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Calvert County Times

THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 2024

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**'McConkey Bill'
Passes in Annapolis**

**County Bills Prevail
After Past Failures**

**Thirteen Injured, One
Charged in Accident**

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“THE BUILDING IS PLAGUED BY SEVERE STRUCTURAL DEFICIENCIES.”

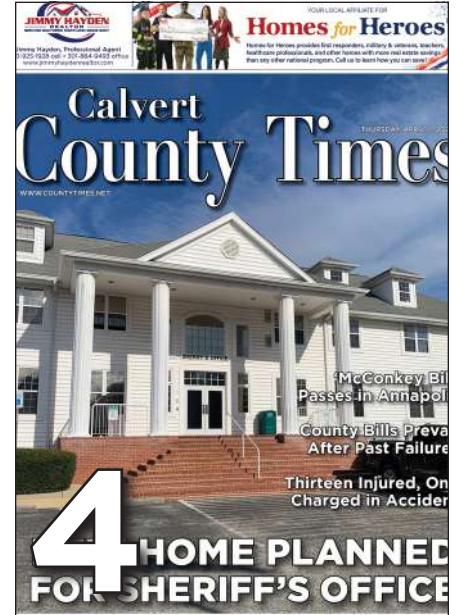
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR MARK WILLIS ON SHERIFF'S OFFICE HEADQUARTERS



LOCAL 5
Ethics bill passes General Assembly



LOCAL 6
Town ballot questions considered



ON THE COVER 6
Commissioners authorize study for new sheriff's office building

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, APR 11	FRI, APR 12	SAT, APR 13	SUN, APR 14
Rain Hi: 66° Lo: 59°	AM Showers Hi: 67° Lo: 51°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 65° Lo: 48°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 73° Lo: 57°
MON, APR 15	TUE, APR 16	WED, APR 17	THU, APR 18
Sunny Hi: 74° Lo: 55°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 75° Lo: 59°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 78° Lo: 58°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 75° Lo: 60°



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Process Started for New Sheriff's Headquarters

Aging Building Deemed Functionally Inadequate

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) has approved a motion that directs "staff to identify a new location for the Sheriff's Office headquarters and incorporate as construction into our CIP (Capital Improvement Plan)."

The motion by Commissioner Mark Cox came after an April 9 presentation by County Administrator Mark Willis and Sheriff Ricky Cox in which Willis stated, "The functionality of this building is really torn up and everybody's kind of discombobulated throughout, and not just throughout the building, but actually throughout the county."

Willis gave an historical perspective of the situation. He said the headquarters building at 30 Church Street in Prince Frederick that was "constructed in 1919, originally served as the Calvert Hospital, marking the inception of healthcare services for Calvert County residents. Founded by Drs. Elliott, Amos, and Clarence Hutchins along with their brother-in-law, Dr. Isaac N. King, the hospital was a testament to their vision. In 2019, Calvert House marked its centennial anniversary, honoring a century since its establishment."

"This 105-year-old building currently serves as the headquarters for the entire sheriff's office. They relocated to this facility in May of 2002 but have since outgrown its capacity and organizational functionality."

He added, "The county administrator, working closely with the deputy director of General Services within the Department of Public Works, has undertaken an exhaustive examination of the entirety of county government buildings and facilities. Through this comprehensive review, it has been unequivocally determined that the continued upkeep and escalating maintenance expenditures of the existing Sheriff's Office headquarters is not economically viable for the county. The building is plagued by severe structural deficiencies, including compromised flooring, heating/cooling/ventilation problems, security and evidence safekeeping concerns, nonfunctional operational layout, non-compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards, decentralized operations, and persistent mold infestations."

Willis said, "It's a nice looking building from the outside, and that might be a little bit of a disguise because it's 105 years old going on 106. And when you walk into that building, you notice that right away."

Willis explained, "The Sheriff's office has multiple sub-agencies within it that all



Current sheriff's office headquarters at 30 Church Street in Prince Frederick

have very specific responsibilities that do not coordinate by design. They coordinate on their own. They're self-stabilized within the building. They have their own job missions. It's not like you get to walk down the hallways of this building, and it's all laid out nice and properly."

The sheriff's office has 11 functional areas within the building, Willis said, and a study showed "eight were rated as poor, and three were rated as fair."

He added, "A poor rating signifies the building condition suffers from significant deficiencies in design, construction, or maintenance."

Of particular concern in the building is the basement where evidence is stored and where moisture gathers, and the building leaks and mold builds up. It is mitigated, but then it returns.

Willis said, "The entire lower area, which we refer to as the basement, suffers from moisture and ventilation problems due to substandard waterproofing, exterior wall assemblies, and antiquated, underperforming mechanical systems. It's hard to provide updated and modern mechanical systems in a building that's approaching its 106th birthday."

Willis also showed pictures of a hallway and stairwell where they bring "individuals that they have need to detain, innocent until proven guilty. But they have to bring these individuals in through this door and move up and down these steps to get them to a place where they can actually have them in safe conduct until further notice," adding, "they don't all come in willingly."

Willis said, "It's not if we need to do this,

it's how soon we place a level of urgency on it to do it now versus later."

Cox said, "I'm not pressing the county of doing anything. I just wanted to show you guys what our working conditions are. We've had a couple of areas where we could move to, and my goal is to save the taxpayers money."

Cox added, "I don't need an extravagant building." Willis said the idea would be a com-

plex of buildings housing various entities such as maintenance, canine and administration.

Cox noted, "Evidence for court, that's a big deal too. So, in our basement, we keep evidence for court there. So as the sheriff's responsibility for that, I don't want to lose a case that we have going forward in court because the basement floods. The security for the building also. The deputies really have no secured area to go to."

Commissioner Vice President Catherine Grasso asked, "Is your evidence room laid out that it accommodates all of the evidence that comes into you? Is it secure or you just don't have enough space to make everything as secure as you would like?"

Cox answered, "So the space is running very thin. We've grown since we took over the building in 2002."

Grasso said, "When I have been in there, you all seem to be on top of each other. Everything is jammed in there."

Deputy Director of General Services Tom Homes said the existing building is 20,000 square feet, but Willis said because of the two new substations, a new facility may not need to be that large. As yet there is no cost estimate, Willis noted.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Calvert County Prescription Medication Take-Back Day

Saturday, April 27, 2024
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

No questions asked!

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- Keep prescription medications from being abused.
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- Syringe disposal and Narcan training will be available at Northeast and Southern Community Centers.
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Drop Off Locations:

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



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Local Bills Pass 2024 General Assembly

County Commissioners' Top Priorities



By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again is a motto that often applies to the Maryland General Assembly. The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners' top two legislative priorities passed the 2024 General Assembly after failing in previous years.

One of the bills allows the county to regulate panhandling and the other gives the commissioners authority to establish a procedure for giving a preference to county firms in the bidding process.

The synopsis of the two bills is as follows:

- HB 766 — Prohibiting a person from standing in a roadway, median divider, or intersection to solicit money or donations from the occupant of a vehicle in Calvert County.
- HB 835 — Authorizing the County Commissioners of Calvert County to enact an ordinance that establishes a local percentage preference for certain procurement contracts; and requiring the County Commissioners to comply with certain provisions of law under certain circumstances.

"This year we did very well with the legislative effort," said commissioners President Buddy Hance at the commissioners' April 9 meeting the day after the

session ended its 90-day run.

County Attorney John Norris is the county's point person for their legislative package of supported bills. Norris regularly updates the board on bill status throughout the legislative session.

The local preference bill failed twice previously. It has been touted by the Calvert County Chamber of Commerce and the county's Economic development department.

State's Attorney Robert Harvey issued a press release on the panhandling bill that said, "A law that would prohibit the roadside solicitation of money in Calvert County was passed by the Maryland General Assembly on Friday, April 5, 2024. If signed by the Governor, the law will take effect on October 1, 2024.

"The legislation makes it unlawful for any person to stand in a roadway, median, or intersection and solicit money or donations from the occupants of a vehicle. Violators will face a maximum punishment of 60 days in jail and a \$500 fine.

"The legislation was introduced by the Calvert County delegation to the General Assembly (Senators Jackson and Bailey; Delegates Fisher, Long and Morgan) and supported by the Board of County Commissioners and the State's Attorney. A similar law is already in effect in Charles County."

dickmyers@countytimes.net

'McConkey Bill' Passes General Assembly

Aimed at Strengthening Ethics Law

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

It became known as the McConkey Bill during the 2024 Maryland General Assembly session that concluded at midnight Monday, April 8. The cross-filed bills sponsored by the Calvert County House Delegation and Senator Michael Jackson (D: 27th) were aimed at preventing in the future the situation in 2019 in which former commissioner Kelly McConkey voted to add two properties he owns to the Huntingtown Town Center.

The bill's synopsis states: "Requiring the conflict of interest provisions enacted by Calvert County to include certain provisions relating to judicial relief for certain violations of the county's conflict of interest provisions; requiring the ethics provisions enacted by Calvert County to include a provision requiring the Calvert County Ethics Commission to make public any recommendation it makes to expel a Commissioner; and requiring Calvert County to enact a law or regulation that authorizes removal of a county elected official under certain circumstances."

The bill was supported by the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) but wasn't part of their annual legislative package. It was suggested by advocacy group Calvert Citizens United (CCU) and Delegate Mark Fisher (R: 27C) assumed the leadership in getting the bill crafted.

CCU's Myra Gowans said in reaction to the bill's passage, "For five grueling years, Calvert Citizens United, Inc. was snickered at by the County Attorney's Office and the previous Board of County Commissioners because they knew Commissioner Kelly McConkey would beat the citizens at every turn and his



Myra Gowans of Calvert Citizens United

Huntingtown property would become a new Royal Farms convenience store.

"Remarkably, CCU worked its way to Maryland's Supreme Court. The Supremes ruled McConkey violated his Code of Ethics and simultaneously denied/dissmissed his appeal. Calvert Citizens United, working with Calvert Republican and Democratic Central Committees, the new BOCC and the entire Maryland Delegation initiated by Delegate Mark Fisher, unanimously passed Bill 834 which will forever eliminate elected commissioners that even attempt to violate their oath of office and ethics code. Calvert voters will long remember they contributed \$150,000 in legal fees to stop Kelly McConkey."

