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SEPTEMBER 2026

A Day In The Life: Chris Patrick

*Washington Capitals
Senior Vice President
And General Manager*



Chris Patrick

By Zach Sparks

During his grandfather's funeral in 1998, Chris Patrick received an offer he couldn't refuse. He just didn't know it yet.

George McPhee, the Washington Capitals general manager at the time, told Patrick he would get him "back into hockey" once Patrick was done with Wall Street.

Patrick had played forward for two years at Princeton University and his dad, Dick Patrick, served as Capitals team president. Chris Patrick's grandfather, Muzz, won the 1940 Stanley Cup with the New York Rangers and later became the team's general manager. But the younger Patrick did not want any handouts.

Ten years later, after working
» Continued on page 10

Warriors In The Park: September Concert Reinforces Support For Veterans

By Zach Sparks

Anonymous testimonials fill the webpages and social media feeds of Warrior Music Foundation, a nonprofit that serves active-duty military members, veterans, law enforcement officers, first responders and families of all those groups.

"Thanks to music therapy, I feel like a new man with a wealth of knowledge about myself and what it takes to thrive while living with PTSD," one says, using the acronym for post-traumatic stress disorder.

Another reads, "Within only five sessions of music therapy, I've been able to create a mental and emotional triage kit for myself."

Navy veteran Michael Caimona started Warrior Music Foundation in 2017. Nearly a decade later, its signature concert, Warriors in the Park, is returning to Severna Park Taphouse on September 12 from 1:00pm-7:00pm.

"I have lost friends to suicide and really felt compelled to do something to address the problem," Caimona told the Severna Park Voice in 2021. "I had been involved in music and thought that was a way we could help."

Proceeds from the September
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Warrior Music Foundation has annual concerts at Severna Park Taphouse, at The Fillmore Silver Spring and at Union Stage in Washington, D.C.

Never Forget: Community Honors Vow Made 25 Years Ago

The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and the 2,977 victims who lost their lives that day are engrained in Americans' memories in part because of a promise the United States made to itself decades ago: Never Forget. Each year, communities pause to reflect on the events of that day and honor the victims. This year marks the 25th anniversary of 9/11, and events will be held around town in remembrance.

On Friday, September 11, firefight-

ers and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) from the Earleigh Heights Volunteer Fire Company will perform a stair climb in memory of the firefighters who lost their lives 25 years ago in Manhattan. Wearing full turnout gear and self-contained breathing apparatus backpacks, firefighters will use stair-stepping machines at LA Fitness in Pasadena to symbolically climb the 110 stories of the World Trade Center towers. New York City firefighters were doing just that when the towers collapsed.

Volunteer firefighter Jordan Ramos, stair climb coordinator, is proud to organize the event. "We're grateful to have this opportunity for our
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Earleigh Heights' Jordan Ramos coordinates the annual stair climb.

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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.

Gilliam Launches Girls Summer Basketball League

By Dan Elson

Green Hornets girls basketball commissioner Chris Gilliam never planned to coach three basketball teams, but doing so precipitated his nomination for Volunteer of the Month.

Gilliam launched the girls summer basketball league in 2025. Girls in fourth to eighth grade play six summer league games.

Gilliam and other volunteers put in a lot of hours to give girls the chance to play basketball year-round. The group collaboration was key to starting the league, according to Gilliam.

"It's good to be recognized for something I've been doing," Gilliam said. "It's pretty positive in the community."

The Greater Severna Park Athletic Association, known as the Green Hornets, offers multiple sports for boys and girls to participate in including baseball, football, soccer and lacrosse. Approximately 135 girls played in the summer basketball league this year, according to Gilliam.

"When you have that many kids and that many families relying on your communication, organization and logistics, it makes it feel important," Gilliam, a government contractor, said. "I think enough people would say I take it pretty seriously. I kind of run the program how I would want it to run if I was a parent."

The addition of a summer league provides an outlet for athletes to play year-round.

"We have so many great girl ath-



Chris Gilliam, a former professional basketball player, launched the Green Hornets girls summer basketball league last year.

letes in this area," Gilliam said. "I think if they start to focus a little bit more on basketball, we could ... really dominant in basketball like we are in soccer and in lacrosse."

Gilliam added that he enjoys watching the girls develop into better players. He coaches a rising fifth-grade team and his youngest daughter's recreational basketball squad. Gilliam is a father of two girls.

"I'll see a girl one summer, and then the next summer they can do things that they weren't doing the previous summer," he said. "I think that's where I get the most enjoyment out of it."

As the commissioner, he believes it's important for kids to play on sports

teams with kids from different neighborhoods and elementary schools. When young boys and girls get outside their neighborhoods and schools, it makes the experience better, he shared.

Hard work and commitment are two values Gilliam teaches his teams.

"I always tell people athleticism will only take you so far," Gilliam said. "You have to put the work in, you have to put the time in, and that goes for anything in the world. If you don't put the time in to be better or do better, you'll never get better."

Gilliam played power forward at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown and pursued professional basketball in Denmark, Germany and Luxembourg for a few years. He said his time playing in Europe gave him a new perspective, which is to prioritize developing basketball skills over winning championships.

"Everyone remembers how you developed a kid and took a kid that couldn't dribble," he said. "Now they're one of the best players and they're going to play in college. I think that's more memorable than the amount of championships that you know a given team wins."

Mark Parme, a deputy commissioner of the league, said Gilliam has elevated the program.

"He's got a vision in mind to make the Green Hornets basketball program one of the best in the area, and he's committed to making that happen," Parme said. "I'm happy to be a part of it, proud to work next to him and help him achieve that any way we can."



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Hollyberry Garden Club Celebrates 70 Years



Members of the Hollyberry Garden Club gathered this summer to reflect and celebrate the club's 70th anniversary.

The Hollyberry Garden Club of Severna Park recently celebrated a special milestone — the club's 70th anniversary. In June, members and guests gathered at the Fairwinds on the Severn clubhouse to share a meal and celebratory cake.

Many past presidents joined current members to reminisce about club trips, events, wreath-making fundraisers and the changes they have witnessed in the Severna Park community over the

years. Members also reflected on the local gardens the club is dedicated to maintaining throughout the year, including at Hatton Regester Green and in front of the Severna Park Library.

Numerous binders, carefully preserved by the club historian, were shared with attendees. They contained photographs and memories dating back to the 1980s and provided a glimpse into the club's long history.

The celebration also honored the

club's longtime members, who received special name tags and gifts in recognition of their years of service and dedication. Several current members joined because their mothers had been Hollyberry Garden Club members, and they have now participated in the club for 25–30 years themselves.

The Hollyberry Garden Club is currently sponsoring a tulip and daffodil sale. For more information, visit the club's Facebook page.

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Tradition Continues As Neighbors Gather For Round Bay Carnival

Several generations of Round Bay families have gathered at the community beach since the neighborhood started its annual carnival in 1920. This year was no different as neighbors enjoyed games, performances and treats.

Photos by Matthew Wojtowycz



Ryan Lawton enjoyed the swing set.



(L-R) Donna Norman, Alyson Figlioli and Suzanne Edwards posed in front of the concession stand they worked at the carnival.



Volunteer Stephannie Sullivan ran the "Crab Basket" game.



Audrey Dobrusin enjoyed the carnival with face paint, popcorn and cotton candy.



Alyson Figlioli made cotton candy for carnival attendees.



Volunteers Kevin Wesner (left) and Ben Marshall posed in front of the wheel they operated during the carnival.



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When Someone You Love Dies: What To Do Next

Rachel Muñoz, Esq.
Muñoz Estates & Trusts



When someone we love dies, the world can feel as though it has stopped, yet somehow, the to-do list begins almost immediately.

There may be a funeral to plan, family members arriving from out of town, phone calls to make and countless decisions that suddenly fall to you. If you have been named the executor or personal representative of a loved one's estate, or the successor trustee of a trust, you may also be facing a complicated legal and financial process while you are grieving. It is a lot to carry.

The most important thing to remember is that you do not have to figure everything out immediately, and you do not have to do it alone. Take a breath. Take care of yourself and your family. Then, one step at a time, begin gathering the information you will need.

Start by Protecting What Your Loved One Left Behind

Make sure your loved one's home, vehicle, personal belongings and important papers are secure. Look for important estate planning documents, particularly the original will and any trust documents. You may also find powers of attorney, advance medical directives, financial statements, insurance policies and tax returns.

If your loved one prepared a personal legacy letter, this can be a particularly meaningful time to locate it. These writings often contain family stories, personal values and messages that cannot be found in a legal document.

Gather Financial Information

Begin making a list of the assets your loved one owned, including bank and investment accounts, retirement accounts, life insurance, real estate, vehicles, business interests and valuable personal property. Recent statements, deeds, appraisals and other financial records can be especially helpful.

At the same time, gather information about mortgages, credit cards, loans, medical bills, utilities and other expenses. Do not assume that every bill should immediately be paid from your own funds. Keep the records and seek guidance about how debts should be handled through the estate or trust.

Take Care of Important Notifications

Obtain several certified copies of the death certificate. You will likely need them when working with banks, insurance companies, government agencies and other institutions.

Notify the Social Security Administration and address any Medicare matters. If your loved one was employed, contact their employer about a final paycheck, retirement benefits, life insurance or other benefits.

You should also notify applicable insurance companies, including life, automobile, and homeowners or renters insurance providers. Some policies may need to remain in place while the estate is being administered, so do not automatically cancel coverage.

Don't Forget the Digital Life

Today's estates often include email accounts, social media, online photographs, cloud storage, digital subscriptions and online financial accounts. If your loved one left instructions for accessing these accounts, keep that information secure. Digital accounts may contain both important financial information and irreplaceable family memories.

Ask for Help When You Need It

Estate and trust administration can involve probate court, creditors, taxes, real estate, retirement accounts and beneficiary rights. Some decisions have important deadlines, and mistakes can sometimes result in unnecessary expenses or complications for the person responsible for administering the estate. There is no prize for doing it all yourself.

If you are unsure what to do, consider speaking with an estate attorney early in the process. An attorney can help you understand your responsibilities, identify important deadlines, and determine which matters need immediate attention and which can wait. Depending on the circumstances, other professionals, including accountants, financial advisors and insurance professionals, may also be part of the process.

Most importantly, remember that you are navigating both a legal process and a personal loss. Give yourself time to grieve, ask questions when you need to, and take the process one step at a time.

To learn more about Muñoz Estates & Trusts or to schedule an appointment, contact Rachel Muñoz at 410-541-0269 or visit www.trustmunoz.com.

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Editor's Voice



Zach Sparks

Longtime readers of the Severna Park Voice will remember this column, Editor's Voice. When I took over as editor six years ago, I decided to reserve this space for more community news and event notices rather

than what I considered to be my less-important ramblings. Well, this month I have something to share, something I consider to be somewhat important.

I am stepping down as editor of the Voice. It's been a good run, 13 years total and six as editor. I met some fascinating people, stood on the sidelines as Severna Park and Broadneck teams won state championships, celebrated great triumphs for the community and talked to families after moments of profound loss.

The sum of those moments, good and bad, is more than I could have imagined when I took this job. That said, it's time for someone else to take the reins of the editorial department. I am leaving that task in the capable hands of our assistant editor, Meredith Winter.

Many of our readers already know Meredith. She is kind, she is immensely talented, and she has worked tirelessly to improve our editorial processes and expand the ways in which we give back to the community. I can't wait to see what she does as editor.

The paper also has great ownership from Dianna Lancione and the Lancione family. Dianna's grandmother, a savvy go-getter named Margueritte Mills, started the newspaper 45 years ago. The Lanciones are deeply invested in the community and the Severna Park Voice. Along with the rest of the Voice's dedicated team, they won't miss a beat.

It's hard for me to say goodbye without dramatizing what the last 13 years have meant to me. I will miss all the handwritten thank-you notes, the calls and emails, and the updates after a story helped a non-profit recruit new volunteers or supported a fundraiser that collected money for a deserving cause. I never questioned the significance of what we do, because I always had so many caring readers to remind me.

That's what "local" is all about. You look out for one another. I have seen evidence of that so many times over the last 13 years whether it was residents making masks for healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, neighbors forming a Fight For Phoebe group to aid a Severna Park girl with a life-threatening immunodeficiency, or donors stocking the many area food pantries so no one in the community went hungry.

I have experienced the generosity of so many people in this community, and this job has brought me tremendous joy. So, thank you all for reading and supporting the paper. Thank you all for sharing your stories, your tips and your passion. This area is a better place because of you.

Thank you for the memories. And thank you for helping us keep local journalism alive.

Never Forget: Community Honors Vow Made 25 Years Ago

» Continued from page 1

members to pay tribute to the responders lost in the World Trade Center," he said. "And it's a unique way to keep our responders fit and ready for the next emergency."

In 2025, 17 volunteer firefighters and EMTs participated in the climb. This year, the group anticipates a larger turnout as the company has grown. Earleigh Heights Volunteer Chief Dave Crawford remarked, "It's great to partner with a local business on an event that supports our members and honors the fire service."

