

Calvert County Times

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2023

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Projection Questioned
Commissioners Oppose
"Green" Bills
Twin Beach Library
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CONTENTS

LOCAL NEWS	4
COPS & COURTS	10
CALENDAR	11

“LET’S START CALLING ANNAPOLIS ‘FANTASY LAND’”
 COMMISSIONER MIKE HART ON THE CLEAN TRUCKS ACT OF 2023



LOCAL 4
 Commissioners oppose “green” bills



ON THE COVER 6
 Sheriff honored for community service



LOCAL 6
 Public works chief out

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, FEB 9	FRI, FEB 10	SAT, FEB 11	SUN, FEB 12
Cloudy Hi: 62° Lo: 53°	Mostly Cloudy Hi: 57° Lo: 38°	Mostly Cloudy Hi: 46° Lo: 35°	Rain Hi: 42° Lo: 37°
MON, FEB 13	TUE, FEB 14	WED, FEB 15	THU, FEB 16
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Commissioners Oppose 'Green' Bills

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) will be sending letters of opposition to several environmental bills that have been introduced into this year's Maryland General Assembly. The decisions came after a Feb. 7 briefing from County Attorney John Norris.

Cross-filed bills, House Bill (HB)230 and Senate Bill (SB)224, entitled "Department of the Environment, Zero Emissions Medium- and Heavy-Duty Vehicles – Regulations" is known as the "Clean Trucks Act of 2023," Norris said. He explained it requires "The Department of the Environment to adopt regulations on or before December 1st, 2023, establishing requirements for the sale of new zero emission medium- and heavy-duty vehicles in the state."

He said it would involve vehicles with a gross vehicle weight equal or greater than 14,001 pounds or greater than seven tons. Norris said, "Calvert County does have a number of heavy- and medium-duty vehicles," including county buses and dump trucks.

Commissioner Mike Hart said, "It's a ridiculous bill. It's beyond ridiculous. The vehicles aren't even available. The

infrastructure's not available. No one's trained for the upkeep of these things."

"Let's start calling Annapolis 'Fantasy Land,'" Hart mused.

Another cross-filed bill, HB 147 and SB 250, Norris said, "requires each county to prepare a climate crisis plan to address the effects of climate change in the county, requiring each county to submit its plan to the Department of the Environment (MDE) for review or feedback by June 1st, 2024, requiring MDE to provide that feedback by November 1st, 2024. And each county has to finalize it by January 1st, 2025, and updated every three years."

Norris said the process requires planning for inter-county transportation and Maryland Association of Counties (MACO) believes "counties lack the authority to back up the broad visions of the plan and almost certainly lack both the expertise and resources to single-handedly generate a product to the level of detail required by this bill."

Senate Bill 1 0 3, the Maryland Residential Solar Investment Tax Credit, known as the "residential rooftop solar bill," is supported by MACO because "it is not in fact impacting local revenues."

The concern about the bill, however, related to potential credits for the batteries. Commissioner President Buddy

Hance said, "And just for the public's information, we had a discussion earlier this morning about solar battery packs whereby a solar system stores the energy that's not being consumed and the significant hazards that those batteries create in the community and in the environment. And that's why you're hearing this discussion about batteries. So, we are having discussions about how we can provide notification to emergency services when they arrive on a residence or a commercial structure to know that there may be a battery pack somewhere on location. So, there is a lot of concern from people about the dangers of those batteries and hence the discussion."

Norris said, "Of the 300 Senate bills that dropped last night, I believe it was Senate Bill 562 is the one that requires the batteries to be self-contained and have a fire suppression apparatus. Because we are hearing that there's some fire companies that have been told if you see a lithium battery fire just evacuate as far as you can down wind."

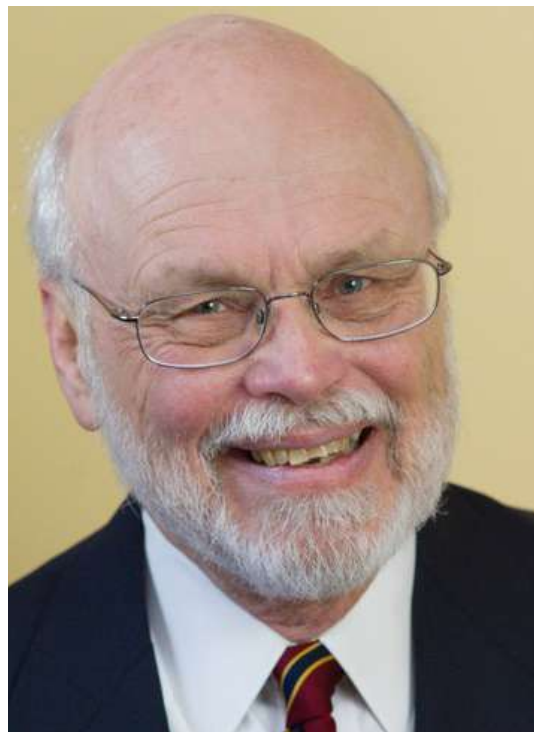
The BOCC agreed to watch what the legislators do on the issue, particularly if the tax credit bill is amended to include batteries.

dickmyers@countytimes.net



County Attorney John Norris

What Will Calvert's Population be in 2040? Group Says Projections are Outdated



Len Zuza

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

In spite of the Maryland Supreme Court upholding the Calvert County Comprehen-

sive Plan, the county needs to go back to the drawing boards and revise it because of inaccurate population projections. That's according to Calvert Citizens United (CCU), the organization that was on the losing side of the court's Jan. 25 decision.

Len Zuza, a member of the CCU board, told the county commissioners at their Feb. 7 meeting that the 2014 comprehensive plan's growth estimates were revised the 2019 plan rewrite to 00,450 residents and with a housing target of 37,600 by 2040. Yet Zuza asserted, "The county will probably reach 37,600 residences by or before the end of 2024."

Since the number of residences that state and county officials agreed upon for 2040 will have already been reached," Zuza said, "County officials will have no MDP/MDE (Maryland Department of Planning/Maryland Department of the Environ-

ment)-coordinated growth planning target for the next 16 years. The Planning Commission and P&Z staff will have no metric for evaluating how many new residences they could allow or approve annually

through 2040. This situation is untenable."

Zuza went on to say, "Given the absence of an agreed level of growth, budget officials will have no basis for analyzing and, thus formulating, the county's future Capital Improvement Plans. Minus the mandated growth target, it will be impossible to identify and budget for new facilities that are required to meet increased demand."

Zuza observed that the Maryland Supreme Court said in their decision, "According to Maryland Code, Maryland counties are required to [adopt] 'comprehensive plans' once every 20 years and use them to guide growth in a 'rational way that is beneficial to the public.' Furthermore, it pointed out that 'comprehensive plan[s] must include certain elements, including community facilities, land use, sensitive areas, water resources, and transportation elements'."

Zuza said the court also observed that, "The local jurisdiction is also required to review its comprehensive plan . . . and, if necessary, revise or amend" it to ensure that it includes the elements and visions required under State law."

"CCU believes," he said, "Commissioners need to review and amend its comprehensive plan because it no longer provides Calvert with guidelines that adequately addresses critical, long-term decision mak-

ing while managing growth in a sustainable manner."

Their recommendation to the commissioners:

1. "Request the Maryland Geological Survey to update the groundwater-flow model for Southern Maryland/Tri-County to determine whether key aquifers which Calvert relies for daily water consumption will not jeopardize our future supply of water.
2. "Consult MDE/MDP officials to reevaluate the 2019 Comprehensive Plan and revise the 2040 residential growth target to determine exactly how many additional residences the County can approve [without] exceeding the capacity of each and every essential public facility.
3. "Direct the Calvert Planning Commission and Department Planning & Zoning to document and include all revised APFO (Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance) metrics to process building permit applications for every new development(s) to assure Calvert officials and residents alike what the daily impact will be on public facilities."

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Mike Evans Honored for Service to Calvert

By Dave Spigler
Contributing Writer

After a long career in law enforcement, first as a Maryland state trooper, then as a Calvert County Courthouse Deputy, and Calvert County Sheriff from 2002, Mike Evans has retired his badge, emptied his holster, and turned over the keys to his office to his successor Sheriff Ricky Cox. His retirement leaves a great legacy of 44 years of dedicated service to the citizens of his County, this state and our country! Sheriff Mike enjoyed a high degree of popularity in the community and with his fellow police officers. He was often referred to as “a Cop’s Cop.” He insisted his officers respect not only the office they represent, but also to each and every citizen they serve. His officers gained considerable positive recognition during his tenure as “the Chief” and he attributes it to the high degree of professionalism and courtesy they always displayed in their performance.

Mike was raised in Huntingtown in a police officer environment. His father Lt Colonel Ted Evans was a Maryland state trooper and retired as the Assistant Superintendent of the Maryland State Police. Upon graduation from Calvert High School in 1974, Mike joined the Army for a two-year stint, then used the GI Bill to earn an Associate Degree in Criminal Justice. In 1978 he joined the Maryland State Police and was

assigned to the Prince Frederick Barrack for 15 years. He became a member of the “Special Tactical Assault Force Team Element” [S.T.A.T.E.] and earned many awards and citations including the “Superintendent’s Award for Extreme Courage,” “Trooper of the Year,” and several “Outstanding Performance Awards!” He received a disability retirement in 1995 and went to work as a county deputy at the Calvert Courthouse for five years. Mike was elected sheriff in November, 2002 and completed 20 years in this role, one of the longest tenures of any sheriff in recent history!

As further evidence that police work is in the “Evans DNA,” Mike and his wife Susan raised two sons, Eric and Charlie, both current Maryland State Troopers themselves. Even Susan worked in law enforcement for a number of years at the Calvert County Detention Center until her recent retirement. And Mike’s mother Aubrey worked for many years for the county as the Clerk of the Circuit Court!

To show their appreciation for the sheriff and his distinguished record of accomplishment and service to the community, a group of Calvert citizens gathered for an evening reception in Lusby in late January. It was put together by several of Mike’s friends and fans who wished to acknowledge his contributions and offer their personal thanks for “a job well done!” Many kind words were expressed by those



Mike and Susan Evans show a portrait of him presented by Deb and Dave Spigler

present. A few small gifts and cards were offered. And he was presented a 16x20 hand drawn portrait of the Sheriff created by Deb and Dave Spigler. Mike said he was thrilled with this surprise gift and truly

pleased with the evening!

Mike and his family are leaving immediately for a family vacation in Florida and he is looking forward to getting in a few rounds of golf and some pickleball play.

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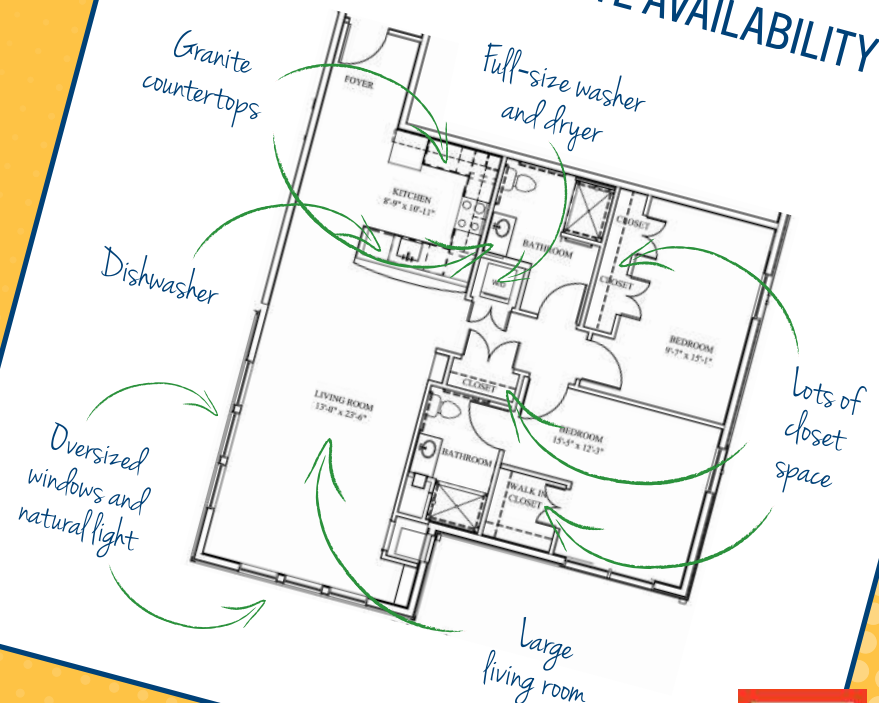
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Twin Beaches Library Open a Year Away

Capital Plan Includes County Office Building



Calvert Library Director Carrie Wilson

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) on Feb. 7 was presented the proposed six-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for county public facilities. The \$64,770,413 over six years includes \$10,470,183 in grant funding.

The proposed CIP includes \$28.5 million in the next fiscal year of which \$26 million is for the new county administration building along with completion of the new Twin Beaches Library, now under construction. Total cost of the new administration building, which is scheduled for completion next fiscal year, is almost \$60 million.