McConkey, who was an elected school board member before being elected county commissioner, is a candidate this year to return to the school board. He was defeated by Catherine Grasso in the 2020 Republican primary in a bid for a second commissioner term.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Huntingtown Man Charged in Multiple- Injury Accident

Troopers from the Maryland State Police La Plata Barrack responded on Sunday, March 31 at approximately 11 p.m. to the area of MD Rt. 231 (Prince Frederick Road) and MD Rt. 381 in Hughesville for a two-vehicle motor vehicle collision with injuries.

Investigation revealed that a Chrysler Town & Country van was disabled and parked on the right shoulder of westbound MD Rt. 231, west of MD Rt 381. At this time, a Honda Accord being operated by Troy A. Jones of Huntingtown was traveling west on MD Rt. 231 when he lost control of his vehicle, ran off the road to the right and struck the rear of the Chrysler that was parked on the right shoulder.

All 13 passengers (five adults, eight juveniles) in the Chrysler were transported to area hospitals with non-life-threatening injuries.

The driver of the Honda Accord, Troy Jones showed signs of impairment, was



Troy Austin Jones (photo from 2018)

placed under arrest for driving under the influence, and charged accordingly.

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

Press Release from MDP La Plata Barrack.

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Two Ballot Questions Proposed for Chesapeake Beach

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Chesapeake Beach Mayor Pat Mahoney has proposed that two questions be included on the November town election ballot. They are:

Question 1: "Do you support the State of Maryland permitting expanded gaming (i.e. additional electronic bingo machines, casino slots, table gaming) to venue(s) in the Town of Chesapeake Beach."

Question 2: "Do you support the Town of Chesapeake Beach to continue to limit attendance at Bayfront Park to Town residents and their guests."

According to information supplied to the town council at an April 9 work session: "The results of the 2020 ballot questions are that 985 of the 1272 (77.4 percent) votes received voted against the support of full casino gambling licenses in the Town of Chesapeake Beach ("Question 1"). Further 903 of the 1272 votes were opposed to awarding sports betting licenses in the Town of Chesapeake Beach ("Question 2")."

Mahoney said regarding the gaming question, "This basically is to do a refresh of what we did four years ago. I can tell you that to my surprise and delight, when I've been up on State Circle up in Annapolis, talking about the different bills, and you'd be surprised

at what bills go up there. They have some wacky bills, but they want to hear from you. And they like hearing from mayors because we're boots on the ground, especially if it affects us. And what I've heard over and over again from the top senators up there was that this is really great, looking at the one we did last time, this is really, really great."

Mahoney was asked why the sports betting question wasn't being revisited. He responded that it's a dead issue. "There's been licenses awarded. There's one license awarded in town right here for a brick and mortar across the street," but he added, "Nationally, 75 percent of sports bets used the phone, 25 percent brick and mortar, which is still plenty of money for somebody that gets a license for brick and mortar. And there was a big snafu at the time when it passed because there was a clause (that) it wouldn't allow it anywhere else in town, but the place it was awarded to never went up with it. And the reasons why, because Marylanders like to bet on their phone, and it's like 90 to 95 percent."

The answers to the ballot questions would be advisory for the next mayor and town council.

Regarding the beach restriction question, that is now in place with the exception for first responders. Mahoney said it would be up to the next council to set any additional



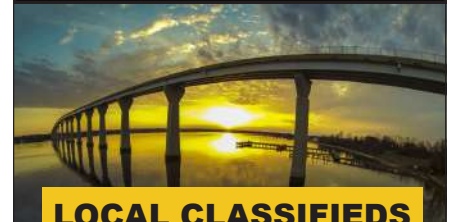
Chesapeake Beach Mayor Pat Mahoney

restrictions or exceptions as the result of the response to the ballot question.

The council does not vote at work sessions. The next town meeting has been rescheduled for May 7. That would be the earliest the ballot questions could be formalized.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

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Deputies Apprehend Ulta Theft Suspects



Yeiner Jose Rodriguez Barcelo Yoncar Alberto Rainoso Stefani Andrea Urbano-Zapata Raimil Marquez Jimenez Adony Josue Carana

Deputies from the Calvert County Sheriff's Office Patrol Bureau responded on April 4 at approximately 4:37 p.m. to Ulta Beauty located at 845 Solomons Island Road N. in Prince Frederick for the report of a theft that had just occurred.

Preliminary investigation revealed two males and one female entered the store and placed numerous colognes and perfumes into bags and fled the store. Store employees advised the suspects stole approximately \$10,000 worth of merchandise. After fleeing the store, witnesses observed all 3 suspects enter a gray Mercury Montego that fled northbound on Rt. 4.

Deputy MacWilliams located the suspect vehicle traveling northbound on Rt. 4 turning onto Rt. 2 and initiated a traffic stop in the area of Pushaw Station Road in Sunderland. During the traffic stop, five occupants were located in the suspect vehicle along with numerous bags of perfumes and colognes

in plain view. The total value of the stolen items was approximately \$7,694.

All 5 suspects, **Yeiner Jose Rodriguez Barcelo**, 27 of Bronx, NY, **Yoncar Alberto Rainoso**, 21 of Manhattan, NY, **Stefani Andrea Urbano-Zapata**, 21 of no fixed address, **Raimil Marquez Jimenez**, 25 of Washington DC, and **Adony Josue Carana**, 27 of Manhattan NY, were placed into custody and transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with Theft: \$1500 to Under \$25,000. Further investigation revealed, Rodriguez Barcelo was wanted on an open warrant from Pennsylvania for Felony Retail Theft related to thefts at Ulta stores in PA.

Sheriff Cox would like to personally thank the witnesses on scene that went above and beyond to promptly call 911 and provide details of the suspects and suspect's vehicle. Your efforts are greatly appreciated.

Basement Fire Damages Huntingtown Home



A fire originating in the basement of a two-story, single-family home in Huntingtown on April 4 caused \$125,000.00 damage to the structure and \$25,000 damage to its contents.

The Huntingtown Volunteer Fire Department responded to the call at 1:11 p.m. to 2300 Stella Drive. It took 40 firefighters 30 minutes to bring the blaze under control.

According to the Maryland State Fire Marshal's Office. "The fire originated and

was contained in the basement of the home. No injuries were reported. The occupants were assisted by the American Red Cross."

The owner/occupants were listed as George & Connie Smith.

The fire marshal reports a smoke alarm was present and activated. There was no fire alarm or sprinkler system.

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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, April 11

Alzheimer's Caregivers Support

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
6:30-8 p.m.

Get tips and support from other caregivers. Facilitated by Jeannette Findley & JC Hooker. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Fri, April 12

On Pins & Needles

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

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

Rooftop Car and Truck Cruize Nite

4185 Mears Ave., Chesapeake Beach
4-8 p.m.

Fifty feet up on the rooftop of the Rod 'N' Reel parking garage by the Chesapeake Bay. Every second Friday, April through October. FREE to all. 866 312 5596

Learn to Square Dance

Southern Community Center
20 Appeal Lane in Lusby
7-8:30 p.m.

Learn Modern Western Square Dance. You don't need a partner, just your desire to have lots of fun. No experience necessary, all you need to know is how to walk. It is friendship set to music. Bring your friends, neighbors, date, kids (over 12). For more information,

call Paula at 301-872-4547 or Rita at 410-610-4798. Or visit our web page at www.aquasquaredancers.org

Sat, April 13

MAEVE Community Book Swap

Dunkirk District Park
Noon-2:30 p.m.

Join MAEVE Northern Calvert at the main park pavilion for a Community Book Swap & Share Event! Participants are encouraged to bring gently used books to donate, then browse the selection and take more home to fill their shelves! We welcome books for all ages (no reference materials, please). Bringing books is not required to participate.

Mon, April 15

Optimist Club Scholarships

Deadline: April 15

The Optimist Club of Calvert is offering college and career/vocational/technical scholarships that total \$17,000. To apply for one of the three scholarships, students must be Calvert County residents and in the graduating class of a Calvert County public school. Application deadline is April 15 and late submissions will not be accepted. For more information, or to obtain an application, go to www.CalvertOptimists.org.

Tue, April 16

Agritourism Workshop

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
5:00-8:00 pm

Led by renowned expert Hugh McPherson. During this engaging workshop participants

will discover the latest trends and strategies in agritourism; Learn how to create a successful business plan for your agritourism venture; Gain insights into marketing and promoting your farm to attract new customers and explore ways to maximize profits through agritourism. This workshop series is proudly presented by the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC)

Spaces are limited to 50 participants, please RSVP now to secure your spot. Included is a complimentary dinner while networking with fellow farmers and entrepreneurs. To register, visit the 'News and Events' page on SMADC.com for more information please contact info@smadc.com

Twin Beaches Branch Grand Opening Ribbon Cutting

New Twin Beaches Branch
4100 5th St, North Beach
2-3 p.m.

IT'S TIME!!! Come celebrate the opening of our new Twin Beaches Branch at the ribbon cutting! Join the Board of County Commissioners, Calvert Library, local and state dignitaries and of course all of our awesome customers in celebrating this exciting day! Please RSVP. Expect standing room only and dress for the weather! 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Dine Out Book Discussion

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
6-8 p.m.

Join us this month to discuss "Station Eleven" by Emily St. John Mandel. How to find hope after a pandemic. What matters when the world crashes? Join us at 6pm for dinner. Discussion starts at 7pm. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Astronomy Night

Calvert Library Fairview Branch
Rt. 4 and Chaneyville Road, Owings
7:50-8:50 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, April 17

Chromebook Giveaways

Southern Community Center
20 Appeal Lane, Lusby
1:00pm-6:00pm.

