



The forgotten tragedy on the Potomac...

BLACK DIAMOND DISASTER



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St. Mary's County Times

THURSDAY, APRIL 18, 2024

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By Authority of Friends of Sue Ann Armitage, Eric Sweeney, Treasurer

CONTENTS

LOCAL NEWS	5	COLUMNISTS	18
LETTERS	13	OBITUARIES	21
COMMUNITY	14	CALENDARS	22

“IT WILL PICK UP THAT UNUSUAL MOTION... BECAUSE IT’S LEARNING THE LAYOUT OF THE BUILDING.”
SCHOOLS SECURITY CHIEF CHARLES EIBLE ON NEW AI CONTROLLED CAMERAS FOR SCHOOLS



LOCAL 5
St. Mary's honors its Teacher of the Year



LOCAL 10
Hopeful Project sign lighting this Friday



ON THE COVER 7
A long lost festival is returning to the county fairgrounds

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, APR 18 Partly Cloudy Hi: 76° Lo: 47°	FRI, APR 19 Cloudy Hi: 63° Lo: 53°	SAT, APR 20 Mostly Cloudy Hi: 67° Lo: 45°	SUN, APR 21 Cloudy Hi: 60° Lo: 46°
MON, APR 22 Mostly Sunny Hi: 64° Lo: 45°	TUE, APR 23 Mostly Sunny Hi: 68° Lo: 53°	WED, APR 24 Mostly Sunny Hi: 70° Lo: 48°	THU, APR 25 Mostly Sunny Hi: 64° Lo: 46°



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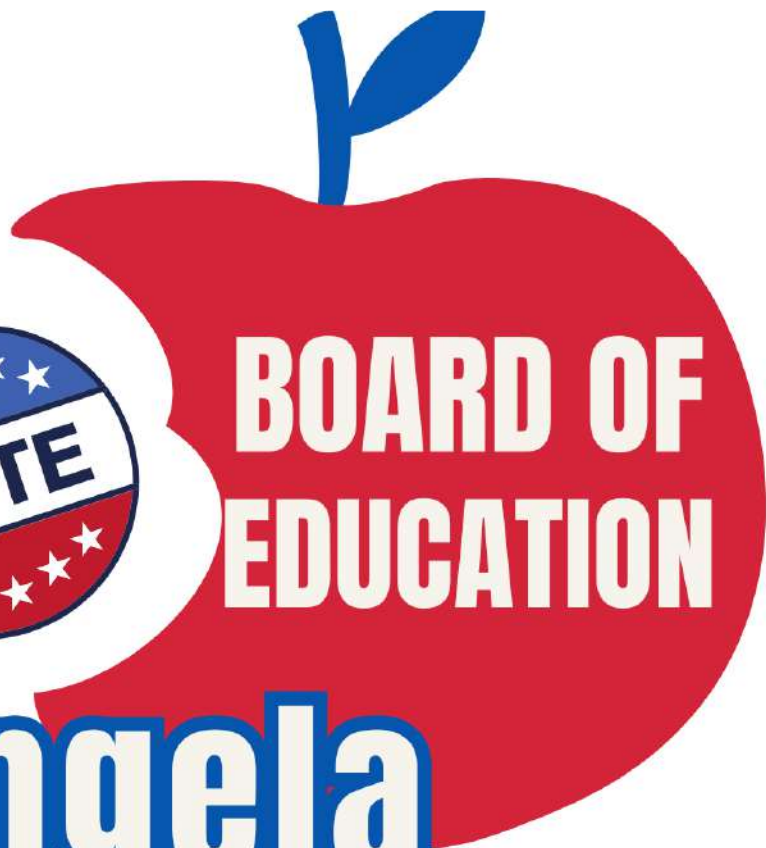
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St. Mary's Chooses Its Teacher of the Year

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Lauren Runkles is St. Mary's County's Teacher of the Year, using her Spanish language skills to help teach mathematics to ESOL [English as a Second Language] students at Great Mills High School.

She finds her days filled with helping to teach Algebra and geometry.

"I push in to provide language support and support our ESOL students in class," Runkles said.

One of the issues common to ESOL students is that they are often behind in education from their native countries and then must adjust to learning in an entirely new language.

It presents a serious challenge that teachers like Runkles have to meet head on.

"We have students for whom the last time they were in school was when they were 6 years old," Runkles said. "Others had a private school education in their country and they're fine."

What's more, being a linguistic bridge for her students means she helps them with issues outside of school as well as inside.

"We end up being the counselor, the nurse, part of the family support system," Runkles said. "It's many hats."

A native of Anne Arundel County, Runkles got her post-secondary education at St. Mary's College of Maryland with a major in mathematics, a subject she loves.

She had pursued Advanced Placement Spanish studies in high school but said she lost interest before moving on to college.

But her college roommates, who were from the Dominican Republic and El Salvador, helped her reconnect with her secondary language training.

"I just fell in love with their culture," Runkles told The County Times. "They inspired me to get more fluent in Spanish."

She went on to study abroad in 2007 in Costa Rica and obtained her Master's Degree in teaching from her alma mater.

Like many children in the elementary school grades, Runkles first came to see St. Mary's College on a field trip to Historic St. Mary's City in the 5th grade.

"I said 'Who would come down here?'" said Runkles who said a friend later convinced her to try the public honors college.

She fell in love with the college, she said. "It was the only one I applied to," Runkles said.

Runkles doesn't consider herself as fluent or knowledgeable as some teachers at Great Mills high who are native Spanish speakers, but she's happy to use her skills to teach critical math to students who many times are already behind the learning curve when they matriculate.

"The best laid plans of mice and men... It's a lot of pivoting," she said of constantly having to make adjustments to fit the needs of students. "But it's inspiring, a lot of our kids are doing really well."

The work she does in the classroom has also helped keep her secondary language skills sharp, something she wants to hold on to.

It's something I've gained back and I never want to lose it," Runkles said.

guyleonard@countytimes.net



Lauren Runkles

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Freedom Fest Returning to St. Mary's

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

For years the county government budgeted enough money to hold an annual Freedom Fest at the fairgrounds in Leonardtown, complete with fireworks show and food vendors, that became one of the central summertime events for the whole community.

But about 15 years ago, the county faced budget constraints and decided to cut the funding for Freedom Fest, leaving various community organizations to fend for themselves to pay the cost for a traditional Independence Day fireworks extravaganza.

But now, a regional event promoter and organizer, Nick Simonds, says he and a host of sponsors are ready to bring the iconic celebration back where it belongs.

And it's just a few months away.

"We are definitely moving ahead," Simonds told *The County Times* in a phone interview this week. "It's 100 percent."

The event is set for the weekend before the traditional 4th of July holiday, Simonds said, and his plans include making it a celebration of freedom and Americana.

"I want it be the kind of event with Uncle Sam walking around on stilts and watermelon-eating contests," Simonds said. "This is going to be a family-friendly event, with no drugs or alcohol allowed."

"And it will be free to all, no admission."

The return of the event, now called the St. Mary's Freedom Fest, Simonds said, has

many community partners to make it a reality.

"The county has come on board as a sponsor," Simonds said. "And there are about five or six sponsors supporting the event, too."

The day of the event is June 29, with gates opening at 3 p.m. and the fireworks display set for after dark.

The fireworks will be provided by Tim Jameson, Simonds said, the raconteur of the PyroJam laser fireworks shows, one of which is scheduled for Aug. 24 in Jefferson Patterson Park in neighboring Calvert County.

The community had been without such an event for the whole county since last summer, he said.

"Last year we didn't have anything for the county," Simonds said.

The fireworks display for St. Mary's in the years since the county commissioners cut funding for Freedom Fest was taken on primarily by the Hollywood Volunteer Fire Department, which had its own relatively large fairgrounds to allow for a fireworks show.

But, the volunteer group decided not to hold fireworks last summer, due to the cost and time needed to procure a vendor who could be scheduled to conduct the performance.

The return of the Freedom Fest to the county fairgrounds brings back more parking options for visitors but that will also be extended to nearby school parking lots on the day of the event, Simonds said, and carpooling is encouraged for families and groups to attend.



Sponsors of the event include the Mechanicsville Moose Lodge, St. Mary's County Government, Great Mills Trading Post, Windward Land Development, CTSi, T&T Sweeping and Port-o-Let Service, Eagle Systems and J.F. Taylor.

Food vendors will be on hand as will family-friendly activities such as face painting for children and prizes for the most patriotic outfits.

The event will also include a raffle to win the Survivor Tractor, the iconic farming vehicle built to bring attention to survivors of cancer, with 100 percent of the raffle proceeds going to benefit the Clements Cuties.

The Clements Cuties are a group of softball players who dress in outrageous costumes to raise money to pay for the medical expenses of severely ill children.

The popular local band HydraFX will also be performing during the event from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

"I'm incredibly excited that a long standing tradition of fireworks at the fairgrounds is returning this year," said County Commissioner Eric Colvin. "This will be a great family friendly event that everyone will enjoy."

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Joseph A. Ripple on the Potomac River. Photo Courtesy Jason Thompson.

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- National Industries for the Blind
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School Board Approves Security Camera Purchase



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The St. Mary's County Board of Education approved spending more than \$500,000 last week to purchase several hundred replacement security cameras with an artificial intelligence-driven (AI) control system.

This system, said director of schools Department of Safety and Security Charles Eible, would "learn the building" and allow personnel to respond more quickly to incidents inside of a school.

The AI system would be able to adapt to requirements asked of it, including finding people in the building identified as wearing something like a blue shirt, Eible said.

The system can also analyze facial features, Eible's presentation to the school board at their April 10 meeting stated.

The Avigilon Control Center, as the system is known, can also detect unusual movement or congregant patterns inside a building, Eible said, once it has learned to compensate for the normal student movement patterns.

"At 9:15 [a.m.] we know there should be nobody in the hallway because everybody should be in their classroom," Eible said. "It will pick up that unusual motion... because it's learning the layout of the building."

"Then we get the notification."

The system can also analyze video of the

building's exterior, Eible said, including the parking lots to spot after-hours parking there or prohibited loitering.

"It's going to recognize that that car shouldn't be there," Eible continued.

The system can also detect who tries to enter the building illegally, including terminated employees who might potentially try to enter with their old identification badge, Eible said.

The facial recognition ability could also be enhanced to allow users to upload images of prohibited persons to a "watchlist," Eible said, that would detect the person upon entry and warn school personnel.

But that was an ability to be considered for the future, Eible said, because it required an additional, one-time licensing fee from the vendor.

Another example of an additional feature would be a camera for reading license plates at school buildings.

"I know that safety is important for everybody," said school board member Dorothy Andrews. "But, it's a lot of money... just to replace a couple of cameras."

"But you are getting the AI portion of the technology," Eible responded.

Andrews was the only board member to vote against the purchase of the new camera system.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

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New Broadband Access Measures Approved

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The federal government is making funding available to the states to increase broadband internet access to those who remain underserved or not served at all, but for St. Mary's to take part in that project effectively, said county information technology chief Robert Kelly this week, the county must be able to update its unserved population in a new database first.

To ensure that the most current local broadband data is included in the federal system the county must process and sign a no cost licensing agreement with Costquest, which is the federal government's vendor, which will allow access to the database.

"We've connected a significant number of homes and areas in St. Mary's County, which I don't believe are updated in that database," Kelly said. "I [also] want to include those new addresses [homes permitted to be built] that will be coming in the next few years.

"We have the most current data of who's not connected in St. Mary's County

The critical piece was getting access to that database to ensure there was enough funding for the unserved in the county and not waste money on those who were already connected.



Chief IT Officer Bob Kelly

The second item related to broadband was a memorandum of understanding between the Commissioners of St. Mary's County and Verizon for the broadband provider to expand its infrastructure here.

The total estimated cost of the project is \$4.2 million, with roughly half being paid by Verizon and the other half paid for by the state's Department of Housing and Community Development.

Although the County has no financial obligation to the Project, Verizon will require regular project updates and certain County permits to perform construction within County rights-of-way, county planning documents showed.

Commissioners approved both measures.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Second Man Convicted in Hollywood Carnival Shooting

State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling announced today a St. Mary's County jury found Thomas Moreland, 21, of Lexington Park, Maryland, guilty of first-degree murder for his participation in the Hollywood Volunteer Fire Department's carnival shooting that took the life of one 16-year-old and left another teenage victim suffering from two gunshot wounds.

"The annual Hollywood Carnival is a treasured family tradition, but on July 15, 2022, the Defendant, along with others, orchestrated and executed a nightmarish event for those in attendance and inflicted widespread fear that rippled throughout the County and beyond," said Sterling.

After a five-day jury trial, a St. Mary's County jury convicted this Defendant of the following:

- First-degree murder
- Second-degree murder
- Attempted first-degree murder
- Attempted second-degree murder
- First-degree assault
- Conspiracy to commit first-degree assault

The Defendant will be held without bond pending a sentencing hearing. He faces a maximum penalty of Life in prison.

Senior Assistant State's Attorneys Sarah Proctor and Alena Mosier prosecuted the case



Thomas Moreland

on behalf of the citizens of St. Mary's County. Detective Tyler Payne and Corporal Daniel Sidorowicz of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office were the lead investigators and received support from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Crime Lab.

The Honorable Joseph Stanalonis presided over the case.

The forgotten tragedy on the Potomac...

BLACK DIAMOND DISASTER

COMMEMORATIVE EVENT • SUNDAY, APRIL 21

An American Civil War Event

On April 23, 1865, the Black Diamond was hit by a steamer near St. Clement's Island during the hunt for John Wilkes Booth. Learn more about this tragic event at a commemorative weekend and wreath-laying ceremony at St. Clement's Island Museum.

Happenings & Activities



All Day – 10am to 5pm

- Free Admission to St. Clement's Island Museum
- Special Exhibits at the Museum
- Free Water Taxi rides to St. Clement's Island

2pm – Free commemorative ceremony with remarks by the Naval Air Station Patuxent River Base Commander. Reception to follow at 3pm.

3pm – Free Concert by Fredericksburg's "Sibling Rivalry," a four-sibling fiddle band ages 13-18 playing Civil War era music and other American folk tunes. Bring your lawn chair or blanket and enjoy the music along the beautiful Potomac River.

For more information, visit the event posting at facebook.com/SCIMuseum or call 301-769-2222



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'Hopeful' Sign Ready to Be Lighted



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The public art project known as the “hopeful sign” has been in the community for about two years now, but not officially revealed to the public.

But elected and community leaders are ready to show it openly at the Church of the Ascension on Great Mills Road in Lexington Park on Friday evening.

Rev. Greg Syler, the rector at Church of the Ascension was initially a little skeptical of the custom-built sign, the work of artist Charlie Hewitt, who is also the brother of County Commissioner Mike Hewitt.

