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Fall Sports
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SEPTEMBER 2025

Art In The Park Returns October 5

Save the date for the fifth annual Art in the Park live music and arts festival. Presented by Cafe Mezzanotte and the Severna Park Voice, this year's event will again offer attendees a buffet of entertainment in the forms of musical performances, live art demonstrations, an all-you-can-eat gourmet picnic, a wine garden and more.

Enjoy modern jazz with Afro, Cuban, hip-hop, rock and Egyptian melodies performed by Ahmed Warshanna's ISHTA, with special guest Gracie Jay. Sponsored by Perilla Wellness, the event will also feature live art demonstrations by local artists and galleries including Side Street Framers & gift gallery, Gallery 564, Benfield Gallery, McBride Gallery, Sand & Silo Marketplace and Local By Design.

Guests can sip drinks from an outdoor wine garden offering more than 20 wine, beer and cocktail options, sponsored by Zeskind's and Park Hardware. The gourmet picnic, sponsored by KMA Law Office, will offer endless samplings of grilled meats, seafood, seasonal produce and more.

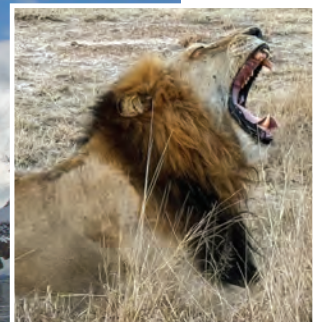
LaBarge Financial is this year's main event sponsor. Proceeds from Art in the Park will benefit local nonprofit Bello Machre, which is committed to providing a lifetime of loving care for children and adults with developmental disabilities. Read more about Bello Machre on page 6.

Art in the Park will run from 1:00pm-5:00pm on October 5 at Cafe Mezzanotte. Tickets are available at www.cafemezzanotte.com/#events.

A GOOD RUN



*Cancer Survivor Joins
Exclusive Club By Finishing
Marathons On Every Continent*



Severna Park resident Chris Peters has collected eight marathon medals, one for each race and one for joining the Seven Continents Club. He enjoyed views of mountains and glaciers while visiting Antarctica, and saw lions in South Africa.

By Zach Sparks

zach@severnaparkvoice.com

The reminders never left Chris Peters.

An estimated 50 people rescued during his four years serving the U.S. Coast Guard in the 1970s. A close friend who died of pancreatic cancer. A head-on collision caused by a drunk driver in 1982, leaving Peters with a broken neck and kneecap, and the devastating loss of his girlfriend.

After witnessing the fragility of life, Peters chose not to dwell on his grief and misfortune.

"I thought, 'You have this great gift of health. You might as well do some-

thing with it,'" he said.

A former Pittsburgh resident who now lives in Severna Park, Peters ran his first marathon in Toronto at the age of 48. He intended it to be his only one. One year later, in 2006, he registered for a marathon in China.

"China was fascinating — only 300 people (did the run), so I was on part of the Great Wall by myself," he said. "The wall was closed off to tourists."

The China race showed him that he could still improve at endurance running.

"I still had a lot to learn about proper hydration, fuel and salt," Peters said, noting that his aha moment came when

another runner gave him a salt tablet.

With help from Marathon Tours & Travel, a Boston-based agency, he planned to become part of the Seven Continents Club. As the name suggests, the club encourages runners to complete marathons or half-marathons on every continent.

He created fond memories with every race. Because Easter Island is only about 15 miles long at its widest point, Peters' wife, Kelly O'Toole, followed him on a scooter for part of the run. Along the way, large Moai statues with somber faces and elongated noses greeted the visitors.

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A Bruin Homecoming: New Principal Is A Broadneck High School Alumna

By Meredith Winter

After two years at the helm of Broadneck High School (BHS), Patrick Gelinis announced in July that he was leaving his post as principal for a new role within the Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) system. The Board of Education approved Gelinis' appointment as director of safe and orderly schools for the district, leaving the Bruins in search of a principal as a new academic year approached.

Later in July, Gelinis issued a second announcement to BHS families and employees: A new principal had been named, and she was

someone intimately familiar with the Bruin community. Katherine "Katie" Smith graduated from Broadneck in 1997, and after 23 years serving as an educator and administrator within AACPS, she returned to her alma mater as its new principal in August.

As she settled into her new role and her new office, Smith shared that she is proud to return to BHS, where she will serve the community she has long called home. Though her career has taken her far, she still lives in Cape St. Claire on the same street where she was raised. Her parents still reside on that street, too.

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Katherine Smith

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Margueritte Mills - Volunteer Of The Month

Every month, the *Voice* recognizes the good work of a local volunteer to honor *Voice* founder and lifelong Severna Park resident Margueritte Mills.

The Margueritte Mills Volunteer of the Month is proudly sponsored by Affordable Outdoor Kitchens.



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Mark And Wendy Preslan Provide For Pets Through Peyton's Promise

By Jaina Peveto

After seeing people throw pizza at the runt of a litter of puppies at a party, Mark and Wendy Preslan's daughter Sarah made the spur-of-the-moment decision to take the puppy home with her. When she discovered that she wasn't allowed to keep a dog at her apartment, she called her parents for help, and they agreed to take him on the condition that she'd find another home for him. However, within an hour of meeting him, the Preslans knew they were going to keep Peyton.

"We said to (Sarah), 'It was the best irresponsible decision you ever made,'" Wendy said.

Peyton, an akita pit bull mix named by the Preslans after Peyton Manning, lived with the couple for 15 happy years. After his death last year, Mark and Wendy decided to honor his memory by starting a nonprofit that provides support for dogs and their owners. Peyton's Promise works toward the goal of helping pet owners be able to afford to keep their pets. The Preslans hope that their work will help keep dogs out of shelters and reduce owner surrenders.

"It's an honor to be able to do this in (Peyton's) memory," Mark said. "I see dogs that need help; I just want to be able to help them. So, in many ways, dogs are much easier than humans. They love you."

The Preslans haven't seen much impact on shelters yet, as Peyton's Promise just passed its first anniversary in July, but they're hopeful for the nonprofit's future. Though the organization is still establishing itself,



Mark and Wendy Preslan started Peyton's Promise in honor of their akita pit bull mix Peyton, who died last year at the age of 15.

each month, Peyton's Promise visits pop-up pantries and gives pet food to community members in need of it. During vendor events, Mark and Wendy provide information about the nonprofit and collect donations.

"It's very difficult financially for people sometimes to take care of all the needs, so we're trying to help by supplementing with nutrition," Wendy said.

The Maryland SPCA has been one resource for Peyton's Promise to pick up food, but individual community members have reached out as well through social media. Mark and Wendy spend a lot of their time going through donations and sorting through what's been delivered.

In addition to the pop-up pantries, Peyton's Promise has helped in other instances where there's a need for pet

food. The Preslans have a bin on their porch where they coordinate people picking it up.

"We're still so brand new that we're trying to figure out how to do that without having it look like a pet store at our front stoop," Wendy said.

Another goal the Preslans have for Peyton's Promise is to start an emergency medical fund that would help local pet owners pay their pets' bills when they get too costly. Though they don't have the fund ready yet, Mark and Wendy have contacted Bayside Animal Hospital to offer for the staff to contact them if there's any way Peyton's Promise can help.

"Any opportunity I could give back and help the community, I was all for," Wendy said.

Peyton's loss was difficult on Mark and Wendy. The couple slept on the floor of their living room for a year to keep him company when he could no longer make it up the stairs. Though they miss him, they've enjoyed being able to spread their love for Peyton while helping the community.

"I was so afraid that after two months, three months, six months, that we'd stop talking about him, but we literally talk about him almost every day, and it just makes my heart so happy," Wendy said.

As the Peyton's Promise website is still under construction, more information can be found through the Peyton's Promise Facebook page or @peytonspromisemd on Instagram. The nonprofit welcomes donations of pet food for pop-up pantries, as well as monetary donations for the emergency medical fund.



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The *Severna Park Voice* is published by

THE VOICE MEDIA INC.

Family owned and operated since 1981

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Volunteers Needed For Fall Fun Day Event At Kinder Farm Park

Members of the Friends of Kinder Farm Park, a nonprofit volunteer organization, are busy planning the park's biggest fundraising event of the year, the annual Fall Fun Day scheduled for Saturday, October 11, from 10:00am to 3:00pm.

This year, the family event will include hayrides, a pumpkin patch, a straw maze, scarecrow making, face painting, and a variety of food and craft vendors. The historic farmhouse will be open, and the blacksmith shop will operate along with the woodshop and sawmill. The Earleigh Heights Volunteer Fire Company will conduct

demonstrations as well.

To make this event a success and raise money for use at Kinder Farm Park, the Friends group needs volunteers — both adults and students. Consider volunteering for a shift or all day. The group needs adults to sell tickets, and students and adults to load and unload hay wagons; help at the scarecrow making station, straw maze and pumpkin patch; and to face paint. To volunteer, go to www.kinderfarmpark.org, navigate to the volunteer tab and scroll to "Fall Fun Day." Volunteers will be instructed to register on SignUpGenius.

Greater Severna Park Mother's Club Kickoff

New moms, seasoned moms, working moms, stay-at-home moms — all moms from Severna Park and beyond are welcome to join the Greater Severna Park Mother's Club for its 2025-2026 kickoff at The Social restaurant in Severna Park on September 17 at 7:30pm.

Learn about the club's events: adult socials, book club, Bunco, community outreach, holiday party, kids' events, Meal Trains, moms-night-out play groups, spring family party, Trunktoberfest, winter gala and more.

To attend the kickoff, RSVP to greatersevernaparkmomsclub@gmail.com. For more information about the club, go to gspmc.wildapricot.org.

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Paradise On The Magothy

Twenty Former Whitehurst Residents Have Returned As Adults



Some of the 20 Whitehurst residents who have moved back to the community they grew up in are (front row, l-r) Kim Burfoot, Katie Weiss, Ali Mikiska, Erica Mules, Betz Wild, Kathy Brennan, Erin Jacobs and Tim Krauss. In the back row (l-r) are Kevin O'Connor and Lance Jaccard. They all experienced idyllic childhoods living in Whitehurst and wanted that same neighbor-caring-for-neighbor spirit for their children.

By Kevin Murnane

In the movie “The Wizard of Oz,” Dorothy shared the iconic phrase, “There’s no place like home.” For 20 children who were raised in the idyllic Whitehurst community, their dream of returning “home” has come true as well as providing their children the same “utopian” surroundings they experienced a generation ago.

“We’re a true definition of community,” said Whitehurst resident Ali Mikiska. “It was always a very close neighborhood when I grew up here and we have continued that tradition of caring for your neighbor.”

Whitehurst has 150 homes along the Magothy River, and the first homes were constructed in the late 1960s. It was known as the Whitehurst farm from 1938 to the mid ‘60s, and its rich history goes back to the famous Baltimore Sun writer Folger McKinsey, who owned 500 acres with six miles of waterfront property on the Magothy River.

Many communities on the east side of Ritchie Highway were built during the 1960s and 1970s, including Oakleigh Forest, Fair Oaks, Cape Arthur and North Cape Arthur.

Since then, Whitehurst residents have developed a unique bond that has lasted through generations, and the community has provided homeowners with a serene and safe place to raise children.

“Our typical summer day growing up in Whitehurst was swim team practice early in the morning, followed by taking a boat ride to Dobbins Island and swimming by the island, then coming back and hanging out by the pool,” said resident Erica Mules. “It was so cool that our parents would call the community pool if they were looking for us because they knew where we would be.”

As the younger generation went off to college and purchased their first homes, many of them knew that the community spirit and caring neighbors they

had growing up in Whitehurst were special.

Slowly the migration of the “children” coming back to Whitehurst began. Through communication between former childhood friends who discussed properties going up for sale, the baby-boomer generation’s kids came home, including some who moved back into the homes they grew up in.

One of the common bonds that the residents have is organizing events for children and adults to celebrate holidays and special occasions.

“We really try to have fun by scheduling activities throughout the year,” said resident Betz Wild. “Our activities range from breakfast with Santa (to) Easter egg hunts, volleyball games, Halloween parades, July 4 celebrations, community plays, Friday night grilling at the clubhouse, progressive Christmas dinners and New Year’s Eve parties where you stop at everyone’s house for some spirits.”

Tim Krauss, who has overseen the neighborhood’s Fourth of July fireworks for 10 years, said that this sensational community spirit was “the only thing I knew growing up, but it took going away for a while to appreciate how special Whitehurst was.”

Whitehurst resident Kathy Brennan has a unique connection to Severna Park: she taught math at Severna Park Middle School for 28 years. “It was always great to have Whitehurst kids in my class, and they were good students because they knew I was friends with their parents, and we would see each other all the time at our community events.”

Whitehurst neighbors take pride in caring for one another, especially helping the elderly. The oldest residents are 105 and 98 years old.

“If we have a storm and lose power, we make sure we get generators to those homes so our elderly residents have power to heat or cool their homes, for medical equipment, as well as cook,” Wild said.

In his book “You Can’t Go Home Again,” Thomas Wolfe had a quote that captures the same sentiment shown by Whitehurst residents, who have spent decades caring for their neighbors: “Some things will never change. Some things will always be the same.”



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Bello Machre Has Been A Guiding Light For Five Decades

Nonprofit Will Be Beneficiary Of Fifth Annual Art In The Park

By Maragret Bates

Parents of children with developmental disabilities founded Bello Machre in 1972. At the time, there weren't many options for caring for people with disabilities, and these parents wanted a third option between being the sole care providers or sending their children to institutions. They founded the nonprofit, which started with four group homes on a secluded campus, over 50 years ago as a solution.

In the intervening decades, Bello Machre has grown throughout Anne Arundel and Carroll counties to include 56 residential homes that house a total of 200 adults. The nonprofit also assists more than 200 children and adults in their own homes or family residences.

Dr. Robert Ireland has served as Bello Machre's president and CEO since 1979.

"When I was a teenager, my family adopted my younger three siblings and they have intellectual disabilities, so I was grown up in it," Ireland said.

Since he joined the organization, Ireland has noticed more infants surviving and living fulfilling lives, though "the need never stops" when it comes to providing them with the resources they need so they can thrive.

Hunter Jackson, marketing director for Bello Machre, explained one of the biggest changes over the decades has been the nonprofit's mission to integrate into the community at large. Since 2010, Bello Machre has focused not only on housing but also on developing community-based opportunities for its residents. Jackson said part of the organization's goals include "finding meaningful opportunities and activities in the community" for the individuals living there.

These opportunities include employment training and jobs in the area, including at Live! Casino & Hotel Maryland and Royal Farms. The meaningful day programs also focus on increasing learning opportunities, whether by trips to visit local businesses or speakers presenting at the homes. As Jackson said, these learning opportunities and excursions help the residents "build the foundation for a fantastic life."

Currently, Bello Machre is looking for community-based businesses that can work with them for excursions and for individuals who might want to



Bello Machre has grown throughout Anne Arundel and Carroll counties to include 56 residential homes that house a total of 200 adults. The nonprofit also assists more than 200 children and adults in their own homes or family residences.



come to talk to their residents. Jackson stressed that anyone should feel free to reach out; even a job that seems ordinary could provide a learning adventure.

One of the goals of the organization is to help the residents "tap into their potential and expand their social networks." Part of that includes providing a variety of experiences and community partnerships, so any excursion opportunity is welcome.

Bello Machre also offers funds to help with medical supplies, specialized summer camps, or other individual needs through the Ray of Hope grant. The online application is brief and easy to navigate.

Bello Machre is also planning open houses so that members of the wider Anne Arundel and Carroll County communities can get to know the organization better and understand its mission. The nonprofit also welcomes volunteers. If community members want to become directly involved, they can fill out volunteer opportunity forms online. There's also an Amazon wish list and a donation page that generous donors can peruse and make contributions.

On September 10, Bello Machre will partner with Tential for its 41st annual charity golf tournament at the Queenstown Harbor Golf Resort.

Bello Machre continues to advance its mission to provide loving care, opportunity and guidance for people with developmental disabilities in Maryland. Jackson stressed that the nonprofit is a "guiding light" for the disability community, and he encouraged people to reach out.

"Know that we're here as a resource, and we're ready to help. If anybody is looking for a service provider, we're more than happy to have that conversation," he said.

Learn more at www.bellomachre.org.

Bello Machre will be the nonprofit beneficiary of the fifth annual Art in the Park live music and arts festival on Sunday, October 5. Art in the Park is hosted jointly by Cafe Mezzanotte and the Severna Park Voice. Attendees can look forward to live musical performances, demonstrations by local artists and galleries, an all-you-can-eat gourmet picnic, a wine garden and more. Purchase tickets at www.cafemezzanotte.com/#events.

Summer Strides

Bello Machre had a busy summer, launching its own nursing department and announcing a new \$250,000 grant to support maintenance of its homes across Maryland.

Nursing Update — By bringing nursing services in-house, Bello Machre hopes to enhance the consistency, timeliness, and quality of care for people with developmental disabilities while providing added support for the dedicated staff who care for them every day.

Phillips Charitable Foundation Home Fund — Thanks to a generous \$250,000 grant from the Phillips Charitable Foundation, Bello Machre has established the Phillips Charitable Foundation Home Maintenance Fund, which ensures the long-term care, safety, and sustainability of its community homes across Maryland.

Pickin 4 Troops Raises Funds For Vets



Photos by Steve Overton

To raise money for veterans' programs, Broadneck Elks Lodge welcomed the community to a Pickin 4 Troops fundraiser on August 9. Attendees were treated to a pig roast, music by the bluegrass band Hard Times, cornhole, raffles and a live auction. Several Gold Star families — those who had a family member die during active-duty military service — attended the event. Proceeds will support the Elks' Welcome Home program, Army of Hope and Fisher House.



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A Fun Fall Lies Ahead For SPAN

Michele Sabean
Director of
Development
SPAN Inc.



It's that time of year — back to school, pumpkin spice and some of SPAN's fun yearly traditions. Heading into the fall, SPAN has three big events coming up: our Broadway Songfest and online silent auction, Stride for SPAN Turkey Trot, and Holiday Caring program.

For the fifth year, Severna Park native Laurette Hankins and Anita O'Connor are donating their time and awesome talent to perform a concert to benefit SPAN. The performance has repeatedly received rave reviews from everyone in the audience - an hour of terrific Broadway songs and laughter with fun trivia and backstage scoops about the various Broadway shows and movie musicals.

St Martin's-in-the-Field Episcopal Church will host the event on Saturday, September 20, at 5:00pm. Local businesses have been tremendously generous, and the online silent auction is available to all, whether attending the concert or not, in the weeks leading up to the concert. Find more information on our website and social media.