There was no discussion of that project during the CIP briefing from Capital Proj-

ects Analyst Veronica Atkinson.

Calvert Library Director Carrie Wilson did give an update of the new library. She said, "They're going to be starting to work on the roof in another couple weeks." She reported the projected opening date was February 2024.

Commissioner Catherine Grasso praised Wilson for her grant securing ability. Wilson said about \$5 million of the total \$12 million will be with grants, saving the county that funding.

The library includes a third-story observation area overlooking the Bay. "It's just going to be spectacular," Wilson said.

The Public Facilities CIP also includes Calvert Marine Museum. The budget includes monies set aside for land acquisition. But Director Jeff Murray said that deal hasn't yet been done. "It has been ongoing because the amount that was allocated was vastly different than the three bids we got."

Also, the six-year plan has a half-million dollars set aside for the Tennyson hull replacement. He said, "It'll likely be done over at St. Michael's where they do the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum. They handle repairs and maintenance for the Tennyson right now. But that is also a placeholder. We do not have an immediate need for the Tennyson hull, but since it's such an expensive item, we were asked to put that in as well."

The commissioners will get a briefing on the parks and recreation CIP next week.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Fatal Crash in Prince Frederick

On Monday, February 6, 2023, at approximately 9:40 p.m., members of the Calvert County Sheriff's Office Patrol Bureau and Crash Reconstruction Team responded to the area of Maryland Route 4 and Wood Acres Court in Prince Frederick, for the report of a serious motor vehicle crash involving two vehicles. Upon arrival, units located a 2014 Honda Civic and a 2018 Toyota 4Runner in the southbound lanes of Maryland Route 4. Both vehicles had significant front-end damage.

Preliminary investigation revealed on February 6 at approximately 9:36 p.m., the Honda Civic was observed by citizens travelling northbound in the southbound lanes of Maryland Route 4. The Honda then struck a 2018 Toyota 4Runner in a head-on crash in the southbound lanes of Maryland Route 4 at Wood Acres Court in

Prince Frederick.

Units arrived on the scene and located Lisa Nicole Sams, 39 of Brandywine partially ejected from the vehicle. Sams was pronounced deceased on the scene. The operator of the Toyota was identified as Anthony Michael Olekson, 43 of Solomons. Olekson sustained serious injuries and was transported to CalvertHealth Medical Center where he is listed in serious condition.

At this time, alcohol and driver error are contributing factors to this collision.

This collision is being investigated by DFC M. Lewis of the Crash Reconstruction Team. Anyone with additional information is asked to call 410-535-2800 or email mike.lewis.jr@calvertcountymd.gov. Please reference case #23-8048.

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Making the Case for a Community Center

Funding, Phasing Still Uncertain

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

When the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) approve a six-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) this spring, one of the decisions they will have to make will be the status of the proposed Harriett Elizabeth Brown (HEB) Community Center. The BOCC last year pulled \$6 million allocated to construction of the new facility from the plan and instead just inserted \$1 million in planning money in the CIP for Fiscal Year 2024. That came after a cost estimate came in at just under \$40 million.

Director of Parks and Recreation Shannon Nazzal gave a briefing on the project for the new commissioners at the BOCC's Jan. 31 meeting. She explained, "The conversation regarding a community center in Prince Frederick began in 2009. In 2015, the 'temporary' community center was opened with a plan to build a permanent community center. In 2018, a 22.15-acre property was purchased on Fairground Road in Prince Frederick to serve as the site of the new community center. Community input had been received through many community groups and in 2019 a conceptual plan was developed. On August 11, 2020, the BOCC directed staff to continue preliminary planning in the development of the FY22 CIP budget, including construction in the FY24 CIP budget, provide an update to the BOCC by December 1, 2020, seek grant funding from other sources, research public/private partnership opportunities, and solicit public input for the Harriett Elizabeth Brown Community Center. The master plan for the project was adopted by the BOCC on April 12, 2022. This includes a footprint of approximately 35,000 square feet with a total square footage of just over 40,000 square feet. The park would include outdoor basketball, tennis, pickleball, yard games area, playground, trail space, Harriett E. Brown memorial area, green / event space and parking."

Brown is a county civil rights icon who as a teacher was successful in getting parity with white teachers after a suit was filed by

her lawyer Thurgood Marshall. It was the first Brown vs. Board of Education, well before the more famous one. The school board settled before it went to trial."

Nazzal said, "The staff has been directed to investigate the phasing of this project due to the overall cost estimated in the master plan. It is the goal to move forward with the design of the parking area first to provide the community access to the property as quickly as possible." She added, "There is currently no additional funding allocated for this project."

Nazzal explained, "Usually in the design process we're able to work with the consultants on a phased approach and cost estimates of those phased approaches in that design."

Commissioner President Buddy Hance noted, "When I came on board there was a campaign to get the center and we definitely need a center in Prince Frederick. I'm not opposed to that. The issue was that we were told \$7 million would do it and we did find \$7 million that we were going to put in last year's CIP, and we'd be building today. The issue is that when we came to last year's budget, I think we were almost done the budget and we had a presentation, and the cost went from \$7 million to \$39 million and we couldn't do that. I mean, if you look at the CIP, this is more than a firehouse."

Several members of the Harriett Elizabeth Brown Commemorative Task Force spoke in support of the project at the meeting. Former commissioner and school board member Pat Nutter said, "Long before Harriett Elizabeth Brown came into effect, there was talk about we needed a place in the 2nd District as a community center."

He added, "When you say recreation, first thing people think about are sports, but there are other things in recreation because not all youth want to participate in sports. There are other things. It's a gathering place. It a place to be mentored by different people, whether it's boy scouts, girl scouts or someone in arts and crafts."

Joyce Freeland, former NAACP president, observed that the task force, with the

help of the late Senator Mike Miller, Senator Michael Jackson, Delegate Mark Fisher, and, when he as delegate, Tony O'Donnell and others "were able to get some of Harriett Elizabeth Brown's projects done. On November 1st, 2016, Harriett Elizabeth Brown Memorial Parkway was dedicated. It runs from the intersection of Routes 2 and 4 into Anne Arundel County."

A portrait of Brown also now hangs in the courthouse and in the temporary center named for her. The third piece of the commemoration is the permanent community center, "Now it is past time for the Harriett Elizabeth Brown Center part to become a reality," she said.

Sudha Haley, a senior citizens advocate, said, "Our county could again be a trailblazer for Maryland to provide a safe and vibrant place like the HEB Center and Park, where community groups could flourish and what a great venue to be for intergenerational gatherings, for recreation and learning, bringing together young and old and everyone in between."

Task force president Margaret Dunkle said, "We look forward to working with you to follow up to make it a reality. We realize the budget figures did not come in as we had hoped they would or as they would have had this been implemented



back in 2015 when we made the recommendation. But what is, is, and we want to work with you to make the Harriett Elizabeth Brown Community Center and Park the reality that Calvert County deserves, that Ms. Brown deserves in her honor. And we look forward to doing that."

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Dull Out as Public Works Director



Former Public Works Director Kerry Dull

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Calvert County Public Works Director Kerry Dull has been “released” from his position, according to Commissioner President Buddy Hance, who did not explain the reason because it is a personnel matter.

Dull’s department was under fire after water and sewer bills were unexpectedly sent out over the holidays in which customers were hit with thousands of dollars more than they were previously paying. The bills were sent under a county policy putting customers in a different Equivalent Dwelling Unit (EDU) category when their water usage exceeded a pre-determined level.

The notices became a public relations nightmare with many citizens complaining at the first commissioner meeting of the new year, also the first for the three new board members.

Hance would not confirm that the faux pas was the reason for Dull’s termination.

At that first meeting of the new year, County Administrator Mark Willis took responsibility for it. Since then the commissioners have rescinded the fee increases and promised to review the policy.

The department also came under fire for the abortive idea of transporting Prince Frederick sewage to Solomons and the contention that the Prince Frederick plants were near capacity, which was later deemed incorrect.

Dull replaced then director Rai Sharma, who also left county government abruptly with no reason announced and his service never recognized.

At the commissioners’ Feb. 7 meeting, public works deputy director J. R. Cosgrove was announced as the department’s interim director.

Meanwhile, Hance has been critical of customer service by county departments.

The commissioners meet with department heads before their regular Tuesday meeting, however that early meeting is not broadcast or streamed. Hance confirmed to The County Times that at a recent meeting he was critical of the departments’ customer service. He said he had received complaints about unreturned calls and inability to get information. Several persons who spoke in the wake of the water and sewer bill flap also complained about being unable to get an explanation.

Bob Estes, an environmental activist who attends many commissioner meetings, was at the staff meeting. He described Hance as having a “tirade to the staff leaders who were at the 9 a.m. pre-meeting.”

Estes said, “He was very upset about the numerous complaints to him and the other commissioners about no one answering the phone at the offices and citizens not getting callbacks in a timely manner as well as conflicting information and circular finger pointing between the departments. He reminded them that they are part of a service group beholden to the citizens and that the current state of affairs is just not acceptable. He told them it had to stop now or there would be hell to pay. He said that working from home was no excuse. He also said that the time to process simple permit tasks like building a deck should not take weeks. He set a response time to getting back to citizens at three days even if all that could be said was that the work was progressing.”

Hance told the County Times he supports telework when appropriate but that was not an excuse for poor customer service.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Kitten Found in Chesapeake Beach Dumpster: Update



Lulu is an approximately one-year-old calico cat who is as sweet as the day is long. Through her ordeal, she seems determined not to hold it against anyone. She is thriving at the shelter and enjoying the love everyone gives her, but she is looking for a home of her very own.

Lulu will be up to date on vaccinations, spayed, microchipped and available this Friday, Feb. 10, to the first qualified adopter.

Thank you to the person who called in the incident, County dispatchers, the Calvert County Sheriff’s Office and Calvert County Animal Control for saving our beautiful feline friend!

This cat remains part of an active investigation. Anyone with information about this incident is asked to contact ACO Buckler at Blair.Buckler@calvertcountymd.gov or send an anonymous tip to csotips@calvertcountymd.gov.

Public Safety Reminds Multi-line Phone System Users to Ensure Direct Access to 911

The Calvert County Department of Public Safety, Emergency Communications Division, reminds residents and business owners to ensure that their multi-line telephone systems provide direct access to 911, without requiring an individual to dial any other numbers first, as required by state and federal law. Multi-line telephone systems are typically found in office buildings, campuses, hotels and other enterprises.

Dubbed “Kari’s Law,” the law is named in honor of Kari Hunt, who was murdered by her estranged husband in a Texas motel room in December 2013. Her 9-year-old daughter tried to call 911 four times, but was unable to reach emergency services because she did not know the motel phone required “9” to be dialed to reach an outside line. Gov. Larry Hogan enacted Kari’s Law in 2015 for the state of Maryland. The law was enacted by Congress in 2018.

Businesses and organizations using a

multi-line telephone system should contact their provider to find out how their system is set up and to ask for direct dialing of 911 without having to dial a prefix or access code first. Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules require any new system to be pre-configured to support direct dialing of 911; however these rules apply only to those that were manufactured, imported, offered for first sale or lease, or installed after Feb. 16, 2020.

For questions or more information, citizens may contact the Department of Public Safety, Emergency Communications Division, at 410-535-1600, ext. 2492.

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.

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CALVERT SHERIFF'S CRIME BLOTTER

Burglary: 23-6592

On January 31, 2023, Deputy Novick responded to the 11300 block of Commanche Road in Lusby, for the reported burglary. The complainant advised three individuals were observed on a trail camera exiting a single-family residence under construction. The homeowner arrived on scene and advised there were ashes all over the floor and the odor of marijuana was present. No property was stolen or damaged. This case remains under investigation.

Theft: 23-7344

On February 3, 2023, Deputy Durnbaugh responded to the Dash-In located at 875 North Solomons Island Road in Prince Frederick, for the report of a theft. Investigation revealed an unknown male suspect entered the store asking for a band-aid and while the cashier was looking behind the register, the suspect walked behind the counter and stole a pack of Newport cigarettes. The suspect described as a black male wearing a blue and white colored jacket, blue jeans, black hat and tennis shoes then exited the store without paying for the items. The estimated value of stolen property is \$12.00.

ARRESTS



On February 2, 2023, Deputy Zinn responded to the area of N. Solomons Island Road and Industry Lane in Prince Frederick, to assist a motorist. The sole occupant and driver, Keith Arlington Yates, 35 of Saint Inigoes, advised deputies he ran out of gas. Deputies on scene asked Yates to start the vehicle which started with no issues. Deputies observed multiple signs of impairment while speaking with Yates. A search of Yates's person revealed a clear capsule

with suspected heroin residue inside. A vehicle search revealed six clear capsules, a sulfate cigarette wrapper, and a spoon all of which contained heroin residue. A syringe, a Zip-lock bag containing marijuana, and approximately 46 round white pills were also found. Yates was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center where he was charged with Reckless Driving, CDS: Possession- Not Cannabis, CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia and other traffic related charges.