Syler was careful not to commit to having the sign sit prominently on the church property until there were more signs in the community of more hopefulness.

Two years on from the sign's entry into St. Mary's and Syler said he is more confident that the artwork is not just a hollow gesture.

“We pushed back a little bit on the timing,” Syler said. “I did feel like it was putting the cart before the horse.”

“But it appears that some long-term commitments to hopefulness have emerged.”

Syler pointed to a now fully-staffed sher-

iff's office substation next door to the church that had long lacked standby personnel until recently as one of the most significant investments in the greater Lexington Park area of late.

Also, he saw more hopeful signs of improvement with local government pursuit of bus stops for better access to public transportation along with bus shelters for riders who have to wait for pickup.

Planned street lighting improvements on Great Mills Road as well as talks of enhancing traffic safety measures on old streets such as North Essex and Midway Drive — either stop signs or speed humps — also gave Syler confidence the county's oldest urban area was in focus once again.

Much of this work has been undertaken by the Community Development Corporation, Syler said, whose mission it is to promote and improve Lexington Park.

“They're starting to focus on sustainable efforts in the community,” Syler told The County Times. “There's a sense people are listening... with a focus of getting something done.”

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Lexington Park Man Charged with Attempted Murder

On Sunday, April 14, 2024, Deputies from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office responded to a disturbance at Paradise Bar and Lounge located at 21367 Great Mills Road in Lexington Park, MD, where they found an individual suffering from multiple stab wounds.

A preliminary investigation revealed an argument between the victim and the suspect escalated into a physical altercation and resulted in the victim, a 64-year-old male, receiving multiple stab wounds. The victim was flown by Trooper 7 of the Maryland State Police Aviation Command to an area hospital for medical treatment, where he is currently listed in stable condition.

The suspect, identified by witnesses as being involved in the stabbing, fled the scene but was later apprehended during a traffic stop on Great Mills Road in Lexington Park. Winston Warren Smith, 38, of Lexington Park, was arrested and charged with Attempted First- and Second-Degree Murder and First- and Second-Degree Assault and transported to the Detention and Rehabilitation Center in Leonardtown, MD.



Winston Warren Smith

State Troopers Investigating Fatal Collision

On Saturday, April 13, 2024, at approximately 0001 hours, Troopers from Maryland State Police La Plata Barrack responded to Maryland Route 5 in the area of Wolfe Drive for a report of a serious motor vehicle collision. Due to the circumstances, a Collision Reconstruction Specialist (CRS) was requested and TFC. J. Engleman, of the MSP Leonardtown Barrack responded to assume the investigation.

A preliminary investigation conducted by Troopers from the MSP La Plata Barrack and the Collision Reconstruction Specialist indicates a Toyota Camry operated by Renee Hull (45 yoa) of Lexington Park, MD was traveling on southbound Maryland Route 5

in the area of the Wolfe Drive. At the same time, a pedestrian identified as Enoch F. Rogers (28 yoa) of Clinton, MD was walking northbound in the southbound lanes. Mr. Rogers was in the travel path of the Toyota and was ultimately struck. Mr. Rogers sustained injuries not compatible with life and was pronounced deceased on the scene. Pedestrian error appears to be the factor in the collision.

Anyone who may have witnessed this crash is asked to contact the Duty Officer at the MSP La Plata Barrack (301) 392-1200. The investigation is continuing. (24-MSP-011711)

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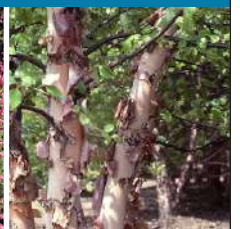
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Man Arrested for DUI and CDS Possession

On Thursday, April 11, 2024, St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Deputies were called to the 24000 block of Point Lookout Road, Leonardtown, MD, for the report of a vehicle blocking the northbound lane. Deputies arrived to find the driver and sole occupant asleep in the running vehicle.

The operator, identified as Jeffrey Neil Shade, 39, of Hollywood, MD, displayed signs of impairment, and as a result, deputies performed standardized field sobriety tests, which were completed unsatisfactorily. Shade was then arrested for driving while impaired by a controlled dangerous substance. A subsequent search revealed Shade had crack cocaine concealed on his person and was also charged with CDS: possession – not cannabis.

Deputies transported Shade to the St. Mary's County Detention and Rehabilitation Center to await a bond hearing.



Jeffrey Neil Shade

Legal Notice

NOTICE OF PUBLIC AUCTION

Date: Friday, April 19th, 2024
Address: 45840 Highway to Heaven Lane, Great Mills, MD 20634
Time: 12:00 PM Local Time

By virtue of default by Quality Shipping LLC (individually and collectively "Client"), under a Negotiable Promissory Note and Security Agreement(s), Security Agreement(s) Promissory Note(s), Lease Agreement(s) and related documents dated February 9, 2022, payable to Commercial Credit Group Inc. ("CCG"), which obligation is secured by the property described below (the "Equipment"), CCG will sell at Public Auction, to the highest bidder, AS-IS, WHERE-IS, WITHOUT ANY REPRESENTATIONS OR WARRANTIES, EXPRESS, IMPLIED OR STATUTORY, INCLUDING WITHOUT LIMITATION, ANY WARRANTY OF MERCHANTABILITY OR ANY WARRANTY OF FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE, all of its right, title and interest to the following Equipment:

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CCG reserves the right to bid at the sale. Contact Adam Clough at (716) 353-7537 for additional information or to arrange an inspection of the Equipment.

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Fire Departments

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for Fallen Firefighters

Let's Light Up Southern Maryland to Show We Remember

Please join the **National Fallen Firefighters Foundation** on May 1-5, 2024 in honoring and remembering the sacrifice of America's fallen fire heroes. We invite landmarks, fire and community organizations, businesses, and homes across the nation to light up red from May 1 through the **National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend**. Learn more or watch live at: weekend.firehero.org.

Sign up & find resources at: firehero.org/light-the-night



Letters ^{to} the Editor

'Raising taxes should be the last resort'

The commissioners of St. Mary's county proposed FY2025 county budget includes a massive \$15.2 million increase in taxes, the largest tax increase in the history of St. Mary's county. The high costs of food, housing, fuel and utilities is stressing the budgets of all our residents. Raising taxes should be the last resort after all efforts to find savings have been exhausted. Now is the worst time to raise taxes on our residents.

More than one commissioner has placed the blame for raising taxes on the state for cutting revenues to our school system. The state has cited falling enrollment and the inefficient use of school facilities as reasons for reduced funding. The Blueprint for Education (Blueprint) is credited as the reason "the state has let us down." If passed, the local income tax rate will be the maximum allowed under Maryland law. By maxing out the rate we lose our flexibility to raise revenues at a later date if necessary. There are substantial savings to be found and it's the reason I voted against the tax increases.

The Blueprint is a state initiative that attempts to determine adequate funding amounts by the county to the Board of Education (BOE). The county has given the BOE millions of dollars in funding above maintenance of effort, far exceeding the amount Blueprint recommends. The state claims the BOE is not spending taxpayer dollars efficiently.

St. Mary's County Public School (SMCPS) enrollment has been falling for several years. It has lost well over 500 students since the end of the COVID-19 crisis. Elementary schools have seen the majority of the lost enrollment and hundreds of seats are currently available. The Board of Education refuses to redistrict students to fill the empty seats. They claim student enrollment will increase but the current multi-year trend does not support their claim.

The Blueprint calls for a starting teacher's salary of \$60k by July 1, 2026. The new contract with the teachers union starts the salary at \$60k on July 1, 2024, two years early. That amounts to a 16.5% increase over 2023. The salary increases could be phased in over three years. A 5.5% increase on July 1, 2024, 2025 and 2026 would comply with Blueprint formula requirements. Reasonable increases every year for the next three years would be similar to county and sheriff department employee salary increases.

The Blueprint identifies St. Mary's county with additional wealth due to rising property assessments and average salaries of its residents. The "wealth equalized" factor impacts state funding. Those impacts can be made up by the county. Projected FY2024 to FY2025 revenue growth is over \$7 million. The county can fund the wealth equalization formula reduction without raising income taxes. The BOE can find savings by redistricting students and closing schools built almost 70 years ago. The reduction in staffing could be done through attrition and a hiring freeze.

There are hard decisions the BOE needs to make that benefits all county residents and not just the school system. It's not fair to ask taxpayers, especially seniors, the poor, and those on fixed incomes to pay higher taxes when more efficient use of existing resources can make up the funding gap. The state hasn't let us down by implementing the Blueprint formula. Phasing in the salary increases, redistricting students to fill empty seats and closing old facilities will eliminate the need for a tax increase. Please reach out to the commissioners and ask them to rescind this unnecessary tax increase

*Michael Hewitt
St Mary's County Commissioner
District 2, Hollywood-Leonardtown*

'A forward looking budget'

There is never an easy time to raise taxes and such decisions are never made lightly. I want to ensure our residents have a full picture of our current situation and the need for a small increase in the Income Tax rate. Our county budget has multiple sources of revenue, the biggest of which are the Income Tax and Property Tax. All five commissioners were unanimous that we could not hold "Constant Yield" and keep the property tax flat, but we did not increase our property tax rate. The proposed Income Tax increase from 3.0% to 3.2% would mean that a person making \$100,000 would pay \$200 more in local income tax over the year—a real and meaningful sum of money that is definitely impactful for a family.

The Blueprint for Education is a flawed formula for the state of Maryland and detrimental to the counties. Commissioner Hewitt is correct in his letter that the county has exceeded the Blueprint funding requirements, but what is important to note is that the Blueprint funding formula does not include everything that is needed for a school system to operate. It does not include transportation costs, safety and security costs, and enrichment programs like band, chorus, art, and STEM. I do not want to have a St. Mary's County school system without these important programs. The Blueprint also does not take into account positions like paraprofessionals, building service workers, athletic trainers, or other support staff—all who play important and vital roles in our education system.

The Blueprint does require a starting salary for teachers of \$60,000 by July 1, 2026. The Board of Education plan increases the salaries of our newest teachers to reach that amount early, but it does not provide a comparable raise to our more tenured teachers—it is not an increase across the board for all teachers. To delay implementation of this portion of the Blueprint would not be a fiscally smart or strategic step for several reasons. First, every county is currently working toward that goal, so competition to hire good teachers will only get more

difficult as we compete with other higher salary counties. Second, we have additional county obligations that will also be increasing over the next several years, and delaying implementation would result in a fiscal deficit that would require higher tax increases. This is a forward looking budget that ensures no additional tax increases. We must ensure our law enforcement officers have competitive salaries. We promised to revisit LOSAP benefits for our volunteer first responders next year, and that will be an additional but important cost for the county. We have a phased-in increase in salaries for county employees to ensure they remain competitive and can continue to provide services to our county residents. In fact, the only cost savings proposed for the County government during the building of our budget was to decrease the St. Mary's County employee healthcare benefits—a proposal that, thankfully, was defeated. Additionally, I do not want to see schools like Town Creek Elementary, White Marsh Elementary, and Oakville Elementary closed, which could be a real risk for our school system with the increased requirements they need to meet.

All of this is being accomplished in the current proposed balanced budget that keeps our property tax rate at the fourth lowest in the entire state. We blame the state government for this tax increase because instead of funding the requirements they laid out in the Blueprint, they spent tax dollars on buying a failing horse race-track. None of us like paying taxes or seeing this increase, but it is important to note that every tax dollar for St. Mary's County stays in St. Mary's County—not to a race track elsewhere or a purple/red/blue line. St. Mary's County remains a great place to live, work, and raise a family and we are committed to ensuring it remains that way.

*Eric Colvin
St Mary's County Commissioner
District 1*

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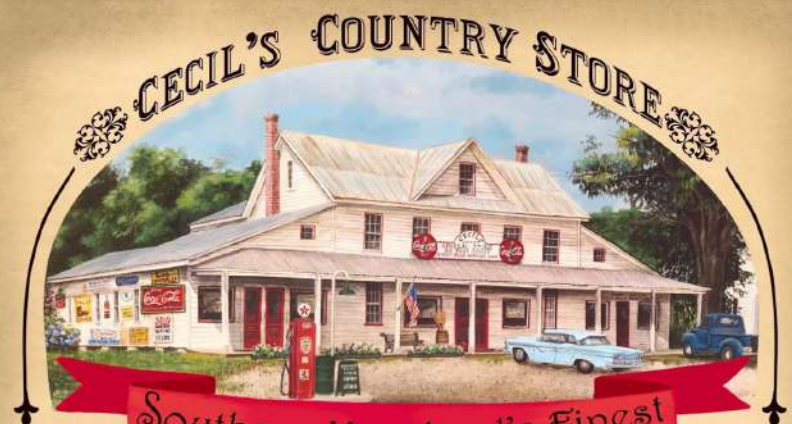
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NAVAL AIR STATION PATUXENT RIVER *News*

Advances in Unmanned Systems, Additive Manufacturing Highlight Sea-Air-Space 2024

Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) kicked off the 2024 Sea-Air-Space Expo on Monday with panel discussions on manned/unmanned and weapon systems advancements, additive manufacturing success stories and collaborative opportunities for small businesses to join with NAVAIR to aid the warfighter.

The first panel was led by Rear Admiral Stephen Tedford, executive officer of the Program Executive Office for Unmanned Aviation and Strike Weapons. PEO(U&W) includes 12 programs offices that design, build, deliver and sustain the Navy's unmanned aircraft, weapons, targets, aircrew systems and common support equipment. The PEO delivers state-of-the-art warfighting capabilities to Sailors and Marines around the world.

Tedford highlighted a few innovations created over the past year from the program including the joint SDB-II (Small Diameter Bomb) Smart Weapon reaching initial operational capability for F/A-18 E/F Super Hornets; a soundwave deflection helmet for deployed sailors aboard the USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72); the BQM-177 Subsonic Aerial Target integrating the ALE-

47 countermeasures payload; Advanced Precision Weapon Kill Systems (APWKS) being deployed in the Red Sea to aid in conflicts there; the addition of the AIM-9X Sidewinder missiles to F/A-18 Super Hornet aircraft also deployed in Red Sea support activities; and the program office examining efforts to advance engine testing capabilities.

Tedford said since last year, the unmanned air systems (UAS) program has deployed three MQ-4 Triton unmanned air systems (UAS) to Guam; the TRV-150 tactical resupply UAS has reached initial operating capability (IOC); the MQ-9 Reaper completed its first flight at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland; delivered the first MQ-25 Stingray static test aircraft, aiming toward IOC in 2026; and began autonomous behavior on the MQ-20 Avenger UAS.

Artificial intelligence and autonomy of UAS is an ongoing development, he said, but one the team is approaching with an air of caution.