The Anne Arundel County Fire Department, along with the Anne Arundel County Police Department and government officials, will host a joint 9/11 memorial ceremony on Friday, September 11, at 9:00am. The annual ceremony will include messages from Police Chief Amal Awad, County Executive Stuart Pittman and others, and will take place at the county's 9/11 memorial, located in front of police and fire headquarters at 8495 Veterans Highway in Millersville.



In 2025, 17 EHVFC members participated in a symbolic climb of the 110 stories of the World Trade Center towers.

On Sunday, September 13, runners can participate in the 2026 Annapolis 9/11 Heroes Run 5K at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium. Hosted by the Travis Manion Foundation, the event welcomes runners, ruckers and walkers of all ages and fitness levels to commemorate the 25th anniversary of 9/11 and to hon-

or the heroes who served on that day and in the wars that followed.

Marine Corps First Lieutenant Travis Manion gave the ultimate sacrifice on April 29, 2007, during his second deployment to Iraq.

The run starts at 11:00am and participants can learn more and register at www.travismanion.org.



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Warriors In The Park: September Concert Reinforces Support For Veterans

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concert will go toward free music therapy, lessons and songwriting retreats.

One of those retreats served as the nonprofit's introduction to John Haywood, a Nashville singer-songwriter who grew up around the Severn River. Haywood will headline this year's Warriors in the Park concert, which features more than 12 acts across three stages.

"It's important that our veterans feel seen and appreciated and that they have a community they can depend on, and Warrior Music Foundation has done great work toward that cause," Haywood said. "I attended one of their songwriting retreats in the spring and am especially looking forward to Warriors in the Park. I'm always eager to play, but events like these hold a special excitement for me knowing that I get to share my craft with these folks we owe so much to. If they walk away feeling valued, I think we've done our jobs as performers. Of course, if we can get them on the dance floor, even better!"

That sentiment and enthusiasm are music to the ears of Kirsten Anatone, executive director of Warrior Music Foundation. She came to the nonprofit while she was in school for music therapy and her practicum placement, or clinical training, led her to discover a passion for working with veterans.

"It opened up a world I didn't know I could love this much, working with the military community," she said.



Bridget Smith celebrated a performance of her original song, dedicated to her service dog.

Music and music therapy can reduce muscle tension, increase self-esteem, decrease anxiety and provide a safe emotional release, among other benefits.

Anatone has seen the therapy work wonders. One method, neurologic music therapy, uses sound to activate cognitive, motor and speech centers in the brain. Anatone used an example of how this method has worked for individuals partnered

with Warrior Music Foundation.

"They struggle with memory recall whether that's their home address or a phone number," she said. "We can write a melody around it, so if they have to recall that information, they are readably able. A good example is 867-5309. You can recall the melody and the number that comes with it."

Anatone is especially fond of the Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music, which is "essentially the use of curated classical music programs that help individuals access deeper levels of consciousness and a more relaxed state," she said.

Through these and other methods, Warrior Music Foundation is making strides.

The foundation gives assessments to individuals after they complete music lessons and music therapy programs. In the last year, 71% of participants reported improvement in PTSD symptom management, 46% noted an improvement in symptoms of depression and anxiety, and 57% cited better cognitive functioning.

She estimates that 136 individuals enrolled in music programs this year.

Thanks to the Warriors in the Park concert and other fundraisers, the foundation continues to grow. It now coordinates three annual concerts and four songwriting retreats per year. More opportunities mean that more lives are changed.

"It's special how all of this has come together," Anatone said. "I have to pinch myself."

Performing Artists

John Haywood

Scribe

Daphne Eckman

Honey Sol

Honestly Soul Trio

George Evans

Carleigh Jane

Sean Brown

Justin LaFave

Savage in Nature

Robert Bertinelli

Priddy Music Academy Musicians

Warriors in the Park is made possible by two event sponsors, Centurion Consulting Group and Progress Federal Solutions, along with many platinum and silver sponsors that pledged their support. For more information on Warrior Music Foundation's services and volunteer opportunities, go to www.warrior-musicfoundation.org. To get tickets to Warriors in the Park, visit that website or Eventbrite.




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The Secret Piece Of Real Estate Data: Buyers

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If you have ever considered selling your home, you have probably heard the phrase “supply and demand” more times than you can count. The real estate industry is very good at measuring supply, or the listing side of real estate. Go online today and you can see exactly how many homes are for sale in Severna Park, Arnold, Annapolis or anywhere else.

There are sophisticated tools that can tell us how many homes have sold, how much prices have changed, and how inventory compares with previous years. But one critically important piece of the puzzle has always been remarkably difficult to measure: How many buyers (demand side of the equation) are actually looking for a home like yours right now?

I believe this is the “secret” data point in the local real estate business.

The Problem With Looking Backward

Most of the housing statistics we talk about are historical. Last month, homes sold for this much. Last year, the average home was on the market for this many days. Prices have increased

or decreased. All of that information is useful. But it doesn’t necessarily answer the question a seller really needs to know: “What is happening right now with buyers for my particular home?”

Buyers Are the Missing Data

There is no public website where I can type in “what is the active demand for four-bedroom waterfront homes in Severna Park between \$900,000 and \$1.2 million?” and see exactly how many qualified buyers are actively looking today.

That information exists, but it is fragmented and institutional knowledge, constantly changing and largely invisible to the public.

One of the best indicators we have is showing activity: how many prospective buyers are actually touring homes. ShowingTime, which tracks buyer showing appointments, has a modality called Showing Index, which is a leading indicator of current and future real estate demand. Its data is based on showing activity across a large sample of listings.

Academic research has reached a similar conclusion. Researchers studying millions of individual home-showing records found that showing activity can provide a timelier measure of housing demand than relying solely on historical transaction data.

In other words, buyers leave clues before they leave contracts.

What Are the Clues Telling Us Now?

The current market makes this question especially important. The Maryland Association of Realtors reported that in May 2026, home showings increased 4.6% from the previous year and pending sales increased 9.6% even as the market experienced a 16.4% decrease in active inventory.

That’s a fascinating combination. Fewer homes were available, yet buyers were still actively looking.

More recently, national data has shown a more complicated picture. Existing-home sales fell 1.7% in July, while the national median price reached \$434,100 — up 2% from a year earlier. Mortgage rates have remained a significant obstacle, with the 30-year fixed rate around 6.69% in early August.

The lesson isn’t that the market is simply “hot” or “cold.” The lesson is that demand is constantly moving.

The Question Every Seller Should Ask

This is where sellers sometimes make a costly assumption. They assume, “There are always buyers for my house, so how much will I get for my home?” The best question that smart sellers ask is, “What is the demand for my home right now?”

Maybe there are 20 buyers looking for a home like yours or maybe there are five. Or maybe there is only one

buyer and that one buyer is actively looking today — then timing of your listing could be enormously important.

Timing Is Everything

Selling a home is ultimately a matchmaking exercise. Somewhere out there is a buyer whose needs, finances and preferences may align with that house. The challenge is bringing those two together at the right time — and at an agreeable price and terms for both parties. That is why I believe the most important conversation before putting a home on the market isn’t simply, “What are the comparable sales?” It’s also, “Who is looking for this home right now?”

The answer won’t always be obvious. But if you can understand the activity of buyers in real time, you have something incredibly valuable: a better sense of the market you are entering today.

For sellers, that’s the missing piece. Because when it comes to selling your home, the most important number may be how many buyers are looking for your home.

David Orso’s office is located at 8 Evergreen Road in the heart of Severna Park. Stop by or schedule a private confidential conversation if you are thinking of buying or selling your home.

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A Day In The Life: Chris Patrick

» Continued from page 1

for an investment bank and a private equity firm, Patrick recalled McPhee's offer. He could no longer resist the urge to be around ice hockey.

He joined Washington and began ascending the career ladder from the bottom, focusing on player development and scouting. Patrick worked as a pro scout, then director of player personnel. In that role, Patrick helped the hockey operations team, which still included his dad, as they secured the Stanley Cup in 2018. He even brought the cup to Severna Park.

Patrick earned a promotion to assistant general manager and eventually became the franchise's senior vice president and general manager.

Now, the Millersville resident is in his third year in that role.

"When I was on the outside, I felt like a GM sat around all day kind of playing fantasy hockey, but really that's a part of it," Patrick said. "There's so much more that goes into the general manager job: managing an organization, managing a staff, managing people, and it takes a lot of time. If you're not good at that, it will end up costing you because those are the things that make an organization strong."

After leading the Metropolitan Division with 51 wins in Patrick's first year as general manager and winning their first playoff series since 2018, the Capitals finished just outside the playoff picture last season. They entered a pivotal 2026 offseason with around \$20 million in cap space.

Patrick viewed the free agent market as "thin." His staff identifies players to acquire roughly a year before they pursue them, and they knew they wanted a top-six forward. They got two.

The Capitals traded for St. Louis Blues forward Jordan Kyrou to add speed and scoring, completed a sign-and-trade for Buffalo Sabres forward and three-time 30-goal scorer Alex Tuch, signed Blue Jackets captain Boone Jenner for versatility at center and wing, and added Vincent Deshares to reinforce the blue line with size and toughness.

"You know, add a guy who can give us first over the boards, penalty-kill guy in Boone Jenner and a solid leader, a guy who was a captain on his team prior to coming to us," Patrick said. "And then some size in the back end in Vinnie, you know, that he's a 6-7 guy, about 230 or 240 (pounds), so he's a big body back there, you know, clear the front of the net and be hard in the corners and be a defending-type guy for some of the more offensive defenders that we have, so yeah, we were happy with what we were able to get done."

The Capitals also signed head coach Spencer "Carbs" Carbery to a multi-year extension.

Those acquisitions and moves set the stage for what Patrick called the biggest move of all: resigning free agent Alex Ovechkin, who surpassed Wayne Gretzky as the NHL's all-time leading goal scorer last year. Even at 40 years old, Ovechkin scored 32 goals to lead the Capitals.

Ovechkin is excited by what Patrick



Photos courtesy of the Washington Capitals

Third-year Washington Capitals General Manager Chris Patrick said the job is about managing people and not just constructing the roster.

pulled off, adding talent to bolster a core that includes Tom Wilson, Jakob Chychrun, Dylan Strome, Pierre Luc-Dubois and Logan Thompson.

"What management did, signing new players, trading for new guys, you can see how for Carbs it's going to be lots of work, lots of thinking what the line combination is going to be," Ovechkin told Monumental Sports Network. "We have lots of depth in our lineup. I'm very excited for our team, for our fans as well, because on paper, you can see our team is one of the best teams. Now we have to work for the playoffs first and a Stanley Cup."

Signing players is not always easy. Behind the scenes, agents and teams engage in difficult negotiations. Many players have no-trade protection, so Patrick said fans should feel proud that Tuch chose to play for Washington because of the coaching staff, teammates and the city.

"I think sometimes people think it's like, 'Oh, this team just decided to overpay this guy by a lot of money,' and that's not really how it works," Patrick said. "Every now and then, a team will get a deal that ends up after a few years looking like a really friendly deal to the team, and that's just sometimes how it works out, but I think every general manager, every team, every agent and every player, they approach that stuff very professionally with a lot of data and a lot of viewpoints and it's about trying to find a common ground, and sometimes that common ground looks expensive to people or looks cheap to people, but it's just the way it ended up. Players have different motivations for what they want to do on a contract as well and so that's why you get a lot of different-looking contracts."

Roster construction is only one aspect of a general manager's job. Another is having tough discussions with staff members and players. Patrick approaches those in a calm manner. It's not his style to yell.

"It's definitely a two-way conversation, which I think kind of today's athletes, that's what they want," he said. "They want to feel heard, and they want to hear, you know, what we're thinking."

Patrick learned under the tutelage of former Capitals General Manager Brian "Mac" MacLellan, who now serves as president of hockey operations. During an interview with Monumental Sports Network in 2024, MacLellan praised Patrick's skills as an evaluator.

"There's a lot of the job that is not what you see on 'Moneyball' and 'Draft Day' and all those movies, but it's just as important as making the big signing or the big trade."

— CHRIS PATRICK

"He's seen the progression of players, so he has a good feel of, you know, this guy's going to turn into this, this player's going to turn into that," MacLellan said. "He has a real good feel for the analytics part. You know, we built up our process analytics wise. He's a smart guy. He's a bright guy. And he gets along with people. So, I think the whole skill set is there for him to be successful."

As he prepares for the upcoming season, Patrick is spending time with his wife, Kelley, and four daughters. They got to see the Stanley Cup up close when he brought it to Severn School and Severna Park Tap House in 2018. He also brought it to Piney Orchard Ice Arena in Gambrills.

"So much stuff was happening down in D.C., right?" Patrick said.

"And the players are down in Arlington, so ... I wanted to make sure up here, I gave as many people a chance to see it as possible."

Severna Park reminds Patrick of Virginia, around Oakton and Vienna where he grew up.