On February 5, 2023, Deputy Tavares responded to the Dunn Clean Laundry located at 248 Town Square Dr. Lusby MD, 20678 for a welfare check. The complainant advised a male was laying down behind two trash cans. Deputy Tavares arrived on scene and made contact Ted William Taylor, Jr., 33 of Prince Frederick. Taylor was advised he had an outstanding warrant through Fairfax County and had been trespassed indefinitely from the property. Taylor became irate and confrontational, yelling profanities, refusing to obey lawful commands. Deputies placed Taylor into custody and transported him to the Calvert County Detention Center where he was charged with Resist/Interfere with Arrest, Obstructing and Hindering, and Failure to Obey Reasonable/Lawful Order of a Law Enforcement Officer.

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@calvert-countymd.gov

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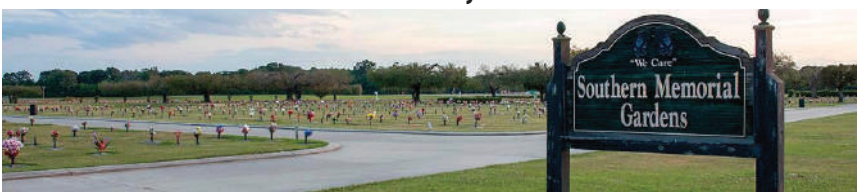
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Calvert Community Calendar

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.

Fri, Feb 10

Annmarie After Hours, Opening Reception

Annemarie Sculpture Garden, 5-7 p.m.

For Breaking Ground: Art About the Earth and Narratives: Works by Sharon Robinson

Enjoy extended hours in the garden in celebration of the opening of two new exhibits. Both galleries in the Arts Building will be open until 7:00pm, along with the sculpture garden and walking trails. Enjoy live music, tour the new exhibit, take a walk, and appreciate an evening of art and nature. You'll find a cash bar and food truck as well. Admission is \$5/person; members free; reservations are not required, just come. visit www.annmariegarden.org or call 410-326-4640.

On Pins & Needles

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

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

Sat, Feb 11

Valentine Market

Annemarie Sculpture Garden
9 a.m.-2 p.m.
Admission to the market area is free

The Valentine Maker's Market is the place to find thoughtful and handmade gifts for all the sweets in your life. There is always a fabulous variety of options, including small batch chocolates, jewelry, leather goods, pottery, clothing, and so much more! You will find indoor and outdoor vendors offering a wide selection of homemade, handmade or homegrown products, all made smoking or vaping. Details: www.annmariegarden.org

Sun, Feb 12

Southern Maryland Bluegrass" concert series

Calvert Elks Lodge #2620
1015 Dares Beach Road
Prince Frederick
2 p.m.

Featuring Lonesome River Band. Since its formation decades ago, Lonesome River Band continues its reputation as one of the most respected names in Bluegrass music. Five-time International

Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA) Banjo Player of the Year, and winner of the Steve Martin Prize for Excellence in Banjo and Bluegrass, Sammy Shelor leads the group that is constantly breaking new ground in acoustic music.

Tickets for each show will be available at the door for \$20 per person. Under twelve are admitted free with a paid adult. Food and beverages will be available for sale and there will be a 50/50 raffle as well as door prizes. The doors open at Noon and the shows will begin at 2 p.m. with the announcement of an upcoming surprise event. Information for each show can be found at www.somdbluegrass.com or by calling 301-737-3004.

Mon, Feb 13

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
9:30am-4:15pm.

VITA provides free federal and state tax preparation services for households whose total household income is \$57,000 or less. Tax services are provided by IRS-certified tax preparers. Tax service is for Charles', Prince George's, St Mary's and Calvert County residents. Visit the website or contact the library for details and limitations, 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

JobSource Mobile Career Center

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

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

Tue, Feb 14

Explorers

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

Explore the world without ever leaving the library. Join us each month to "visit" a new country and learn all about its culture, traditions and language. Grades 3-5. Registration Required, 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>

Wed, Feb 15

Working Wednesdays - How to Love Your Career

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

In the spirit of Valentine's Day learn how to LOVE YOUR CAREER! Professionals, managers, volunteers, and jobseekers of all ages can learn how to build and rekindle effective professional and business relationships, go after the dream, and evaluate your skillsets to love your career! Registration closes the Monday before the event. Management Consultants from Lord and Tucker Management Consultants, LLC are conducting this event sponsored by the Calvert County Minority Business Alliance. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Book Discussion

Calvert Library, online, 2-3 p.m.

The Radium Girls by Kate Moore is written with a sparkling voice and break-neck pace, The Radium Girls fully illuminates the inspiring young women exposed to the "wonder" substance of radium, and their awe-inspiring strength in the face of almost impossible circumstances. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Reading Buddies

Calvert Library Fairview Branch
6-7 p.m.

Help build your child's reading confidence by reading to a teen. Bring your child and we will provide the teenager. Fun for all! Does your K-5th grade child struggle with reading confidence? This is a great opportunity for reading practice in a safe and welcoming space! Register for the event. At the event, pick out a book you would like to read. Choose your teen Reading Buddy and read them a story! Have fun! If you are interested in being a Teen Reading Buddy, please call Mary at the library for more information at least a week before the event. Earn a service learning hour! 410-257-2101. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Tween Book Club

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

Among the Hidden by Margaret Peterson Haddix. Join other book lovers during this fun winter book club! We will be reading and discussing fabulous books. Did we mention there will be snacks?! In a future where the Population Police enforce the

law limiting a family to only two children, Luke has lived all his twelve years in isolation and fear on his family's farm, until another "third" convinces him that the government is wrong. Ask at the desk to check out a copy! 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Thu, Feb 16

Little Minnows

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

This month's theme is The Masked Bandit is Out at Night. For preschoolers ages 3 – 5, with an adult. This program focuses on one of the museum's three themes. Join us for story time and a takeaway craft, available while supplies last. Sessions are 25-40 minutes. Capacity is limited. Sign up at the Admissions Desk when you arrive. Cost is free with admission,

Upcoming

Maritime Performance Series with Ash & Eric

Calvert Marine Museum
Friday, Feb. 17, 7 p.m.

The married couple's new album Sure (May 2022) is "a tale of love... [with] some heartaches and a pinch of disputation along the way." Hailing from the gritty heart of New England, the two find consolation in discovering beauty in the challenges of life. Their warm harmonies, swirling acoustic guitars, and easy stage presence have earned them a dedicated following in the emerging US folk scene, performing with folk legends like Livingston Taylor, Mark Erelli and Vance Gilbert. Performance is in the museum's Harms Gallery starting at 7 p.m.; doors open at 6 p.m. with beer and wine for sale. Tickets are \$20 online at bit.ly/MaritimeConcerts and \$25 at the door.

Great Backyard Bird Count

Calvert Marine Museum, Friday & Saturday, Feb. 17 & 18 – 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Participate in a Citizen Science activity that provides data to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society. Check out a pair of binoculars and a bird count tally sheet in the museum lobby to assist us with this program on your own or on a guided walk with museum educators. For adults and children in third grade or older who are interested in assisting with research. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Included with museum admission.



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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, Feb 9

National Pizza Night

Garvey Senior Activity Center
23630 Hayden Farm Ln, Leonardtown
6 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Cost: \$5 per person

Let's celebrate national pizza day by eating pizza together and socialize! Come enjoy some pizza and beverages. Advanced Registration is required, and the fee covers the cost of the pizza.

Sat, Feb 11

Contra Dance

37497 Zach Fowler Road, Chaptico
7 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Come out to swing, promenade, and do-si-do to lively jigs, reels and waltzes played by the So. MD Open Band. A caller will teach and call the dances. Dance workshop at 7:00 PM. Dance begins at 7:30 PM. No partner required. Beginners welcome. **Trivia Night!**

Patuxent Presbyterian Church
23421 Kingston Creek Road, California
2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Do you love playing trivia games as much as we do? Then you're in luck! BELONG (Bridging Everyone Linking Older and Newer Generations) Trivia Night, our next intergenerational fellowship event, is coming up on Saturday, February 11th from 2:00-5:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. We will have a live trivia host and snacks. Bring a friend and join us! For more information about our church, please visit: www.paxpres.com.

Sun, Feb 12

Farmers Market-Fly in-Walk in-Drive in!

St. Mary's County Airport Terminal
44200 Airport Rd, California
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Oysters—Local Meats—Honey—Baked Goods —Eggs—Seasonal Produce—Local Hard Cider—Local Bourbon—Breads—Pickles—Goat Milk Soap—Aged Oils & Vinegars—Sheep Cheese— Local Beer—

Spices—Local Chocolate
FLY IN or DRIVE IN!

Mon, Feb 13

Red-Cross Blood Drive @ Social Hall-2nd Dist., Drayden Rd.

2nd District VFD & RS, Company 6,
45245 Drayden Rd., Valley Lee
1:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.

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

Social Distancing / Mask may be required.

Upcoming

Corn Hole Tournament

Feb. 25
Bay District Volunteer Fire Department
46900 S Shangri-La Dr, Lexington Park
1 p.m.

Steven King, one of the 2nd Dist. VFD, Valley Lee, Co. 6 members, is experiencing some serious medical issues and currently in the care of Hospice. Steven's family is hosting a Cornhole Tournament to assist him to offset the large medical bills that have been incurred.

For more info please call 240-216-0167.

2022 Sustainability Award Nomination Deadline

Tue, 28 Feb

The St Mary's County Commission on the Environment is accepting nominations to recognize efforts to incorporate and expand sustainable environmental practices into St Mary's County. Categories include: Businesses, Restaurants, Schools, Non-profits, Farms, and Individuals. See the nomination forms on the County website: https://www.stmarysmd.com/docs/2022_St_Mary_s_Sustainability_Awards.pdf

Nominate your deserving organization or one that you admire for their extraordinary practices!



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Sweet Valentine's Buffet

Sat. Feb. 11 & Sun. Feb. 12
8am-2pm

Scrambled Eggs	Sausage Gravy & Biscuits
Hash Browns	Cinnamon Baked French Toast
Pancakes (Gluten Free Available)	Mini Muffins
Breakfast Bacon Bit Pizza	Fresh Sliced Melons
Frittata with Bacon, Spinach & Tomato	Rice Pudding
Sausage & Egg Casserole	Bread Pudding
Keto Breakfast Casserole	Strawberry Shortcake
	Sweetheart Brownies

Adults: \$20.95 Seniors (65+): \$15.95 Kids 6-10: \$12.95
Kids 3-5: \$6.95 Kids 2 & Under: Free

Mimosa 10oz \$8 • Orange, Cranberry & Orange/Cranberry
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Due to the volume of customers expected, we will not be serving from the menu—buffet only. Please make reservations for parties of six or more.

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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.

Black History Month – Film Series

Join us in the Social Room at Northern Senior Activity Center for our free film series. HBO's King in the Wilderness (1hr 51min) will be shown Friday, Feb. 10, at 12 p.m. Netflix's 13th (1hr 40min) will be shown Friday, Feb. 17, at 12 p.m. Finally, Lilies of the Field starring Sidney Poitier (1hr 34min) will be shown Friday, Feb. 24 at 12 p.m. Space is limited for each showing. To register for these free events, click on the "View and Sign Up for Activities and Programs" button at www.stmarysmd.com/aging. Accommodations can be made for those requiring registration assistance by leaving a message at 301-475-4200, ext. 3115.

Nutrition Education

This month Donna Taggart will discuss Heart Health at the Loffler Senior Activity Center on Monday, Feb. 13, at 10 a.m. Register for this talk by going to www.stmarysmd.com/aging or leave a message on our reservation line at 301-475-4200, ext. 1660. ADDITIONALLY- Donna offers free personal nutritional education at 11 a.m. on the day she is here if you make an appointment with her by text message or calling 240-538-6539.

Watercolor with T.L. Ford

Come learn the basics of watercolor painting in a relaxing, informal setting at the Garvey Senior Activity Center. No experience or drawing skills are necessary and everything you need is provided. The theme of the painting for Tuesday, Feb. 14, at 1:30 p.m. will be Jungle Leaves. The cost for each class will be \$25.

February Health Watch

Surprising Health Challenges of Aging plus Aging Successfully are the topics that will be presented this month at the Loffler Senior Activity Center on Wednesday, Feb. 15, at 9:30 a.m. Aging bodies take longer to recover from illnesses and can sometimes make one more vulnerable in unexpected ways. But awareness and knowledge can give you an edge in prevention and quicker recovery. And there is more good news—there are simple, fun ways to stay stronger longer! Advance registration is required for this presentation. Go to www.stmarysmd.com/aging or leave a message on our reservation line at 301-475-4200, ext. 1660.

Presented by Hope & Healing

As we age life's events can often become overwhelming, both mentally as well as physically. Especially during this time it's

even more important to take care of your mental wellness. We have collaborated with Hope & Healing Psychotherapy, LLC to bring you a Mental Health Series. At the Garvey Senior Activity Center, we will hear a presentation on a new topic. The topic for Tuesday, Feb. 21, at 1 p.m. will be Trust & Relationships. Advance sign up is required and a suggested donation of \$5 for each series is requested.

