the group's activities, please contact Sylvia Lague at (941) 705-0094.

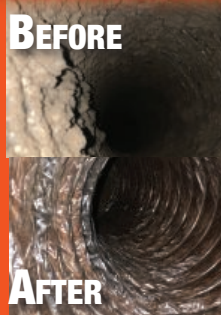
Article and Photos by Jerre Stephens for PAX Sound of Freedom.

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And remember, if there is room in the heart, there is room in the house.

To see more of my amazing friends also available for adoption, "like" us on Facebook @ Tri-County Animal Shelter Southern MD or view us on our website at <https://www.charlescountymd.gov/services/animal-care-control/tri-county-animal-shelter>

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SMADC Farms in Focus Video Series 'Livestock' Edition



The Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC) announced the release of the 'Livestock' Edition of the Farms in Focus video series on Southern Maryland's key agricultural sectors.

SMADC's latest video opens a window into the world of Southern Maryland's livestock farmers and shows how a careful balance of art and science, combined with environmental stewardship, humane raising standards, and strong customer relationships go hand in hand to bring quality meats to our tables.

The video explores five regional farms, each with a different livestock focus (pigs, cattle, sheep and poultry), that all share a common commitment to provide the best possible environment and forage for their animals. Personal and insightful interviews with the individual farmers illustrate what is involved in the day to day stewardship of their herds and land, and how their love of farming (plus a great deal of attention to detail) is rewarded with a quality, humanely raised product that provides nourishment for their local communities and a reasonable living for their families.

Raising top quality livestock requires many skill sets – a sound agricultural knowledge as well as chemical and mechanical expertise, marketing savvy and computer skills. At the very top of the list for the featured farmers is the ability to cultivate close customer relationships; all agree that getting to know their buyers is essential for the overall success of their operations and involves not only educating their customers, but also paying

close attention to their questions and needs. Jason Leavitt of Wilson Dowell Farms in Calvert County, sums it up "Ultimately, the customer is the boss – they vote with their dollars to underscore what you're doing (and the way you're doing it) is what they want and is valuable to them."

Livestock producers in this video are participants of the Southern Maryland Meats (SMM) Program of SMADC, and representative of over 55 farms region wide. "Membership in SMM states that all animals are humanely treated, have access to pasture, and are not fed antibiotics or growth hormones," commented Craig Sewell, SMM Livestock and Marketing Manager. "We at SMADC are pleased to offer this glimpse into their lives and practices." To learn more about the SMM program and find where to buy locally raised quality meats visit the searchable directory at SouthernMarylandMeats.com.

Produced by SMADC, a division of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, the Farms in Focus 'Livestock Edition' is available now to view on the SMADC YouTube channel. The video series, filmed by accomplished agriculture videographers Edwin Remsberg Studios, illustrates Southern Maryland's diverse agricultural profile and connects consumers with the region's farming community. Visit SMADC.com for more farm resources and consumer guides.

The "Farms in Focus" videos are made possible by a grant awarded to SMADC through the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund (RMPiF).

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Greenwell Foundation Partners with Charlotte Hall Veterans Home for Special Visit

Greenwell Foundation is a local non-profit providing therapeutic and recreational programs to children and adults with and without all kinds of disabilities. Greenwell and Charlotte Hall have partnered for many years, bringing veterans to Greenwell State Park for activities on the water and with their horses. When the pandemic hit, and Charlotte Hall locked down, the staff at Greenwell sent treats and videos to lift the residents' spirits.

On Wednesday, November 4th, Greenwell's Executive Director, Jolanda Campbell and Equestrian Director Jenn Emmart, were able to bring Maverick, a miniature horse and Summer, a piebald pony to Charlotte Hall to visit with Ambulatory and non-ambulatory residents, and patients in the dementia unit.

"We were extremely well received," Campbell said. "They would host us again and again. Every single person who greeted us was thrilled to see the horses. Staff were excited for themselves and to see the residents respond in such positive ways. It was really wonderful to see the staff enjoying the visit vicariously. They took photos to print out and hang

on residents' bulletin boards. They made sure all residents saw both Maverick and Summer by wheeling them from place to place. We visited three outside locations including a locked courtyard on the Alzheimer's unit wing. I was very glad that staff felt comfortable bringing us to that location and did not exclude those very disabled veterans from this experience."

"Most all residents immediately reached out and wanted to touch the ponies. They smiled huge smiles and laughed. Two non-verbal adults talked to us and we responded. The staff was shocked to hear these residents talking, one for the first time since arriving at the facility"

Greenwell looks forward to going back soon, and is actively seeking funding to underwrite additional visits. Next time, Emmart explained, they plan to take Maverick – in a diaper and harness – inside the facility to visit veterans who are bedridden.

"The event was magical! The residents had an absolute blast! The horses brought so much joy!" Ashley Radano, Director of Recreational Services, Charlotte Hall Veterans Home



★ ST. MARY'S COUNTY Library

Chair Yoga

Chair Yoga - Give your body some gentle movement while seated in a supportive chair with a sturdy back with instructor Megan Grunewald. Join us on Saturday, December 12 from 2 – 2:30 p.m. We will focus on intentional breathing and gentle stretching of the neck, arms, and torso. Register with an email address on www.stmalib.org to receive a link to join the online event. Megan Grunewald earned her yoga teacher certification in 2015. She taught Hatha and restorative yoga classes for 4 years with a nonprofit studio in Columbus, Ohio before moving to Boulder, Colorado. She currently teaches online yoga classes and

encourages her students to develop a home practice.

Virtual Romance Book Club

Join the St. Mary's County Library for a Virtual Romance Book Club on Wednesday, December 16 from 7:30 – 8:30 p.m. Each month we will discuss a different romance novel. All books will be available in both eBook and audiobook format on Hoopla. December's title is "How the Dukes Stole Christmas".

Christmas Piano Concert: With Georgia Harvey's Piano Students

Join us for an afternoon of music on Friday, December 11 from 3:30 – 4:30 p.m. Georgia Harvey's piano



students of all ages will play delightful holiday arrangements. We will hear beautiful carols like Silent Night, Away in a Manger and Joy to the World, along with popular Christmas songs like Jingle Bells, Winter Wonderland, and White Christmas. Register with an email address on www.stmalib.org to receive a link to join the online event

ceive a link to join the online event

Library Holiday Hours

All three St. Mary's County Library locations will be closed Thursday, December 24 – Saturday, December 26 for Christmas. All locations will reopen on Monday, December 28.

Managing Your Retirement Plan Under a New Employer

Your employer-sponsored retirement plan is a valuable asset. But sometimes things happen that can affect the status of your plan. So, for example, if you work for a hospital that changes ownership, and you have been participating in a 403(b), 457(b) or 401(k) retirement plan, what should you do with it now?

Basically, you have four options:

- Cash out your plan. You can simply cash out your plan and take the money, but you'll have to pay taxes on it, and possibly penalties as well. So, unless you really need the funds and you have no other alternative, you may want to avoid liquidating your account.

- Roll your account into your new employer's plan. If it's allowed, you can roll over your old 403(b), 457(b) or 401(k) plan into your new employer's plan. Before making this move, you'll want to look at the new plan's investment options (which should be numerous) and fees (which should be low). If you move the money directly to the new plan, you won't be taxed at the time of the transfer, and your funds can continue to grow tax-deferred.

- Leave your plan with your old employer. If your account balance is above a certain level, you may be able to leave your plan with your old employer's plan administrator. You won't be able to contribute any more money to the plan, but if you like the investment options you've chosen, keeping the money in your old plan might be a viable choice.

- Move your account into a traditional IRA. One possible

advantage to moving your 403(b), 457(b) or 401(k) into a traditional IRA is you'll open up a world of new investment options, because you can fund your IRA with virtually any type of vehicle, including stocks, bonds, mutual funds, certificates of deposit (CDs) and exchange-traded funds. And if you already have a traditional IRA, you can combine the new funds with the old ones, making it easier to track your holdings. As is the case with leaving your money in your old employer's plan or transferring it to a new plan, you'll continue to benefit from tax-deferred growth. Keep in mind, though, that IRAs have costs, too, possibly including transaction costs to buy or sell new investments. (One more thing to keep in mind: When you want to move a retirement plan to an IRA, you may want to make a direct rollover, so the old plan's administrator moves the money directly into the IRA, allowing you to avoid immediate taxes. If you were to make an indirect rollover, you'd get the money yourself, but your old employer would have to deduct 20% for federal taxes, and you'd have to deposit the entire balance, including the withholding, into your IRA within 60 days.)

Which of these choices is best for you? There's no one "right" answer for everyone. You'll want to consider all the options and possibly consult with your tax advisor and financial professional. But do all you can to protect your retirement plan – you've worked hard to build it, and you'll need to rely on it to help you pay for your years as a retiree.

*Article was contributed by David McDonough
Financial Advisor at Edward Jones.
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Leonardtown MD, 20650
301 997 1707*

UAS Route Network Over Chesapeake Bay Could Transform Aviation Airspace, Integration.

In a move that could spearhead major advancements in civilian and commercial use of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), the University of Maryland (UMD) UAS Test Site has initiated a feasibility study for a UAS route network overlying the Chesapeake Bay.