You can also join us for the 13th Stride for SPAN Turkey Trot 5K race and 1-mile fun walk on Saturday, November 1. It is held at Kinder Farm

Park and is a fun community tradition. A huge thank you to all of our sponsors, especially our three platinum sponsors who are consistent supporters of SPAN: Landmark Roofing, Severna Park Automotive and Edward Jones — Alexis Lecouras. Register for the Turkey Trot on the calendar event page found at www.spanhelps.org/events.

Our third event helps to ensure every child can experience the joy and wonder of Christmas. Our Holiday Caring program matches families in need in the local area with sponsors who provide Christmas gifts and sometimes holiday meals as well. These gifts mean so much to the families who receive them.

Last year, one mother came to SPAN seeking help with her BGE bill. When we informed her that we could provide Christmas gifts as well, she said, "I have nothing to give my kids for Christmas but the dust under my feet. I was hoping just to keep the power on for Christmas!" Look for information coming soon to participate in this wonderful expression of love and generosity.

As we head into fall, we are especially thankful for all the community members who generously helped keep our pantry shelves full during the slowest time of year for donations. SPAN is blessed with several very generous donors who ask what we need and make large shopping trips. They are joined by the many others in this community who immediately stepped up when they heard our shelves were

empty. I am always impressed how the individual bags of food dropped off add up and help so many in need.

Thank you to the youth from Baldwin Memorial United Methodist, Asbury United Methodist, Our Shepherd Lutheran and Woods Memorial Presbyterian churches' Vacation Bible Schools. Visits with and contributions from the Vacation Bible Schools are always highlights of our summer.

The Severna Park Elks are wonderful and consistent supporters of SPAN; lately they contributed food from their Christmas in July event and wrote a grant that is helping us give fresh food to our clients. The Pondview community continued their great tradition of putting together birthday bags for our clients! Thank you to the Severna Park Racquetball and Fitness Club members for the donation of diapers and to Heartlands Assisted Living for the food.

We are thankful to the many individuals, groups and businesses who help SPAN help our neighbors in need! With SPAN's events, there are lots of opportunities to join us in helping others this season. Together we have fun and accomplish so much.

SPAN (Serving People Across Neighborhoods) is an independent nonprofit food pantry and emergency services provider that has been helping local families with eviction prevention, utility turnoffs, medical/prescription bills, and food since 1990. For more information, call 410-647-0889, email spanhelps@yahoo.com or visit www.spanhelps.org. Please "like" SPAN on Facebook!

Firefighters Emerald Society Presents Corn Hooley & Shamrock Shenanigans

Get ready for a charity cornhole tournament and family fun festival. The Anne Arundel County Firefighters Emerald Society is planning the inaugural Corn Hooley & Shamrock Shenanigans event, set for Sunday, September 21, from noon-6:00pm at Earleigh Heights Volunteer Fire Company.

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Cornhole Tournament: Competitive and social brackets with cash prizes and trophies. A kids' bracket will also be offered. Registration is required for tournament play.

Family Fun: Activities include a moon bounce, face painting, live DJ entertainment and more for all ages.

Car, Truck and Motorcycle Show: Free to enter and open to all makes and models. Prizes will be awarded in various categories.

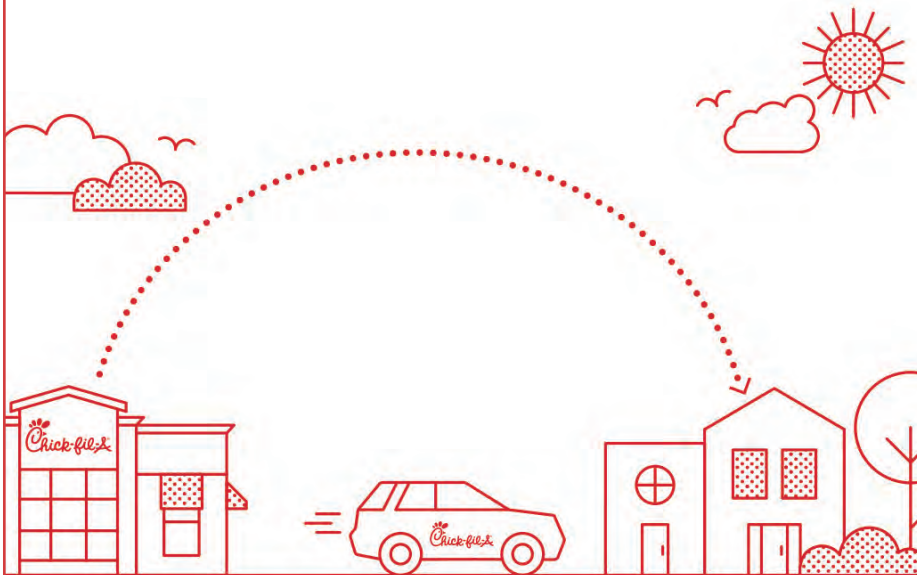
Food and Drinks: Available for purchase throughout the event.

Silent Auction and Games: Featuring themed gift baskets, autographed sports and entertainment memorabilia, and more. Guests can also enjoy 50% boards, prize wheels and other fundraising games.

Admission is free and open to the public. Team registration for the cornhole tournament and full sponsor information is available at www.aaemerald.com/cornhole.

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Hearings Scheduled Regarding Preliminary Plan Approval For Arnold Chick-fil-A

A series of six public hearings held by the Anne Arundel County Board of Appeals regarding preliminary plans for a drive-thru only Chick-fil-A in Arnold began on September 2. These hearings were previously slated for July.

The appeals are of the preliminary plan approval granted by the county earlier this year for the construction of a 2,852-square-foot restaurant with a two-lane drive-thru and more than 40 parking spaces, as well as conditional approval of modification requests.

Chick-fil-A has sought to construct a restaurant at 1500 Ritchie Highway, just south of CVS and the Sunoco gas station, for several years. Nearby residents and community members have raised concerns about pedestrian and traffic safety as well as environmental impacts of building a restaurant at that particular location.

Appeals have been filed by adjacent property owners including Arnold Preservation Council President Elizabeth Rosborg. She shared that she and other appellants have nothing against Chick-fil-A; they simply have concerns about additional traffic in an already congested area, as well as environmental concerns including the removal of specimen trees and runoff from added impervious surfaces.

The property at 1500 Ritchie Highway backs up to a residential neighborhood and is close to the median crossover for the Arnold Volunteer Fire Department. Current plans would have traffic access the Chick-fil-A from both Route 2 south and a lane behind the existing CVS.

The remaining upcoming hearings are open to the public, and community members are invited to attend and speak. The meetings are scheduled as follows:

- **Thursday, September 11**, 5:00pm-8:00pm in the Arundel Center Council Chambers
- **Tuesday, September 16**, 5:00pm-8:00pm in the Arundel Center Council Chambers
- **Thursday, September 18**, 5:00pm-8:00pm in the Arundel Center Council Chambers
- **Wednesday, October 1**, 5:00pm-8:00pm in the Arundel Center Council Chambers
- **Thursday, October 16**, 5:00pm-8:00pm in the Arundel Center Council Chambers

To learn more about the hearings, go to www.aacounty.org/board-of-appeals. For more information about the Arnold Preservation Council's efforts to support the appellants, go to www.arnoldpreservationcouncil.org/news.

Friends Of Kinder Farm Park To Host "Planting With Purpose" Speaker

By Jim Rausch
Friends of Kinder Farm Park Board Member Emeritus

As part of its speaker series, the Friends of Kinder Farm Park will sponsor its next speaker on September 28, when Maxine Yoon, home horticulture educator and a Master Gardener coordinator for the University of Maryland, will present a talk on "Planting with Purpose."

The talk will highlight how native plant gardens can support beneficial insect biodiversity. Her presentation will take place from 2:00pm-3:00pm in the Harvest Hall at Kinder Farm Park, located at 1001 Kinder Farm Park Road in Millersville.

Yoon will detail how use of native plants can offer a powerful, effective way for gardeners to support insect biodiversity, including native bees, butterflies and other pollinators essential for healthy

ecosystems. This is critical in this time of rapidly declining insect populations. She will explain how gardeners can use native plants to meet the needs of local wildlife and how these plants form the foundation of food webs.

Yoon will present practical tips on how to design and plant a pollinator garden and how to choose the right plants to create year-round habitat.

So, whether you are a seasoned gardener or just getting started, this talk will equip you with the knowledge and inspiration to transform your outdoor space into a haven for pollinators and a vibrant piece of the local ecosystem.

Tickets are required for both Friends of Kinder Farm Park members and nonmembers, and they are free for members and \$3 for nonmembers.

They are available at www.kinderfarmpark.org.



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MRA Plants 3 Million Oysters In the Magothy

Photo courtesy of Jay Crawford

This year's oysters were bought from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and delivered by its flagship, Patricia Campbell.

The Magothy River Association (MRA) celebrated its 50th year of oyster restoration this year with the addition of 3 million oyster spat to Rock Point reef on August 26. This year's addition of oysters was bought from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and delivered by its flagship, Patricia Campbell. Members of the MRA witnessed the deployment of oysters from the Magothy tall ship Jolly Dolphin.

This is the first year that the MRA has purchased oyster spat for restoration from contributions to the MRA Oyster Fund, much of which was raised by generous contributions to the Great Chesapeake Bay Schooner Race featuring the Jolly Dolphin. MRA plans to continue to expand and refine its oyster restoration, thanks to its members and friends.

Swing Into Action With Fundraiser For Rebuilding Together Anne Arundel County

Severna Park-based nonprofit Rebuilding Together Anne Arundel County is preparing for its third annual Swing Into Action golf tournament at Renditions Golf Course in Davidsonville on October 16.

The nonprofit is dedicated to repairing homes, revitalizing communities and rebuilding lives. Most of its clients live below the poverty line, and its services reach all populations: the elderly, single-parent families, disabled individuals and veterans.

For the golf tournament, participants will get to enjoy an 18-hole course that replicates iconic holes from major championship venues across the world. From Augusta National's famous Amen Corner to the 17th island green at TPC Sawgrass, these spots are brought to Anne Arundel County for a memorable experience.

The event start time is 9:00am, and groups should include four golfers. For more details and registration information, visit app.event-caddy.com/events/swing-into-action-rebuilding-together-golf-tournament-2025.

Cancer Survivor Joins Club By Finishing Marathons On Every Continent

» Continued from page 1

Antarctica offered close views of penguin colonies and humpback whales, after a few unsettling moments.

"We took a Russian research vessel through Drake's Passage," Peters said. "That was rough because of the waves and storms."

During each marathon, O'Toole cheered for her husband while sporting a crab hat she purchased in Annapolis. The hat quickly became a favorite sight wherever the couple traveled.

The good vibes continued for a decade. Five races in with two to go, Peters received unwelcome news in 2015: stage 3 throat cancer. O'Toole recalled details of the diagnosis.

"He had a tumor the size of a golf ball lodged in his throat," O'Toole said. "He underwent a grueling treatment plan — 39 radiation sessions and three day-long sessions of a chemo that took away his sense of taste and all saliva."

"He had a trach and feeding tube — I nicknamed him Swiss cheese because of how many holes he had in his body," O'Toole said. "He lost a good portion of his body weight, and he was sleeping upwards of 20-plus hours a day toward the end of treatment. He went through it all with grace and humor."

Peters cited one example of maintaining his good spirits. "We took a picture where (Kelly) has a margarita and I have a feeding tube and we clinked them together," Peters said.

Determined to reach the last two continents on his list — Australia and Africa — Peters started from step one. The first time after beating cancer, he ran half a mile. "It was like a hope," he said.

O'Toole said, "He donned a singlet and shorts, with arms and legs like sticks jutting out. He shuffled 150 yards to the end of our street the first day and walked back. The next day, he added yardage."

He continued building up his mileage until, in 2016, he had a recurrence of cancer. This time, doctors at Johns Hopkins Hospital were able to remove the new tumor.

Peters completed the Sydney Marathon in 2019 to cross Australia off the list. With the COVID-19 pandemic ongoing and a newly diagnosed autoimmune disease, the seventh marathon remained out of reach until this summer.

His final competitive run was the Big Five Marathon on a game preserve in South Africa this June at age 67.

The marathon had to be delayed by 15 minutes because rhinos entered the course. Next, another 15-minute delay, this time for cheetahs. Once it got underway, the marathon was no walk in the park. Peters suffered severe leg cramps and conditions that caused several younger runners to pull out of the event.

"The course had a 19-foot elevation change in a mile and a half," Peters said. "The roads were like packed dirt ... and because of a recent flood, we were running on miles and miles of sand."

At the end of the race, he was greeted by a "loud, deafening roar." Many of the runners had stayed to con-

gratulate him on ending the race, even though he was last to cross the finish line.

"I knew it was my final race," he said. "Kelly was at the end, so that was emotional for me."

With that feat, Peters capped a nearly 20-year effort to join the Seven Continents Club. Since the club formed in 1995, 758 men and 426 women have completed the quest at the marathon distance.

Now 68 years old, Peters plans to continue traveling the world, cycling instead of running competitively. He will stay connected to running by volunteering with the Annapolis Striders.

Though the reminders of injuries and personal loss have never left him, Peters uses them as motivation to live life to the fullest.

"Long runs can be boring, so I go through the people we've lost," he said. "That list has gotten longer and longer."

"I run because I can and others can't," Peters added. "There are so many people with different challenges in life who would do anything to do this. It's a gift."



Chris Peters enjoyed a near-empty Great Wall of China during a 2006 marathon.

During an Easter Island trip, Chris Peters posed with large Moai statues.



A deafening roar from fellow runners greeted Chris Peters as he crossed the finish line during the Big Five Marathon in South Africa.



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Literacy Council To Hold Fifth Annual Fundraiser Book Fair

The Anne Arundel County Literacy Council (AALC) will host a fundraiser book fair on Saturday, September 27, from 10:00am-4:00pm. The book fair will take place outside Discoveries: The Library at the Mall at the Crate & Barrel Court. Annapolis Mall generously donated space and marketing support. The fair will feature thousands of gently used books, including children's books, cookbooks, bestsellers, romance novels, memoirs, mysteries, thrillers, historical fiction and more. Books will be priced at \$2 for hardbacks and \$1 for paperbacks. Shoppers can fill a special edition literacy council tote bag with books for \$25. PayPal, credit cards, checks and cash will be accepted. Also at the book fair: gift basket raffles, featuring restaurant and local shopping gift cards, fine wine selections, and other goodies. In collaboration with the literacy council, Discoveries: The Library at the Mall will offer activities inside the library. Proceeds from the fair will support the council's free adult tutoring programs in Anne Arundel County. Information about the book fair is available at the literacy council's website: www.icanread.org/bookfair.

New Principal Is Broadneck Alumna

» Continued from page 1

As a child, Smith attended Cape St. Claire Elementary, Magothy Middle, Severn River Junior High, and Broadneck High schools. Smith emphasized that Broadneck has a rich history. "The traditions are still going, but we remember them and want to make sure that they keep going, because my experience here was so storybook, everything that you want for your own child: Good friends, I played three sports all four years, we had team dinners, I was also ... class officer," she said, painting an idyllic picture that included homecoming floats and spirit events. "That experience I feel like doesn't exist everywhere, and they still have that." Smith knows this in part because her elder son graduated from Broadneck in 2024, and her younger son is a sophomore there this year. Though her mom was a teacher, education was not in Smith's initial career plans. Instead, she earned her undergraduate degree in economics from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, where she played lacrosse. However, she soon discovered interviewing and driving into Washington, D.C. were not for her and pivoted to the job that was in her DNA. Smith became certified to teach within a year, then earned a Master of Education degree from the University of Notre Dame, and ultimately got certified to be an administrator as well. She first taught social studies at Southern High School, where she coached lacrosse and soccer, before moving to Severna Park High School for eight years to teach AP economics and U.S. government. She was then promoted to assistant principal at Magothy River Middle School, and most recently served as assistant principal for three years and principal for five years at Wiley H. Bates Middle School. "It was very hard to say goodbye to them, but this is also an amazing opportunity to be here," she said of leaving Bates. Smith shared that there was something special about that school that can't be recreated elsewhere, stemming from the uniqueness of being an Apex Arts school. Reflecting on her five years as principal at Bates — the first of which was largely spent navigating the challenges of COVID protocols and remote learning — Smith said her favorite thing that transpired under her leadership was The Bates Story Project. As students returned to the classroom following the pandemic, some struggled

to make connections. So, the school created a project for students and staff alike to share about who they were through an art form, ranging from collage to spoken word. The school received a grant that enabled the staff to hire someone to create a documentary featuring the students and their projects, and it was played for the whole Bates community. The students not only got to illustrate who they were, but they also were encouraged to find someone with whom they felt a connection. "It changed the whole culture of our school," Smith recalled. "Discipline dropped 30% — people had a little bit more empathy, or stopped before they reacted to say, 'Maybe they're just having a bad day.'" Returning to Broadneck, Smith underscored that the school has a strong staff, many of whom are alumni like herself. She does, however, have one goal for the Bruins on her mind already. "I would like to be a five-star school. That is the ultimate goal," she said. "So, I plan on getting in classrooms and seeing the instruction, and just working with everyone to figure out — how can we make those little improvements to reach that better report card? But I have a lot to learn first. I'm not coming in and just changing everything; clearly they function really well." For the academic year 2023-2024, 11 AACPS schools received a five-star rating; 10 were elementary schools, and the 11th was Chesapeake Science Point, a multi-level charter school. BHS received a four-star rating. Back in a high school setting, Smith said she is looking forward to watching students celebrate special milestones, including applying to and being accepted to colleges, attending prom, and more. Smith is married, and in addition to her two sons, has two stepdaughters. When she is not working or cheering her boys on in lacrosse — the younger as a Bruin, and the older at Virginia Military Institute — she enjoys running, whipping up homemade fig jam, and being out on the water in their boat. As he departed, Gelinas shared his confidence in Smith's leadership at Broadneck, writing, "Mrs. Smith is a passionate and dedicated educator whose experience at the secondary level will make her an outstanding leader for our amazing staff, students, and community. The fact that she is a Bruin and grew up in the Broadneck family is an incredible added plus."

The Real Estate Unicorn: Severna Park Waterfront

David Orso
Berkshire Hathaway
Home Services/
PenFed Realty



Severna Park is notorious for waterfrontage and the waterfront lifestyle. Our town is functionally water-locked with the borders hugged by the Magothy River on one side and the Severn River on the other side. Not many residents realize the location of Severna Park is actually on the northwest section of the Broadneck peninsula. A more appropriate nomenclature would have been the "Severna Park and Arnold peninsula." With the omnipresent watershed, it would be a simple assumption that a primary category of local real estate would be waterfront homes. Waterfront homes are more appropriately specified as having riparian rights. In simpler terms, this is the owner's ability to install a dock/pier, launch a boat or have reasonable use of the waterfrontage through property ownership rights.

So, Why Are Only 7.8% Of Homes Sold In Severna Park Waterfront?

