



CALVERTHEALTH 5K RUN/WALK

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Calvert County Times

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2023

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**Condos, Retail Coming
to Solomons**

**Lothian Grain Elevator
to Reopen**

**Fall/Winter Home &
Garden Guide Inside**

A SURVIVOR SHARES HER STORY



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“THE BENEFIT WOULD BE TO KEEPING THE HEART OF SOLOMON’S ISLAND ACTIVE...”

DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING CAROLYN SUNDERLAND ON REDEVELOPMENT PLAN.



LOCAL 4
Condos planned for Solomons Island











LOCAL 5
Grain elevator reopens



ON THE COVER
October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

WEEKLY FORECAST

<p>THU, OCT 12</p>  <p>Sunny Hi: 72° Lo: 52°</p>	<p>FRI, OCT 13</p>  <p>Sunny Hi: 68° Lo: 52°</p>	<p>SAT, OCT 14</p>  <p>Rain Hi: 65° Lo: 51°</p>	<p>SUN, OCT 15</p>  <p>AM Showers Hi: 58° Lo: 48°</p>
<p>MON, OCT 16</p>  <p>Mostly Cloudy Hi: 59° Lo: 48°</p>	<p>TUE, OCT 17</p>  <p>Partly Cloudy Hi: 60° Lo: 46°</p>	<p>WED, OCT 18</p>  <p>Partly Cloudy Hi: 62° Lo: 45°</p>	<p>THU, OCT 19</p>  <p>Mostly Sunny Hi: 64° Lo: 46°</p>

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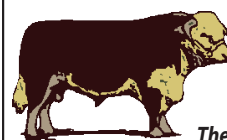
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<p style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 2px;">WINE • COLD BEER</p>	<p style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 2px;">LOCAL HONEY</p>
<p style="background-color: red; color: white; padding: 2px; text-align: center;">EXCHANGEABLE PROPANE TANKS</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">4300 HUNTING CREEK RD • HUNTINGTOWN, MARYLAND 410-535-1304 FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK 410-257-2222 MON-FRI 6 AM - 8 PM • SAT-SUN 7 AM - 9 PM</p>	

'That Mammogram Saved My Life'

CalvertHealth Foundation Member's Personal Story

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

When Denise Bowman joined the CalvertHealth Foundation Board of Directors she saw it as a way to give back to the community in which she and her family live.

The senior counsel with the Davis & Palumbo law firm in Prince Frederick said as to why she joined, "I was asked that question when I was interviewed for the board by the former chair. And my response at the time, unbeknownst to what I was going to go through, was, I live in Calvert County with my husband and my two children were born and raised here. My sister is my neighbor. Her son was born and raised here. My parents are our neighbors. My dad just recently passed, but my parents came to Calvert because all three of their children were living in Calvert. And my other sister lives around the corner from us in Huntingtown and she raised her son here in Calvert. And I felt that it was important to make sure that Calvert was a place where all of my family could go for good quality care."

She added, "I believed at the time CalvertHealth was providing good quality care. But I felt that hopefully everybody does some type of philanthropic activity. And I felt that this was one of the things that I could do that really assisted all of my family."

"In time, I think every single one of us had been there," she mused.

But little did she know that the fundraising work of the CalvertHealth Foundation would lead her down a very personal path. She was diagnosed with breast cancer.

"I think there's several parts of this conversation," she said. "One part is no matter where you go, you need to be comfortable that where you're going has the expertise, the quality, the safety for the treatment that you need. And when I was diagnosed with breast cancer, (Dr.) Ted Tsangaris, (Chief Medical Officer & Program Director, Cancer Center) who is the breast surgeon at Calvert Health, he's a great guy, I don't know how else to describe it. You can talk to the CEO and all the staff about this. He is a well-respected leader in breast cancer surgery."

She went on, "And when you have a caliber of that type of surgeon coming to CalvertHealth and bringing their expertise to CalvertHealth, that rises to the level that you are receiving quality, good care in your home community, and understanding that you can get quality, good cancer care in Calvert, and you don't have to drive, as one of my friends would say, she had to drive an hour to two hours just to get her treatment, fight traffic, fight parking, get in the building, then fight traffic on the way home, so that she could get to a place where she had to go. I was home. I was 10 minutes from my home. Just taking off that stress and burden, especially with somebody having chemotherapy, is huge. It's huge."

She noted, "I've had two diagnosis of breast cancer. My initial diagnosis of breast cancer was right at the beginning of Covid. So, it's when the world was shutting down."

That diagnosis was the result of a mammogram. "That mammogram saved my life and each mammogram that I've had after

that has saved my life. And I am going to tell you that if I could stand at the top of the world and scream, get your mammogram, I would do it."

This is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. She said, "When we talk about breast cancer awareness and we talk about treatment, the initial part of it is the diagnosis. And the diagnosis comes from self-exam, annual visits with your doctor, as well as the imaging that is helpful in detecting breast cancer. And there are so many women who fail to get that test or who fail to do the self-exam, the annual visits with their doctor."

"Even though that initial diagnosis was at the onset of the Covid pandemic, Bowman said, "They didn't miss a beat," adding, "having a community hospital, you don't have bureaucracy, you don't have that level of the decisionmakers are not in the building that you're walking into at CalvertHealth. The decision makers are right there."

She explained, "So my original diagnosis was confirmed from imaging. Then I had biopsies, which further confirmed it. I had a lumpectomy, chemo and radiation. All of my care was through CalvertHealth. Because of the type of breast cancer I have, there is a higher chance of recurrence. Two years later, an imaging scan, then a sonogram and a PET scan, all three combined, found another lump. And, because of its location and because of all kinds of other things, it was very difficult to ascertain. And through the combination of those tests, it was confirmed that there was another lump, Biopsies were done. It was confirmed that it was cancerous, and it was the same type of cancer. It was not a failure of any of the treatment I had before. This is something that was not unusual. I elected to again have all of my care at CalvertHealth because I was at home, and I felt comfortable with the quality and the care I had received before."

While other hospitals in the region have merged with larger entities, CalvertHealth has remained independent, which Bowman feels contributes to the quality of care.

By example, she said, "When I was heading into my first chemotherapy treatment, you're a little scared, you're a little nervous, no matter what the doctors say, and the oncologists say, and everybody says, you just don't quite know what to expect. And I was walking in there, and it was in the middle of Covid, so, spouses or guests didn't get to hold your hand and attend with you. And I was so relieved when I walked in for my first treatment, and somebody that I knew who I was friends with and had known for some time due to my daughter's friendship, was my nurse. And it felt so comforting. And what was amazing is that evening after my first treatment, I got a text from her, 'How you doing? You okay? Do you need anything?'"

When should women begin testing? She said, "I think insurance and other factors outside of the medical profession dictate when the appropriate ages for testing. Some suggest it's 50. I think that is way late. And the reason I say that is my eldest sister, who is my neighbor, was diagnosed with breast cancer at age 44. And I've had multiple friends that have been diagnosed with breast cancer prior to age 51. At age 41, at age 42."



Denise Bowman, breast cancer survivor

Lack of insurance of course could be a factor. But she said, "Number two is the misunderstanding of the significance of the test."

She added, "A lot of times they say family history is an indicator, but it's not always family history. It's very interesting. My breast cancer is extremely different than my sister's. So, family history had no play for purposes of my diagnosis and what treatment or when testing should have occurred for me."

"Every time a woman goes and gets a mammogram, there's a stress to it...are they going to find something? How is this going to change my life?" she admitted.

There's also the fear of chemotherapy. She said, "Each person responds to chemotherapy differently. Each person responds to radiation differently. Chemotherapy is long and hard, depending on the concoction that you're receiving and the duration and the amount that you're receiving. In radiation there can be side effects, from burning of the skin to rashes, to irritation. It's just exhausting. It, it's debilitating. It changes your life for a time period."

The loss of hair is not a minor issue, she said. "It's as bad as it sounds. It is losing your hair. In losing your hair you lose some of your identity."

About CalvertHealth's partnership with Duke University, she said, "I was extremely supportive in that partnership. I believe in that partnership. I think it's an integral part of Calvert Health cancer care program. You don't go to Duke, it's a partnership with Duke and what that partnership does is it provides expertise, data, information training protocols, you name it, all from Duke to Calvert Health."

The CalvertHealth Foundation has been instrumental in raising funds for the hospital's cancer center, and that's where that decision before her diagnosis to join the board becomes very personal. For instance, they are raising money for the hospital to purchase a DaVinci machine. "There's so many advantages to the DaVinci. You're getting better surgical procedures and surgical results from the DaVinci than you get from traditional surgery, provided the DaVinci can be used for that surgery. It is a robotics type of piece of equipment that is used for surgery. So better success, better surgery, quicker recovery."

But also, she said, "It attracts new young physicians, which is what we want to attract. So, if you look at the standard medical school preparation and those that

are in med school now, they are learning on the DaVincis, they are being trained on the DaVincis, their experience is on the DaVinci. They're not going to come to a local community hospital that doesn't have the equipment that they were trained on, or they would be less likely if they're being recruited or by some other hospital that has all of that equipment."

For the fundraising, she said, "It's not just the actual physical piece of equipment. Then you have to have the infrastructure for that piece of equipment. You have to modify the existing surgical facilities to accommodate the piece of equipment."

The foundation is holding a benefit 5K in Solomons this Saturday (Oct. 14). Bowman explained, "You go to your normal doctor, you get your imaging, whatever that imaging may be. Sometimes they'll say, we're not real comfortable with what we found in the mammogram. The mammogram is the base test. Then we want you to come back for an MRI, or a sonogram, or do a PET scan."

And then, she said, after surgery, "The chemo's exhausting. You don't want to spend five hours on the phone fighting with insurance or figuring out who's paying what or trying to get approval for medication. And that happens. So, there's what's called a nurse navigator and a financial navigator, who are not a reimbursable expense through insurance, but are a necessary need for the cancer patient. And I can tell you, I was truly 100 percent appreciative of that nurse navigator and that financial navigator when I was going through the type of treatment I was going through. If I had been burdened with all of that, I probably would've just quit."

So, the 5K is intended to raise money to assist patients with that support. People who want to participate, she said, "can go to the CalvertHealth Foundation website that has a link where you can sign up. It's \$40 early registration or \$50 the day of the event. It's a great day. You don't have to run, you can walk, I promise you will see me walking."

"Last year I was 10 days post my last chemo treatment. I finished that 5K. I was the last one to cross that line. But I walked it, and I did it, and it was such a huge achievement."

Walk-ins the day of the event are allowed. Meet at the Solomons CalvertHealth office building at 14090 H G Trueman Rd., with registration beginning at 7 a.m.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Condos, Retail to Replace Fire-Destroyed Locust Inn in Solomons

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

In April of 2017 the historic Locust Inn in Solomons, built in 1886, burned to the ground in a fire that was ruled an arson by the State Fire Marshal's Office. No arrests have been made in the case.

According to a report from the fire marshal's office, approximately 80 firefighters from the Solomons volunteer fire company responded to the blaze at 11:15 p.m. on April 23 and had to fight the blaze for 90 minutes before they gained control over it. Estimated damage to the structure was \$50,000 though there were no items inside to be lost, the report stated.

The building, which had served as a bed and breakfast, had been vacant for several years.

The property was purchased in 2016 for \$850,000 by PAR Limited Partnership, a company affiliated with the then Stoney's restaurant chain. Jeannie Cousineaux-Stone representing PAR had earlier told the planning commission they had purchased the property without being able to see the interior. She said when they finally were able to get inside they found it in such bad shape that it would be very expensive to save.

Some historians had urged the saving of the structure, but the planning commission approved the demolition. The county commissioners had delayed the final decision

when that became moot with the destruction by fire of the building.

Now the property, under new ownership, is slated for redevelopment as Sunset Terrace Condos. Located at 14474 and 14478 South Solomons Island Road, the two vacant lots total .42 acres and are zoned Solomons Town Center. Three buildings are proposed that total 19,191 square feet of mixed use. The one of the three buildings that faces Main Street in Solomons would have 1,000 square feet of commercial/retail space on the ground floor. There would be a total of eight condominiums with parking and site improvements.

The project is on public water and sewer. The concept submittal was accepted by the county on July 27, 2022. But it has yet to be heard by the planning commission.

The project, however, did go before the Calvert County Board of Appeals on Oct. 5 for a variance of the height requirements for the building that faces Back Creek. The board did unanimously approve the increase in height from 38 feet to 44.8 feet.