Such a network would be designed to enable unmanned aircraft to be flown safely within airspace that also includes conventional, piloted aircraft. In addition, unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) utilizing the network would be able to fly beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) and over populated areas. Currently, most UAS operations are constrained by BVLOS requirements and restrictions on flying over people.

"There is a widespread consensus that integrating UAS into non-segregated airspace is critical to realizing the vast potential of unmanned systems," said UMD UAS Test Site Director Matt Scassero. "But it has to be done safely and systematically, with a well-conceived framework and operational best practices. The Chesapeake Bay UAS Route Network will provide an appropriate means to move forward."

The feasibility study is being developed in partnership with The Padina Group, a consulting firm that specializes in aerospace and aviation, and with the participation of key industry and government stakeholders, including the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) UAS Integration Office.

John Walker, senior partner with The Padina Group, said the Chesapeake Bay region is poised to take on a historic role.

"There is a widespread consensus that integrating UAS into non-segregated airspace is critical to realizing the vast potential of unmanned systems."

Matt Scassero, UMD UAS Test Site Director

"Technology advancements within the aerospace industry have generated a 'Kitty Hawk' moment that is revolutionizing global air transportation," Walker said. "The innovative use of drones for commercial purposes is recognized as an early enabler of this new aircraft technology."

"The Chesapeake Bay is close to the site where the Wright Brothers successfully took flight in December 1903," he noted. "Now, in 2020, the Bay region is poised for the development of new technology and services that will benefit millions. This emerging air transportation technology will bring important public benefits and connect with other transportation systems throughout the region."

According to Scassero, the planned network would be implemented in phase. Initially, only small unmanned aircraft would be permitted to fly in non-segregated airspace, and only at lower altitudes. In later phases, the network would be opened to larger aircraft flying at higher altitudes.

Research, commerce, humanitarian needs, and public safety could all benefit from the establishment of a such a network, Scassero said. "The time is right for major steps towards airspace integration," he said. "It's important for the regional economy, for the budding UAS industry, and for the many who can benefit from the capabilities these technologies offer."

The feasibility study is the latest initiative from the UMD UAS Test Site, which has led a succession of missions aimed at advancing the use of unmanned systems, including the first-ever drone delivery of a live organ for transplant. Part of the A. James Clark School of Engineering at UMD, the UAS Test Site has also helped pioneer the use of drones in disaster relief, search and rescue, and many other critical endeavors.



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CountyTimes

Food Bank Steps Up to Feed St. Mary's

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

It was a rocky year for Feed St. Mary's, the county's first food bank, but members of its board of directors say it was a successful one and if the volume of food that they have distributed is an indicator the need for food assistance in St. Mary's is growing as COVID-19 continues to make a resurgence.

"We've been distributing through pantries and churches and they have all expressed a need for food," said Linda Lymas, founder of Feed St. Mary's.

Feed St. Mary's just supplied more than 900 Thanksgiving turkey dinners throughout St. Mary's, Lymas said, and even then, the call for more food assistance from pantries and churches continued, she said.

Charlie Wharton, food bank board member, said they have yet to have their grand opening, though that event had been originally planned for the same time that the first wave of COVID-19 hit.

"Our grand opening was supposed to be in March," Wharton told The County Times. "It's more about celebrating the process."

While the board still wants to have a grand opening it hasn't stopped the organization from pursuing its mission, to ensure that local food pantries and care organizations are always stocked with food and to eliminate food insecurity here in general.

"The wheels were in motion and it just took off," Wharton said, noting that Feed St. Mary's has partnered with 18 food pantries locally and continues to supply them, even during the difficult times of COVID-19.

"We've never turned away anybody," Wharton said.

The local food bank has effectively only been operating for nine months, Wharton said, but it has benefited from not only government funding support spurred by the pandemic but also by donors offering financial help.

"Without that we might not have been able to do what we've been able to do," Wharton said. "People have been more generous."

In their first year of operation, Feed St. Mary's has distributed 18,000 cas-



es of food, Lymas said.

On a larger metric, they have taken in 61,345 pounds of food in less than a year, she said, which translates into a little more than 30 tons.

This food is for distribution to St. Mary's County residents who are deemed to be food insecure.

But, currently, it is difficult to ascertain just how many are in that condition, Lymas said.

The food bank is currently working on ways to keep records of how much food that they distribute is being passed out to various pantries or service organizations and also who in the community is the final consumer.

"We are looking to track data by client and by pantry," Lymas said.

Rev. Greg Syler, the pastor at Church of the Ascension in Lexington Park, with one of the largest food pantries in the county, says that demand has definitely increased since the pandemic

started.

People with families who lived on the margins of the local economy and may have become unemployed or underemployed were hurt because of COVID-19, he said, and the results have been evident.

"Our numbers have shot through the roof," Syler said. "We had to move our whole operation into the parking lot because of the pandemic."

"If you're hungry we'll give you food."

St. Mary's Caring, another soup kitchen in the Lexington Park area, reported also that continued donations from the community have allowed them to provide more than 56,000 meals for free since mid-March when the pandemic first hit.

Church of the Ascension joins with several other food pantries along Great Mills Road, which runs through the center of Lexington Park, in serving the community and Syler said those pantries report much the same; that more and more people are coming out to get more food assistance.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, having 20 to 25 families come in for food assistance at Church of the Ascension was considered a busy day, Syler said.

That has more than doubled on the days they are open for business.

Phyllis Greer, the director of the food pantry at Church of the Ascension, said a busy day now is between 70 to 80 families.

"That's not counting the number of people in the families," Greer said. "Two weeks ago, we had 111 families in one day."

The pantry is still being operated outside and food pick up is done via drive thru.

The current method of operation is

at the behest of the Maryland Food Bank's guidance, which includes a contactless transfer of food to those picking it up.

The Maryland Food Bank is the organization which donates food to Feed St. Mary's for redistribution to pantries here.

The contactless method also has brought a new aspect to the food distribution issue.

"Before COVID-19 everyone had to show an ID [to prove St. Mary's County residency]," Greer said. "Right now, we're not taking any IDs from people."

"If people are hungry, we give them food."

This leaves the question open as to whether the greatly enhanced demand for food assistance is due to a significant increase in hardship here, or if some from other jurisdictions are coming to St. Mary's to take advantage of all of the services offered to the needy.

"Do we know [who everyone is who is seeking aid]? No, we don't," Greer said. "Some faces we know."

"But, I'm not seeing some of the faces we'd normally see inside."

Many of these were elderly people who stopped showing up to the pantry for help during COVID as they did during more normal times.

"We started to get concerned, that we weren't seeing some of these people," Greer said.

One thing Syler was sure of, getting food to those who wanted it, whatever their level of need, was much easier with Feed St. Mary's acting as the local hub for food assistance.

"Feed St. Mary's has been the missing ingredient," Syler said. "Before they came along, we had to worry about supply and distribution."

"Now we can just focus on distribution."

Local food pantries such as Church of the Ascension's, used to have to go all the way to Baltimore to get the food they needed to distribute which was taxing and volunteers to do the job were not always available.

"The supply side has been taken care of," Syler said.

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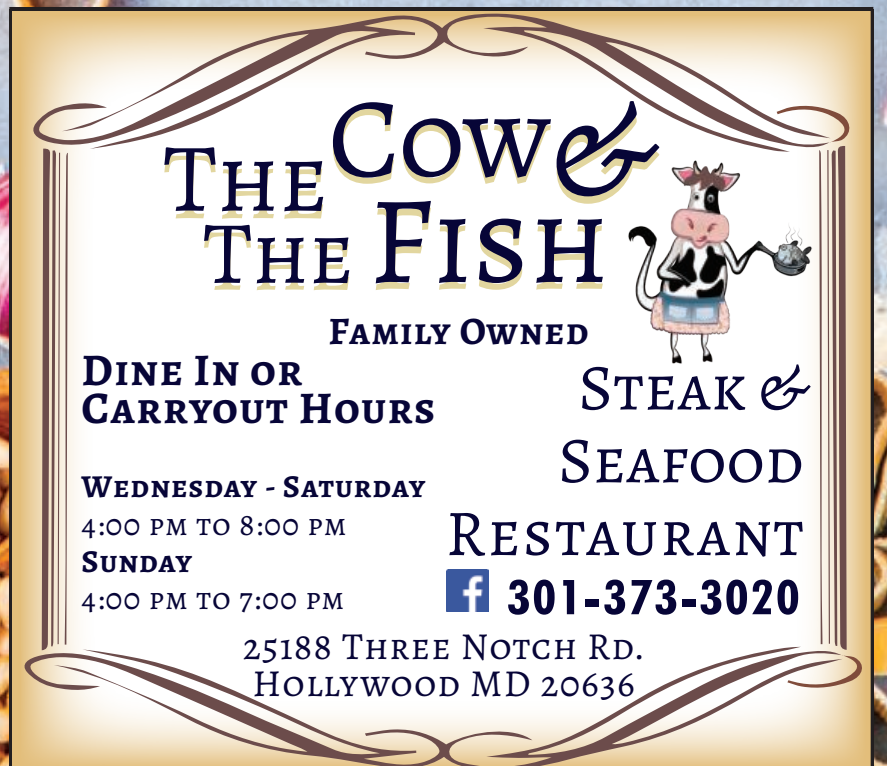
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ST. MARY'S SHERIFF'S OFFICE CRIME REPORT

Robbery/Drug Arrest- On November 12, 2020, DFC. Beyer responded to the 48200 block of Hillside Drive in Lexington Park, for the reported theft. Investigation determined the victim observed

Michael Wade Blackistone, age 38 of Lexington Park, inside the victim's vehicle, attempting to steal items. The victim advised Blackistone then fled on foot with his stolen property and the victim pursued him. Blackistone assaulted the victim by shoving the victim and then fled the scene. Deputies located Blackistone at his residence and he was arrested. Located on Blackistone at the time of his arrest was a suspected CDS smoking device containing a quantity of suspected cocaine. Blackistone was charged with Robbery, Rogue and Vagabond, Theft, Assault 2nd Degree, CDS: Possession-Not Marijuana and CDS: Possession-Paraphernalia.