Calvert County and Calvert Library are excited to be able to give one FREE Chromebook to qualified households. Please see the qualification requirements before making a pick-up appointment. We understand that demand may be higher than our supply of Chromebooks. If you don't receive a laptop at one of our events, we encourage you to check out our lending program. Customers can borrow a Wi-Fi-enabled Chromebook, a mobile hotspot or both for a normal borrowing period of 21 days with a library card. 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Tween Book Club

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

Roller Girl by Victoria Jamieson. A graphic novel adventure about a girl who discovers roller derby right as she and her best friend are growing apart. 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>

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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

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CALVERT COUNTY INFORMATION & EVENTS

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

UPCOMING MEETINGS

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

Board of County Commissioners Meeting

Tuesday, April 16, 2024, 10 a.m.,
Commissioners' Hearing Room, 175 Main Street, Prince Frederick

Boards and Commissions Meetings

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

Architectural Review Committee Town Center Meetings:

- Dunkirk: Thursday, April 11, 5-6 p.m.
- Huntingtown: Thursday, April 11, 7-8 p.m.
- Lusby: Monday, April 15, 2-3 p.m.
- Owings: Wednesday, April 17, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Environmental Commission Meeting
Monday, April 15, 6 p.m., Calvert Library Prince Frederick

Zoning Ordinance Update

Public Forum: Draft 2023/24 Calvert County Zoning Ordinance Update, Thursday, April 11, 7 p.m., Harriet E. Brown Community Center

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

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

FLOOD MITIGATION PLAN

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

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



ANNUAL COUNTY TAX SALE

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



HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION

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



PAPER SHREDDING EVENT

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

Primary Election Day is Tuesday, May 14

UPCOMING EVENTS:

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

Voter Registration Deadline
Tuesday, April 23

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



CAPITAL REGION HONOR FLIGHT

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

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



FLOOD MITIGATION PLAN

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CALVERT COUNTY Farmers Market



NORTH BEACH FARMERS MARKET OPENS
Saturday, April 13, 8-11:30 a.m.



CALVERT LIBRARY TWIN BEACHES BRANCH RIBBON CUTTING

Join the Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday, April 16 at 2 p.m. for the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Calvert Library Twin Beaches Branch located at 4100 5th St. in North Beach.

911 RECRUITMENT

The Calvert County Emergency Communications is looking for highly motivated, people-oriented candidates to join the team. Make a difference in your community and in people's lives.

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St. Mary's Community Calendar

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

Thu, Apr 11

Coffee with the Sheriff

Garvey Senior Activity Center
23115 Leonard Hall Dr., Leonardtown
10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Talk to Sheriff Steve Hall about your concerns and learn more about the community during Coffee with the Sheriff.

Primary Election Candidate Forum

Lexington Park Library
21677 FDR Blvd., Lexington Park
5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

An opportunity to hear candidates express their ideas and respond to questions.

- 5:00–5:30: Meet and Greet in the Library Lobby
- 5:30 until completion: Candidate Forum in Meeting Rooms A & B
 - » Judge of the Circuit Court Circuit 7
 - » Board of Education At Large
 - » Board of Education District 2
 - » Board of Education District 4

This forum is sponsored by the League of Women Voters of St. Mary's County, St. Mary's County NAACP Branch 7025, the

Center for the Study of Democracy at St. Mary's College of Maryland, and the St. Mary's County Library.

Fri, Apr 12

2024 Caregivers Conference

University System of Maryland at Southern Maryland
44219 Airport Rd., California
8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

The Annual Southern Maryland Caregivers' Conference is traditionally held in Spring and alternates between St. Mary's, Charles, and Calvert Counties. This year's Southern Maryland Caregivers Conference will be held on Friday, April 12, from 8 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at the University System of Maryland at Southern Maryland (44219 Airport Road, California, MD).

Designed for the family caregiver, this one-day event is a wonderful opportunity to enrich one's knowledge and skills in caring for an aging individual or for someone with disability in the community. The conference fee includes a continental breakfast, lunch, conference materials, exposure to service providers in the exhibition area,

and the opportunity to attend professionally presented educational sessions on caregiving-related topics.

Registration for this event is required. For a complete list of speakers and a registration form, visit www.stmaryscountymd.gov/docs/Caregivers_Conference_Program_2024.pdf.

The conference is sponsored by St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services (DAHS), Calvert County Office on Aging, and the Charles County Community Services' Aging & Human Services Division. For more information, contact Rebecca Kessler, DAHS Home & Community Based Services Division Manager, at 301-475-4200, ext. 1061, or by email at Rebecca.Kessler@stmaryscountymd.gov.

Sat, Apr 13

Community Shred & Medication Take Back Day

St. Mary's Governmental Center
41780 Baldrige St., Leonardtown
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Do you have paper documents with per-

sonal information that you'd like to purge? Or do you have unused, unwanted, or expired medications in your cabinets? This is your chance to dispose of them safely at the Community Shred & Medication Take Back Day!

Participants may bring up to six boxes of documents to the site. Materials that will be accepted include all types of paper. Three ring binders will not be accepted. Participants are asked to refrain from bringing newspapers to put in the shred truck.

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

Pork Loin and Beef Sandwich Sale

American Legion Post 221
21690 Colton Point Rd., Avenue
11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

American Legion Post 221 is sponsoring a pork loin and beef sandwich sale. Pork loin, sliced roast beef, and BBQ beef sandwiches will be sold on both Saturday and Sunday. The event will be from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and sandwiches will cost \$8.00 each. For more information e-mail us at alpost221@aol.com or call 301-481-6625.



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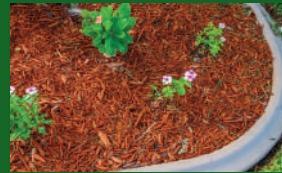
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In Remembrance

P3A in 1964 when Buddy was transferred to the Patuxent River Naval Air Station in Maryland, where he was honorably discharged on August 20, 1965. However, Buddy's love for flying did not stop when he left the Navy; he went on to earn his pilot's license and became a certified flight instructor for eight years.

After leaving the Navy, Buddy began his 34-year civil service career for the Department of Defense at Webster Field in September 1965, where he specialized in radio communications systems for Navy auxiliary ships and Marine Corps communications and landing systems. Buddy oversaw various programs that advanced our technical capabilities and helped secure our national defense. For example, in 1975 his program built the AN/TSC-85 high frequency ("HF") communication system, which improved the termination reliability of the Marine Corps' HF communications, their primary mode of communication at the time, from 15% to better than 95% accuracy. He also oversaw the development of the Marine Corps Scanning Beam landing system, AN/TRN28, which provided helicopter pilots with more precise data for a safer instrument-controlled landing.

Buddy retired from the civil service in 1999, but was not yet ready to stop learning or working. He achieved his Bachelor of Science from Alameda University with a major in Electronics Technology, and went on to work for Eagan, McAllister Associates (EMA) and then for The MIL Corporation until he finally retired in 2015. While Buddy had many adventures and successes in his career, the best part was the friendships he made with his colleagues. He wanted to specifically honor his friendships with Dave Larson, John Richards, and Joe Knoefel who remained close friends long after they retired.

Throughout his life, Buddy had a passion for the drums and was a self-taught musician. He started playing the drums in High School where he joined a band that made a few jazz albums. He continued playing drums while in the Navy playing for various bands during his off hours and even stepped in for some famous acts that were on tour. In fact, playing drums in a band is how he

met his first wife, Carolyn "Kay" Owens (d. 1994), who was a school teacher at Great Mills High School. His rendition of the song "Does your chewing gum lose its flavor on the bedpost overnight" won her heart.

Buddy and Carolyn married on August 21, 1965, the day after he was discharged from the Navy, and they settled in Leonardtown, Maryland where they had two children, Daniel and Carrie. As a young father he enjoyed coaching his son's little league baseball teams. Buddy later volunteered as assistant football coach at Leonardtown High School.

Buddy met his second wife, Joyce, in September 1995 through a colleague at work who played matchmaker and it was love at first date. After a long courtship, they married on August 12, 2000, officially bringing Joyce and her daughter, Lindsay Bradburn, into the family. Despite having two kids already in college, Buddy eagerly accepted the opportunity to be a dad once again to Lindsay.

While having been confirmed as a child in the Catholic Church, Buddy joined the Leonardtown Baptist Church with Joyce, in 1998, when they were both baptized. Their love for Christ and desire to serve others led them to prison ministry where they served for 10 years at the St. Mary's County Detention Center. While Buddy served with Pastor Gordon Bacon of Rushing Winds Ministry they saw the recidivism rate drop to fewer than 20%. Buddy's favorite Bible verse was 1 Peter 4:8, "Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins."

Buddy also volunteered with the Rotary Club of Lexington Park where he served on the Scholarship Committee and the Oyster Board. This was one of his favorite volunteer activities as it allowed him to greet thousands of Southern Marylanders as they entered the gates for the Oyster Festival. Buddy's volunteer work with the Oyster Festival actually began when he served as President for the St. George's Optimist Club, where he helped to create "crab chili" in order to entice sales during a very warm weekend. This caught the attention of a reporter from the Food Network and began

the tradition of crab chili.

After retirement, Buddy enjoyed traveling with Joyce to various foreign destinations, returning regularly to Italy on tours led by Vincenzo D'arista. They loved discovering hidden spots tourists often miss, dining with local residents, and enjoying the "best gelato in all of Italy" at every town they visited. Their travels also took them to Ireland, where Buddy reunited with a distant family member of the Duggan clan. After a chance encounter, he warmly greeted Buddy and Joyce, taking the day off from work to show them around the small town of Roscarbury.

Buddy loved to fish and golf - both of which brought him equal fun and frustration. He often carried a set of clubs in his truck and was easily persuaded to hit the green even if he was already at work, ready to walk into the building. When Buddy and Joyce bought their home on Breton Bay, he quickly bought a boat and enjoyed fishing every chance he got. Buddy delighted in hosting family and friends with Joyce for both grand holiday gatherings or a simple BBQ after a day of swimming and fishing. Above all, Buddy most enjoyed sitting with Joyce in the evenings as the sun set over the bay, observing God's glory and the serenity of the water.

Buddy is survived by his wife Joyce; and

children Daniel and his wife Jennifer of Herndon, VA; Carrie of Falls Church, VA; Lindsay and her husband Robert of Tall Timbers, MD; and his four grandchildren, Blaine, Brooke, Emily, and Caroline. Buddy was a proud husband, father, and "Pop Pop," ready to spoil his grandchildren with whatever adventure or treat they desired. Buddy's greatest desire is that his family and friends find the same comfort and faith in Christ that he did and understand that it is through God's grace from our belief in Jesus Christ as our savior, and not our works, that we are saved.

The family will receive friends for a visitation on Friday, April 12, 2024, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. with a memorial service beginning at 12:00 p.m., at Leonardtown Baptist Church, 23520 Hollywood Road, Leonardtown, MD 20650. Interment will follow the service at Charles Memorial Gardens, 26325 Point Lookout Road, Leonardtown, MD 20650.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to one of the following organizations:

- Hospice of St. Mary's:
<https://giving.medstarhealth.org/medstarhealth/get-involved/donate/hospice>
- St. Jude Children's Research Hospital:
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REMEMBRANCES
IN PRINT & ONLINE



County Times

St. Mary's County • Calvert County

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.