Consulting engineer Dan Kelsh of COA explained the variance request to the appeals board, "It has to do with the 36-foot height where in order to tie the roof lines together, the dormers are exceeding that height within the 50-foot buffer on the side closest to Back Creek."

He added, "That was all done for archi-



The charred remains of the Locust Inn after the April 2017 fire



tectural aesthetics, making the building look right from the water and people across the water from it. And so, not having such a severe wall line that goes down the back."

At the public hearing portion of the meeting, one speaker, Thomas Berg of Solomons, wanted to know, "How does the additional height for these proposed buildings improve or compliment the island's current historic charm and maritime appearance? Is this in the public interest or solely in the interest of the developers?"

The developers' representatives grappled with answering to Berg's satisfaction. Finally, Deputy Director of Planning Carolyn Sunderland attempted to answer for the applicant.

She said, "Then Solomon's Town Center Zoning Ordinance permits a density of 20 units per acre in the C-1 district. That was part of the adopted zoning ordinance that complies with the master plan down there. And I believe that it was to have a combination of residential and commercial, with the requirement that they try and retain commercial along the street front. So, the benefit would be to keeping the heart of Solomon's Island active, filled with residents, and with a variety of retail and commercial activities and services."

The height variance is allowed when commercial is made part of a development mix along Main Street.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

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In Remembrance

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

Joan Tornell, 90



Joan M. Tornell of Port Republic, Maryland passed away on Tuesday, September 19, 2023 at The Solomons Nursing Center in Solomons, Maryland. Joan was

born on June 8, 1933 in Chicago, Illinois and was raised in Miami, Florida.

After graduating from the University of Florida with a bachelors degree in education, she married Gonzalo Tornell Jr. on March 29, 1958 in Miami, Florida. The couple then moved to Seattle, Washington. They also lived in San Bernardino, California, Chateauroux, France, Upper Marlboro, Maryland and then settled in Port Republic, Maryland.

Joan taught elementary school for over 20 years in Miami and Maryland. She had many hobbies including playing tennis, playing piano and organ, water skiing, snow skiing, and doing crafts. She played the organ for a local church and displayed her crafts at many fairs in Southern Maryland. Above all, she loved spending time with her family.

Joan is survived by her husband of 65 years, Gonzalo (George) Tornell; sons Michael, Steven and Jeffrey, grandchildren; Katherine, Brian, Rebecca, Scott, Dale, Melanie, Jeffrey Jr. and Charlotte and great grandchildren; Isabella, Ava, Oliver and Hazel.

A memorial service will be held at the Lighthouse Restaurant in Solomons on October 15, 2023 at 11:30 am. A reception will follow at the same location. The restaurant is located at 14636 Solomons Island Rd. S., Solomons, MD 20688.

Lothian Grain Elevator to Reopen Serves Calvert County Farmers



The Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission, a Division of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, has alerted the Southern Maryland agricultural community to the following important announcement concerning the opening of the Lothian Grain Elevator on Friday, October 13, 2023, to benefit the regional farming community.

Anne Arundel County Executive Steuart Pittman issued the following statement regarding the opening of the Grain Elevator in Lothian:

"Friday's opening of the Lothian Grain Elevator is probably the most impactful local government action on behalf of agriculture in the history of our county.

"When it's time to harvest the corn, the beans, or the wheat grown on over ten thousand acres of our county, it needs to get trucked somewhere for storage on its way to market. The closer that somewhere is, the quicker that field can get harvested.

"Without a local elevator, growing grains just isn't feasible. We've already lost thousands of acres of our county's farmland, and we can't afford to lose more.

"That's why when Perdue made its final decision to shut this facility down, Senator Sarah Elfreth and I convened stakeholders to save it.

"The funds to buy this elevator from Perdue and to make the repairs needed to get it operating came from the State of Maryland. That happened not only because Senator Elfreth, Senator Jack Bailey, and

our entire Southern Maryland delegation supported the allocation in this year's budget, but also because Secretary Kevin Atticks went to Governor Wes Moore and got his support.

"The Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission, Maryland Farm Bureau, Anne Arundel Farm Bureau, and Calvert County Commissioner Buddy Hance were all instrumental in making the case that the elevator must be saved.

"Once funding was secured, it was left to the Anne Arundel County Office of Central Services (OCS) to close the deal with Perdue and contract with an operator. This was not a simple assignment. The first Request for Proposals only attracted one operator, and that company was unwilling to open this fall. That wasn't good enough. Our Central Services team canceled that procurement and did an emergency procurement. That's how we were able to engage Warfield Brothers from Howard County as the facility operator.

"Director Susan Herrold, Purchasing Agent Catrice Parsons, and Southern Facilities Manager Mike Davis are the people at Central Services who made this happen. They were able to create in record time a public private partnership with Kenny Warfield to get this facility operating once again to serve the good farmers of Anne Arundel County and Southern Maryland."

Press Release from SMADC

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CALVERT SHERIFF'S CRIME BLOTTER

During the week of September 25 – October 1, 2023, Calvert County Sheriff's Office Deputies responded to 1,779 calls for service throughout the community.

Damaged Property: 23-68491

On September 26, 2023, at 11:35 p.m., DFC Savick was in the area of Bay Ave and 7th Street in North Beach and observed damage to the stop sign located at the intersection. The stop sign appeared to have been hit by a vehicle and was discovered laying in a garden bed of mulch. The wooded beams supporting the mulch bed were also damaged. The estimated value of damaged property is unknown at this time.

Theft: 23-69408

On September 30, 2023, DFC Tavares responded to the Prince Frederick Safeway located at 80 W. Dares Beach Road in Prince Frederick, for the report of a theft. Investigation revealed a female suspect with a cart full of merchandise left the store walking past all points of sale and fled the scene. The suspect is described as a black female wearing a gray and blue in color stripped head cover, a black t-shirt, a jean jacket tied around her waist, black and gray colored leggings, and black shoes. The stolen items include paper towels, dish detergent, and Salisbury Steaks. The total value of stolen items is \$504.00.

ARRESTS



Wilmer Yanes-Jiminez

On September 26, 2023, Calvert County Sheriff's Deputies were assisting Troopers with the Maryland State Police to locate a vehicle that refused to pull over for a traffic stop. Deputies attempted

to stop a white Ford Mustang for traffic violations when the operator fled at a high rate southbound on Rt. 4 in Lusby. As the suspect vehicle approached deputies stationary at Rt. 4 and Patuxent Point Parkway in Solomons, the driver eluded deputies by making a U turn and began driving north in the southbound lanes before crashing into a guardrail.

The driver bailed out of the car and fled on foot into the woods. A search of the vehicle revealed ammunition, an imitation handgun, and numerous knives. After nearly a 2-hour search, Calvert Deputies located the suspect, **Wilmer Bladimir Yanes-Jiminez** and placed him into custody. Yanes-Jiminez was charged with Fleeing and Eluding, Concealing a Dangerous Weapon, Negligent Driving, Reckless Driving and several other related charges.



Terry Parsons

On September 27, 2023, Deputy Zinn initiated a traffic stop on a vehicle all over the roadway and traveling at below the posted speed limit in the area of S. Solomons Road and Monticello Lane in Lusby. Upon making contact with the driver, **Terry Glenn Parsons, Jr.**, 43 of Lusby, a strong odor of an alcoholic beverage was emitting from Parson's breath. As Parsons, exited the vehicle, a miniature Fireball shot fell from his lap onto the roadway. Parsons was placed under arrest for DUI. A search of Parsons upon entering the detention center revealed Suboxone in his wallet. Parsons was arrested and charged with CDS: Possession-Not Cannabis, Possession of CDS in a Place of Confinement, Driving While Under the Influence of Alcohol, Negligent Driving, Reckless Driving and other traffic related charges.



Keona Best

On September 28, 2023, at 5:40 a.m., Deputy McCourt responded to a residence on Orwell Court in Prince Frederick, for the reported burglary that had just occurred. Upon arrival, deputies observed the front door displaying signs of forced entry. Contact was made with the occupants of the residence who advised an unknown black female was outside the home screaming and yelling and proceeded to kick

in the door. The female suspect then fled the scene. Deputies located the suspect vehicle in the area of Rt.231 and Prince Frederick Blvd. in Prince Frederick and initiated a traffic stop. The suspect, **Keona Dominique Best**, 28 of Prince Frederick, was actively resisting arrest and refused to obey deputies' commands. Best was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center where she continued to actively resist and fight with Correctional Deputies. Best was charged with First-Degree Burglary, 3rd-Degree Burglary, 4th-Degree Burglary, Disorderly Conduct, Failure to Obey a Reasonable/Lawful order of Law Enforcement Officer, and Malicious Destruction of Property Value Less \$1,000.



McKinley Brooks

On September 28, 2023, DFC Plant responded to the 700 block of Armiger Road in Huntingtown, for the report of a suspicious vehicle. Upon making contact with the operator, deputies observed a wooden stick/dowel rod in the handle of the driver's side door. Further investigation revealed, three glass smoking devices with suspected crack cocaine residue were found inside the vehicle. The operator, **McKinley Theodore Brooks**, 31 of Huntingtown, was

arrested and charged with CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia.



Michael Brooks

On September 30, 2023, at 11:03 p.m., Cpl. Holt responded to the 7900 block of Mt. Harmony Lane in Owings, for a person with a weapon. Upon arrival, contact was made with **Michael Frank Brooks**, 68 of Owings, who was intoxicated standing in the middle of the roadway with a rifle in hand. Brooks advised he was on PCP. Brooks was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center where he was charged with Reckless Endangerment, Intoxicated Endangerment, and Rifle/Shotgun Possession – Disqualification.

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

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

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Calvert Community Calendar

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

Thu, Oct 12

Teen Night: Creepy Cupcake Wars

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

Get creative and make the creepiest cupcake and you may win our cupcake contest! We're having a Halloween themed cupcake party! Cupcakes and all the supplies provided. Costumes welcome! 6th - 12th graders. Please register 410-326-5289.

<https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Fri, Oct 13

Annmarie After Hours

Annemarie Sculpture Garden and Arts Center, Solomons, 5-7 p.m.

Enjoy extended hours in the garden in celebration of the opening of a new exhibit in the Kay Daugherty Gallery. Both galleries in the Arts Building will be open until 7 p.m., 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. Details: www.annmariegarden.org

Rooftop Car Show

Rod N Reel
4165 Mears Ave, Chesapeake Beach
4-8 p.m.

Rooftop Car Cruise Nite on the rooftop of the Rod 'N' Reel parking garage by the Chesapeake Bay. Open event. Free to all. Free auto books. Cool cars and trucks. Check out the owner's 1936 Ford coupe and pickup. Excellent food and beverages at the 1936 Bar & Grill and the CBQ. 866 312 5596 Car Nutz.

Sat, Oct 14

CalvertHealth Breast Cancer 5K Run/Walk

14090 H G Trueman Rd, Solomons
7 a.m.

Join us on Saturday, October 14 in beautiful Solomons Island as we raise funds for the Sheldon E. Goldberg Center for Breast Care, which gives local women and men access to an experienced team of breast health experts and the most sophisticated technology available today. We are pleased to offer team fundraising opportunities, fun superlatives, prizes and more! This is a great opportunity to support your community while connecting with friends and family for a great cause. We can't wait to see you at this year's event! www.calverthealthfoundation.org/ch-5

9th Annual Craft and Vendor Show

Huntingtown United Methodist Church
4020 Hunting Creek Rd., Huntingtown
9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Come see the wares of our local, talented crafters and vendors. Get a head start on your Holiday shopping. You'll see: handmade jewelry, painted Christmas decor, knitted and crocheted items, glass art, soaps, oils, handcrafted woodworking, Tastefully Simple, Mary Kay, Tupperware, Origami Owl and much more!

Garden Smarter: Harvesting Seeds

Calvert Community Resource Bldg.
10-11 a.m.

Want to learn how to harvest seeds from your native plants? Join the Master Gardeners at their demonstration garden and tour our gardens to see what plants have gone to seed. Dress appropriately for the weather. Sponsored by Calvert Library Prince Frederick, 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Spirits & Steeds Fall Festival

Freedom Hill Horse Rescue
7940 Flint Hill Rd., Owings

1-6 p.m.