"Our practice rink is in Arlington, Virginia, and that's where our offices are, so it's a grind of a commute," he said. "But for me, it's worth it because we like being here. We have relationships here. Even when I get back from the Arlington, D.C. area, it feels like you're away from it here a little more, so we've really enjoyed living here."

The Capitals open training camp in mid-September and will face the defending champion Carolina Hurricanes on October 2.

Patrick is glad he accepted McPhee's suggestion all those years ago and got back into hockey, but he is looking toward the future. General managers do not often have time to dwell on the past.

When reflecting on his tenure as general manager one day, he wants to be able to say that he won at least one Stanley Cup and that his contributions went beyond wins and losses.

"I hope they look back and say, 'Yeah, that was an organization, that was a general manager who did things the right way and took care of the players, took care of the employees. They were a high-class, high-quality organization,'" Patrick said.

Do you know of a Severna Park, Arnold or Millersville resident who has a fascinating job or hobby? Send your tip to spvnews@severnaparkvoice.com.

Annual PRO-Vision Memorial Run Set For October 10

On Saturday, October 10, the annual PRO-Vision Memorial Run returns to Severna Park with a 5K/10K run and walk honoring the life and legacy of Paul Robert Overton. The race begins at 8:30am at the Severna Park Community Center and follows the scenic B&A Trail. Strollers and leashed pets are welcome.

Following the race, participants and families are invited to a community celebration featuring awards, raffle prizes, free food and drinks, and more.

This year's proceeds will benefit Athletes Serving Athletes and Chrysalis House.

To register or donate, go to www.paulrovertonvision.org. For more information, email provisionmemorial@gmail.com.

Letter To The Editor

Motorcycles And Motorized Scooters

My name is Kathy Cochran, and I recently moved to Severna Park, and love the area and the people. I'm a daily walker, and I've noticed far too often too many boys and girls under 17 are driving motorcycles and motorized scooters on the street and walking trails during the day and night. Many are not wearing helmets, are going far too fast, they're wearing sandals or flipflops and not shoes, they're playing music, they're a group together on the trail, and their motorcycles and scooters do not have lights when driving at night.

As a mom and grandmother who recently retired, I'm very concerned, and strongly feel children should have required lessons before driving a motorized scooter or motorcycle, regardless of how fast it can go, and each vehicle should have a license to ensure children understand the rules, and the drivers, passengers and walkers are safe.

Thank you for the opportunity to send my concerns, and please let me know how I can help to make this change.

**Kathy Cochran
Severna Park**

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By Authority: Friends of Dave Crawford; William P. Flinter, Treasurer

Relief And Hope During Stressful Seasons: Community Members Share What SPAN Means To Them

Michele Sabean

Director of
Development
SPAN Inc.



SPAN is... where my family, church and workplace come together to make a difference.

SPAN is... where my donation helps a family down the road.

SPAN is... where our scout group helps local families.

SPAN is... the first Turkey Trot 5K I ran.

SPAN is... where our school's food drive becomes meals for local families.

SPAN is... where our community shows up for one another.

SPAN is... where our neighborhood comes together to make Christmas brighter for children.

SPAN is... one way that members of our community care for one another.

I love hearing the many connections people have with SPAN. Sometimes it is from helping the community through their church, collecting food and money with their neighborhood, or seeing the giant macaroni and cheese and Cheerios boxes in the Fourth of July parade — and sometimes it is a combination of memories and experiences.

Most of my conversations about SPAN are with our generous community members. Recently I asked some of our clients what SPAN means to them.

Several of them spoke about how SPAN helped

when they really needed it, helping them fill in the space when work was slow or they were between jobs.

One shared, "SPAN felt like a little bit of a shoulder to lean on when I'm in a bind."

The importance of relief and hope during a stressful time was reiterated. "Sometimes just knowing that there are people and organizations willing to help makes a huge difference. When you're already dealing with difficult circumstances, being treated with compassion means more than people realize."

Many of our clients are living paycheck to paycheck and earn just enough to cover basic needs. An unexpected expense can quickly make a difficult situation worse. SPAN's support can provide a meaningful bridge during those times, helping people get back on their feet and move forward.

As one client put it, the assistance "helped take some of the pressure off of me and allowed me to focus on getting things back in order instead of constantly worrying about how I was going to make everything work."

A common theme in my conversations with both donors and clients is that any of us may need help at some point. "Sometimes people are doing everything they can and still fall on hard times. Having somewhere to turn that offers support with dignity and compassion can make the difference between someone feeling hopeless and

feeling like they can keep going. I'm grateful that SPAN is there for families who need that extra help," another client shared.

Occasionally, I run into SPAN clients in my day-to-day life. It's a wonderful reminder that SPAN truly is a local organization and that sometimes a little extra help is what makes it possible for a family to keep moving forward.

In the words of another client, "SPAN has helped my kids thrive. To the donors, what you are doing truly makes a difference. It may seem like a donation, a few hours of volunteering, food or financial assistance to you, but to the family receiving it, it can mean keeping the lights on, having food in the house, staying in their home, or simply being able to breathe for a moment."

One of the events SPAN is known for, the Turkey Trot, is coming up on Saturday, November 7, at Kinder Farm Park. Choose between a timed 5K and a fun one-mile option. Group pricing is available, so gather your friends, sign up, and enjoy a fun morning together.

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.

Following Your Doctor's And Attorney's Advice Is Key To Motor Vehicle Collision Cases

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



If you have the misfortune to suffer injuries in a motor vehicle collision, the most important thing for you to do, quite simply, is to rest and recover. The law requires that you "mitigate your damages." In other words, you must do that which is necessary to improve your physical condition and limit the effects of your injuries.

Second only to following your attorney's advice, following your doctor's advice in the aftermath of a motor vehicle collision is a key to securing fair compensation. This may necessitate taking some, or all, of the following steps:

Do not miss appointments with your doctor. Stay in touch with your doctor and be certain to keep your appointments. If you have to cancel, notify the doctor with as much notice as possible. The words "no show" on a doctor's record sheet can be used against you at the time of settlement or trial.

Attend physical therapy sessions as prescribed. Your physician may prescribe therapy to facilitate recovery from your injuries. Physical therapy is often helpful in many types of injuries including strains

and sprains. If physical therapy is prescribed, be sure to keep your appointments and participate actively in the process.

Do what your doctor tells you to do. If your physician prescribes certain medications, therapy exercises or limitations on activities, be sure to follow your doctor's orders. Failure to follow your doctor's advice can be used against you when it comes time to settle your case or can be used against you in court if your claim proceeds to trial.

Follow your doctor's advice with respect to work and leisure activities. If your physician advises you to rest, stay home from work, or avoid certain activities, it is important that you follow such advice. If you resist your doctor's advice and do activities that have been forbidden, it will not only prevent a speedy recovery but also could affect the legal aspects of your case. Even though staying out of work may have an impact financially, it is important that you follow such advice so that your recovery will be enhanced. Your attorney will attempt to recover lost earnings.

Understandably, clients are concerned about how medical bills may be paid following a collision. In summary, your medical bills may be paid from one of the following sources:

- Your own health insurance from your employment benefits package
- Your own health insurance that you may have paid for personally
- Health insurance obtained by

your spouse for your benefit or by your parents if you remain eligible under their policy

- Medical payments insurance coverage from your own automobile policy (also known as PIP, or personal injury protection) if you were driving your automobile and were involved in an automobile collision
- Medical payments insurance coverage from the person with whom you were riding, if you were a passenger in an automobile that has automobile insurance coverage
- Your own personal funds if you were not insured and are able to pay medical bills as they are incurred
- Workers' compensation insurance if your injury occurred while you were working on the job and the injury occurred as a result of your employment
- The liability insurance coverage for the person, persons or company who caused your injuries. Such

insurance coverage will most likely be paid at the time of settlement rather than during the period that you incur such medical bills

- Other possible sources: Depending on the nature of your case, your medical bills may be covered by any of the above possibilities. If there is no insurance coverage, your bills will be gathered by you and your attorney and may be paid at a later date, if and when your case is resolved

If you or a family member is injured in a motor vehicle collision, you will have many questions. You should consult with an attorney who is familiar with this area of the law, who will assist you in making informed decisions and who will make sure that you receive the compensation to which you are entitled.

To learn more about this subject, contact David Diggs at the Law Office of David V. Diggs LLC, located at 8684 Veterans Highway, Suite 302, in Millersville. Call 410-244-1189 or email david@diggsllaw.com.

This branded content is brought to you by an expert in his or her respective field.

Kinder Farm Park To Present "Build Caring Connections With Nature"

Want to support wildlife? The Friends of Kinder Farm Park group will host park ranger and Master Naturalist Jessica Farr as part of its speaker series on Sunday, September 13, at 2:00pm in the visitors center. Learn about habits that can attract and help wildlife.

The cost is \$3 for non-members and free for members and students. Non-members can register online by going to the Friends of Kinder Farm Park Facebook page or by viewing the event page on TicketLeap. Group members and students can email speaker@kinderfarmpark.org.

What We Have Forgotten From 9/11

Stephen Mitchell

Senior Pastor
Trinity Bible Church



It's been 25 years. Twenty-five years since planes were hijacked and crashed into symbols of America's power and prosperity, killing over 3,000 of our fellow citizens, forever changing our nation and world.

That Tuesday morning, I was a junior in high school and what I remember most was how transfixed we all were watching the surreal scenes unfolding on TVs throughout our classrooms and hallways, with images of the Twin Towers on fire and masses of people running through the streets of New York in terror. It felt like a movie that couldn't be real.

Yet it was a major turning point. There's the world as it was before 9/11 that some of us remember, and there's the world after 9/11, for which an entire generation has now grown into adulthood under its shadow.

Twenty-five years should hit us differently than just another anniversary of that infamous day, yet what's truly sad and tragic is not just that

horrible day but the way the lessons that we should have remembered have been forgotten.

Every anniversary of 9/11, scroll through our social media newsfeed and often you'll find posts and images of the towers with the words "9/11" and "Never Forget." In the years after Pearl Harbor, I imagine my grandfather's generation said the same thing about that momentous and tragic day, but unfortunately, we tend to forget as our world moves on.

It is clear from how broken, polarized and divided our country is today in 2026 that we have indeed forgotten 9/11. To never forget is not just about observing a moment of silence or posting something on Facebook. It's about remembering, reflecting and responding to what lessons emerged from the rubble of the towers, Pentagon and Flight 93.

There are two things I remember from the fall of 2001. The first is the shock and horror of that day and the second is the way we responded to it in the months after that day. We responded with love, unity, patriotism and an urgency to turn to God.

Visiting the 9/11 Memorial & Museum in New York City a few years back, I remember one of the most moving exhibits that brought me to tears was

hearing the voicemail recordings or messages of goodbye left by loved ones, family and friends who were on the hijacked planes. There are no voice-mails left by anyone expressing hate or anger or discussing trivial matters. They were all messages of love.

Long before The Beatles said all we need is love, Jesus said it. The second greatest commandment given to us was to "love our neighbor as ourselves" (Matthew 22:39), and Jesus said the greatest evidence to the world that someone believes in and follows him is that they demonstrate genuine, sacrificial love.

Love is stronger than hate. Yet in the years since 9/11, our culture has come to view love as being conditional on agreeing with someone's views and opinions. True Christian love, and American civic virtue, is expressed in being able to love someone while having different views and opinions on big issues or subjects. In 2026, we choose to remove, silence, block or unfriend others who believe, vote or live differently than we do.

Twenty-five years ago, I remember being taken aback with seeing Republicans and Democrats holding hands and standing shoulder-to-shoulder on the steps of Capitol Hill singing "God Bless America." I remember seeing American flags everywhere and witnessing a wave of patriotism like I've never seen before or since spread throughout our nation as we came together as Americans, as one nation under God. We didn't see each other as the enemy but instead were focused on defeating the enemy who attacked our country.

Sadly, today's America reminds me of a "Twilight Zone" episode where extraterrestrials toyed with a suburban street called Maple Street,

causing neighbors to turn on neighbors by making them see each other as the enemy. The pandemic and the years of the 2020s have only further widened the rift of polarization and division that now grips our country. In an age with more technology to communicate, we are losing the art of dialogue with one another. We have forgotten that being an American and loving our country and its ideals should come before our politics.

Finally, and most importantly, what I remember the most from 25 years ago was seeing churches packed, prayer services held at the National Cathedral led by the Rev. Billy Graham, and spiritual urgency. Our world has been shaken and shown to be vulnerable, and as human nature often does, when faced with a crisis, we look up. The problem is that when weeks turned to months without another terrorist attack, and our lives moved on with a new sense of normalcy, we lost the sense of urgency.

The truth is that every day could be our last, and it's by divine providence that our nation has been spared another horrible terrorist attack. Yet the spiritual warning whenever a horrible crisis, attack or disaster unfolds is always the same: Are you ready? Are you ready to meet God? Do you know a savior named Jesus?