Indoor Cornhole Tournament

Who doesn't love a good round of cornhole? Compete in this casual & fun tournament at Northern Senior Activity Center on Wednesday, Feb. 22, from 1-3:30 p.m. Show off your skills or try it out for the first time. Keep in mind that this game requires good dexterity, throwing, and hand-eye coordination. The winner of the tournament will win a prize. It's currently a secret. You'll have to attend to find out! To register for this free event, click on the "View and Sign Up for Activities and Programs" button at www.stmarysmd.com/aging. Accommodations can be made for those requiring registration assistance by leaving a message at 301-475-4200, ext. 3115.

Winter & Spring Well-being: A 5 Element Qigong & Yoga Workshop

The Traditional Chinese Medicine 5 Elements represent what is in Nature - Water, Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal - and are associated with the Kidneys, Liver, Heart, Spleen, Lungs, emotions and much more. With a focus on Winter and Spring elements, Paty Massón and Judi Lyons delightfully transform the 5 Element concepts into a lovely movement practice of Qigong and Yoga, to invite more radiant health - emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Join Paty & Judi at Northern Senior Activity Center on Monday, Feb. 27, from 1-3 p.m. Paty is certified in RYT® 500, CBT, and Qigong. Judi Lyons/Mindful Motions Md. is YACEP®, E-RYT® 200, EMYoga® Certified, RYT® 500 Therapeutic. To register for this event & pay the \$20 fee, click on the "View and Sign Up for Activities and Programs" button at www.stmarysmd.com/aging. Accommodations can be made for those requiring registration assistance by leaving a message at 301-475-4200, ext. 3115.

★ ST. MARY'S COUNTY Library



Intro to Microsoft Excel

Learn the basics of computer spreadsheets with this introductory in-person class at Leonardtown Library on Friday, February 17 from 10 - 11:30 a.m. Have you been meaning to learn how to use the computer to make lists or to calculate columns of numbers? We'll cover the basics of creating, saving, and formatting spreadsheets as well as using formulas so you can get started with Microsoft Excel! We'll also introduce you to resources

available on the library website to continue to develop your computer skills. Register on www.stmalib.org.

Library Closed for Presidents Day

All three St. Mary's County Library locations will be closed on Monday, February 20 to observe Presidents Day. All locations will be open regular business hours on Tuesday, February 21.

Recognizing Our Past

Join the St. Mary's County Library in welcoming author, historian, and researcher, Daryl T. Hinmon, in discussing his works and his efforts to celebrate lesser-known figures in Black History at Lexington Park Library on Tuesday, February 21 from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. No registration is required. Hinmon will discuss the remarkable achievements of formerly enslaved African American ancestors and their descendants. Anything of value is typically hidden by nature, or other people, and it takes work to unearth valuable gems that will increase your worth. True Black History is one of those gems that was hidden from our enslaved ancestors because the true knowledge of their history would have made them 'forever unfit to be slaves'. Daryl T. Hinmon is an acclaimed local author of two books: Slaves With Swag: The Negroes Your History Teacher Forgot To Mention and Black Gold: Remarkable Achievements of Formerly Enslaved African Americans & Their Descendants.

Open Art Workshop: With Deb McClure

Art is all about self-expression, but having some guidance never hurt anyone. Artist Deb McClure will be at Leonardtown Library on Friday, February 24 from 1 - 4:30 p.m., prepped with exercises and guidance, to help you create art that truly speaks to you. This program will focus on

acrylic paint, though you are welcome to bring other mediums to work on. Painting supplies, such as canvas, brushes, and paints will be provided by the St. Mary's Arts Council. Each workshop will feature a still life set up for use, as well as other guided exercises. Deb will be on hand to offer advice, guidance, or just friendly artistic conversation. Feel free to come in and stop by for however long you would like, just be ready to make some art! No registration.

Seventeenth-Century Dutch Pots in Maryland Middens

Dr. James Gibb will use an archaeological lens to discuss findings from a 17th-century plantation in Calvert County in a virtual discussion on Monday, February 27 from 7 - 8 p.m. The peg-legged, one-eyed, cutlass-wielding pirate is a mainstay of comedic movies and television advertisements. Evidence from a 17th-century plantation site in southern Calvert County suggests a less colorful image: common merchantmen smuggling bales of fabric and crates of ceramics. In this illustrated presentation, Dr. Gibb will explore restrictions on the importation of non-British goods to Maryland and the evidence for smuggling in archaeological deposits dating to the 1650s and 1660s. Register on www.stmalib.org.

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

Sandra Eversberg, 64



Sandra Anne Eversberg, "Sandy", 64, of Hollywood, MD, formerly of Mechanicsville, MD, passed away on January 27, 2023 at her home. Born on February 28, 1958

in Washington, D.C., she was the daughter of the late Mary Long and the late Thomas Long, Sr. Sandra was the loving wife of Michael Eversberg, whom she married on September 27, 1986 in St. John Catholic Church, Hollywood, MD. She is survived by her children Michael Eversberg II of Lexington Park, MD, William Eversberg (Kirsten) of Lexington Park, MD, Jessica Eversberg of California, MD, and Joseph Eversberg of California, MD, her sister Ellen Long of Lexington Park, MD, as well as two grandchildren. In addition to her parents, Sandra was preceded in death by her siblings Thomas Long, Jr., Gerri Stokel, Michael Long, and Patricia Lewis.

Sandra was a lifelong St. Mary's County, MD resident. She graduated from Chopticon High School in 1975 and was a homemaker. Sandra enjoyed gardening, crocheting, watching wildlife, and her cooking shows. She belonged to the Hollywood Vol. Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary.

The family will receive friends on Friday, February 3, 2023 from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, MD, where a funeral service will be held at 11:00 AM in the funeral home chapel with Father Ray Schmidt officiating. Interment will be private.

Condolences may be made to the family at www.mgfh.com. Arrangements provided by the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home and Cremation Services, P.A., Leonardtown, MD

George Trossbach, Sr., 92



George DePaul Trossbach, Sr., 92, of Scotland, MD, peacefully passed away on January 31, 2023 at his home surrounded by his loving family. Born on April 13, 1930 in

Beachville, MD, he was the son of the late John Linwood and Mary Adelaide Norris Trossbach. He was the loving husband to the late Opal Lacey McMillian Trossbach, who preceded him in death on April 7, 2010. They were married at Arlington Methodist Church in Arlington, VA on December 5, 1958. George is survived by his two children George Trossbach, Jr. (Connie) of St. Inigo, MD and Violet Halton (Timothy) of Brandywine, MD, his siblings Marjorie Ridgell of Scotland, MD, Juanita Smith of Ridge, MD, John L. "Bill" Trossbach (Frances Mae) of Drayden, MD, Norris "Buster" Trossbach (Hilda) of Scotland, MD, and Amelia Fenhagan (Benedict) of

Scotland, MD, eight grandchildren, 14 great grandchildren, and many nieces, and nephews. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his sisters Hilda Hall and Adelaide "Addie" McBride.

George was a lifelong farmer in St. Mary's County, MD dedicated to filling the needs of his family and community. His early years were spent milking cows and delivering milk on Choice Dairy Farm. Through the years he raised cattle, hogs, and planted many crops and grains. As needs changed and his family grew, he started Trossbach Produce, a thriving business and labor of love that continues to this day. When he wasn't hard at work he enjoyed hunting fishing, and front porch living with his family and friends. George will be remembered for his big smile, kind heart, and love that showed all those he knew.

The family will receive friends on Tuesday, February 7, 2023 from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM with prayers recited at 7:00 PM at St. Michael's Catholic Church, Ridge, MD, where a Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Wednesday, February 8, 2023 at 10:00 AM with Father Mark Cusic officiating. Interment will follow at the church cemetery. Serving as pallbearers will be Michael Powell, Calvin Powell, Jonathan Trossbach, Steve Gatton, Buddy McBride, Jr., and Buddy Trossbach.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Archangel Scholarship Foundation Corporation to support St. Michael's Catholic School at P.O. Box 211, Ridge, MD 20680.

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

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

Carl Hubscher, 93



Carl Sargent Hubscher was born in Washington, D.C. on September 13, 1929, the son of Carl Alois and Louise Margaret Hubscher nee Western, the oldest of eight children. Carl died peacefully this morning, January 6th at his home in Hollywood with his children at his side.

Carl married Marie Ella Weber in Mt. Rainier, MD on April 9, 1954. They celebrated forty-five years of marriage prior to Marie's passing on November 30, 1999. Carl is survived by his four children: Beverly Marie Berned; Carl S. Hubscher, Jr. (Alice); Brenda Jean Lewis (Tim); and June Louise Llerena (Luis); many grandchildren and great-grandchildren; nieces and nephews; and his siblings Doris Lorraine Perkins and Dennis Jack Hubscher (Rosemary). He was predeceased by siblings Helen Dolores Polcen, Audrey Beverly Tamkin, Richard Max Hubscher, Theodore Nicholas Arthur Hubscher and Ruth Margaret Boone.

Carl was a Korean War Veteran and

served in the U.S. Army in Japan. He was a civil servant for the District Government for many years working his way up the ladder in the Sewer and Sanitation Division. After retirement, he worked as a real estate salesman and broker in Prince Georges County MD. He and Marie raised their family in Hyattsville MD. After Marie's passing, Carl relocated to Hollywood MD in St. Mary's County in December 2004.

Carl is resting at the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, 41590 Fenwick St., Leonardtown MD, where a visitation was held on Tuesday, January 10th, 2023 from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM with prayers recited at 7:00 PM in the Funeral Home Chapel. A Graveside Service was held on January 11, 2023 at 11:00 AM in Fort Lincoln Cemetery Brentwood, MD.

Bob St. Clair, 97



James Robert (Bob) St. Clair, 97, of Alexandria, Virginia passed away peacefully on January 6th 2023, at the Fairfax Senior Living Community, Fort Belvoir,

Virginia.

Bob was born February 25, 1925 in Washington D.C. He was the son of Joseph Frederick St. Clair and Estella Mae Rollins St. Clair. Bob's father grew up on a farm near Avenue, MD and moved to Washington D.C. for work. As a child growing up during the depression, Bob and his brother William spent summers on the Tippett family farm which was situated on a tributary of the Chesapeake Bay in Southern Maryland. It was during these early years that he developed a love of life around the water, and appreciation of hard work, which later served him well in his business career.

As a boy growing up in D.C. and attending public school, Bob developed a passion for music. His neighborhood near the Navy Yard was heavily populated by members of the military bands and he benefitted greatly by learning from some of the musicians of his generation. As a high school student, he was playing trumpet at a professional level,

and his musical talent created the opportunity for him to play with notables of the Big Band era including Lawrence Welk, Anna Rae Hutton, and Artie Shaw. He was also a member of the first Redskin Band.

After he graduated from Eastern High School, Bob enlisted in the Navy and was assigned to Franklin & Marshall College in the Naval Air Core program, attended the Navy School of Music and later served on the US aircraft carrier Tarawa during WWII.

Bob married Ruth Riley Rice, of New Market, Virginia, on April 10, 1948. For 61 years they enjoyed life and raised their two children in Alexandria.

After being honorably discharged from the Navy following the war, he started his business career with Edgar R. Morris Co. and later worked with Westinghouse, rising to regional sales manager. St. Clair Appliance Distributors opened in March 1966. Bob and Ruth worked successfully together to grow the business which later welcomed other family members.

Bob will be remembered for his life together with his wife Ruth. Inseparable, they built a second home in Leonardtown, Maryland, where they spent most weekends around the water. The family has over the years spent as much time together as possible in St. Mary's County enjoying the lower Potomac River areas where the entire family grew to love the home of his ancestors.

Bob is survived by his daughter Sharon Leigh St. Clair Lugar (Larry) of Charlottesville, Virginia; son Robert Franklin St. Clair (Kelly) of Alexandria, Virginia; his three grandchildren: Kevin Lugar (Susan), Zack St. Clair (Danielle), and Cory St. Clair. He also had four great-grandchildren: Brandon Lugar, Natalie Lugar, Sutton St. Clair, and Baker St. Clair. He was predeceased by his wife, Ruth, in 2009; his two brothers and sister-in-laws, William & Kathleen Tippett St. Clair (Haines City, FL) and Earle & Mildred (PG) St. Clair (Bushwood, MD), and nephew, Joseph St. Clair (Baltimore, MD).

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, or to a charity of your choice.

Services will be private.

*A Tribute to the Loved One
Whose Memory Lives
On Forever in Your Heart*

Honor the memory of your cherished one by sharing the story of their life with friends, neighbors and associates here in the community.