Kenneth Moore, 78

Kenneth Carter Moore, 78, of Mechanicsville, MD, formerly of Dayton, OH, passed away on March 28, 2024 in Leonardtown, MD. Born on April 6, 1945 in Dayton, OH, he was the son of the late Ethel F. Hunkle and the late Carter P. Moore. Kenneth was the loving husband of the late Charlyne A. Moore, whom he married on August 13, 1971 in South Carolina, and who preceded him in death on February 24, 2006. He is survived by his children, Kimberely Shinaberry of WV, Joseph Carullo of WV, and Tony Carullo of Woodward, OK, his sister, Carol A. Moore of OH, as well as six grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Kenneth graduated from Tecumseh High School in 1963 and served in the United States Navy for 25 years, from September 1963 to September 1997. He moved to St. Mary's County, MD from Bremerton, WA in January 1990, and was a Nuclear Engineer for Calvert Cliffs, retiring in 2021.

All services will be private.

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

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

Rebecca Avery, 48



Rebecca Lynn Avery, 48, passed away on April 1, 2024. Born in Marlow Heights, MD on September 22, 1975. She is the daughter of Glenn Michael Parks and

Karen Lynn Parks.

Rebecca worked as an assistant manager for the family automotive business. She was blessed with one daughter, Sophia who was the highlight of her life.

She was an amazing artist and lover of people and socializing. Everyone who met her became an endeared close friend. Rebecca had a strong love for Jehovah and devotion to her faith. She enjoyed spending time with her daughter and cousins. As well, as thrifting and taking spontaneous trips to visit family and the beach.

Rebecca is survived by her parents, Glenn Parks and Karen Parks of Charlotte Hall, MD; daughter, Olivia (Sophia) Avery of Charlotte Hall, MD; sister, Melanie Parks of Alexandria, VA; brother, David Parks of Hollywood, MD; nieces and nephew Courtney, Samantha, and Michael

The family will receive friends for

Rebecca's Life Celebration on Saturday, April 20, 2024, from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm at Brinsfield Funeral Home, 30195 Three Notch Road, Charlotte Hall, MD 20622. Interment is private.

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

Buddy Owens, 81



Floyd Daniel "Buddy" Owens passed away peacefully on April 2, 2024, at his home in Leonardtown, Maryland, at the age of 81, with his loving family and pastors at his side after an honorable and long battle with cancer. Buddy lived a life full of adventures, a career of service to our nation, and had a passion for giving back through his numerous volunteer activities.

Buddy was born in northern New Jersey, to Mabel Etta Duggan (d. 1968), and Floyd Daniel Owens, Sr (d. 1959), a little more than five months after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. His father enlisted in the Navy and served on the Destroyer Escort, USS Robert Brazire. They initially provided escort services in the North Atlantic and later tran-

sited through the Panama Canal to the South Pacific where they stayed until the end of WWII. Buddy had an older sister, Frances E. "Nancy" Thalmann (d. 2023).

Buddy graduated from Woodbridge High School, NJ in 1961, and since his father had passed away two years earlier and money was tight, he followed his father's lead and enlisted in the Navy. After boot camp at the Naval Training Center in Great Lakes, Illinois, he received orders to Navy Aviation Electronics Technician A School in Millington, Tennessee. His first duty station was with a VP-49, P5M anti-submarine warfare squadron, at the Naval Operating Base in Bermuda. They patrolled the Mid-Atlantic, surviving many transits through the Bermuda Triangle.

Shortly after arriving at VP-49, he was assigned as a radio operator on Crew 3, and was responsible for sending and receiving message traffic, as well as managing the aircraft's electrical system. They were soon directed to Guantanamo Bay, where they flew during the Cuban Missile Crisis, monitoring progress of Russian vessels. Without any formal training in Cyrillic, Buddy was tasked with documenting the names of each of the Russian vessels. While they knew tensions were high, they had no idea they were on ground zero for a possible nuclear war.

The VP-49 squadron transitioned to the

MEDICATION TAKEBACK DAY



Saturday, April 13 9 am – 1 pm

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Wanderings of an Aimless Mind

by Shelby Oppermann



Change is Good

I always want to keep my Easter and rabbit decorations up longer than Easter. I have a thing for rabbits. The rose theme usually takes over after this. My Bavarian china with the hand painted roses will remain on the dining hutch until it's time to switch to my more recent Old Country Roses china for the dining room's decoration. It's probably silly, but I love this changeover of seasonal decorations. My mother kept the same plastic flowers up for years – nothing ever changed in our house, except for the Christmas tree going up a few weeks before the day, and Easter baskets out on Easter. My mother was not into any kind of decorating, but I love it. Some years I may not decorate as much, and now it may take me two weeks to do what I used to do in one day, but I love each holiday and change of season. Of course, taking down and putting away decorations seems to take even longer each year. The change of seasons in decorations and temperatures is good and keeps things interesting, yet still has constant, cherished traditions.



This year, we had two separate days for Easter; Easter Sunday of course at church and then afterwards at our house with my husband's family, and then we had one with my sons and my youngest son's girlfriend and his two young boys this past Saturday. I love making Easter baskets, but now that most of the grandkids and a great nephew are either away at college or away with friends, the number of baskets keeps dwindling. But the tradition remains alive, and I will keep doing it as long as I can.

My husband smoked a ham for each day, so we've decided we are hammed out until next Easter. We didn't even want to save the hambones for ham and bean soup like usual. That is one tradition that went away this year... maybe next year we will be ready to eat it again.

It looks like some really warm days are ahead for us already. I think the day that you are reading this is supposed to be 76 but will probably be hotter than that for us than what the DC TV weather people predict. That is officially into miserable heat for me. I used to love the mid-70s, but now the mid-50s to low 60s is perfect for me – this has been a change in later life that is not so good – not being able to tolerate any heat. Now I am waiting for all the leaves to come out to shade me when I am outside. On nice days I like to take the business phone, calendar, and work order sheets outside to schedule pool openings. I mean if it's a choice between sitting inside by the phone or sitting outside where Mindy can lounge in the hot sun, and I can get work done, then I am going to sit outside.

You can already start to hear people mowing their lawns more and more. My husband has mowed three times already, but he is very particular about his grass. I did notice that since he has added a large rake attachment to the back of the mower that it is reminiscent of when he would rake the ballfield at St. Mary's Landing. You probably remember there was a softball field where the big outdoor shed sales are now. He took care of that ballfield like it was another child. I remember trying to get the orange dirt out of softball clothes – I learned a lot about all the different stain fighters for washing clothes back then. But long gone is the old St. Mary's Landing and the ballfield, now a wonderful change for the property has occurred with Southern Maryland Produce setting up almost directly across the street from where they were at the Farmer's Market. I hear they are revamping the inside of the building as well. This is a great change.

The biggest change this past week was the total solar eclipse, which for our part of Maryland turned out to be only about 85% of an eclipse. My husband wasn't as impressed as I was - I thought it was still pretty neat to see since the next total solar eclipse isn't expected until August 23rd, 2044. Naturally, I hope I am still here to see that one too... though there are some changes I'm not quite ready for yet.

To each new day's adventure, Shelby Please send your comments or ideas to: shelbys.wanderings@yahoo.com or find me on Facebook.

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What should you know about long-term care?

We all hope to remain healthy and independent throughout our lives – but life can be unpredictable. If you were ever to need some type of long-term care, would you be financially prepared?

Long-term care encompasses everything from the services of a home health aide to a stay in an assisted living facility to a long residence in a nursing home. You may never need any of these kinds of care, but the odds aren't necessarily in your favor: Someone turning age 65 today has almost a 70% chance of needing some type of long-term care services and support in their remaining years, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

And all types of long-term care can involve considerable financial expense. The median annual cost for a home health aide's services is more than \$60,000 per year, and it's more than \$100,000 per year for a private room in a nursing home, according to Genworth, an insurance company. Furthermore, contrary to many people's expectations, Medicare usually pays very little of these costs.

Of course, some people expect their family will be able to take care of their long-term care needs. But this may not be a viable strategy. For one thing, your family members simply may not have the skills needed to give you the type of care you may require. Also, by the time you might need help, your grown children or other family members might not live in your area.

So, you may need to protect yourself and your loved ones from the potential costs of long-term care. Basically, you've got two main choices: You could self-insure or you could transfer the risk by purchasing some type of long-term care insurance.

If you have considerable financial resources, you might find self-insuring to be attractive, rather than choosing insurance and paying policy premiums. You may wish to keep an emergency savings or investment account that's earmarked exclusively for long-term care to help avoid relying on your other retirement accounts. But self-insuring has two main drawbacks. First, because long-term care can be costly, you might need to plan for a significant amount. And second, it will be quite hard to predict exactly how much money you'll need, because so many variables are involved – your age when you start needing care, interest rates or inflation, the cost of care in your area, the type of care you'll require, the length of time you'll need care, and so on.

As an alternative to self-insuring, you could purchase long-term care insurance, which can provide benefits for home health care, adult day care and assisted living and nursing home facilities. However, you will need to consider the issues attached to long-term care insurance. For one thing, it can be expensive, though the younger you are when you buy your policy, the more affordable it may be. Also, long-term care policies typically require you to wait a certain amount of time before benefits are paid. But policies vary greatly in what they offer, so, if you are thinking of buying this insurance, you'll want to review options and compare benefits and costs.

In any case, by being aware of the potential need for long-term care, its cost and the ways of paying for it, you'll be able to make the appropriate decisions for your financial situation, your needs and your loved ones.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.

Edward Jones, Member SIPC

Contributed by David McDonough

Financial Advisor at Edward Jones

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They Said Yes!

Congratulations to the happy couples who applied for Marriage Licenses in St. Mary's County during the month of March. Best wishes to all!