Sixth annual Spirits & Steeds fall festival and largest fundraiser of the year. Located in our arena, come sip and savor exquisite tastings from our variety of breweries, wineries and distilleries. Dance along with the Nightlife Band or enjoy a performance from O'grady Quinlan Academy of Irish Dance. Shop through our 50+ artisans & craft vendors or grab a bite to eat from one of our four Food Trucks. Meet some of our horses in our new Meet-N-Greet area. There's plenty of activities, games, and fun for the whole family. For tickets go to www.eventbrite.com/e/spirits-steeds-2023-tickets-510285105487?aff=oddtcreator

NDC Theater Aladdin Jr

Long Beach Community Center
5845 Calvert Blvd St. Leonard
2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Join Aladdin and his pals as he attempts to win Princess Jasmine's heart by outwitting the evil Jafar with the help of a magical Genie. Limited seating: advanced tickets suggested. www.ndctheater.org

Tue, Oct 17

One Maryland One Book Discussion

Mamma Lucia's, Dunkirk
6-7:30 p.m.

Join Calvert Library at Mamma Lucia's this month for a discussion of "There There" by Tommy Orange. The whole state is being asked to read and discuss this book as the One Maryland One Book initiative. A wondrous and shattering award-winning novel that follows twelve characters from Native communities: all traveling to the Big Oakland Powwow, all connected to one another in ways they may not yet realize. -535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Veterans & Military Families Connect

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way

6-7 p.m.

Dr. J. A. Dula, Veterans Affairs Officer from Prince George's County, will be discussing the Four County Veteran Collaborative, and health care initiatives available to those registered with the VA. The Four County Veteran Collaborative (Prince George's, Calvert, Charles, St. Mary's) is a partnership between ServingTogether and Prince George's County Veterans Affairs Office. The monthly meetings allow service providers and community organizations to collaborate and raise awareness of community resources while building capacity within the four counties. The Southern Maryland Veterans Collaborative meets every other month 10am-11:30am at the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Astronomy Night

Calvert Library Fairview Branch
Rt. 4 and Chaneyville Road, Owings
7-8 p.m.

Come see what the night sky has to offer in the field behind Fairview. Learn about the equipment used to view the sky from the Astronomy Club of Southern Maryland. All ages welcome. Outdoor only event, weather permitting. 410-257-2101. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Wed, Oct 18

Business Cybersecurity: Skill Builders Workshop

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
9:30-11 a.m.

Don't miss this free class to provide businesses with the education and resources to protect themselves against cyber attacks. Registration Calvert County's Department of Economic Development and Technology Services has developed a Cybersecurity Workshop in honor of Cybersecurity Month. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Publisher Thomas McKay
Associate Publisher Eric McKay
General Manager
Al Dailey aldailey@countytimes.net
Advertising
Jen Stotler jen@countytimes.net
Staff Writers
Dick Myers dickmyers@countytimes.net
Guy Leonard guyleonard@countytimes.net
Contributing Writers
Ron Guy, Ken Lamb, Shelby Opperman,
Dave Spigler

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

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



County Times

P. O. Box 250 • Hollywood, MD 20636

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, Oct 12

Pre-Order for the LA-HVFD Prime Rib Dinner

Hollywood VFD Social Hall
24801 Three Notch Rd., Hollywood
5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Please call Lynn Brady at 240-538-2503 to pre-order.

Fri, Oct 13

Community Health & Wellness Fair

University of Maryland at Southern Maryland
44219 Airport Rd., California
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

This year's screenings will include body composition, glucose, skin cancer, hearing, vision, and blood pressure. Licensed Massage Therapist Gwynne Hill with California Total Body Massage will be on site all day offering free 15-minute mini-massages. The Pharmacy at PJ Bean

will be supplying flu shots and additional vaccinations. Bring your insurance card—all insurance agencies are accepted!

The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office and St. Mary's County Health Department will be on-site to collect medications, including diabetic supplies such as needles, lancets, and EpiPens.

The Department thanks our many sponsors for this event, including The Pharmacy at PJ Bean, Mid-Atlantic Skin Surgery Institute, St. Mary's Nursing & Rehabilitation Center, and Southern Maryland Foot & Ankle.

Register online at www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging/healthfair. Online registration closes at 12 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 12.

This event is free and open to the public. For more information, contact Sarah Miller, Community Programs & Outreach Division Manager, at 301-475-4200, ext. 1073, or email sarah.miller@stmaryscountymd.gov.

Sat, Oct 14

Community Yard Sale

St. Mary's Country Fair Grounds
42455 Fairgrounds Rd., Leonardtown

7 a.m. to Noon

Yard sale supports 2nd District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad.

Event will occur rain or shine.

Spaces available inside or outside if weather permits.

A great way to get rid of unwanted items or find some bargains.

Reserve a space for \$20.00—includes 1 table (6 ft) and 2 chairs

****NOTE:** Additional fee of \$10.00 will be charged for each additional table.**

****Can bring your own table as long as fit in space****

For more information or to reserve a table contact: Becky at dbksk@atlanticbb.net or 301-904-1656 or Agnes at agnes.birch54@gmail.com or 301-904-0946

Break & Make: Grief Workshop

Hospice of St. Mary's
44724 Hospice Ln., Callaway
10:30 a.m. to Noon

Hospice of St. Mary's will host a unique workshop this October: Break and Make, offering participants the space to process

grief through breaking ceramics, then using the pieces to create something new. Open to all adults age 18 and older who have experienced a grief event. No artistic experience necessary! Free to participate; donations welcome. Registration is required by contacting Trish Watson, bereavement coordinator, at 301-994-3023 or patricia.s.watson@medstar.net.

Fall Vendor Fair

Leonard Hall Junior Naval Academy
41740 Baldrige St., Leonardtown
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Food Trucks, vendors, Laser Tag, axe throwing, Board & Brush Make & Take! Open House! Raffles! Bounce House! Obstacle Course!

www.facebook.com/events/829481461915510?active_tab=about

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Continued from pg. 17

Helen Mildred Bailey Downs. She was the loving wife of William Joseph "Billy" Huseman, Sr. for 76 years, whom she married on March 17, 1945. She is survived by her sons William Joseph "Joey" Huseman, Jr. (Janette) of La Plata, Md and Walter Daniel "Danny" Huseman of Lusby, MD; five grandchildren Christopher Scott Huseman (Anita) of Adamstown, MD, Mark William Huseman (Jennifer) of Cocoa Beach, FL, Katherine Alexandra Huseman of Lusby, MD, Brandon Allen Huseman and Crystal Ann Huseman of Ft. Meyers, FL; eight great-grandchildren Nicole Marie Huseman of Adamstown, MD, Christopher Joseph Huseman of Holly Springs, NC, Anthony Thomas Meadows (Chrissy) of Waldorf, MD, Zachary William and Tyler Christopher Huseman of Cocoa Beach, FL, Nathaniel William Huseman and Ronilynn Grace Tackett and Haley Marie Huseman of Ft. Meyers, FL; and also many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. She was also preceded in death by her youngest son Ronald Allen "Ronnie" Huseman (Patricia Ann) of Ft. Meyers, FL, brothers Walter Bailey Downs of Coltons Point, MD, Thomas Elwood "Nick" Downs (Patsy) of Avenue, MD, Joseph Mitchell "Joe" Downs (Jean) of LaBelle, FL, James Milton "Buddy" Downs of Abell, MD and sisters Joan Theresa Downs of Bushwood, MD, Patricia H. Troger of Silver Spring, MD and Thelma D. Reingruber of Annandale, VA.

Ann was a lifelong St. Mary's County resident who attended Saint Mary's Academy in Leonardtown, MD. She worked for

many years at the First National Bank in Leonardtown, MD where she retired. Ann's great love was her family — being a loving wife to her beloved husband "Billy" and caring for and raising their three sons. Ann also loved to cook and always looked forward to and enjoyed celebrating the holidays by having Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner at her home for family and relatives. She had a very deep-rooted passion for her family and spending time together.

Ann was a Charter Member of the Hollywood Volunteer Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary where as a Life Member she was very dedicated to the support and betterment of the Fire Department and the local community. Over the years she enjoyed supporting and participating in annual fundraising events such as bake sales, craft shows, card parties, dances, bingo nights, carnivals and dinners.

Ann grew-up as a member of the Holy Angels Catholic Church in Avenue, MD. Since 1952 Ann has been a devoted member of the St. John Francis Regis Catholic Parish in Hollywood, MD.

The family will receive friends on Monday, October 16, 2023 from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm with prayers recited at 7:00 pm at the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, MD. A mass of Christian burial will be celebrated on Tuesday, October 17, 2023 at 10:00 am at St. John Francis Regis Catholic Parish, Hollywood, MD with Father Ryan Braam officiating. Interment will follow in the church cemetery. Pallbearers will be Scott Huseman, Mark Huseman, Brandon Huseman, Crystal Huseman, CJ Huseman and Zach Huseman. Honorary pallbearers

will be Mike Reingruber, Teddy Downs and Jimmy Downs.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Ladies Auxiliary of the Hollywood VFD, P.O. Box 7, Hollywood, MD 20636, Hollywood Volunteer Fire Department, P.O. Box 7, Hollywood, MD 20636 or Hollywood Volunteer Rescue Squad, P.O. Box 79, Hollywood, MD 20636.

Alice Owens, 91



Alice Rebecca Russell Owens, age 91 of Clinton, MD, formerly of Abell, MD joined our Heavenly Lord on 1 October 2023.

Alice Rebecca was born on 4 May 1932, the tenth child of the late John Robert and Mary DeBessie (Harden) Russell in Abell, St. Mary's County, MD. Alice married the love of her life, William Frederick Owens, on 28 August 1949 at Holy Angels Catholic Church in Avenue, MD.

Alice is survived by her daughters, Ann (Harold Lee) McCready, Joan Preslar of Mechanicsville, MD, Mary Smith of King George, VA, Brenda Ticer, and Pamela Owens. Alice is also survived by eight grandchildren: Karen Cross, John McCready, Kim McCready, Lynn Espinoza, Thomas William Preslar, Rick Burrows, Jr., Jonathan Burrows, and Charity Beck; 14 great-grandchildren; four great-great-grandchildren; many nieces and nephews and very special friends Dave and Beverly Fry.

Alice enjoyed spending time with her family and friends. She especially enjoyed planting her many yearly flowers. Alice and her husband Fred enjoyed having summer gatherings at their home for family and friends.

Alice was a devout Catholic with an unwavering faith in God. Alice was a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, and friend.

In addition to her loving husband Fred (who predeceased her on 25 January 2018) and her parents Alice was predeceased by two grandchildren Tabitha Burrows Abrams and William Patrick Ticer and her brothers and sisters: James Lawrence Russell, Agnes Madeline Langley, Theresa Dowell, Patricia Elizabeth McCready, and John Robert Russell, Jr.

Funeral services will be held in the Lee Funeral Home, 6633 Old Alexandria Ferry Road, Clinton, MD on 13 October 2023. Viewing will be from 10 AM to 11 AM. Service will be on 13 October 2023 from 11 AM to 12 PM by Father James M. Stack. Christian burial will immediately follow at Trinity Memorial Gardens, 3221 Mattawoman-Beantown Road, Waldorf, MD.

Pallbearers will be John McCready; Thomas William Preslar; Rick Burrows, Jr.; Jonathan Burrows; Lanny Chapman, III; and Pat Russell. Honorary pallbearer is Bobby Russell, III.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that contributions be made to either Catholic Charities or to a Cancer Research Center. Condolences may be made to the family at www.leafuneralhomes.com.

Sacred Heart Church
ANNUAL OCTOBER
Drive-Thru Dinner
23080 MADDOX ROAD
BUSHWOOD, MARYLAND 20618
Sunday, October 22, 2023
11:00 a.m. 'til

MENU:

Fried Oysters	Stuffed Ham	Turkey w/Dressing
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Parsley Potatoes, Candied Sweet Potatoes, Green Beans, Cole Slaw, and Rolls

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**Cake Table Available**

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**Mechanicsville Vol. Rescue Squad Community Auction**  
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# In Remembrance

To schedule an obituary in the County Times, submit text and picture to [aldailey@countytimes.net](mailto: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.

## Stuart Fitrell, 84



Captain Stuart J. Fitrell, 84, died on Friday, September 22, 2023, at Medstar St. Mary's Hospital after a long fight with cortico basilar syndrome. He was born in Cleveland,

Ohio on January 17, 1939, to Vernon W. and Irene Petro Fitrell. He is a graduate of Shaw High School in East Cleveland where he participated in many sports, most importantly as the Center on the football team that went on to win the Lake Erie League championship. This propelled him to the US Naval Academy where he graduated in 1962 and was commissioned as an Ensign in the U.S. Navy. Three days after commissioning he married the former Lynn Funk at Christ the King church in East Cleveland. Three days after that, with all their belongings packed into a 1962 Corvair, they headed for flight training in Pensacola, Florida, starting their lifelong adventure. He received his wings in 1963 and reported to his first squadron (VA106) in Jacksonville Florida flying the A 4 Skyhawk. Mid tour he was transferred to Lemoore California (VA 155) where he immediately embarked on the first tour of

his two tours in Viet Nam.