"In our ability to get after a truly artificial intelligence autonomous system, especially one in the future, that we have the intent of arming with weapons, we're going to

have to start with a foundation of trust," he said. "How do we trust? How do we evaluate? How do we test to make sure that the autonomy in the AI is doing exactly what we want it to do and it's staying within the guardrails of both our rules of engagement also our ethical rules of engagement for AI and autonomous systems?"

Theodore Gronda, program manager for the NAVAIR Additive Manufacturing (AM) Team, began his panel discussion by highlighting that the AM team was established in order to create parts in small quantities, when needed, to get a grounded aircraft back in service in a faster time than relying on industry partners for supply chain gaps. Additive Manufacturing is the ability to "print" an object based on information fed into a device much like a 3D printer.

Currently, there are 96 AM devices deployed to 33 sites, including deployed aircraft carriers.

One of the newer capabilities Gronda announced was the addition of a "Solid State" cold spray technology, which uses a metal powder to spray and build up or repair a designated item.

One success story related to the team was the ability to repair tire rim assemblies on F/A-18 Hornets. Gronda said pilots often land hard on carrier decks, causing the landing gear wheel hub to oblong and the tire to shake. If the tire shakes, it is taken off and discarded.

"That tire is wildly expensive," Gronda said. "There wasn't an effective way to repair it. We go through 166 of these tires a year and they cost six figures apiece. Eighty percent of those tires are repairable with cold spray technology. It takes me two hours and costs \$300. It's a big deal for us. And what that's done is taught us to think different. Stuff that we previously thought was not repairable is repairable now with cool spray and our additive manufacturing repair machines."

The Sea-Air-Space Exposition, taking place at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center at the National Harbor, Maryland, is an annual event hosted by the Navy League of the United States. SAS brings together the U.S. defense industrial base, private-sector U.S. companies, key military decision-makers, and international allies and partners for an innovative, educational and professional maritime-based event.



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Cruise Series Returns to St. Clement's Island Museum



St. Mary's County Government's Museum Division is pleased to announce the 2024 Dinner and a Cruise Series. These themed cruises offer visitors the opportunity to enjoy a fun evening of cruising on the St. Clement's Island Water Taxi, a delicious seafood dinner, and a dessert reception. The run of seven cruises kicks off on April 21, 2024, highlighting the theme, "The Civil War and St. Clement's Island" as part of the Black Diamond Disaster commemoration weekend. The tour will include a guided presentation about St. Clement's Island's interesting role during the American Civil War.

The six other cruises occur monthly from May to October, highlighting the following themes:

- Sunday, May 12, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.: "The Lights Are Not Safe"
- Sunday, June 23, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.: "Inside Blackstone Lighthouse"
- Sunday, July 21, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.: "The Piscataway"
- Sunday, August 18, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.: "Inside the Blackstone

Lighthouse"

- Sunday, September 15, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. will feature an environmental topic.
- Sunday, October 13, from 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.: "WWII on the Potomac"

"Since we started these cruises in 2019, they have always sold out quickly," said Karen Stone, Manager of the St. Mary's County Museum Division. "We are excited to bring this fun and informative series back this season with seven scheduled cruises. Keep in mind that seats are limited to 20 per cruise, so get your tickets fast before we sell out!"

Tickets are \$85 per person or \$160 per couple, and include the boat ride, water tour, dessert reception and seafood dinner.

For more information or to reserve your ticket, visit: DinnerAndACruise.eventbrite.com (scroll down for all available dates) or call St. Clement's Island Museum at (301) 769-2222. Like, follow, and stay up to date with Museum events online at: [Facebook.com/SCIMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/SCIMuseum).

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Annual Men's Health Day Offers Free Screenings and More

St. Mary's County Government's Department of Aging & Human Services invites the community to join in celebrating Men's Health Month this June! Their annual Men's Health Day event will be held on Saturday, June 1, 2024, from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the Garvey Senior Activity Center, located at 23630 Hayden Farm Lane in Leonardtown. Doors open at 8:30 a.m. This year's presentations include:

- **Promoting Prostate Health**
Presented by: Hillary McDonald, PA-C, Chesapeake Urology Associates 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
- **Planning Ahead: Advance Health Care Directives, Hospice Services, and more!**

Presented by: Rachael Okun, LCSW-C, Hospice of St. Mary's County
11 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Along with the guest speakers, Men's Health Day will feature informational displays, health screenings, and lunch provided by Mission BBQ.

This event is free and open to the public; however, pre-registration for this event is strongly encouraged. To register, please visit: stmaryscountymd.gov/menshealth.

For more information, contact the St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services Community Programs & Outreach Division Manager, Sarah Miller at (301) 475-4200, ext. 1073, or sarah.miller@stmaryscountymd.gov.

St. Mary's Couple Takes Home Third-Tier Powerball Prize



St. Mary's County residents Joseph and Sylvia Riley celebrate a \$50,000 third-tier Powerball win

A jackpot-chasing couple from Southern Maryland missed a huge jackpot by one number in the Powerball drawing on Saturday, April 6. However, the fun-loving players are very grateful about their \$50,004 third-tier win.

Joseph and Sylvia Riley from St. Mary's County only start playing the jackpot games, Mega Millions and Powerball, when a game's jackpot reaches \$250 million. Last week, the Powerball jackpot climbed to an estimated \$1.3 billion, so Joseph made a special stop at Walmart #1981 located at 45485 Miramar Way in California specifically to get tickets. He purchased a \$10 quick-pick ticket and later hid it in a safe place at home.

The weekend arrived and the April 6 Powerball drawing had come and gone with a jackpot win reported in Oregon. However, there were three \$50,000 third-tier winners from Maryland. After hearing about that,

Joseph made sure to check the ticket to see if he matched any of the winning numbers.

"I saw I matched four white balls and the Powerball and I got excited," said Joseph. "I probably checked that ticket four or five times to be sure."

Confident that he won \$50,000, plus \$4 because he also matched one white ball and the Powerball on another line, the husband called his wife to take a look.

"He told me we won \$50,000 but I owed him money for my portion of the ticket," said Sylvia, laughing. "He's always messing around."

They then shared the news with their children. The couple claimed their \$50,004 prize this week at Lottery headquarters in Baltimore, deciding to split the prize equally down the middle.

Joseph and Sylvia told Lottery officials that they plan to use their winnings to help family members and to take a family vacation.

Charlotte Hall Farmers Market Demolished



Demolition began last week on the old Charlotte Hall Farmers Market which stood for decades in the northern reaches of St. Mary's County. It drew dozens of vendors of all kinds and thousands of people to shop there each weekend.

Pet of the Week

MEET BUTCH



What kind of dog does a scientist prefer? A Laboratory Retriever!

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The Tackle Box Fishing Report



Mike Bowen Sr. and Jr. show catfish caught Sunday afternoon off Patuxent shoreline near Hollywood Shores.



By Ken Lamb
Contributing Writer

Blue catfish are everywhere in the Patuxent and Potomac.

Shore fishermen are doing well, from the piers in Bushwood to the museum in Compton in the Potomac. The public area in Leonardtown in Breton Bay behind Ryken high school is good. College boys have found catfish from Church Point in St. Mary's City. Now that the winds have calmed, boaters will find catfish from St. George Island to Washington D.C.

The Patuxent has catfish all the way to Hog Point in the mouth of the River. Benedict, Greenwell State Park, Hollywood Shores, and the mouth of St. Leonard Creek have reported good catches. Just about any pier in the Patuxent and Potomac should have catfish. The fish feed better at night.

The bay temperature is 56°. The warm sunny days this week should bring the perch into the creeks. Baited pots off piers will now find the first crabs of the season.

Puppy drum, seatrout and spot are due in a few weeks.

Spring is here; lets go fishing!

Edward Jones

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A View From The BLEACHERS



SPORTS PLEASE

By Ronald N. Guy Jr.
Contributing Writer

As this "View" gets underway, an unencumbered journey into the world of sports has been interrupted by the site of Iranian missiles raining down on Israel. This, of course, is fresh off Israeli-Hamas hostilities and occurs while war rages on in Ukraine, tensions remain high in the South China Sea and the future of Taiwan is very much uncertain. As always, the world is a heavy place; jarring reminders are unnecessary, but, as history shows, they are inevitable.

There will be no breakdown of any of the above in this column, and certainly no politicization of it. The former I'll leave to real experts and reputable media sources. Regarding the politicization, that will inevitably occur on your favorite social media portal. And a quick scan in the wake of the attack on Israel indicates it is very much underway. Facebook, Twitter/X, Truth Social, etc. – pick your favorite social media cesspool, plug in your brain and prepare to be reprogrammed with someone's agenda and whipped into some sort of misinformed frenzy that will, at the very least, raise blood pressures and damn well could cause alienation from friends and family. Because if we aren't freaking out based on sketchy news, blindly consuming A.I. fallacies, retreating to our socially engineered tribes, raging against our fellow Americans (note: we are allies, not enemies) who have a different point of view, and generating misguided victimhood, we aren't trying hard enough.

Joy. To. The. World.

Ah, but this sports retreat is only delayed, not deterred. Have a seat. The beer man and peanut vendor, brave souls dedicated to do-good-ery, just climbed the steep stairs to the upper reaches of the bleachers to deliver a fresh bag of legumes and a massive plastic cup filled with fermented grains. No inflation here – this stuff has always defied any rational pricing curve. The cost matters little: this is exactly what's needed to settle the pulse and improve the mood.

Our little sports cabin in the mountains isn't a perfect retreat, though. It has its issues – a bad roof, drafty windows and a fridge that struggles to keep beer appropriately cold. The transfer portal in college sports has made roster-building an annual endeavor and rendered long-term school-athlete-fan relationships a rarity. Conference membership has the durability of a scoop of ice cream in my presence. Too many pitchers are getting injured. NFL mock draft overexposure syndrome is highly contagious. Shohei Ohtani's interpreter is the latest example of sports' recent embracement of gambling. Can you have it both ways – benefitting from gambling's boost to interest (and revenue) in sports while maintaining the precious integrity of the competition? Gut instinct from a duped steroid era fan: no.

Then one looks around and the skeptical nerves calm and the cynicism abates. The view from the bleachers is rich, indeed. Caitlin Clark is dropping threes and South Carolina is going undefeated. Alexander Ovechkin is scoring goals again and his march toward Wayne Gretzky's record is reenergized. Jackson Holiday reported to Baltimore; James Wood is bound for D.C. soon. The NBA and NHL playoffs are about to begin. The Paris Olympics arrive this summer. The pending selection of a new quarterback (and a new name too???) – on the heels of a new owner, general manager, coach and darn near everything else – has made it feel like spring again for D.C. football fans.

The incredible games, the fantastic competition and compelling stories can, at least temporarily, transcend the warts of the sports world and worries over existential global crises. That is part of the magic of sports: being the tonic, the elixir, the special sauce, the spoonful of sugar that makes the real world's medicine go down. And as usual, in these difficult times, I am grateful for having been bitten long ago by the sports bug. If you weren't, or maybe not as deeply – no matter. Indulge your favorite interests. Maybe it is music or books. Comedy. Gardening. Hiking. Movies. Art. Theater. It is a beautiful and amazing world out there – mostly, but not always. So, when "not always" happens, hold tight to your pleasurable distractions, for sanity's sake.

Here... want some peanuts?

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WED 17	THURS 18	FRI 19	SAT 20	SUN 21	MON 22	TUES 23
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To schedule an obituary in the County Times, submit text and picture to aldailey@countytimes.net by noon on Tuesdays for publication on Thursdays. Any submissions received after this deadline may run in the following week's edition.

In Remembrance

Jack Candela, 89



John Alfonso "Jack" Candela, 89 of California, MD passed away on April 10, 2024 at George Washington Hospital, Washington, DC, with his loving family at his side.

He was born on November 27, 1934 in Brooklyn, NY to the late Pompeo Benjamin Candela, M.D. and Gwendolen Cornack Candela. Jack moved to St. Mary's County in 1944 with his mother and two sisters. He attributed much of his success and work ethic to his time spent working at the Yates Family farm in Compton, MD during his youth.

In 1952, Jack graduated from St. Mary's Academy in Leonardtown, MD. After graduation, he immediately began his lifelong career in banking, working his way from bank teller to the CEO and Chairman of the Board of First National Bank of St. Mary's. He retired after 53 years of dedicated service in the banking industry. On April 21, 1956, he married his beloved wife, Mary Ada Burch, at St. Aloysius Catholic Church in Leonardtown, MD. They were 11 days shy of celebrating their 69th wedding anniversary.

Jack dedicated his time and talents to the Southern Maryland community through his service with local foundations, volunteer organizations, and his Church. Jack was a lifetime member of the Leonardtown Lions Club and past member of Leonardtown Volunteer Fire Department, where he served 14 years. In addition, he was proud to serve in the Army National Guard for 11 years.

Jack enjoyed many hobbies such as tennis, playing cards, boating, and framing Mary Ada's paintings. Above all, Jack loved his family. He deeply cherished the time he spent with those most important in his life. Nothing made Jack happier or prouder than his grandchildren.

Jack's life was a testament to hard work, dedication and a deep love for his family and friends. He cherished each and every moment surrounded by loved ones. The Candela family thanks everyone who shared special moments in his life and have joined us in celebrating a life well lived.

In addition to his wife, Mary Ada, he is survived by his two daughters, Marylee Candela Kreamer (Kenneth) of Mooresville, NC and Leigh Ann Candela Keller (Ernest) of Waldorf, MD. Also surviving him are his grandchildren: Ryan Kreamer (Katie), Matthew Kreamer, Emily Keller (Theodore), and Lindsey Keller; great grandchildren, Cole and Caleb Kreamer. He is preceded in death by his sister, Marianne Candela Stone, and his twin, Arlene Candela Cullins.

The family will receive friends on Tuesday, April 16, 2024, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m., with prayers at 7:00 p.m., at Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A., 22955 Hollywood Road, Leonardtown, MD 20650. A Mass of Catholic Burial will be celebrated on Wednesday, April 17, 2024 at 11:00 a.m. at St. Aloysius Catholic Church, 22800 Washington Street, Leonardtown, MD 20650. Interment will follow in the church cemetery.

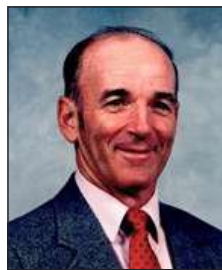
Serving as pallbearers will be George Kalnasy, Jr., Paul Kalnasy, David Cullins; Tim Cullins; Chris Cullins; and Ted Glaros. Honorary pallbearers will be: Bill Cullins, Michael Rigby, Joe Johnston, Ned Brinsfield; Ernie Bell; and Al Gough.

Memorial contributions may be made to the St. Mary's Knight Fund, St. Mary's Ryken High School, 22600 Camp Calvert Road, Leonardtown, MD 20650.

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

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.