Tatiana Montes Acevedo, 26, Mechanicsville, MD
Matthew William Hodges, Sr., 39, Mechanicsville, MD

Kara Elizabeth Koepfinger, 31, White Plains, MD
Tyler Clay Walter, 31, White Plains, MD

Della Jo Mcginn, 59, Brandywine, MD
Bryon Michael Smith, 56, Brandywine, MD

Christopher Austin Combs, 28, Hollywood, MD
April Angelique Adams, 27, Hollywood, MD

Garret Brady Harim, 27, Mechanicsville, MD
Destinee Michelle Lape, 27, Mechanicsville, MD

Kevin Robert Saverko, 37, Lexington Park, MD
Thi Dieu Linh Dao, 32, Lexington Park, MD

Jordyn Malek Johnson, 20, California, MD
Emily Christine Holba Delorey, 20, California, MD

Leon Juldeh Koroma, 31, Valley Lee, MD
Margaret Elste Grollman, 28, Valley Lee, MD

Cortney Lynn Buckler, 32, Mechanicsville, MD
Joseph Alan Thompson, 37, Mechanicsville, MD

Cody Merrill Brickerd, 27, Mechanicsville, MD
Haley Lynne Pilkerton, 23, Mechanicsville, MD

Rebecca Kate Newkirk, 33, Hughesville, MD
Andrew Charles Kaplin, 40, La Plata, MD

Javier Ernesto Rodriguez Flores, 35, Hollywood, MD
Beronica Marisol Avelar Mojica, 34, Hollywood, MD

April Marie Schrader, 36, Lexington Park, MD
Jeffrey Scott Allan Causby, 38, Lexington Park, MD

Vivian Rebecca Lee, 26, Hollywood, MD
Oloruntobi Abayomi Akinrinlola, 32, Hollywood, MD

Adam Nicholas Glidden, 37, California, MD
Katarina Marie Eyster, 27, California, MD

Michael James Mathis, 36, Sterling, VA
Xinyu Yao, 29, Sterling, VA

Kayla Elizabeth Fassel, 28, Bushwood, MD
Dean Hamilton Cogburn, 28, Bushwood, MD

Andrew Dawson Rioux, 22, Drayden, MD
Rebecca Virginia Boerner, 21, Forest Grove, OR

Elizabeth Jane Mclawhorn, 31, New York, NY
Brandon Miller Dillow, 33, New York, NY

Christine Renee Woods, 55, Lexington Park, MD
Kenneth Murray Cooper, 62, Lexington Park, MD

Lisa Marie Van Tassel, 46, Chaptico, MD
David Michael Blosser, 43, Chaptico, MD

Anthony Jose Lucas, 28, California, MD
Sarah Nicole Shortall, 27, California, MD

William Mckinley Branch, Jr., 55, La Plata, MD
Elaine Lisa Lewis, 49, La Plata, MD

Simone Patrice Thompson, 20, Lexington Park, MD
Xavier Thomas Lane, 21, Lexington Park, MD

Olivia Grace Flack, 24, Lexington Park, MD
Jacob Galen Dunagan, 26, Lexington Park, MD

Caroline Michelle Raley, 31, Leonardtown, MD
Andrew Weil Foursha, 42, Leonardtown, MD

Ryley Cathryn Montgomery, 26, Nottingham, MD
Craig Anthony Spicer, 30, Nottingham, MD

Lauren Christine Combs, 36, Leonardtown, MD
Brandon James Donnelly, 35, Leonardtown, MD

Jakita Rushell Cash, 38, Lexington Park, MD
Matthew Tyrone Carter, Jr., 35, Lexington Park, MD

Brianna Leigh Floyd, 29, Leonardtown, MD
Tyler Shane Abell, 29, Leonardtown, MD

Josephine Solis Inaldo, 28, La Plata, MD
Jonathan Marshall Coombs, 27, La Plata, MD

Anna Catherine Lahman, 24, La Plata, MD
James Gilbert Adkins, Iii, 26, Waldorf, MD

Jennifer Renee Molitor, 30, Lexington Park, MD
Kevin Michael Rodgers, 39, Lexington Park, MD

Rodrekia Chanel Johnson, 43, Brandywine, MD
Marco Jovon Washington, 46, Brandywine, MD

Colby Freeman Mast, 35, California, MD
Meredith Gayle Stewart, 30, Lexington Park, MD

John Patrick Sherman, 32, California, MD
Allison Ann Johnson, 30, California, MD

Catherine Elizabeth Raley, 32, Lexington Park, MD
Andrew Gerad Marziani, Jr., 29, Lexington Park, MD

Veronica Michele Lebeau, 23, Nanjemoy, MD
Connor Randolph Welch, 28, Nanjemoy, MD

Caitlin Elizabeth Rotchford, 32, Arlington, VA
Maxwell Oliver Cliff, 28, Arlington, VA

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EVERY DAY



Celebrate Earth Day at Summerseat Farm



The St. Mary's County Commission on the Environment is excited to announce the return of their highly anticipated Earth Day event; taking place on Saturday, April 20, 2024, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the historic Summerseat Farm, located at 26655 Three Notch Road in Mechanicsville. Attendees can look forward to a full day of fun, including an array of environmentally based vendors and organizations, engaging demonstrations, live music, free native plant giveaways, food for purchase, animal encounters, and much more!

Earth Day is open to the public, with free admission and parking. While pre-registration is not required, attendees are encouraged to visit www.facebook.com/GreenInStMarys to confirm their attendance on the "St. Mary's County Earth Day" event page and follow for updates.

Molly Boron, Chair of the St. Mary's County Commission on the Environment, expressed her excitement, "We are thrilled to once again bring the community together to celebrate Earth Day and raise awareness

about environmental conservation. This event is a fantastic opportunity for individuals and families to learn, engage, and take action towards a more sustainable future."

"By raising awareness and fostering a sense of stewardship, events like these play a vital role in protecting and preserving our natural resources and rural heritage for future generations," said Commissioner President Randy Guy. "We hope that residents come out and join us for a great day at the beautiful Summerseat Farm."

Organizers are still accepting vendors for this event. Non-profit organizations are invited to participate free of charge, while businesses can secure vendor space for a fee. All vendor proceeds will support Summerseat Farm's non-profit initiatives.

For more information about Earth Day or to inquire about becoming a vendor, please contact Commission Vice Chair, Melissa Rodriguez at Melissa@SOMDHomeSales.net or (301) 904-6490. For Commission on the Environment information, visit: www.stmaryscountymd.gov/COE.

Volunteers Sought for Boards, Commissions & Committees

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County (CSMC) are seeking applications from residents who are interested in serving on a local Board, Committee, or Commission. Volunteering to serve as member of these groups is an excellent way to meet new people while contributing to the successful operation and development of our community!

Please visit stmaryscountymd.gov/boards for board descriptions and to complete the online application. All applications must include a resume and be submitted online no later than 5 p.m. on Tuesday, May 21, 2024.

Current vacancies:

- Airport Advisory Board
- Board of Trustees Museum Division
- Commission for People with Disabilities
- Commission for Women
- Commission on Aging
- Commission on the Environment
- Economic Development Commission
- Ethics Commission
- Housing Authority Board
- Human Relations Commission

- Police Accountability Board
 - Recreation & Parks Board
 - Transportation Advisory Committee
- Please note the following, additional vacancies have special requirements:

- Agriculture, Seafood & Forestry Commission – Real estate community representative.
- Board of Appeals (Alternate) – Must have some planning experience.
- Family Violence Coordinating Council – Must be a victim of domestic violence or the family of a person who has been a victim of domestic violence.
- Historic Preservation Commission – Discipline of architecture, architectural history, history, or archaeology.
- Metropolitan Commission - Applicants must live in the 3rd District.

Interested residents can complete the online application at stmaryscountymd.gov/boards or call Diane Gleissner at (301) 475-4200 ext. 1707 for more information.

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



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NAVAL AIR STATION PATUXENT RIVER *News*

From 'Doc' to Doctor: Pax Corpsman Earns PhD

Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Quinton Dotson is a very busy man at NAS Patuxent River. Most days you can find him in Building 409, though he's rarely alone.

In his position as Command Climate Specialist, Dotson is sought out by NAS PAX River commanding officer, senior enlisted leaders, and even junior Sailors for guidance on all aspects of equal opportunity policy and execution. He provides analysis and recommendations regarding all informal, formal, and anonymous harassment and prohibited discrimination complaints to the command while adhering to, and informing of, all changes in the OPNAVINST 5354.1H. In addition, he provides CMEO program oversight, assist visits and training to the command and subordinate commands across the region as requested or required. He also interprets the unit's climate status through the Defense Equal Opportunity Climate Survey using statistical quantitative data to detect, identify, and understand risks/strengths within command. And he helps improve the organization's health and performance, evaluates the effectiveness of initiatives and programs, predicts and drives organizational outcomes.

He also just earned his PhD in Research Psychology.

"I have always been that person to ask the

'Why?' and 'How?' questions," said Dotson on what drove him to earn his advanced degree. "I started my academic journey with a simple goal – understanding how to be good at being human. This led me to pursue an Associate degree in Human Biology. Intrigued by the impact of society on behavior, I furthered my exploration with a Bachelor's in Sociology. As my curiosity about the mind deepened, I felt called to obtain my Master's in Psychology. During these years, I realized that my commitment to the field was rooted in a genuine curiosity about the human mind and a belief in the transformative power of research, so I made the deliberate choice to pursue a Ph.D. in Research Psychology."

Dotson's dissertation explored emotional wellbeing of study participants who had previously used the psychoactive Ayahuasca. "Framed within the theoretical underpinnings of Maslow's Extended Hierarchy of Needs Theory, my dissertation considered the spiritual dimensions of participants' experiences, thereby offering a comprehensive understanding of their overall wellbeing."

Dotson says that making the time to earn an education pays dividends.

"I have been a Hospital Corpsman for 17 years and have been lucky enough to experience shipboard operations, Afghanistan

deployments, program management, and have led anywhere from 2- 200 Sailors at one time," said Dotson. "During my time as an enlisted Sailor, I have earned three warfare devices from three different communities – Seabee Combat Warfare, Surface Warfare, and Air Warfare.

If you make school a priority then you will find time to chip away at it and eventually, over time, be able to obtain an advanced degree. My advice is to just do it."

He already has plans for his new credentials. He intends to commission as a naval research psychologist, and bring his skills back to the Sailors.