As an adventurous soul, he chose to spend one shore leave "in country" to see what the other services were experiencing. He spent several days with a South Vietnamese (ARVN) tank group, an Army infantry platoon, and a Forward Air Control unit, experiencing enemy fire close at hand in each of those detachments. His only comment regarding this experience was that he had made the right choice in Naval Air where he could get hot food and go back to his stateroom aboard ship after each flight. He also served in VX 5, China Lake, California, testing a variety of aircraft, and as Chief Test Pilot at the Systems Engineering Test Directorate at Patuxent River, Maryland. He served as the commanding officer of VA 66. Among his nonflying tours was that of navigator aboard USS Saratoga.

In addition to the US Naval Academy, his academic achievements included graduating from the US Air Force Test Pilot School, a master's degree in Aeronautical Engineering from the Cranfield Institute of Technology in England, and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

His many decorations included: Distinguished Flying Cross (3), Navy Commendation Medal, Combat Action Ribbon, Navy Unit Commendation (2), Combat Action, Viet Nam Combat Medal,

Viet Nam Service Medal, Meritorious Unit Commendation, Overseas Service Ribbon, Sea Service Deployment Ribbon, Meritorious Unit Commendation (3), Navy Achievement Medal, Viet Nam Cross of Gallantry, National Defense Service Medal, Strike Flight Air Medal (19), Air Medal (2), and .45 Cal (Expert).

He retired as commanding officer of NAS Patuxent River in 1989. He would brag that he was the only NAS Pax CO to spend 3 years having such good fun.

As many know, he was very proud of his flight jacket and wore it constantly in recent years, even hot summer days. Whenever anyone approached him and asked what he did in the Navy he responded loudly and clearly "fighter pilot!"

He was the author of two novels, "Gang of Graybeards" and "Nickle-Dime Book" and co-author of a non-fiction work on aviation innovation, "Xtraordinary Planes, Xtraordinary Pilots." He was an active member of the Society of Experimental Test Pilots, publisher of this last book. He was a devoted member of the Thomas J. Shryock Masonic Lodge #223 and valued the time spent with his Brothers.

He leaves behind his wife of 61 years, Lynn; his children, Kirsten of Baltimore, Kendall (Liz) of Annapolis, and Troy (Kathryn) of Conakry, Guinea; and his

grandchildren Astin, Madeleine, Morgan, Emma, and Sam.

Services will take place October 11, 2023 at St. Aloysius Church, 22800 Washington Street, Leonardtown, MD, with visitation in the church at 11:00 a.m. followed by mass at noon. Interment will take place at Arlington National Cemetery at a later date. In lieu of flowers please make a donation to any of St. Mary's County Rescue Squads, Sotterley Plantation, or Navy, Marine Corps Relief Society.

Condolences may be made to the family at [www.brinsfieldfuneral.com](http://www.brinsfieldfuneral.com)

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

## Ann Huseman, 97



Ann Elizabeth Downs Huseman, age 97 of Hollywood, MD passed away peacefully on October 5, 2023 at St. Mary's Nursing Center. Born on March 20,

1926 in River Springs, MD she was the daughter of the late Joseph Clifton and

*Continued on pg. 18*

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# Letters to the Editor

## An Invitation to Fellowship

How many of us know someone (maybe our grandparents, parents, or even ourselves) who were taught by the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth or perhaps have been to Camp Maria for a summer program or for a retreat?

The Sisters of Charity of Nazareth and Camp Maria Retreat Center have been a part of the lives of many people in the Southern Maryland community for generations.

You are invited to join the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth (SCNs) at Camp Maria Retreat Center on Thursday, November 2nd. Attendees will learn more about the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, their ministries, including Camp Maria, and the impact of their work through testimonials. Come join your friends and reconnect with the Sisters at Camp Maria. Please RSVP for this event through the Camp Maria Retreat Center website or at nazareth.org/camp.

Embracing intercultural relationships, the SCNs and their Associates are committed to care for all creation and to work for peace and justice in solidarity with oppressed and marginalized peoples. Camp Maria Retreat Center works to support the community and fulfill its mission by maintaining a retreat center where many different groups can run programs and enjoy the peace and beauty of God's creation. Camp Maria offers programming and event opportunities to bring people together, as well as support programs for the underrepresented members of our community such as the home-

less, veterans, individuals struggling with grief or addiction, and high risk youth.

Camp Maria Retreat Center is answering the call from Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si*, and strives to increase programs that inspire people to care for our common home. This past year, Camp Maria hosted its first annual music festival with Earth Day themed activities and educational opportunities. Camp Maria also ran Camp Creation, a youth camp with a focus on ecological sustainability and eco-spirituality. A Food, Faith, and Fellowship event, hosted by Camp Maria, allowed space for individuals and organizations to gather and discuss how to bring about action from our community members. Additionally, three native pollinator flower gardens and three canopy trees were planted on the Camp Maria property.

The SCNs and staff at Camp Maria hope that you'll be able to attend a luncheon or dinner session on November 2nd, 2023 at Camp Maria Retreat Center in Leonardtown, Maryland. Although the event is free, attendees will have the opportunity to donate, with all proceeds benefiting Camp Maria Retreat Center. We look forward to seeing you there and sharing stories. Please RSVP for this event through the Camp Maria Retreat Center website or at nazareth.org/camp.

*Ann Kovalcik  
Director, Camp Maria*

## A View From The BLEACHERS



### FILLING A VOID

By Ronald N. Guy Jr.  
Contributing Writer

Last Saturday, on an idyllic fall afternoon, the Baltimore Orioles did something they hadn't done since 2016: take the field for a playoff game. Between then and now, there have been many dark seasons, with three reaching the dubious 100-loss milestone.

Plagued by the cringe-worthy ownership of an ailing Peter Angelos and his family's adversarial jockeying for team control, the organization, at least off the field, has been adrift (sound familiar, D.C. football fans?). That chaos aside, the baseball operations have been crushing it. The Orioles parlayed those poor seasons and draft capital into arguably the best young roster and farm system in MLB. In 2023, ahead of all expectations, that talent announced its arrival with a 101-win season and the AL East Pennant.

Despite the euphoria, there is a tinge of sadness in Birdland. A black circular patch with an inlaid orange "5" adorns the Orioles' uniform. The patch is a tribute to Orioles legend Brooks Robinson, who passed away on September 26th. Robinson was 86 years old.

The measurables of Robinson's baseball greatness are distinguished: 18 All-Star games, 16 Gold Gloves, league MVP (1964), Roberto Clemente Award (1972), two World Series championships (1966, 1970), World Series MVP (1970), Baseball Hall of Fame member and an unimaginable defensive highlight reel. How good was he at third base? For decades, if anyone at any level made a great play on the hot corner, teammates and opponents simply needed to utter "Brooks" with a tip of the cap. You knew because you knew. He was the best.

But in a full account of Robinson's life, the baseball player would be in the shadow of the man. Stories are the best way to understand Brooks Robinson, the human. Scott Van Pelt, ESPN anchor and Maryland native had one. His dad caught a Robinson foul ball at Memorial Stadium and gave it to Scott, who, as kids are apt to do, lost it down a storm drain after a stray throw. Years later Van Pelt told the story within earshot of a Robinson acquaintance. Apparently, the story got back to Robinson because, shortly thereafter, Van Pelt received a signed Robinson ball with a note that it hopefully eased the pain of the one that got away.

Sportscaster Rich Eisen had his story. As a younger lad he was part of a charity golf tournament and, as youth sometimes does, vigorously imbibed the night before. Nursing a hangover, he became frustrated when the shuttle to the course no-showed. Eisen called the hotel front desk and asked if anyone was there from the tournament. Somehow Robinson ended up on the phone with Eisen, addressed his concern and had a shuttle sent within minutes.

I have two. I was in Robinson's company just once – an autograph show in Baltimore. His interactions were fascinating. Robinson treated everyone with the warmth of a long-time friend. I mean everyone – staff, fellow luminaries, kids and star-struck, nobody autograph hounds like me. The second is his voice. I don't remember Robinson the player, but I do remember him broadcasting Orioles games. His delivery was so down-to-earth and unassuming. To this 10-year-old kid, he made comic book stuff – major league baseball and greats like Cal Ripken Jr. and Eddie Murray – seem like reality (albeit an extraordinary one). He invited you into the Orioles' living room, so to speak. All were welcome. He made Orioles baseball feel like family.

Maya Angelou famously said, "People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." Whatever the name Brooks Robinson immediately brings to your mind, be it a signed ball sent to atone for an adolescent mistake, commandeering a shuttle to a golf tournament, a ridiculous play at third or even a voice over the airways on a perfect summer night, he made us all feel a little better – in the moment and about the course of humanity. With Robinson's death, the world is left less friendly, less humble, less decent and less kind. His passing leaves a void; the challenge for those left behind is to fill it.

Send comments to [RonaldGuyJr@gmail.com](mailto:RonaldGuyJr@gmail.com)

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## Legal Notice

### IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR SAINT MARY'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

CASE NO: C-18-CV-23-000246

Chesapeake Employers' Insurance Company,  
**Plaintiff**

v.

Diaz Logistics, LLC, *et al.*,  
**Defendants**

#### NOTICE

The above Plaintiff has filed a Complaint entitled *Chesapeake Employers' Insurance Company v. Diaz Logistics, LLC d/b/a and/or t/a Diaz Logistic LLC and Jose Diaz* in which it is seeking damages of at least \$78,505.00, plus punitive damages in the amount of \$150,000.00, as well as interest, costs, attorneys' fees, and for such other relief as the Court deems just and appropriate.

Notice is hereby issued by the Circuit Court for St. Mary's County that the relief sought in the aforementioned Complaint may be granted, unless cause be shown to the contrary. Defendants Diaz Logistics, LLC d/b/a and/or t/a Diaz Logistic LLC and Jose Diaz are to file a response to the Complaint on or before November 30, 2023. Failure to file the response within the time allowed may result in a judgment by default or the granting of the relief sought, provided a copy of this notice should be published in some newspaper published in the county, once for one (1) week on or before October 30, 2023.

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

## Free Veterans Resource Day Being Held November 3

St. Mary's County Government's Department of Aging & Human Services (DAHS) is proud to host Veterans Resource Day on Friday, November 3, 2023, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the University System of Maryland at Southern Maryland, located at 44219 Airport Road in California, Maryland.

This event is free and open to the public. Veterans, active service members, their friends, and their families are all welcome to attend Veterans Resource Day.

Disabled American Veterans (DAV) will be on site from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. to answer questions and assist with claims processing! Additionally, there will be more than 20 organizations serving veterans on-site. Join us for a presentation during the event:

- **Protecting Yourself Against Fraud & Identity Theft**

Presented by: Navy Federal Credit

Union  
10 – 11 a.m.

- **Learning about Service Animals**  
Presented by: MK9 Service Dogs  
12:30 – 1:30 p.m.

Free lunch will be provided at noon by Mission BBQ.

Want to skip the registration line? Register online at [www.stmaryscountymd.gov/veterans](http://www.stmaryscountymd.gov/veterans). Online registrants will be eligible for a special prize! Online registration closes at noon on Thursday, November 2, 2023.

Many thanks to our generous event sponsor: SMECO!

For more information, contact Sarah Miller, DAHS Community Programs & Outreach Division Manager, at (301) 475-4200, ext. 1073 or via email to: [sarah.miller@stmaryscountymd.gov](mailto:sarah.miller@stmaryscountymd.gov).

## St. Mary's Gymnastics Academy Ribbon Cutting Announced

St. Mary's County Government's Department of Recreation & Parks is excited to announce the Grand Opening of the St. Mary's Gymnastics Academy in their new location, 46961 Bradley Blvd in Lexington Park, formerly Willows Recreation Center. St. Mary's County Government announced the purchase of this facility in May of 2023.

Community members are welcome to attend the Grand Opening event on Tuesday, October 24, 2023, at 4:30 p.m. to celebrate with remarks and a ribbon cutting. Interested attendees may also tour the newly renovated facility between 3:00 –

4:00 p.m.; tours after the event may be limited due to scheduled programming.