That is an inconvenient statistic for buyers seeking waterfront homes. A much closer review of waterfront homes sold would display a 10-year annual average of waterfront homes sold in Severna Park is only 31 per year. Below are some key data points found in my research into the waterfront category for Severna Park for the last 10 years:

- 69 days:** How long it takes to sell a waterfront home
- \$1.3 million:** Average sales price of waterfront homes
- \$4.95 million:** Highest waterfront sale in the last 10 years (5 Boone Trail, brokered by David Orso)
- 26%:** Cash deals
- 1968:** The average year waterfront homes in Severna Park were built

Severna Park Home Statistics			
	Waterfront Homes Sold	Total Homes Sold	
2025 (YTD)	17	161	10-Year Average Waterfront Homes Sold Per Year: 31
2024	21	268	
2023	17	281	
2022	30	378	As Percentage Of The Total Market: 7.8%
2021	34	505	
2020	47	481	
2019	41	439	
2018	26	416	
2017	35	407	
2016	33	453	
2015	29	381	*Data Source: Bright MLS

The lack of waterfront real estate helps the subordinate category known as water-privileged thrive. The most common home sold in Severna Park is non-waterfront in a water-privileged community. Buyers enjoy boat slips, ramp access, kayak racks, community gathering areas and winter boat storage. In fact, the primary buyer of a Severna Park waterfront home is a "move-up" buyer who resides locally. A common misconception about local waterfront is that buyers come from larger metropolitan areas such as Washington, D.C., Philadelphia or New York. That is completely inaccurate but sounds fun and sexy. The profile of a waterfront buyer in Severna Park is overwhelmingly a local resident raising school-aged children, with a stable local career that is thriving, who is rooted in community activities and philanthropy, is a boat owner, and has significant equity in their current home. Any good mariner knows that navigation is the key to a smooth voyage. The same is true in waterfront real estate, and the data is our navigation chart. A savvy home buyer or home seller should be aware of critical variables to avoid making critical mistakes and to assist in making wise decisions in large financial matters such as real estate.

David Orso is the dominant Severna Park real estate agent in both waterfront and non-waterfront home sales. In the last 10 years, David has been the agent on 55 of 331 waterfront home sales in Severna Park, which is more than quadruple any other agent. Knowing the nuances of local waterfront home sales is a critical variable to success in this specific category. David's office is conveniently located at 8 Evergreen Road in the heart of Severna Park (the white rancher across from Severn School). Stop by or schedule a private confidential conversation if you are thinking of buying or selling your home.

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Finally! A Child Custody Statute For Maryland

**By David V. Diggs,
Esq. and Lisa
Bogan-Reohr, Esq.**



Every year, these bills were defeated, until this year. Finally, Maryland joins most states by enacting Maryland Family Law Section 9-201, effective October 1, 2025, encoding the “factors to determine a child’s best interest” in deciding legal and physical custody.

Previously, Maryland courts were guided by case law, in particular, *Montgomery County v. Sanders*, the seminal case setting forth those factors that a court must consider when ruling on custody. The new law codifies and streamlines Maryland's custody case law, including the *Sanders* factors. It states that, in determining what legal custody and physical custody is in the best interest of a child, the court may consider the following factors:

- 1.** Stability and the foreseeable health and welfare of the child
- 2.** Frequent, regular and continuing contact with parents who can act in the child's best interest
- 3.** Whether and how parents who do not live together will share the rights and responsibilities of raising the child
- 4.** The child's relationship with each parent, any siblings, other relatives, and individuals who are or may become important in the child's life
- 5.** The child's physical and emotional security and protection from exposure to conflict and violence
- 6.** The child's developmental needs, including physical safety, emotional security, positive

As I wrote in the Severna Park Voice in March 2020, multiple legislative sessions had seen the introduction of bills that would make joint custody and/or shared parenting the presumptive custodial arrangement.

- self-image, interpersonal skills, and intellectual and cognitive growth
- 7.** The day-to-day needs of the child, including education, socialization, culture and religion, food, shelter, clothing, and mental and physical health
- 8.** How to:
 - A.** Place the child's needs above the parents' needs
 - B.** Protect the child from the negative effects of any conflict between the parents
 - C.** Maintain the child's relationship with the parents, siblings, other relatives, or other individuals who have or likely may have a significant relationship with the child
- 9.** The age of the child
- 10.** Any military deployment of a parent and its effect, if any, on the parent-child relationship
- 11.** Any prior court orders or agreements
- 12.** Each parent's role and tasks related to the child and how, if at all, those roles and tasks have changed
- 13.** The location of each parent's home as it relates to the parent's ability to coordinate parenting time, school and activities
- 14.** The parents' relationship with each other, including:
 - A.** How they communicate with each other
 - B.** Whether they can co-parent without disrupting the child's social and school life
 - C.** How the parents will resolve any disputes in the future without the need for court intervention
- 15.** The child's preference, if age-appropriate
- 16.** Any other factor that the court considers appropriate in determining how best to serve the physical, developmental and emotional needs of the child.

Notably, the “any other factor” allows the courts to fashion a tailored arrangement. The new legislation will foster uniformity and predictability, while still

leaving to the trial judge ample discretion to fashion the best resolution for each family.

Additionally, in section B, the law will require the court to “articulate its findings of fact on the record or in a written opinion, including the consideration of each factor listed in subsection A of this section and any other factor that the court considered.” This requirement will make the record clear for subsequent determinations and appeals.

Child custody determinations are always modifiable, and the new legislation also codifies that law in Maryland Family Law Section 9-202, stating, “Modification of order due to material change in circumstances,” also effective October 1, 2025. Child custody orders are open to modification “if the court determines that there has been a material change in circumstances since the issuance of the order that relates to the needs of the child or the ability of the parents to meet those needs and that modifying the order is in the best interest of the child.”

Additionally, the new law specifically states that a “parent’s proposal to relocate the residence of the parent or the child in a way that would cause physical custody to be impracticable constitutes a material change in circumstances.”

If you or a loved one has questions about custody, you should consult with an attorney who is familiar with this area of the law and who will assist you in making informed decisions. David Diggs is experienced in all facets of family law.

For further information regarding this subject, contact The Law Office of David V. Diggs LLC, located at 8684 Veterans Highway, Suite 204, in Millersville. Call 410-244-1171 or email david@diggsllaw.com.

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Earleigh Heights VFC Fundraiser Will Celebrate Heroes, Community



Earleigh Heights Volunteer Fire Company FUNDRAISER

A Toast to Courage, A Night for Heroes

Members of Earleigh Heights Volunteer Fire Company (EHVFC) are preparing to usher in a new era of the department's history by breaking ground on a new station as early as fall 2026. To celebrate that milestone, EHVFC is hosting a cocktail fundraiser with the theme "A Toast to Courage, A Night for Heroes" on September 27.

"A Toast to Courage, A Night for Heroes" came to life as a way to not only celebrate the men and women of the fire service but also celebrate the community that stands and supports them," said Joshua Austin, one of the event co-chairs.

During the fundraiser, attendees can enjoy food, music, dancing, and live and silent auctions. Austin and his co-chairs hope to raise enough money to fund operations once the expected three-year construction of the new station begins.

"Once construction begins, we will lose the ability to host hall rental events, weekly bingos, or our yearly carnival, all of which are the bread and butter toward covering opera-

tional costs, from purchasing new equipment to keeping the lights on," Austin explained.

During the fundraiser, the sponsorship cocktail hour will take place from 4:00pm-5:00pm, and the general ticket cocktail hour will be from 5:00pm-6:00pm. Following those cocktail hours, the next portion of the event will include small plates dining, a main program and an auction from 6:00pm-8:00pm.

Finishing the evening in style, the Maryland party band 8-Ball Deluxe will perform in the fire hall. The performance will be open to the public, and admission is free with a donation to the fire company.

Silent and live auction items will include a signed Eagles electric guitar, a signed KISS electric guitar, a signed Bruce Springsteen "Born in the U.S.A." album, Garth Brooks "Friends in Low Places" signed sheet music, a Bryce Harper autographed photo, a Wayne Gretzky autographed Sports Illustrated cover, a Tiger Woods signed Masters Tournament flag, and several trips.

For tickets or more information, go to ehvfc-fundraising.square.site/cocktail-fundraiser.

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St. John The Evangelist Opens Doors To Renovated Church



Photo by Judy Tacyn

This is the new sanctuary of the renovated St. John the Evangelist Church.

By Judy Tacyn

On August 20, more than an hour before a solemn dedication Mass was to be celebrated by the Most Rev. William E. Lori, archbishop of Baltimore, St. John the Evangelist parishioners, friends and neighbors started to line up for the first glimpse of their newly renovated church at 689 Ritchie Highway.

Decades in the making, the multi-million-dollar renovation, which was completely funded by generous donors, resulted in a space worthy of worship offered to Christ.

The St. John the Evangelist Catholic community was formed in Severna Park in 1902, and since 1964, members have gathered for worship at the intersection of Ritchie Highway and Cypress Creek Road. When the Rev. Erik Arnold was named pastor in 2019, the building showed many signs of infrastructure age. Monsignor Rick Woy and the Rev. James Proffitt, both pastors of St. John the Evangelist prior

to Arnold's arrival, had studied plans and capital campaigns to raise money to renovate the church.

Arnold received approval from the Archdiocese of Baltimore to begin a capital campaign in late 2023, and by spring 2024 shared draft renovation plans with parishioners for comments. In just a few months, donations and pledges were received to cover the cost of the renovation in full. Work began September 1, 2024; Masses and events were moved to the parish activities center attached to the school at the north end of the campus.

Improvements included the remediation and removal of asbestos ceiling tiles and adding new, energy-efficient heating and cooling systems, a new boiler and roof, and new ventilation and insulation. New lighting, audio, visual, fire alarm, and security systems were also rewired and installed.

The new interior design introduced detailed sacred art and decorative

» Continued on page 18

Vacation Bible Schools Took Kids On A Faith-Based World Tour

Over the summer, churches throughout Severna Park welcomed children to explore their faith during Vacation Bible Schools (VBS). Whether themed after the frigid north or exploring Bible stories that took place in Egypt, VBS gave students the opportunity to dive deeper into the Christian faith in a fun way while surrounded by friends.



Our Shepherd Lutheran's "True North" themed VBS welcomed kids from pre-K to sixth grade to participate. Every day, the kids brought in items to support SPAN (Serving People Across Neighborhoods), collecting over 700 items to donate by the end of the week.



With the support of many volunteers, Trinity Bible Church's "True North" themed VBS offered crafts, activities, music and fellowship as children in kindergarten through fifth grade learned about Jesus.



Tug-of-war was a fun outdoor activity enjoyed by kids who attended VBS at Severna Park United Methodist Church.



Kids accomplished mission-oriented projects during Severna Park United Methodist Church's "SERVE!" VBS that involved cooking, music, arts and crafts, sports and broadcast journalism.



During St. Martin's-in-the-Field Episcopal Church's "Egypt: Joseph's Journey from Prison to Palace" VBS, the kids learned about Joseph and his coat of many colors. They made their own coats of many colors by painting T-shirts.

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Courtney Speaker Series: An Evening with Thomas M. Scalea, MD Thursday, October 9, 2025 • 7–8 pm

“Do for Others, Before You Do for Yourself: A Legacy of Purpose”

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Community Wellness Day Saturday, October 11, 2025 • 10 am–1 pm

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St. John The Evangelist Opens Doors To Renovated Church



Photos courtesy of Be Well Creative

Above: Most Rev. William E. Lori, archbishop of Baltimore, consecrated the Holy Eucharist during the solemn dedication Mass on August 20. **Right:** Archbishop Lori spoke to the St. John the Evangelist congregation during his homily.

» Continued from page 16

elements into the church, bringing a greater focus to the Lord and connecting the congregation more deeply to their patron, St. John.

Sacred art, drawn from the scriptures recorded by St. John, was added while respecting the original architectural intent, maintaining the church's prayerful and inviting warmth.

The focal point of the space is a hand-painted dome over the altar, depicting Christ the victorious lamb in St. John's vision recorded in Revelation 5. Blood issues forth from his heart, a sign of his sacrificial offering and death for humanity. The angel catching the blood in a chalice is a traditional eucharistic symbol

often found in sacred art over the centuries.

Every artistic element throughout the renovated church is a reference to St. John the Evangelist and the scripture he recorded. A new Blessed Virgin Mary shrine, a Sacred Heart of Jesus shrine, and a baptismal font were added. Marble hand-cut in Italy was installed in the sanctuary floor. Restrooms were remodeled and a family bathroom was added. Outside, a new patio and statue of Jesus offer a comfortable place for parishioners to gather.

During a 30-minute prelude and two-hour Mass arranged by Worship and Music Director Helen Kirby, more than 45 musicians and vocalists performed a compilation of ancient Catholic chants and modern contemporary choral pieces.

"The church and the Mass are absolutely gorgeous. Mass was beautiful and spiritual," Barbara Perez, whose husband, Victor, was

in the choir, said about the ancient tradition of a church dedication. "I am honored to witness the blessing of the altar, relics and church. Thank you, Father Erik and team, for your commitment and hard work in making this a reality."

Mary Ellen Bilenki was one of the many worshipers moved during the emotional Mass. "This church is so holy, so beautiful," she said as tears rolled down her cheeks. "This was an amazing dedication of this renovated church so rich in our church history. The music was so moving, and I am so blessed to have been a part of this tonight."

In his homily, Lori said what many parishioners were already thinking: To follow a renovation online in pictures pales in comparison to walking into the church for the first time and witnessing a church renewed. "How lovely is your dwelling place, Oh Lord," he said, quoting Psalm 84. "How lovely, indeed."

"It is the same church building you have worshiped in for years," the archbishop continued. "(Under the leadership of your former pastors and) Father Erik Arnold, it now shines forth with renewed glory and renewed splendor."

While the new St. John the Evangelist facility is truly spectacular, Arnold summed up the ceremony perfectly.

"None of this physical beauty means anything if it doesn't in some wonderful way lead us to be caught up into the heart of Christ and his great love for us, leading us to give ourselves with him on this altar to the Father, having been made new in that great love he has for us," he said. "All of this will be for naught unless it draws each of us closer and deeper into the heart of Christ. That is my great prayer."

To learn more about St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church, visit www.stjohnsp.org.

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Coming In October!

The Severna Park Voice will publish its Retirement Living edition. This glossy magazine will feature a variety of important information that will allow you to enjoy a stress-free retirement. The special edition will be direct-mailed with the October edition of the Voice to more than 24,000 homes in the local area.

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Welcome Back To School!

Dana Schallheim
AACPS Board
of Education
District 5



useful as you kick off the school year.

Mobile App — Available on the Apple app store as well on Google Play, this free mobile app makes staying informed easier than ever before. Type “Anne Arundel County Schools” into the search bar.

Back-To-School Events — Informative events designed for parents/guardians are scheduled at every school. Many middle- and high-school events in our district have already occurred, but several elementary school back-to-school events are coming up. For more information, visit www.aacps.org/btsevents.

Transportation — We anticipate transporting over 67,000 students by bus or via our alternative vehicle program every school day. To use the bus transportation eligibility tool, read bus policy and regulation, and view bus schedules and disruptions, visit www.aacps.org/buses. Bus schedules were initially posted a couple weeks ago but will continue to evolve over the first few weeks of school. Please check back occasionally for the latest information.

Consider signing up for notifications for your child’s bus. This is especially helpful should there be unanticipated disruptions in service. A link to sign up can be found next to each bus number on the bus schedules page.

School Meals — For information

Welcome back students, families, teachers and staff! I wish each of you a happy, healthy and successful 2025-2026 academic year. Below, please find some resources you might find

about school meals, menus and applications for free or reduced-price breakfast and lunch, visit www.aacps.org/nutrition.

Immunizations — Students must have required immunizations or an approved exemption to attend school. More information about vaccinations required of all students in Maryland can be found at www.aacps.org/schoolvaccinations.

Student and Parent Handbooks — Available in both English and Spanish, student and parent handbooks contain complete information about student rights and responsibilities including dress code, references to all pertinent school system policies including bullying and bias, programs, graduation requirements, and more. All students from prekindergarten through grade 12 will receive age-appropriate briefings about the student code of conduct during the first couple weeks of school. Visit www.aacps.org/parenthandbook and www.aacps.org/studenthandbook for more information.

Redistricting — We are currently undergoing the second phase of county-wide redistricting. An interactive map and comment portal can be found at www.aacps.org/redistricting. Public comments were collected through September 5. The Board of Education of Anne Arundel County will vote on a plan or plans to take to public briefings and public hearings during its September 17 meeting. The meeting will begin at 6:00pm in the boardroom located at 2644 Riva Road in Annapolis and is open to the public and streamed live on YouTube.

Your child’s school is equipped to answer any questions you may have; however, I am happy to assist if needed and will do my best to connect you with the appropriate staff. As always, I can be reached at 443-534-2660, dschallheim@aacps.org, or on the socials.

Back To Good Schools And Some Big News

Steuart Pittman
Anne Arundel
County Executive



Editor’s Note:

This column appeared in the county executive’s weekly email newsletter on August 28. The column has been shortened to fit available space.

Dear neighbor,
Over 85,000

kids returned this week to our Anne Arundel County Public Schools, entering new classes that offer new experiences. Half of the revenue that county government collects each year is spent in our school system. I, my staff, and the county council make hard decisions about what to fund in the Board of Education’s budget request, and we all hope for what Superintendent Mark Bedell calls a good return on investment.

The ribbon cutting last week to celebrate the \$124 million restoration of Meade High School is a bricks-and-mortar return that will boost the morale of the Mustangs for many years to come, but yesterday Dr. Bedell called to share his excitement about something even better. Test scores at Meade, a school with students from military families, public housing, and the most diverse neighborhoods in our county, skyrocketed last year.

In fact, scores across our county were up in 10 of the 11 grade-band assessments in English language arts, math and science. While some of the assessment tools have changed, the overall picture is that we’ve finally returned to pre-pandemic performance, and the higher results for younger kids will likely show up with even more progress

when they move up the grade levels.

Good education starts with good teachers. Our county’s teachers were among the lowest paid before I and four members of the county council made some hard decisions about revenue and spending seven years ago. We paid back step increases, grew starting salaries, and did everything that we could to deliver fair raises in each of our budgets. COVID took a toll on teacher retention, and in the post-COVID years, it was hard to hire for any position. But this year, it all paid off.

The school year started with 32 vacancies, and that number could well drop below 30 in the coming days. That means our vacancy rate is 0.5% while the national teacher vacancy rate is 12.5% (and teacher applications are also up). I’m told that we’re hiring only the best applicants. People want to teach in our schools again!

I’m not suggesting that all is roses in our schools. Much more can and should be done, starting with delivering the Blueprint’s recommendation to increase collaborative time, giving teachers the freedom to work with students individually and plan their lessons. But things are looking up.