It's been 25 years since that day that changed our country and the trajectory of the 21st century. In addition to remembering what happened and sharing a post on social media, do your part to reflect on the lessons from the weeks following that day, because we could surely use them in 2026.

Stephen Mitchell is the senior pastor of Trinity Bible Church in Severna Park. He also is the host of a regular podcast, "Real Christian Talk with Pastor Steve," available on all podcast platforms.

Fire Department Unleashes Pet Chip ID Scanners At Stations Countywide



Photos courtesy of the Anne Arundel County Fire Department

AACoFD, along with the two partnering organizations, showed off the microchip scanning technology with the help of dogs Gelato and Chad during a ceremony at Marley Fire Station in Glen Burnie in August.

Have you ever found a dog, cat or rabbit and wished you could reunite the pet with its owner? That possibility is now more likely thanks to a partnership between the Anne Arundel County Fire Department (AACoFD), Anne Arundel County Animal Services and the non-profit Friends of Anne Arundel County Animals.

The initiative places pet microchip scanners in fire stations

across the county. All it takes is a quick scan for firefighters to identify a pet.

Members of AACoFD called the initiative an example of what can happen when public safety agencies and community partners work together for a common goal.

"As a fire department, we want to take care of all our residents, including our four-legged friends," said Don Clime, an AACoFD firefighter and paramedic.

Literacy Council To Hold Fundraiser Book Fair

The Anne Arundel County Literacy Council (AACLC) will host a fundraiser book fair on Saturday, September 26, from 10:00am to 4:00pm.

The book fair will take place outside Discoveries: The Library at the Mall at the Crate & Barrel court. Annapolis Mall donated space and marketing support.

The fair will feature thousands of gently used books, including children's books, cookbooks, best-sellers, romance novels, memoirs, mysteries, thrillers, historical fiction and more. Books will be priced at \$2 for hardbacks and \$1 for paperbacks, with a large collection of new and notable books for \$5 each. Shoppers can fill a special edition Literacy Council tote bag with books for \$25. PayPal, credit cards, checks and cash will be accepted. The following items will also be at the book fair: gift

basket raffles featuring restaurant and local shopping gift cards, and other goodies.

The AACLC is a volunteer-driven nonprofit that transforms lives by providing free, convenient, individualized reading, writing, high school diploma preparation, English and math instruction for low-income adults and out-of-school youth who want to improve their skills. Last year, the Literacy Council recorded over 18,000 volunteer hours serving more than 250 out-of-school learners, including adults at both county detention centers.

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 www.icanread.org/book-fair. To learn more, follow the Anne Arundel County Literacy Council at AACLC on Facebook, @aacoliteracy on Instagram or @aaccl on X.

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ELECTION DAY - TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3RD

Severna Park/Severn School Football Matchup Sets Stage For Upcoming Season

By Kevin Murnane

Last fall marked a stellar football season for Broadneck, Severna Park and Archbishop Spalding high schools. Broadneck advanced to the state's semifinal playoff round only to lose against eventual state champion Quince Orchard. Archbishop Spalding won a fourth consecutive Maryland Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) A Conference championship and Severna Park secured the school's first playoff win in 17 years.

This year should deliver great competition within the county and private school leagues as well as the first game between Severna Park and Severn School.



Photo by Fincham Photography

Safety Charlie Cavanaugh hopes his Falcons can shut down opposing offenses this season.

Falcons Aim To Build On Recent Gridiron Success

Severna Park is coming off of a 7-4 record and a playoff win over Crofton.

"We had a great senior class and 10 of those players are continuing their playing careers this fall," said Severna Park head coach **Nick Marks**.

Marks will miss the departing seniors' leadership and athletic abilities, but he trusted his plan of developing those players in their sophomore years. He is excited about this year's squad.

"First of all, our players are really pumped to play Severn the first week of the season," Marks said. "To my knowledge, Severna Park and Severn have never played in the regular season. It should be fun and the players can't wait. We hope to keep this game going on a yearly basis."

Three athletes are vying for the starting quarterback spot left by **Blake Howell**, who took his talents to Salisbury University.

On offense, Marks is counting on running back **Lucas Zyvoloski**, wide receiver **Caden Guerra** and two-way lineman **Bubba Mullervy** to guide the Falcons to a winning record. Defensively, Marks is counting on senior line-backer **Logan Moran** and safety **Charlie Cavanaugh** to stop opponents.

Bruins Will Attempt To Finish Season On Top

Every year, Broadneck's goal is to win the 4A state championship.

The Bruins consistently advance in the playoffs, and they continually battle Montgomery County schools for that elusive title. That was the scenario last year as the Bruins beat Paint Branch before succumbing to the eventual state champion, Quince Orchard.

"In the championship game, we

» Continued on page 24

Falcons, Bruins Look To Continue Field Hockey Dominance

By David Bashore

SPHS Gunning For Third Straight Title Chase

After winning the state field hockey championship in 2024, Severna Park was supposed to take a step back in 2025.

They didn't, and their surprise run to last year's title game with such a young squad has the Falcons poised for a giant leap forward in 2026.

The entire starting lineup is back, and that bodes well for the team's fortunes. Severna Park graduated just two seniors from last year's squad, and this year's 21-deep roster features six seniors. They get **Kelsey Begin** back in goal, after **Tesa Norris** held down the fort in her freshman season during Begin's absence to give the team two capable backstops. Defender **Emerson Clarke** and attackers **Izzy Scarfo** and **Addison Hill** add experience and savvy.

Junior do-everythings **Leela Vernugopal** and **Sophia Weber**, the latter of whom scored the game-winning goal in overtime to put Severna Park in the title game a year ago, lead a 10-strong junior class to make this

» Continued on page 24



Photos by Fincham Photography

Above: Sophia Weber proved to be a clutch scorer for Severna Park in 2025, and she supports a strong senior class to lead the Falcons.

Below: Leela Vernugopal rose onto the scene as a stout, athletic defender, and she will anchor a strong upper class in 2026.



Cross Country Contenders Likely To Include Familiar Teams

By David Bashore

Rich Get Richer: SP Girls Reload For Fifth Straight XC Title Run

The common joke shared about cross country is that the sport is essentially every other sport's punishment: running.

At Severna Park, though, athletes are forgoing other sports to participate.

"Success breeds success, and folks want to be a part of something special," Severna Park coach **Josh Alcombright** said. "Those guys that are com-

ing over are doing it to help themselves for track, and they're all in and are really excited about this. They want to better themselves and their team."

Joining Severna Park cross country is not without merit: The Falcons have won four straight girls state titles, and they are primed for a run at a fifth successive crown. The boys are building toward a finish near the top of the 3A classification as well, with a young clutch of runners.

Both boys and girls teams have absorbed players from other sports who have realized that running is their future.

While the Falcon girls return last year's third-

place finisher **Josie Kamas** and seventh-place finisher **Mari Matthews**, they also have **Lexi Fitzsimmons** and **Siena Pegues** set to feature prominently. Both were key parts of their indoor track championship earlier in 2026, and Pegues has joined the program after playing soccer last fall.

With a strong freshman class, barring injury, the Falcons look formidable among their championship contenders.

On the boys side, they are leaning on track-heavy experience to pay dividends. **Collin Denton** was on the track team's 4x800-meter state championship relay team, and like Pegues, he has transitioned from playing soccer. **Jacon Bradley**, a sprinter, has shifted from playing football. **Daniel Haase-Lyons**, also a one-time track runner for Severna Park, moved back to the area after a year away to give the Falcons yet another quality runner.

» Continued on page 24



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STUDENT-ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

MEGHAL SPENCER

Severna Park High School | Volleyball

By David Bashore

Meghal Spencer doesn't have time to sit around. No, seriously.

The Severna Park junior is a two-sport varsity athlete, a two-position student government electee, a county-wide student advocate, and a host of other things.

"I wish I had a quarter of her energy," one of her volleyball coaches quipped.

It's well known within Severna Park High's halls that Spencer does a lot. In fact, it might be shorter to list the things she doesn't do.

She's the junior class vice president, while also being the school's student body president — two entirely different things, she's quick to explain. The student government association (SGA) position is involved in a lot of the school's overall programs, like homecoming and mental health week, whereas the junior class role is more about fundraising for the class of 2028's senior prom and graduation, along with other class-specific events.

Spencer started her journey in student government in seventh grade, where she was involved as an ambassador for the Student Equity Advisory Team, which is a student-led group within Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) focused on student engagement, advocacy and community involvement. She then moved into student roles,



Photo by Fincham Photography

part of AACPS' SEAT program, a member of three honor societies, a member of the Key Club, and a tutor through Schoolhouse, which helps students improve their SAT readiness.

It all stems from a mindset that she doesn't want to miss out on anything she may enjoy during her high school years.

"I have major 'FOMO' with everything. I love trying new things. If I see something and it looks even halfway interesting, I'll give it a shot," Spencer said. "I've played a multitude of instruments, and none of them stuck, but I was excited to try each of them. And everything I do, I like to do

being the historian for SGA and the class of 2028, before winning election to her current positions this year.

In addition to being an outside hitter on the Falcons' volleyball team, she's also a member of the school's tennis team, vice president of the school's Health Occupation Students of America chapter, involved with the school's Falcon Thon benefiting Johns Hopkins Children's Center,

well. When I joined SGA, I wasn't satisfied being just delegate, I wanted to be president. That mindset can be a blessing and a curse, I guess."

It all can be overwhelming, but Spencer finds refuge in a few places. One of those is the athletic court, whether tennis or volleyball.

She's done some work improving her own mindset, from being easily overwhelmed or frustrated, and now she hopes to be a conduit of calm for her teammates.

"I hope to be known as the person who had a smile on her face. I had a hard time getting in my head and getting frazzled," said Spencer, casually throwing in that she's also deaf in one ear — something she calls her go-to fun fact. "I really want to be able to bring calm and happy energy and infuse that positive vibe with everyone else on the court. All my teammates are that kind of person for me, so I want to be able to give that back to them."

In those rare moments of free time, Spencer can be seen engaging in books, most recently "The Kite Runner," and joining her friends on a movie kick. She made sure to see "Obsession," "The Odyssey" and "Spider-Man: Brand New Day" this summer.

Between that and pursuing knowledge for knowledge's sake — one of her recent studies revolved around the legal implications of marriage in the 18th century — Spencer has positioned herself as an intentionally well-rounded person, poised to excel in whatever she pursues.

"I want to make sure everything that I'm doing is something I actually care about," Spencer said. "If you're going to do something, make sure it's something that you truly love and you want to spend your time on it. Otherwise, you'll be miserable."

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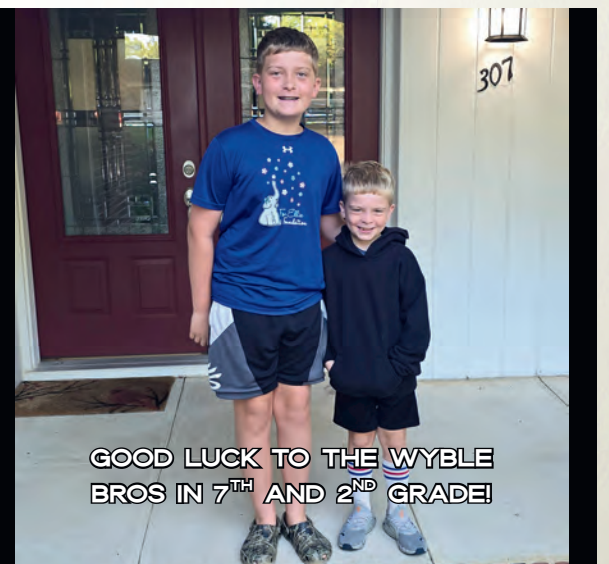
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Broadneck, Severna Park Volleyball Teams Retool For 2026



Photos by Dennis McGinley
Barrett Bolter returns as Broadneck's setter, aiming to lead a young attack to success in 2026.

By David Bashore
Youth Will Determine Bruins' Success

When last we saw the Broadneck volleyball team, they were celebrating their straight-set win over Urbana to claim the 2025 4A state championship.

The 2026 version is going to look quite a bit different, but that doesn't mean the Bruins are necessarily rebuilding.

Broadneck graduated most of their attacking rotation from last season, including outside hitters **Kennedy Smith** and **Anna Graves**, setter **Sydney Lawrence**, defensive specialist **Chloe Richie** and middle blocker **Addison Britton**. That leaves Stony Brook-bound senior setter **Barrett Bolter** as the lone returning starter and gives fellow seniors **Chloe Hays**, **Molly Robison** and **Marley Evans** their time to shine.

Broadneck's roster features three freshmen and five sophomores, and that's not counting two more underclassmen who will miss the 2026 season due to injury.

The Bruins shape up to be a "young team that will have major growth by the playoffs," coach **Tracey Regal-buto** said.



Jennifer Hong returns for her fourth year as a starter for the Severna Park volleyball team.

Experienced Falcons Gear Up For Another Run

In Severna Park, the Falcons look to ramp up the experience factor another level, as they seek a way to vie for a region championship against perennial state power Arundel.