"The Department looks forward to offering competitive and recreational gymnastics in this modernized facility," said Arthur Shepherd, Director of Recreation & Parks. "Leisure classes, pickleball, and events will also have space at the new St. Mary's Gymnastics Academy location."

For more information about the St. Mary's Gymnastics Academy, please visit [www.stmaryscountymd.gov/gymnastics](http://www.stmaryscountymd.gov/gymnastics) or call (301) 862-1462.

## St. Mary's County Museums Announce Winter Operations

St. Mary's County Government's Museum Division has announced that the water taxi service offered at St. Clement's Island Museum will cease operations for the season by October 31, 2023, and resume cruises on Maryland Day, March 25, 2024.

The museums operated by the Museum Division, including St. Clement's Island Museum in Coltons Point, the Old Jail Museum & Visitor Center in Leonardtown, and the Piney Point Lighthouse Museum in Piney Point, will continue to be open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., except for Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day when they are closed.

The Drayden African American Schoolhouse, the fourth division historic site, will be closed until spring 2024 when it will reopen for special open houses.

Our museums offer amazing programs and events throughout the year! Stay up to date by following them on Facebook at:

St. Clement's Island Museum: [Facebook.com/SCIMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/SCIMuseum)

Old Jail Museum & Visitor Center: [Facebook.com/TheOldJailMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/TheOldJailMuseum)

Piney Point Lighthouse Museum: [Facebook.com/1836Light](https://www.facebook.com/1836Light)

Drayden African American Schoolhouse: [Facebook.com/DraydenSchool](https://www.facebook.com/DraydenSchool)



# Christmas in April in Trouble

By Guy Leonard  
Staff Writer

Over the past 33 years Christmas in April (CIA), a volunteer organization making critical repairs to homes of the needy in St. Mary's, has worked on 881 homes, completed 28 community projects, brought out 45,000 volunteers to aid the community and provided \$9.1 million in free home repairs to residents, said its president, Howard Thompson.

It's all in danger of fading away.

"It's just getting tough to raise funds," Thompson told The County Times. "We've had to dip into our savings, actually we dove into them."

In the beginning, three decades or more ago, businesses were lining up to give generous donations of money and materials to allow CIA to accomplish its mission, which Thompson defined as making homes "safe, warm and dry."

Now, the group is fortunate to have saved some of that money it got all those years ago as fewer and fewer businesses have come to CIA's aid in recent years.

The ever-tightening economy and the COVID-19 pandemic had a lot to do with that, Thompson said.

Still, some companies, such as 84 Lumber, continue to support their efforts with a golf tournament fundraiser event; the antique tractor parade that went through Leonardtown's town square Oct. 8 also helped raise funds for CIA.

"That was the most people I'd ever seen in Leonardtown for the tractors," Thompson said hopefully.

The leadership board at CIA has decided to soldier on, for now, despite the financial difficulties.

It wasn't an easy decision, according to Thompson.

"We thought we might have to stop because of the funding," he said.

More than funding and materials drying up, it has become harder to gather volunteers — particularly skilled labor — to volunteer for the day-long event in April.



The pandemic dealt a blow to volunteerism, Thompson said, with home owners in need of help unwilling to have people in their homes and volunteers wary of entering people's homes with or without masks.

This year, masks will be optional for volunteers, Thompson said, but they will wear them if the homeowner requests it.

By this time of year, he said, the CIA board is usually examining between 40 and 50 applications for assistance.

"Right now, we only have 22," Thompson said. "A lot of these are repeat applications... that are not in keeping with our mission, which is safe, warm and dry. They want cosmetic work done."

This sort of request, he said, has to be rejected in favor of homes that are in serious need of repairs.

"We vet every house that sends in an application," Thompson said.

With so few applications in for critical repair work to be done, why would volunteers continue to do the work?

"We're not in it for it to be easy," Thompson said. "We're in it to help."

guyleonard@countytimes.net

# Routine Maintenance Scheduled on Gov. Thomas Johnson Bridge

The Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration will perform routine maintenance on the MD 4 (Governor Thomas Johnson) Bridge at the Calvert County/St. Mary's County line starting at 6 a.m. Sunday October 15, weather permitting. Lanes will open to traffic no later than 2 p.m. that afternoon.

Maintenance crews will clean the drainage systems and the bridge deck. Drivers can expect single-lane closures guided using a flagging operation. The State Highway Administration will use flaggers and port-

able variable message signs to guide motorists safely through the work zone.

The State Highway Administration understands roadwork can be an inconvenience but is necessary to maintain a safe and reliable highway system. Drivers are asked to slow down in the work zone for the safety of all drivers and the crews working to improve our roadways.

For a list of all major State Highway Administration projects, visit roads.maryland.gov. For a look at real-time traffic conditions, go to md511.maryland.gov.

# State Highway Administration Urges Caution This Autumn

## Deer Mating Season and Shorter Days Bring Hazards to Driving

The Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration is reminding motorists to use extra caution during the autumn months. With milder temperatures, motorists should expect to see more pedestrians and bicyclists along the roadways. White-tailed deer mating season, falling leaves and less visibility with later sunrises and early sunsets are among some of the seasonal factors that challenge highway users.

The State Highway Administration continues to urge drivers to be extra vigilant for pedestrians, especially around Halloween when children will be out trick-or-treating.

Motorists are urged to:

- stay alert, slow down and stop for pedestrians in crosswalks and intersections (it's the law);
- use caution when turning at intersections; and
- stop at stop signs and for school buses.

Pedestrians are urged to:

- pay attention to their surroundings;
- use sidewalks and marked crosswalks, and
- press the pedestrian signal button at signalized intersection, then wait for the walk signal.

White-tailed deer activity increases in Maryland from mid-October to mid-December. During this time, deer are extremely active and often dart across roads, increasing the potential for a vehicle-deer collision. Motorists are urged to heighten awareness of surroundings and stay alert, particularly in rural areas across the state.

Here are some tips for limiting a chance of a vehicle-deer collision:

- Never "VEER" for deer. Making sudden sharp turns is dangerous, as it could place a driver in the path of

oncoming traffic or cause the vehicle to strike a fixed object such as a tree or utility pole. This is true for both motorists and motorcyclists.

- Be familiar with deer behavior. If you see one deer, chances are good that more will follow. Deer typically travel in herds.
- Be aware of known deer areas. Driving slower will enable you to stop sooner.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Deer herds feed primarily between sunset and sunrise and often live in forested areas or rural regions near watersheds.
- Stay alert. When traveling through a known deer crossing area, keep both hands on the wheel and eyes on the road.
- Use extra caution when driving at night. Use your high beams when there is no oncoming traffic. High beams illuminate a wider area.
- Use peripheral vision. Scan each side of the roadside for movement as well as straight ahead and in the distance.
- If you strike a deer, never approach the injured animal. Pull to a safe location with hazard lights on and call the police. Citizens can reporter dead deer on the side of the road at the State Highway Administration's Request for Service webpage here.

Finally, autumn brings falling leaves. Citizens are reminded to bag the yard leaves, and do not blow leaves onto roadways. Wet leaves on the road surface can cause the vehicle to lose traction and skid. This is especially dangerous for motorcycles.

For a list of all major State Highway Administration projects, visit the project portal or the homepage at roads.maryland.gov. For a look at real-time traffic conditions, go to md511.maryland.gov.

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## Safely Decorate Your Home Exterior This Holiday Season



Come cooler weather, a person doesn't have to drive far or look too closely to be inspired by holiday decor for Halloween and beyond. Enthusiastic celebrants go to great lengths to express their holiday spirit, and that typically includes decorating their home exteriors.

Home holiday decorations are a tradition in millions of households. Though the tradition helps make this special time of year even more festive, decorating a home exterior for the holidays is not without certain safety risks. Homeowners must prioritize safety when decorating their home exteriors for the holidays. These tips can ensure the holiday season is as safe as it is special.

- Never decorate alone. The buddy system should be employed when decorating a home for the holidays. No fewer than two people should decorate a home. A second person can ensure a ladder remains steady while hanging lights and can help lift potentially heavy lawn decorations, thus reducing the risk for injury.
- Use the appropriate decorations and tools. The American Red Cross urges individuals to use only decorations designed for outdoor use when decorating their home exteriors. Indoor lights should never be strung outdoors, even on small spaces. In addition, the Red Cross recommends homeowners who intend to use nails or hooks to hang decorations first confirm they are insulated, which can help to avoid electrocution and reduce fire risk.
- Plug decorations into the correct outlets. The energy experts at FirstEnergy note that outdoor lights and inflatable decorations should be plugged into circuits protected by ground fault cir-

cuit interrupters (GFCIs). Older homes may not be equipped with such outlets, particularly on their home exteriors. Replacing existing outlets with GFCIs is a quick and relatively inexpensive job that a professional electrician should be hired to handle before decorating for the holidays.

- Utilize a timer for exterior lights. Lights should be not kept on overnight, which can be costly and pose a safety hazard. Utilize a timer so lights come on at night and turn off around bedtime, if not earlier.
- Inspect decorations. Exterior string lights and other plug-in decorations should be inspected at the beginning of each season to ensure there are no frayed or cracked wires. Damaged wires pose a significant fire hazard, so any damaged strands should be discarded and replaced.
- Pick the right day to decorate. Consult the weather forecast prior to decorating the exterior of a home. Pick a day when efforts to decorate won't be compromised by wind, rain, snow, or other inclement weather. If it's already snowed, avoid decorating until the snow has melted, as there could be ice lingering beneath the snow. It's also unsafe to work on a snow-covered roof. Decorate on a day with ample daylight and pause decorating if weather takes a sudden, unexpected turn for the worse.

It can be fun to decorate a home's exterior for the holiday season. But homeowners must prioritize safety and take every step necessary to reduce their risk for accident or injury.

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# How to Protect Your Home When You're Away

Travel often serves as a well-deserved break from the hustle and bustle of daily life. When relaxing and recharging away from home, the last thing travelers want to think about is the safety of their homes and everything inside them. However, the National Council for Home Safety and Security and Statistics Canada estimate that more than two million burglaries occur in the United States and Canada every year. That underscores the importance of protecting your home at all times, including when you're not there.

- Create the impression that someone is home. Just because you're heading off for parts unknown doesn't mean you can't create the impression that life is carrying on as usual within the walls of your home. Smart home technology now enables homeowners to set timers on lights and even home electronics like televisions and radios. Homeowners also can ask neighbors to pick up their mail or halt delivery until they return from their trips. Nothing says "no one's home" as definitively as an overflowing mailbox.
- Keep quiet on social media. A Credit Sesame survey of former burglars in the United Kingdom found that 78 percent acknowledged monitoring social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter as they try to find homes to burglarize. Individuals about to go on vacation should avoid sharing that on social media.
- Stay silent while you're away as well.



Social media silence should be continued while you're on vacation as well. No matter how tempting it may be to share photos from holiday visits or an exotic location, such posts could catch the attention of all the wrong people. A recent report from MetLife indicated that 35 percent of Americans between the ages of 18 and 34 check in from their locations via social media. That

can alert criminals that no one is manning the fort back home.

- Switch from a traditional lock and key to a lockbox. Individuals who travel frequently can take a page from the realtor notebook and switch from a traditional lock and key lock system to a lockbox. Lockboxes require that a code is entered before a box containing a key can be unlocked. Homeowners who

want this added measure of protection don't even need to put a key inside the lockbox, which typically covers a lock, making it extremely difficult for potential thieves to pick the lock.

Before leaving for vacation, individuals can implement various strategies and safety measures to protect their homes and their belongings while they're away.



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# Tricks to Trim Your Utility Bills



Strategic use of appliances in a home can help consumers reduce their energy bills by a significant amount.

A rapid rise in the cost of living has undoubtedly proved to be one of the major stories of the past few years. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, energy prices rose by 41.6 percent in the 12-month period that ended in June 2022, marking the highest 12-month increase since April 1980.

The significant spike in energy costs is somewhat misleading, as the BLS considers motor fuel prices, which rose more than 60 percent in the 12-month period ending in June 2022, part of the energy category. However, during that same period, electricity prices rose by nearly 14 percent while natural gas prices increased by 38 percent. Both of those increases were more significant than the more publicized rise in food prices, which rose by right around 10 percent.

Families need to eat and many professionals now must return to in-person work after years of pandemic-related remote working, which means they must confront higher fuel costs. That leaves little room to save money in those areas. However, there are ways for families to reduce home energy costs without adversely affecting their quality of life.