Another success story is Anne Arundel County Public Libraries (AACPL). You’ll have to listen to my upcoming “Pittman and Friends” podcast episode with AACPL CEO Skip Auld to hear the full story of the progress they are making, especially for preschool children in a way that boosts our all-important kindergarten readiness. Parents love to bring their kids to activities at our Discoveries Library at the Annapolis Mall, and that’s why we’ve just expanded it. That ribbon cutting took place in August, and you should really stop by.

Leveling The Playing Field For Officials Too

Dawn Gile
Senator
District 33



When most of us think about high school sports, we picture the players, the coaches, and the roaring stands filled with proud parents and students. But there’s another group on the field that often goes unnoticed until a tough call is made: the officials. They keep the games safe, fair and orderly.

Last summer, constituents Doug Silber and Jenn Murphy — both longtime high school sports officials — came to me with a concern. They explained something many families in the stands may never have realized: Despite Maryland’s pay equity laws, officials for girls sports were being paid less than those working similar boys sports. The work was the same, the time commitment was the same, but the paychecks were not.

Here in Anne Arundel County, for example,

officials for boys lacrosse were being paid \$120 per game while girls lacrosse officials received \$100. Once the issue was raised, Anne Arundel County Public Schools acted quickly to correct the disparity locally. But Doug and Jenn were right to point out that the problem went beyond one sport or one county — it was happening across Maryland, and the law needed to be stronger.

That’s why I introduced Senate Bill 923, which was cross-filed in the House by Delegates Dana Jones and Heather Bagnall. The bill passed with overwhelming bipartisan support and puts in place several commonsense measures to make sure pay inequities don’t creep back in.

Among other provisions, school systems must now reject any officiating contract that results in different pay for boys and girls versions of the same sport. Solicitations for officiating services must be issued at the same time, with the same deadlines, so no side has an unfair advantage in the bidding process. And school systems can even require that contractors bid on boys and girls sports together to

keep pay consistent. These guardrails close loopholes and create accountability across Maryland.

But for me, this legislation is about more than contracts and procurement rules. It’s about the message we send to our kids. When a girl athlete sees that the officials at her game are paid less than those at her brother’s, we are telling her, whether we intend to or not, that her time on the field matters less. That is not the Maryland I want for my daughters or for any of our young athletes.

Here in Severna Park, sports are part of our fabric. Whether it’s the Friday night lights, a spring lacrosse showdown, or watching our cross country teams chase another state title, athletics bring us together. They teach teamwork, discipline and resilience. But they should never teach inequity.

This bill started with the voices of local officials who saw a problem and spoke up. Together with Delegates Jones and Bagnall, I was proud to work on their behalf to correct it. And as a mom of three girls who already spends so much time at practices, games and meets, this one is personal. I want them — and all of our daughters — to know that their games, their talents, and their futures matter every bit as much as anyone else’s.

An Ounce Of Prevention

Heather Bagnall
Delegate
District 33C



vaccinations, and ensuring that Marylanders have access to affordable, comprehensive health coverage.

In 2019, when it appeared likely that Congress would repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA), Maryland, having already established our own health benefit exchange, took preventive measures to protect our health care by codifying the protections of the Affordable Care Act such as the prohibition on pre-existing conditions, allowance of children to remain on their parents' insurance until the age of 26, and requirements for insurance to cover preventive screenings and primary care into our state law.

Though the ACA was not repealed, by decoupling it from the federal law, our health care system and provider network were not thrown into the same chaos as other states each time the law came up for debate in Congress.

In January 2025, as we saw data-driven, evidence-based policy at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) being replaced with more partisan, discretionary policies regarding health care and covered services, and as we saw a removal of institutional knowledge and medical expertise within these same agencies, Maryland once again took an ounce of prevention.

Unless like me, you are a public health policy geek, you likely won't read a lot about House Bill 974. You won't notice a change due to HB 974, which passed mostly along

We've all heard the adage, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Prevention of disease, early detection and early intervention not only provide better health outcomes but make good financial sense. It's why Maryland has invested in our primary care services, health screenings, prenatal care, childhood screenings and

partisan lines and quietly went into effect June 1, unless you leave Maryland. Then, you will immediately see the chaos we prevented with HB 974, with the gripping title "Health Insurance — Preventive Services — High Deductible Health Plans and Enforcement Authority." HB 974 stopped time by requiring in our state law all the protections, screenings and services covered by insurance as required by federal law as of December 31, 2024, without cost sharing. This empowers our Maryland Insurance Administration to enforce these provisions, and it allows for future evidence-based, data-driven screenings and preventive measures to be added to the coverage. What does that mean to you?

In Anne Arundel County, we have always had a healthy vaccination rate exceeding the state average, not only during COVID but also our childhood vaccination schedule and with our vaccines for our aging population. It's a point of pride for many Anne Arundel residents doing their part to protect their families and community.

With the passage of HB 974, your ability to access the full recommended schedule of vaccines will not be impeded by unexpected out-of-pocket costs. You won't see a change in your covered health screenings at your next primary care or well-woman visit. And as we develop new vaccines, screenings and other preventive measures to promote population health, Maryland will lead in adopting those innovations.

We didn't know if we were overcorrecting but in Maryland, because we did, Marylanders won't feel the impact of the changes at the CDC and HHS. However, other states who did not take this prophylactic measure are learning that routine screenings and vaccinations may no longer be covered. Much like preventive screenings and vaccinations, HB 974 is a quiet bill with a huge impact that prevented unnecessary hardship and kept our state health system stable in uncertain times.

Next month, we'll talk about the potential impact of HR 1, which was passed by Congress and signed into law in July.

Celebrating Community Through Citations

LaToya Nkongolo
Delegate
District 31



One of the most rewarding parts of serving as a state delegate is celebrating with our community and recognizing those who make a difference. Through strong partnerships with the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce, the Pasadena Business Association and the Northern Anne Arundel Chamber of Commerce, I've had

the honor of attending numerous ribbon cuttings and presenting citations to local small-business owners.

As a small-business owner myself, I understand the dedication, sacrifice, and resilience it takes to build and sustain a business that not only succeeds but also gives back to the community. Supporting and uplifting our entrepreneurs is one of the greatest joys of this role.

What's really inspiring is the opportunity to celebrate our youth. I've had the privilege of attending several Eagle Scout Court of Honor ceremonies and recently presented a citation to Alethia Brown, the first recipient of the Stars and Stripes Award for Troop MD0152. It is an absolute honor to recognize young people who are committed to service, community and leadership.

If you know of a District 31 business, youth or community member who deserves special recognition, I would love to hear from you. Please reach out to my office at latoya.nkongolo@house.maryland.gov with details including the honoree's name, the date of the event, and suggested language for the citation. We would be happy to mail the citation or present it in person, depending on availability.

There is so much good happening in our community, and I look forward to celebrating these achievements together.

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CEM (right) shows the cancer not seen on mammo (left)

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High School Football Teams' Biggest Challenge Is Replacing Graduating Players

Broadneck, Severna Park, Spalding And Severn All Have Daunting Schedules This Fall

By Kevin Murnane

Three of the four area high school football teams have new quarterbacks to lead their offenses in 2025. They must also replace many talented players who have gone on to play college football.

Only Severna School has a starting quarterback returning, Severna Park resident **Ty Bussard**. Archbishop Spalding lost All-American quarterback **Malik Washington**, Broadneck lost three-year starter **CJ Watkins**, and Severna Park graduated multi-year signal-caller **Vince Nguyen**.

All three quarterbacks have gone on to play college football; Washington to Maryland, Watkins to West Virginia Wesleyan, and Nguyen to Wagner.

All four area football programs went back to work in August to try to replace those stars and prepare for their grueling schedules that await them this fall.

Broadneck

Head coach **Rob Harris** enters his 19th year as a Broadneck football coach, 11 years as head coach. Harris has the herculean task of replacing three starters of the skilled positions of quarterback (Watkins) running back (**Ian Mouldin**) and leading wide receiver (**Joey Smargissi**).



Severna Park wide receiver **Cole Cavanaugh** (right) will be a staple of the Falcons' offense this year.

"We have a great group of players coming back," Harris said. "They work their butt off, and it's fun to teach them and they have earned the right to be a Bruin."

Last year, the Bruins went 10-2, and their only losses were to Annapolis and Quince Orchard in the state's 4A semifinals. This year, the Bruins are ranked No. 10 in the Baltimore area according to MaxPreps, a national website providing coverage of high school athletics.

"We have a tough schedule as our early games are against St. Mary's of Annapolis and Milford Mill," Harris said.

According to MaxPreps, both St. Mary's and Milford Mill are ranked in the top 20 teams in Baltimore.

The Anne Arundel County competition will be fierce as Arundel and Old Mill are also ranked in MaxPrep's top 20.

Harris looks to replace Watkins with junior **Nate Kropkowski**, who received valuable playing time last year. At running back, the Bruins will have senior **Aaron Foote**, and at wide receiver, junior **Aidan Tupper** and senior **Carson Pierce** will step into bigger roles.

Harris boasted about a stingy defense that may include 10 seniors as starters. "Our defensive line will be very good, and the overall leadership of that unit helps us compete against the high-powered offenses in the county," Harris said.

Visiting teams that come into Broadneck's home field are greeted by a banner that reads "Play Like a Bruin." When asked what the banner means to him, Harris replied, "That reminds our players to play with grit, hustle and wear the opponents down in the first three quarters and then dominate them in the fourth quarter."

Severna Park

The Falcons went 4-6 last year which was an improvement. » Continued on page 28

Now What? Field Hockey Teams Turn To Youth

By David Bashore

On the strength of their big three, Broadneck's field hockey team has been a perennial power the last three seasons. Senior-heavy Severna Park won it all last season.

But those players are all gone in 2025, leaving each program to navigate some inexperience before heading into the teeth of this fall's campaign.

The upshot for these two programs is that the county as a whole appears to be in the same boat, giving everyone time to negotiate the growing pains and coalesce into a more formidable version of themselves when October rolls around.

Broadneck

After a state championship, a semi-final appearance, and a return to the championship game in the last three years, Broadneck graduated their decorated seniors and will turn to a squad with about a dozen varsity players but light on experience.

The scoring may fall to seniors **Alysa Lewis** and **Charlotte Robertson**, along with junior **Caroline Miller** and sophomore **Cate Imber**, each of whom saw minutes last year and will have to grow into a larger role. Miller and **Laurie O'Leary**, a sophomore defender who received all-county honors in 2024, are the lone returning starters.

» Continued on page 29



Broadneck will depend on junior **Caroline Miller** to create scoring opportunities and supplement a roster that is light on varsity experience.

Cross Country Conversation Starts With Severna Park

Broadneck Could Showcase Their Best Team In Years

By Tom Worgo

Anne Arundel County should have some of the state's best cross country teams again this year, with two defending champions leading the pack.

Severna Park

Championships are etched in the minds of Falcons coach **Josh Alcombright** and his runners.

The girls team has won three consecutive state championships and six county titles in a row.

The boys have won 13 straight county titles, five consecutive Class 4A state titles from 2017 to 2022 while placing second in the state to the past two seasons.

"It's not a secret that we have had the most successful program in the state in recent years — for sure," Alcombright said. "That's pretty undisputed."

The Falcons boys and girls squads have the talent and depth to capture a county or state title.

Junior **Josie Kamas** is the runner to watch on the girls side. She placed third in the 2024 Class 3A state championships and improved on her 2023 time by about 25 seconds when she finished fourth overall.

Kamas, the last year's Capital Gazette girls cross country Runner of the Year, also has a 2024 county championship on her. » Continued on page 32



Severna Park junior **Josie Kamas** placed third in the 2024 Class 3A state championships and improved on her 2023 time by about 25 seconds when she finished fourth overall.

Falcons Hope To Progress, Bruins Hope To Finish In Volleyball

By David Bashore

Two teams, two outlooks, two standards.

Broadneck and Severna Park start their volleyball seasons in different places with different goals. One team is hoping to go a step further and claim some hardware, while the other is angling to take a step forward after two years of playing a young squad to gain experience.

The two teams will lock horns September 16 at Broadneck.

Broadneck

After finally getting over the hump both locally and statewide, winning the county championship and reaching the state championship match, Broadneck is hoping to go one step further and complete the job.

The Bruins are well positioned to do just that, bringing back 11 players from last season, including all-county honorees Sydney Lawrence, Kennedy Smith and Anna Graves.

Such a seasoned group gained confidence from beating Arundel in the county championship and learned some lessons in a defeat by Richard Montgomery in the 4A championship.

It is those two matches that the team will carry forward, in addition to the seasoned experience of three-year starters in multiple positions.

Head coach Tracey Regalbuto said the team "is happy about last season's success but not satisfied with the end result. We are hoping to make it back to that



Broadneck returning starters Kennedy Smith (left) and Sydney Lawrence celebrated a point last season against Crofton.

position" and for a different outcome.

Key regular season games for the Bruins include a matchup with Arundel on September 30, as well as crossover games against Annapolis Area Christian on September 22 and Howard on October 21.

Severna Park

After taking some lumps the last two years with a young squad laden with underclassmen, the Falcons are hoping to take a big step forward in 2025.

They return two players who received all-county nods last season in setter Genevieve Willis and outside hitter Lizzie Ranaghan. Between those two and returning setter Jennifer Hong and right-sided attacker Maggie Morgan, Severna Park boasts experience with multi-year starters at several positions.

Second-year coach Caitlin Mills told the Voice that having two setters and a slew of defensive specialists back allows them to be more flexible in attack. But a collective lack of height will force the team to be creative in that attack, something having such flexibility should help.

The Falcons are looking forward to key games in succession in early October that will give them a measuring stick to see where they're at: they host Arundel on October 7 and then Crofton two days later.

Note: Information for Severn School and Archbishop Spalding was not received by press time.

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Falcons Girls Soccer Eyeing Three-Peat, Bruins Looking For Growth



Ava Scott played a key role in Severna Park's championship run in 2024. She and her sister, Emerson, headline the returning squad.

By David Bashore

For the Severna Park girls soccer team, championships have almost become the standard. It will be tougher this season, but the pieces are there to make yet another run.

Broadneck, on the other hand, is looking to take the next progression in their rebuild.

The two teams will battle in Broadneck's home opener on September 9.

Severna Park

After going 20 years between state championships, the Falcons made it two in two in 2024. But they lost several key components to that squad,

most notably All-American midfielder **Abby Cover**.

They return several important pieces from the last two championships, though. Senior twins **Emerson** and **Ava Scott**, who have committed to Florida Atlantic and Flagler, respectively, headline the returning squad. The same goes for forward **Maria Bragg**, who committed to Florida for lacrosse.

Sixth-year coach **Rick Stimpson** said the team's depth is stronger than in the past couple of seasons, though losing the heart of their midfield is something they'll have to rectify early in the season. Junior **Izzy Burleson**, now a three-year varsity player, will help anchor the engine room.

Their season starts with a bang, with their first three games against Severn School, Broadneck and Chesapeake.

Broadneck

The Bruins are continuing their youth movement, having graduated a handful of seniors from last year and only having three in 2025.

Hadley and **Natalie Crooks**, two of the seniors, will give experience to a squad laden with freshmen and sophomore talent. **Lola Banks** and **Reagan Milnes**, both sophomore forwards, give skill and assertiveness in attack, while freshman midfielder **Alyssa Watson** and sophomore goalkeeper **Cameron Terhune** add to the youthful energy.

John Camm, now in his 22nd year as coach, said the team should be skillful and aggressive, but defending as a unit will make or break the squad's fortunes in 2025.

Broadneck opens the season with a two-game date at Glen Burnie on September 6.

Note: Information for Severn School and Archbishop Spalding was not received by press time.



Hadley Crooks (left) played tough defense as Broadneck and Annapolis battled to a scoreless draw last season. A senior, Crooks will give experience to a squad laden with freshmen and sophomores.

Falcons, Bruins Boys Soccer Teams Dreaming Big



T.J. Remson headlines 19 returners for Broadneck. The team hopes that their seasoned leadership takes them past the state quarterfinals this year.

By David Bashore

With a combined three dozen returners providing a healthy combination of skill and experience, the boys soccer teams at Broadneck and Severna Park both have promising prospects for the 2025 season.

Each team remains in their region from the past two years — Severna Park in 3A East, Broadneck in 4A East — and each has one addition to the region. Old Mill joins the fray in Severna Park's region, while Crofton shifts to Broadneck's in the 4A ranks.

Otherwise, it will be a gauntlet of familiar foes as Broadneck looks for a return to the state playoffs, and the Falcons hope to get back to that round after missing out in the last two seasons.

An early litmus test comes for both programs, when they square off in the first week of the regular season. They'll kick off at 5:00pm September 9 at Broadneck.

Severna Park

The Falcons are gearing up for another crack at returning to the state playoff rounds, where they haven't been since reaching the 4A state final in 2022.

In each of the last two years, Severna Park has been ousted by South River in the region tournament. But with the Seahawks rebuilding and the Falcons returning 17 varsity players, experience gives Severna Park an early leg up.

Forward **Aidan Min** returns to spearhead the Falcons' attack, while **Charlie Samples** is back to backstop the team in goal. In between, players who have grown into leadership positions — like midfielders **Jacob Broadwater** and **Garrett Moden** and defender **Liam Kinslow** — give the Falcons the "consistency, cohesion and confidence," coach **Ryan Parisi** expects.

Severna Park opens the season Septem-

ber 5 at home to Cecil County's North East High. They'll also host Chesapeake and visit Broadneck and South River during the regular season.

Broadneck

Down the road in Cape St. Claire, Broadneck is looking to take another step forward in **Sean Tettermer's** 24th season in charge. The Bruins won their first region title in six years in 2024 before bowing out to Montgomery Blair in a tight state quarterfinal contest — the second straight year in which they were eliminated by the eventual state champion.

They avenged the 2023 loss by ousting Leonardtown 1-0 on a **T.J. Remson** goal in officials' time. And with Remson headlining 19 returners into the 2025 season, there's optimism that this season could yet be even better.

Remson will anchor Broadneck's midfield, while **Brady Miller** returns to provide presence in defense, and **Wilson Banwell** and **Braeden Kelly** lead the attack.

Out of a short list of around eight perennial 4A powers, three come out of the 4A East II region: Broadneck, Bowie and Leonardtown. They're joined in 2025 by an ascendant Annapolis and region newcomer Crofton, alongside North Point, to form a loaded region that will leave the eventual winner truly battle-tested for a playoff run.

Broadneck opens the season September 6 with a pair of games in Bowie, against 2024 3A finalists River Hill and Mount Hebron. Later in the season, they have home games against South River, Chesapeake and Annapolis, as well as heading to Crofton to round out the regular season.

Note: Information for Severn School and Archbishop Spalding was not received by press time.