Severna Park returns multiple starters, including four-year varsity player **Jennifer Hong**, as well as sophomore outside hitter

Hannah McKinstry. That duo will hope to replicate the departed combo of **Gena Willis** and **Lizzie Ranaghan**.

Coach **Caitlin Mills** called her team "more experienced than in previous years, (with) 10 returning players gelling very quickly together."

Heavy experience combined with budding leadership will be key for the Falcons if they are to achieve their lofty aims for 2026.

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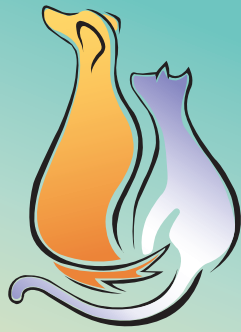


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Bruins, Falcons Boys Soccer Have Championship Aspirations

By David Bashore

Broadneck Enters The Year With Seasoned Roster

Every season, a handful of 4A teams prove they have the mettle to realistically compete for a state championship.

Year in and year out, Broadneck is on that list. The last three years, the Bruins have run into the team that eventually won it all. This fall, they look poised for another crack at the program's first championship.

Broadneck said goodbye to all-time leading scorer **Braeden Kelly**, do-everything midfielder **T.J. Remson**, and a solid defensive unit anchored by **Brady Miller**, but the Bruins hope to continue their free-scoring ways on the backs of a healthy returning contingent.

Led by senior forward **Wilson Banwell** and midfielder **Erik Akhtar**, Broadneck returns 15 players from last season's county championship squad. Of those, eight remain from the region title-winning team of 2024, including Banwell, Akhtar, senior winger **Ryan Ball** and senior goalkeeper **Dalton Bashore**.

In total, 10 seniors will be looked at to set the tone for the Bruins in 2026.

The first four games for Broadneck

won't define the season, but it could tell the team's early trajectory: they play River Hill and Mount Hebron in Bowie, followed by road trips to St. Mary's and Severna Park.

Falcons Hope To Go One Step Further

After winning a playoff game last season to erase a two-year deficit, the Falcons saw their season end on penalty kicks at Stephen Decatur, who went on to win the 3A championship.

Severna Park graduated leadership and goals in midfielders **Garrett Moden** and **Jacob Broadwater**, as well as forwards **Aiden Min** and **Stephen Bacho**.

But they will build out from a strong returning rearguard, headlined by senior goalkeeper **Henry Bauer** and defenders **Liam Kinslow** and **Caden Morris**, who's also a scoring threat on set pieces.

Senior forwards **Alvaro Dominguez-Calix** and **Gianfranco Gonzalez Caceres** figure to get first crack at leading the line, but there are others waiting in the wings to support as well.

Head coach **Ryan Parisi** said the team looks to lean on its 11 seniors for "leadership, composure and consistency" as the season progresses.



Photo by Dennis McGinley

Wilson Banwell will again lead the line for Broadneck in 2026.

SP, Broadneck Girls Soccer Eyeing Big Things

By David Bashore

New-Look Falcons Could Outperform Expectations

One look at the Severna Park girls soccer roster, and there are some glaring notes: the standouts of yesteryear, the linchpins of three straight state championships, are all gone.

But the Falcons' cupboard is far from bare; it's just the new generation's turn.

Though Capital Gazette Player of the Year **Emerson Scott**, twin sister **Ava Scott**, all-everything athlete **Maria Bragg**, and defender **Bella Mazzola** are gone, there is still plenty of firepower left. Senior midfielder **Izzy Burleson**, an all-state honoree a year ago, and all-county defender **Keira Wittlinger** are back. So too is wide player **Taylor Edwards** and attacker **Harper Wallace**, whose golden goal against Oakdale secured the state championship in 2025.

The gap is ever closing between Severna Park and the rest of the county and state, though they feel optimistic about making another run in 2026. "We're returning a core of starting players that are good technically, so (we) should be strong in possession," head coach **Rick Stimpson** said. "We need to incorporate a bunch of new players into the team and figure out how we are going to play to our strengths."



Photo by Dennis McGinley

Raegan Milnes, first-team all-state a year ago, returns to lead Broadneck's scoring attack.

It might not be quite as straightforward as in years past, but the Falcons keep looking ahead, not behind.

Bruins Leaning On Youthful Experience, Surprise Return

Broadneck's youth movement might pay dividends in 2026 — and they have an old-yet-new face that might help put them over the top.

Having graduated just two start-



Photo by Fincham Photography

Attacker Harper Wallace, who scored the game-winning goal in overtime of last year's state championship game against Oakdale, will help lead Severna Park in search of their fourth title in a row.

ers in cousins **Hadley** and **Natalie Crooks**, the Bruins return nine starters from last season and a 10th in senior midfielder **Mia Orso**, who rejoined the program after spending last year at the McDonogh School.

The Syracuse commit was an all-state selection earlier in her Broadneck career, giving the team two all-state honorees alongside returning junior forward **Raegan Milnes**. Returning senior defenders **Sam**

Brown and **Sophia Hickey** give the Bruins strength and experience at all three levels on the field.

With so much developing talent and Orso's return, Broadneck is eyeing a giant leap forward in 2026.

"Technically we will have the best team since the 2021 season," Broadneck coach **John Camm** said, referencing the program's last state championship game appearance. "The team is also very athletic."

Green Hornets Cap Their Time Together With Youth Soccer Nationals Appearance

The Green Hornets U15 girls soccer team qualified for, and competed in, the US Youth Soccer national championships in Nashville, Tennessee in July. Team coaches believe this marked the first time a Severna Park squad competed at the national event. This group of girls already set the bar high by being the first team to make it to regionals last year.

The team included **Annie Bigelow, Valentina Buzaitis, Emma Cover, Olivia De Los Santos, Grace Distler, Amelia Doherty, Katelyn Filo, Emma Grey, Andrea Gunderson, Elena Martinez, Sienna McPhee, Ayla Moadeli, Milla Pulz, Carlee Scott, Abbie Tingler** and **Kate Verrusio**.



The U15 Green Hornets girls soccer team qualified for the US Youth Soccer national championships held in Nashville, Tennessee over the summer.

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Severna Park's Brynn Williams Suits Up For Wales



Above: Brynn Williams (right) played for Wales against Australia during the 2026 World Lacrosse Women's Championship in Tokyo. **Inset:** Williams (left), 17, posed with teammate Charlotte Williams, 43, during the world tourney.

By David Bashore

Severna Park senior Brynn Williams landed the opportunity of a lifetime over the summer.

The 17-year-old from the Falcons girls lacrosse team got to represent her heritage on the biggest stage in

July, playing for Wales at the 2026 World Lacrosse Women's Championship in Japan.

Williams heard about an opportunity to represent her father's birth nation and looked into it, primarily eyeing the U20 team on account of her age. But as the sports adage goes, if you're good enough, you're old enough, and she made the senior team and the final cut list for worlds.

"It involved a lot of flying to the (United Kingdom), because they really value their hometown players and I was only one of a few who was based in the U.S.," said Williams, the only player on Wales' worlds roster listed with a non-UK hometown. "But the team made it so easy for me, and they were so welcoming."

Williams was the youngest player on the team, along with one other 17-year-old, playing alongside women

as old as 43 and against the best of the best.

Wales played against Germany, Australia, Canada, the Philippines and Ireland, placing 12th at the tournament. Williams appeared in all five games, securing one ground ball and winning her only draw opportunity.

Game speed was the biggest learning curve for Williams, she said, noting Canada's players in particular were a challenge to defend and a source of inspiration to learn and to keep improving.

"That helped me see that my ceiling can be higher than I thought," said Williams, who has already committed to play lacrosse at the University of Vermont. "A lot of athletes, once they commit to college, can kind of think that's it and slow down, but I learned a lot about how I can still improve even more."

Not only does Williams hope to continue her lacrosse international career into the 2030 games, but she has already game-planned how she can help Severna Park push forward toward another successful season in 2027.

"I learned so much about just having a positive mindset, because in the past I would often start getting negative and frustrated if things weren't going well," Williams said. "But with the team, we just kept reminding ourselves that we were in Japan, playing and having fun. That helped us a lot, especially against Germany when we won in overtime."

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Field Hockey Preview

» Continued from page 16

team both deep and top-heavy.

"We are returning a very competitive team," said Severna Park coach **Shannon Garden**. "It's hard to tell (where the team is at) because we've had several practices canceled due to storms. But we are working hard to reach the finals again this year."

The Falcons start their season September 8 against River Hill before taking on Kent Island the next day. They'll also play Manchester Valley and Notre Dame Prep before moving into county play.

Bruins Retooling After Semis Ouster

A year after getting ousted in the region final by eventual state champion Leonardtown, the Bruins return a deep and experienced squad to reload for a 2026 title run.

Cate Imber, an all-state player who set the program's single-season goals mark last season as a sophomore and has since committed to Cornell, leads an attack that has three other players with varsity experience: **Tess Mansfield**, **Vera Shaklee** and **Raelyn Soares**. Combine that with two three-year varsity defenders in **Shea Fitzpatrick** and **Laurie O'Leary**, and returning goaltender **Trish Maloney**, and the Bruins have plenty of experience returning to gear up for another long campaign.

"We have powerful and fast forwards, lots of skill, and returning experience spread out in the midfield and backfield," said Broadneck coach **Shannon Hanratty**. "A big roster this year will add depth and development to many positions."

Broadneck leads off their season with four big games: defending 2A champion Glenelg on September 8, 1A titleholder Liberty on September 10, perennial 2A contender Kent Island on September 16, and Archbishop Spalding on September 19.



Photo by Dennis McGinley

Cate Imber led Broadneck in scoring last season and returns to anchor a deep, experienced attack.

Football Preview

» Continued from page 16

turned the ball over the first two times we had the ball," said Broadneck head coach **Rob Harris**.

This is Harris' 15th season as head coach, and he is eager to see what his tenacious team will do this year.

"Our offensive line will be the strength of our team," Harris said. "We'll be a very physical team up front as we have some big and athletic linemen."

That offensive line averages 280 pounds. Those players will create holes for their running backs and protect quarterback **Nate Kropkowski**. Those linemen include tackles **Marcus Forsythe** and **Riley Baker**, guards **Christian Guzman** and **Will DiCandilo**, and center **Joey O'Connor**.

Kropkowski will lead the Bruins' high-octane offense with accurate passing skills and option running ability. The senior quarterback also has a talented wide receiver ensemble to throw to including **Aiden Tupper** (a Monmouth University commit), **Max Freesty**, **Liam Sabo** and **Josh Simons**.

On the other side of the ball, Harris has some holes to fill due to graduation.

"We'll have nine new starters on defense," Harris said. "But we're looking into a competitive fall camp to fill those openings."

Linebackers **Grayson Boone** and **David Townes** and defensive backs **Preston Gordon** and **Amir Proctor** will lead the defense.

Severn School Anticipates Turnaround

Severn School's football team will be young, but the players have put in countless hours since last fall to compete in the MIAA B conference.

"This has been the best offseason in the weight room by far," said Severn School head coach **Demetrius Ballard**. "Our opening game against Severna Park has helped our motivation all offseason and we expect a dog fight that Friday night."

Last year, Severn finished 4-6, but the Admirals experienced major injuries that affected their depth.

The Admirals will rely on many sophomores to start as they have only eight seniors on the team.

"We have some young but talented players in key positions, but overall, this will be our best defense since I've been here," said Ballard, who is entering his fifth year as head coach.

The Admirals will be led by quarterback **Landyn Hardnett**, who has the physical prowess to run or pass. Hardnett's top passing target could be senior tight end **Lincoln Watkins**, who has committed to William & Mary. The Admirals will also deploy sophomore tight end **Tristan Gale**, whom Ballard called "the strongest kid in the program."

The strength of the offense may be the massive offensive line, which features freshman **Mason Wade** and junior **Nate Mitchelski**.

On defense, Ballard is counting on many fast and athletic players to roam the field including defensive back **Myles Goger**, who is committed to play lacrosse at Johns Hopkins; defensive lineman **Bubba Hamilton**; and linebacker **J.J. Frankl**.

New Coach Leads Archbishop Spalding

Last fall, Archbishop Spalding won their record-setting fourth consecutive MIAA A Conference championship. This year, the Cavaliers will be missing a key element of that winning chemistry.

Former head coach **Kyle Schmitt** accepted an as-



Photo by Dennis McGinley

Nate Kropkowski leads Broadneck's offense.

sistant coach position at the University of Maryland, his alma mater.

To fill this void, Spalding chose Naval Academy cornerback coach **Robert "R.B." Green**, who played at Navy and was a coach in Annapolis for 13 years.

"My ultimate goal is to get these kids into colleges to continue their education and hopefully playing days," Green said. "Spalding has definitely put itself on the map of the recruiters as we had 68 colleges visit us last spring."