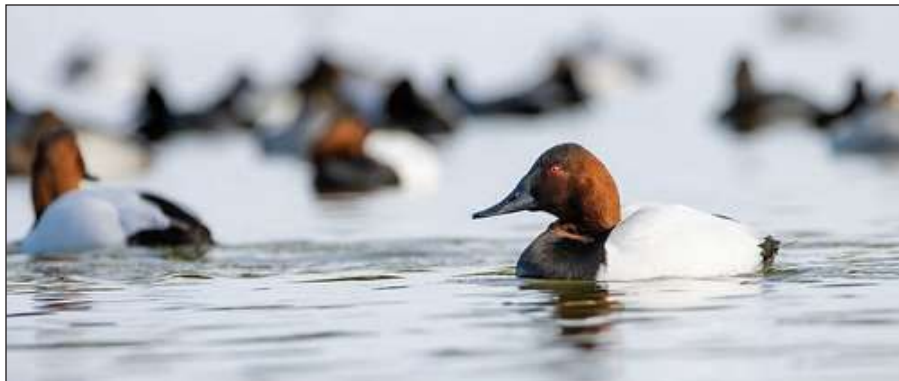
For details and to place your notice of remembrance, call 301-373-4125 for assistance.



REMEMBRANCES
IN PRINT & ONLINE

County Times
St. Mary's County • Calvert County

Maryland DNR Announces Waterfowl Survey Results



In early January, aerial survey teams of pilots and biologists from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) made visual estimates of the ducks, geese, and swans along most of the state's Chesapeake Bay, Potomac River, and Atlantic coast shorelines. This year, the teams counted about 632,200 waterfowl, which was higher than the 563,800 birds observed in 2022 but lower than the most recent five-year average of 682,520 birds.

"The distribution and abundance of wintering waterfowl is influenced not only by the annual changes in population size, but also the weather conditions during migration and throughout the winter," said Wildlife and Heritage Director Paul Peditto. "The surveys our staff conduct provide a snapshot of where waterfowl are located in the state and are combined with data from other states in the flyway to track the status of several important waterfowl species."

Overall, dabbling ducks were similar (93,600) to 2022 (97,600). While the number of pintails counted in the survey dropped slightly (3,300 in 2023 and 4,600

in 2022), mallards (56,800) and black ducks (21,800) remained similar to their respective 5-year averages (53,920, and 24,580). Despite the generally mild winter, a mid-December cold snap across the country likely led to more diving ducks (190,300) being observed on the Chesapeake and tributaries than in the 2022 survey (79,400).

Biologists counted 320,800 Canada geese in the 2023 survey which was similar to the 361,100 counted in 2022. The 2023 count was likely negatively affected by the warm early January weather, which allowed many wintering geese to roost and feed further inland away from survey routes. Positive reports from many goose hunters appear to confirm this theory.

The Midwinter Waterfowl Survey has been conducted annually since the early 1960s – except 2021 – and covers most of the tidal shorelines and near-shore waterfowl habitat in Maryland. The 2021 Mid-Winter Survey was not flown due to human health concerns related to COVID-19.

Registration Opens for Keys to Senior Independence Series

What are your plans for retirement? Do you know how to access Medicare, Medicaid, or other programs and services? Are you seeking volunteer opportunities within the St. Mary's County community? Get connected and get the information you need at the Department of Aging & Human Services Keys to Senior Independence series!

The Keys to Senior Independence series will be held on Tuesdays, from March 7-28, from 6:00-9:00 p.m., at the College of Southern Maryland - Leonardtown Campus.

This year's presentation topics are:

Aging Actively - Tuesday, March 7

Join the Department of Aging & Human Services and St. Mary's County Recreation & Parks to learn about the various ways you can be physically active, and activity involved in the St. Mary's County community!

Planning for the Unexpected - Tuesday, March 14

Learn about emergency plans, Advance

Health Care Directives, Medicare planning, and other things to have in place in case of emergency.

Protecting Your Identity - Tuesday, March 21

A representative from the Sheriff's Office will teach community members about scams directed toward the aging population and how to detect, avoid, and report them.

Aging in Place - Tuesday, March 28

Aging in place is important. Learn about programs that provide support for family caregivers, provide mobility equipment, and learn how to make your home more user-friendly overall!

Sign up for one presentation or all four! For more information, or to register, contact Sarah Miller, Community Programs & Outreach Division Manager with the Department of Aging & Human Services at (301) 475-4200, ext. 1073 or Sarah.Miller@stmaryscountymd.gov.

Pet

OF THE WEEK



MEET DOT

True love is seen
In the eyes of a rescue.
Adopt a Forever Friend today!

Hi everybody! My name is Dot. Are you are looking for that PERFECT BLEND of ENERGY and SNUGGLE bunny? Then my Shelter Pals will tell you, I'm that girl! I absolutely LOVE to get out into the yard to play and I even LIKE OTHER DOGS. And, if you want a doggie to curl up on the couch with you, I've got that covered! I LOVE to be with PEOPLE and if you are not careful, I'll be in your lap before you know it. If you're looking for THE BEST then come visit me during adoption hours, Monday-Saturday 12:30-3pm or email animalshelter@charlescountymd.gov. BE MY MIRACLE AND PLEASE CHOOSE ME! When you choose to adopt, you are saving a life.

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



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Donate Pieces of Local History During Museum "Community Day"

Have you ever wanted to contribute to a museum exhibit? The St. Clement's Island Museum in Colton's Point and the Piney Point Lighthouse Museum in Piney Point will host "Community Day" on Friday, February 10, 2023, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

This event allows the public to get involved with the planning of new exhibits by sharing historic documents, photos, and other significant objects related to St. Clement's Island and the Colton's Point area from the 20th century and earlier, as well as objects related to Piney Point and maritime history of the Potomac and Chesapeake.

The museum is seeking information and items about local boat builders; information about the Golden Hotel, the Shirley K Hotel, the Hotel on St. Clement's Island, Tolson Hotel and Swann's Hotel in Piney Point, and the Blackstone Island Canning Company or other oyster companies; photos of the island and the Blackstone Lighthouse or Piney Point Lighthouse; information about living on St. Clement's

Island and/or living in Colton's Point or Piney Point; any photos of steamboats at Colton's Point landing; U.S. Coast Guard or U.S. Navy history related to Piney Point; "retro" holiday and Christmas décor and decorations (both indoor and outdoor) from the 1930s through 1970s (specifically glass ornaments and related items); and more.

Museum staff will be available to scan photos and documents, or photograph objects and people, with the permission of the owner, for potential new exhibits or collections. If you do not have any items that could be applicable but still wish to support the museums, the public is welcome to make monetary donations towards exhibits or other museum programs either in person or online at: friendsmuseum-store.square.site.

For more information, visit facebook.com/SCIMuseum and click on events. Or contact Christina Barbour, St. Clement's Island Museum Manager at (301) 769-2222 or Ken Burke, Piney Point Lighthouse Museum Manager at (301) 994-1471.

St. Mary's Ryken Basketball Player Scores 1,000th Point



Honor Roll student, Mekhia Chase of St. Mary's Ryken scored her 1,000th point January 27 against Good Counsel

Patuxent Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation

invites you to join us at

**Mechanicsville Social Hall
28165 Hills Club Rd
Mechanicsville, MD 20659**

As we host our

Annual Hunting Heritage Banquet



NATIONAL WILD TURKEY FEDERATION
50TH ANNIVERSARY

Saturday, February 25th, 2023

Doors open: 4:00 p.m.

Dinner: 5:30 p.m.

Your early registration will be a great help to us in planning our event. It will speed up the entry process at the door and qualify you for our
- EARLY BIRD SPECIAL -

Early registration cutoff date is Friday, Feb. 17th, 2023

Register online at <https://events.nwtf.org/203420-2023>

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Collaboration Provides Medical Respite Services for Homeless

A collaborative effort by Three Oaks Center, MedStar St. Mary's Hospital, St. Mary's County Department of Social Services, and St. Mary's County Health Department (SMCHD) is providing medical respite services to residents who are homeless. Participants in the medical respite program have ongoing medical needs after being discharged from the hospital. They receive care coordination and temporary sheltering at Three Oaks Center in order to facilitate the medical services they need post-hospital discharge. During this time, public agencies and community organizations work together to help resolve some of the other factors contributing to the person's homelessness. Participants are also able to take advantage of services now offered through the nearby St. Mary's County Health Hub.

"The St. Mary's County Department of Social Services (DSS) is the county's single point of entry for homeless services and is a key partner in the Medical Respite Program. Caring for those without stable housing often involves assisting with the non-medical situations in their lives," said Alexis Zoss, the Department of Social Services' Director. "Our DSS team provides case management as well as facilitation of a multi-disciplinary process to help resolve the complex social issues which affect these patients."

"The collaboration we have built through the St. Mary's County Health Hub is extending beyond walls to address the

medical needs of persons experiencing homelessness in our community," said Dr. Meena Brewster, St. Mary's County Health Officer. "This multi-partner effort is a great example of our St. Mary's County community coming together to take care of our neighbors in need."

"The partnerships we have established and continue to nurture are the foundation we rely on to ensure the most vulnerable members of our community receive care with dignity," said Sasha Seenath, Executive Director at Three Oaks Center. "Three Oaks Center's Medical Respite Program cares for the homeless while they recover in a safe and healthy environment. Our goal is not to send individuals back into homelessness but to a stable housing environment. Together with the St. Mary's Health Hub and other partners, we work on bridging gaps to support those without a home while promoting a healthier community."

"Without a safe place for them to go, these patients most likely would return to our hospital for readmission sicker than when they left due to lack of care," said Brenda Wolcott, MPH, director of MedStar St. Mary's Hospitals' Population & Community Health Department. "These individuals are very grateful and appreciative of this program. It really is a community lift for many of these patients."

For more information about services provided at the St. Mary's County Health Hub, visit smchd.org/hub.

Leonardtwn Lions Support St. Mary's County Shoe Fund



Kate Eggert Weaver, (center) Supervisor of Student Services with the St. Mary's County Public Schools (SMCPS), accepts annual **SHOE FUND** donations from the Leonardtown Lions Club. Presenting the check are (L) Lion Glenn Richards, and (R) Lion George Kirby, both former educators with the S.M.C.P.S. The St. Mary's County Shoe Fund is only funded by generous donations from the community. 100% of the funds donated to the **SHOE FUND** are used to provide shoes for eligible youth whose families have limited resources. If you are

interested in more information about the Shoe Fund or you would like to contribute to this fund, please contact the Department of Student Services of St. Mary's County Public Schools at 301-475-5511, extension 32150. Contributions can be donated online at SMCPS or mailed to St. Mary's County Public Schools' Shoe Fund, 23160 Moakley Street, Suite 104, Leonardtown, Maryland 20650. Checks should be made payable to St. Mary's County Public Schools Shoe Fund. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Progress on L'Town Alley

Leonardtwn recently completed more work on the L'Town Alley project that seeks to make a community event space behind the Duke Building just off the town square.

Town Administrator Laschelle McKay said the paver stones are in addition to four new murals revealed late last year that make the area more attractive for events; also the

space helps ensure that the town square does not have to be closed down as much.

Stepping Stone is the local installer laying the pavers and Paverart out of New Jersey made the logo. Both contractors were the ones who installed and made the compass rose at Leonardtown Wharf.



Before



In progress



After

FINANCIAL FOCUS

Can you benefit from new RMD age limit?

When you're working, you may spend decades contributing to retirement accounts such as your 401(k) and IRA. Once you're retired, though, you'll likely need to begin withdrawing from these accounts to help pay for your living expenses. In fact, you'll be required to take money from them at a certain age — but that age requirement is changing, and it could lead to changes in your financial strategy.

Let's look at some background behind this development. You put in pre-tax dollars to a traditional IRA and 401(k), so your contributions can lower your taxable income and your earnings can grow on a tax-deferred basis. Eventually, though, you must take withdrawals from these accounts or face tax penalties. (A Roth IRA does not have the withdrawal requirement; you can essentially keep the money intact as long as you choose.) As part of the SECURE Act 2.0 of 2022, the age at which you must take these withdrawals — technically called required minimum distributions, or RMDs — has increased from 72 to 73. So, if you turn 72 in 2023, you now have another year before you're required to take RMDs.

The SECURE Act 2.0 also mandates that, in 2033, the RMD age will increase again — to 75 — so, depending on your current age, you may have even more time to plan for the effects of RMDs. Of course, you may need to start taking withdrawals from your retirement accounts before you reach either RMD age — 73 or 75 — so the additional time may not mean much to you. But if you can afford to wait until you must start taking RMDs, what issues should you consider?

Perhaps the most important one is taxes. Your RMDs, which are based on your life expectancy and account balances, are considered taxable income in the year in which you accept the money. If you have sizable amounts in your traditional IRA and 401(k), these RMDs could be large enough to bump you into a higher tax bracket, leading to greater taxation of Social Security benefits and a Medicare surcharge. So, the ability to delay taking RMDs can be beneficial from a tax standpoint, at least for a time. On the other hand, by delaying RMDs, you might eventually have to take bigger taxable withdrawals from your accounts that may have larger balances because they've had more time to potentially grow.