"My journey from human biology to sociology and psychology reflects a continuous quest to understand the intricate layers of human behavior," said Dotson. "As I have dedicated myself to this pursuit, I am eager to contribute my skills and passion to further the mission of the Navy and its unique research initiatives. I am particularly intrigued by the prospect of exploring the psychological dynamics within naval environments, addressing challenges specific to this context, and developing strategies to optimize the mental and emotional readiness of personnel."

Dotson added that he credits his nearly two decades in the Navy and his exposure



Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Quinton Dotson

to a range of different personnel and communities at sea and ashore with his ability to collaborate and with and strengthen teams, which he hopes to continue as an officer.

"I am genuinely excited about the possibility of contributing to the resilience, performance, and well-being of naval personnel through cutting-edge psychological research," said Dotson. "I am enthusiastic about the opportunity to bring my skills, dedication, and passion to the esteemed team of professionals we call Naval Research Psychologists."

To learn more about academic programs in the U.S. Navy, visit the Navy College website at www.navycollege.navy.mil.

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Leonardtwn Man Arrested on Felony Child Abuse Charges

Deputies from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office have charged Darryl Anthony White Robinite, 32, of Leonardtown, MD, with Felony Child Abuse, Second-Degree Child Abuse, and First- and Second-Degree Assault.

On Thursday, April 4, 2024, at approximately 7:47 p.m., St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Deputies responded to a call for the report of an assault at a residence in Leonardtown and, upon arrival, found a juvenile victim with numerous abrasions to the neck and a laceration to the face.

Following an investigation, Robinite was arrested and transported to the St. Mary's County Detention and Rehabilitation Center to await a bond hearing.



Darryl Anthony White Robinite

Reconstruction Unit Investigating Crash into Holy Face Church

At approximately 1:36 a.m. on Saturday, April 6, 2024, patrol units from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office (SMCSO) were dispatched to a motor vehicle crash on Point Lookout Road in Great Mills, MD. When deputies arrived, they found a 2005 Ford F-150 truck crashed into Holy Face Church, and the driver, the sole occupant of the vehicle, was stuck inside the truck and seriously hurt.

Local fire and emergency medical services personnel extricated the driver, Nicholas Aaron Fondren, 22, of California, MD, from the truck, and he was transported to an area trauma center by Maryland State Police Aviation's Trooper 7 for emergency care.

Due to the nature of the collision, the SMCSO Collision Reconstruction Unit responded to assume the investigation. A preliminary investigation indicates the truck was traveling southbound on Point Lookout Road toward Great Mills Road when the vehicle left the road, traveled approximately 450 feet, and struck the Holy Face Church. At this time, speed, driver error, and alcohol are considered contributing factors in the collision.

Anyone who may have witnessed the collision or any events leading up to the collision is asked to contact Corporal Jason Smith at Jason.Smith@stmaryscountymd.gov or 301-475-4200 ext. 2328.

Sheriff's Office Investigating Fatal Car Collision

At approximately 10:19 a.m., Sunday, April 7, 2024, St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Deputies were dispatched to the scene of an automobile collision involving a motorcycle and an SUV at Three Notch Road and Tom Hodges Drive in Hollywood.

Upon arrival, deputies determined that a 2006 Yamaha Motorcycle had collided with a 2008 Hyundai Sonata. The initial investigation determined that the motorcycle, driven by Tiernan Anthony Stephenson, 21, of Waldorf, MD, was traveling north on Three Notch Road when the Hyundai, driven by Stephanie Rose Robey, 36, of Hollywood, MD, pulled into the path of the motorcycle while attempting to cross the road from Tom Hodges Drive.

Mr. Tiernan struck the driver's side back door, was ejected from the motorcycle, and was pronounced dead at the scene. The driver of the vehicle was transported to MedStar Washington Hospital Center, and a juvenile passenger in the SUV was transported via Maryland State Police Aviation Trooper 7 to Children's Hospital and remains in critical condition.

The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Reconstruction Unit has assumed the investigation. Anyone who may have witnessed the collision or any events leading up to it and who has not already provided a statement is asked to contact Corporal Rachael Roszell at 301-475-4200, ext. 8108, or by email at Rachael.Roszell@stmaryscountymd.gov.

Sheriff's Office Conducts Compliance Checks

In March, the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office (SMCSO) Alcohol Enforcement Unit conducted separate alcohol and tobacco compliance checks.

On March 21, 2024, alcohol compliance checks were performed using a Sheriff's Office confidential informant (CI), who was 18 years old and wearing jeans and an athletic sweatshirt. The underage individual was informed to enter the business and request to purchase an alcoholic beverage.

Seventeen businesses were visited, and 12 were found to be following Maryland law. Five businesses failed to ask for identification and/or corroborate the CI's age, and the CI was illegally served an alcoholic beverage.

The following businesses asked for identification from the underage individual:

- Brudergarten: 22725 Duke St., Leonardtown, MD
 - Social Coffeeshouse & Speakeasy: 41658 Fenwick St., Leonardtown, MD
 - Sweetbay Restaurant and Bar: 22680 Washington St., Leonardtown, MD
 - The Rex: 22695 Washington St., Leonardtown, MD
 - Mac's Tap & Table: 25470 Point Lookout Rd., Unit C Leonardtown, MD 20650
 - Salsas Mexican Café: 25470 Point Lookout Rd., Leonardtown, MD 20650
 - Ledo Pizza: 25460 Point Lookout Rd., Leonardtown, MD 20650
 - Slice House II: 22745 Washington St. Leonardtown, MD 20650
 - Tacos Hacienda: 20975 Point Lookout Rd., Unit 1, Callaway, MD 20620
 - Gridiron Grill: 20855 Callaway Village Wy., Unit 2 Callaway, MD 20620
 - Red Robin Gourmet Burgers & Brews: 45305 Abell House Ln., Calif., MD 20619
 - Texas Roadhouse: 45255 Abell House Ln., California, MD 20619
- The following business failed to ask for identification from the underage individual:
- Antoinette's Garden: 22694 Washington St., Leonardtown, MD
 - Slice House: 41565 Park Ave.,

Leonardtwn, MD

- The Front Porch: 22770 Washington St., Leonardtown, MD
- Cracker Barrel Old Country Store: 45315 Abel House Lane, California, MD 20619
- Olive Garden Italian Restaurant: 45265 Abell House Ln., California, MD 20619

The alcohol violation report was forwarded to the St. Mary's County Alcohol Beverage Board for review.

On March 26, 2024, SMCSO conducted a succession of Tobacco compliance checks within St. Mary's County. The covert compliance checks involved using an underage Sheriff's Office Confidential Informant (CI) wearing athletic pants and a sweatshirt. The CI was informed to enter the store and retrieve a tobacco product from the business location in an effort to purchase said tobacco product.

Overall, ten businesses were visited, of which six were found to be following Maryland law and required Identification from the underage CI. Four businesses failed to ask for identification and/or corroborate the CI's age, and the CI was able to purchase tobacco products.

The following businesses asked for identification from the underage individual:

- Wawa: 30320 Three Notch Rd, Charlotte Hall, MD 20622
- Food Lion: 30290 Mt Wolf Rd, Charlotte Hall, MD 20622
- Walgreens: 30283 Triangle Dr, Charlotte Hall, MD 20622
- CVS: 24288 Three Notch Rd, Hollywood, MD 20636
- Hermanville C-Store: 21151 Three Notch Rd, Lexington Park, MD 20653
- Dollar General: 21411 Great Mills Rd, Lexington Park, MD 20653

The following business failed to ask for identification from the underage individual:

- Vape Pro: 29220 Three Notch Rd, Mechanicsville, MD 20659
- Birdies Shell: 28270 Three Notch Rd, Mechanicsville, MD 20659
- Tobacco King and Vape: 21995 Three Notch Rd, Lexington Park, MD 20653
- Family Dollar: 21703 Great Mills Rd Suite B, Lexington Park, MD 20653

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Third Suspect Arrested in 2023 Great Mills Murder

Sheriff's Office Corporal Glen Knott arrested Tavion Kelly Sommerville, 18, of Bushwood on April 1, on an open warrant for first-degree murder, firearm use during a violent crime, and related charges in connection with the April 4, 2023, murder of Marcus Anthony Day that took place in Great Mills.

Sommerville is incarcerated at the St. Mary's County Detention and Rehabilitation Center in Leonardtown, MD.

Just over a year ago on April 4 at 10:37 pm, sheriff's office deputies responded to the parking lot of the Great Mills Sheetz at the 20700 block of Old Great Mills Road for a report of shots fired. A short time later, deputies also responded to MedStar St. Mary's Hospital in Leonardtown for a report of a victim who arrived with multiple gunshot wounds. The victim, identified as Day, age 26 of Leonardtown, was pronounced deceased.

By May of last year detectives with the Criminal Investigations Division arrested a 15-year-old male juvenile of Lexington Park for Day's murder.

The juvenile was located and arrested in King George County, VA on Friday, May 5, 2023. The juvenile was charged via war-



Tavion Kelly Sommerville

ranted as an adult with first-degree murder, second-degree murder, use of a firearm in a violent crime, first-degree assault, second-degree assault and possession of a firearm by a minor.

Legal Notices

COMMISSIONERS OF LEONARDTOWN Fair Summary of Ordinance No. 220

Notice is hereby given that The Commissioners of Leonardtown have passed, and the Mayor has approved, Ordinance No. 220, An Ordinance Adopting the Budget and Setting the Tax Rate for Fiscal Year 2025. The real property tax rate shall remain the same as the prior year at \$.1203 per \$100 of assessed valuation for the tax year beginning July 1, 2024. Full text of the ordinance may be obtained at the Town Office at 22670 Washington Street, Leonardtown, MD or online on the Town's website at www.Leonardtown.somd.com.

By Authority: Laschelle E. McKay, Town Administrator

COMMISSIONERS OF LEONARDTOWN Fair Summary of Ordinance No. 221

Notice is hereby given that the Commissioners of Leonardtown have passed, and the Mayor has approved, Ordinance No. 221 – Acquisition of Real Property for a Public Purpose. A fair summary of the ordinance will follow:

Ordinance No. 221 - An ordinance for the purpose of approving the acquisition of a 1.5544+/- acre portion of real property being donated by Quality Built Homes for the public purpose of constructing a water storage tower and drilling a production well to serve residents of the Town of Leonardtown.