James Thorne, 89



James Eugene Thorne, 89 of Port Republic (formerly of Charlotte Hall), MD, passed away at home with his family by his side on April 6, 2024. He was born on

March 23, 1935, in Meadows, MD to the late Richard Russell Thorne and the late Margaret (Randall) Thorne.

James, fondly known as "Sid" to most and "Jim" to others, had a green thumb and could grow just about anything when he was gardening, played his favorite lottery numbers every day, and was a friend to all who knew him. He was a member of the Antique Automobile Club of America for 63 years and could work on or tell you anything you would want to know about old vehicles. Having joined the Forestville Volunteer Fire Department at the age of 14, he has been a member for 75 years.

More than anything in life, he loved his family.

Soon after his graduation from Frederick Sasser High School in Upper Marlboro, MD, he was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1957 and his first assignment was Ft. Leonard Wood, MO, where he attended engineer school. Once his training was complete, he was assigned to the Headquarters Battery 18th Artillery Group, Pittsburgh, PA, as part of more than a dozen missile sites established to protect the "Pittsburgh Defense Area" from any foreign interference to the steel capital of the world during that time. He was Honorably Discharged from the U.S. Army Corps Reserves in 1963.

While stationed in Pittsburgh, he met the love of his life Lois (McClelland) Thorne. They would be married 64 years on May 14th and were blessed with their daughter Kim Gryskewicz (Paul), grandchildren James, (Jessica), John (Nikkie), and Abby (Casey), as well as, eight great-children, Albert, Lacey, Jack, Henry, Eloise, Jago, Letty and Paul, whom he adored.

He worked at Andrews Air Force Base, PEPCO, and finally, the District of Columbia Fire Department, where he worked for almost 30 years as a mechanic, machinist, and Shop Foreman within the Apparatus Division until his retirement.

In 1967, he rescued his neighbor from her home that was engulfed in flames after a Navy Jet crashed into it. Because of his valiant efforts, he was awarded the Carnegie

Bronze Medal of Honor. Again in 1996, he was nominated for "extraordinary" volunteer work and as a "community Hero" and was selected as one of 100 Maryland participants to be an Olympic Torch Bearer for the 1996 Olympics. He was a humble man and very honored by these two special recognitions.

James was predeceased by his brothers, Charles R. Thorne, Paul H. Thorne, Sr.; sisters, Ruth R. Alvey, Martha J. Schuman, and Elsie M. Sayler. He is survived by his brother, John W. Thorne, sister-in-law Janet (Denny) Steigerwald, as well as, many loving nieces and nephews.

The family will receive friends for a visitation on Monday, April 15, 2024, from 5:00-8:00 p.m. and on Tuesday, April 16, 2024, for a memorial service beginning at 11:00 a.m. at Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A., 30195 Three Notch Road Charlotte Hall, MD 20622.

Interment will follow the service at Queen of Peace Cemetery, 38888 Dr. Johnson Road, Mechanicsville, MD 20659.

Pallbearers will be James Gryskewicz, John Gryskewicz, Casey Braswell, Paul Thorne, Jeff Thorne and Greg McVerry. Honorable pallbearers will be John Thorne, Paul Gryskewicz and Don Jump.

Memorial donations may be made to the Tunnel to Towers Foundation, 2361 Hylan Blvd, Staten Island, NY 10306, or t2t.org.

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

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

Robert Cammack, 93



Robert Edmund Cammack, 93, died peacefully Thursday, April 11, 2024 at his home "Hampton" in Medley's Neck, Leonardtown, MD. Born September 17, 1930 in Washington

D. C., he was the fifth son of John Edmund Cammack and Martha Louise Newman Cammack. He is predeceased by his wife, Patricia, and is survived by his five children, thirteen grandchildren, and two great grandchildren.

The family will receive friends on Tuesday, April 23, 2024 from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM, with prayers recited at 5:00 PM in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home in Leonardtown, Maryland.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Wednesday, April 24, 2024 at 10:30 AM in Our Lady's Catholic Church, Medley's Neck, Maryland with Father John Nguyen officiating and Fr. Thomas LaHood concelebrating. Interment will follow in the church cemetery. Pallbearers will be Peirce S. Cammack, Power W. Cammack, Henry J. Krissoff, William Joseph Owen Girod, Matthew B. Girod and Eric J. Krissoff.

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

Arrangements provided by the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, MD.

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St. Mary's Community Calendar

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

Thu, Apr 18

MD Archaeology Month: Updates from the Field

Historic St. Mary's City
18751 Hogaboom Ln., St. Mary's City
7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Join Historic St. Mary's City for an evening lecture celebrating Maryland Archaeology Month! Dr. Travis Parno, HSMC Director of Research & Collections, presents exciting updates on the St. Mary's Fort site, with new clues regarding one of early Maryland's first public buildings. Ruth Mitchell, HSMC Manager of Archaeological Services, presents the evolving landscapes of the Mackall and Brome plantations in St. Mary's City. Also, archaeological evidence of several sites where enslaved individuals lived on the landscape.

Free and open to the public.

Fri, Apr 19

SMTMD Spring Concert—The Blue Rhythm Boys

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

Tom Mitchell (vocal and guitar), Jim Stephanson (vocal and guitar) and John Previti (upright bass) bring their own swinging mix of hot jazz, country blues and hokum to Southern Maryland! It is a real treat to see these extremely talented musicians playing off each other, swapping licks, and just having fun. This is music for acoustic guitar music lovers. Influences of soulful blues and raucous swing, will take you on a trip through time, from the roaring 20's and 30's, from Mississippi John Hurt, Blind Blake, the "hot club" swing of Django Reinhardt, the western swing of Bob Wills & The Texas Playboys to the music of the great Fats Waller. The Blue Rhythm Boys play

the music they love, and their great delight and considerable chops will be evident pretty quick into their first set. In their musical lives, these guys have played in just about every state in the union and many countries around the world, but they have all claimed that their favorite gigs are when they can play together. For more information and performance videos, go to bluerhythmboys.com and www.smtmd.org/#/concert/.

Admissions: \$15 SMTMD members, \$20 Non-members. Advance sales through TicketLeap (www.ticketleap.events/tickets/httpswwwsmtmdorg/blue-rhythm-boys). We also accept cash, check, Venmo, or Zelle at the door. Refreshments will be made available. SMTMD is a 501 (c)(3) organization.

8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

35th Annual Coming Out Car & Bike Show (Southern Knights Rod & Custom)—April 20th, 8:30 am-3:00 pm. Bowles Farm, 22880 Budds Creek Road, Clements, MD 20624. All vehicles welcome. Pre-registration \$15 by March 15, \$20 at gate. Registration cut-off noon. Dash plaques first 500 participants. T-Shirts first 100 registered. Top 75 Cars & Top 5 Motorcycles and other awards. Vendor (pre-registered only) and swap meet spaces available. (Rain date April 21) Information call Bill 301-904-7430.

St Mary's County Earth Day

Summerseat Farm
26655 Three Notch Rd., Mechanicsville
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Celebrate Earth Day at Summerseat Farm! Vendors, live music, food trucks, conservation information and farm animals!

Sat, Apr 20

35th Annual Coming Out Car & Bike Show

Bowles Farm
22880 Budds Creek Rd., Clements

ST. MARY'S COUNTY Library UPCOMING EVENTS



Managing Family Finances: Lunch & Learn Series

Learn how to best support your family on a budget at Lexington Park Library on Friday, April 19 – from 12 – 1 p.m. Pack a lunch and join Dr. Troy Anthony Anderson, financial wellness expert, as he reviews decisions and resources related to managing a household on a low income. We will explore the costs and benefits of DIY, and attendees will have the opportunity to evaluate the effects of their value clarification. We will also discuss the cost and benefits of the art of choosing. This interactive workshop is packed with practical, family-oriented exercises that will help you be the master of your own financial wellness. The Lunch & Learn series is a hybrid event. If you are planning to attend virtually, be sure to register for the event to receive a link to the online session. In-person walk-ins welcome. All registrants will receive a Zoom link the day before the session. Register on www.stmalib.org.

Pressed Flower Art

Come explore the art of pressing flowers while learning new skills and ex-

pressing your creativity at Charlotte Hall Library on Friday, April 19 from 1 - 2:30 p.m. Join Pressed Flower Artist, Holly Dilatush of Tonglen Art, in creating beautiful and fun pressed flower art. Through this fun hands-on activity for adults and teens ages 13 and over, you will leave the program with a deeper appreciation for botanical artistry and a unique pressed flower art to cherish. Materials will be provided. Register on www.stmalib.org.

A Mini Guide to Becoming a Beekeeper

Beekeeping can be enjoyed by almost anyone, whether you live on a farm or have nothing more than a backyard. The best way to learn the craft is with an experienced beekeeper. Susan Polsky, of The Association of Southern Maryland Beekeepers (ASMB) and a beekeeper for 10 years, will share with us what we should consider before deciding whether to pursue beekeeping at Lexington Park Library on Saturday, April 20 from 9:30 - 10:30 a.m. Keeping a hive is something many wish to do for the environment (and the honey!) but you may find yourself feeling a tad overwhelmed with the information available to you. Join

us for this presentation so you can be well-informed before starting your journey to becoming a beekeeper. Register on www.stmailb.org.

Digital Audiobooks and eBooks at Your Library

Learn how to access thousands of eBook and digital audiobook titles for free through the library through the Libby, Hoopla and Palace apps at Lexington Park Library on Monday, April 22 from 6 - 7:30 p.m. Please bring along the phone or tablet you want to use to read and/or listen to your books. Computer Skills needed for this class: Internet searching. Register on www.stmalib.org to reserve your spot and receive a reminder email. Walk-ins welcome as space allows.

All About Hummingbirds

Join Barb Whipkey, owner of Wild Birds Unlimited in Lexington Park and LaPlata, for this virtual talk all about hummingbirds on Thursday, April 25 from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. Barb will discuss nesting behaviors, attracting hummingbirds to your feeders, and more. Barb will even give some of her tips for hand feeding the hummingbirds. Make this your best hummingbird sea-

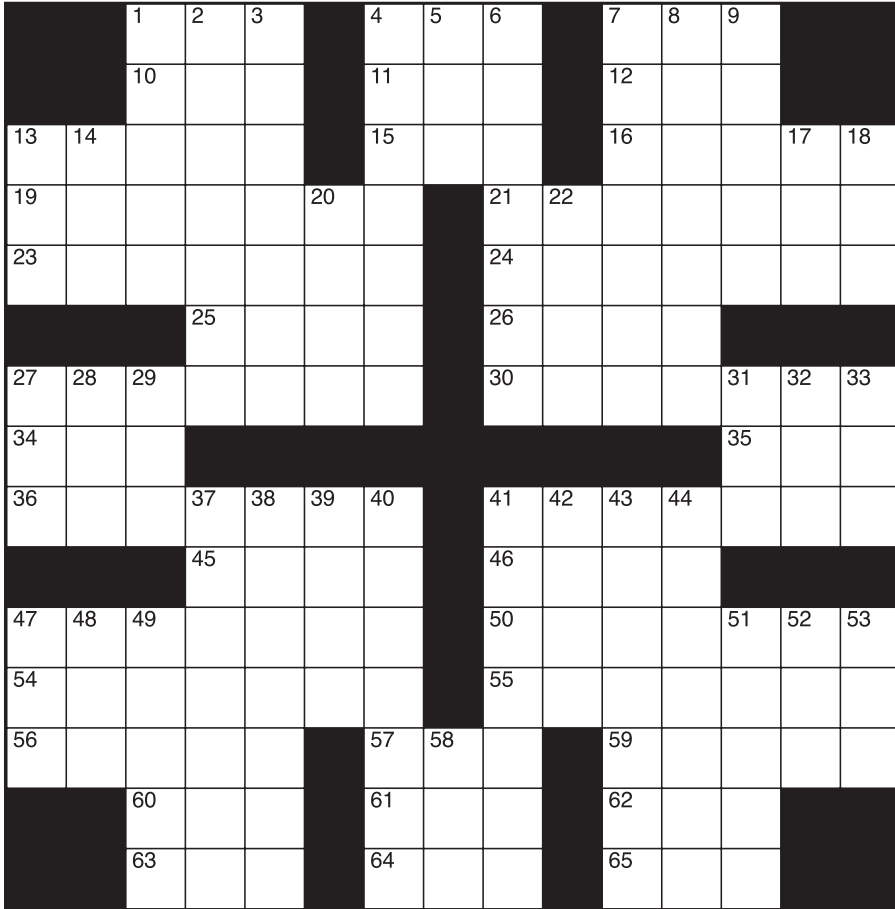
son ever! Register on www.stmalib.org with an email address to receive a link to join the online event.

DIY Crafternoon: Graduation Caps

Calling all 2024 graduates! You've worked hard to make it to graduation day, so why stick to the plain graduation regalia? Let your personality, studies, and goals shine by creating a personalized graduation cap! Visit Leonardtown's Makerspace on Friday, April 26 from 2 - 4 p.m. to create a stylish cap personal to you and your accomplishments. We will have an array of free supplies available, but feel free to bring your own as well! Register on www.stmailb.org.

Sustainability Fair

Attend enlightening lectures, make eco-inspired art projects, and connect with community organizations driving positive change at Lexington Park Library on Saturday, April 27. All ages are welcome! Let's shape a greener future together! Learn more about the fair and find a list of programs and activities on www.stmalib.org.