You could address the issue of taxable withdrawals by converting your traditional IRA to a Roth IRA before you're faced with RMDs — and now, you have more time to do so. Roth IRAs have no RMDs, and since a Roth IRA is funded with after-tax dollars, your withdrawals are tax free, provided you don't begin taking them until you're at least 59½ and you've had your account at least five years. Again, though, taxes are the issue — any pre-tax dollars you convert from a traditional IRA to a Roth IRA will be taxable in the year of the conversion. To reduce this tax hit, you could space out the conversion over several years.

When thinking about delaying RMDs or doing a Roth IRA conversion to avoid RMDs, you'll need to consult with your tax advisor. But the new RMD age limits do give you more flexibility in these areas, so think carefully about how you might benefit from the added time.

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



Letters to the Editor

Todd Morgan and the YMCA

It is disingenuous for anyone to suggest that I am opposed to the YMCA and that I do not care about the Lexington Park community. I was elected Commissioner from this district for 3 terms. During my 12 years as Commissioner, I supported the investment of over \$70 million into Lexington Park. No other area in the county received such an investment.

The YMCA project was initially proposed to the Commissioners as a county-run Community Center. As Commissioner I voted to support the Community Youth Mapping Project. I was skeptical. But, after reviewing the data and talking to citizens, I agreed to a County Run Lexington Park Community Center.

Over time, this concept morphed into a county funded YMCA as part of the

YMCA of the Chesapeake. This is a sticking point for me. All of the YMCAs on the Eastern Shore have been funded with private money/resources. The citizens of St. Mary's County are committing to invest \$15 million of the \$21 Million project which will be a privately run and managed facility. The YMCA is required to raise only \$4 million.

I believe it is important for the YMCA to show its commitment to Lexington Park by demonstrating its ability to raise \$4 million prior to the County committing its \$15 million. This was my view as a Commissioner and remains my view as a Delegate. My position has been consistent.

Respectfully,
Todd B. Morgan

Thanks from Shop with a Cop

Shop With A Cop, Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. It was chartered to assist children whose families are having economic hardships. Each child is teamed up with a police officer for the day with the intent of providing a positive experience dealing with members of law enforcement while having a memorable shopping experience before Christmas and before their return to school in the fall.

We would like to once again thank all of the police officers, Optimist Clubs and community members who support this youth program. The 100+ children who were able to participate in this past year of 2022 and the community are very appreciative.

Also, a very special thanks to the many anonymous cash contributors and the below listed businesses and patrons for their contributions. This community generosity has allowed the Shop With A Cop, Inc. program to continue through 19 years of operation. We look forward to 2023 which will mark the 20th anniversary of this successful community program.

Walmart California MD, Mission BBQ of California MD, St. Mary's Church of Christ, California MD, Leonardtown Lions Club Charitable Foundation Inc., Republican Women of St. Mary's, Frontstream SPV LLC, Vincent & Patricia Roche, Jeffrey & Gloria Turbyne, Quality Built Homes Inc., David & Luann Smouse, Guy Distribution

Co., Inc., Mary Ann & Raymond Thompson, David & Nicole Herrington, Vincent Enterprises LTD, Ronald & Shirley Shoop, Sierra Management & Technologies, Inc., John & Linda Wharton, Victoria & Daniel Alioto, Christine & Charles Kohls, James & Myrtle McWilliams, Hickory Hills East, LLC, J. F. Taylor, Inc., Frances Titus, Marlo & Ronald McGee, The Optimist Club of St. Maries, Ripple Brothers Contractors, Inc., Jahn Corporation, Loyal Order of Moose - Mechanicsville Lodge 496, George & Barbara Brstilo, SMECO, William & Kathleen Kurtz, Nancy Jensen Wiedner, John , Payne, ACE Group Foundation Inc., First Saints Community Church St. Paul's United Methodist Women, Bill Mattingly, Myrtle & James McWilliams, Amanda & David Koenig, Optimist Club of the 7th District, John & Ann Richards, Virginia O. Woods, Blue Knights Motorcycle - Club MD IV, Sean Powell, M. Robinson, St. Mary's Council No 1470 Knights of Columbus, Inc., Philip Holzbauer and Mattingly-Gardiner Funeral Home.

Donations are greatly appreciated and can be made to Shop With A Cop, Inc., P.O. Box 2336, Leonardtown, MD 20650 or by using the below VENMO link

Lorraine (Bunny) Brewer,
Chaptico, Maryland
Treasurer, Shop With A Cop, Inc.

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

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

County Times
St. Mary's County • Calvert County

Notice is hereby given that the following vessel(s) has apparently been abandoned for more than 60 days on the private marina/property of: Point Lookout Marina, LLC., 16244 Millers Wharf Road, Ridge, MD 20680, 301-872-5000.

The vessels are described as:

1. MD 9394 DC
HULL # NCZ26751G874
1974 Cambridge White Hull
Name "Annie Bo"
2. MD 3966 BV
HULL # XYM37656M82E
1982 Irwin White Hull
Name "Aldebaran"

Application for title will be made in accordance with Section 8-722 of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Natural Resources Article if vessels are not claimed within 30 days of this publication date.

ST. MARY'S SHERIFF'S CRIME BLOTTER

Lexington Park Man Arrested for Illegal Possession of Firearms



Devin Bryan

Donald Bryan

A 19-year-old Lexington Park man was arrested by St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office detectives on Thursday for CDS Possession with Intent to Distribute and two counts of Possession of a Firearm by a Minor.

On Thursday, Feb. 2, 2023, the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations Division executed a residential search and seizure warrant at the 46000 block of Yorktown Road in Lexington Park. During the search, officers located a Taurus 9-mm handgun and a Rugar 5.7-caliber handgun in the bedroom of Devin Maurice Bryan,

age 19 of Lexington Park. Also located in the same bedroom was a large quantity of suspected marijuana, totaling more than 11 ounces, as well as CDS packaging material and digital scales.

Devin Bryan is prohibited from possession of regulated firearms due to his age. He was charged with CDS Possession with Intent to Distribute Cannabis, CDS Possession of Cannabis Over Civil Use and two counts of Possession of a Firearm by a Minor.

Detectives also had a search and seizure warrant for Donald Lewis Bryan, age 44 of Lexington Park. Located on his person was a dollar bill, which contained a white powder, suspect to be cocaine. Donald Bryan was charged with CDS Possession: Cocaine.

Both Devin Bryan and Donald Bryan were transported to the St. Mary's County Detention and Rehabilitation Center in Leonardtown. Devin Bryan is being held without bond, while Donald Bryan was released today on personal recognizance.

Narcotics Arrest



Dimitri Brooks

On Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2023, detectives from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Vice/Narcotics Unit, with the assistance of the Patrol Division, Emergency Services Team and K-9 Unit, executed search and seizure warrants at the 46000 block of Sue Drive in Lexington Park, as part of an ongoing narcotics distribution investigation.

The residence has been identified as being occupied and used as a CDS distribution location by Dimitri Paul Brooks, age 27 of Lexington Park.

A search of Brooks' residence located a significant quantity of crack cocaine, a quantity of Fentanyl, a loaded Ruger Secu-

rity 9-mm handgun, US currency, a digital scale and various packing/production materials. Brooks is prohibited from possessing a firearm due to previous criminal convictions.

Brooks was located in the area and taken into custody without incident. Brooks was served with multiple outstanding arrest warrants for failure to appear on CDS Possession and Violation of a Protective Order and also charged with: CDS Possession with Intent to Distribute Narcotics; Possession of a Firearm with Nexus to Drug Trafficking Crime; CDS Possession: Not Cannabis; Illegal Possession of a Regulated Firearm and Illegal Possession of Ammo.

Brooks was transported to the St. Mary's County Detention and Rehabilitation Center in Leonardtown, where he was released by a court commissioner on personal bond on Feb. 1.

Wanted: Shawn Michael Miles



Shawn Miles

The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office is seeking the whereabouts of Shawn Michael Miles, age 31 of no fixed address, who is wanted for Second-Degree Escape. Miles failed to report to the St. Mary's County Detention and Rehabilitation Center last week to serve his sentence for trespassing on private property. Miles is known to frequent

the Lexington Park and Great Mills area.

Anyone with information on Miles' whereabouts is asked to contact Detective Joseph Bowling at 301-475-4200, ext. 71959 or email joseph.bowling@stmary-countymd.gov.

Citizens may remain anonymous and contact Crime Solvers at 301-475-3333, or text a tip to "TIP239" plus their message to "CRIMES" (274637). Through the Crime Solvers Program tipsters are eligible for an award of up to \$1,000 for information about a crime in St. Mary's County that leads to an arrest or indictment.

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NYC Housing Exec to Lead St. Mary's Housing Authority



The Housing Authority of St. Mary's County (HASMC) announces Simone Ross, MPA as the new Executive Director for the organization. Ross comes to HASMC with more than 20 years of housing, medical, and mental health experience.

"It is an honor and a privilege to serve as the second Executive Director in the history of this organization," Ross shared. "The sands of housing are shifting in St. Mary's County, and I am excited to roll my sleeves up and get to work!"

Ross previously served as the Director of the Tenant Interim Lease Program and Acting Assistant Commissioner of Co-op Readiness and Technical Services for the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development. In this role, she oversaw 99 buildings, 87 tenant associations, and 1,523 residential and

commercial units. Ross has also managed multiple supportive housing programs, Department of Human Services contracted shelters, affordable housing projects, scatter site programs, and other human service initiatives.

"Access to housing and preservation of sustainable communities is essential," said Commissioner President, James Randy Guy. "On behalf of the Commissioners and county government, I am pleased to welcome Ms. Ross to St. Mary's. We look forward to working with her and are confident her experience will benefit the Housing Authority and our residents."

Following the retirement of long-time HASMC Executive Director, Dennis Nicholson, the organization launched an exhaustive and competitive nationwide search.

"We are so pleased to welcome Simone to St. Mary's County. Simone brings the energy, enthusiasm, and experience that this job demands," remarked Tina Dean, HASMC Chair.

Ross holds a master's in public administration from Metropolitan College of New York. In 2019 she received the City Council Citation for Philanthropy and Community Service from Councilmember Farah Louis as well as the Brooklyn Borough President Citation for Housing and Community Development from now NYC Mayor, Eric Adams. She also received the Women's Empowerment award that same year.

Arthur Shepherd Returns as Rec & Parks Director



The Commissioners of St. Mary's County are pleased to announce that Arthur Shepherd will return full-time to the position of Director for the St. Mary's County Department of Recreation & Parks.

"Mr. Shepherd has done a tremendous job leading our Recreation and Parks Department," said Commissioner President Randy Guy. "His commitment to our community is evident, and we couldn't be happier that he has decided to stay on with us and return to full time in this role."

Mr. Shepherd has been with Recreation & Parks since 1978, serving as a Coordinator, Recreation Division Manager, and Director. During that time, he has overseen many key initiatives for the Department, to include the opening of Snow Hill Park, the Wellness & Aquatics Center, Lexington Manor Passive Park, and the Old Jail & Museum as a local visitor center and historical site. Mr. Shepherd also managed extensive athletic field improvements, including the construction of six synthetic turf fields, as well as major improvements to the Wicomico Shores Golf Course. He led the Recreation & Parks team through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as through the application process for national accreditation. In 2022 St. Mary's County Recreation & Parks joined the ranks of elite park and recre-

ation agencies across the country by earning accreditation through the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies.

"Receiving national accreditation in September of 2022 confirms that St. Mary's County Recreation and Parks is driven towards excellence," said Shepherd. "I look forward to our continued progress, working in partnership with the County Commissioners, the talented Rec & Parks team, the invaluable work of our volunteers, and the input of county citizens."

For more information on St. Mary's County Recreation & Parks, please visit: stmaryscountymd.gov/recreate.

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have demonstrated outstanding efforts to improve our environment. Recognition may be granted for voluntary initiatives, projects or for efforts exceeding regulatory requirements within the calendar year (Jan-Dec 2022).

Visit <https://www.stmarysmd.com/pio/docs/2023-015COENominations.pdf> to download the nomination form. Deadline is 28 February!



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PATUXENT RIVER NAVAL AIR STATION *News*

V-22 Joint Program Issues Bulletin to Restrict Flights



Based on the recommendation from the V-22 Joint Program Office, the U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Air Force Special Operations Command and U.S. Navy issued a time limit, via fleet bulletin, on the V-22 Input

Quill Assembly, effective Feb. 3, 2023.

The imposed time limit will restrict flight on a subset of V-22s until the Input Quill Assembly is replaced. The Input Quill Assembly is an element of the proprotor

gearbox, which houses the aircraft clutch.

This recommendation is based on a progressive increase in Hard Clutch Engagement events and ongoing engineering analysis.

A Hard Clutch Engagement event occurs when the clutch, driven by the engine, releases from the rotor system and suddenly reengages, sending an impulse through the drive train, potentially causing damage.

In order to ensure the continued safety of the aircrew, the services took decisive action to implement the bulletin.

The fleet bulletin identifies aircraft with Input Quill Assemblies above a pre-determined flight-hour threshold and the requirement to replace that component. Once replaced, the aircraft will return to flight status.