This year, Spalding will battle the best teams in Washington, D.C. and Baltimore. The Cavaliers' first three games are against D.C. powerhouses DeMatha, St. John's and Good Counsel before they face the gauntlet of MIAA A Conference opponents.

This year's Cavaliers team will be a high-intensity squad on both sides of the ball.

"Our strength will be our offensive line that features four seniors," Green said.

That offensive line will consist of seniors **Alek Giddens**, **Mike Byrne**, **Owen Rickard** and **Tucker Lapriola**. Junior tackle **Bryce Smalls** fills out the starting five.

The Cavaliers will also have a group of high-level wide receivers for sophomore quarterback **Brian Snowden**. Leading that group is senior **Myles McAfee**, who is committed to Maryland, along with **Kam Miller**, **David Ledbetter** and **Drew Hall**.

Headlining the defense is defensive tackle **Brock Frisby**, who has committed to Virginia Tech, and lineman **Nomue Duncan**. Linebackers include **Kevin Thompson**, **Brandon Hicks** and **David Robinson**, and the defensive backfield features **Joseph Cowsette**, **Chase Smith**, **Torre Massenburg** and **Nisaiah Glass**.

"Coach Schmitt built a legacy at Spalding, and my job is to keep the train going," Green said.

Cross Country Preview

» Continued from page 16

Alcombright hinted at a deep, talented freshman class that will push those runners and supplement established distance runner **Brenden Woods**, who finished 13th last season and helped lead Severna Park to a fourth-place finish at the state meet.

Bruins XC Program Hopes To Rebuild Quickly

At Broadneck, the Bruins are retooling after losing a handful of top runners to graduation, headlined by **Max Marinello**, **Jeannette Manseau** and **Annabelle Hall**.

On the boys side, senior **Evan Whitford** returns to help lead a talented group of runners who are primarily either young or returning

from injury. Among those are senior **Alex Fiedler** and junior **Alexander Mancus**, as well as sophomore **Evan Johnson**, who lit up the track as a freshman last year. Juniors **Will Konopka** and **Matthew Parker**, as well as senior **Emery Arnold**, also figure to compete for a spot in the scoring seven.

On the girls side, youth will be served as many of the top returners are sophomores, including **Audrey**

Fleishman, **Mia Funk** and **Harper Johnson**. Fleishman was an all-county honoree last year, while Funk also turned heads a year ago. Junior **Jessica Herdich** and senior **Alexa Johnson** will provide veteran leadership and round out the group of runners.

For both boys and girls, Broadneck will look to develop and support through a large class of freshman runners.



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SPHS, BHS Marching Bands Ready To Take The Field With New Routines

By Judy Tacyn

An estimated 11% of high school students play an instrument in a school ensemble, according to a study conducted by music education researchers in 2019, while the National Federation of State High School Associations reports that more than half of high school students participate in athletics

for their high school teams. And some students combine high-level physical fitness and playing an instrument — at the same time — in their school's marching band.

Broadneck and Severna Park high school marching band members gathered in early August at their respective schools to learn new field

» Continued on page 30



The Severna Park High School marching band performed at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium last year.

Photo courtesy of Chris Krupar

The Park Welcomes Four School Administrators



Photo by Judy Tacyn

(L-R) Cathy Anders, Shang Hopkins and Keri Allen are ready to take on new roles in Anne Arundel County Public Schools.

By Judy Tacyn

A Bulldog, an Osprey, a Shark and a Falcon, oh my! The start of the 2026 school year welcomed three new assistant principals and one principal in Severna Park, and all of them are excited to be part of a vibrant

Anne Arundel County Public Schools' (AACPS) learning community.

There is a new top Bulldog at Benfield Elementary School. Keri Allen begins her 26th year in education, all within AACPS, as the new principal at

» Continued on page 32

New Assistant Principals Start At Schools On The Peninsula



Photo by Judy Tacyn

(L-R) Kristen Noe, Tiara Colbert-Cox, Andrew Behringer and Christina Howard began the year as assistant principals on the Broadneck peninsula.

By Judy Tacyn

Of the eight schools in the Broadneck cluster, three of them welcomed new assistant principals when the

school year started in August. Andrew Behringer and Tiara Colbert-Cox have new assignments at Broadneck High School;

» Continued on page 28

New Assistant Principals Start At Schools On The Peninsula

» Continued from page 27

Christina Howard is at Severn River Middle School; and Kristen Noe is at Broadneck Elementary School. This group of assistant principals is unique because they all attended and graduated from Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS).

Behringer has spent the entirety of his 15 years in education within AACPS. He returns to his alma mater following three years as assistant principal at Annapolis High School. He began his career in special education at Bates Middle School and then served as a behavior specialist at Lindale Middle School and Bates Middle School. His new assignment at Broadneck will be his fourth year in administration.

"Both of my parents were educators. From a young age, they instilled in me the importance of helping others, treating people with kindness, teaching, and paying it forward," Behringer said. "I am incredibly grateful for everything they taught me, and they continue to be my greatest inspiration."

He shared that he's excited to get to

know a new group of students, staff and families with new opportunities to help others, learn from those around him, share his knowledge and experiences, and make a lasting, positive impact on students and staff.

"Broadneck High School is one of the premier schools in AACPS and is highly regarded throughout the state. The school already does many things very well," Behringer added. "I look forward to contributing my knowledge and experience to help Broadneck continue improving, move from a four-star school to a five-star school, and ensure that all stakeholders have opportunities to 'belong, grow and succeed.'"

Tiara Colbert-Cox is a 14-year veteran educator in AACPS schools. She has served as a math teacher at Marley Middle and Arundel High schools, math department chair, Meade High School assistant principal, and now Broadneck assistant principal. She approaches leadership as she would as a coach.

"I like to be directly involved in the work so that I can provide support throughout the process," she said. "I'm excited to contribute to the great work that is already happening at Broadneck both in academics and in athletics."

"As a proud AACPS graduate, I know firsthand that we're an excellent school system doing what is best for students to 'belong, grow and succeed.'"

Twenty-nine of Christina Howard's 31 years in education have been

within AACPS. She began as a teacher at Sunset Elementary School, then a talent development resource teacher at Meade Heights, Maryland City and Seven Oaks elementary schools. She taught math at Magothy River Middle and then served as the mathematics department chair at MacArthur Middle School. As an administrator, she's been at MacArthur Middle, Central Middle and now Severn River Middle School as assistant principal.

"As a proud AACPS graduate, I know firsthand that we're an excellent school system doing what is best for students to 'belong, grow and succeed.'"

— **TIARA COLBERT-COX**
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL,
BROADNECK HIGH SCHOOL

"My leadership style is centered on serving teachers. I am an effective communicator who is a good listener, shares clear ideas and makes sure everyone understands the plan," Howard said. "I lead with empathy, caring about how others feel, most often noticing when a colleague is struggling and offering support. I do my best to do the right thing even when no one is watching. I believe in collaboration and respecting different views and helping everyone to contribute."

Howard is excited to return to the peninsula.

"I am honored to work with the esteemed staff at Severn River Middle this year," she added. "I cannot wait to meet students and learn alongside them this year."

Kristen Noe started her 27th year in education as a Broadneck Elementary School "Bee." After teaching in an elementary school classroom for 17 years, Noe mentored new teachers for five years as a Right Start advisor. She served as assistant principal at High Point Elementary School for four years before starting the 2026 school year in Arnold.

"I often ask people what they need from me to be successful. I try to listen, remove barriers, and make sure staff feel supported and have what they need to learn and grow as professionals," Noe explained. "I believe that working together gives people a stronger sense of ownership and helps them see themselves as leaders who play an important role in our school's success. I value different perspectives and believe we do our best work when everyone has a voice and feels invested in our shared goals."

She is excited to join the staff at Broadneck Elementary and be a part of a team that is already doing incredible things for students. She plans to work hard to understand what's working, celebrate those strengths, and then work alongside the team to build on that success and see what everyone can accomplish together.

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Luminis Health Helps Families And Communities Prepare Children For A Healthy School Year

As students return to classrooms, Luminis Health is offering parents and families practical tips to help children start the school year on a healthy note. From nutritious eating habits to establishing healthy screen-time routines, small changes can help students feel their best and stay focused throughout the school year.

Healthy habits begin with nutrition. Before students leave the house, parents and guardians should make sure they start the day with a nutritious breakfast.

“Breakfast should always include a protein,” said Colleen Kiley, Luminis Health’s lead diabetes educator. “While eggs are an obvious choice, a good source of protein is also Greek yogurt, a protein shake, protein waffles or pancakes with peanut butter, or cheese.”

Parents and guardians should also include the following options:

- Include a variety of fruits and vegetables. Offering different fruits with breakfast and lunch can keep meals interesting for children. When packing lunch, carrots, cucumbers, bell peppers, and celery are healthy and delicious options.
- When students return home, good afternoon snacks include an apple with peanut butter or a yogurt bowl with fruit, chia seeds and protein granola. Another option is a high-fiber, high-protein muffin.
- Avoid sugary drinks before, during and after school. Water is always best, but families can also consider zero-sugar drink mixes or zero-sugar sports drinks.



“One of the best ways to limit screen time is to delay giving young children their own personal device for as long as possible,” said Dr. Jesselina Curry, a Luminis Health child and adolescent psychiatrist. “Early exposure to screen time has been linked to developmental and cognitive concerns, including delays in language development. When you introduce screen time in your home, it should be in an open area and not behind closed doors.”

Other ways to promote healthy screen time habits include:

- Set clear expectations by discussing what is and isn’t acceptable screen use
- Establish consistent weekly screen time limits. If your child currently spends several hours a day on a device, gradually reduce that time to make the change more manageable
- Practice what you preach by limiting

With a new Maryland law requiring all public schools to prohibit student use of personal electronic devices and certain social media during the school day by the 2027-2028 school year, screen time is an increasing concern for many parents and educators.

- your own recreational screen time
 - Set limits on social media by using built-in phone settings to monitor screen time and establish boundaries
 - Create device-free family time, such as during meals or while watching TV or a movie together as a family
 - Make screen time a reward that they can work toward
 - Download age-appropriate games that do not require internet access for young children
 - For older children, require approval before they make purchases or download new apps
- Beyond offering families tips for healthy habits at home, Luminis Health supports students throughout the school year through programs and services designed to promote physical and behavioral health.

In Anne Arundel County, Luminis Health’s orthopedic and primary care teams provided free sports physicals over the summer to 240 Anne Arundel County Public Schools student-athletes.

“As athletes head back to school and onto the fields, I can’t stress enough the importance of strength training,” said Dr. Mark Denzine, a Luminis Health orthopedic surgeon. “Throwing injuries are the most common, particularly in younger athletes when their growth plates are still active. To help avoid these injuries, coaches should monitor pitch counts, teach proper throwing mechanics, and ensure athletes follow a healthy progression with long-toss training.”

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wouldn’t trade the opportunity to serve you. While our families are working hard to make the most of every dollar, looking for relief from energy and tax bills, and navigating crowded roads, I’m collaborating across party lines to protect the taxpayers and get things done - for you.

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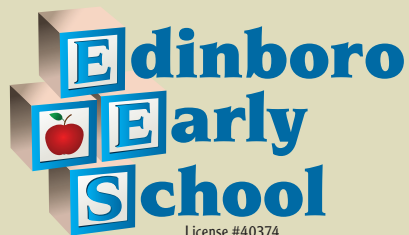
I’m proud of my record, leadership, and the work we’ve accomplished together. I’m also grateful for the continued opportunity to work with my Council colleagues, our hard-working county employees, and the constituents who bring forward ideas that become real results for our community.



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SPHS, BHS Marching Bands Ready To Take The Field



Last year, Broadneck High School's marching band comprised 102 students. This year, 132 Bruins are participating.

» Continued from page 27

routines with technical step choreography and practice high-spirited musical compositions.

Although playing by memory under the weight of instruments and uniforms in unpredictable weather conditions while high-stepping in unison with dozens of others isn't for everyone, the talented members of local marching bands are excited to pump up crowds at home football games and perform in competitions this fall.

This year 132 students make up the spirited Broadneck High School marching band, 30 more than last year. Matthew Heist has been director of bands at Broadneck for the last 22 years. He also serves as the music department chair.

The theme of the Bruins' season is "There is a Place" based on "Where the Sidewalk Ends," the popular book by Shel Silverstein.

"We felt we could arrange music that worked well with this theme and it would be an intriguing visual production for our audiences," Heist said.

To assist Heist, a student leadership team of 21 students was selected through an application and interview process. Two of those students, senior Jane Blair and junior Maggie Bradford, were respectively named senior and junior drum majors.

In addition to football games, the Bruins will participate in local Maryland Marching Bands Association and USBands shows. Heist said competitive marching bands have taken a lot of influence from musical theater.

"Visual components such as dance and choreography are becoming important factors in the overall competitive score," Heist added. "Also, we borrow technology from Broadway in terms of live sound reinforcement and amplification."

Expect the Bruins to bring their dynamic sound and fast-paced visual programming to the field again this season.