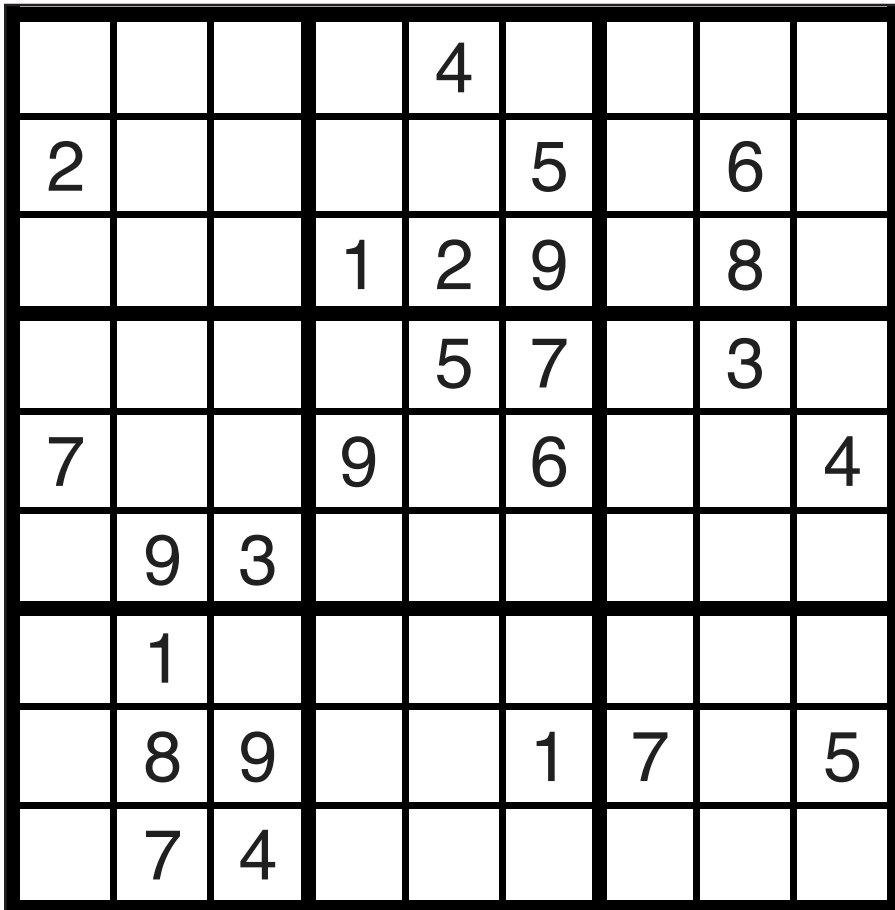


CLUES ACROSS

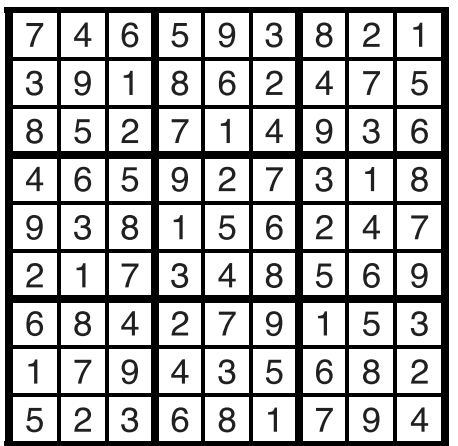
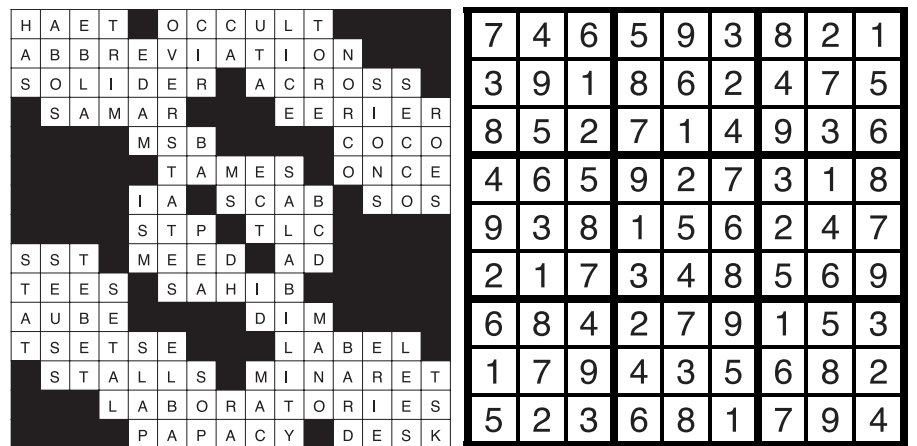
- 1. Midway between south and southeast
- 4. For each
- 7. Airborne (abbr.)
- 10. Photographs
- 11. They ___
- 12. It's important in respiration (abbr.)
- 13. Monetary unit
- 15. Cool!
- 16. A son of Jacob
- 19. Cut off
- 21. Devour
- 23. Agent of one's downfall
- 24. Best
- 25. Network of nerves
- 26. Partner to "oohs"
- 27. Origins
- 30. Sewing utensil
- 34. Alias
- 35. Swiss river
- 36. Greek mythological figure
- 41. Type of whiskey
- 45. Lay to rest
- 46. "Rule, Britannia" composer
- 47. Select jury
- 50. Feeling
- 54. Action regarded as morally wrong
- 55. Makes angry
- 56. Act incorrectly
- 57. Defensive nuclear weapon
- 59. Class of escort aircraft carrier
- 60. To what degree
- 61. Buzzing insect
- 62. The human foot
- 63. "The Leftovers" actress Dowd
- 64. A place to stay
- 65. Sun up in New York

CLUES DOWN

- 1. An involuntary muscular contraction
- 2. Earnest
- 3. Cuts out surgically
- 4. Can't move
- 5. Baseball stat
- 6. British soldier
- 7. Traditional medicine plants
- 8. Political party controlled by managers
- 9. Hebrew prophet
- 13. Supporter
- 14. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
- 17. Liberty Mutual mascot
- 18. Georgia rockers
- 20. A place where building is done
- 22. Large, deep-bodied fish
- 27. Clothing retailer
- 28. Supplement with difficulty
- 29. Annoy constantly
- 31. Founder of Babism
- 32. Indigenous person in parts of Asia
- 33. Sea eagle
- 37. Leave behind
- 38. Time of day
- 39. Colorless crystalline compound
- 40. They lay out course requirements
- 41. A diamond has three
- 42. Algerian coastal city
- 43. Remove cover
- 44. Rechristened
- 47. Distinctive practice
- 48. Defunct phone company
- 49. Turkish officer of high rank
- 51. Eliminate from the body
- 52. Witness
- 53. Soviet Socialist Republic
- 58. Founding Father Franklin



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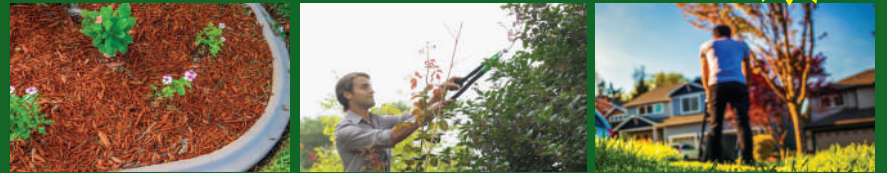


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Great-Great-Grandmother Relishes Life and Five Generations of Family

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Dorothy Morgan just turned 89 years old last week and still loves life, living by herself in single story rambler on the banks of Persimmon Creek in Mechanicsville.

She is, in essence, the matriarch of her family, enjoying the company of her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren on their family property, Morgan Brothers Farm, which was recently honored by the state for being in continual operation for 100 years: a centennial farm.

"I do everything I want to do," Morgan said. "And I have a good time doing it."

"I play the slot machines [in Chesapeake Beach], I play cards."

She drives by herself and takes care of all of her own housework, save for doing outdoor yard chores during the hot summer months.

She relies on her grandson Jeff Raley for things like that.

"This boy's my life right here," she said of her 44-year-old grandson.

"We've worked a lot side by side," Jeff said.

The whole family has a tradition steeped in farming and, though she doesn't do farm chores now, she still helps with the family business.



Dorothy Morgan displays a citation presented to Morgan Brothers Farm for 100 years in operation.

"I take care of the bills and boss them around," she said with a laugh. "I've been here [on the farm] for 72 years."

"I never thought I would make it this far."

She's had a life filled with hard farm labor that has taken a heavy physical toll on her; she's had three heart attacks, a three-way bypass surgery and even lived through an incident in the early 1990s where a runaway tractor knocked her down and ran over her chest, breaking seven ribs and cracking the rest.

She blacked out and when she awoke, she



From left to right, Dorothy Morgan with her daughter, Lenore Raley; grandson, Jeffrey Raley, Jr.; great-granddaughter, Madison Mattingly; and great-great-grandson, Luke Mattingly.

had to crawl to get help from a neighbor.

She's even outlived two of her own children, but despite everything she's been through she takes it all in stride, even with a laugh and a smile on her face.

"If I keep going this way it looks like I'm going to outlive most of my children," she said jokingly. "I've survived all of it."

She's the oldest of four siblings.

Nothing seems to be able to stand in her way. "Very few people believe I'm 89," Morgan said. "If I want to do it, I'm going to find a way to do it."

Morgan said she has a very simple philosophy when it comes to longevity.

Her life of hard work, she said, from all kinds of farm chores to cutting, hanging and stripping tobacco in summer heat, has been responsible for keeping her going.

"Yeah, by working hard," she said emphatically. "You've got to get plenty of exercise."

"Don't sit still to save your body; I've worked hard and kept my body in shape."

guyleonard@countytimes.net



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Long Time Calvert Educator Continues to Make an Impact

By Dave Spigler
Contributing Writer

Dr. Ted Haynie is a very popular, well-known educator in Calvert County. Since “retiring” in 2009 following 37 years in the Calvert County Public School system as an Assistant Principal and Principal, he continues to volunteer and enthusiastically support his community in leading many charitable efforts to improve the lives of our citizens today.

Ted is a DC native and grew up in Hyattsville in Prince Georges County. He was both an athlete and a scholar at Northwestern High School where, as a member of their varsity basketball team, he won the Maryland State Basketball Championship in 1967. He considers it to be one of his life’s biggest highlights! Moving to Southern Maryland is also one of his highlights. He and his family always had an attachment to Calvert County as his grandfather Bob Benner built two cottages at Carpenter’s Beach at Plum Point. For many years, Ted and his family were regular visitors there and he grew to love the quality-of-life Calvert County offered.

But moving to Calvert would have to wait while Ted pursued his education, first earning a degree in teaching at Bowie State College in 1972, and his Master’s in Education at the University of Maryland in 1975. And following three years of teaching in Prince Georges he finally moved to Calvert in

1975 and first taught at Northern Middle where he also served as an assistant baseball coach at Northern High. His team won the 1976 SMAC Baseball Championship. He transferred to Calvert Elementary and was later appointed Assistant Principal at Mutual in 1980. He then served at Mount Harmony as the Assistant Principal and was later appointed Principal at Southern Middle in 1986. He became Principal at Appeal Elementary and then opened St. Leonard Elementary as its first Principal in 1996. Along the way he completed his Doctorate from George Washington University in DC.

Ted thoroughly enjoys getting out into the community and meeting and interacting with people who share his love for Calvert County. Five years ago, he discovered a reading camp that was held in Prince Frederick for elementary school-aged students. He learned the camp served only county students from Prince Frederick and north. There was no opportunity for students in the southern part of the county, so in 2019, he organized a group to start a similar camp for these students at the Middleham-St. Peters Church in Lusby. After five years as its director, he has now moved on to pursue more challenges and adventures.

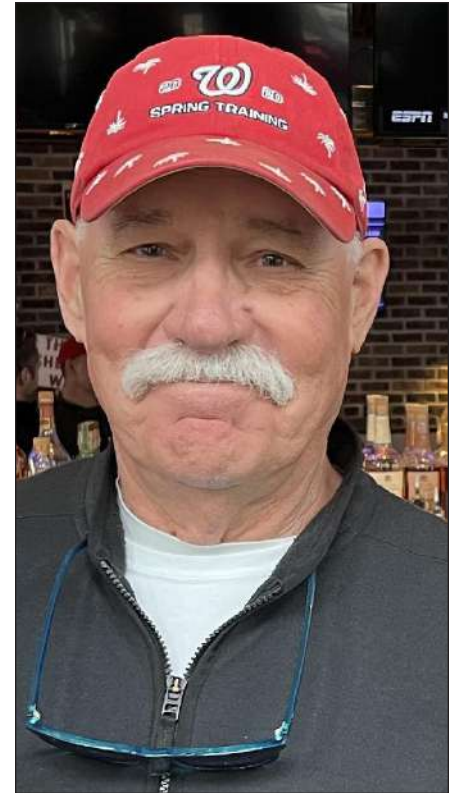
Two years ago, he along with a group of friends, helped form the “Friends of Millcreek Watershed” [FOMC] Group, one of several in the County that complete annual testing

of County streams to analyze the water and create steps to correct problems and deficiencies as necessary. As we live in a place completely surrounded by water, Ted believes it is important for every citizen to take personal responsibility and pay attention to the water quality and advocate for practices that keep our waterways swimmable and fishable. The Group just completed their annual testing called the “Water Blitz” on April 6th and will share the results soon.

Ted recently was approved for appointment to the Calvert Marine Museum Board of Governors, a role that brings him great joy as his grandfather Bob was an early advocate for creating the Museum. Ted always believed this facility was the “crown jewel” within our community as these folks are the “custodians” of our history dating back millions of years with their paleontological work and wonderful exhibits documenting the Chesapeake Bay’s history, wildlife, and industries. This position keeps him busy in a role he loves.

And just this past year, Ted joined the Optimists Club of Solomons following an invitation from a friend. As a school Principal and a resident of Solomons, he was very aware of their great work and programs with the youth of the local area. Knowing their mission “to make the world a better place one child at a time” and the history of their work, Ted believed his lifelong dedication and support of children made him a good fit for this new role! He immediately rolled up his sleeves to help organize the Club’s 50th Anniversary Celebration and lead the way in recruiting sponsors from his many friends for the large dinner held at the Calvert Marine Museum’s Hall this past February! He claims he is truly interested in becoming more involved in their many events and activities that serve our community.

Finally, Ted is currently serving as President of the Solomons Civic Association [SCA] as well, but admits he was not always successful in all his endeavors he has attempted



Dr. Ted Haynie

during his lifetime. With the encouragement of several close friends, he ran for County Commissioner in 2019, but did not get elected. He would be the first to tell you he was “no politician” however he thoroughly enjoyed being out in the community working with so many people who shared a love for Calvert and its future. For him it wasn’t a huge disappointment and it obviously didn’t dim his outlook nor his desires to continue to support our fine citizens.

Ted states “he considers himself very fortunate to be able to live in such a beautiful and unique place and feels it is an honor and a privilege to join so many others in making these small contributions to keep it that way!”



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St. Mary's Department of Aging & Human Services

Programs and Activities

Loffler Senior Activity Center 301-475-4200, ext. 1658
 Garvey Senior Activity Center, 301-475-4200, ext. 1080
 Northern Senior Activity Center, 301-475-4002, ext. 3101

Unless otherwise specified, all activities are open to Senior Activity Center participants ages 50+. Please call your local Senior Activity Center or visit StMarysMD.com/aging for the most up-to-date information.

Northern Stars Movie Club: Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny (2023)

Northern Senior Activity Center
 Thursday, April 25
 1-3:30 p.m.
 Cost: FREE

Get your snacks and popcorn ready! This bi-monthly film club, led by Keilan Ruppert (Program Specialist), explores classic and modern movies. The club reviews each film based on specific criteria, then assigns a rating using 1 to 5 "Northern stars." This month's film selection is Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny (2023, PG-13, Action/Adventure, 2 hr. 34 min), the fifth & final installment in the Indiana Jones franchise.

Daily Energy Routine: Balancing Emotions

Northern Senior Activity Center
 Monday, April 29
 1-2:30 p.m.
 Cost: \$15

Join certified instructor Judi Lyons for this brand-new class – the third in her Daily Energy Routine series!