Ordinance No. 221 will become effective April 29, 2024. Full text of this ordinance may be obtained at the Town Office at 22670 Washington Street, Leonardtown, MD between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday or on-line on the Town's website at www.Leonardtown.somd.com

By Authority: Laschelle E. McKay, Town Administrator



Philip H. Dorsey III
Attorney at Law

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Jack Candela Dies After Car Accident

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Jack Candela, a well-known Leonardtown banker and resident who served on several town boards died as the result of a car accident that occurred April 9 outside of Washington, D.C., according to family members on social media.

He was 89.

Family members said Candela, who was once the president of the First National Bank of St. Mary's in the heart of the county seat, succumbed to his injuries early in the morning of April 10.

Candela was reported as a critical missing person April 9 by the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office and an immediate lookout was posted.

He was found soon after in the area of Washington D.C. where he was taken to George Washington Hospital Center for treatment.

His family said he passed away after suffering from a severe brain bleed.

"He was the best dad anyone could've asked for," wrote Marylee Candela Kreamer, one of Candela's daughters. "I can't believe he's gone."

His other daughter wrote that her parents would have soon celebrated another anniversary.

"Mom and Dad were 11 days shy of their 69th wedding anniversary," wrote Leigh Ann Keller. "Everyone should experience the type of love they shared and the father's love that Marylee Candela Kreamer and I had all our lives."



Jack Candela

Laschelle McKay, town administrator, said she worked at the same bank as Candela back in the late 1980s.

"He hired me at the bank," McKay said. "He was well liked and very professional."

"He saw the bank through many years of changes."

Candela also served on the town's planning and zoning board from 2003 to 2018 and on the town's board of appeals from 2018 until 2020.

Keller said her father was dedicated to his family.

"Family was the ultimate to him," Keller said of her father. "That was his whole center."

"There was nothing he wouldn't do for us and there was nothing we wouldn't do for him."

guyleonard@countytimes.net

NAS Pax River Fire Battalion Mourns Loss of Comrade

We are deeply saddened to share with you the untimely loss of our brother, Firefighter Corey Porter.

Firefighter Porter began his federal firefighting career with us at NAS Patuxent River Battalion of NDW, 12 April 2021, and from day one showed an eagerness for involvement and firemanship.

An ARFF and Aerial Apparatus Driver/Operator, FF Porter continually completed classes and obtained certifications towards his progression within the department, and was in the process of completing his Acting Truck Captain package.

Corey was a fireman's fireman and well loved by everyone who had the privilege of working alongside him.

Arrangements will be shared as they become available. Please keep Corey's family and loved ones in your thoughts.



Photo courtesy of Naval District Washington Fire Company 13

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May 1 - 5, 2024 #nffflightthenight2024
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Please join the **National Fallen Firefighters Foundation** on May 1-5, 2024 in honoring and remembering the sacrifice of America's fallen fire heroes. We invite landmarks, fire and community organizations, businesses, and homes across the nation to light up red from May 1 through the **National Fallen Firefighters Memorial Weekend**. Learn more or watch live at: weekend.firehero.org.

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Firefighters Want Leonardtown to Light the Night

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The week starting May 1 through May 5 is National Fallen Firefighter Week and members of the Leonardtown Volunteer Fire Department want residents to remember firefighter Brice Trossbach, who lost his life in the line of duty last year.

Kevin Mattingly, with the Leonardtown fire company, said residents are encouraged to participate in the "Light the Night" event to memorialize Trossbach and fallen firefighters across the country by replacing light bulbs outside their homes with red ones.

"We're doing this to memorialize Brice," Mattingly said of the red light display the fire company hopes the whole town will participate in. "It's the sign... it's a tribute to his service."

The volunteers are also asking all churches to ring their bells to take part in the memorial, Mattingly said, while some town businesses are donating some of their proceeds to Trossbach's family.

A bench with Trossbach's name on it will also be dedicated at the Leonardtown Wharf property, Mattingly said.

The National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, which sponsors the memorial week, works to help the families of fallen firefighters and to prevent line of duty deaths as much as possible.



Brice Trossbach

As part of the memorial weekend, Trossbach's name will also be added to the national memorial for firefighters in Emmitsburg.

To ensure that all county residents can have a chance to obtain red light bulbs, Dyson's Hardware in Callaway as well as Ace Home Improvement in Leonardtown and St. Mary's Lighting in Lexington Park will be stocking them, Mattingly said.

"We're just trying to get the word out to everybody," he said.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Animal Adoptions, Intakes Halted Due to Respiratory Illness

The St. Mary's County Animal Adoption & Resource Center is announcing a temporary pause to adoptions and non-emergency animal intakes, in response to a sudden outbreak of a contagious upper respiratory illness impacting several of the Center's dogs. Testing has been conducted to verify the illness type and severity; results are pending.

Symptomatic animals are being immediately quarantined, tested, and are receiving treatment. Deep cleaning and personal protective equipment protocols are also in effect for all Shelter staff to reduce the risk of further transmission. Operations will continue to be driven by veterinary medical professionals and best practices in shelter medicine.

The facility will remain on emergency admissions only status until further notice to manage and contain the outbreak. The date of reopening will be dependent on the last, new report of a symptomatic animal, and will be announced to the public based on how the outbreak progresses.

If you find a stray dog, please visit: www.stmaryscountymd.gov/LFpets and/or call our Animal Control Division at (301) 475-8018. Animal Control Officers are

available to assist with microchip scanning and are working to return found pets home and prevent shelter intakes. If you can foster a stray animal, please email Volunteer@stmaryscountymd.gov.

Shelters nationwide are experiencing increased animal infection rates. Many shelter dogs come in as strays with preexisting illnesses, malnourishment, cruelty experiences, or other maladies, which make them more susceptible to severe illness. This, in addition to the overall rise overall in the number of animal intakes (strays, surrenders, etc.) increases the risk of transmission and outbreak. While shelter overcrowding has become the norm nationwide, this can be changed with help from the community. St. Mary's County Animal Services encourages pet owners to spay/neuter their animals, be responsible pet owners, and consider fostering an animal in need.

For more information on the St. Mary's County Animal Adoption & Resource Center, please visit: www.stmaryscountymd.gov/AnimalShelter or follow at: [Facebook.com/smcanimalservices](https://www.facebook.com/smcanimalservices).

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Commissioners Hear Update on Lexington Park Redevelopment



Artist's rendering of Pax River Village Center

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The developer of the Pax River Village Center, formerly known as Millison Plaza, in Lexington Park said this week that work on redeveloping the aging shopping center should begin soon and finish by the end of the year.

"We hope to start in 30 days," said David Ross of Atlantic Realty. "It should be completed in eight months."

Much of the work will focus on façade improvements of existing businesses, the demolition or partial demolition of surrounding properties — such as the vacant hotel on the side of the property fronting Route 235 — and the addition of two new businesses to include an Aldi grocery store and a Starbuck's coffee shop.

Ross made his announcement at a joint meeting between the command staff of Patuxent River Naval Air Station and the Commissioners of St. Mary's County at

their April 9 meeting.

One piece of property owned by Atlantic Realty will be redeveloped without its original tenant.

"AMC Theatres will not be renewing their lease," Ross said. "We tried to get them to expand their footprint" but the company declined. Ross said his company will redevelop the building AMC Theatres currently uses and turn into a daycare facility.

Ross said he believed the facility would be of significant use to local families, especially those employed on the base.

Ross said the only remaining tasks to complete before beginning work on the redevelopment project could take place; those being final acquisition of the funding for the work and to pull the final plans for the site from the county's Department of Land Use and Growth Management.

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General Assembly

from page 5

the two successful bond measures.

"The robotic lawnmowers weren't called out by name in bond bill but there was \$2 million allocated to St. Mary's City for various infrastructure needs," Houser said of specific request for the historic city program.

"Boy, Delegate Crosby can really get it across the line," said Commissioner Mike Hewitt, praising Crosby's work in "bringing home the bacon" for local projects.

St. Mary's College received \$2 million, Houser said, to aid in renovations to Montgomery Hall.

There were also significant updates to the laws regarding the critical area buffer in the watershed, which often restricts development in the most sensitive environmental areas of the state and effects St. Mary's most significantly.

The county must now update its critical area preservation programs every 10 years, Houser said, as well as make plans to deal

with rising sea levels due to climate change.

The county has three years of grace if it falls behind in making those changes, according to the new law.

"Then the Critical Area Commission will make those changes for us," Houser said.

Del. Matt Morgan (R-Dist. 29A) warned in the early days of the legislative session that there were efforts to codify into law the teaching of gender identity and sexual orientation in public schools.

HB 558 also would not have allowed parents to opt their children out of such instruction but it failed to pass this year, Morgan said.

"I viewed it as a violation of parental rights," Morgan said in a social media post. "I am happy to report that Democratic Senators agree with me and the rest of the Freedom Caucus members."

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Rathbone Hopes Third Time's a Charm in School Board Race

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

DeForest Rathbone, a Leonardtown resident, is making his third attempt to win a seat on the St. Mary's County Board of Education.

Despite having lost in his bid twice before — once in 2020 and before that in 2016 — he remains upbeat and confident.

"The first time I got 2,000 votes, the second time I got 6,000 votes," Rathbone said. "At this rate I'll probably win them all."

"At 94, I don't have much time so I have to make my big pitch."

Rathbone is by far the oldest candidate in the school board race.

His pitch has been consistent over the years: to find a way to enact random drug testing of students in public schools.

He told The County Times that he has tried to find ways to work with Superintendent Dr. J. Scott Smith to combat drug use in schools, but to no avail.

"If I get enough votes, he has to listen to me," Rathbone said.

Should he get enough votes he would implore Smith to form a committee, with Rathbone leading it, "to look into the feasibility of random drug testing in St. Mary's County schools."

Rathbone has been a consistent community activist fighting for keeping drugs out of the community and especially away from children.

Rathbone said successfully combatting



DeForest Rathbone

drug use among children and students would also reduce crime and violence.

Schools do not support his ideas, he said, because of fear of lawsuits by organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union.

"The schools just give up and forget it," Rathbone said.

Rathbone also said he wanted to find a way to get the federal government involved to "get the marijuana factory in the 7th District shut down and turn it into a rehab facility."

"We should not have had this legalization of marijuana," Rathbone said. "Nobody's safe from these druggie kids out there because they know nothing's going to be done about them."