- Run appliances during off-peak hours. According to the United States Department of Energy and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the best time to use appliances in a home is when overall electricity use is low. Though this time changes depending on the season and can vary based on geography, the DOE and the EPA both note that after 9 p.m. and before 9 a.m. are generally the off-peak hours in most areas.
- Strategically use your shades and blinds. The energy providers at ConEd estimate that about 40 per-

cent of unwanted heat comes through windows. Strategic use of curtains, shades and blinds can keep heat out on hot days, thus allowing homeowners to turn the thermostat up on their air conditioning units in summer. Opening curtains, blinds and shades on winter mornings and afternoons will allow more sunlight in, allowing homeowners to control heating costs more effectively.

- Reorganize your refrigerator. There are plenty of contradictory strategies regarding how best to store foods in a refrigerator so the unit consumes as little energy as possible while still keeping foods fresh and chilled. But various energy providers, including ConEd, recommend that consumers avoid packing a fridge too tightly. By allowing cold air to circulate within the refrigerator, the refrigerator won't need to work as hard, and thus consume as much energy, to keep foods cool. It's important to note that the opposite should govern how the freezer is packed. Packing frozen items tightly in the freezer will help the refrigerator work a little less hard.
- Turn off the lights. Estimates from the U.S. Energy Information Administration indicate that electricity for lighting accounts for around 10 percent of electricity consumption in homes. A concerted effort to turn off lights in rooms that aren't being used can help consumers save money.

Rising utility bills are compelling millions of people to seek ways to trim their energy consumption. Thankfully, there are many ways to do that without upsetting daily routines.

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# How to Create a Welcoming Entertaining Space at Home

The lasting effects of the pandemic that swept across the globe in 2020 will be studied for years to come. Though some consequences have yet to be discovered, others, including a heightened desire to entertain loved ones at home, were already apparent even before the world emerged from the darkest days of the pandemic.

A 2021 study from ButcherBox™ found that 46 percent of survey respondents were excited to host and entertain guests in their home when it was deemed safe to do so. Such gatherings were given the green light years ago, and homeowners have maintained their enthusiasm for entertaining. With that in mind, homeowners looking to upgrade their entertaining spaces can look to these tips as they prepare to welcome guests into their homes.

- Establish various seating areas. Ample seating is a must when welcoming guests into your home. Open layouts make it easier to add seating without feeling cramped, so homeowners whose properties feature such design schemes may find it easier to accommodate more guests than homes with more traditional, compartmentalized layouts. When arranging seating, aim to create multiple seating areas so guests can speak privately to one another if they so desire. Multiple seat-




ing areas also ensure more than one conversation can take place at a time. That's especially useful when hosting a game watch, as some guests may come for the game while others may be more interested in socializing than the score.

- Designate spaces for children. Kids are typically part of the equation when

entertaining at home, so it's important that hosts create spaces for them as well. A basement or children's playroom can do the trick. If the weather outside is welcoming, a fenced-in backyard with games and a trampoline can provide the perfect space for kids to have fun while the adults get to engage in conversation and catch


up with friends and family apart from boisterous youngsters.


- Add lighting. Dimly lit rooms may be a homeowner's desired aesthetic when no one's visiting, but lack of light can give the impression certain rooms are off limits or lead to muted conversations. Adjust recessed lighting so bulbs provide a warm but well-lit space for guests to relax and converse. In rooms without such lighting, open blinds or curtains or add some floor lamps before the party so rooms are well lit when guests arrive. Avoid lighting candles during the gathering, as flickering flames pose a fire hazard.
  - Utilize Florida rooms or outdoor spaces when possible. Afford access to a Florida room or a deck or patio if the weather allows. The great outdoors tends to be a natural mood enhancer, and even some brief breaks in the fresh air can do guests some good. If guests will be spending ample time in a Florida room or outdoors, ensure ample seating is available and make sure those spaces are well lit as well.
- Entertaining at home is wildly popular, and homeowners can employ some simple strategies to make their homes welcoming spaces for friends and family.




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# Ideas to Repurpose a Formal Dining Room

Formal dining rooms are no longer a must-have among home buyers. Reports on the decline of the formal dining room appear to have been premature, as many real estate professionals have noted that some clients still insist that a home must have such a space. However, many agents also report low demand for formal dining rooms.

Beauty is indeed in the eye of the beholder regarding formal dining rooms. Buyers and homeowners who see these rooms as unnecessary can consider the many ways to transform them to better suit their needs.

- **Playroom:** Parents of young children know that kids have a way of taking over living spaces in a home. If the living room has been overtaken by toys, homeowners can consider converting their formal dining room into a kids' playroom. Formal dining rooms tend to be spacious places that can accommodate a large dinner table, a bar and a buffet table. That means there's ample space for a kids' toy chest, bookshelf, crafts table, dollhouse, and more.
- **Home office:** The COVID-19 pandemic changed the way many modern workers go about their typical workday. Millions of workers now work from home at least a few days a week if not full-time. When the pandemic began, that led to a space crunch, particularly in homes with more than one working adult. Workers who have been using the formal dining table as a desk for years can now fully commit to repurposing the room. One factor



A seldom-used formal dining area can be converted into a game room with a few simple touches.

to keep in mind is whether or not the room will need a door. Some formal dining rooms already feature pocket doors or even French doors, but many do not offer any such privacy. A door installation could increase the price tag associated with repurposing the room, but the end result could be well worth the additional costs.

- **Game room:** A large formal dining table might be similar in shape and size to a pool table, but pool players will need some space around a pool table to ensure they aren't putting holes in the surrounding walls each time they

pick up a cue stick. If pool doesn't tickle homeowners' fancy, then a room devoted to gaming, complete with a flat screen or two on the wall and some new gaming chairs, can be a great way to repurpose the space. Modern parents often play video games alongside their children, making this a great way to create a fun and family-friendly space in the home.

- **Reading room:** Devoted bibliophiles may aspire to turn their formal dining rooms into spaces tailor-made for curling up with a good book. Book lovers often lament they lack the space to

display all of their books, so this idea can provide the perfect solution to that problem. Replace existing furnishings with some bookcases and a comfortable reading chair and then sit back and crack open a good book. Homeowners who want to go the extra mile can convert the room into a traditional English library, complete with wood-paneled walls, a fireplace, a floor globe, and leather furniture.

There's no end to what can be done when homeowners decide it's time to convert their formal dining rooms into spaces they're likely to use more often.

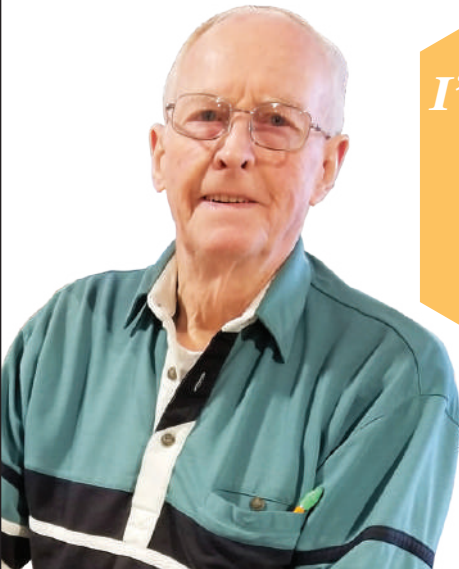
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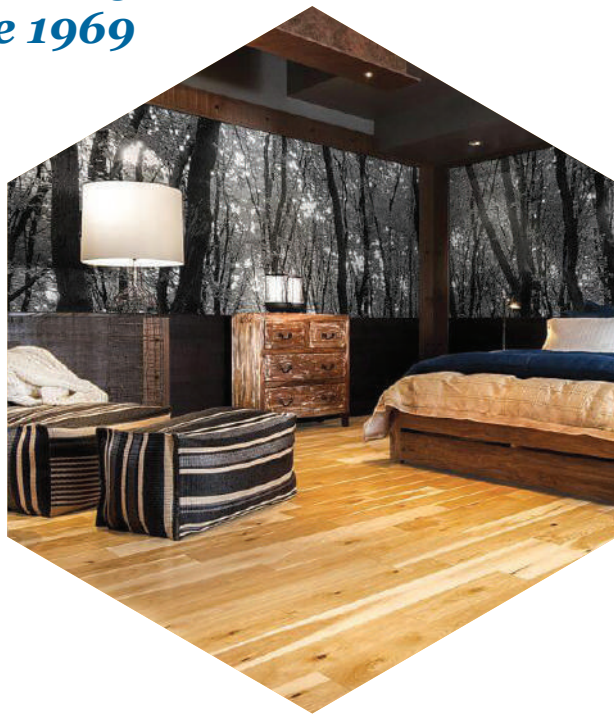
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# Eight Steps to a More Functional Kitchen

A kitchen is often the most utilized room in a house. Meals may be prepared, cooked and often eaten in kitchens, and the room is often utilized as a homework spot or a makeshift place to pay bills and stay on top of household needs. By enhancing the organization and functionality of the kitchen, homeowners can enjoy these popular spaces even more.

Homeowners have increased their spending on home improvements in recent years. According to the Joint Center for Housing Centers for Harvard University, project spending rose to \$472 billion in 2022 from \$328 billion in 2019. It's estimated consumers will have spent \$485 billion by the end of 2023. Kitchen renovations were the most popular upgrade and accounted for the highest budgets in 2021, according to Houzz. When the time comes to renovate a kitchen, homeowners can take steps to make these spaces more organized and therefore functional. Here are eight tips to creating a more functional kitchen.



1. Increase storage, and then invest in more. Make the most of corner cabinets and other potential dead spots in a kitchen. Various products can be used to organize awkwardly angled or shaped areas. Kitchen designers also can work with you to reconfigure cabinets and kitchen layouts.
2. Organize utensils and dishes around the sink/dishwasher. Rather than tra-

versing the kitchen to put clean dishes away, make loading and unloading the dishwasher that much easier by locating commonly used items next to and above it. Similarly, place frequently used saucepans, baking dishes and other items near the oven or food preparation area.

3. Utilize drawer and cabinet organizers. Make a place for everything in the kitchen. Take out all items and see what you need and use all the time. Then coordinate storage around those items so everything fits perfectly. Pull-out shelves and Lazy Susans also can facilitate access.

4. Add shelves to cabinets. If you can afford to have a custom-built kitchen, by all means design cabinets according to preference. If you're using standard cabinets, you may have to reconfigure shelves and spacing to fit the items you have. This also will help you maximize cabinet space.
5. Organize the garbage. Have a pull-out drawer or cabinet to store trash bins. Separate compost, trash and recycling needs.
6. Create continuity in the room. Many open concept homes will have kitchens open up to another room in the home. Mirror the design scheme from elsewhere in the house, and make sure that the flow between spaces is not obstructed.
7. Create a beverage station. A beverage station can minimize the time needed to make a cup of tea or coffee or for the kids to grab juice or chocolate milk.
8. Have a workspace in the kitchen. Whether paying bills, making a grocery list or leaving notes for the family, a dedicated workspace can add more function to the room. Be sure there is task lighting nearby and ample overhead lighting to ensure that all kitchen needs are illuminated properly.

A more functional kitchen can make this already popular space even more so.

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# The Benefits of Working with an Interior Designer

Homes require an investment of time, energy and money. The payoff of those investments is substantial, and the benefits of home ownership are more profound than even longtime homeowners may recognize.

A report from the National Association of Realtors indicated that home ownership boosts kids' performance in the classroom, leads to greater participation in civic and volunteer activities and improves health care outcomes, among other benefits. With so much to gain from home ownership, it's no wonder so many people across the globe are willing to commit the time, energy and financial resources necessary to own their own homes.

Homes are undoubtedly a point of pride for millions of homeowners, and that sense of fulfillment is even greater when interiors are up-to-date and welcoming. Home trends come and go, and busy homeowners can be forgiven if they're not able to keep up with the latest interior design styles. That's the job of a skilled interior designer. Working with such professionals when redoing a home's interior can make all the difference and increase the already profound sense of pride many homeowners have in their homes.

- Interior designers can help narrow down the possibilities. A simple internet search prior to beginning a home renovation project will turn up mil-



lions of results. That can leave homeowners' heads spinning as they try to identify their own style and plan a project that coordinates with their preferences. Experienced interior designers can help homeowners identify their style and offer practical insight as they work with clients to choose elements to incorporate into spaces they aspire to renovate.