Emotions got you down? Frustration, worry, depression, grief, loss of inspiration, anger, fear? Emotions serve an important purpose in guiding and healing us. Emotions that aren't dealt with when they occur get stuffed into the physical body. The Energy Medicine movement flows in this workshop teach us how to deal with emotions as they arise (instead of locking them away for an uncertain later) so that they don't wreak havoc on our systems.

Accessible to all. Judi Lyons/Mindful Motions Md. is YACEP®, E-RYT® 200, EMYoga® Certified, RYT® 500 Therapeutic.

Sign up for Law Day - Fill Out an Advance Health Care Directive

Get an Advanced Health Care Directive filled out during Law Day! This year's event will be held on Friday, May 3, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at four locations!

- **Department of Aging & Human Services** - 41780 Baldrige Street, Leonardtown, MD
- **Garvey Senior Activity Center** - 23630 Hayden Farm Lane, Leonardtown, MD
- **Loffler Senior Activity Center** - 21905 Chancellors Run Road, Great Mills, MD
- **Northern Senior Activity Center** - 29655 Charlotte Hall Road, Charlotte Hall, MD

All participating attorneys are members of the St. Mary's County Bar Association and are donating their time for Law Day to fill out Advance Care Directives ONLY.

Registration for this event is required. For more information, please contact Sarah Miller at Sarah.Miller@stmaryscountymd.com.

gov or 301-475-4200, ext. 1073.

Loffler Book Club - The Great Alone

Loffler Senior Activity Center
 Friday, May 3
 2 p.m.
 Cost: FREE

Discuss The Great Alone by Kristin Hannah. Enjoy a friendly discussion on the first Friday of every month- everyone's thoughts are appreciated. The Lexington Park Branch Library has been very helpful by holding several copies of the books for us. Call 301-475-4200, ext. 1658 to learn more about this group.

Luncheon with Patricia Armstrong

Garvey Senior Activity Center
 Friday, May 3
 Doors Open: 11:30 a.m.
 Lunch Served: 12 p.m.
 Performance: 12:30 p.m.

The Garvey Senior Activity Center is happy to present the musical stylings of Patricia Armstrong. Patricia plays a variety of genres and accompanies herself on her guitar. Be entertained by her sweet singing voice while enjoying a delicious meal. The cost for lunch is by donation for those ages 60 and above and \$6 for those under the age of 60. Advanced Registration is required. Please visit www.stmarysmd.com/aging and click on the "View Sign Up for Activities and Programs" button for this special luncheon.

Wii Bowling League: Spring 2024

Northern Senior Activity Center
 Mondays, May 6-June 10
 1-3 p.m.
 Cost: \$2

Ready to strike up a good time? Join us for this league-style Wii bowling event with staff-led teams and some fun, good ol' group competition. The last game will take place on June 3 with individual and team prizes awarded on June 10. No play on May 27 – Senior Activity Centers closed.

Law Enforcement Appreciation Day

The White Rose
 21030 Point Lookout Rd., Callaway
 Tuesday, May 7
 11:30 a.m.
 Cost: FREE

The community is invited to join the Commissioners of St. Mary's County, the Department of Aging & Human Services, and the Triad/SALT Council to thank this year's Law Enforcement Officers of the Year and remember the men and women who gave their lives in service to their community.

This event is free and open to the public.

The community is invited to stay for a complimentary lunch following the ceremony.

For more information, contact Sarah Miller at 301-475-4200, ext. 1073, or at sarah.miller@stmaryscountymd.gov.

Downsizing 101

Garvey Senior Activity Center
 Wednesday, May 8
 10 a.m.
 Cost: Free

Thinking about making life easier by moving to a smaller place? Is it time for you to downsize? If you are planning to downsize or are considering it Downsizing 101 will answer many of the questions and give easy solutions! Join us for a 1-hour session. Advance registration is required.

Ladies Tea Party: Derby Style

Northern Senior Activity Center
 Thursday, May 9
 9:30-11 a.m.
 Cost: \$2

Rein it in with the gossip! This May event is in celebration of all the ladies in the month

of Mother's Day, with a Kentucky Derby kick. Get ready to enjoy a cup of tea, snacks, and stirrup a good time in Derby style – so make your hats grand!

Nutrition Presentations by Donna Taggart - Osteoporosis Awareness Month

Loffler Senior Activity Center
 Monday, May 13
 10 a.m.
 Cost: Free

Join Registered Dietician, Donna Taggart, for Nutrition Education discussions at the Loffler Senior Activity Center.

In May, learn how nutrition can help reduce the risk of osteoporosis. Osteoporosis is a common chronic disease characterized by a decrease in bone mineral density, impaired bone strength, and an increased risk of fragility fractures.

To register go to www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging or call our reservation line at 301-475-4200, ext. 1660. ADDITIONALLY- If you would like to meet with Donna for a free personal nutritional education session, you can schedule an appointment with her by texting or calling 240-538-6539.

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CALVERT COUNTY INFORMATION & EVENTS

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

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Meetings are open to the public and are subject to change.

Board of County Commissioners Meeting

Tuesday, April 23, 2024, 10 a.m.,
Commissioners' Hearing Room, 175 Main Street, Prince Frederick

Boards and Commissions Meetings

Meetings are held via Zoom unless otherwise noted.
Call-in information can be found on www.calvertcountymd.gov.

Architectural Review Committee Town Center Meetings:

- Owings: Wednesday, April 17, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Planning Commission Meeting

Wednesday, April 17, 7 p.m., Harriet E. Brown Community Center,
901 Dares Beach Road, Prince Frederick

Zoning Ordinance Update

Joint Work Session: Calvert County Board of County Commissioners
& Planning Commission, Wednesday, April 17, 7 p.m., Harriet E.
Brown Community Center, 901 Dares Beach Road, Prince Frederick

Public Hearings

Calvert - St. Mary's Metropolitan Planning Organization Public
Hearing, Monday, April 22, 11 a.m., St. Mary's County Department
of Public Works and Transportation, 44829 St. Andrew's Church
Road, California

Find more information about all Boards and Commissions at
www.calvertcountymd.gov/GetInvolved. Now is a great time to
get involved! Call 410-535-1600, ext. 2201 with any questions.

FLOOD MITIGATION PLAN

Did you know that April is Flood Mitigation Awareness month?
Approximately 11% of Calvert County is within the Special Flood
Hazard Area. We want your feedback on our final draft which is
now available online at: www.calvertcountymd.gov/FloodPlain

Join us to offer your feedback on Wednesday, April 17, 6 p.m. at
Harriet E. Brown Community Center in Prince Frederick.



For more information visit
www.CalvertAg.com/FarmersMarkets



ANNUAL COUNTY TAX SALE

Friday, April 19, 10 a.m.,
Circuit Court Courthouse
Find list of eligible properties at:
www.calvertcountymd.gov/TaxSale



HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION

Saturday, April 20, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.



PAPER SHREDDING EVENT

Saturday, April 20, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
FREE EVENT!

Primary Election Day is Tuesday, May 14

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Public Demonstration
Friday, April 19, 1 p.m., Community Resources Building

Canvass Mail-In Ballots Received To Date
Monday, April 22

Voter Registration Deadline
Tuesday, April 23

For polling locations, important dates and more visit
www.CalvertCountyMd.gov/Vote



CAPITAL REGION HONOR FLIGHT

Thursday, April 25, 6 p.m. at Dunkirk District Park

Join us in staging a joyful welcome home to
local veterans of World War II, the Korean
War and the Vietnam War, as they return from
their Capital Region Honor Flight. Homemade
signs and waving of American flags are
encouraged as we honor these courageous
warriors and heroes, and give them a warm
"welcome home" that some have never
received.



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CHESAPEAKE HILL GOLF COURSE CLUBHOUSE RIBBON CUTTING

Join the Board of County Commissioners
on Tuesday, April 30 at noon for the ribbon
cutting ceremony for the new Chesapeake Hills
Golfcourse Clubhouse located at 11352 HG
Trueman Road in Lusby.

911 RECRUITMENT

The Calvert County Department of Public Safety,
Emergency Communications Division is looking for highly
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[www.linkedin.com/company/
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Calvert Community Calendar

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

Thu, Apr 18

TACOS: Teen Advisory Council of Students

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

Teens! Calvert Library needs you! We want the library to be a safe space where teens can hang out and freely access books, information, and form community. TACOS meets monthly to help us with our events and services planning. Join us every third Thursday! You can receive one Service Learning hour for each meeting attended. Sign up to join Calvert Library's Discord server if you would like to attend virtually. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Sat, Apr 20

Spring Spectacular Vendor & Craft Show

St. Leonard VFD
200 Calvert Beach Rd. St. Leonard
10 a.m. to 12 Noon

The Company 7 Alarmers of St. Leonard VFD will be hosting this vendor fair. If you have a small business, art, fashion, baked delights or crafts you'd like to display and sell, we'd love for you to join us!

Please contact Lesa at 240-882-7515, Angie at 978-333-0461 or Company7AlarmersAux@gmail.com to reserve a space with a table and 2 chairs for a donation of \$30 or \$35 if electric is needed.

Free Paper Shredding Event

Northern Middle School
2954 Chaneyville Rd., Owings
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The Calvert County Department of Public

Works, Solid Waste Division, will host free paper shredding events for county residents and businesses. Shredding documents helps prevent identity theft by destroying confidential and/or sensitive information.

Proof of Calvert County residency or business location is required. Paperclips and staples are acceptable. Binders and binder clips are not acceptable.

Businesses are allowed up to five banker boxes of paper per business (or the equivalent volume of five banker boxes in alternate containers). There is no limit for residents. Certificates of destruction will be provided if requested.

Residential Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event

Mt. Hope Convenience Center
96 Pushaw Station Road, Sunderland
8 a.m. to 2 p.m., rain or shine.

Hosted by Calvert County Department of Public Works, Solid Waste Division. Acceptable hazardous waste items include auto and floor care products, medications, pesticides, gasoline, fertilizers, ammunition and more. Latex paints will not be accepted at this event. For a full listing of accepted hazardous waste materials and for more information on household hazardous waste collection events, call the Calvert County Solid Waste Division at 410-326-0210 or visit www.CalvertCountyMD.gov/HazardousWaste. Proof of residency is required. There is no limit of material per resident. Businesses are prohibited from this event.

Brain Games: Mahjongg, Scrabble & More

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
12-3 p.m.

Games are a great way to keep your brain sharp while having fun! Join us! Please register. Interested in reading about Mahjongg? 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://>

CalvertLibrary.info.

Dungeons & Dragons – Teens

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

Meet up and have fun with D&D. Players ages 13 - 19 of all levels and interest are welcome. REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. 410-257-2101. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Earth Day and Fairy Festival

Annamarie Garden
13470 Dowell Rd, Solomons
11 a.m.-4 p.m.

Explore the Wondrous Woods, shop the enchanted marketplace, search for over 150 fairy houses, meet whimsical characters and wandering performers, make enchanting arts and crafts, engage in imaginative play, enjoy nature explorations, adorable animal encounters, unicorn rides, and more. Food and drink will be available. day! 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862.

Mon, Apr 22

Book Discussion

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

Join us this month to discuss Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus. 410-535-0291. 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Tue, Apr 23

Calvert Writes: Middle School Level Showcase

Calvert Library Prince Frederick

850 Costley Way
5-7:30 p.m.

Students, parents and community members, please join Calvert County Public Schools and Calvert Library to celebrate student authors, novelists, playwrights, journalists, essayist, poets, song writers and comics artists at the 2023 Gallery of Words Spring Showcase. For more information, contact Steve Van Rees vanrees@calvertnet.k12.md.us or Loren Grimes grimesl@calvertnet.k12.md.us 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862.

Wed, Apr 24

Professional Interview Workshop

Calvert Library Fairview Branch
Rt. 4 and Chaneyville Road, Owings
10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Participants will learn professional techniques and the importance of effective interviewing. This workshop will teach you best practices enhancing your interviewing skills by providing insight on dress attire, appropriate attitude, and professional etiquette and presentation. Virtual interview techniques are also discussed. 410-535-0291. 410-257-2101. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Calvert Writes: High School Level Showcase

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
5-7:30 p.m.

Students, parents and community members, please join Calvert County Public Schools and Calvert Library to celebrate student authors, novelists, playwrights, journalists, essayist, poets, song writers and comics artists at the 2023 Gallery of Words Spring Showcase. For more information, contact Steve Van Rees vanrees@calvertnet.k12.md.us or Loren Grimes grimesl@calvertnet.k12.md.us

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

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



County Times

P. O. Box 250 • Hollywood, MD 20636

County to Hold Free Hazardous Waste Collection Event



The Calvert County Department of Public Works, Solid Waste Division, will host a free household hazardous waste collection event for county residents on Saturday, April 20, 2024. The event will be held at Mt. Hope Convenience Center located at 96 Pushaw Station Road in Sunderland, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., rain or shine.

Hazardous household products are common in many homes and must be disposed of carefully to prevent dangerous chemical reactions, ignition, burns, vapors and groundwater contamination that can occur when combined with everyday household waste. A substance is considered hazardous if it is corrosive or toxic, ignites easily, or reacts or explodes when mixed with other substances.

Acceptable hazardous waste items include auto and floor care products, medications, pesticides, gasoline, fertilizers, ammunition and more. To determine if a substance is hazardous, check product labels for words and/or symbols that indicate caution, warning, danger, poison or toxic. Latex paints will not be accepted at this event.

For a full listing of accepted hazardous waste materials and for more information on household hazardous waste collection events, call the Calvert County Solid Waste Division at 410-326-0210 or visit www.CalvertCountymd.gov/HazardousWaste. Proof of residency is required. There is no limit of material per resident. Businesses are prohibited from this event.

Twin Beaches Library Now Open



Today, amidst a gathering of community members, the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners, alongside library leadership and staff, celebrated the official ribbon-cutting ceremony at 4100 5th Street. This moment marks the beginning of a new chapter in providing accessible resources

and enriching experiences for all. The new space allows visitors the opportunity cultivate their passions, explore new horizons and connect with individuals from diverse backgrounds, fostering a vibrant and inclusive community.



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South River**
Assisted Living | Dementia Care
410.755.5169
www.BrightviewSouthRiver.com
8 Lee Airpark Drive | Edgewater

CALVERT COUNTY POLICE BLOTTER

During the week of April 1, 2024 – April 7, 2024, Calvert County Sheriff's Office Deputies responded to 1,692 calls for service throughout the community including, but not limited to:

- Check Welfare / Mental Health – 44
- Disorderly – 16
- Domestic – 25
- Motor Vehicle Crashes – 46
- Patrol Checks / School Checks – 933
- Suspicious Persons / Vehicles – 32
- Traffic Complaints – 68
- 911 Hang Ups – 46
- ARRESTS – 23

Burglary: 24-27496 — On April 5, 2024, Cpl. Bortchevsky responded to Granados Tires located at 7605 Meadow Run Lane in Owings, for report of theft. Investigation revealed an unknown suspect burglarized three Conex boxes containing new tires. The estimated value of stolen property is \$6,463.96. The estimated value of damaged property is \$100.