Assault/Disorderly Conduct- On November 15, 2020, Dep. Luffey responded to the 21600 block of Great Mills Road in Lexington Park, for the reported disturbance. Upon arrival Dep. Luffey observed **Robert Lee Driggers**, age 54 of no fixed address, in front of the business yelling and creating a disturbance. Driggers was ordered to cease his behavior, but he refused to do so, and began disturbing employees and citizens in the area. As a patron exited the business, Driggers grabbed the patron and when a deputy on scene intervened, Driggers struck the deputy's arm. Driggers was arrested and charged with two counts of Assault 2nd Degree, Disorderly Conduct, and Fail to Obey a Reasonable Lawful Order.

Violate Protective Order- On November 15, 2020, Dep. Wilhelm responded to the 45600 block of Buckshot Way in Lexington Park, for the reported protective order violation. Investigation determined **Jorge Suarez Cerquera**, age 26 of Lexington Park, was the respondent in a valid protective order which prohibits Cerquera from being at the victim's residence. Cerquera was located inside the residence and arrested. Cerquera was charged with Violate Protective Order.

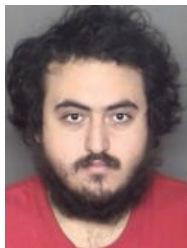
Home Invasion- On November 15, 2020, Dep. Palmer responded to the 46400 block of Sue Drive in Lexington Park, for the reported property destruction. Investigation determined **Gloria Ticas Hernandez**, age 45 of Lexington Park, arrived at the residence and began banging on the door. When Hernandez was not let into the residence, she broke a window and climbed into the residence. Once inside the residence, Hernandez proceeded to assault the victim by ripping the victim's shirt and scratching the victim. Hernandez was arrested and charged with Home Invasion, Assault 2nd Degree, Burglary 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Degree and Malicious Destruction of Property.



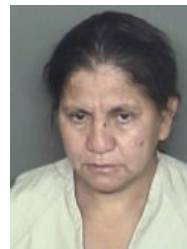
Michael Blackistone



Robert Driggers



Jorge Suarez-Cerquera



Gloria Hernandez

Editor's Note:

The above arrests are not an indication of guilt or innocence as the cases have not been adjudicated.

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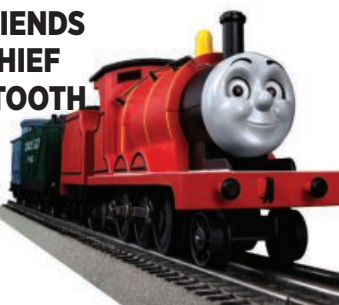


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PATUXENT RIVER NAVAL AIR STATION *News*

Navy Completes Testing Next-Gen Air Combat Training System on F/A-18

By Amie Blade
PEO(CS) Public Affairs Officer

The Naval Aviation Training System and Ranges program office (PMA-205) recently completed testing its next-generation air combat training system, the Tactical Combat Training System Increment II (TCTS II), on an F/A-18E/F Super Hornet at NAS Patuxent River.

The latest series of tests, conducted by Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (VX) 23, are the culmination of innovative, strategic planning across multiple organizations working together with industry to complete this mission with urgency.

“It is a significant milestone event when a system moves from lab testing to aircraft testing at Pax River. Due to the hard work of our government and industry team, these tests are meeting program schedule dates to enable low rate production this April,” said Capt.

Lisa Sullivan, PMA-205 program manager.

Traditional air combat training missions have included a combination of live and simulated range training missions designed to prepare aircrew for real world combat with adversaries. As training requirements have changed over time, the Navy and Marine Corps have worked with industry to find innovative methods to revolutionize the way air combat training is conducted while improving integrated training readiness at the same time.

“This is one step closer to bringing these real-time training capabilities to the warfighter, in the end allowing them to train like they fight,” said Melissa Benish, PMA-205 TCTS II lead assistant program manager for test and evaluation. “Our strategy is developmental test with a focus on mission-level requirements.”

The TCTS II system, developed

by Collins Aerospace Systems, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, is an encrypted, multi-level security, open architecture system air combat instrumentation system that enables live, blended with synthetic real-time air combat training with additional onboard interactive training models. The system enables aircrew to train in air combat maneuvering with both real and simulated weapons and electronic warfare tactics with simulated threats.

TCTS II has an open systems architecture that interfaces with current training assets such as electronic warfare threat emitters and ground-based systems. The advanced processor, advanced data link, and capability for advanced waveforms all encompassed within an open architecture ensure the system is scalable to meet current and future requirements while controlling future costs.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Air Force

joined the TCTS II program to leverage investments made by the Navy and delivery training capabilities sooner and at a lower cost. The services will work together to use this system to train in real-world environments with real-world threats.

PMA-205 provides full life-cycle acquisition of naval aviation platforms, general training systems, training range instrumentation systems, and distributed mission training centers to provide USN and USMC pilots, naval flight officers, aircrew, and maintainers with the training equipment required to provide lethal capability and operational readiness. The program office manages flight simulators, part-task trainers, maintenance trainers, airborne and underwater training range instrumentation, threat systems, and associated curricula to ensure optimum performance for naval aviation.



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.

Friday, December 4

First Friday

Leondartown Square; 5 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Come by from for shopping, dinner, dessert, and one-evening-only specials at participating shops, restaurants, and art galleries! Check the "Leondartown First Fridays" Facebook page for details about specific events in Downtown and beyond, we look forward to seeing you there! Social distancing and masks required per current guidelines. Our merchants offer safe and sanitary shopping and dining experiences with all proper regulations in place, come Shop Small for the holiday season!

Beth Israel Synagogue Shabbat Services Online

7 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Shabbat evening services are being held online due to COVID19. Beginning July 17, 2020, Beth Israel Synagogue will hold online services EVERY FRIDAY at 7 PM. Check our website calendar (bethisraelmd.weebly.com/calendar.html) for event details.

Saturday, December 5

Myrtle Point Park Workday

Myrtle Point Park; 9 a.m. - noon

Join PTLT and Friends to help remove invasive vines and plants to help restore the woodland. Bring clippers, hand saw, or your favorite tool. Wear appropriate clothing including work gloves, hat, and protective eyewear. It's a great way to get some Vit. D and fresh air, socially distanced activity, and do something good for our community. Questions? Call Frank at 301-862-3421. RAIN Date: Sunday, Dec. 6, 2020 (We are a hardy bunch...only postponed for nasty weather. Call 301-247-3285 day of event if unsure.) Bottled water and snacks provided (Thanks to Good Earth Natural Foods Company)

Sunday, December 6

Drive-Thru Breakfast

St. John's School; 8 a.m. - 11 a.m.

Each meal includes scrambled eggs, hash browns, two sausages, two pieces of bacon, and three pancakes. Napkins and utensils are available upon request. Cost \$5 per person, \$20 maximum per family. Proceeds to benefit St. John's School, Charitable Society, and CCD Program. Donations

encouraged.

We are taking preorders (number of meals and time of pick up). Please email Mike Thompson at mikeandbararat@gmail.com. To order on-site, simply drive up to St. John's School's main door, where you will order and pay. Then pull ahead to the corner door (between School and Msgr. Harris Center) for pick up.

Walkups can order and pay at the Msgr. Harris Center doors.

Tuesday, December 8

Grief Support Group

Calvary Chapel; 7 p.m.

Help and encouragement after the death of a spouse, child, family member, or friend. The support group meets weekly. You are welcome to begin attending at any point. You'll find it to be a warm, caring environment and will come to see your group as an "oasis" on your long journey through grief. For more information call the church office and leave a message 301-645-0660 or email us at admin@ccsmd.com.

Wednesday, December 9

Wayback Wednesdays

We hope you're loving our weekly video series showing some of the stories that make St. Mary's County's history so unique and interesting. We thought this would be a fun way to bring our closed museums to you while we all keep our social distance. Join us every week for short videos featuring everything from the quirky to the fascinating - tune in! We have several episodes in the playlist! [Facebook.com/SCIMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/SCIMuseum)

DAV Assistance Program

St. Mary's Square ReStore; 8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Veterans - do you have a service-connected disability? Did you receive an injury while on active duty and are now filing for disability through the Veterans Administration (VA)? The Disabled American Veterans organization is here to assist you with those VA forms at no cost to you. These men and women (who are disabled veterans) are volunteers who ensure you are placing the proper information in the proper blocks and advise you on common mistakes that are made on these VA forms. Their spaces are toward the rear of the building on the left side. Stop by and see if we can be of assistance to you. No appointment necessary.