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St. Mary's Faces More Taxes After Session Ends

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

St. Mary's County had a few small victories in the aftermath of the latest Maryland General Assembly session but like all other jurisdictions in the state, it is waiting to count the true cost of the many tax and fee increases enacted to close budget shortfalls.

"It is over," said Deputy County Attorney John Houser to the Commissioners of St. Mary's County at their April 9 meeting. "We were fortunate this year all the bill we were tracking closely and all our local bills passed over the weekend."

The Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act of 2024 was introduced near the end of the session and with great urgency to raise revenue amid state budget shortfalls.

Initially, a Montgomery County delegate proposed a tax increase package that would have eventually raised \$1.3 billion, particularly through an increase in the sales tax.

The idea was to decrease the sales tax to five percent but broaden the tax to encompass a plethora of commercial services.

The plan met hostility from Senate Democrats and virtually all Republicans in the General Assembly.

A compromise was reached but the cost to tax payers will still be in the hundreds of millions of dollars. Most Republicans also opposed the taxation increase plan that passed.

"There was a veritable standoff between the House and the Senate as to what we were



Sen. Jack Bailey



Del. Brian Crosby



Del. Matt Morgan



Deputy County Attorney John Houser

going to do," said Houser. "The compromise that was settled upon by the House and the Senate, which the governor backed, does call for about \$253 million in fees and taxes this fiscal year."

That total is expected to rise over the next several fiscal years to about \$300 million in extra taxes and fees, Houser said.

The extra revenue is coming from increases in speed camera fines in work zones, surcharges on electric and hybrid vehicles, which pay less or not at all in gas taxes to fill the transportation project trust fund, and increases in vehicle licensing and registration fees.

A plan to tax on-line gaming or gambling did not pass.

Drivers throughout the state will pay more under the current funding bill passed.

"The headlines on this bill are ominously

mostly to the tune of fixes this year but revenue concerns for future years remain," Houser cautioned. "Expect fiscal concerns to be a nagging subject."

Two local bills regarding alcohol, one to create a new class of liquor license for tasting events and another to create a license for non-profit performing arts groups — such as The Newtown Players — both passed, Houser said. They are awaiting signature by Gov. Wes Moore.

The commissioners had also supported a bill that would have designated 10 communities here where golf carts could be driven on local roads, which failed.

But, Houser said, a statewide bill which suits the commissioners' purpose passed, allowing them to designate communities for that same privilege.

"It's a much better bill," said Commissioner

Eric Colvin of the state wide authorization.

The new law goes into effect Oct. 1, Houser said, but golf carts would still not be allowed on state-owned roads only those owned by the county.

There were also numerous bond bills introduced in the legislature to fund local efforts from supporting non-profits to aiding private schools, but most failed.

"It looks like all but the Longview Beach and St. Mary's Ryken [High School] bond bills were not funded," Houser said.

The Longview Beach community asked for \$65,000 for road improvements, while \$200,000 went to support the sports stadium at the Catholic high school in Leonardtown.

Both Del. Brian Crosby (D-Dist. 29B) and Sen. Jack Bailey (R-Dist. 29) supported

See General Assembly, page 6

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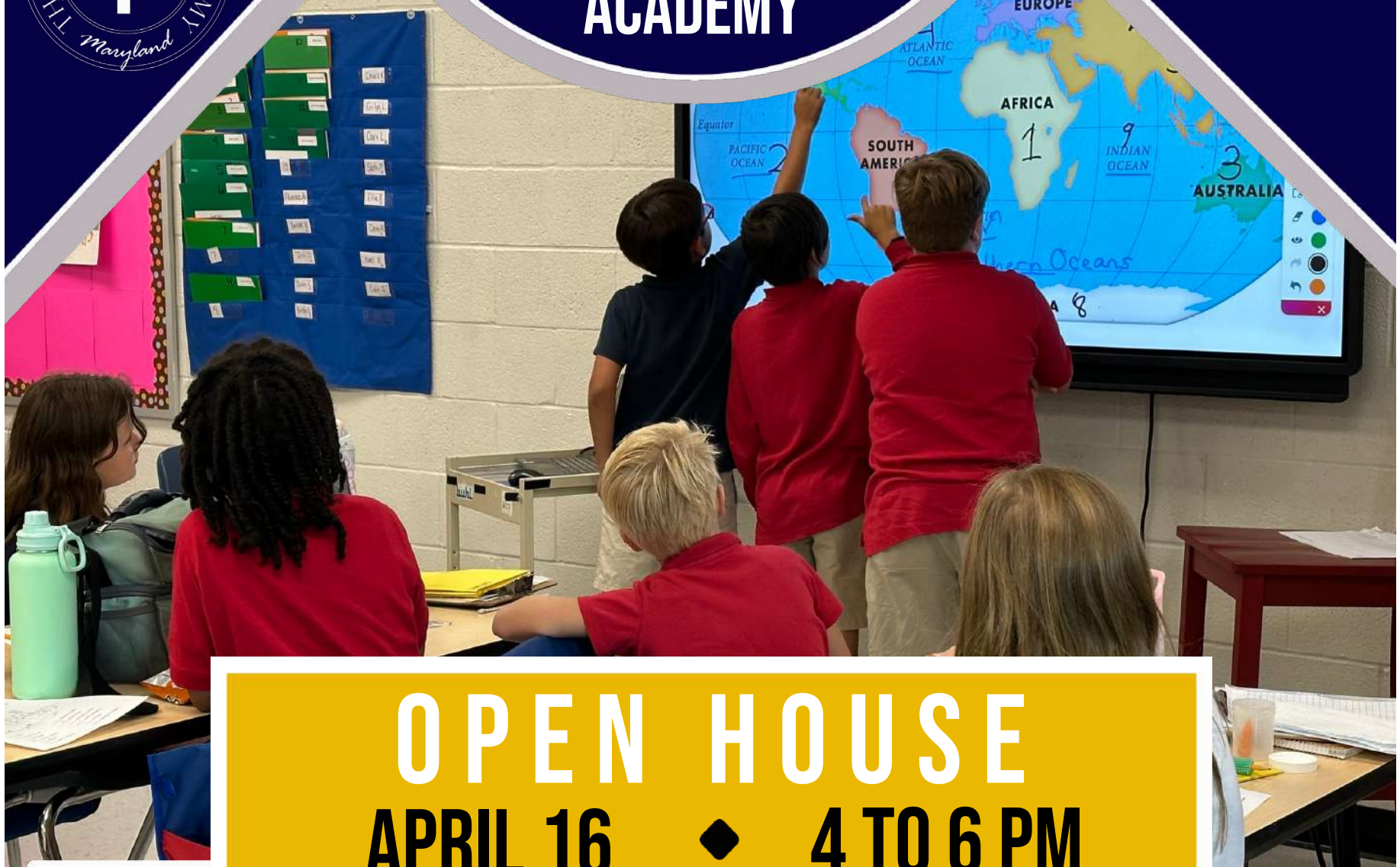


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NAS Pax River Goes to 100 Percent ID Check

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Anyone trying to enter Patuxent River NAS will have to show a valid state or federal identification piece, base command announced this week; that includes passengers on board those vehicles.

"This is an added security measure intended to protect the personnel and assets of NAS Patuxent River," the announcement said. "NAS Pax River appreciates the patience of our mission partners and community while we maintain safety on the installation."

"While the Trusted Traveler Program remains in effect, all vehicle passengers must present valid state or federal government ID in order to gain entry to the base."

Social media regarding the decision quickly showed concerns over increased traffic delays at already stressed intersections.

The three gates to base on Route 235 constitute the greatest amount of traffic congestion on county roads during the morning commute; one long-time commuter to the base said the results of the new order were predictable.

"We have this back and forth every time we get a new [commanding officer,]" said Del. Todd Morgan (R-Dist.29C) "It's bothersome."

Morgan is also a senior employee at a large local defense contractor.

"It's going to cause the traffic going through the gate to slow considerably," Morgan said of the abrupt policy change. "It's going to cause more delays."

"It's that simple." The new commanding officer on base is Capt. Douglas Burfield; he and base command staff met with the Commissioners of St. Mary's County this week to discuss issues the base and county had in common.

There was no public mention during the meeting of plans to move to a 100 percent ID check policy.

"Yesterday's [April 9] decision stems from a recent incident at the gate, so the decision was made to enforce the 100 percent ID check policy in an effort to enhance security," said base public information officer Patrick Gordon. "100 percent ID checks are part of the Trusted Traveler Program but enforcement is simply being stepped up."

A similar announcement was made in February by base command.

"This was different from the February incident, which was the result of having to escort off the base an individual who had previously been barred from access," Gordon said. "While the ID checks may cause more of a delay at the gates, we will always err on the side of caution when it comes to the safety of our personnel."

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Eclipse Dims St. Mary's Skies for a Brief Time

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

It was here and then it was gone.

After weeks of hype the solar eclipse of April 8, 2024 drew hundreds of people to Dorsey Park in Hollywood, many of them families leaving school and work early, to see the moon occlude the sun by about 86-to-88 percent.

As the time approached — approximately 3:20 p.m. was the stated time of maximum eclipse residents would be able to see locally — the sky dimmed noticeably but not exceptionally.

Using such accoutrements as specially made glasses to view the eclipse safely, viewers could see much of the sun turned black by the intercession of the moon passing in front of it.

But the effect was not visible to the naked eye.

It lasted perhaps a minute and viewers could actually see the moon moving off and away from the sun as full brightness returned.

The day quickly became more about enjoying a family outing than bearing witness to a rare astronomical event.

"It was nice to get outside but not very exciting," said Benjamin Pennington, who had brought his family out to see the event. "It met expectations."

"It's about what happened the last time."



Others were glad it had passed.

"I'm glad the eclipse is over, because it seemed like everybody lost their minds for a couple of hours," said County Commissioner. "Especially during my trip into work, yesterday evening."

"It took me three hours to get to [Washington] D.C. from my house in Coltons Point which is just absolutely ludicrous."

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“IT’S GOING TO CAUSE MORE DELAYS. IT’S THAT SIMPLE.”

DEL. TODD MORGAN ON THE INCREASE IN GATE SECURITY AT NAS PATUXENT RIVER



LOCAL 3
Base ups gate security



LOCAL 9
Well-known banker passes away



ON THE COVER
Session end means more taxes, fees for Marylanders

WEEKLY FORECAST

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