STUDENT-ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

WYATT SHAW

Broadneck High School
Soccer, Lacrosse

By David Bashore

If there's an academic or athletic endeavor at Broadneck High School, there's a good chance **Wyatt Shaw** is in the midst of it. The Broadneck senior is a capable central defender for the boys soccer team, as well as a lockdown long-stick midfielder on the lacrosse squad.

He also owns a flawless 4.0 unweighted GPA (better than 4.5 weighted) and is committed to the admissions process at Harvard, where he plans to play collegiate lacrosse.

Shaw committed to the Crimson last September, shortly after the trigger date for the class of 2026 to receive direct recruiting contact from Division I colleges. As the Ivy League does not give athletic scholarships, the fit was even more important, but Shaw had a feeling as soon as he arrived on campus that this was home for his four collegiate years.

"September 1 (2024) rolled around and the messages started coming in. I started getting visits lined up, and I took two before Harvard. I know it sounds cliché, but when I visited, I just knew," Shaw said. "Of course there's the name, but it was also the coaches, and the community felt right."

In addition to his studies, Shaw is involved in several groups at Broadneck, including Na-



tional Honors Society, One Love, and Morgan's Message. He's also involved in the community and in ministry through his church.

In the classroom, Shaw has five AP classes this academic year, which will bring his total

Photo courtesy of Dennis McGinley

Wyatt Shaw is a senior and a capable central defender for Broadneck's boys soccer team.

to 15 during his time at Broadneck. Outside of class, the sports field, and his other academic pursuits, Shaw calls himself naturally curious.

"I like to learn little things — like how to juggle three lacrosse balls, or how a certain thing works," Shaw said. "At school, I'll even just pop into a club once or twice to see what it's about."

At Harvard, he plans to study economics. His college career will be built on everything he's learned at Broadneck, both inside and outside the classroom.

"It's just such a great community, a place where academics are valued and there's a chance to compete for state championships in most sports," Shaw said. "You don't get that in a lot of places. I'm so grateful to be a part of it."

"It's just such a great community, a place where academics are valued and there's a chance to compete for state championships in most sports. You don't get that in a lot of places. I'm so grateful to be a part of it."

— WYATT SHAW

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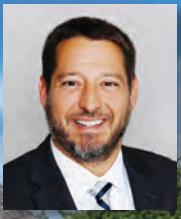
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High School Football Teams' Biggest Challenge

» Continued from page 23

provement over their 2023 record of 2-8.

"We played 10 sophomores two years ago and we knew we would take some lumps, but now we have 27 seniors leading our team," said head coach **Nick Marks**.

One of those seniors, wide receiver **Cole Cavanaugh**, will attract the attention of visiting teams as he was one of the leading wide receivers in the county last year. He has accepted a scholarship to Brown University to extend his football career.

Throwing to Cavanaugh this year is senior **Isaac Graves**, who will be more of a dual-threat quarterback. Graves is one of the strongest players pound-for-pound on the team and is a member of the Falcons' 1,000-pound club. His squat, bench press and deadlift totals reach over 1,000 pounds.

"We want to be mentally tough this year," Marks said. "We want to finish games and compete through all four quarters."

Senior leadership will also be an asset for the Falcons. Marks raved about **Johnny Wark**, defensive lineman **Noah Croghan** and **Kam Chapman**, as well as offensive lineman **Asher Knickerbocker**, **Roy Bowman**, **Matt Murphy** and **Roy Bowerman IV**.

The Falcons also boast of two exceptional kickers in punter **Gavin Fetty** and kicker **Joe Caffiero**.

"Our goals are to have a winning record and win our first playoff game," Cavanaugh said.

The Falcons have not won a state playoff game since 2012.

Marks also wanted to thank the Severna Park community for their outstanding support during the past year as his wife, Leah, was diagnosed with breast cancer. She is in recovery now and Marks is grateful for all the kindness that was provided to him and his family.

"Severna Park is just a great community," Marks said.

Archbishop Spalding

How do you replace the fifth-rated quarterback in the nation in **Malik Washington**, who many observers believed was a generational talent?

Spalding head coach **Kyle Schmitt** is concerned about replacing Washington's exceptional talents, but he also has to replace numerous other players who have gone on to major college football programs.

"Replacing the senior class that went 43-4 over the last four years will be a tremendous challenge," Schmitt said. "They were the foundation of three consecutive MIAA A Conference championships."

In addition to Washington going to Maryland, his teammates **Jayden Shipps** and **Delmar White** also became Terps. **Trent Gillis** and **Cooper Welsh** went to Navy, and **Alijah Jones** is playing at Northwestern.

The Cavaliers have a formidable schedule this year by adding nationally-ranked Archbishop Hoban of Ohio as well as the prestigious Hun School of New Jersey before the rigorous MIAA schedule starts.

"Every opportunity to play top com-

petition allows your players and staff to measure themselves against those high-caliber teams," Schmitt said.

"We've had a strong focus in summer workouts and energetic August practices to serve as great preparation for our challenging conference schedule."

One of the Cavaliers' strengths will be the offensive line, which has four returning starters including senior **Kyle Lucas**, who is a Navy recruit.

Replacing Washington at quarterback is Severna Park's **Blake Howell**, who has served multiple seasons as Washington's backup. He is a dual-threat quarterback compared to Washington's drop-back style. The offense has multiple quick receivers including sophomore **Kam Miller** and junior **Myles McAfee**.

Defensively, the Cavaliers are athletic and fly to the ball. Senior defensive back and Severna Park resident **Sean Johnson** leads the ball-hawking secondary. Johnson has committed to Florida State.

Spalding is chasing their fourth consecutive MIAA A Conference title, and they will face numerous teams that MaxPreps has ranked in the top 10 from the Baltimore area. Those teams circling Spalding on their calendars include McDonogh, Loyola, Calvert Hall, Mount Saint Joseph and Concor dia Preparatory.

Severn

Severn School had a successful season last year as the Admirals finished with a 7-4 mark and made the Maryland Interscholastic (MIAA) B Conference playoffs and head coach **Demetrius Ballard** was named the MIAA coach of the year.

Severn also retains numerous players from last year's squad including Severna Park resident and senior quarterback **Ty Bussard**, along with the hard-running backfield of seniors **Jules Floyd**, **Charlie Runco** and junior **Jack Schlein**.

"What has really impressed me so far is our offensive line," Ballard said. "Our strength and conditioning program has been so beneficial to our success."

Those offensive linemen include seniors **Charlie Helfferich** and **Nate Eskins**. Eskins is up to 265 pounds and increased his bench press by 50 pounds over the summer. Another example of Severn's achievement in the weight room is Bussard, who came to Severn at 145 pounds three years ago and has grown to 6-foot-2 and 190 pounds. Both Bussard and Eskins are both being recruited by college programs.

Ballard believes that the improved overall athleticism will play a major factor during the season.

"We have much better athletes than before," Ballard said. "That will be one of the strengths of the team."

Ballard raved about his freshmen class as he has recruited eight players from the Green Hornets feeder program. Ballard hopes to add Severna Park to Severn School's schedule as an annual game.

"It would be great for the community," Ballard said.

Severna Park Eighth-Grader Wins Jiu-jitsu Gold



Liam Ellis showed off his gold medal after the Pan Kids IBJJF Jiu-Jitsu Championship in Florida this summer.

By Elsa Webster

Student Intern

After months of training, Severna Park Middle School eighth-grader **Liam Ellis** took home gold at the Pan Kids IBJJF Jiu-Jitsu Championship in Kissimmee, Florida, in late July.

The International Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Federation (IBJJF) is a highly regarded institution for people of all ages who practice jiu-jitsu. Its Pan Kids competition is the largest children's jiu-jitsu tournament in the world.

"I heard about it from my coaches because I've been training for a long time," Ellis said. "I first heard about it around three years ago, I'd say, and I've kind of just been training really hard since. So it's more of just completion for me."

Ellis attends Crazy 88 Mixed Martial Arts, where kids train as teams and are "almost like family." While Brazilian jiu-jitsu is more of an individual sport, Ellis shared his victory at Pan Kids with his teammate Evelyn Hexter, who won a silver medal. The pair met through Crazy 88, training in the sport together.

Ellis spent months prior to the tournament preparing.

"For the past four or three months, I've been getting in around 20, 30 hours a week of trying to work on my techniques and my skills and just overall how I'm going to fight and also my endurance," Ellis said. "Endurance is a really big part, but it all comes together."

Although this was the biggest competition yet for Ellis, it was not his first. The previous year, Ellis went to Las Vegas for another large tournament, and he has competed in state and regional tournaments in New York, New Jersey and Virginia.

Ellis' journey in jiu-jitsu started when he was only 3 years old but intensified when he turned 10. After having difficulty enjoying other sports, Ellis embraced his family history of wrestling and jiu-jitsu. Crazy 88 gave him another incentive to start being more serious about the sport because of the members' positive attitude and the friendships he made while training.

"I continued or pushed myself through because my grandfather was always big into sports like that, and he recently passed, so I really wanted to do something for him," Ellis said. "So I just wanted to continue the sport. I've always really loved the sport, though. It's a great thing. My family's really big into wrestling and all that. And my brother used to do the sport and he's helped me a lot in that too."

The years of training represent work toward a goal, with the Pan Kids tournament being one step into Ellis' future with jiu-jitsu. He plans to continue with the sport and aspires to eventually become an IBJJF Hall of Famer. Ellis hopes to participate in bigger tournaments at the IBJJF before he reaches his goal of signing an Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) contract and is unable to participate in any other competitions.

Ellis' win at the Pan Kids tournament only marks the beginning of what he hopes to do with Brazilian jiu-jitsu. After significant time spent training and participation in numerous tournaments, his future with the sport is within reach.

Now What? Field Hockey Teams Turn To Youth

» Continued from page 23

Coach **Shannon Hanratty** called the returning group "coachable and eager. Lots of new faces (with) lots to learn and gel together, but eager to take it all in and see where this team can go. ... We have a lot of room to grow but a lot of hardworking players looking to rise to the occasion and step up to fill the needs of the team."

Broadneck starts the season with a big test, facing Interscholastic Athletic Association of Maryland (IAAM) power Archbishop Spalding on September 6.

Severna Park

After leaning heavily on seniors to win the 3A state title last season, the Falcons return to the 4A ranks with a squad that will feature just two seniors. Longtime coach **Shannon Garden**

expects contributions from juniors **Emerson Clarke, Ryleigh Connell, Addie Hill** and **Izzy Scarfo**, as well as sophomores **Sophia Weber** and **Grace Redmond**, all of whom saw time on varsity last season and will step into larger roles.

Garden suggested that despite new faces, chemistry and a hard-work mentality are already team strengths that can get even better as the season progresses.

Severna Park has two-time defending 4A champion Crofton in their region, and the two will play their regular-season matchup on September 25 in Severna Park.

Note: Information for Severn School and Archbishop Spalding was not received by press time.

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2025 Fall Sports Schedules

FIELD HOCKEY

Broadneck

Sept. 6: Home Tournament, 10:00am and 4:00pm (*opponents TBD*)
Sept. 9: at Glenelg, 6:00pm
Sept. 11: at Southern, 6:30pm
Sept. 15: Liberty, 6:30pm
Sept. 17: Crofton, 6:30pm
Sept. 22: at Severn, 4:30pm
Sept. 25: at South River, 6:30pm
Sept. 30: at Arundel, 6:30pm
Oct. 7: Severna Park, 6:30pm
Oct. 9: at Chesapeake, 6:30pm
Oct. 14: Annapolis, 6:30pm
Oct. 16: North County, 6:30pm
Oct. 20: Winters Mill, 6:30pm

Severna Park

Sept. 9: River Hill, 6:00pm
Sept. 11: at Chesapeake, 6:30pm
Sept. 16: at South River, 6:30pm
Sept. 24: at Annapolis, 6:30pm
Sept. 25: Crofton, 6:30pm
Sept. 29: South Carroll, 6:30pm
Sept. 30: at Kent Island, 5:30pm
Oct. 7: at Broadneck, 6:30pm
Oct. 9: Southern, 6:30pm
Oct. 14: Glen Burnie, 6:30pm
Oct. 16: at Arundel, 6:30pm

Archbishop Spalding

Sept. 6: at Broadneck Tournament (*opponents/times TBD*)
Sept. 9: John Carroll, 4:00pm
Sept. 11: Leonardtown, 4:30pm
Sept. 15: at Stone Ridge, 4:15pm
Sept. 22: at Good Counsel, 4:00pm
Sept. 25: Garrison Forest, 4:00pm
Sept. 30: Mount de Sales, 4:00pm
Oct. 7: St. John's, 4:00pm
Oct. 9: at St. Mary's, 4:00pm
Oct. 14: Bryn Mawr, 4:00pm
Oct. 21: at Notre Dame Prep, 4:00pm
Oct. 23: at Maryvale Prep, 4:00pm

Severn School

Sept. 3: at Gunston, 4:00pm
Sept. 5: Arundel, 4:00pm
Sept. 9: Mount de Sales, 4:00pm
Sept. 11: at Notre Dame Prep, 4:00pm
Sept. 16: at Park, 4:00pm
Sept. 18: St. Paul's, 4:00pm
Sept. 22: Broadneck, 4:30pm
Sept. 25: at Mercy, 4:00pm
Sept. 30: McDonogh, 4:00pm
Oct. 3: at St. Mary's, 4:00pm
Oct. 7: at John Carroll, 4:00pm
Oct. 9: at St. Paul's, 4:00pm
Oct. 14: Park, 4:00pm
Oct. 16: Mercy, 4:00pm
Oct. 21: at McDonogh, 4:00pm
Oct. 23: John Carroll, 4:00pm

BOYS SOCCER

Broadneck

Sept. 6: Bowie Tournament vs. Mount Hebron, 11:00am; vs. River Hill, 4:00pm
Sept. 9: Severna Park, 5:00pm
Sept. 11: at Chesapeake Science Point, 6:00pm
Sept. 16: Meade, 5:00pm
Sept. 18: at Glen Burnie, 7:00pm
Sept. 20: at St. Mary's, 1:00pm
Sept. 24: Annapolis, 5:00pm
Sept. 26: South River, 7:00pm
Sept. 30: Arundel, 5:00pm
Oct. 7: at North County, 5:00pm
Oct. 9: Chesapeake, 7:00pm
Oct. 14: at Old Mill, 5:00pm
Oct. 16: at Crofton, 7:00pm

Severna Park

Sept. 9: at Broadneck, 5:00pm
Sept. 11: Chesapeake, 7:00pm
Sept. 16: Severn Run, 5:00pm
Sept. 18: at South River, 7:00pm
Sept. 24: Northeast, 5:00pm
Sept. 25: at Crofton, 7:00pm
Sept. 30: North County, 5:00pm
Oct. 7: at Arundel, 5:00pm
Oct. 9: at Southern, 7:00pm
Oct. 16: Old Mill, 7:00pm

Archbishop Spalding

Sept. 2: Archbishop Curley, 4:00pm
Sept. 5: at Loyola Blakefield, 4:00pm
Sept. 8: Calvert Hall, 4:00pm
Sept. 12: at McDonogh, 4:00pm
Sept. 16: Gilman, 4:00pm
Sept. 19: at Mount St. Joseph, 4:00pm
Sept. 23: at Concordia Prep, 4:00pm
Oct. 1: John Carroll, 4:00pm
Oct. 3: at Archbishop Curley, 4:00pm
Oct. 7: Loyola Blakefield, 4:00pm
Oct. 10: at Calvert Hall, 4:00pm
Oct. 14: McDonogh, 4:00pm
Oct. 17: at Gilman, 4:00pm
Oct. 21: Mount St. Joseph, 4:00pm
Oct. 24: Concordia Prep, 6:00pm
Oct. 31: at John Carroll, 3:30pm

Severn School

Sept. 2: John Carroll, 4:15pm
Sept. 4: Paul VI, 4:15pm
Sept. 11: at Mount St. Joseph, 4:00pm
Sept. 16: North County, 4:15pm
Sept. 19: Meade, 4:15pm
Sept. 26: at Indian Creek, 4:00pm
Sept. 30: Park, 4:15pm
Oct. 3: at Mount Carmel, 4:00pm
Oct. 7: St. Peter and St. Paul, 4:15pm
Oct. 14: St. Paul's, 4:15pm
Oct. 17: Gerstell, 4:15pm
Oct. 21: at St. Mary's, 4:00pm
Oct. 24: Annapolis Area Christian, 4:15pm
Oct. 28: at Boys' Latin, 4:00pm
Oct. 31: at St. Vincent Pallotti, 4:00pm

GIRLS SOCCER

Broadneck

Sept. 6: Glen Burnie Tournament, 11:00am and 3:00pm (*opponents TBD*)
Sept. 9: Severna Park, 7:00pm
Sept. 11: at Chesapeake Science Point, 4:00pm
Sept. 16: Meade, 7:00pm
Sept. 18: at Glen Burnie, 5:00pm
Sept. 20: St. Mary's, 1:00pm
Sept. 24: Annapolis, 7:00pm
Sept. 26: South River, 5:00pm
Sept. 30: Arundel, 7:00pm
Oct. 7: at North County, 7:00pm
Oct. 9: Chesapeake, 5:00pm
Oct. 14: at Old Mill, 7:00pm
Oct. 16: at Crofton, 5:00pm

Severna Park

Sept. 5: Severn, 7:00pm
Sept. 9: at Broadneck, 7:00pm
Sept. 11: Chesapeake, 5:00pm
Sept. 13: Crofton Tournament (*opponents/times TBD*)
Sept. 16: Severn Run, 7:00pm
Sept. 18: at South River, 5:00pm
Sept. 24: Northeast, 7:00pm
Sept. 25: at Crofton, 5:00pm
Sept. 30: North County, 7:00pm
Oct. 7: at Arundel, 7:00pm
Oct. 9: at Southern, 5:00pm
Oct. 16: Old Mill, 5:00pm

Archbishop Spalding

Aug. 28: at Good Counsel, 4:30pm
Sept. 5: Public/Private Challenge at Mercy (*opponent/time TBD*)
Sept. 9: Maret (Washington, D.C.), 4:00pm
Sept. 11: Georgetown Visitation (Washington, D.C.), 4:00pm
Sept. 13: Urbana, 11:00am
Sept. 15: at Northern, 6:00pm
Sept. 20: Calvert, 11:00am
Sept. 26: Notre Dame Prep, 4:00pm
Sept. 30: St. Paul's, 4:00pm
Oct. 8: at Roland Park, 4:00pm
Oct. 10: at McDonogh, 4:00pm
Oct. 15: Mercy, 4:00pm
Oct. 17: at Maryvale Prep, 4:00pm
Oct. 21: at John Carroll, 4:00pm