St. Mary's Department of Aging & Human Services Programs and Activities

Loffler Senior Activity Center 301-475-4200, ext. 71658

Garvey Senior Activity Center, 301-475-4200, ext. 71050

Northern Senior Activity Center, 301-475-4002, ext. 73101

Visit www.stmarysmd.com/aging for the most up-to date information

Brought to you by the Commissioners of St. Mary's County: James R. Guy, President; Michael L. Hewitt; Eric Colvin; Todd B. Morgan; John E. O'Connor; and the Department of Aging & Human Services

Videos from Aging & Human Services

The Department of Aging & Human Services is proud to announce our brand new Virtual Senior Activity Center and YouTube page! Go to <https://www.stmarysmd.com/aging/virtual-senior-center/> or www.youtube.com, keyword SMC Aging & Human Services, to see what we have for you! There are more videos coming soon!

Loffler Book Club

This group will meet next on Friday, December 4, at 10 a.m. in the Facebook Chat Room. Read

"The Seven Days of Us" now (Some copies are being held at the Lexington Park library-schedule your curbside pickup by e-mailing [Catherine DiCristofaro cdicristofaro@stmalib.org](mailto:CatherineDiCristofaro@stmalib.org))

Summary: What happens when a scattered family finally must come together for the first time in years and ends up forced to spend a week together in quarantine over the holidays? For the next seven days, the Birches are locked down, cut off from the rest of humanity--and even decent Wi-Fi at Weyfield Hall, their family's aging country estate. (Amazingly enough, this book was written 2 years before our own quarantine experience!) If you want to be a part of this, contact Sheila.Graziano@stmarysmd.com for instructions and details.

Tasty Christmas Cottage

For over a decade, this workshop has been a beloved Loffler event. Even though things must be done differently this year, we are not doing without the Tasty Christmas Cottage tradition! We will simply do it live stream via Zoom on Wednesday, December 16, and Thursday, December 17, at 11 a.m. Two days will be needed for this project- the first day we will construct the cottage and let it dry overnight. The next day we will decorate it with sweets. This cute little item is made with Pop Tarts put together with royal icing, so it makes up (and holds up) nice and easy. (Doesn't crumble like graham cracker houses.) If you would like to attend this 2-day workshop, register by contacting Sheila.Graziano@stmarysmd.com. Successful registrants will be sent an ingredient list. Registrations will be limited to eight students.

Looking for Volunteer Discussion Leaders

If you are comfortable leading and conducting virtual meetings or classes using Zoom or similar platforms, I am looking for some volunteer leadership for discussion groups and classes such as Pain Management Support Group, Current Events, Craft Classes and other topics of interest. Please contact Sheila.Graziano@stmarysmd.com to discuss serving the community in this fun and rewarding capacity.

100% LOCAL COMMUNITY NEWS
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CountyTimes

Thousands in Southern Maryland pay for dentistry they never get done!

BY: JEFF TOMCSIK
Research Reporter

Statistically about 50% of the local population have dental insurance. Of that percentage only 50% of them properly use the dental benefits they are paying for. Most of them have no idea what benefits they have and how easy it is to lose them. To make the most of their dental benefits the consumer needs to understand how dental insurance works.

Dental insurance plans can be confusing. There are several components to a dental insurance plan. First there is the monthly premium that must be paid by the consumer, or in some cases their employer. There is the discount that is applied to all the dental codes that the insurance company negotiates with the dental offices. These discounts only effect "in-network" dentists and usually average about 30% off the usual and customary rate that a person without insurance would pay. Then there is the annual maximum. This is the amount that the insurance company is willing to pay on the insured's behalf per year. This typically ranges between \$1000 and \$3000 depending on the plan and how much the premium is per month.

While it certainly is a benefit to the consumer to have the lower fees that are negotiated on their behalf between the insurance company and the dental practices that are in-network, this discount doesn't make the cost of the annual fees worth the value. Those who have a healthy smile, would

likely never use the restorative benefit or at least not much of it. In other words, a 30% discount on something not being used or purchased doesn't hold any value.

Most of the insurance plans pick up the entire or at least most of the insured consumers' preventative maintenance. This is usually the procedures that are recommended to be done twice per year by your hygienist. This may include cleanings, x-rays, fluoride, exam, and the like. The insurance company would have you believe they are the hero for paying for these visits, but in fact, the consumer paid for them. They just allowed the consumer to spread the payments out throughout the year in monthly payments or weekly deductions from their payroll. Insured individuals that don't take advantage of their preventative visits by seeing their hygienist twice a year are literally throwing their money away. It would be the equivalent of paying for two nights in an upscale hotel in DC but never showing up for the stay! Who would do that? These dental visits are of equivalent value; but yet 25% of the insured public throws these visits they paid for away.

Regular preventative maintenance visits drastically reduce the likelihood of major restorative procedures in the future. It is a known fact that preventative dental care not only saves the integrity of the smile but it truly saves the patient from high cost restorative care in the future.

The dental insurance company wins when the patient waits to go to the dentist. Those

who pay for dental insurance every year but never go to the dentist are writing a free check to the insurance company. The insurance companies are keeping the money they've earmarked for preventative care as well as the entire annual maximum for those patients. Putting off dentistry until it hurts could easily escalate to \$5000 worth of treatment or much more in one year. The dental insurance company will only contribute \$1500 because that is the average maximum on any given plan which leaves the out-of-pocket due at \$3500 for the insured individual in this example. Whereas, had they gone to the dentist every year and had the work done as needed over the course of four years, their out-of-pocket may have been zero, as the \$1500 per year (\$1500 x 4 years = \$6000) would have covered \$6000 over the four year period.

But the insurance companies do not let annual maximums roll over. They have a strict use it or you lose it policy. One would think that the insured consumer would be able to accrue his or her benefits since they literally paid for them and did not use them. Not the case; leftover benefits become pure profit for the insurance companies. The insurance companies are in business to make money, not to save smiles.

Dental providers see patients every day who put off dentistry and then struggle to pay for the work they need to have done. It is very sad for both the dental provider who wants to help the patient and for the patient who is in pain or embarrassed by the condition of their smile. Dental providers want their

patients to see them as recommended but can't force anyone to do anything. This is why they try to educate them about the benefits that they have with their insurance company, so that when they need work, they understand how to best take advantage of their insurance.

Most dental plans end at the end of a calendar years. The average plan allows for a \$1500 annual maximum. Someone treatment planned today to have \$3000 in restorative treatment done, can start the procedures in November or December and finish them in January. This will allow them to take maximum advantage of the dental insurance they've paid for.

Call your dental office. Ask them if they are in-network with your insurance. If they are, schedule an appointment for a cleaning and a checkup. See if you have any dental work that needs to be done. Then ask your dental office what your annual limit is and how much remains. If you have work that needs to be done, use your annual benefit before the end of the year. Remember, if you don't use it, you lose it.

This article is courtesy of Tidewater Dental with locations in St. Mary's and Calvert Counties. Visit them on the web at www.TidewaterDental.com

Don't let your money blow away!

Most insurance companies have a "use it or lose it" policy. Maximize your dental benefits by scheduling an appointment before the end of the year.



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Call today & ask us about your insurance benefits before their December expiration date.

Call today & ask us about your insurance benefits before their December expiration date.



The County Times runs complimentary obituaries as submitted by funeral homes and readers. We run them in the order we receive them. Any submissions that come to guyleonard@countytimes.net after noon on Mondays may run in the following week's edition.

In Remembrance

Donald George Hyde Jr.



Donald George Hyde Jr., 77, passed away on Wednesday, Nov. 18, 2020 at his home in Great Mills, MD with his companion Elizabeth Cross by his side.

He was born on April 2, 1943 in Johnson City, New York to the late Donald and Freda Hyde.

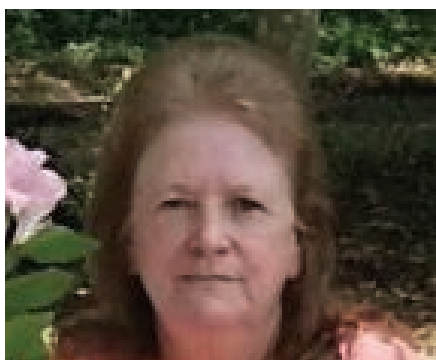
He leaves a son Donnie Hyde (Sandy) in Norfolk VA. and a daughter Lisa Barr (Brett [Penn]). He also leaves a brother Richard Hyde (Debbie [Penn]). His sister Barbara Allgood and John are deceased.

He worked as a security guard at Webster Field and the Veterans Home until Dec. 2007. He leaves 9 grandchildren and one great grandchild.

There will be a memorial service at a later date.

He loved Blue Grass music.

Eleanor "Mae" Williams



Eleanor "Mae" Williams, 71, of Lexington Park, MD formerly from La Plata, MD passed away on November 24, 2020 in Clinton, MD. Born on October 10, 1949 in Clinton, MD she was the daughter of the late Eleanor Quade and Leo Quade, Sr. Mae was the loving wife of the Harold Williams whom she married on August 18, 1970 in St. Joseph's Catholic Church Morganza, MD.