- Interior designers can ensure a room doesn't stick out like a sore thumb. Just because a design looks good on the internet does not mean it will work well in every home, particularly if only one room is being renovated. Interior designers recognize that and can steer homeowners in the direction of designs that will fit the larger theme of the home while still offering a fresh look and feel.

- Interior designers can save homeowners money and headaches. Renovation projects can be pricey, and that price tag only goes up when mistakes are made. Interior designers advise clients on furnishings and other design components, and that advice can save homeowners money in the long run. Furnishings may be returnable, but such returns typically come with sizable fees. By directing clients toward furnishings and other components that fit the overall design scheme, interior designers are saving homeowners the cost and headaches associated with fixable yet expensive mistakes.
- Interior designs are up-to-date on the latest trends. Real estate and design trends come and go, and dated designs can adversely affect what homeowners recoup at resale. Homeowners who want to update their home interiors with the ultimate goal of selling their homes can work with experienced interior designers who know which trends are in and which are out. That knowledge can make it easier and more lucrative to sell a home.

Homes are a significant investment, and investing in the services of an experienced interior designer can ensure homeowners maximize the value of their homes.



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# Small Renovations That Make a Big Difference



Home renovation projects were high on homeowners' priority lists during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout much of 2020, people across the globe were forced to spend much of their time at home as leaders and governments across the globe sought to prevent the spread of COVID-19. More time at home compelled millions of homeowners to invest more in their properties, thus sparking a renovation boom.

By early 2023, the renovation boom that marked the initial days of the pandemic appeared to have burst. In May 2023, the popular home improvement retailer Home Depot reported its sales had fallen by 4.5 percent in the first quarter of the year and that its income had fallen by more than 6 percent from the same period a year earlier. That marked the end of what Home Depot CEO Ted Decker characterized as "a three-year period of unprecedented growth" in the home improvement sector.

Home Depot's decline in sales was attributed to a number of factors, including a pivot among homeowners from large projects to smaller renovations. Inflation and the looming threat of a recession have led many homeowners to emphasize smaller projects. With that in mind, the following are some small renovations that can have a big impact.

- **Storage addition:** Regardless of where storage is added, be it the kitchen or a home office or a laundry room, extra space to keep items out of view can dramatically alter the look of a home. Unused kitchen walls can be transformed with some inexpensive, easily hanged shelves, while some laundry pedestals with storage draw-

ers can help keep washrooms clear of clutter.

- **Polish floors:** Elbow grease might be the biggest expenditure when cleaning hardwood floors. The wood flooring experts at Bona® advise homeowners to polish their floors once every two to four months depending on how much foot traffic the floors get. A fresh polishing can make floors look brand new and ensures dirt and dust are not hanging around as uninvited houseguests.
- **Paint:** Painting is another inexpensive option for budget-conscious homeowners who want to update their homes. There's no shortage of places in a home, both inside and out, where a fresh coat of paint can make a statement without breaking the bank. Fading paint on bedroom walls and kitchen cabinets can be painted over with a fresh coat of the same color or even something more vibrant. Outside, apply a fresh coat to a wooden deck or paint over brick siding to create a whole new look.
- **Molding:** Crown molding can add a touch of elegance to any room. Rooms can be transformed in a single weekend with the installation of new or replacement crown molding. A simple molding installation is a task many do-it-yourselfers can handle on their own, while homeowners with less DIY experience may benefit from hiring a contractor to create a layered molding look.

Homeowners are pivoting away from costly renovations to more budget-conscious projects. Various less expensive undertakings can transform spaces at a fraction of the cost of more extensive renovations.



# Home & Garden

FALL/WINTER 2023



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 Vertigo Red Concert in Leonardtown Square, 10/14  
 Halloween Movie Festival at the Wharf 10/21  
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 Walk for the Poor in Leonardtown Square 11/4  
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# Vice President of El Salvador Comes to St. Mary's



Salvadoran Vice President Felix Ulloa

By Guy Leonard  
Staff Writer

Felix Ulloa, Vice President of the Republic of El Salvador, is scheduled to visit St. Mary's County's airport today, complete with a reception and dinner at the AirTec facility joined by the Maryland Secretary of Agriculture Kevin Atticks.

Tom Jarboe, president and CEO of AirTec, said Ulloa's main interest in visiting his company at the airport is to observe unmanned aerial systems they operate for crop surveillance.

"He's doing an agricultural tour in Annapolis and that's why he's making the trip with Secretary Atticks," Jarboe, a former county commissioner, told The County Times.

"You can fly these over crops and see what condition they are in," Jarboe said of the technology that Ulloa will be there to observe. "You can even use it to spray them [for pests.]"

Ulloa will also be there to observe a vast command and control system AirTec uses to monitor drone systems.

"We're pivoting more into the unmanned world," Jarboe said of the technology under development at AirTec.

AirTec is part of the booming business growth at the St. Mary's County Regional Airport that focuses on aerospace and tech-

nology advancement and development for commercial and international use.

This is not the first high ranking dignitary or official to come to see the county's AeroPark Innovation District, as it has come to be known.

The former President of Panama, Juan Carlos Varela, came to see the technology AirTec had to offer in 2019 during his last month in office.

El Salvador is a small but densely populated country in Central America according to the CIA World Fact Book and more than one-quarter of its economy depends upon remittances to the country from its residents who live abroad.

Approximately 20 percent of its citizens live in a foreign country, many of them in the United States.

Ulloa has been a relatively high-profile representative of his country of late, being featured in U.S. and foreign media defending his nation's mass police actions in quelling a rampant surge of crime related to gang activity.

The El Salvadoran government has been criticized for what some have called mass incarceration of suspects in violation of human rights because they have no connection to criminal gangs.

[guyleonard@countytimes.net](mailto:guyleonard@countytimes.net)

# Boy Flown After Golf Cart Strike

By Guy Leonard  
Staff Writer

A 2-year-old boy was evacuated to Children's Hospital in Washington, D.C. late last week after he was run over by a golf cart, the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office reported.

Allyssa Casas, spokesperson for the sher-

iff's office, said that the child's grandmother was in the golf cart with the 2-year-old's brother when the boy in the cart pressed on the accelerator, running the 2-year-old over.

The incident occurred Oct. 6 in Avenue in the vicinity of Burch Road.

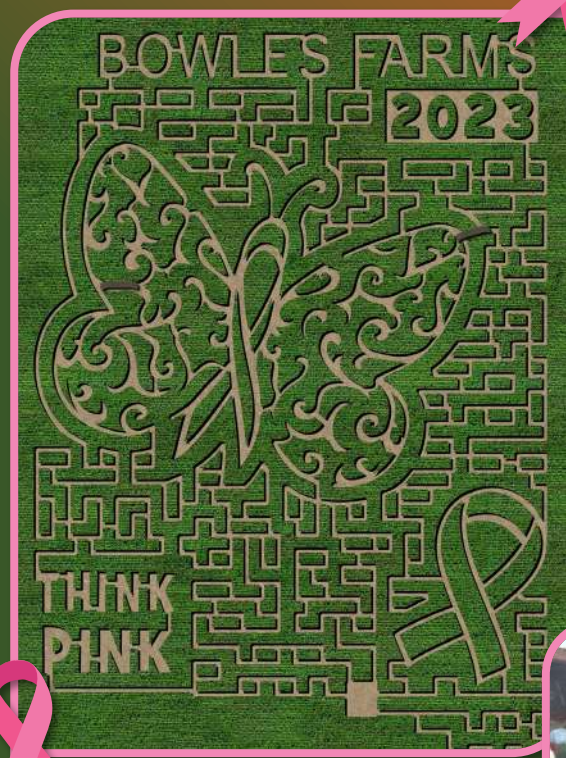
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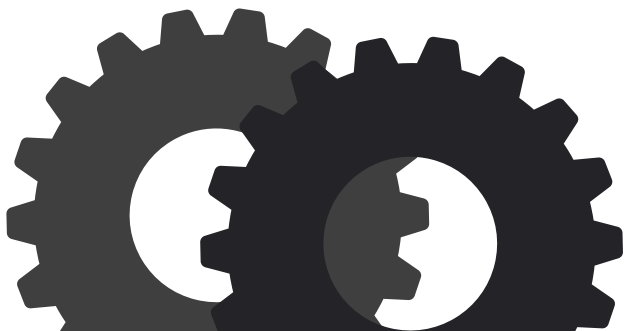
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# School System's Fund Balance Grows

By Guy Leonard  
Staff Writer

The latest financial records from the St. Mary's County Public School System show that their unassigned fund balance — essentially unspent money from their operating budget — has grown in the last fiscal year.

Tammy McCourt, deputy superintendent for fiscal services, told the board of education at their Oct. 11 meeting that the current unassigned fund balance, or money that the board could choose to spend where it wished, was \$4.2 million, up from just \$1.8 million in fiscal 2022. In fiscal 2021 the unassigned fund balance was \$2.5 million.

"Let's talk about that fund balance," said Superintendent Dr. J. Scott Smith. "Because we have the one thing we cannot stand; unallocated money."

"If we have a dollar we'd better be talking about how we are going to spend it on behalf of children or the people who are working with children."

The total fund balance for fiscal 2023, last fiscal year, was \$19.2 million, of which \$14.9 million was allocated to be spent on health care (\$6.6 million), boosting the fiscal 2024 budget (\$4 million) and to costs such as fuel and snow removal and emergencies (\$500,000 each), according to school system documents.

Scott said that the system is often questioned about why it could not spend a "\$15



Superintendent Dr. J. Scott Smith

million fund balance."

"Because we can't," Smith said. "It's already allocated."

Smith said many of the things purchased with an allocated fund balance were still to be received by the system, which is why the money had yet to be spent.

The school board voted to add the \$4.2 million in unassigned fund balance to the current operational and construction budgets to spend towards post-employment benefits, renovations to bathrooms and the concession stand at Leonardtown High School, sidewalk repairs at Lettie Marshall Dent, White Marsh, Leonardtown and Park Hall elementary schools and Dr. James A. Forrest Career and Technology Center and other expenditures.

The budget amendment must still be approved by the Commissioners of St. Mary's County.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

# Bridge Jumper Dies

By Guy Leonard  
Staff Writer

A 41-year-old male who jumped from the Gov. Thomas Johnson Bridge the night of Oct. 5 has died, according to the Calvert County Sheriff's Office.

The male jumped at approximately 7:23 p.m., said Kristen Leitch, sheriff's office spokesperson, said.

A private boater was able to bring the jumper out of the water, she said, and bring him the fishing pier at the base of the bridge on the Calvert side.

First responders performed CPR, Leitch said, but he was later pronounced deceased.

The incident caused the bridge to be closed for approximately one hour.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

# Sheriff's Office Investigating Shooting in Lexington Park

On Sunday, October 8, 2023, at 9:46 p.m., Deputies from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office responded to the 46000 block of Radford Lane in Lexington Park, MD, for a report of shots fired.

Upon arrival, Deputies located an adult male suffering from two gunshot wounds; emergency first aid was rendered. The victim was then flown to the University of Maryland Capital Region Medical Center for medical treatment.

DFC. Max Schell, Detectives from the Criminal Investigations Division, and technicians from the Crime Lab responded. The Criminal Investigations Division has under-

taken further investigation of the incident.

Anyone with information about this incident is asked to contact Detective Warren Forinash at Warren.Forinash@stmaryscountymd.gov or call 301-475-4200, ext. 8072.

Citizens can also call Crime Solvers 24/7 at 301-475-3333 or send a text to Crime Solvers at 274637. Type "Tip239" in the message block and select SEND. After receiving a response, continue the conversation. Note: Tip239 is case-sensitive and must be typed in the message block as shown. With Crime Solvers, tipsters may remain anonymous.

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**All About Advance Health Care Directives**  
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Website: [www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging/healthfair](http://www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging/healthfair)  
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Email: [sarah.miller@stmaryscountymd.gov](mailto:sarah.miller@stmaryscountymd.gov)

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# Surgeon: Early Detection is Key to Beating Breast Cancer

By Guy Leonard  
Staff Writer

One in eight women will develop breast cancer sometime in their lives, said Dr. Kelly Fritz, a surgeon at MedStar St. Mary's Hospital and to combat it patients need to be tested early and often.

"We want everyone to be aware," Fritz told The County Times. "The incident rate has only gone up in the last 30 years but death rates have gone down because the treatments are better."

Cancer of all types, including breast cancer, is still pervasive despite medical advances in treatment because, in part, of how varied each case is.

"Every cancer is different and everyone's breast cancer is different," Fritz said. "Early detection is key, including a self-exam every month."