Severn School

Sept. 3: Bullis, 4:30pm
Sept. 5: at Severna Park, 7:00pm
Sept. 11: Maryvale Prep, 4:15pm
Sept. 16: at Mercy, 4:15pm
Sept. 18: Catholic, 4:15pm
Sept. 24: Gerstell, 4:00pm
Oct. 1: Concordia Prep, 4:00pm
Oct. 3: at Severn Run, 6:00pm
Oct. 8: at St. Timothy's, 4:00pm
Oct. 10: at St. Mary's, 4:00pm
Oct. 17: Bryn Mawr, 4:15pm
Oct. 21: at Mount de Sales, 4:00pm

BOYS VOLLEYBALL

Archbishop Spalding

Sept. 12: Mount St. Joseph, 5:30pm
Sept. 17: at Gilman, 5:30pm
Sept. 19: at St. Paul's, 5:30pm
Sept. 23: Calvert Hall, 5:30pm
Sept. 26: at Loyola Blakefield, 5:30pm
Oct. 1: at Boys' Latin, 5:30pm
Oct. 8: at Mount St. Joseph, 5:30pm
Oct. 10: Friends, 6:30pm
Oct. 15: Gilman, 5:30pm
Oct. 17: at Calvert Hall, 5:30pm
Oct. 20: Loyola Blakefield, 5:30pm
Oct. 22: Archbishop Curley, 5:30pm
Oct. 27: at John Carroll, 5:30pm

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

Broadneck

Sept. 9: at St. John's Catholic, 5:30pm
Sept. 11: Crofton, 6:00pm
Sept. 16: Severna Park, 6:00pm
Sept. 18: Meade, 6:00pm
Sept. 22: Annapolis Area Christian, 5:00pm
Sept. 24: at Severn Run, 6:00pm
Sept. 25: at South River, 6:00pm
Sept. 30: at Arundel, 6:00pm
Oct. 3: at Calvert, 5:30pm
Oct. 6: at Musselman (West Virginia), 6:00pm
Oct. 9: at Annapolis, 6:00pm
Oct. 14: Old Mill, 6:00pm
Oct. 16: at North County, 6:00pm
Oct. 21: Howard, 5:30pm
Oct. 23: at Reservoir, 5:30pm

Severna Park

Sept. 5: at Annapolis Area Christian, 5:30pm
Sept. 11: at Severn Run, 6:00pm
Sept. 16: at Broadneck, 6:00pm
Sept. 18: Southern, 6:00pm
Sept. 25: Annapolis, 6:00pm
Sept. 30: at Chesapeake, 6:00pm
Oct. 7: Arundel, 6:00pm
Oct. 9: Crofton, 6:00pm
Oct. 13: at McDonogh, 5:45pm
Oct. 14: at Meade, 6:00pm
Oct. 21: at Long Reach, 5:30pm
Oct. 23: River Hill, 5:30pm

Archbishop Spalding

Aug. 28: at Good Counsel, 6:00pm
Sept. 2: Bishop O'Connell (Virginia), 5:45pm
Sept. 8: St. Mary's Ryken, 5:30pm
Sept. 9: Chapelgate Christian, 5:30pm
Sept. 12: at John Carroll, 5:30pm
Sept. 17: Annapolis Area Christian, 5:30pm
Sept. 19: at St. John's, 5:30pm
Sept. 20: at Crofton Tournament (*opponents/times TBD*)
Sept. 24: Mount de Sales, 5:30pm
Sept. 26: at Mercy, 5:30pm
Sept. 30: McDonogh, 5:30pm
Oct. 8: at Maryvale Prep, 5:30pm
Oct. 10: Notre Dame Prep, 5:30pm
Oct. 15: at St. Paul's, 5:30pm
Oct. 17: Garrison Forest, 5:30pm

Severn School

(not published as of July 2025)

FOOTBALL

Broadneck

Sept. 5: at St. Mary's, 7:00pm
Sept. 12: Milford Mill, 6:00pm
Sept. 19: Arundel, 6:00pm
Sept. 26: at Annapolis, 6:00pm
Oct. 3: Glen Burnie, 6:00pm
Oct. 10: at North County, 6:00pm
Oct. 17: Old Mill, 6:00pm
Oct. 24: at Meade, 6:00pm
Oct. 31: Severna Park, 6:00pm

Severna Park

Sept. 5: at Boys Latin, 4:15pm
Sept. 12: at Northeast, 6:00pm
Sept. 19: Crofton, 6:00pm
Sept. 26: at Severn Run, 6:00pm
Oct. 3: Meade, 6:00pm
Oct. 10: Old Mill, 6:00pm
Oct. 17: Arundel, 6:00pm
Oct. 24: North County, 6:00pm
Oct. 31: at Broadneck, 6:00pm

Archbishop Spalding

Aug. 30: vs. Archbishop Hoban (Ohio), 7:00pm
Sept. 5: vs. Hun (New Jersey), 7:00pm
Sept. 12: at McDonogh, 7:00pm
Sept. 19: Calvert Hall, 7:00pm
Sept. 26: at Gilman, 4:00pm
Oct. 3: St. Mary's, 7:00pm
Oct. 11: at Concordia Prep, 12:00pm
Oct. 24: at Loyola Blakefield, 5:00pm
Oct. 31: Mount St. Joseph, 7:00pm

Severn School

Sept. 5: at Annapolis, 6:00pm
Sept. 12: at St. John's, 4:00pm
Sept. 19: John Carroll, 4:15pm
Sept. 26: St. Vincent Pallotti, 4:15pm
Oct. 4: at Boys' Latin, 12:00pm
Oct. 11: at Archbishop Curley, 2:00pm
Oct. 18: St. Paul's, 1:00pm
Oct. 24: at Mount Carmel, 3:45pm
Oct. 31: at St. Mary's, 4:00pm



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Cross Country Conversation

» Continued from page 23

her resume. She beat out teammate and defending champ **Kathryn Murphy**, a junior at the time, by about 15 seconds.

"She is definitely Division I level material," Alcombright said. "This will be a big year for that."

Another potential county champion is sophomore **Lexi Fitzsimmons**. She took a respectable seventh in the state and third in the county last year.

More importantly, Alcombright knows he could have a stellar one-two punch in Kamas and Fitzsimmons for 2026.

Alcombright gets excited when he talks about the potential of the rest of Severna Park's starting lineup. The Falcons boast Murphy and senior **Sydney Davis**.

Brenden Woods is the top boys runner from a team that finished second in the Class 3A state championships last year. The junior is a great athlete to build

a team around. He helped the Falcons to a 2024 county championship.

"He is open to becoming the best he can be," Alcombright said. "He is very coachable."

The runners that comprise the rest of the lineup have excellent experience.

Seniors **Colin King** and **Tariku Maddox** will battle for the No. 3 position and senior **Rielly Caldwell** earned a spot in the middle of the lineup.

Alcombright also has a lot of confidence in junior **Jared Briczinski** and junior **Evan Tarsi**.

Broadneck

It's all in the numbers for the Broadneck girls.

The Bruins jumped from 11 runners in 2023 to 31 this season.

The expectations have been raised.

"I think they will finish among the top two or three in the county," Broadneck coach **DeWitt Kneass** said.

Senior **Annabelle Hall** and **Jeannette Manseau**, along with freshman **Mia**

Funk, anchor the Bruins.

Hall holds down Broadneck's No. 1 running position.

"She is going to have a really good season," Kneass said. "She can make all-county."

Funk should run near the top of the lineup all season.

"You have to come from a deep running background, like 10 to 12 years old," Kneass said of freshmen making an impact.

Senior **Sadie Whynock**, junior **Alexa Johnson** and freshman **Audrey Fleishman** will support the team's leaders.

There is prime talent up and down the lineup for the Broadneck boys, who increased their total runners by five over the past two years.

On the boys' side, Kneass will lean on senior **Max Marinello** and sophomore **Colin Kreisel** to help the Bruins to top team finishes.

"He is our best runner," Kneass said Marinello.

Not far behind Marinello and Kreisel are juniors **Evan Whitford** and **Alex**

Fiedler and senior **Duncan Gordon**.

Seniors **Aiden Blakaitis** and **Carter Johnson**, and sophomore **William Konopka**, add quality depth.

"This is probably the best boys team we've had in five years," Kneass explained.

Severn

Admirals coach **Skip Sensbach** can't stop talking about senior and Severna Park resident **Emma Patrick**.

What Patrick did last season was a rarity. She won the Interscholastic Athletic Association of Maryland championships by 1:41.

Junior **Rowan Palmer** and senior **Gemma Becker** also rank among Severn's best runners. Senior **Nyla Pratt**, junior **Elizabeth Maltz**, and freshmen **Emilie Crump** and **Finley Silk**, an Arnold resident, complete the lineup.

Severn's boys team is full of promise, too. Junior **Barrett Vaughan** finished second in the Maryland Interscholastic Athletic Associations B Conference championships.

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Crosse Over Lacrosse Celebrates 29th Year With First American “Legacy Daughter”



The 2025 Anne Arundel County Crosse Over team visited London, Manchester and Warwick Castle.

By Savannah Brooks

In 1996, Pamela Colistra joined Crosse Over Lacrosse on a tour of Northwest England, playing lacrosse against English players in English towns. Twenty-nine years later, her daughter, Caliana, did the same. Caliana, 14, the first “legacy daughter” of the Crosse Over program, joined 23 other players hailing from the Anne Arundel County area to play a variety of English teams before their competition culminated in an all-star “friendship game” against the English Metros this summer.

Founded by Steve Willett and Steve Barry, the Anne

Arundel County Crosse Over lacrosse program allows young players to get a taste of international play with a system of alternating hosting — during even years, the Metros travel to Maryland, and during odd years, the Crosse Over team heads to England.

Despite an initial obstacle at Dulles International Airport — which added 24 hours to the team’s travel journey — the 2025 trip across the pond allowed players and coaches to visit London, Manchester and Warwick Castle. Past trips included a stop at Stratford-upon-Avon, the home of Shakespeare.

Plenty of games were played in the Manchester area.

“I really enjoyed walking around Manchester,” Caliana said. “I thought it would be like New York City, but it’s a lot different. The culture in England is different — they’re a lot nicer.”

The team’s day in London included visits to the Tower of London, Buckingham Palace, Hard Rock Cafe and, perhaps most notably, according to Caliana, “Our coach bought us all ice cream.”

Players host one another in alternating years — this year, the Crosse Over players stayed with English families. For the first time, the teams played sixes lacrosse, as it will be played in the 2028 Olympics.

“(The Metros) took the game so seriously,” Caliana said. “The whole town would come to watch.”

Since the program’s inception in 1996, “The style of play has been intensified,” according to Pamela. “They want to compete at our level.”

Jeff Bunker, co-director and head coach, identified the Crosse Over team as a “baseline” for where the Metros aim to be as the sport grows in the United Kingdom. “In Anne Arundel County, you’re born with a lacrosse stick in one hand and Old Bay in the other,” Pamela said. “It’s great for the players on the English teams to see the level they can reach.”

The Crosse Over team is made up of players from numerous teams; only two or three players at a time may know one another from the same club or high school team. Players are chosen based on community nominations and their attitude, emotional maturity, and lacrosse skills.

The volunteers, players and parents who join the Crosse Over program may find intense games of lacrosse, but most of all, they aim to find community, friendship and cultural education. For example, one key volunteer, Jennifer Beall, is the “huggy mom,” giving players who are away from home the opportunity for hugs and support when needed.

“Steve Willett’s legacy has allowed for 300 girls to be able to experience international play and immerse themselves in a different culture at such a young age,” Pamela said. “This experience helped shape me. It’s a blessing to pass it on.”

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Severn School

SCHOOL & YOUTH

SPHS Marching Band Looks Forward To A “Tough” Year



Photos courtesy of Chris Krupar

The Severna Park High School marching band performed at football games and at several weekend competitions last year.



By Aidann Gia Bacolodan

The Severna Park High School (SPHS) marching band has resumed its rehearsals following the summer intermission, preparing for a season packed with performances, competitions and an energetic theme.

In early August, most students returned for day-long practices, with the percussion section and color guard participating in separate camps tailored to their specialties. Band Director Eric Kilby announced this year's show theme as “Tough.”

“‘Tough’ goes well with a boxing theme,” Kilby explained. “We were surveying a bunch of shows, and we fell in love with this particular show.”

Throughout the fall, the band will hold after-school rehearsals three days a week to learn and refine original music by composer Randall Standridge. Students will perform at all home football

» Continued on page 36



Girls Earn Stars & Stripes Award, Serve The Community

By Sharon Mager

Three Severna Park young women recently received the prestigious American Heritage Girls

(AHG) Stars & Stripes Badge: Alethia Brown in August, Olivia Sudano in July and Maile Trelles in February. American Heritage Girls is a

national organization focused on character development for girls ages 5–18. It offers various hands-on learning experiences while promoting Christian values. According to the AHG website, the award is the organization's highest honor, emphasizing leadership, faith and personal growth, with strict requirements. Girls must earn a total of 16 ad-

vanced badges and serve as a troop leader for at least six months. They are also required to plan and lead a service project of over 100 hours, write a “spiritual walk” essay, gather three letters of reference, and successfully pass a review board.

All three girls' projects provided a benefit — or one could say a “blessing” — to the community.



Alethia Brown initiated a care bag program in collaboration with Severna Park Baptist Church to assist individuals in need.

Alethia Brown

Alethia's Stars & Stripes project focused on compassion. Working through Severna Park Baptist Church (SPBC), where her father Dave Brown serves as lead pastor, she led in starting a “blessing bag” project for individuals needing a helping hand. The church supports SPAN (Serving People Across Neighborhoods), but Alethia said some individuals need extra help to get through a challenging period.

“There are three types of bags — food, hygiene and infant bags,” she said.

The food bags include bottled water and nonperishable foods such as peanut butter and jelly, crackers and other easy-to-eat items to stretch a limited budget. Hygiene bags provide washcloths, toothpaste, shampoo, nail clippers and other similar

items. Infant bags include diapers, formula, and small snacks for babies and toddlers.

Alethia, who graduated from Severna Park High School in June, organized the project and supervised volunteers in collecting food items and assembling 30 bags. She also oversaw the building of a cabinet to store the bags and supplies. “There was a lot of extra because the church was just so generous with their food donations, as well as monetary gifts,” she said.

The Severna Park AHG Troop MDO152 will continue to support the project through fundraising events like craft fairs and yard sales to keep the new cabinet full. “They will sell different jewelry or paintings and other items to raise funds for the project,” Alethia explained.

» Continued on page 36

Back To School

The end of August marked the beginning of the 2025-2026 school year for many public and private school students across Severna Park, Arnold and Millersville. Despite having to say goodbye to summer, many of the kids showed excitement for the year ahead.



Connor Pollard is entering his freshman year at Severna Park High School



Fourth-grader Joanna Gilmore waved to her mom as she boarded a bus heading to Severna Park Elementary School.



Christian Cancelliere is a 4-year-old starting pre-K.



Aiden and Olivia Laws have high hopes for the new school year.



Brielle Murray was excited for her first day of third grade.



Seven-year-old Robert Cancelliere is going into the second grade.



Elliot Kolakowski is entering his fifth-grade year at Jones Elementary.



Twins Calhan and Shea Cassidy kicked off their senior year at Archbishop Spalding.

Girls Earn Stars & Stripes Award

» Continued from page 35

Olivia Sudano

A senior at Chesterton Academy in Annapolis, Olivia constructed a prayer garden dedicated to the Seven Sorrows of Mary, located at St. John the Evangelist Church, her home church and the spot where AHG troop MD4205 meets.

Olivia said she wanted to create a quiet space the community could use to “escape from their busy lives and refocus on the bigger picture, which is faith.”

On her GoFundMe page, she wrote: “It will also give the teachers

at the school on campus an area to take their students and to use as a teaching aid for the young kids. In addition, it will open up the possibility for girls in my troop to earn service hours through maintaining the garden. Overall, the addition of this prayer garden will benefit the church, school and community for what I pray to be a very long time.”

Olivia said, “I think this award inspires younger girls as they are deciding what they want to do and following through. It also gives me a sense of pride knowing I was able to do something difficult, something I’ve never done before.”

She emphasized that perseverance is an important part of the AHG creed, as well as showing younger girls they can achieve what they set their minds to.

Photo by Judy Tacyn

Olivia Sudano, a senior at Chesterton Academy in Annapolis, constructed a prayer garden dedicated to the Seven Sorrows of Mary, located at St. John the Evangelist Church.



Maile Trelles

Maile, who also attends AHG meetings at St. John the Evangelist Church, was homeschooled and graduated from high school in May, combining classes with tutors and completing dual enrollment courses at Anne Arundel Community College. She has been part of American Heritage Girls for 12 years.

For her Stars & Stripes project, Maile worked with The Well in Curtis Bay and its affiliated Hons Honey Marketplace, transforming a room above its coffee shop. “I painted a focal wall, added art and fundraised for furniture to complete a meeting space,” she said.

“I chose the project because I enjoy serving in underserved communities and especially have a heart for supporting women. The Well was founded in 2013, and Hons Honey was founded in 2018. The Well is a community of women coming out of abusive and trafficking situations, being transformed through long-term relationships, practical programs, and the healing power of love.”

For more information about American Heritage Girls and to find a troop, visit www.americanheritagegirls.org.



Maile Trelles worked with The Well and Hon's Honey to enhance their conference area and meeting room.

SPHS Marching Band Looks Forward To A “Tough” Year

» Continued from page 35

games, including the national anthem before kickoff, a field show during halftime, and a “Tough” musical program throughout the game. Senior Grace Wong is leading as president, and the senior drum major position is held by Keith Ivey.

Performances will run from late September through early November, during which the band will appear not only at school events but also at weekend competitions.

To help cover transportation for equipment, instruments and students, SPHS is hosting a competition midseason. The marching band also organizes restaurant nights and a popcorn fundraiser to support its efforts.

A highlight of the season is the band’s annual out-of-state trip for its final competition. While SPHS typically competes in events held by the Maryland Marching Band Association, this year the band is returning to its previous circuit, USBands. On

November 8, students will travel to Allentown, Pennsylvania, to compete against groups from across the Mid-Atlantic and New England.

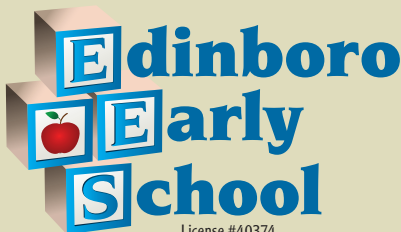
The director described the band as well-balanced this year in terms of instrument families and class representation, with approximately 20 students in each graduating class.

“We have 97 kids in the band this year, which is up about 15 from last year,” he said. “We’ve been steadily increasing since COVID. After we came

out of COVID, we had about 30 kids. It takes a while to rebuild, but we’ve been doing it. We’re just about back to where we were, which was around 75 to 80 kids.”

Kilby expressed enthusiasm about the progress and buzzing energy heading into the new semester.