Mae is survived by her daughter Michelle Williams of Lexington Park, MD, 11 grandchildren, and 12 Great grandchildren. Siblings Mammie Mooreland of Charles County, MD, Marie Horrell of Charles County, MD, Ricky Quade of St. Mary's County, MD, Joe Quade of Charles County, MD, Grace Ann Murphy of Charles County, MD, and Johnny

Quade of Charles County, MD.

She was preceded in death by her children Harold Williams, Jr. and Shelia Williams, and her brother Leo Quade, Jr.

She graduated from Chopticon High School. Mae was a loving housewife.

All Funeral Services will be private at this time.

Arthur Blane Altizer



Arthur Blane Altizer died at his home on November 29, 2020 at the age of 88, leaving behind his beloved wife of 58 years, Judy. He is also survived by three daughters, Kara Small, Rebecca Towns (Gene), Kimberly Busch (Dan), five grandchildren: Mitsuko Coulby (Andrew), Zachary Towns (Erin), Brianna Duvall (Colton), John Busch, and Benjamin Busch, and one great-granddaughter Cecelia Ann Coulby. In addition to his immediate family, he is also survived by Randy Flinchum (cousin) and family, Martha Altizer (sister-in-law), Bryan Altizer (nephew) and family, and Anna Leigh Altizer (niece).

Blane was born on March 19, 1932 in Warriormine, WV, the son of Arthur Bryan Altizer and Helen Virginia Whittaker Altizer. He was raised by his grandmother, Rebecca Altizer and his Aunt and Uncle, Stella and John Flinchum. In addition to his parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, Blane is preceded in death by his brother, David Gene Altizer.

Blane grew up and attended school in War, WV and he graduated from Big Creek High School in 1950. He enlisted in the US Army on June 16, 1950 and was very proud to serve his country until April 1957. Blane served in the 3rd Transportation Railway Command in Korea and then the 51st Signal Battalion.

Blane graduated from Concord College in 1960 with a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting. He moved to Washington DC where he met his wife, Judy Ann Tenney. He worked as an accountant for the Federal Government for 33 years. He was a life member of the Clinton American Legion, Post 259 and the Scott Johnson Collins VFW, Post 9619 in Morningside, MD. He retired to St.

Mary's county and was a member of Mt. Zion United Methodist Church. After retiring, he took up golfing and enjoyed the fresh air and good times with his son-in-law, grandsons, and many good friends.

Blane was a loving husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. He loved spending time with his family and enjoyed attending all of his grandchildren's sporting events and band concerts. He was a very proud American and veteran. Above all, he was a Christian man who liked everyone and we are sure that he has earned his place in heaven with our Lord and Savior. He was a very good man.

Blane will be buried at Mt. Zion United Methodist Church in Mechanicsville, MD with a private family service.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations to Mt. Zion United Methodist Church, Hospice of St. Mary's, or the Mechanicsville Volunteer Fire Department.

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

All arrangements have been made at Brinsfield Funeral Home & Crematory, P.A., Charlotte Hall, MD.

Douglas "Doug" Calvin Benfield



Douglas "Doug" Calvin Benfield, 69 of Mechanicsville, MD passed unexpectedly due to injuries sustained in a vehicle accident on Tuesday, November 17, 2020.

He was born on April 22, 1951 in Caudwell County, NC to the late Doyle Benfield and Ruby (Lackey) Benfield. He was one of six children.

Doug was a hard-working man with a gift for turning wrenches and fixing even the most difficult engine. He was born to be a mechanic and never worried about a little grease on his hands. The callouses came from an honest day's work and determination.



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The County Times runs complimentary obituaries as submitted by funeral homes and readers. We run them in the order we receive them. Any submissions that come to guyleonard@countytimes.net after noon on Mondays may run in the following week's edition.

In Remembrance

With a smile that was a guarantee he was up to no good and a contagious laugh, Doug was the life of the party. He made friends easily and was generous. He would give you the shirt off his back if you needed it. Doug found great joy riding his Harley and cruising the roads on a beautiful day. His greatest joy was being "Pop-Pops" to his grandson, Douglas Scott Benfield. They spent many days together growing an unbreakable bond.

Doug is survived by his son, Jeffrey Benfield of Woodbridge, VA and his grandson, Douglas Scott Benfield of Woodbridge, VA. He was preceded in death by his parents, daughter-in-law, Terri Benfield and all of his siblings, Roger, Randy, Clay, Betty and Peggy.

A great man was lost, but his memory will remain in the heart of his loved ones.

At this time, all services are postponed due to Covid-19 protocol and will be scheduled for a later time.

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

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home & Crematory, P.A., Charlotte Hall, MD

David Tiller

David Tiller, 67, of Hollywood MD passed away on November 27, 2020 at his home.

He was born on January 22, 1953 in Washington D.C. to the late Carr A. Tiller and Rose Proden Tiller.

David was supported for many years by the ARC of Southern MD, whose caring and devoted staff helped him with his daily needs, in the group home he shared with three others. Despite his challenges, David was always happy and enjoyed an excellent quality of life.

He is survived by his siblings: Linda Tiller Cromwell (Herb) of Catonsville MD, Roger Tiller of San Antonio TX, and Barry Tiller (Audrey) of Edgewater MD; and extended family

and friends. He is preceded in death by his parents.

A memorial celebration will be held at a later date.

In memory of David, the family requests that donations be sent to the ARC of Southern MD, P.O. Box 1860, Prince Frederick MD 20678-1860.

Condolences to the family at www.brinsfieldfuneral.com

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

Sarah Ann Nelson

Sarah Ann Nelson, 63 of Lexington Park, MD passed away on November 22, 2020 at MedStar St. Mary's Hospital, Leonardtown, MD.

Sarah was born on March 3, 1957 in San Diego, CA to the late Hugh Nelson and Catherine Ann Newhouse.

Sarah was a resident of St. Mary's County for the last 56 years. Sarah's love of animals made her pursue a career working with animals at Park Veterinary, where she worked for many years. She attended Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church, Lexington Park.

Sarah is survived by her sister, Patricia Weaver (Jim) of Valley Lee, MD; her brother, Stephen Nelson (Teresa) of Papillion, NE; three nieces, Jessica Richard (Nick), Jennifer Osborne (Scott), and Jamie Seiss (Colin); and four nephews, Stephen Nelson, Jr., Christopher Nelson (Miki), Alex Nelson, and Ryan Nelson.

Services will be Private.

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

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.

Julia Gayle Roberts

Julia Gayle Roberts, 50 of Hollywood, MD passed away on November 21, 2020 at her home.

Julia was born on September 27, 1970 in Washington, D.C. to the late Arthur Leon Roberts and Barbara (Raymond) Roberts.



Julia was a lifelong Maryland resident. She attended Northwestern High School in Hyattsville, MD. She married Michael Bryan Humphrey on April 27, 2016 in Leonardtown, MD. She and Michael were high school sweethearts who reconnected eight years ago! Together they enjoyed live music, watching movies, and just being together. She enjoyed being a homemaker and was blessed with a daughter, Amber, about whom she was so very proud. She cherished spending time with her, and would never pass up a chance to tell an "Amber Story."

Julia is survived by her husband, Michael, her daughter, Amber Pittock of Nampa, Idaho, and her brothers, Scott Roberts and Arthur "Rob" Roberts, both of San Diego, CA.

A Memorial Service will be held on December 9, 2020 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at Brinsfield Funeral Home, 22955 Hollywood Road, Leonardtown, MD 20650. Interment is private.

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

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.

Ruth Dawn "Peaches" Fallon



Ruth Dawn "Peaches" Fallon, 86, of Ridge, MD passed away on November 26, 2020 at MedStar St. Mary's Hospital in Leonardtown, MD.

She was born on February 8, 1934 to the late J. Frank Raley, Sr. and Ruth Zimmerly Raley.

Peaches is a graduate of St. Michael's School in Ridge, MD. In her younger years, she was athletic and enjoyed playing baseball with her brothers. She had a terrific sense of humor and was a prankster. She was

sassy and enjoyed cokes, cakes and candy.

She is survived by four nieces and four nephews. In addition to her parents, she is also preceded in death by her husband, John Fallon, brothers, J. Frank Raley, Jr. and Bill Raley and niece, Kathy Raley.

A private Graveside Service will be celebrated by Reverend Peter Giovanoni.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. Michael's Catholic Church, P.O. Box 429, Ridge, MD 20680.

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

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.

Stephen Dean Copeland



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Stephen Dean Copeland.

Steve was a longtime resident of Mechanicsville, Maryland. He passed away, surrounded by family and friends, in his home after a long and complicated battle with cancer. His devotion to his family and his firm belief in God supported him in his struggle and ultimately gave him peace. Steve went home to be with the Lord on November 20, 2020.

Steve was born into a military family on November 18, 1952 in Denver, Colorado. His family moved to several different states before finally settling in Maryland where he graduated from Crossland High School. He followed in his father's footsteps and worked in the printing trade for 40+ years and retired in 2015. He married his sweetheart, Nancy, in 1973 and celebrated over 47 years of marriage and they raised 3 children together.

Steve was a fun, loving and wild-spirited guy, always the life of the party. In addition to being a devoted husband, father, and grandfather, he enjoyed spending time with his family and friends, fishing, working on cars, gardening, cooking on the grill and drinking Bud Light. The past 22 years, he and his wife loved spending time with their grandchildren. He valued his role as "Pop Pop" above anything else.