The services previously implemented in-flight and ground training mitigations. Examples include:

Supplying interim flight guidance to

the fleet designed to minimize exposure to a hard clutch engagement, highlighting existing emergency procedures

Modified Hard Clutch Engagement scenarios were added during simulator training.

Due to operational security concerns, the specific Input Quill Assembly flight-hour threshold and number of aircraft affected will not be released.

The joint program office is exploring 24 initiatives, such as data mining, laboratory and flight testing and hardware redesign, that fall along 4 lines of effort (analyze, identify, mitigate, eliminate). These efforts provide the information required to inform short-, mid- and long-term solutions. It was a result of these efforts that we identified and implemented the time limit for the Input Quill Assembly. We will use relevant findings to continually improve the safety of the V-22.

Navy Partners with Japan to Deliver JPALS Equipment

The U.S. Navy, in partnership with Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) representatives, awarded an \$8.6 million foreign military sale in December 2022 to Raytheon Intelligence & Space for the procurement and delivery of a Joint Precision Approach and Landing System (JPALS) unit.

The Naval Air Traffic Management Systems Program Office (PMA-213) worked closely with the vendor and the international customer to leverage existing contract options to bring this cutting-edge technology to the JMSDF.

“The urgency with which this contract was completed is a testament to our commitment to closely collaborate with our JMSDF partners, which is critical to the 2022 National Defense Strategy call to bolster robust deterrence in the INDO-PACOM [Indo-Pacific Command].” said Cmdr. Charles Steele, PMA-213 JPALS deputy program manager (DPM).

JPALS, which is a software-based, high-integrity differential GPS navigation and precision landing system, ensures

enhanced safety and increased operational capability to equipped aircraft. JPALS enables aircraft to approach and land on ships at sea while operating in all-weather conditions and is integrated on the F-35.

PMA-213 International Programs DPM, Casey Edinger said, “JPALS is a critical enabler of enhanced F-35B Joint Strike Fighter landing capabilities for coalition partners. Japan’s acquisition of JPALS significantly enhances and furthers their modernization goals, operational readiness, force projection, and PACOM [Pacific Command] interoperability operations. In addition, the execution of this Japanese foreign military sale (FMS) case and the subsequent award to Raytheon demonstrates U.S. Navy and Raytheon’s dedication to supporting Japan’s commitment to joint coalition force operations and interoperability.”

JPALS is currently being deployed on all U.S. Navy aircraft carriers and amphibious assault ships. Japan joins the United Kingdom and Italy to procure JPALS, which is currently deployed on the U.K.



Royal Navy’s HMS Queen Elizabeth, and the Italian Navy’s ITS Cavour. JPALS is scheduled to be deployed on the JMSDF’s JS Izumo in 2024.

JPALS has been supporting F-35B deployments on U.S. Navy LH-class amphibious assault ships since 2016 and F-35C deployments on U.S. Navy aircraft

carriers since 2021.

“Leveraging existing production capabilities and historical cost/technical data optimized the use of diminishing supply sources, prevented significant price increases, and avoided any deployment schedule impacts,” said John Britt, PMA-213 procuring contracting officer.

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Schwartz Returns Home After Surgery, BMX Wreck



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Mike Schwartz, owner of Mike's Bike's returned home last week after being in intensive care in a Virginia hospital after suffering back and neck injuries in a bicycle motocross race.

"I am back at the shop moving extremely slow," Schwartz told his followers on social media. "Just a quick shout out to all of the great people who are supporting me. I am truly overwhelmed; I had no idea, Thank you all."

Schwartz broke both his neck and back in the crash in Lexington Va. at the USA BMX Blue Ridge National Race Jan. 27.

His injuries required surgery and he will have to endure a lengthy recovery period.

Though he has to wear a neck brace for the time being, Schwartz is happy and grateful to be able to walk after what could have been a life-ending crash.

"I very easily could've died," Schwartz told The County Times. "And I probably

should've been paralyzed."

He praised his surgeon and the other medical professionals for not only saving his life but making sure he could continue walking.

"These people did it right," Schwartz said. "I essentially destroyed the tendons and ligaments that hold head as well as breaking my neck.

"I'm extremely happy to be walking and breathing."

Schwartz said was surprised by all of the community support that has come his way and at the GoFundMe page that has raised money to pay for his medical bills.

"I never imagined this would happen," Schwartz said. "If I'd have known it was going to be like this, I'd have broken my neck a long time ago.

"The outpouring of support for me has been mindboggling and humbling."

Schwartz said he is able to drive, walk on his own and squat to pick up items off the floor as long as he avoids bending over.

"I'm feeling pretty good," Schwartz said. "I'm structurally sound."

Schwartz is perhaps best known for his ongoing donation drives to benefit community members, particularly those who are less fortunate or have suffered a serious mishap.

His annual Christmas Turkey drive has delivered thousands of turkeys and side dishes to residents every holiday season for the past 40 years.

Schwartz operated the drive for years in gratitude to a community that came together to aid him when a fire destroyed his home and left him displaced decades ago.

A GoFundMe page has been established on-line to collect donations to help pay for Schwartz's medical bills, which are expected to be extensive.

So far the fundraising drive has collected just under \$25,000, surpassing the goal of \$20,000.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

County Government Operations for Presidents Day

All St. Mary's County Government (SMCG) administrative offices will be closed on Monday, February 20, 2023, in observance of the Presidents Day holiday. Offices will resume normal operating schedules on Tuesday, February 21, 2023.

The February 20 closure also includes:

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

The following SMCG operations will be open on February 20:

- The six Convenience Centers and the St. Andrews Landfill (regular hours)
- Department of Recreation & Parks school programs and facilities (regular hours)
- The St. Clements Island Museum, Piney Point Lighthouse Museum, and the Old Jail Museum (open for visitors from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.)
- The Wicomico Shores Golf Course (open 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.); the River-view Restaurant (open 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.)

For more information on SMCG programs and operations, please visit: stmaryscountymd.gov.

SMCM Board of Trustees Maintain Flat Tuition Rate

The St. Mary's College Board of Trustees approved tuition and fees for the 2023-2024 academic year in their meeting on Saturday, February 4, maintaining a fourth consecutive year of no increase in tuition. The Board also received an update on the progress of the College's strategic plan, as well as news that Moody's Investors Service has maintained the College's A2: Stable credit rating.

"The Board's actions today affirmed and reinforced the positive trajectory St. Mary's College has been on for the past several years," said Susan Lawrence Dyer, chair of the Board of Trustees. "The Board was particularly pleased to be able to continue with our Long-Range Tuition Strategy, adopted last spring, in our efforts to give students and their families an affordable education."

Tuition & Fees

The Board approved tuition and fee rates for 2023-2024, notably continuing a freeze on tuition in all categories for the fourth consecutive year. Rates for mandatory fees and room charges will increase by a modest 2%, while board (dining) rates will rise by 4% due to inflation and personnel costs.

"St. Mary's College of Maryland is committed to providing an honors-level liberal

arts education that is both accessible and affordable," said President Tuajuanda C. Jordan, PhD. "To demonstrate this commitment, for the fourth consecutive year, we recommended, and the Board of Trustees has approved a zero percent increase to student tuition rates for academic year 2023-2024."

The Board also approved recommendations from the Finance, Investment, and Audit Committee to revise the FY23 Plant Budget to a total of \$1.983 million, incorporating additional funding for two additional capital projects. The throwing sports field at Jamie L. Roberts Stadium and design costs for the marine science lab in Schaefer Hall will be funded by a combination of private donations and bond proceeds.

In maintaining the College's A2: Stable credit Rating, Moody's Investors Service noted the College's strong support from the State of Maryland, its stable enrollment levels, and good financial strategy and conservative budgeting.

Strategic Plan

The Board also received an update from President Jordan and the Strategic Plan Steering Committee on the progress of the strategic plan. After the Board's approval

of the strategic plan pillars and timeline in September 2022, the College appointed workgroups for each pillar and a Strategic Plan Steering Committee to oversee and coordinate their efforts. A facilitator met with the campus community in October and with workgroups as they engaged in background work. In December, the workgroups provided initial drafts goals to the steering committee, and brought revised goals to the campus and local community through a series of open forums held in January.

With feedback provided by the Board at the February 4 meeting, the steering committee and workgroups will finalize the goals through continued engagement with stakeholders, with a goal of being able to present a final plan to the Board at the May 2023 meeting.

New Appointment

The board also acknowledged Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty Katherine Gantz, PhD. Gantz was appointed to the role in January after previously serving as interim provost and vice president of academic affairs.

The Board's next meeting will be Friday, May 12, 2023.

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Sharp Blades, Fun Times



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Distance, timing and letting the axe do the work. That's the key to successfully throwing an axe and sinking it into a wooden target every time, so says the crew at Viking Axe Throwing, one of the newest additions to Shepherd's Old Field Market in Leonardtown.

Set outside just a few yards from the Brudergarten pub sit rows of target bays where visitors of all ages can come in, pay their money and hurl axes, throwing knives and even shoot arrows to their hearts' content.

Kraig and Cori Eriksen, owners of Viking Axe Throwing, say they started the spot as a hobby, selling some homemade knives and axes and giving people something fun to do afterwork and on weekends.

They say they never thought it would morph into something big enough for them to quit their jobs and grow it into a full-time entertainment business with employees.

This past weekend they were busy hosting a birthday party for young children complete with their parents getting in on

the fun of hurling and thinking axes into the targets just a few feet away.

The weather was cold but that doesn't stop people from renting time on the bays to test their hand.

"People are still coming in," Coni said. "They just bundle up."

Coni watches over customers, ensuring their experience is a smooth one while Kraig, who is directly descended from Norwegians, themselves descended from the Vikings of old, is busy teaching people the basics of axe throwing and ensuring the tools of the trade are being handled safely.

"I don't leave them until they're sinking axes in," Kraig said of the ease with which the tools can be

thrown accurately.

Destiny Mellen, one of their employees and a top-tier axe thrower in league competitions they have there, said throwing axes is not a strength game.

Being petite and standing a little over 5-foot tall, Mellen throws the axes — normally the size of camp hatchets or tomahawks — and routinely chunks the axes home accurately.

Throwers play against each other in bracketed league tournaments until the first player reaches 21 points.

This is harder than it seems, since the bullseye of the target is five points; an accurate thrower who hits the bullseye in five throws consecutively will breach the 21-point limit and have to go back to 17 points, Mellen said.

That gives their opponent that much more opportunity to reach 21 without going over; it's a lot like playing blackjack only your casino is a set of separated throwing bays with fencing wire on top to prevent any projectile mishaps.

Players who breach the 21-point limit again have their scores drop back down

to zero.

The beauty of the game, they say, is that the focus required to sink the axe into the target helps to push any other concerns or worries away.

The relaxation — and the fun — just seems to happen.

Kraig said he started throwing all kinds of projectiles when he was a kid; now he's teaching others to do it for fun, too.

"I was tearing up the house when I was a kid," Kraig said. "My grandmother was old school, she taught me how to throw knives and axes."

The sport with a sharp edge has "100 percent" helped him to focus in his adult life, Kraig, who has struggled with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, explained.

Now, Viking Axe Throwing even has parties especially designed for special needs children, he said.

"I want us to grow to a kids' league and a kids' club," Kraig continued.

Axe throwing also helps kids stay active and engaged in the outdoors.

"A lot of kids who don't like sports like this," Cori said.

The Eriksens and their employees often have up to 60 people at a time throwing during the week but their team building parties can be much larger.

They recently had a program office from Patuxent River Naval Air Station hold an event with them and 200 people came, with 80 of them actively throwing blades, they said.

The Eriksens also have a mobile unit for axe throwing — with a completely enclosed bay — for parties and other events outside their headquarters at the SOF Market.

There are now five leagues that play regularly at Viking Axe Throwing and they have some pretty colorful names such as "Axes of Evil" — that's Kraig's team — and "Low Axepectations."

Their aspirations don't end there, they want to eventually build a "rage room" or "smash house" where clients can come in and destroy various items in a safe space to get out their frustrations.

Viking Axe Throwing can provide the tools for the task or clients can bring in approved items to do the job, they said.

Targets of catharsis could include old televisions, appliances and even vegetables, they said.

Though they've been operating for just about a year, their grand opening was just in September, they said, and the whole operation has been built from the ground up; Kraig worked in construction recently but before that was in the Navy serving on the deck of aircraft carriers.

Cori has spent much of her career in the hospitality industry managing bars and restaurant operations.

Their expertise combines to make Viking Axe Throwing a reality.

"We didn't think it would work out," Kraig said "But we're doing it."

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County Outpacing State in New English, Math Assessments

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Results are back from the spring of 2022 when county public school students took the first official Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP) tests for English language arts and math and the county appears to be performing at a slightly higher level on average than the rest of the state.

The St. Mary's County Board of Education was briefed on the latest test results at their Feb. 8 meeting in Leonardtown.

Tammy Burr, supervisor of assessments, said there are four categories of student achievement: from distinguished, proficient, developing and beginning noted by a numerical score of 4 descending to 1.