“I always look forward to the process,” he said. “Especially because they’re doing so well this year. It’s a great group of kids. They’re motivated and excited for the year.”



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Educator Of The Month

Rachel Hansen Cornerstone Tutorial



By Jaina Peveto

Education is a big part of Rachel Hansen's life, but she didn't plan to become a teacher when she graduated from college with a degree in chemistry. While she enjoyed student teaching in college, her goal was to do something related to chemistry. It wasn't until she started homeschooling her children that she became more interested in teaching.

"I had a vested interest in my own children getting a good education," Hansen said.

The Hansens began homeschooling their kids after meeting another family of homeschoolers who inspired them to give it a try. Hansen has taught at Cornerstone Tutorial, a nondenominational Christian cooperative homeschool tutorial, for the past eight years.

Once a week, homeschooled students come together for classes and labs, giving them a more structured classroom experience and a chance to see friends on a regular basis. This year, Hansen will teach chemistry, general science for middle-schoolers, and environmental science, a new class for Hansen.

"Every teacher gets the question of, 'When will I use this in my life?'" Hansen said. "And I realize they probably won't use chemistry in particular, but what they will use is an understanding and appreciation for the world around them. That's why I like chemistry."

Hansen, a mother of four, started at Cornerstone in part for the

sake of her own children. Two of her kids have taken her chemistry class, while the other two aren't yet old enough.

Over time, the number of students Hansen teaches has grown. This year, she expects to teach around 60 students. "It's not just work that needs to be done because my kids need the classes, but I really like it," Hansen said. "That's been a happy surprise."

Hansen has recently become more involved in Cornerstone even outside of her classroom. Last year, her daughter grew interested in starting a newsletter for the homeschool tutorial, and Hansen took on the task of being the advisor for it. Hansen has recruited students to work on the newsletter, and she helps the students come up with topics to write about.

Hansen spends half of her class time reviewing the material with her students and the other half on a lab or activity. While she's always enjoyed science, one of her favorite parts of teaching is getting to see it click for the students who might be more hesitant about chemistry.

"It's really rewarding when they start to engage in class and answer questions and participate and even smile," Hansen said.

Hansen's teaching experience has expanded outside of Cornerstone. In addition to teaching at the homeschool tutorial, she's involved in teaching Sunday school classes at her church. Last year, she also started teaching at Arise Christian Academy in Laurel.

"Learning how to engage with students is something I've had to grow in and hopefully I'm still growing in," Hansen said. "I'm learning how to connect with them and how to make it useful and practical in their life. That goes for chemistry or any subject."

Growing up in rural Michigan meant that Hansen's childhood was full of opportunities to be in nature, which helped spark her interest in chemistry and the way the world works. Hansen hopes to give students who grew up in Severna Park and its surrounding areas the chance to gain appreciation for those things even while living in the suburbs. One of her goals as a teacher is to make chemistry useful to her students, even if they won't be majoring in chemistry in college.

"It's been a surprising joy in my life," Hansen said. "I didn't really realize how much I would like teaching."



C A F E

MEZZANOTTE

The Educator of the Month is proudly sponsored by Cafe Mezzanotte.

Franklin's Toys Annual LEGO Content Winners Announced

In August, Franklin's Toys in Severna Park held its annual LEGO competition, inviting young minds to think outside the blocks and construct unique creations with the popular toys. Entries were on display in the store from August 17-23, allowing visitors to cast votes for their favorites. Prizes were awarded for first- and second-place winners in four age groups, as well as for several staff picks.



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Jeremy Mueller — 1st Place
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"Fireman to the Rescue"
Camden DeBartolo — 1st Place
Ages 5-7 years old



"Bunker Breach"
Noah Campion — 1st Place
Ages 8-12 years old



"Rainbow Palace"
Austin Lehr — 2nd Place
Ages 2-4 years old



"Anything Can Happen In A Dream"
McKinley Trio — 2nd Place
Ages 8-12 years old



"Super Cool Boathouse"
Hunter Sullivan — 2nd Place
Ages 5-7 years old



"Animal Land"
Arturo Estopinan — 2nd Place
Ages 13 and older

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Understanding Your Risk For Prostate Cancer



Rian Dickstein MD, FACS

Chair of Urology,
UM Baltimore
Washington Medical
Center (UM BWMC)



Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among American men. The American Cancer Society estimates that in 2025, more than 313,000 new cases will be diagnosed and around 36,000 men

will die from the disease.

One dangerous aspect of prostate cancer is that it's "silent" and rarely causes symptoms early on. Knowing your risk of prostate cancer can help you decide if prostate-specific antigen (PSA) testing is right for you.

What Increases Your Risk?

All men face some risk for prostate cancer, but certain unchangeable factors can increase it. These include:

- African American ancestry
- Family history of prostate cancer
- Genetic mutations (BRCA1 or BRCA2)
- Older age — risk increases significantly after age 50

Lifestyle also matters. Diets high in fried or fatty foods and low in fruits and vegetables may increase risk, while a balanced diet may help support prostate health.

When To Consider Screening

The American Urological Association recommends most men begin discussing prostate cancer screening with their provider between ages 45-50. For those at higher risk, conversations may start as early as age 40. These discussions should continue every two to

four years through age 69 or beyond for those at higher risk.

For those with higher risk, a PSA blood test may be appropriate. The PSA blood test is quick and simple. While not perfect, it helps providers decide if further testing, like a biopsy, is needed. Screening in your 40s and 50s can allow for earlier detection — when treatment is most effective.

Take Action

If you're concerned about your prostate cancer risk, speak with your primary care provider or a urologist. They can help you decide whether PSA screening is right for you. You can visit www.umbwmc.org/cancer to explore prostate cancer services at the Tate Cancer Center at UM BWMC. Need a primary care provider? Visit www.umbwmc.org/primary.

Free Prostate Cancer Screening

**Thursday, September 18,
5:00pm-6:30pm**

UM Baltimore Washington Medical Center
255 Hospital Drive, Glen Burnie, MD 21061

Join urologist Rian Dickstein for a free event to learn about prostate cancer and to receive a PSA blood test if you meet the criteria.

PSA Testing Eligibility:

- Men ages 45 and up
- Men ages 40-45 with:
 - African American ancestry
 - Family history of prostate cancer
 - Known genetic mutations

Register Today: Space is limited. To register and schedule your free PSA testing appointment, call 410-553-8103 or visit www.umbwmc.org/prostatescreeningevent.

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AACC Announces Dental Hygiene Program

Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) has welcomed its first cohort of dental hygiene students this fall. This semester's inaugural dental hygiene classes cover dental hygiene theory, dental anatomy and tooth morphology, oral histology and embryology, dental hygiene radiology, and dental hygiene clinical.

Dental hygienists play a crucial role in patient care. They take X-rays and help patients prevent cavities, gingivitis and periodontal disease by removing tartar, stains and plaque from teeth, in addition to educating patients on proper oral hygiene procedures.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the dental hygiene profession is expected to grow 9% from 2023 to 2033, faster than the average for all occupations. This translates to a projected 16,400 openings nationwide for dental hygienists each year throughout the decade. Graduates can expect career opportunities in dental offices, clinics, hospitals and public health agencies.

Students who complete AACC's

new two-year, five-term program will receive an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree, after which they will be qualified to sit for the American Board of Dental Examiners' National Licensing Examination for Dental Hygiene.

"At AACC, students can embark on a fulfilling journey in dental hygiene where passion meets purpose," Interim Director of Dental Education Badal Patel, a registered dental hygienist, said in a press release. "The college and I believe that students can join us in making a difference by learning how to provide comprehensive dental hygiene care and educating individuals and communities about the critical connection between oral health and overall well-being."

AACC's new dental hygiene program is a selective admission program, so interested parties must apply for acceptance. Additional information about the new program can be found at www.aacc.edu/programs-and-courses/credit-and-degree-seekers/dental-hygiene.

Department Of Health Announces First Human Case Of West Nile Virus For 2025

In late August, the Maryland Department of Health announced that an adult tested positive for West Nile virus — the first confirmed human case in Maryland this year. The patient is recovering from the infection.

West Nile is transmitted to humans via mosquitoes infected by feeding on birds that have the virus. In rare instances, the virus may be spread from person to person through organ donation, blood transfusion, breastfeeding or from a pregnant mother to fetus.

The disease affects the nervous system, and up to 80% of people who are infected will not display any signs of illness. However, those who have underlying health conditions could become seriously ill.

"We are in the season when the West Nile virus and other mosquito-borne viruses can spread in Maryland," said Dr. Meg Sullivan, deputy secretary for public health services. "We urge people to be vigilant and take steps to avoid infection, such as eliminating standing pools of water where mosquitoes can breed."

West Nile virus was first detected in the U.S. in 1999, and the number of Marylanders infected with the virus fluctuates each season. In 2024, 18 Maryland residents were confirmed positive for West Nile virus infection.

While most people do not develop symptoms from this virus, some people who develop illness may experience mild symptoms such as fever, headache and body aches; occasionally, a skin rash and swollen lymph glands may be noticed. These symptoms may last a few days or as long as several weeks. People who are older than 50 or have immunocompromised conditions can become seriously ill.

People who are concerned about mosquitoes should cover up exposed skin and use an Environmental Protection Agency-registered insect repellent. Residents are also urged to monitor their own yards and gardens for areas of high mosquito activity, especially standing water that can serve as a breeding ground. Even small amounts of water in a discarded can or container can support dozens of mosquitoes, as can clogged rain gutters or drain pipes.

The Maryland Department of Health launched a campaign in May to prevent mosquito bites, including a social media toolkit to educate Marylanders on protecting themselves and their homes from mosquitoes.

Although birds are not routinely tested for West Nile virus in Maryland, sick or injured birds can be reported to an appropriate wildlife rehabilitator. Call 1-877-463-6497 for a list of licensed rehabilitators.



Ann Grieb quilted a "Peanuts" themed blanket for Project Linus.

Volunteer Crafters Give Back To The Community

By Jaina Peveto

Though she's been volunteering with Project Linus for 17 years, Arnold resident Ann Grieb doesn't often see the direct impact of the non-profit's work. Most of the time, Project Linus drops off its blankets without seeing who receives them. But one day, while Grieb was delivering to Sarah's House, a supportive housing program for families experiencing homelessness, a little girl came up to her and asked if she could have the blanket with the heart on it from her bag.

Grieb wasn't sure if she was allowed to give the girl the blanket, but she was given permission when she brought the girl up to the counter to ask.

"Seeing that little girl, she hugged that blanket so tight," Grieb said. "I just thought, 'That blanket is going to be with her forever.'"

Project Linus is a nationwide nonprofit that focuses on creating blankets for children in need. The Annapolis chapter, established in April 2002, gathers at the Severna Park Community Center. During meetings, volunteers create many types of blankets using different needlecrafts, in-

cluding crocheting, knitting and sewing.

Once finished, the blankets are donated to local organizations, schools and hospitals, reaching kids from newborns up to the age of 18. The organization's biggest project each year is creating fleece blankets for kids at Title I schools. Annapolis chapter volunteers made 426 fleece blankets last year.

"I got hooked," Grieb said. "And then to find out that you were donating to children who were in need was even more special."

Severna Park resident Jean Pallett also volunteers with Project Linus and has done so since her retirement in 2018. Pallett had already been familiar with the organization due to her mother volunteering before her death in 2017, so taking up volunteering herself has allowed her to feel closer to her mother.

In addition to quilting blankets, Pallett also works with kids to get them involved in volunteering. She has introduced Project Linus to a variety of kids interested in service learning, from elementary schoolers to the Crofton High School track team.

» Continued on page 42

Fairs And Festivals Bring Fall Fun To Anne Arundel

As summer draws to a close, it's the perfect time to enjoy the fairs and festivals found throughout Anne Arundel County. September is full of opportunities to attend events with family and friends.

Anne Arundel County Fair

September 10-14

County Fairgrounds, Crownsville

The 73rd annual Anne Arundel County Fair will take place from Wednesday, September 10, to Sunday, September 14, at the Anne Arundel County Fairgrounds. Attendees can expect entertainment including a carnival, daily shows, music and vendors, as well as various crafts, arts, animals, vegetables and other produce submitted by exhibitors. Admission pricing varies. More information and tickets can be found at www.aacountyfair.org.

Annapolis Songwriters Festival

September 11-14

Annapolis venues

Presented by Rams Head, the Annapolis Songwriters Festival provides music enthusiasts with the opportunity to get acquainted with the faces, voices and stories behind songs. The festival is modeled after the Key West Songwriters Festival, the largest festival of its kind in the world. This year's Annapolis Songwriters Festival takes place September 11-14, and its lineup contains over 110 artists, including festival headliner Dirty Heads, 10,000 Maniacs, Steep Canyon Rangers and more. For additional information, go to www.annapolissongwritersfestival.com.

Kunta Kinte Heritage Festival

September 13

Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium

The Kunta Kinte Heritage Festival is a celebration of the perseverance, education and cultural heritage of Africans, African Americans and Caribbean people of African descent. The theme of this year's festival is Afrofuturism, and it will take place from 10:00am to 7:00pm on Saturday, September 13, at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium in Annapolis. The free event features community, education, arts and crafts, food vendors, children's activities, live music and more. To learn more, go to www.kuntakinte.org.

Maryland Seafood Festival

September 13-14

Sandy Point State Park

The Maryland Seafood Festival will take place from 11:00am-7:00pm on September 13 and 11:00am-6:00pm on September 14, featuring live music, local artisans, kids' activities, a crab soup cook-off, contests and more. This year's festival will also include Skipjack Heritage Days, as skipjacks return to Sandy Point for the first time in 35 years. To learn more or purchase tickets, go to www.abceventsinc.com/maryland-seafood-festival.

Riviera Beach Music Festival

September 20

Riviera Beach Community Park

Anne Arundel County will welcome a new music festival this year, located at Riviera Beach Community Park from 11:00am-9:30pm on Saturday, September 20. The full-day outdoor festival will feature a mix of Maryland-born talent, regionally loved acts, and a nationally recognized headliner, along with food trucks, beverages and local vendors. Proceeds from ticket sales will benefit the Riviera Beach Volunteer Fire Company, helping fund life-saving equipment, specialized training, and public safety programs that strengthen emergency response across the region. Additional information can be found at www.rbvfc13.com/rbmf.

Annapolis Baygrass Music Festival

September 20-21

Sandy Point State Park

From September 20-21, baygrass lovers can look forward to nonstop music from 14 national and regional bands and three artists-at-large performing across two alternating stages. Festivalgoers will also have the chance to engage with artists in a more intimate setting during interactive music workshops. In addition to its music, the Annapolis Baygrass Music Festival will offer attendees the chance to savor fresh oysters and locally sourced cuisine; sip on microbrews, craft cocktails and wines; and explore a marketplace full of local craft vendors. For additional information and to purchase tickets, go to www.baygrassfestival.com.

"Weapons" Is A Mystery With Human Flaws At Its Core



Photos courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures
Julia Garner plays teacher Justine Gandy in "Weapons."

By Audrey Ruppert
Film Critic

“Weapons,” Zach Cregger’s sophomore effort, absolutely lives up to the hype surrounding it — but not for the reasons you might think. I’ve heard some people describe it as the scariest thing they’ve ever seen, and I certainly wouldn’t go that far. While “Weapons” is largely advertised as a horror film, I would classify it as 60% thriller, 20% horror and 20% comedy — and it does all of those things well.

The basic premise involves a grade-school class of children, all of whom disappear from their homes in early hours of the morning and are not seen again. The only remaining members of the class are the teacher and one solitary student. The audience is told the story through several lenses including that of the teacher, the principal, a police officer, a man addicted to drugs, the parent of a missing student, and the remaining student. With each new perspective, more of the mystery is unveiled. Heavily inspired by Stephen King, the story is a classic “tragedy befalls small-town America” narrative, with children being at the center of the disquiet.

I wouldn’t describe “Weapons” as particularly scary throughout; though it does have some scary moments, fear isn’t the most compelling aspect of the story. Rather, “Weapons” is engaging because of its excellent use of suspense and slow revelation, and its textured characters and world-building. The audience is kept guessing

the entire time, and it’s not particularly predictable in terms of plot. I had some suspicions about what the twist might be, and the answer was adjacent to what I had thought, but the final reveal did take me by surprise. I was also surprised at who survived the situation and who died. It’s a horror film so, of course, you expect some people to die, but the choice of survivors was interesting.

“Weapons” is also surprisingly funny and satisfying at times through its sheer absurdity. Typically, I dislike watching films with large audiences (there’s always someone chewing too loudly or scrolling on their phone the whole time), but this was a rare exception where watching with an audience was great fun. By the end, the theater was positively cheering for much needed catharsis, which was delivered in spades.

When “Weapons” has its scary moments, it’s deeply unsettling rather than pure slasher drivel. One scene involving scissors will haunt my dreams for a while, and the live audience had a visceral reaction to it. The film does have a couple of cheap slasher moments that felt gratuitous — though I suppose, if you like that sort of thing, it will scratch your Michael Myers itch. If you don’t, you can just look away as I did — these moments are rare.

“Weapons” is played rather straight. There were no deep metaphors or social commentary that I could discern. The evil behind the children’s disappearance is primal, and while the mechanisms behind that evil are fully fleshed

out (perhaps too much), the motivations, source, and backstory behind that evil are left a mystery. The only lesson I might be able to parse from the story is that grief and misfortune can sometimes be random — we might look for someone to blame, or a reason behind it all, but life can be cruelly arbitrary at times and not leave us with any real closure or answers.

That doesn’t seem to be the main thrust of the story, however; what makes “Weapons” so rich is its textured world-building, rather than any metaphor or motif. Each perspective shift adds a layer of depth to the world; all of the characters (arguably with the exception of the principal) are flawed people, some more sympathetic than others, but very human and real — people you may have met in your own life.

Even characters like the parents of the remaining child, who get hardly any screen time, are given depth. That’s what makes it a good horror film: Viewers are invested and feel something when characters die or experience misfortune, unlike many shoddy films of the slasher genre where people whose names you forgot drop like flies, with zero emotional impact.

“Weapons” is an impressive effort from Zach Cregger, who also produced the humorous yet unsettling “Companion,” which was released in January. He has been added to my pantheon of modern horror directors with something compelling and intelligent to say, alongside Ari Aster and Jordan Peele. This film is well worth watching with friends or with a weekend crowd.

Volunteer Crafters Give Back To The Community

» **Continued from page 41**

“(The elementary schoolers) get so excited to be helping these kids who might be their age,” Pallett said.

Project Linus and other craft-based nonprofits allow volunteers the chance to give back in creative ways from the comfort of their own homes. Many Project Linus volunteers work on blankets while watching television at night and then take them with them to the community center when the group meets.

Residents have taken advantage of other opportunities to volunteer through crafting as well. Another nonprofit called Stitches of Kindness encourages kids and other community members to get involved in sewing items for other organizations.