Susan Michelle Furr

CDS Violation: 24-26421 — On April 1, 2024, Deputy Tunnell initiated a traffic stop on a vehicle on Dares Beach Road in the area of Terrace Drive in Prince Frederick, for an equipment violation.

Investigation revealed, the passenger, **Susan Michelle Furr**, 37 of Dunkirk, was possessing a glass pipe and a pill container containing two controlled dangerous substances. Furr was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center where she was charged with CDS: Possession-Not Cannabis and CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia.



Linda Marie Bond

CDS Violation: 24-27145 — On April 3, 2024, DFC Tavares responded to the area of Southbound Rt. 4 and Coster Rd. in Lusby, to assist a motorist who had run out of gas. Contact was made with the driver who initially provided a false name, but was later identified as **Linda Marie Bond**, 29 of no fixed address. Investigation revealed Bond has open warrants for her arrest thru MSP and St. Mary's County. Further investigation revealed a clear smoking device with burnt residue (suspected crack cocaine) and a metal rod with white powder residue (suspected crack cocaine) were located in the vehicle. Bond was arrested and transported to the Calvert County Detention Center where she was charged with Fraud- Per Identification Avoid Prosecution and CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia.

CDS Violation: 24-27357 — On April 4, 2024, DFC Lewis initiated a traffic stop in the area of the Wawa located at 305 Market Square Drive in Prince Frederick, for an



Patrick Lee Brown

equipment violation. Upon making contact with the occupants, the rear passenger refused to provide identification and continued to be irate. Further investigation revealed drug paraphernalia to include two burnt glass pipes were located inside the vehicle. **Patrick Lee Brown**, 59 of Huntingtown, was arrested and charged with CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia.



Bobby Lewis King Jr.

CDS Violation: 24-27229 — On April 4, 2024, Deputy Newton responded to Solomons Island Road in the area of Wayside Drive in Sunderland, for a traffic complaint. Investigation revealed citizens called 911 to report a vehicle all over the roadway and the driver hanging his leg out of the window. A traffic stop was initiated after an equipment violation was observed. The driver, **Bobby Lewis King Jr.**, 39 of Sunderland, initially failed to stop. Further investigation revealed, King was operating the vehicle while under the influence. A vehicle search revealed, a metal rod, a brown cigarette (suspected PCP), and a container with a white rock inside (suspected crack). King was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with Negligent and Reckless Driving, DWI, CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia and CDS: Possession-Not Cannabis.



Shannon O'Neal Wills

The passenger, **Shannon O'Neal Wills**, 46 of Sunderland, was charged with CDS: Possession-Not Cannabis.



Raymond Eugene Sompayrac

Disorderly: 24-27882 — On April 6, 2024, DFC. A. Dymond responded to Abner's Crabhouse/A & A Gaming located at 3748 Harbor Road in Chesapeake Beach, for disorderly subjects. DFC Dymond was advised two disorderly patrons were causing a disturbance and needed to be removed from the bar and escorted off the property. The two males, **Raymond Eugene Sompayrac**, 55



Jesse Ray Sompayrac

of Chesapeake Beach, and **Jesse Ray Sompayrac**, 35 of St. Leonard, were shouting derogatory racial remarks. Both males were asked to leave the property and refused to do so. Jesse began to make lewd threats toward deputies in the presence of customers walking across the parking lot. Both Raymond and Jesse were placed into custody and transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with Trespassing: Private Property, Disorderly Conduct, and Intoxicated Public Disturbance.



Ted William Taylor Jr.

Theft: 24-27296 — On April 4, 2024, Deputy Daily responded to the Walmart located at 10600 Town Center Blvd. in Dunkirk, MD for the report of a shoplifting incident. Investigation revealed **Ted**

William Taylor Jr., 34 of Prince Frederick, had entered the electronics section of the store. He proceeded to unlock a secured case and unlawfully took nine boxes of AirPods, placing them into a shopping cart before exiting the store without making any payment. Taylor was observed transferring the stolen items into his vehicle. A subsequent search of Taylor's person yielded a barrel key, which was identified as the tool used to open the locked case. Taylor was placed under arrest for the theft and transported to the Calvert County Detention Center where he shouted obscenities, racial slurs, and threats. Taylor's behavior escalated by resisting arrest and exhibiting violent behavior, including spitting on Correctional Deputies. A search of Taylor's person at the jail revealed copper mesh, a metal push rod, and a bag of suspected crack cocaine residue. Taylor was charged with Theft: \$100 to Under \$1500, 4th-Degree Theft/Burglary, Burglary-4th Degree/Tools, and CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia.

Theft: 24-27556 — On April 5, 2024, Deputy Morrison responded to the Sheriff's Office located at 30 Church Street in Prince Frederick, for the report of a theft. The complainant advised a small safe containing a

driver's license, social security card, and several medications was stolen from the trunk of a vehicle on April 1 while parked outside the Cliff's Motel located at 4785 St. Leonard Road in St. Leonard. The estimated value of stolen property is \$11.

Theft: 24-27827 — On April 6, 2024, Deputy Claggett responded to the Wawa located at 10205 Kirksville Lane in Dunkirk, for the report of a theft. The complainant advised two males entered the store and grabbed an armful of unpaid merchandise and walked past all points of sale without making payment. The suspects were identified as Paul A. Aragona, 19 of Dunkirk, and Charles D. Demarest, 19 of Dunkirk. The estimated value of stolen property is \$17.92. Both suspects were trespassed indefinitely from the property and cited for Theft: less than \$100.

Theft: 24-27765 — On April 6, 2024, Deputy T. Bowen responded to the 3700 block of Harbor Road in Chesapeake Beach, for the report of a theft. The complainant advised an unknown suspect stole a DeWalt power drill and impact wrench from the complainant's unlocked vehicle. The estimated value of stolen property is \$600.

Theft: 24-27943 On April 7, 2024, Deputy Deinert responded to the 1900 block of Solomons Island Road in Prince Frederick, for the report of a theft. The complainant advised a Razor Dirt Bike, described as a Razor Dirt Rocket SX500 was stolen from a shed on the property. The dirt bike is yellow and red in color with an aftermarket white reflector on the handlebars. The estimated value of stolen property is \$600.

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

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

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Branham Appointed Director of Parks & Recreation

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) is pleased to announce the appointment of Bob Branham as the director of the Department of Parks & Recreation, effective March 25, 2024.

Branham has 30 years of overall experience in the field of parks and recreation at the federal, state and local levels, including more than 20 years working for county government. He was most recently the deputy director for Parks & Recreation, and served as recreation division chief prior to that.

During his career with county government, Branham has chaired or served on many parks and recreation committees locally and statewide through the Maryland Recreation and Parks Association. He was also integral in creating and implementing the Calvert County Parks & Recreation Scholarship Fund that enables families in financial need gain assistance to participate in parks and recreation programs and activities.

“Bob’s dedication and service to our community over the past two decades, coupled with his extensive experience across all levels of parks and recreation, uniquely position him to lead this department into a promising future,” said BOCC President Earl F. “Buddy” Hance. “We are confident that under Bob’s guidance, our parks and recreation facilities



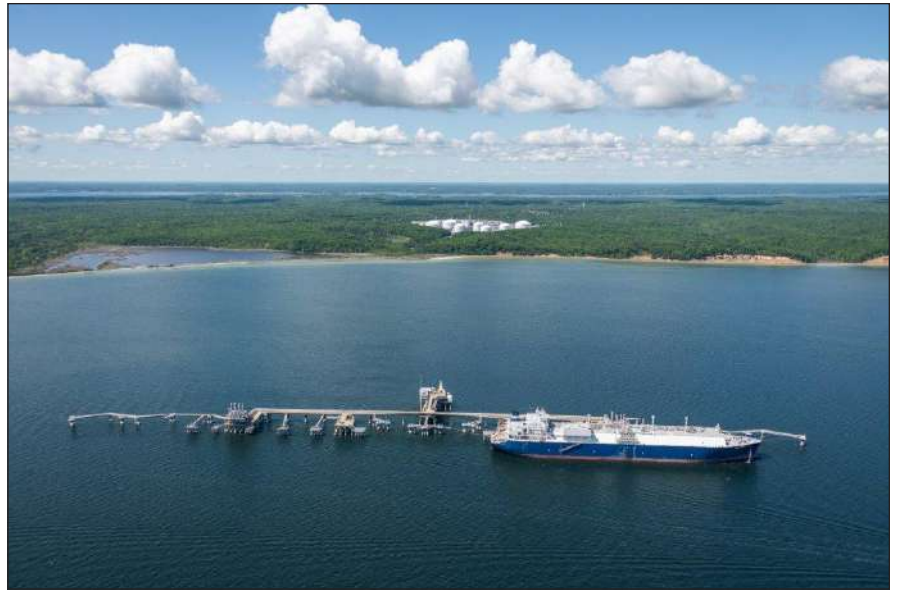
Bob Branham

will continue to thrive and enhance the quality of life for all Calvert County residents.”

Branham is a Certified Park and Recreation Professional through the National Recreation and Park Association. He holds a bachelor’s degree in physical education from Towson University and a master’s degree in recreation and parks management through Frostburg State University. He is also a member of the Leadership Southern Maryland class of 2020.

Press Release from Calvert County government

Mariners Warned of Safety Zone at Cove Point LNG Plant



The U.S. Coast Guard in coordination with Federal, State, and local agencies has established a ‘Safety and Security Zone’ for the Cove Point Liquefied Natural Gas Terminal, Chesapeake Bay, Maryland. This exclusion zone is necessary to help ensure public safety and security. The zone prohibits vessels and persons from entering a well-defined area of 500 yards in all directions around the Cove Point LNG Terminal at Cove Point.

The safety and security zone excludes recreational vessels, fishing vessels, or other small craft and unauthorized vessels from areas around docked ships at the terminal, extending piers, and nearby shorelines. The exclusion zones are well-marked with signs on surrounding piers, buoys, and other structures visible day and night.

Security personnel, land, and waterside enforce the safety and security zones at all times. In accordance with general regulations, any entry into or movement within this zone is prohibited unless authorized by the Coast Guard Captain of the Port (COPT) Maryland-National Capital Region or his designated representative.

Any violators that encroach on this zone are expected to be boarded by the U.S. Coast Guard and/or law enforcement. Violations of these regulations are punishable to include a fine of \$32,500 in addition to possible criminal charges.

For more information on this regulated navigation area, please visit <https://www.dco.uscg.mil/RNA/>.

Press Release from CCSO

Lusby Land Being Cleared



The property on Routes 2/4 near the Appeal Landfill is privately owned and has an approved Timber Harvest/Forest Management Plan. No development of the land is proposed, and no plans have been submitted, according to a county spokesperson.

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School Bus Involved in Head-On Collision



Photo courtesy of Solomons VRS&FD

Units from Solomons Volunteer Rescue Squad and Fire Department (Company 3) and St. Leonard Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad (Company 7) were dispatched on April 12 at 8:47 a.m. to a motor vehicle accident involving a school bus. Captain 3A arrived on scene to find a head-on style collision between an occupied school bus and a small passenger car. A total of three patients were assessed, with one patient being transported for evaluation at the hospital.

Emergency personnel assisted with stabilizing the bus for patient removal due to

the bus being off the roadway. The scene was turned over to Calvert County Sheriff's Office and units returned to service.

The Solomons Volunteer Rescue Squad and Fire Department would like to remind drivers that the roads are the slickest at the beginning of a rainstorm and please drive safely in all weather conditions.

Responding units were Squad 3, Ambulance 37, Ambulance 238, Paramedic Ambulance 236, Car 3, and Command 3.

By Captain Richard Lacey for Solomons VRS&FD.

League of Women Voters Cancels Candidates Forum

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The League of Women Voters of Calvert County has cancelled a planned forum for school board candidates. League Co-Presidents Sandra Raviv and Gladys White said in a release, "The League of Women Voters of Calvert County has regretfully decided to cancel our scheduled April 18th Board of Education (BOE) Candidate Forum at the Harriet Elizabeth Brown Community Center in Prince Frederick.

"Despite early responses that all seven BOE candidates would attend our event, three candidates withdrew from the Forum with less than a week to go. LWV non-partisan rules require a minimum of two opposing candidates from each district to participate, so two of the three districts had to be eliminated.

A second, less formal option for a "Meet and Greet" was entertained, but it was ultimately discarded, since the League could not guarantee the thoughtful and civil interaction that is a hallmark of League programs.

"Looking ahead to the Fall, LWVCC has decided to leave it to the BOE Candidates themselves regarding whether a second Forum will be offered. This means that candidates will need to notify us that they want a non-partisan venue to speak to the public, and that they are truly committed to attending.

"The League regrets that this opportunity for citizens has been cancelled, for it is the citizens who are losing out the most.

Voters who are affiliated and active with a political party may receive only their party's perspective on the issues and proposed solutions. Other voters may not receive information necessary for informed decisions about the candidates.

"We urge you to visit VOTE411.org to learn more about candidate views. We also urge you to make known your expectations for more open and transparent behavior on the parts of candidates who want your vote."

The only contested race on the May primary ballot is for the 3rd District Board of Education race in which three candidates are vying for the two spots on the November ballot.

The 3rd District represents northern Calvert. The candidates are Jeanette L. Flaim, Melissa Goshorn and Kelly D. McConkey.

Although the school board elections are non-partisan, the Calvert County GOP on their Facebook page said, "CCRCC (Calvert County Republican Central Committee) recognizes that candidates for the Board of Education run as non-partisan. We are proud to endorse Melissa Goshorn for the Board of Education this Primary Election! Melissa has shown in action her ability to protect our values in educational excellence and parental rights."

Although the Calvert Democrats have no endorsement on their social media, Flaim is a former chair of the Democratic Central Committee, and their Facebook page has a notice of a fundraiser for her.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Study: No School Support Staff Paid Below Market Average

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

A compensation study by a consultant has concluded that all support staff in Calvert County Public Schools (CCPS) make above the market rate for their position.

The study presented to the school board on April 11 by Teresa Daulong, vice president of Client Services – HR Experience Management Institute LLC (EXMI) of Delaware, OH, concluded:

"One, all Support Staff job roles are within the minimum market range. There are no positions being paid under market. Market range is defined as the market midpoint +/- 20 percent based on industry standard and best practice. Twelve job roles are above the market range.