Both women and men can suffer from breast cancer, she said, though it affects women more.

Risk factors for developing breast cancer increase upon reaching the age of 40 but those who have a family history of cancer have increased chance of developing the condition by the age of 30, Fritz said.

"Most lumps that patients find are benign but they need to be examined to be sure," Fritz said.

There are a host of risk factors, she said, to include family history, age (the older a patient gets the more susceptible they are to developing breast cancer), and increased exposure to the hormone estrogen.

Fritz explained that estrogen treatments were popular in medicine for treating women who had difficulty dealing with menopause but doctors realized that this extra exposure could lead to higher risk for developing breast cancer.

Women who also experience either early menses or late menopause have a higher risk for developing breast cancer.

Patients who have received some sort of radiation treatments are also at a higher risk for developing breast cancer, she said.

There are any number of reasons to lose weight and lessening one's risk of developing breast cancer is one of them, according to Fritz.

Fat cells, she said, produce and store estrogen, which can lead to higher risk of breast cancer.

"Just dropping 10 pounds can really lower someone's risk," Fritz said, noting being actively engaged in exercise can also lower risk of developing breast cancer.

"Stay active," she advised.

Even increased amounts of alcohol consumption can elevate one's risk of developing breast cancer, she said.

She did not advise complete abstinence from alcohol, only to control its intake.

"All things in moderation," she said.

She also advised patients to stay away from hair coloring agents such as benzene and formaldehyde, which are also known to increase risk of developing breast cancer.

People who work regular night shifts also may be more susceptible to developing breast cancer, she said, as that kind of schedule can have a detrimental effect on the immune system.

Detection techniques become better each year, Fritz said, and MedStar St. Mary's uses new technologies to aid in breast cancer diagnosis.

One such technique uses magnetically sensitive material that is injected and circulates to the lymphatic system where cancerous cells are most likely to be found.

The magnetic sensor used to locate the metals introduced to the body acts as a metal detector to more precisely locate the affected cells that can then be targeted for treatment or removal.

Also, small probes can now be inserted into the skin to suck out small bits of possibly-cancerous tissue from lesions as well, Fritz said, making biopsies less invasive in some cases.

This method is computer controlled as well, she said.

"The treatments get better every year," said Fritz.

Still chemotherapy is a mainstay of breast cancer treatment, which often results in feelings of illness, nausea and hair loss among other side effects.

Surgery, too, is another form of treatment that must often be used to remove cancer, which can involve removal of healthy tissue as well from the breast or in its entirety.



Dr. Kelly Fritz



Dr. Samer Jabbour

Though it has improved, Fritz said, treatment remains difficult.

"It's a hard road to go down," said Fritz. "But many patients who go through it do well after."

New specialists, such as Dr. Samer Jabbour, a surgeon specializing in plastic surgery and reconstruction can help recent

cancer patients who have come out of surgery "so it's not as disfiguring," Fritz said.

"We also want people to look good and feel good," said Fritz. "That's very important."

[guyleonard@countytimes.net](mailto:guyleonard@countytimes.net)

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[VisitLeonardtownMD.com/MovieFest](http://VisitLeonardtownMD.com/MovieFest)

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# Local Jewish Congregation Shocked at War in Israel

By Guy Leonard  
Staff Writer

Rabbi Kenneth Cohen, the spiritual leader of the small Jewish congregation that meets at the Beth Israel Synagogue in Lexington Park, had an on-line meeting with board members of the congregation Monday night to talk about the war raging in Israel.

"We opened with two prayers," Cohen, who lives in Bethesda, "One was for protection for the State of Israel and the other was for the defense forces."

Cohen said the reaction of members ranges between shock and rage.

"We have a couple of Israeli's [in the congregation] and they are very concerned," Cohen said.

Just last week, fighters for the terrorist group Hamas stormed out of Gaza, a tightly controlled area of Palestinians on the coast of the Jewish state, by boat, para glider and all sorts of land vehicles to attack Jewish settlements, killing hundreds of civilians. Casualties continue to mount on both sides.

Press reports from the war zone state that nearly 800 Palestinians are dead while the Israeli death toll is higher at more than 900.

Israel immediately struck back against Hamas, trading airstrikes against terrorist rocket attacks; defense forces now say they have sealed off Gaza and continue to press their attacks.

Hamas has captured hundreds of hostages, though, several dozen of them believed to be American citizens, and threatened them with execution.

Several Americans were believed to have been killed in the initial Hamas strike, a total of 11 are believed to have been killed after almost a week of fighting.

Cohen said most members of the St. Mary's congregation believed in some sort of reconciliation with the Palestinians, who are ethnically Arab, but he was unsure if that sentiment still held Beth Israel's members.

"The Two State Solution seems to be dead," Cohen said. "A lot of the members are bewildered but also angry."

The citizens of Gaza elected Hamas, widely recognized as a terrorist organization backed by Iran, as their government; one of the state goals of Hamas is not just the destruction of Israel but the eradication of all Jews.

Conversely, Cohen said, Israel has had the means to destroy the population of Gaza for years but has never done so.

"We value human life," Cohen said.

He admitted that in the last Israeli incursion into Gaza there were many civilian casualties but those deaths were not the goal of the Israeli Defense Force.

"Those deaths were collateral damage," Cohen said. "Hamas came in at point blank range [and killed civilians]."

"I don't see the equivalence."

Right now, the congregation is trying to actively find ways to help their co-religionists whose front yards have become their front lines.

One member is trying to raise donations to rebuild a kibbutz — a collective farm named Kfar Aza — that was destroyed and virtually all of its inhabitants killed or displaced in the attacks, Cohen said.

In Hebrew the name means Gaza village, he said.

"Thoughts and prayers are good," Cohen said. "But we're girding our loins and seeing what we can do to help."

guyleonard@countytimes.net

# Vehicle Destroyed by Fire

The Hollywood Volunteer Fire Department reports that at approximately 8:20 p.m. on Oct. 5, crews were dispatched to the 43000 block of St. John's Road for a reported motor vehicle accident with a single vehicle into a tree and on fire.

Rescue Squad 7, Engine 73, and Chief 7 responded with 12 volunteers shortly after dispatch, the company reported on social media.

Units arrived on the scene to find a single occupant out of the vehicle and the vehicle on fire. Crews deployed an attack line to the fire and also assisted with patient care. The patient was evaluated and deemed to be in need of transport by medivac helicopter to a trauma center. The fire was extinguished and the patient transported to the hospital, the company reported.



# Delegation Will Push for "Jamari's Law"

By Guy Leonard  
Staff Writer

In July of last year, a recent graduate of Great Mills High School, Jamari Tyrese Duckett, was killed in a vehicle collision after a drunk driver crashed into the back of Duckett's vehicle while he was driving on Willows Road near Abberly Crest Lane in Lexington Park.

Duckett was just 18 years old. The driver of the striking vehicle, Matthew Mark Mazza, was just sentenced to 10 years in prison for Duckett's death.

State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling said that evidence showed that seconds before the crash, Mazza was driving at speeds between 76 to 91 miles per hour in a 40 mile per hour zone. A blood test showed that Mazza's blood alcohol concentration level was 0.13 grams of alcohol per 100 milliliters of blood, according to Sterling's office. The legal limit is 0.08 grams of alcohol per 100 milliliters of blood.

"While my office fought for and received the maximum penalty allowable by law, justice demands more," Sterling said in a prepared statement. "When drunk driving at extreme speeds steals the life of a young man, 10 years is never enough."

"I will not stop until the penalty for this crime accounts for its devastation."

Last week Sen. Jack Bailey told the Commissioners of St. Mary's County that



Jamari Duckett

he and the county delegation to Annapolis will partner with Sterling in trying to get the vehicular manslaughter law changed to increase the penalty.

"In just over two years the person will be paroled," Bailey, a retired law enforcement officer told of the likely reality of a full sentence for vehicular manslaughter in Maryland. "That's the same if you had an assault victim... this is actually taking someone's life."

Working with Del. Brian Crosby (D-Dist.29B) and Sterling, Bailey said they have crafted a bill that has already been pre-filed that seeks to double the maximum penalty to 20 years.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

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**Website: [www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging/veterans/](http://www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging/veterans/)**

*Brought to you by the Commissioners of St. Mary's County and the Department of Aging & Human Services*



# Student Behavior Alarms Parents, Leaders



By Guy Leonard  
Staff Writer

Five years ago Melissa Willey lost her daughter Jaelynn, 16, to gun violence at Great Mills High School.

Last week Wiley warned elected leaders that students could still be in danger of serious harm if bad behavior in the classroom is not checked and checked quickly.

Willey told of her daughter, who attends Spring Ridge Middle School, and what she told her mother just two weeks ago.

"My daughter... came home and said a boy said he is going to bring a gun to school and shoot kids," Willey said at the Oct. 3 joint meeting of the Commissioners of St. Mary's County and members of the State House delegation.

Willey brought her concerns to school administrators, whom she said told her they would take care of the matter.

Her daughter told her a similar story soon after.

"Next day, she comes home, she says 'Mommy, he said it again,'" Willey said.

Upon her second consultation with the school administrators, Willey said, she was told "well [her daughter] has options."

This disturbed Willey, she said, noting she was told her daughter could sit in a different seat while at lunch and so forth.

"I looked at them and said 'Why is it her that has the options,'" said Willey. "Why is this child not being disciplined for what he is doing or saying?"

Kids do, in fact Willey said, "say stupid things.

"We all do."

The alleged offender was removed from two of her daughter's classes, Willey said, though he remained in three. "They changed his schedule," she said. "OK, fine but that still doesn't solve the problem of what he's saying to other students."

Willey said her daughter reports of almost-daily fights at her school.

"Something has got to be done with these

kids," Willey said. "Because there's going to be another child that dies from something; whether it's a gun, a stabbing or something else."

The latest data available from the Maryland Department of Education for the 2021 to 2022 school year show there were a total of 510 suspensions or expulsions at Spring Ridge Middle School, 322 of them were for an offenses such as fighting, attacks or threats.

There were 136 suspensions for disrespectful or disruptive behavior at Spring Ridge.

Of those suspensions or expulsions, 308 were male, 202 were female; the data did not disambiguate on the number of expulsions versus suspensions.

No other school came close to Spring Ridge for the number of suspensions and expulsions; Great Mills High School had 279 suspensions or expulsions for that same school year. Of those, 161 were for attacks, fights or threats while 77 were for disrespectful or disruptive behavior.

Del. Matt Morgan had spoken on the issue of bad student behavior earlier in the meeting.

"It is a problem," Morgan said. "If you talk to the teachers — usually off the record — there are some concerns out there."

Morgan said the state erred seriously when the General Assembly passed legislation that forbade the arrest of anyone under the age of 17 by police for certain offenses and even the interrogation of young people that age.

This was an invitation, he said, to increased disruptive and destructive behavior by young people.

"Parents are at their wit's end," Morgan said. "It's in the state constitution, every child is entitled to an education.

"It's gotten to the point now where you have some children who are disrupting the education of other children who want to learn."

*guyleonard@countytimes.net*

## 2023 Medicare Open Enrollment Period

### What is Open Enrollment

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### When is Open Enrollment

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**LOCAL 3**  
Student behavior in focus



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Christmas In April looking for help



**ON THE COVER**  
October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

## WEEKLY FORECAST

|                                                            |                                                            |                                                            |                                                           |
|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>THU, OCT 12</b><br><br>Sunny<br>Hi: 73° Lo: 51°         | <b>FRI, OCT 13</b><br><br>Sunny<br>Hi: 69° Lo: 52°         | <b>SAT, OCT 14</b><br><br>Rain<br>Hi: 66° Lo: 51°          | <b>SUN, OCT 15</b><br><br>AM Showers<br>Hi: 58° Lo: 47°   |
| <b>MON, OCT 16</b><br><br>Partly Cloudy<br>Hi: 60° Lo: 47° | <b>TUE, OCT 17</b><br><br>Mostly Cloudy<br>Hi: 60° Lo: 46° | <b>WED, OCT 18</b><br><br>Partly Cloudy<br>Hi: 62° Lo: 44° | <b>THU, OCT 19</b><br><br>Mostly Sunny<br>Hi: 64° Lo: 46° |



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# St. Mary's County Times

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2023

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**Student Behavior  
Becomes Concern**

**School Board To Spend  
Extra \$4.2 Million**

**Fall/Winter Home &  
Garden Guide Inside**

## EARLY DETECTION



# SAVES LIVES