A nonprofit organization called Mak-

ing Cards for Our Troops (MCFOT) offers community members the chance to volunteer through papercraft. Started in 2016 by Pat Brodsky and a group of fellow volunteers, MCFOT designs blank cards to be sent in care packages for soldiers, to make it easier for them to send messages back home to their families.

Though Brodsky originally intended for the card-making to be a one-off event, the volunteers who joined her were eager to do it again. In the nearly 10 years since its creation, the initiative has grown to the point where volun-

teers are creating tens of thousands of cards each year.

“It really does help our veterans,”

MCFOT Vice President Roberta Zimmerman said. “There’s still troops that are stationed far away from home and can’t just go to the Hallmark store.”

Zimmerman has lived in Severna Park for 25 years and has been involved with the organization since 2020. Retiring just before COVID gave her the free time she needed to join the nonprofit. She uses her collection of over 250 sets of stamps to create cards, and she fundraises for the group by

“There’s still troops that are stationed far away from home and can’t just go to the Hallmark store.”

— **ROBERTA ZIMMERMAN**
MCFOT VICE PRESIDENT

running a silent auction at a MCFOT event in the spring.

While the nonprofit typically meets at Club 164 in Annapolis, people began creating cards at home and sending them to MCFOT during the pandemic. More recently, the organization has begun holding events elsewhere in Anne Arundel County, with two community events at the Severna Park Library taking place on Saturday, September 13, from 2:00pm to 3:00pm, and Saturday, November 15, from 2:00pm to 4:00pm.

In addition to stamps, other volunteers create cards using a variety of mediums, including hand painting, photography and even cross-stitching.

“You volunteer, and you don’t feel like you’re doing any work at all,” Zimmerman said.

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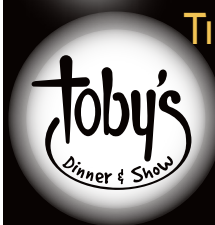


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Ballet Theatre Of Maryland Season Schedule

Ballet Theatre of Maryland (BTM) has announced its lineup of upcoming performances for its 2025-2026 season. Beginning on September 21, with a VIP Ballet in the Garden event, the season comprises six productions, four of which are included in BTM's season subscription package.

Mainstage performances are held at Maryland Hall in Annapolis, while other events will be held in Owings Mills, Hampstead and Largo. Though Maryland Hall is undergoing renovations that might impact parking, restrooms, and how to access the theater, performances will continue as scheduled.

BTM will also be found throughout the community this fall at events including the Maryland Renaissance Festival, the Professional Dance Collaborative of Maryland's fall mixer, Ballet on the Beach, and Art in the Park at Quiet Waters Park. Additional information about BTM's presence at events will be provided on the Ballet Theatre of Maryland Facebook and Instagram pages.

Ballet in the Garden

Sunday, September 21, 5:00pm
Guests will be invited to the Hammond-Harwood House in Annapolis to enjoy smaller classical works in a garden setting and a complimentary glass of wine. Audiences can expect favorites from classical ballets and composers such as Gershwin, Mendelssohn and Tchaikovsky. Other numbers will include works by Roman Mykyta and by company dancers Lindsey Bell and Isaac

Martinez. Tickets are \$60 for subscribers and \$80 for non-subscribers.

A Nutcracker Storytime

Sunday, October 12, 1:00pm
BTM and Historic Annapolis will present "A Nutcracker Storytime" at the William Paca House and Garden. Costumed dancers from BTM will share an engaging read-aloud of "The Nutcracker," give families a sneak peek of the all-new Annapolis-themed production, and invite children to join in a fun, interactive move-along. General admission tickets are \$10 for children and \$5 for adults.

Giselle

October 17-19
"Giselle" tells the story of a German peasant girl who unknowingly falls in love with a nobleman and loves nothing more than to dance, but her mother cautions her that her heart is too weak. BTM will perform the tragic ballet just in time for Halloween, with performances at 7:30pm on October 17, 7:00pm on October 18, and 2:00pm on October 19.

The Nutcracker

November 23, December 13-21
This year, BTM is unveiling a new retelling of "The Nutcracker," set in 19th-century Annapolis. The production will feature new choreography by artistic director Nicole Kelsch, reflecting Christmas traditions popular in Maryland in the 1800s. "The Nutcracker" will premiere at 2:00pm at the Coppermine Pantherplex on November

23 before moving to BTM's mainstage performance venue of Maryland Hall from December 13-21.

Momentum: A Mixed Bill

February 13-14
This performance offers audiences a bouquet of world-premiering works just in time for Valentine's Day. In "Momentum," BTM fosters new works from emerging creators while also offering an opportunity for established creators to experiment. The evening of dance will feature works varying in length from five to 30 minutes each, presenting a broad spectrum of themes from pointe shoes to bare feet. "Momentum: A Mixed Bill" will be presented at 7:30pm on February 13 and 7:00pm on February 14.

La Esmeralda

April 24-25
BTM's performance of "La Esmeralda" will be a company and Maryland premiere. Originally staged in London in 1844 before being expanded into a three-act ballet for the Russian stage, the ballet retells the story of Victor Hugo's "The Hunchback of Notre Dame." Marius Petipa's revivals in the late 19th century can be credited for the modern version of the production. Tickets are available for a performance at 7:30pm on April 24, as well as for performances at 1:00pm and 4:30pm on April 25.
To learn more about BTM's new season or to purchase tickets, visit www.balletmaryland.org.

Seven Steps To A Fabulous Fit For Renn Fest



Photo courtesy of Ashley Hayes/ Maryland Renaissance Festival

By Hannah Bates

Every year, thousands of people wear handmade period or fantasy costumes to the Maryland Renaissance Festival. Whether they choose to go as fairies, maidens, knights or royalty, many costumers dress up to make their experience more immersive and memorable. However, anyone new to costume designing who wishes to make their own garb for this year might feel overwhelmed at the thought of designing their own clothes. Visit www.severnaparkvoice.com to find seven tips for creating an affordable DIY ensemble worthy of the fair.



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How To Prepare For Interest Rate Cuts

Jason LaBarge
Financial Advisor
and President
LaBarge Financial



I'm a father of five children, and I'm in charge of guiding them to explore the world for the first time in their lives, with new experiences every day. While that can be exciting, it can also be scary. For example, when I

create a financial plan.

If you're concerned about the short-term impact of interest rates and inflation, consider paying down any outstanding debt as quickly as possible. Using a monthly budget to track your income and expenses can help you better cope with rising prices. A budget can also help you avoid overspending.

You should also have a long-term financial plan in place that accounts for investments, retirement savings, and strategies for taxes, Social Security and health care costs.

Avoid Emotional Decisions

Financial anxiety can be stressful, but it's important to avoid letting that stress lead to fear-driven decisions. Market cycles are natural, and the decision of whether to cut interest rates later this month could shake up the stock market.

However, it's normal for markets to go through cycles, and the market can rebound as quickly as it can crash. If that happens, don't panic. In the last 20 years, the S&P 500 has lost value in just four years — 2008, 2015, 2018 and 2022 — with a 10% average annual return. Time and time again, the market has proven that it's not a matter of if it will recover, but when.

The economy will go through cycles, but if you have a solid foundation, you don't have to panic because we know our plan will continue to keep our finances upright.

Consult A Professional

There's always uncertainty in the market, but that doesn't mean we should act in fear. Even though there is uncertainty, embrace it. Now is the opportunity to create a plan that can help your finances weather the storm.

That's where a financial professional

» Continued on page 51

Chamber Update

Liz League
CEO
GSPACC



Please give a warm welcome to our newest members and enjoy reading about all the businesses that make our community the best place to live! Visit their websites and find them in our

directory at www.gspacc.com.

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Jamie is an Anne Arundel County resident and has been proudly serving the Central Maryland real estate community since 2008. As a licensed Realtor with Cummings & Co Realtors, she specializes in helping neighbors sell their homes with confidence. Jamie's mission is simple: to maximize your proceeds while providing exceptional, personalized service, a dedication that placed her among the top 500 agents in Central Maryland for 2024, the top 4% in the region. Known for her strategic, detail-oriented approach and thorough coordination, Jamie prides herself on making the home sale process smooth, while taking the time to connect with each client and celebrate their success!

Y'ollk Bakery (Coming soon to Severna Park)

info@yollkbakery.com

Y'ollk Bakery is an artisan French-inspired patisserie coming soon to Severna Park, specializing in handcrafted pastries, breads, cakes and coffee. It combines traditional European techniques with approachable flavors, creating everything in-house from buttery croissants and brioche doughnuts to elegant petit gateaux and quiches. The menu reflects a dedication to quality, seasonal

ingredients, and a warm, welcoming experience for our community.

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www.greensjewelry.net

In September 1963, Bill and Charlotte Green opened the doors of their first store in Severna Park. After 50 years of a tradition of quality and excellence, they have passed on the tradition to their sons, Howard and Jeffrey. Howard is a GIA Diamonds graduate and Jeffrey is a graduate gemologist (GIA) and is certified in insurance replacement appraisals (GIA). With over 50 years of combined experience, Howard and Jeffrey offer a great deal of jewelry services from repairs and custom design to their wedding collections and more!

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We kicked off August with **National Night Out**, held at Kinder Farm Park on August 5. National Night Out is a vibrant celebration of community spirit and public safety, bringing neighbors together for an evening of connection, fun and shared purpose. Over 70 exhibitors provided demos, games, giveaways and more! The chamber was a proud chief-level sponsor of this wonderful event.

We held five ribbon cuttings in August, a testament to the vibrancy of our business community. The first was for **The LoveJoy Project**, a business selling home decor, candles, diffusers, pillows and more. Proceeds from sales are donated to the National Ovarian Cancer Coa-

» Continued on page 50

KMA Law Office Celebrates 15 Years Of Serving The Community

By Meredith Winter

Over the last decade and a half, KMA Law Office has grown to a staff of eight, and its team has helped more than 2,000 families in the greater Severna Park area and beyond. The business officially reached its 15-year anniversary on August 10, and the team celebrated with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house featuring live music, food trucks and more on August 16.

As many businesses do, the firm began with humble beginnings. Owner Karen Authement, a resident of Anne Arundel County since she was 6 years old, followed a gradual path to opening the law firm.

Authement said she always knew she wanted to be an attorney. She first earned an associate's degree in paralegal studies and began working in law firms as support staff. She quickly developed a passion for helping people, particularly those who had suffered injuries.

After completing her undergraduate studies, Authement began law school at the age of 28 — while working full-time and starting a family. She began her career as an attorney in a personal injury firm and expanded to practicing real estate law. But a long com-

(L-R) Karen Authement, Ryan Leeb and Kelly Arnold are attorneys at KMA Law Office, proudly offering "big-firm services with small-firm personal attention."

mute and an exhausting volume of business prompted her to branch out on her own.

"I decided if I'm going to do it, just do it on my own. And that's what I did," Authement said. "So on August 10, (2010), I started on my own, and the first month was in my dining room, and then I found a space to rent. The first two years I was in Baltimore City, and then I moved my office closer to home in Severna Park, and I've been there for the last 13 years now."

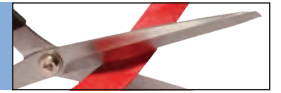
Gradually, the firm grew. A paralegal and an administrative assistant joined KMA Law Office. In 2021, Authement welcomed the firm's first associate attorney. Today, the team consists of three attorneys, two legal assistants, two paralegals and an administrative assistant.

Together, they have recovered millions of dollars for clients over the years, including two recent cases with

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RIBBON CUTTINGS



KMA Law Office Marks 15 Years Of Serving The Community

KMA Law Office held a milestone celebration on August 16 to honor its 15-year anniversary through a ribbon cutting sponsored by the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce as well as a community open house featuring food trucks, live music and more. KMA Law Office offers big-firm services with small-firm personal attention, focused on needs in estate planning, personal injury and other legal matters. KMA Law Office is located at 540 Ritchie Highway, Suite 201, in Severna Park. For more information, go to www.kma-law.com.



Gotta Have HeART Studio Opens In Severna Park



On August 23, the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce welcomed Gotta Have HeART Studio to Severna Park with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. From group art classes for all ages, to flexible open studio hours for independent work, to summer art camps for kids and teens, the new studio offers a variety of art experiences and creative programs designed to spark imagination and build confidence. Gotta Have HeART Studio is located at 568 Governor Ritchie Highway, Suite E. To learn more, go to www.gottahaveheartstudio.com.

iCode Severna Park Celebrates Grand Opening

The Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the opening of iCode Severna Park on August 22. iCode's instructor-led, hands-on coding and STEM classes and camps utilize gamified learning techniques to keep students engaged and excited to learn. iCode is located at 570 Benfield Road, and all of its educational opportunities are listed at www.icode.school.com/severna-park-md.



The Park Welcomes The LoveJoy Project

A ribbon-cutting ceremony hosted by the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce marked the opening of The LoveJoy Project on August 14. The LoveJoy Project provides home decor, candles, diffusers, pillows and more, and donates a percentage of its proceeds to the National Ovarian Cancer Coalition in memory of the owner's mom, Judith Lovejoy Stewart. The store is located at 564 Benfield Road. To learn more about The LoveJoy Project, follow the business on Facebook or call 410-999-5893.





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Chamber Update

» Continued from page 47

lition in memory of the business owner's mother, Judith Lovejoy Stewart.

Next, we celebrated the 15-year anniversary of **KMA Law Office** and the three-year anniversary of **Park Modern Realty**. Karen Authement is the founder of KMA and recently purchased a building on Ritchie Highway in Severna Park that houses her offices, along with Park Modern Realty and her son's company, **Bayrise Builders**. We enjoyed food, music, giveaways and more.

We were honored to perform the ribbon cutting for the grand opening of **iCode Severna Park**. iCode makes STEM education fun with instructor-led, hands-on STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) classes

and camps utilizing gamified learning techniques to keep students engaged and excited to learn.

Another new business celebrated its official grand opening — **Gotta Have HeART Studio**. The space is a haven for artists of all levels and ages who want to participate in workshops, classes and studio sessions, igniting their passion for art!

Cottonwood in the Park was the host of our Successful Women in Business Group's "First Cup Club." And what an amazing place it is, filled with sewing and crafting essentials, antiques, jewelry, clothing and much, much more.

We kicked off a new event called Monthly Mingle where chamber members and guests enjoyed a no-pressure, relaxed opportunity to network and get to know one another. The August event was held at **Park Tavern**. We enjoyed

delicious appetizers, libations, a beautiful bundt cake courtesy of **Nothing Bundt Cakes**, and great conversation. We will visit a different place each month.

There are six chambers in Anne Arundel County, and we often partner with them to host events. We recently held a multi-chamber Power Connections breakfast at the **Maritime Institute of Technology and Graduate Studies in Linthicum**. Participants enjoyed meeting more than 100 attendees in a fast-paced, speed networking format.

There are some milestone ribbon cuttings coming up in September. **Landmark Roofing** is celebrating its 10th anniversary on September 18 at 4:00pm. The event is free and open to all. **Zeskind's/Park Hardware** is celebrating a 100th anniversary on Saturday, September 20, with an open house from

8:00am–6:00pm. The businesses will have raffles, giveaways and more for the community to enjoy. A ribbon cutting will take place at 11:00am.

We are again partnering with the **Maryland Plastic Surgery Center and PURE MedSpa at the Aesthetic Institute** to offer a health, wellness and beauty fair in Millersville. The event will be on Saturday, September 20, from noon to 3:00pm, and is free and open to all!

Our 2025 Driving Force for Business golf tournament will be held at the gorgeous Chartwell Golf and Country Club on September 22 from noon to 7:00pm, and we look forward to a fantastic day.

For more information about the chamber, go to www.gspacc.com. As always, please shop locally and support our community!

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How To Prepare For Rate Cuts

» Continued from page 47

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Jimeno And Gray Law Firm Named To The Inc. 5000 List Of The Fastest Growing Companies In America

The Maryland law firm of Jimeno and Gray has been named to the 2025 Inc. 5000 List, the most prestigious ranking of the fastest-growing private companies in America. Jimeno and Gray is one of only five law firms in Maryland that made the list, and the only one in Anne Arundel County. The firm practices in the areas of family law and

estate planning. The Inc. 5000 List provides a data-driven snapshot of the most successful companies within the economy's most dynamic segment — its independent, entrepreneurial businesses. Past honorees include companies such as Microsoft, Meta, Chobani, Under Armour, Timberland, Oracle, and Patagonia. Greg Jimeno, partner at Jimeno and

Gray, said, "Jimeno and Gray, including our estate planning arm of Chesapeake Wills and Trusts, is a client-focused law firm with dedicated attorneys who listen carefully to our clients in order to craft customized solutions. We work hard to empower our clients so they have control over their lives during critical times." Read more about the accomplishment at www.severnaparkvoice.com.

KMA Law

» Continued from page 47

verdicts over \$1 million each. Early on, the business was a general practice firm. "After the first five years, we started tailoring it down," Authement said, reflecting on the evolution of KMA Law Office. "I realized ... I just wanted to focus on the two areas I feel we give back the most in, and that's the estate planning — making sure people have things set up for the worst-case scenarios — and then the personal injury (side), helping people work through that process — nobody plans for that — and get what they're entitled to under the law." Attorney Kelly Arnold joined KMA Law Office a little over a year ago and focuses on personal injury law. Attorney Ryan Leeb came on board in April and practices estate planning.

For generations, Leeb's family has served people through retirement plan-

ning, which is where he got his start. Though he enjoyed it, he pursued law school to focus on estate planning. Leeb found success working at a few firms, but he dreamed of working alongside attorneys who treated clients the same way his family did. "It wasn't until I started (at KMA Law Office) that I felt like I found something that matches, as close as possible, to working with my family, and it feels great," he shared. KMA Law Office prides itself on offering "big-firm services with small-firm personal attention." Authement noted that some people have an image of attorneys as unapproachable people in stuffy suits, but she and her team are committed to helping their clients feel cared for and comfortable. She has witnessed clients enter her office anxious and leave relieved. "When our clients tell us that they felt comfortable ... you can see the weight lift off of them, and that's why I take a great deal of comfort in

seeing them feel relieved," she said. KMA Law Office also gives back to the community: the firm sponsors events at the Severna Park Community Center and was the main sponsor of Art in the Park in 2024. Another longtime local, Arnold is equally passionate about serving the community she calls home. "I grew up in this community, so helping clients here in the greater Severna Park area ... really is like helping our neighbors, helping our community, protecting the people that are close to us and serve the same community that we do," she shared. Arnold added, "For us that's really one of the driving factors of staying here in Severna Park, because it is such a small community. We could go to Annapolis or Baltimore, but we don't serve our community by doing that. So for us, it's a very client-centric and community-centric practice." To learn more about KMA Law Office, go to www.kma-law.com.



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