Just seven miles away, music department chair Eric Kilby and Jennifer Greeff, president of the Severna Park High School (SPHS) Band and Orchestra Boosters, opened the Falcon marching band's fall practices with an intensive week of 12-hour band camp for the 110 student performers.

"We have a robust show experience planned for both students and the audience this year," Greeff said. "Our show theme, 'Danzon,' includes energetic Spanish dances and familiar music from Camila Cabello, Jennifer Lopez and Enrique Iglesias. The theme was chosen to represent how music and dance — the arts — bring people together."

This year's Falcon band leaders are senior Warren Webb and junior Leeah Wang as senior and junior drum majors, respectively. In addition to performances at all home varsity football games, the Falcon marching band has seven competitions scheduled, including a USBands competition on October 3 at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium in Annapolis.

"Marching band is much like theater in that they are both visual performing arts requiring every member on the field to do their part to make the show look good," Greeff said. "Marching bands showcase movement while playing various musical instruments, and one wrong step on the field can ruin the visual for the audience."

Maintaining an exceptional marching band with more than 100 students can be costly. Individuals and businesses interested in supporting Broadneck or Severna Park high school's marching band can contact Broadneck Music Boosters President Walter Grier at president@bhsmusic.org or Greeff at president@sphsmusic.org. Contributions help cover instrument maintenance and replacement, uniforms, sheet music and costs related to competition and festival travel.

Educator Of The Month

Lindsay Roark
*Anne Arundel
Community College*



By Judy Tacyn

Lindsay Roark, academic chair and assistant professor for mathematics, has been in education for 16 years, first as a high school math teacher, and the past eight years at Anne Arundel Community College (AACC). But before she was a professor, she was a student. “I took classes here at AACC about 20 years ago while I was home for the summer from York College of Pennsylvania,” Roark said. “I remember being really impressed by my professors and by the level of care they showed their students. I never imagined that years later I would be teaching here.”

As a professor or as a department chair, Roark said it pays to ask questions and make connections. “I really like getting to know people. Call me nosey, but I really want to know about their lives, their journeys, what brought them to AACC, and what motivates them,” Roark added. “We all know math can be intimidating, and I want students to feel like they belong in the classroom and that they are capable of being successful mathematicians.”

As an educator, Roark believes that knowing her students helps her understand where they are coming from and how she can help them be successful. As a leader in the department, she seeks to discover and highlight her colleagues’ strengths and find ways to set them up for success. “I think people do their best when they feel supported, valued and (like) they belong,” she said.

It’s hard to believe Roark once thought she wasn’t a “math person.” Her anxiety over math began in middle school, but a special high school math teacher helped her change the

way she thought about math. “I learned being good at math isn’t necessarily about being the person who can figure everything out immediately,” Roark said. “It’s about putting in the time, practicing, making mistakes and continuing to work at it, very much like practicing a sport.”

Once she realized she could be a math person, she learned what worked for her to be successful. “That is a big part of what motivates me as a professor today,” she said. “I love helping students discover that they are capable of doing math and that math can open up so many doors for them.”

Roark believes one of the greatest strengths of community college is the variety of paths it can provide. Not all students come to AACC for the same reason or at the same point in their lives. She is amazed by and proud of students and how much they balance while enrolled, whether they are working, raising families, or caring for other people, and yet still prioritize their education.

“Community colleges can meet students where they are and help them get where they want to go. That might mean earning a degree, transferring to a four-year university, changing careers, gaining a new skill, or sometimes even discovering a goal they didn’t know they had,” Roark explained. “I think that flexibility is important because there isn’t one right path through college. We meet people where they are and help them find the path that works for their lives.”

She believes math is foundational to many fields that are shaping the future, such as computer science, artificial intelligence, data science, engineering, healthcare and others. “I think understanding mathematics is important far beyond someone pursuing a STEM career. We are surrounded by numbers, statistics, graphs, percentages and data every day,” Roark explained. “We must be able to look at that information critically and understand what it is actually telling us.”

When she’s teaching math, Roark isn’t just trying to help students pass their next test or course. She’s focused on helping them develop the problem-solving, critical-thinking and quantitative skills they will use for the rest of their lives.

Ultimately, she wants students to leave her classroom knowing they are capable of more than they may have believed when they walked in. “That’s probably what makes coming back to AACC as a faculty member so special to me,” Roark said. “I was once an AACC student, and now I get to help other students find their path. That’s pretty amazing.”

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Victoria Burden, PA
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The Park Welcomes Four School Administrators

» Continued from page 27

Benfield. This school year will be her fifth as a principal. She's held several roles throughout the county including teaching first and fifth grades, and as a literacy teacher.

Allen comes from a family of educators, including her grandmother, who started teaching at Glen Burnie High School in 1934, followed by both of her parents, who were lifelong teachers within AACPS.

"Severna Park is such a close community, and the principals at the other elementary feeder schools have been very supportive and welcoming," Allen said. "I've been lucky to work with amazing educators who I learn from every day."

Allen is excited to get to know the Bulldog community and continue looking for ways to make school a place where learning is fun and students and staff enjoy coming to Benfield.

Veteran educator Cathy Anders joins the staff of Severna Park Middle School to start her 25th year in education, the last 12 in Anne Arundel County Public Schools. Her most recent assignment was as assistant principal at Annapolis Middle School.

"I consider myself a 'warm demander' that leads with my heart. I set high, achievable expectations for students and staff," Anders said. "I believe when students and staff have a community in which they belong, they will make great progress."

Anders loves the energy when students are in the building, noting that



Paula Brackett is the new assistant principal at Shipley's Choice Elementary School.

children grow — academically, physically, emotionally and socially — so much during their middle school years.

"Severna Park schools are platinum. We are the best and will continue to thrive to be the best," Anders added. "I am ever grateful for the opportunity to be a part of the Severna Park community, and I am looking forward to being an Osprey and part of an amazing community."

First-year administrator Paula Brackett joins Shipley's Choice Elementary School after 12 years teaching in AACPS, including at Frank

"I feel strongly about the direction of AACPS and the work happening across our schools. I am honored to now serve in a leadership role where I can contribute to that work in a meaningful way."

— **PAULA BRACKETT**
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL, SHIPLEY'S CHOICE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Hebron-Harman Elementary, and most recently as the literacy teacher at Ridgeway Elementary.

"My core values are collaboration, communication and integrity. I believe that clear is kind, so I strive to communicate expectations clearly and consistently while making sure staff feel supported," Brackett said. "I value collaboration and believe the best decisions come from listening, learning from others, and working together toward a common goal. I also lead with integrity by being honest, dependable and following through on my commitments. Most importantly, I strive to make decisions based on what is best for kids. Even when decisions are difficult, I want staff to understand the 'why' behind them and know that student needs are at the center."

An AACPS parent herself, Brackett is proud to be part of a school system

that is committed to public education and creating opportunities for every student.

"I feel strongly about the direction of AACPS and the work happening across our schools," Brackett added. "I am honored to now serve in a leadership role where I can contribute to that work in a meaningful way."

Shang Hopkins joins the assistant principal staff at Severna Park High School via Old Mill Middle South, where he served in several roles including dean of students, and Old Mill High School, where he taught social studies. He has also served as a multi-sport athletics coach in his career that has spanned North Carolina, Baltimore and ultimately the last five years with AACPS.

Hopkins promises to lead first with kindness and bring an utterly human approach to school administration while valuing empathy, active listening, and the understanding that everyone is learning and growing together.

"I am looking forward to immersing myself in the exceptional 'Falcon Way' that defines Severna Park High School," Hopkins shared. "I am incredibly energized by the school's culture of top-tier academic achievement, athletics and vibrant social community spirit."

After owning his own business, Hopkins became an educator nine years ago and he's never looked back. "The chance to impact a student, a teacher, a staff member, a parent or an entire community every single day is why I show up to work," he said.



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Young Builders Display Creativity In Franklin's Toys Annual LEGO Contest

Each year, Franklin's Toys invites children in the community to exhibit their unique block builds in its LEGO expo and building contest. This year's competition took place in August, with kids ages 2-13 and up entering their LEGO creations for patrons to vote for the winning builds. First-place winners competed for \$50 gift cards, and second-place winners vied for \$25 gift cards. The voters' favorites were announced on August 24.

And the winners are...

AGES 13 AND UP

First place:
Molli and Maci McKinley
Second place: Derek Lloyd

AGES 8-12

First place: Charlotte Reed
Second place (tie):
Ewan Hardy, Bode Wiles

AGES 5-7

First place: Eli McKinley
Second place (tie):
Harlow Thiel, Hunter Sullivan

AGES 2-4

First place (tie):
Willa Duckett, Wade Lian
Second place: Catherine Robinson



First place among kids ages 8-12 went to Charlotte Reed for her "Friends Party In The Park" display.



Ewan Hardy tied for second place with his "Battle Of The Bulge" creation.



Derek Lloyd's "Icarus" earned him second place for kids ages 13 and up.



Molli and Maci McKinley collaborated on "CLUE" and won first place among the oldest entrants in this year's LEGO contest at Franklin's Toys.



Bode Wiles' "The First Star Wars Movie" tied for a second-place prize.



Eli McKinley's "Ninja Rescue Squad" earned first place among kids 5-7.



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SCAN TO VISIT

Troop Confers Three Gold Awards In Girls' Scouting

By Judy Tacyn

To earn the Gold Award, scouting's highest award for girls, senior scouts must spend 80 hours making a sustainable, meaningful change, and have completed the prerequisite Silver Award (for girls in sixth through eighth grades) and Ambassador Journey activities focused on leadership, STEM and advocacy.

Three girls from Troop 10346, all 2026 Severna Park High School graduates who started their scouting journey together in kindergarten at Oak Hill Elementary School, recently earned the Gold Award together.

For her Gold Award project, avid reader Kate Edwards built @thestationsp Little Library to combat illiteracy. Isabella Elliott created and installed bat boxes for "Bats for Biodiversity: The Bat Box Project" to promote bats over pesticides. Allyson Jones' project, "Keep Track of Your Back: Scoliosis Awareness and Accessibility to Screening," was an awareness campaign highlighting the importance of early scoliosis screening.

Edwards first saw a Little Library while visiting relatives in New York. After she learned that over 60% of Maryland fourth-graders may not read at a proficient level, she knew she wanted her Gold Award project to be a community library.

Located at The Station in Severna Park, along the B&A Trail, the spot is ideal because it offers an outdoor children's play area with plenty of seating. The Little Library features a bulletin board for business cards and event flyers and is self-sustaining since people are welcome to take books and leave books.

Edwards will keep an eye on the library when she comes home from the University of Maryland, College Park where she will study operations management and business analytics at the Robert H. Smith School of Business. If attention is needed in the meantime, owners of the small businesses nearby will attend the library.

"Over 13 years in scouting I learned



Isabella Elliott (left) and Allyson Jones celebrated their Gold Awards.

leadership, teamwork, goal setting, problem solving and other valuable lessons that ultimately allowed me to turn my passions into meaningful change," Edwards shared. "I had so much fun scouting with my friends and (making) memories together and am forever grateful for the opportuni-



Kate Edwards constructed @thestationsp Little Library near the B&A Trail in Severna Park.

ties scouting provided us."

For Elliott, "Bats for Biodiversity: The Bat Box Project," was a natural progression from her Girl Scout Silver Award, which outlined the importance of pollinators and native plants.

"I created my project to support pollinators and our ecosystem, raise awareness about the toxicity of widespread pesticide use to our local and greater ecosystem, and to support our declining bat population as an alternate solution to widespread pesticide use," Elliott explained. "Bats are a natural solution. They are exterminators of mosquitoes and invasive insect pests, decreasing the need for insecticide use. Bats are unsung heroes of the ecosystem!"

Her bat box project highlighted the benefits of bats and bat boxes as a natural, non-toxic solution. First, she created an educational campaign about the benefits of bats and bat boxes as a natural alternative to widespread pesticide usage. Elliott presented her research at homeowners association meetings, ultimately building and installing bat boxes in Severna Park and the Brittingham neighborhood in Millersville. The cedar bat boxes were funded by communities, and Elliott taught residents how to maintain them. She also taught younger scouts how to build their own boxes.

"The most important thing I have learned from my Gold Award is that one person can have an idea and start a movement to create change for the greater good," Elliott said. "That, in my opinion, exemplifies the Girl Scout Promise."

Elliott is attending Florida Institute of Technology to study mechanical engineering and play lacrosse.

As a young teen, Jones was diagnosed with severe adolescent idiopathic scoliosis and wanted to create and work on a project that raised awareness for early screening and prevention.

"Lack of scoliosis awareness and screening led to my late diagnosis of scoliosis," Jones said. "I have learned that if youth are frequently screened for scoliosis, there is a small chance of scoliosis going unnoticed, and screening helps promote early detection in youth who do develop it. Early detection increases the likelihood of receiving noninvasive treatment methods."