The data shows that 44 percent of county 3rd, 4th and 5th graders scored a proficient grade in English language arts compared to 39 percent for the same three grades at the state average.

Just five percent of those three grade levels scored in the distinguished category while 10 percent were in the beginning level of achievement, the data showed.

The data improved in English testing for middle school grades with 47 percent of 6th, 7th and 8th graders scoring proficient while the state average for those grades

was 40 percent.

Still, just five percent of county middle schoolers were distinguished English learners and 10 percent were in the beginning level of achievement.

At the high school level 50 percent of county students were proficient with 10 percent distinguished in language arts; 35 percent were at the developing level, the data showed.

That test was administered to 10th grade students only.

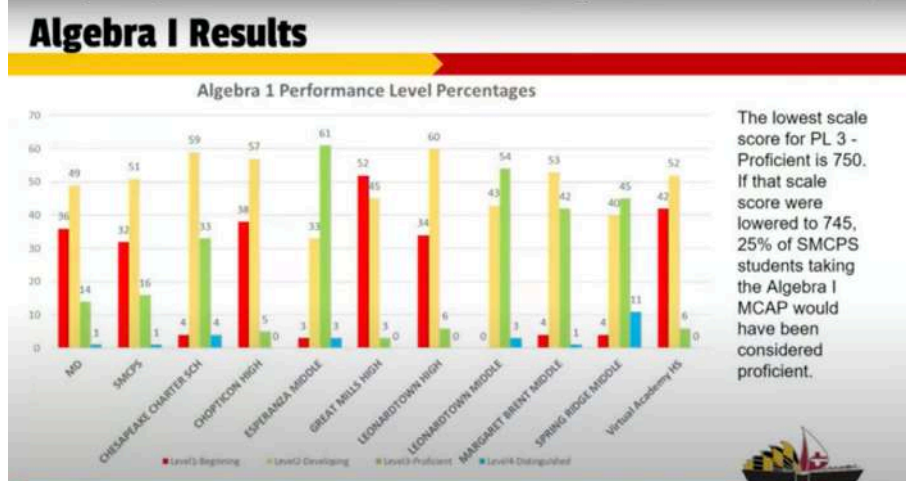
When it came to math elementary school grades fared better than the state average with 33 percent proficient: there was six percentage points difference over the state figures.

Just three percent of elementary school students were distinguished learners in math while 20 percent were still in the beginning phase.

Middle school students scored much higher on average than their state counterparts at 22 percent proficient versus just 12 percent, though only two percent at the county level proved distinguished.

The performance on the algebra 1 assessment, which encompasses both high school students and some of the "most skilled and talented" learners from middle school made for some mixed results.

Middle schools such as Esperanza mid-



dle showed 61 percent of their students scoring proficiently while just six percent scored the same level at Leonardtown High School.

"That explains why the high school levels look like their struggling so much," Burr explained.

Still the county outperformed the state in algebra by a few percentage points.

"Please, stay with this test for 10 years," said Superintendent Dr. J. Scott Smith to the state Department of Education. "Give up 10 years with the exact same test.

"We would be able to see scores rise every year."

The MCAP is the latest is a series of assessments designed to gauge student achievement, but each test brings with it a readjustment and learning phase for students.

"The state of Maryland continues to modify its assessments year, after year, after year and then lament the fact that the data derived from it seems to show us struggling to make progress," Smith said.

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Bill Would Boost Golf Cart Use In St. Mary's



Del. Matt Morgan

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Del. Matt Morgan (R-Dist. 29A) has introduced a bill in the Maryland General Assembly that would confer upon the Commissioners of St. Mary's County the authority to grant the use of golf carts in certain communities.

"This bill is enabling legislation allowing the St. Mary's County Commissioners

to determine and designate areas and neighborhoods within our county that would be permissible to drive golf carts," Morgan said in a statement to constituents this week.

Several sessions ago in Annapolis legislation was finally passed that allowed golf carts to be driven on neighborhood roads in the Golden Beach community; this new bill follows the same frame work, Morgan said.

The bill would create an exception from the motor vehicle registration requirement for golf carts, according to the bill's summary on-line.

If the bill passes it would allow the county commissioners to designate any county-owned streets or roads for golf cart usage that have a speed limit of 35 miles an hour or less.

The bill also requires that golf carts only be operated between dawn or dusk and that they be driven as far to the right side of the roadway as possible.

An operator of a golf cart under the legislation also must have appropriate lighting affixed to the cart and possess a valid driver's license.

The bill's first hearing in the House of Delegates is scheduled for Feb. 16.

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County District Elections Bill Returns



Del. Brian Crosby

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Del. Brian Crosby (D-Dist. 29B) has reintroduced a bill that would fundamentally change the way St. Mary's County residents elect their commissioners, replacing the current plan where every resident casts

five votes for commissioners from four districts and one at-large president for residents only voting for the commissioner candidate running and residing in their own district and one county commissioner president.

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County have already voted to continue their opposition to the bill, which would put the future of county voting in the hands of delegates and senators from other counties.

No referendum has been set for the question of changing from at-large voting to district-only voting, despite calls to do so from the likes of Del. Matt Morgan (R-Dist. 29A)

HB 447 is up for its first hearing Feb. 14 in the House Ways and Means Committee; that is the same day as a budget work session of the county commissioners.

John Houser, deputy county attorney, told county commissioners that while the bill is meant specifically for St. Mary's County, it could have repercussions for counties which use the same election style.

Houser said neighboring Calvert County had yet to take a position on the bill but would debate it this week; Queen Anne's County was also considering its impacts.

Garrett County was actively opposing the measure.

Crosby also introduced a bond bill of his own drafting after aiding in the introduction of another bond bill in cooperation with Sen. Jack Bailey and Del. Matt Morgan and Del. Todd Morgan.

This bond bill seeks to give the commissioners bonding authority for \$56 million while the previous bond bill bifurcated the amount so that \$15 million for the construction of the YMCA planned for Great Mills Road nearest the public pool would be released contingent upon the YMCA of the Chesapeake raising \$4 million in private funds as agreed between the county and non-profit last year.

"What we have are two rival bond bills," said Commissioner Eric Colvin. "I haven't seen that in my short time here... it's very interesting, very strange."

Colvin said Crosby introduced his own bond authority bill without the knowledge of the other delegation members he had aided in sponsoring the first.

"It's disappointing to see our delegation not working together," Colvin said. "I'm not sure what's going on there."

But Commissioner Mike Hewitt said that Crosby's bond bill was much closer to what the commissioners had initially asked for.

"It's cleaner," Hewitt said "It's what

we're used to in county government when we ask for bonding authority — that we get bonding authority for the commissioners to decide how to use it."

In the past several weeks, activists who have long pushed for the YMCA public/private partnership have complained that bond bill that put conditions on the county's \$15 million unnecessarily endangers the project.

Delegates Matt Morgan and Todd Morgan argued that the conditions ensured that the taxpayers would not be left to fund the project if the YMCA did not keep its part of the deal.

In a message to constituents, Crosby said the bifurcated bonding bill "adds hurdles to a project that has been in the works for almost eight years."

"This is the first time the BOCC has ever had these types of requirements placed on a county project it approved," Crosby wrote. "Let's be clear: the restrictions were added because two delegates don't like this particular project."

"I feel strongly that the right thing to do is to support local government."

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Commissioners Briefed on Cannabis Reform Legislation

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Newly introduced legislation in the Maryland General Assembly could vastly increase the volume of legal cannabis available for sale by as much as a factor of five by broadening the market to recreational purchases rather than the much more strictly regulated medical variant, The Commissioners of St. Mary's County were told this week.

John Houser, deputy county attorney, reported the estimate of increasing marijuana as a function of the vastly increased cannabis infrastructure the legislation would allow for growing, processing and distribution.

Houser said that the legislation — HB 556 — allows for 175 growing operations, 200 processing operations and 500 dispensaries around Maryland.

The current allowable number under the medical marijuana licensing is 22 growers, 28 processors and just 102 dispensaries.

St. Mary's already has a massive 50,000-square foot indoor growing facility in Abell as well as a processing facility under construction on Mervell Dean Road in Hollywood.

A cannabis dispensary exists on Three Notch Road in Mechanicsville.

Houser said county legal staff are still searching through the legislation.

"We're still going through it to figure it out," Houser said.

What is known is the initial taxing plan for legalized recreational cannabis.

The legislation calls for a 6 percent sales tax for the first year on each sale; that increases one percent per year until the sales tax per purchase reaches 10 percent, Houser said.

The sales tax increase is being phased in gradually, he said, to help "squeeze out the gray-and-black-market supply," that would undercut the legitimate market's profits.

"It's to allow legal businesses to compete with what will still remain as illegal and unlicensed businesses," Houser said. "The state is mindful... there will still be 'your guy' on the corner or wherever who will have access to some product."

A revenue sharing provision exists in the proposed law; it would carve out 1.5 percent from all collected cannabis revenue and distribute that number to all municipalities and counties.

Those jurisdictions that have more distribution of marijuana will have a greater share of those proceeds, Houser said.

The county will have some ability to control and regulate recreational marijuana in all facilities, Houser said of the regulations proposed in the legislation, but not to a point that it "unduly burdens" the cannabis license.

"Do I have an idea what it means?" Houser said. "Not really."

"Your guess is as good as mine."

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Library Employees Ask for Salary Hikes

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic the St. Mary's County Library System is making a comeback, said director Michael Blackwell this week in a report to the Commissioners of St. Mary's County.

But the local system is in need of better compensation for employees, he said, as there has been about 40 percent turnover in library staff who are choosing to leave for better pay in neighboring jurisdictions such as Calvert and Charles counties.

"If you look at the exit interviews, they're glowing," Blackwell said. "People say they love working for the library...but they simply can't afford to stay given the salaries."

Blackwell asked for an additional \$1 million in funding for salaries, bringing the fiscal 2024 request for compensation to \$3.9 million.

Other problems have arisen, he said, including struggles to keep pace with electrical and heating costs and reduced programs to attract customers.

Costs for books and other materials are increasing as well.

Blackwell said the library's budget amounted to seven-tenths of one percent over the county's overall budget now, down from nine-tenths back in fiscal 2015.

The county library's budget is \$4.3 mil-

lion a year, compared to \$7.1 for Charles and \$6.6 million for Calvert, Blackwell said, though St. Mary's has a higher number of items in circulation at 445,756 for a six-month period compared to just 284,428 for Charles and 400,138 for Calvert.

"You're getting a bargain," Blackwell said of what the county was getting compared to what it was paying for in library services.

Blackwell explained that while the libraries receive about 80 percent of their funding from the county and 20 percent from the state, they are governed by the local Library Board of Trustees.

This group decides how to allocate the money to give them between operations and salaries.

"We're completely separate that way," Blackwell said.

Commissioner Scott Ostrow sought answers as to why the trustees had not increased salaries with the money given them.

"Has anyone gone back to the library board and asked why?" Ostrow said. "They're obviously the ones who write the checks." Blackwell said later: "It's difficult to give a raise if you don't have the money."

"You can't factor that in as a one-time expense, you have to factor that in over the years."

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CONTENTS

LOCAL NEWS	4	COMMUNITY	14
COPS & COURTS	12	OBITUARIES	17
LETTERS	13	CALENDARS	18

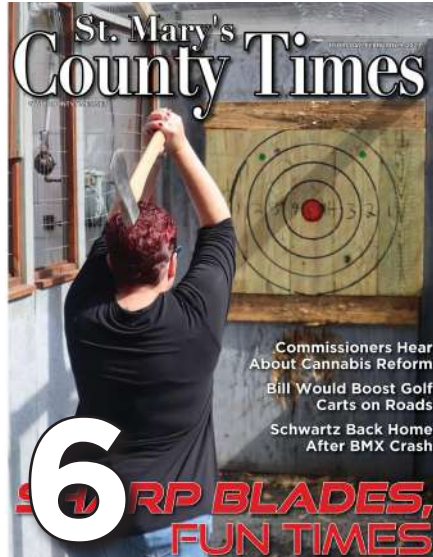
“I FEEL STRONGLY THAT THE RIGHT THING TO DO IS TO SUPPORT LOCAL GOVERNMENT.”
 DEL. BRIAN CROSBY ON HIS BOND BILL INCLUDING \$15 MILLION FOR YMCA



LOCAL 4
Commissioners hear about state-level cannabis reform



LOCAL 5
Delegate introduces county-wide golf car bill



ON THE COVER
 Viking Axe Throwing offers outdoor fun

Commissioners Hear About Cannabis Reform
 Bill Would Boost Golf Carts on Roads
 Schwartz Back Home After BMX Crash

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THU, FEB 9	FRI, FEB 10	SAT, FEB 11	SUN, FEB 12
Cloudy Hi: 63° Lo: 53°	Mostly Cloudy Hi: 59° Lo: 39°	Cloudy Hi: 46° Lo: 35°	Rain Hi: 44° Lo: 37°
MON, FEB 13	TUE, FEB 14	WED, FEB 15	THU, FEB 16
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