Steve is survived by his beloved wife Nancy, daughter Angie Johnson



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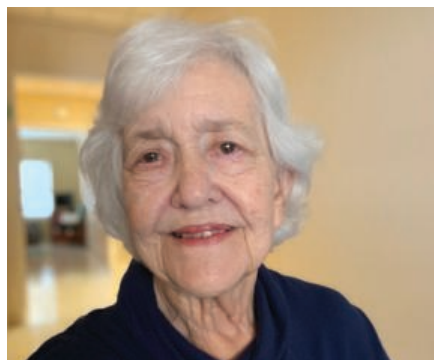
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(Joey), son Charlie Copeland (Car-en), son Joseph Copeland (Megan), grandchildren Tiffany Johnson, Joey Johnson, Colin Copeland, Ethan Copeland, Graceson Copeland, Eliana Copeland and Carsen Copeland, and his 4 siblings, Phil Copeland, Kevin Copeland, JoJean Stern, Cindy Tracey and many family and friends. He was preceded in death by his parents, Dean and Mary Jean Copeland.

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

All arrangements have been made at Brinsfield Funeral Home & Crematory, P.A., Charlotte Hall, MD.

Betty "Carole" James



Lexington Park, MD On Sunday, November 15, 2020, Betty "Carole" James (McCleary) peacefully went home to be with the Lord.

Born on May 27, 1934 in Steubenville, OH to Emma Elizabeth McCleary McLean (Weaver) and Charles Melvin McCleary. Proceeding her death were her husband, Clifford B. James, Jr; her daughters, Cheryl L. Young (James) and Constance B. Costanzo (James); her parents and half-sister.

Carole was a loving daughter, wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and friend. Carole and Cliff were married for over 30 years and raised four daughters; Cheryl, Connie, Carolyn, and Carla.

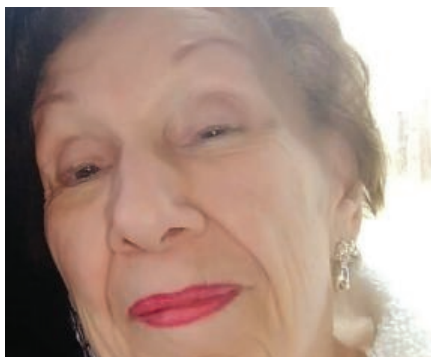
Carole enjoyed being a Navy wife. The Navy took her and her family to the West Coast, Newfoundland, and finally to the place they called home, Lexington Park, Maryland.

Carole loved taking care of children and pursued a career as an Assistant Teacher for HeadStart and in local preschools. During her retirement years, Carole was an avid gardener and loved working in her yard. She also enjoyed crabbing, going to the beach, and going on picnics.

Carole valued her friendships and always had time to fellowship over a cup of coffee and a doughnut. She had a beautiful smile, loved to laugh, and enjoyed being with her family.

Carole will be buried alongside her husband in Arlington National Cemetery.

Jeanne Cross Walters



Jeanne Cross Walters, née Jeanne Elizabeth Cross, age 86, tranquilly passed away with loved ones by her side on Sunday, November 22, 2020 at George Washington University Hospital in the District of Columbia.

She was born on January 02, 1934 in Washington, D.C., to Charles and Dorothy (Tyler) Cross. Jeanne's first marriage to Walter Lee Hayhurst, now deceased, produced five wonderful children whom she loved dearly. She is survived by her children James Hayhurst, Sandra Bullard, Kenneth Hayhurst, and Cynthia Howlin. Her son Michael Hayhurst preceded Jeanne's own passing. Jeanne is also survived by her siblings Marie Huffman, Doug Cross, and Steven Cross. On September 02, 1978, she married the love of her life, Lawson "Gene" Walters. They shared a marvelous life together, up until her very end. Gene survives her at the remarkable age of 89.

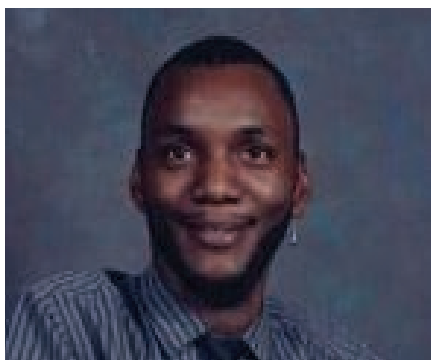
Jeanne thoroughly enjoyed spending time with her family, extending to her grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and her in-laws. She loved making conversation with just about anyone, and she possessed a propensity for recounting many a story.

There will be a private funeral service for Jeanne's family at Brinsfield Funeral Home at 30195 Three Notch Road in Charlotte Hall, MD to reminisce and support each other during this difficult transition.

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

All arrangements have been made at Brinsfield Funeral Home & Crematory, P.A., Charlotte Hall, MD.

Joseph Eric Kelly



Joseph Eric Kelly passed away on

November 20, 2020 at Washington Hospital Center. Eric was born on July 3, 1961 to Elizabeth V. Kelly and Joseph W. Kelly in Hollywood MD.

Eric is survived by his mother Elizabeth (Liz), his sisters Yvonne, Norma, Lynne and Jacqueline (Jackie), nieces Shayna and Anna, nephews Wayne and Kenyan, great nephew Jeremiah. Eric is also survived by one brother-in-law Francis Bankins and a friend that was like a brother to him Francis Maddox.

Eric attended St. John's Elementary School in Hollywood and was the tallest 8th grader in his class at 6'6". He attended St. Mary's Ryken High School and in the summer of his freshman year, he attended a basketball camp at Georgetown University.

On February 12, 1977, he was in a serious car accident that left him paralyzed. He spent six

months in the University of Maryland Hospital but came back home in time to finish school and graduate on time. He was accepted to the University of California Berkeley in 1979. He graduated from Berkeley in 1983 but worked and lived there until 1986. He and Yvonne drove back to Maryland with Shayna riding along too.

His first job in Maryland was with J.F. Taylor and then he worked for CareFirst before starting his career at NAVAIR. His first position was in the EEO office and his last was a Cost Analyst.

He was a big fan of the Georgetown Hoyas, the California Golden Bears and the Raiders (Oakland, Los Angeles or Las Vegas). He had the ability to fix any kind of technical problem the family had. He loved Reggae music and sitting in the sun. He was an inspiration to many by the way he lived his life. He stayed positive through all of the trials and tribulations. He never complained. In addition to his immediate family, he is also survived by a special aunt, Delores Kelley as well as many relatives and friends.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the National Spinal Cord Injury Association, 12034 Queens Boulevard, #320, Kew Gardens, NY 11415.

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

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.

George Edward Widmayer

George Edward Widmayer, 97, of Mechanicsville, MD passed away on November 18, 2020 at University of Maryland Charles Regional Medical Center in La Plata, MD.

Born on December 3, 1922 in Washington, DC he was the son of the late Charles F. Widmayer and Irma E. Widmayer (Baynes).

George married the love of his life Alma Agnes Widmayer (Oliver) on



October 12, 1946 and they spent 23 wonderful years of marriage together until her passing in 1969. They welcomed 3 beautiful children.

George worked as an accountant for the United States Post Office for 37 years until his retirement in 1979. He was a member of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Mechanicsville and frequently enjoyed attending services there with his family. George loved watching sports, especially football, baseball and golf. On those crisp fall Sundays, he was always watching his favorite team, the Washington Redskins. In the spring, he could be found cheering on the Washington Nationals as they scored run after run on the baseball diamond. George was a man full of wanderlust. He loved to travel, visit and explore new places and definitely knew his way around a map. A family man with a heart of gold, George's favorite thing was to be surrounded by his loved ones, whom he cherished. A day spent with his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren was a perfect day in George's world and his family will cherish the memories they have of times spent with him.

George is survived by his son, Charles Edward Widmayer (Terrie) of Mechanicsville, MD, his daughter, Marie Alma Widmayer (Long time boyfriend Paul Walker) of Mechanicsville, MD, as well as 5 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren.

In addition to his parents and beloved wife, George is preceded in death by his daughter, Beverly Ann Widmayer and his brothers: Charles F. Widmayer, Jr., Herbert E. Widmayer and Raymond B. Widmayer.

Family will receive friends for a Life Celebration visitation on Saturday,

In lieu of flowers, donations can be sent in George's name to the American Cancer Society or Immaculate Conception Church in Mechanicsville.

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

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home & Crematory, P.A.