"Two, a few job roles have different titles but similar job evaluation points.

"Three, eight job roles are paid at salary schedules higher than the published CAESS (Calvert Association of Education Support Staff) agreement.

"Four, no evidence of gender or race valuation discrimination is found in the data analyzed."

She reported, "Based on our findings, the EXMI team had the following recommendations:

"One, align titles based on job evaluation points and/or salary scale to clarify job titles, help alleviate perceptions of inequity, and improve trust in the compensation system.

"Two, update the support staff position title/salary scale list by removing obsolete job roles and adding new positions. Ensure all salary scales and job roles are up to date.

"Three, review job roles with different titles but similar job evaluation points for redundancy of job tasks and alignment of salary scales.

"Four, document CCPS processes and procedures to ensure equity and transparency in job role creation and placement, hiring, promotions, etc.

"Five, begin succession planning for key positions. This report reflects the results of EXMI's scope of work as outlined in the CCPS study requirements."

The consultant compared Calvert to eight other school systems, either neighboring or of similar size. The report doesn't consider pay for private sector jobs; School board Vice President Inez Claggett questioned both of those methodologies.

Claggett said Prince George's and Anne Arundel were much larger systems with more people in each job. Daulong said that's taken into consideration.

Regarding private sector employment, Daulong said, "That's very hard to compare because the private sector doesn't give that data up. They don't publish their benefits package. They don't publish their 401k. They don't give that information up. So it's very hard to compare that."

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Sludge Spill Leaks into Hellen's Creek

The Calvert County Department of Public Works, Water and Sewer Division advises citizens that a ruptured pipe at Solomons Wastewater Treatment Plant, located at 500 Sweetwater Road in Lusby, led to an accidental spill of sludge. There is no impact to drinking water.

Upon discovering the leak, staff followed protocol, turned the pumps off and closed the valves, initiating immediate cleanup procedures. To mitigate environmental impact, lime was applied over the affected area.

It was determined that approximately 17,500 gallons of return-activated sludge reached a nearby stream that feeds into

Hellen's Creek. The Maryland Department of Emergency Management was contacted immediately, and bilingual signage was posted around the spill site.

For questions or concerns, please contact Public Works at public.works@calvert-countymd.gov or 410-535-2204.

Find information on Calvert County Government services online at www.CalvertCountyMd.gov. Stay up to date with Calvert County Government on Facebook at www.facebook.com/CalvertCountyMd and YouTube at www.youtube.com/CalvertCountyGov.

Press Release from Calvert County government

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- Keep prescription medications from being abused.
- Prevention, treatment and recovery information will be available.
- Syringe disposal and Narcan training will be available at Northeast and Southern Community Centers.
- Detera medication drug disposal packets will be available free of charge for county residents. The packets allow medications to be deactivated and thrown in your household trash. Limit of three packets per family, while supplies last.

Drop Off Locations:

- **Calvert County Sheriff's Office**
Prince Frederick
- **Maryland State Police, Barrack "U"**
Prince Frederick
- **Northeast Community Center**
Chesapeake Beach
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Lusby



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School Board Discusses Discipline Policies

Change in State Law Limits Responses

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

With concerns raised by Calvert High School staff about behavior problems still resonating (see separate story), the Calvert County Board of Education at their April 11 meeting talked about two policies pertinent to the issue -- Student Behavior Intervention and Alternative Education.

Making the presentation were Director of Student Services Cecilia Lewis, and Director of Special Education Dr. Kendy Anderson.

Lewis said the ability of the school system to deal with behavior issues is limited by state law. She said, "In 2009, a task group began through the state board to shift the discipline regulations in the state of Maryland. Those discipline regulations finally got shifted in 2014. It was a five-year process. Through that process, we shifted from a zero-tolerance as a state stance. We don't have zero-tolerance with the exception of firearms on school property. So that progressive discipline model that's currently in place through state law and regulation requires that school systems look at a progressive model prior to suspension or expulsion."

She added, "So the continuum of responses that are outlined in our student code of conduct is what administrators use on a regular basis in order to determine, after the investigation, what is the appropriate response. We no longer say, well, that child picked up a chair and hit someone, therefore you go to alternative education. There may have been a practice like that in the past, I'm not sure. But that is not something that we would do because we would want to look at the individual case and support. Obviously, there's going to be a consequence, but support whatever that root cause or issue was, so that when that child does return as soon as possible to instruction that they are in a better place. So, they're even learned something, relearned something or unlearned something that they should not have done."

Lewis emphasized, "And so we make decisions based on state law and state law does not have an allowance of just shifting students to an alternative setting based on things outside of imminent threat or harm to others. There's another caveat, which is chronic disruption across school settings across the school day. So, there are parameters that we have to follow legislatively that do not allow us to just make a decision that seemingly would be a consequence for an action from someone else's lens."

Anderson said, "The reason we're here together, although Cecilia handles discipline, it takes all of us. So early in my tenure here, I felt like there was a misunderstanding about discipline and special education students. So, over the last summer we had our attorney to talk about COMAR (state law) and the language. Not to say, let's open the floodgates of suspension and extended suspensions, but what does this mean? What does the language mean? And so, we've made some real inroads and the conversations with building level administrators have changed around, even if



School Board member Lisa Grenis

you are identified, aspects of COMAR pertain directly to you, and how do we work through that as a team? And so, my personal opinion, it has gotten better at the building level with this understanding. They didn't sit in the meeting with the attorney, but Larry (Titus, director of security) and Dr. (Susan) Johnson (assistant superintendent for instruction) and I, we came to an understanding of what COMAR was saying, and we're better able to communicate that to administrators when they're facing these difficult cases."

During the discussion, board member Lisa Grenis said, "After a little research, I learned that placing a problem student into the alternative education is cumbersome and a lengthy process. Sometimes taking several months or even as much as a year of paperwork, review committees, and a case-by-case assessment or delaying the removal of students who act out violently and present a real threat to our teachers and other students."

Lewis responded, "I have not experienced any extended time from the time I received an application to placement."

Grenis added, "You have to go through processes to prove that you've done several things to try to find the triggers to resolve it, and in many situations, that's very appropriate. But for a child who is posing a danger, to me, that process needs to be expedited. We cannot make administrators jump through all these hoops while children are being injured and teachers are being injured. That's where I say there needs to be a special process in place. How can we expedite it when a child is posing danger to others?"

Lewis responded, "There is data that is gathered depending on the root of the recommendation. In the case that you have just mentioned, where by law, if there is an imminent or serious harm to another individual, then the school principal would likely suspend that student, and make a recommendation for an extended suspension. In that case, they would come to a board hearing. So that is a disciplinary model of placement. And we are within limits of school educational law that within 10 days we have to hold a board hearing and then a determination is made."

Staff recommended only minor changes to the two policies. They have both been posted for 30-day public review.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

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CHS Students: 'I Do Not Feel Safe'

Calvert High Staff Air Concerns to School Board

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

"When it gets thrown right in your face, it's just impossible to ignore." That was Calvert County Board of Education member Dawn Balinski's reaction to the presentation by Calvert High School (CHS) staff to discipline problems there.

Four staff members spoke to the school board at their April 11 meeting on behalf of all 47 in the building. But it was perhaps the one CHS student who spoke, Paige Aguilar, who left the deepest impact on the board.

Aguilar, 15, a sophomore, said, "I have asked my peers, and the most common answer I've gotten on the school's environment is, 'I'm uncomfortable. Why has this not been handled or stopped? And I do not feel safe.' I don't think that should be the first thing out of a child's mouth. Since we were little kids, we've been taught that school is a safe place and CHS's environment is the complete opposite."

She went on to say, "I feel every time I walk into the building, something bad is going to happen and every day I must keep a guard on myself like I'm in prison, which no kid should have to face. School used to be my escape from my other life problems, but now it's just a burden I'm waiting to end."

Aguilar suggested more police officers in the schools. "They're more equipped and have better knowledge to stop a fight safely and would alleviate a teacher's fear of their very own safety and also the student's safety to stop a fight and to jeopardize their own health."

She added, "The destroying the bathroom problem is out of hand. I should not have to walk into a restroom with baby oil on the floor, broken mirrors, into all the broken toilet seats. Why haven't these kids been punished? Why are they coming back to school and why are they allowed to still play sports? You can suspend them for 10 days all you want, but they're going to come back and cause the same trouble."

Later in the meeting, Student Member of the Board Jordan Hayes agreed. "Students in Calvert County are afraid to attend school, to use the bathrooms. The students of CCPS deserve the best education possible. That requires a safe environment, a comfortable environment, and a nurturing environment. So, while I can work very hard to gain the support, the help, the improvements that are needed for me to be a successful student and for my peers to be successful students, in the end, we need help from the adults."

During the public comment portion of the meeting, Erin Hammett said, "At CHS, we are experiencing an exponential growth of dangerous behaviors. We have reached a point where excuses will not be accepted. We need intervention and support from leadership in the school system. The increase in negative behaviors has caused our school's culture and climate to suffer as a result in student and staff injuries, decreased academic success and decreased student and staff morale."

She observed, "Students are unfazed by referrals because consequences are minimal

and there are no lessons learned from the student," adding, "This year's not over yet, but we've had over 1,000 referrals being written for class cutting. That is over a thousand missed educational learning opportunities. In addition to missing instructions, students are breaking other code of conduct rules while skipping class. The increases seen in class cutting directly correlate to other behavioral concerns in our school environment."

Jackie Getjen shared testimonials of some of the staff and students about drug use in the bathrooms. She said, "Our schools are supposed to be no smoking, no vaping, no drugs or alcohol, no weapons sanctuaries, where staff members are not allowed to have these items or do these things, but we allow our underage students to do them while in our buildings; students can wreak of raw marijuana and staff are told there's nothing we can do about it."

She added, "I've been verbally assaulted over 20 times this year by students that are skipping. Staff avoid confronting students as to where they're supposed to be when found without a pass due to the constant disrespect. I am one of them and I never thought I would be one of those teachers who walks away from a student."

She said, "A younger teacher has stated, 'I have students coming in my room talking about hitting blinkers before class. I have students in class so high they can't keep their heads up.' For those of you who don't know, which I didn't, a blinker is slang for hitting a marijuana pen until the light blinks making for a disoriented and high student. They're so comfortable doing drugs in school, they're talking about it right in front of us and assuming we don't know what they're saying and not caring. This is not a learning environment."

Donna Wallmark shared another staff member's experience: "While clearing out our bathroom, which is part of my duties, a student brushed up against me and then started to curse me out. The situation escalated to me being assaulted by the student. I will no longer go near the student bathrooms for fear of being assaulted and not being backed by the school or the county. I do not do hall duty for the same reason. It is sad that I do not feel safe in my school. This student is back in the schools walking the hallways while I feel unsafe."

Kathryn Wolber offered some solutions. She said, "We understand the issues with the budget, but it is time to look at need rather than enrollment numbers in determining if a building warrants a fourth assistant principal. We know our administration is trying and is overwhelmed. Having a fourth assistant principal would allow for better management of smaller issues that are damaging to school culture and morale and that contribute to larger issues."

Later in the meeting, school board member Lida Grenis reacted. She said, "Our teachers, parents and students who want to learn have had enough. We have a code of conduct for a reason. Where it is being enforced, the problems are less severe. Where it is not, you have chaos, fights, drug

use, vaping, cyber bullying, hate speech, inappropriate use of cell phones and property destruction almost on a daily basis. In fact, since school year 2023 up until now, there have been 615 fights reported to Calvert County Public School Student Services. This is approximately eight fights per week. This is unacceptable."

Grenis added, "When there's a fight, the cell phones come out and the incident is recorded and shared, sparking more fights. Speaking of cell phones, 'come to the bathroom and vape' is undoubtedly a text message, sort of like a meeting invite. So, let's enforce a no cell phone in the classroom policy."

Vice President Inez Claggett observed, "We are listening. It is a problem I feel that we have not gotten to the root cause of, as of yet. I believe we are trying to resolve some symptoms with things that we are doing. And as we dig further, I believe that staff will uncover the root cause and we will continue to work on that situation to attempt to resolve it."

"However, I would ask that we keep in mind that in coming to the root cause, we need to realize that these are students who will grow up and become adults in society. So, I think it is incumbent upon us while we have the opportunity to make an impression upon them, to ensure that we provide them the resources they need to heal them-



Student Member of the Board Jordan Hayes

selves so that when they grow older, they do not feel that this is something they can continue as they become adults and go out into society. We never want our students to leave our school system and feel like they can continue to be a menace and not be productive citizens."

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CONTENTS

LOCAL NEWS	4	COMMUNITY	9
COPS & COURTS	8	CALENDAR	10

“I FEEL EVERY TIME I WALK INTO THE BUILDING, SOMETHING BAD IS GOING TO HAPPEN.”

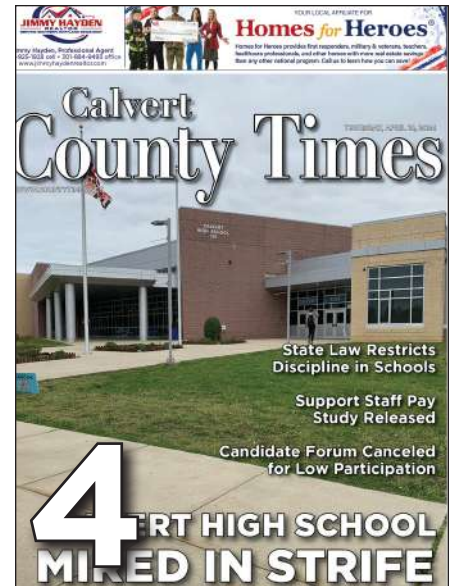
CALVERT HIGH SCHOOL SOPHOMORE PAIGE AQUILAR



LOCAL 5
School Board mulls student discipline



COMMUNITY 9
Twin Beaches Library officially opened



ON THE COVER
Calvert High School's troubles in focus

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, APR 18	FRI, APR 19	SAT, APR 20	SUN, APR 21
 Partly Cloudy Hi: 73° Lo: 48°	 Cloudy Hi: 63° Lo: 53°	 Partly Cloudy Hi: 67° Lo: 45°	 Cloudy Hi: 60° Lo: 46°
MON, APR 22	TUE, APR 23	WED, APR 24	THU, APR 25
 Sunny Hi: 64° Lo: 45°	 Partly Cloudy Hi: 68° Lo: 53°	 Partly Cloudy Hi: 69° Lo: 48°	 Partly Cloudy Hi: 64° Lo: 47°



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Calvert County Times

THURSDAY, APRIL 18, 2024

WWW.COUNTYTIMES.NET



**State Law Restricts
Discipline in Schools**

**Support Staff Pay
Study Released**

**Candidate Forum Canceled
for Low Participation**

CALVERT HIGH SCHOOL MIRED IN STRIFE