Mitchell Whiting Kalloch

Mitchell Whiting Kalloch passed away on Wednesday, November 18, 2020 at St. Mary's Hospital in Leon-

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In Remembrance



ardtown, Maryland. Mitchell was born in Riverhead, New York to William Ralph Kalloch and Kathryn Todd Commelin Kalloch on August 8, 1930. Upon high school graduation, Mitchell enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in 1948, where he served our country throughout the Pacific and finally in the Korean War arriving in the third wave on Inchon Landing, and fighting in the battles of Heartbreak Ridge, Chosin Reservoir, and Imjin River. After eighteen months of fighting on the front lines, Mitchell returned home to New York with the Bronze Star and Purple Heart for his service to his country. Mitchell relocated to Castine, Maine where he attended and graduated from Maine Maritime Academy with his Bachelor's Degree in Nautical Sciences. During this time, Mitchell married the love of his life, Margaret Mary Campbell, at St. Joan of Arc Catholic Church in Jackson Heights, New York on August 10, 1955. Mitchell served as a navigating officer with the United States Merchant Marines, making frequent transatlantic crossings with United States Lines on the S.S. America and the S.S. United States. Dignitaries looking for the quiet escape from social duties, including then President Dwight D. Eisenhower, knew they could find night watchman, Third

Officer Mitchell Kalloch for a quiet cup of coffee and easy conversation on the bridge. Resigning from United States Lines in 1962, Mitchell accepted an offer from the United States Naval Oceanographic Office as a Navigation Specialist in Suitland, Maryland where he and Margaret Mary and their two daughters, Margaret Therese and Linda Christine relocated. Eight years later while Mitchell was still employed with the Naval Oceanographic Office, he and his family relocated to St. Mary's County, Maryland where the family made their home permanent. Enjoying for the first time a home with a little acreage, Mitchell and Margaret Mary also raised and showed Bullmastiffs locally and along the mid-Atlantic coast. Retiring as an Executive Director in 1993, Mitchell and Margaret Mary made their home permanent in Mechanicsville, Maryland where they continued to be devout and active Catholic parishioners at St. Joseph's Church in Morganza, Maryland.

Mitchell was an avid reader and enjoyed tracing his and Margaret Mary's family genealogy during his early retirement years. Anyone who knew Mitchell embraced his gift of an easy demeanor and casual conversation that made all feel at home with him. His family, friendships, and day-to-day acquaintances were very precious to him. Mitchell's priority above all others and things was his loving care for the love of his life, Margaret Mary.

Mitchell is preceded in death by his parents William Ralph Kalloch and Kathryn Todd Commelin Kalloch Preston. In addition to his wife of sixty-five years, Margaret Mary, Mitchell is also survived by his two daughters, Margaret Kalloch Craddock-Dexter (Charles) of Leon-

ardtown, MD, and Linda Christine Kalloch of Silver Spring, MD; and two grandsons, Mitchell Craddock (Bradley) of Aurora, CO and Nicholas Craddock of Baltimore, MD.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. Joseph's Catholic Church, P.O. Box 175, Morganza, MD 20660.

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

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.

Anita McRae George



Mrs. Anita McRae George, 78 of Hollywood, MD, passed away on November 17, 2020 at Medstar Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, DC after a sudden illness.

Mrs. George was born on November 6, 1942 in Memphis, TN to the late Ellison Jerome (E.J.) and Charlotte Robertson McRae.

Mrs. George married her loving husband, Dr. Chester LeRoy George, in Salt Lake City, Utah on August 19, 1974. They spent 45 wonderful years together. Mrs. George was a retired music teacher and taught for St. Mary's County Public Schools for 23 years. She endowed her talent for music education on the students of Great Mills High School, Leonardtown High School and Leonardtown

Middle School. Her caring and compassionate nature as an outstanding educator of the fine arts left an indelible mark on all of her students. After her career in teaching, Mrs. George became the choir director of Hollywood United Methodist Church and began exploring her prowess as an artist with the Color and Light Society of Southern Maryland. In addition to her many talents, Mrs. George was also an active member of the United States Power Squadron, the St. Mary's County Garden Club, the Elks Club, the Solomons Island Yacht Club, and the Happy Hearts Club.

Mrs. George is survived by her three children, Daniel M. George of Fort Collins, CO, Patrick J. George (Ronald) of Columbia, SC, and Renee M. George of Dowell, MD, and her two grandchildren; Nicole L. Tillman of Hollywood, MD and Kathleen G. George of Fort Collins, CO. She is also survived by her aunt Sarah Clair Robertson Bachman of Salisbury, CT. Anita will also be remembered by her close friend, Marla Saulter of Calvert County, MD, as well as numerous longtime friends throughout Southern Maryland. Mrs. George was preceded in death by her husband and her daughter, Genise M. George.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Mrs. George's memory to the American Cancer Society, 405 Williams Court, Ste. 120, Baltimore, MD 21220, Johns Hopkins Hospital, 750 East Pratt Street, 17th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21202 or Hollywood United Methodist Church, 24422 Mervell Dean Road, Hollywood, MD 20636.

A celebration of life will be held in the spring of 2021.

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

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A View From The BLEACHERS



VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

By Duke Radbourn

Greetings and salutations good people of the world. It has been a while – years even – since our paths have crossed in this here column. Your regular writer is a blubbering pile of Coronamotions at present - so many life events have been altered or lost to the viral giant stampeding, again, throughout the country. The aging, but still young lad (given my company anyway), asked for an assist from old Uncle Duke.

Wordless, I guess is how he found himself. It happens, especially when improperly lubricated. Stuck with me are thee.

Did someone say lubrication? Where's my courage? Ah yes, never more than an arms-length away – because I am a professional. There we go. Sitting there all brown and appealing with those dancing ice cubes, it could be taken for a harmless glass of tea. Oh, but that would be a mistake - the kind that could land you on the bathroom floor later, fumbling through the medicine cabinet for headache helpers and firmly in the doghouse of some other human that naively expected so much more maturity and self-control from you.

No such judgment here, though, my friends. This is the safe zone. Sinners and saints are welcome alike. Besides, as Jimmy Buffett once said, there's a thin, often indiscernible line, between Saturday night and Sunday morning. So, come as you. Be you, unapologetically...at least until you see flashing lights and someone is screaming to put your hands above your head.

On to business then. Waylon Jennings and Willie Nelson once crooned, "Mammas, don't let your babies grow up to be cowboys," suggesting instead that you, "let 'em be doctors and lawyers and such." Well that didn't age well. Our poor doctors are once again drowning in COVID cases and putting their health on the line after "smarter-than-science" sections of the country turned America into a bio-hazard zone. And as for the lawyers...sheesh...a whole lot of them are billing hours supporting zany lawsuits and sweating through they hair dye. Does a cleared check clear one's conscience?

You know what craft Waylon

and Willie should have suggested to mammas? NBA player. Have you seen these free agent NBA contracts? It is good to be tall, athletic and possess elite handles and a sweet shot – or just one of these attributes! Mason Plumlee got three years and \$25M from the Pistons. Jordon Clarkson scored four years and \$52M from the Jazz. The Trail Blazers gave Rodney Hood and his repaired Achilles two years and \$21M. And the Wizards re-signed Davis Bertans for five years and \$80M. This mere mortal cannot comprehend this math - a greater power is at work. All praise be to the free market economy. Hallelujah!

Here is something else your favorite Duke has been celebrating over the last few weeks: scoreboards. The decisiveness is all the jazz. You win. You lose. Now run along. Thanks for participating. Victors celebrate, recount the success of carefully crafted plans and acknowledge their good fortune. The defeated fuss and moan a bit - bad bounces, missed calls, blown opportunities – but regroup, reassess, learn and, most importantly, accept the loss gracefully.

All involved know it is what it is. I don't have my scoreboard and you don't have yours. There is one, cold and unbiased judge. The result - the final accounting of the best each competitor had to offer - is sacred and unquestioned. When the competition ends, everyone kisses the scoreboard's ring. It is a stone tablet, not a blackboard that can be erased on a whim – or in a juvenile fit – and a different outcome created for consumers lusting for an alternate reality. Championship shirts can't be recalled, champagne can't get put back into the bottle and recorded and history can't be re-written. We clear?

What's that? What if the scoreboard could be retroactively manipulated? Chaos, people. More chaos than I could describe even if this entire bottle of "sippin' tea" in front of me was suddenly in my belly and massaging my brain. Sports would break. Cease to exist.

(Duke takes a long, slow swig)

Look, imagine if the heart of democracy was hijacked by bandits...

Send comments to RonaldGuyJr@gmail.com

Wanderings of an Aimless Mind

by Shelby Oppermann



GOING WITH THE CHRISTMAS TIDE

I hope everyone's Thanksgiving was as wonderful as it possibly could be. We made ours as nice as it could be during this time. I know I made plenty of food and pies. I did wonder if there were more prayers and more talk of gratitude for what we do have at people's Thanksgiving tables this year. We tried to count all the many blessings we do have and to share some blessings where we could.

We did take a short pre-Thanksgiving diversion to the mountains to drive along Skyline Drive where it was very quiet since it was way after leaf-peeper season. We wanted to be away from people and crowds. The Blue Ridge Mountains were spectacular even without the leaves. I was thrilled that at the Skyline Drive Thornton Gap overlook area, we were able to walk up the Appalachian Trail a little ways even with the hitch in my giddy-up (I feel like we walked a quarter mile, but my husband is pretty sure it was only an eighth of a mile) which may be why my hitch in the giddy-up is worse and put me out of commission a good bit since then. But it was worth it to get a photo near an AT trail marker. A major bucket list item is hiking on the trail again for at least 5 miles, no, nothing like the day long hikes on the Appalachian Trail when I was in the High School hiking club, but it would be wonderful. Never say never.

There were times my husband would just say, "Let's see where this road goes" and we would end up driving through all sorts of magical little towns. At one point, while driving, my husband said, "Where are we?" I replied, "I don't know where we are or where we are going. Kind of sounds like the story of our lives doesn't it?" It seems to work for us, though sometimes two spontaneous souls together can make for disaster, as we started thinking when darkness fell on those winding mountain roads.

Now it's time for the Christmas season and preparing for another holiday outside the norm. This year it seems that people in our large Country Lakes neighborhood are decorating even sooner than normal. One neighborhood decorator posted her good-sized outdoor decorations display a few weeks ago, saying there has been too much bad news she wanted to brighten things up, and ending with a simple "cheers" for us to enjoy what they did. I have already seen lots of



beautiful displays, not only in our neighborhood, but all over the place. It is starting to get me in the spirit of things.

I normally like to leave my fall decorations up for another two weeks, but I think as soon as I finish writing I am going to go with this early tide of Christmas enthusiasm and cheer and put away the fall decorations and bring out those Christmas boxes from under the steps. I am not quite ready for putting up the Christmas tree yet, maybe another week or so. The panic does start to set in when I realize that there are only a smidgeon over 3 weeks left. I don't plan on any big store shopping if possible, so it will be mainly locally owned stores, and maybe some on-line for a few things. I always find things at the local shops that are unique and that I know will be used and loved. This year more than ever, I want to help my Southern Maryland neighbors with their home and storefront businesses.

Well, I guess I am going to head outside now and take down those tired looking cornstalks from around the yard, and put away our stick scarecrows, which we have starting calling our drunk scarecrows because every time it rains they seem to lean closer to the ground. We fix them and they must just drink more right afterwards. So, here's to the Christmas season rushing me away with the tide, cheers!

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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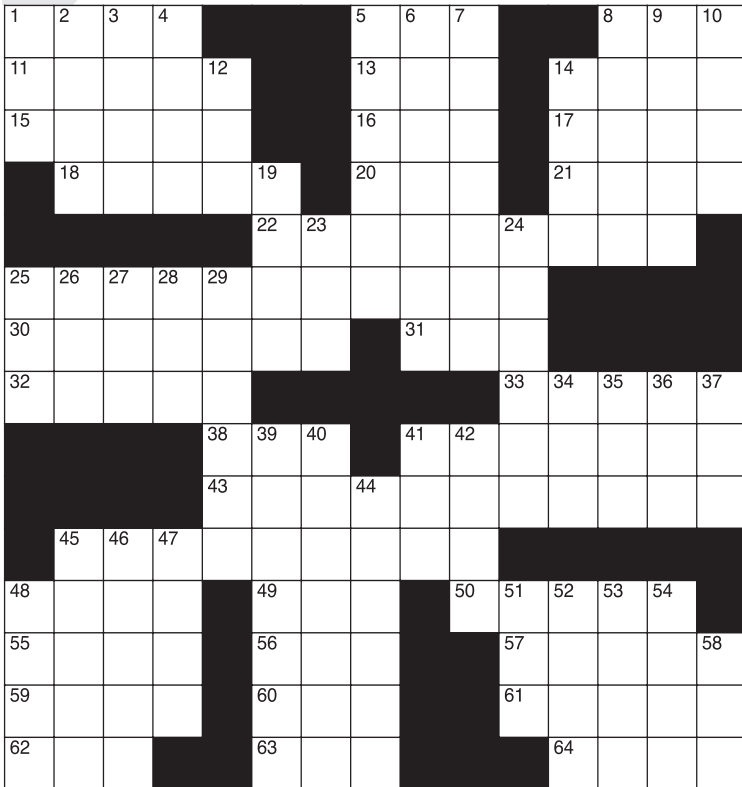
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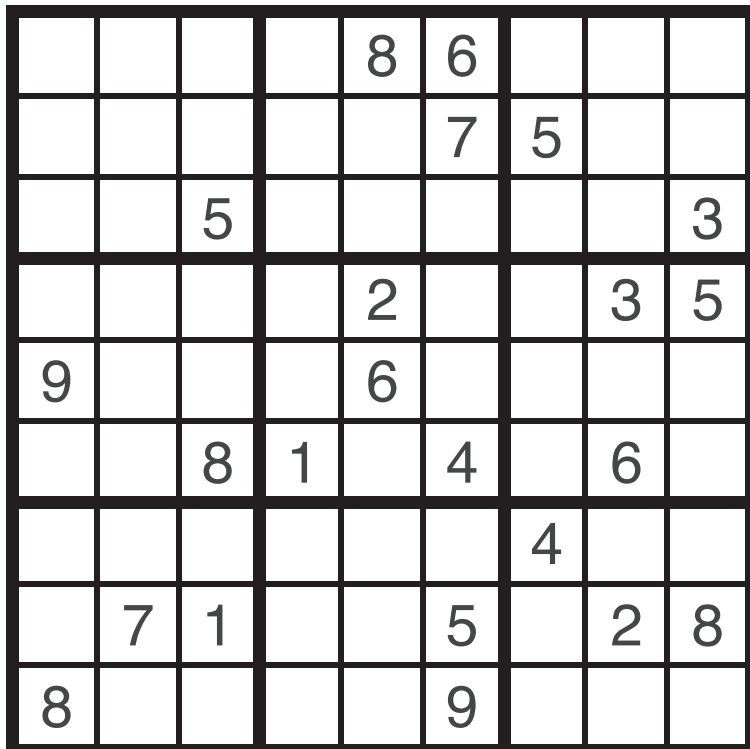
- 1. Opposite of west
- 5. ___ Caesar, comedian
- 8. Helps little firms
- 11. A way to censor
- 13. Expresses atomic and molecular weights
- 14. Chalcedony
- 15. Type of sword
- 16. A corporation's first offer to sell stock to the public
- 17. Attired
- 18. A sequence of winding turns
- 20. Pal
- 21. Expresses pleasure
- 22. Amendable
- 25. Clear
- 30. A way to cut off
- 31. Indigenous Thai person
- 32. Pale brownish yellow color
- 33. Aquatic plants genus
- 38. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!
- 41. Merchants
- 43. Fix a chair
- 45. Throws into disorganization
- 48. Famed German composer
- 49. Keyboard key

- 50. Oral polio vaccine developer
- 55. Partner to pain
- 56. Where golfers start
- 57. Jenny ___: weight loss program
- 59. Sailing dinghy
- 60. Suffix that forms adjectives
- 61. Speeds at which music is played
- 62. Body part
- 63. Fall back
- 64. Ancient Greek sophist

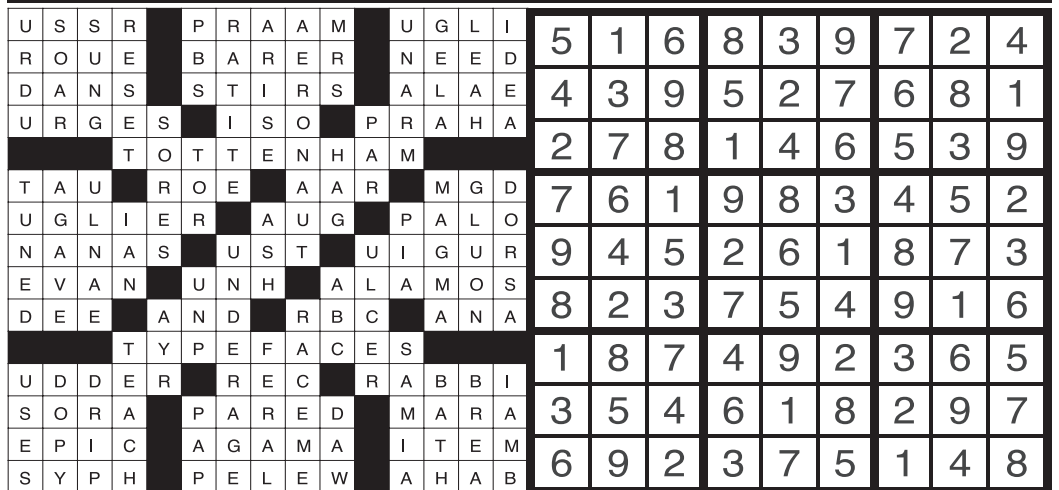
CLUES DOWN

- 1. One point south of due east
- 2. Wings
- 3. One point south of southeast
- 4. The shirts on our backs
- 5. One who works on the seas
- 6. Select jury
- 7. Small intestines parts
- 8. Plant of the heath family
- 9. Extrasolar planet
- 10. Creates more of
- 12. Before
- 14. Forms over a cut
- 19. Runs down
- 23. Exercise regimen
- ___-bo
- 24. Unkeyed

- 25. Principle underlying the universe
- 26. Corpuscle count (abbr.)
- 27. Residue
- 28. Company that rings receipts
- 29. Rugged mountain range
- 34. Commercials
- 35. NY footballer
- 36. They ___
- 37. Soviet Socialist Republic
- 39. Poked holes in the ground
- 40. Pitchers
- 41. Your
- 42. Diana ___, singer
- 44. Important document for inventors
- 45. Bangladesh capital
- 46. Fluid that flows in the veins of Greek gods
- 47. Famed daguerreotype photographer
- 48. Where military personnel work
- 51. Play a role
- 52. La ___ Tar Pits, Hollywood
- 53. Unstressed-stressed
- 54. Type of palm tree
- 58. Judo garments



LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE SOLUTIONS



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