Jones lobbied Anne Arundel County Public Schools' health department and government offices about the need to increase awareness and provide screening in schools. She launched a social media campaign to share scoliosis facts, garnering more than 2 million views in June, Scoliosis Awareness Month.

"I wanted to prevent the repetition of my story in other adolescents," she said, noting that limited treatment options are available for late diagnosis, which may include spinal fusion surgery. "Roughly 2-3% of the population will develop scoliosis. With early detection, minimally invasive treatment options may include physical therapy or bracing."

Jones is attending Texas A&M University to study education.

"I'm proud of all three girls for



For her Gold Award project, Allyson Jones completed a project titled "Keep Track of Your Back: Scoliosis Awareness and Accessibility to Screening."



Isabella Elliott installed bat boxes as part of her project, "Bats for Biodiversity: The Bat Box Project."

pursuing and accomplishing their goal. Only 5% of eligible Girl Scouts earn the Gold Award," said Laurie Edwards, troop leader. "I've loved watching the girls grow into confident, strong women while trying new experiences and learning to handle challenges."

Elliott feels that her scouting experiences have been invaluable.

"I am so grateful that Kate, Ally and I have been on this incredible journey together that started in kindergarten," she highlighted. "That equals 13 years of shared experience: crafting, camping, volunteering, building, collaborating, creating, planning, laughing, crying, traveling, learning, growing as people, and making the world a better place. I know that Ally and Kate, and all the scouts from my troop, are going to go on to do amazing things."

Berrywood South Heads Back To School



Folger McKinsey Elementary School students gathered for a group photo at the bus stop on the first day of school, August 24. Residents of the Berrywood South neighborhood, they represented grades one through five.



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International Group To Provide Exercise Community For Athletes, Veterans With Disabilities

By Dan Elson

A global organization launched a local chapter in August for athletes and veterans with disabilities to join a running and walking community along the B&A Trail.

Achilles International's mission is to "transform the lives of people with disabilities through athletic programs and social connection." Volunteers serve as guide runners and walkers for members. They also provide essential physical guidance and safety support as they navigate outdoor conditions and traffic.

Gabrielle Gallant, co-founder of the new Annapolis chapter, said there was a gap in the area for athletes with disabilities who want to be active and challenge themselves.

"We have a lot of blind people and disabled veterans in the area that are looking for a way to get out in the community and enjoy the weather and the beautiful place that is Annapolis," said Gallant, a hospital administration student at MGH Institute of Health Professions School of Nursing.

Achilles International has chapters in 18 countries including the U.S., where it is active in 19 states and Washington, D.C. The organization, founded in 1983, has helped over 150,000 athletes participate in endurance events.

As of mid-August, three athletes and 13 volunteers have joined the Annapolis chapter, which plans to hold weekly practices on Sundays.

Locally, the organization plans to add cycling options such as adaptive, recumbent, hand cycle, and push bikes, according to chapter co-founder



The newly formed Annapolis chapter of Achilles International first met on August 9 along the B&A Trail.

Marie-Pierre Delisle.

A professor at the Naval Academy, Delisle shared that it is inspirational to watch athletes and veterans with disabilities work out and support one another.

"To be able to run alongside someone and help them achieve their goal, that's such an amazing thing and so inspiring to see them do that," she said. "At the same time, you have a higher level of stress when you're guiding than when you're just doing it for yourself. So I think the combination of those two makes it even more incredible."

Achilles International isn't just for

athletes, according to Delisle.

"Any athletes with disabilities, any people with disabilities that feel like they might not be fit enough to join or they're nervous about it, (I would) just encourage them to come," Delisle said. "Any ability level is welcome, and we really work with athletes for whatever will best serve them."

Mark Delmege, a contractor, was diagnosed with Leber hereditary optic neuropathy (LHON) in July 2006. LHON is a rare genetic disease that causes an individual to suddenly lose their vision. Delmege lost his central vision but still has peripheral vision.

Delmege, who started running 17 years ago, joined Achilles International to connect with other members with disabilities. He said the organization is one of the best groups he's joined.

"I discovered Achilles (International) and learned there's so many other individuals with visual impairments or just other disabilities who love to run and it's just a big outlet for them," Delmege said. "There's people who would give their time to guide ... us who need the assistance. It's just a fantastic organization."

Members with similar disabilities who love to run offer relatability and inspiration, and establish a strong bond within the community, according to Delmege.

"Years ago when I was a runner, a marathon was never something that was in my thoughts or my sights," he said. "Now that I know that other people with low vision have done it, that's what kind of made it more cement in my head, like, 'Oh, you can definitely accomplish this because other people know they should have done this as well.'"

Delmege is training for the 26.2-mile Ocean City Running Festival marathon this year. Running is therapy for Delmege. It's how he gets through life, he said.

"Running to me has ... kept me mentally in check, and it's definitely one of the best ... outlets I've ever found in life," he said.

Achilles International offers funding programs for athletes and veterans to participate in races.

Athletes of all ages can join Achilles International. Individuals under 18 can become volunteers with parent permission and supervision. The Annapolis chapter will meet again September 6 at 8:00am in the parking lot next to the former Severna Park Rite Aid on Jones Station Road.

UM BWMC Ranked As A Top Hospital In Maryland For Third Year In A Row

University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Medical Center (UM BWMC) has once again been recognized as one of the top hospitals in Maryland and the Baltimore metro area in the 2026-2027 U.S. News & World Report "Best Hospitals" rankings.

UM BWMC ranked No. 5 in the state for the third year in a row and remains the No. 1 hospital in Anne Arundel County this year, reflecting continued excellence in quality care, innovation, discovery and patient safety. As a member organization of the University of Maryland Medical System (UMMS), UM BWMC consistently seeks to transform the care it provides to better meet the needs of the communities it services. The hospital has provided expert care to residents of Anne Arundel County and surrounding region for more than 60 years.

"This recognition is another proof point of the level of excellence that the hospital delivers to our patients and

the community," said Kathy McColum, president of UM BWMC. "Thanks to our team's ongoing dedication to delivering safe, high-quality and compassionate care, we've been ranked No. 5 in Maryland for a third consecutive year. Our community is fortunate to have access to exceptional healthcare here in Anne Arundel County, with outstanding providers and care teams working every day to serve patients across the region."

UM BWMC is one of three UMMS hospitals ranking among the top five hospitals in the state, according to U.S. News & World Report. The University of Maryland Medical Center (UMMC), the system's academic flagship hospital, ranked No. 3 in both Maryland and the Baltimore metro area, and ranked No. 35 nationally for its cancer services through the UM Greenebaum Comprehensive Care Center. UM St. Joseph Medical Center ranked No. 2 in the state and Baltimore metro area.

Altogether, UMMS earned "high performing" ratings in 20 adult procedures and conditions — nine of which were received by UM BWMC for abdominal aortic aneurysm repair, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), colon cancer surgery, lung cancer surgery, diabetes, heart failure, kidney failure, pacemaker implantation and pneumonia.

The U.S. News & World Report "Best Hospitals" rankings evaluate hospitals across the country based on factors such as patient outcome and quality of care provided. The annual rankings are designed to help patients and their providers make informed decisions about where to receive care for challenging health conditions and common procedures. More than 50 hospitals in Maryland were evaluated by U.S. News & World Report for their annual list, with only seven meeting the high standards set by the third-party rating organization.

Festivals And Fairs Headline Weekends In September

Slate Of Local Events Offers Entertainment For All Ages And Interests

By Meredith Winter

From jousting to a rodeo, a crab soup cookoff to concerts by the bay, fairs and festivals

happening in the greater Annapolis area this month promise fun for all. Merriment abounds every weekend in September, starting with the Maryland Renaissance Festival and culminating with the Kunta Kinte Heritage Festival. Save the date for these family-friendly celebrations around town.



Photo courtesy of Dave DeCrescente

Set along the Chesapeake Bay, the Annapolis Baygrass Music Festival is a two-day showcase of bluegrass, jamgrass, Americana and other music genres.

Renaissance Festival
Weekends through October 25
www.rennfest.com

Entering its 50th season, the Maryland Renaissance Festival has returned and runs through the end of October. This year's "Rennfest" will feature more than 200 professional performers across 10 stages, 140 artisans exhibiting crafts, 42 food and beverage emporiums, five taverns and more. Step back into 1540 and the life of King Henry VIII in the 27-acre Village of Revel Grove and feast on turkey legs; take in armored jousting on horseback; shop wares from sculptors, artists and craftsmen; and enjoy ales and ciders — all right in Crownsville.

» Continued on page 40

Local Author Dylan Roche Releases Third Novel, "Shadowclaw"

Young-Adult Horror Is First Crow Teen Title For Quill & Crow Publishing House

"Shadowclaw, Shadowclaw, come and play!" Those were the words Ethan and his friends chanted as children during a slumber party seance to summon a legendary ghoul. It was the night his best friend, Robby, ended up murdered. Years later, Ethan is an anxious and superstitious teenager doing his best to forget the past and convince himself that Shadowclaw was only a story. But when he finds himself transported back in time to that fateful night, he realizes he actually has a chance to change the past and save Robby from a horrific death. It also means he will have to face a supernatural entity he's always told himself was just a legend that couldn't hurt him: Shadowclaw.

Author Dylan Roche, an Arnold resident and Severna Park High School graduate, released his third book in



Roche will appear for a book signing at Wyrld Bookstore in Edgewater on October 10 from 1:00pm-3:00pm, and with Park Books at the FrightReads Book Festival at the Howard County Fairgrounds on October 25.

"Shadowclaw" is available wherever books are sold. To learn more about Roche and his novels, go to www.dylanrochewriter.com.

Free Concert Series Is An Anticipated Community Tradition

By Meredith Winter

For music enthusiasts, summers in Severna Park are bookended by free concert series at Hatton Register Green. Each May and September, the Friends of Anne Arundel County Trails arranges for local musicians to perform on Sunday afternoons at the idyllic spot in the heart of town. The May concert series earlier this year was the first to be performed on the park's newly constructed covered stage.

Attendees are encouraged to bring lawn chairs, blankets and refreshments — and then to sit back and enjoy a casual outdoor show. The free concerts begin at 4:00pm and are approximately two hours long. They are made possible through grant funding provided by the Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks.

Weather permitting, this month's lineup is as follows.

September 6: Laura Brino and Meg Murray

An award-winning indie folk-pop singer-songwriter, Laura Brino has released 10 albums over her two-decade musical career. She pens lyrics that explore themes of resilience, identity, grief, healing, love, friendship and hope, and her songs are characterized by rich narratives, memorable melodies and a willingness to embrace vulnerability.



Meg Murray



Laura Brino

Meg Murray has performed in duos and bands and has released six of her own albums. The Annapolis-based singer-songwriter's soulful voice has captivated audiences across Maryland and Washington, D.C., and she has performed in venues spanning New York City to Birmingham, Alabama.

Together, Brino and Murray are the leadership team behind Songbird Collective, which hosts an annual music festival and exists to help musicians succeed.

September 13: MDPolka



A German band, MD Polka has performed locally for three decades.

Retired music teacher Dave Ingalls formed a German band to play at church functions in the 1990s. Simultaneously, Severna Park resident Ed Justice worked in Stuttgart, Germany, for three years and joined a local German band before returning home in 1996. Ingalls recruited Justice to play in his band, and when requests to play at private parties started coming in, Justice organized the band into MDPolka.

The first event they played was West Severna Park's Oktoberfest in 1998, and they have played every year since. MDPolka currently performs about a dozen times annually from August through October.

September 20: Sparks & McCoy



Classic rock duo Spark & McCoy consists of Edward Sparks (left) and Steve McCoy, who have played together for 42 years.

Regulars at the Hatton Register Green concert series, Edward Sparks and Steve McCoy have performed as a duo for over four decades. Appearing at local and not-so-local venues, they play acoustic classic rock and cover musicians including

» Continued on page 43

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Festivals And Fairs Headline Weekends In September

» Continued from page 38
Annapolis Songwriters Festival
September 10-13
www.annapolissongwritersfestival.com

The Annapolis Songwriters Festival is headlined by Young The Giant this year and will feature over 100 performing artists, including many local acts. Organized by Rams Head Presents, the festival is modeled after the Key West Songwriters Festival and takes place across the state capital in multiple venues. Music lovers can look forward to becoming acquainted with the faces, voices and stories behind songs.

Maryland Seafood Festival
September 11-13
www.mdseafoodfestival.com

Marking 60 years since its inception, the Maryland Seafood Festival will offer a new experience this year. The festival grounds at Sandy Point State Park will be open on Friday, September 11, and discounts are available for military and first responders in remembrance of the 25th anniversary of 9/11. That evening, live music performances will feature bands representing the four branches of the armed forces.



Photo courtesy of Christian Smooth

The Kunta Kinte Heritage Festival drew over 10,000 people to Annapolis in 2025.

The world's largest rubber duck will also be on display at this year's festival, and attendees can look forward to a crab soup cookoff, oyster shucking contest, seafood vendors, artisans, kids' activities and much more.

Anne Arundel County Fair
September 16-20
www.aacountyfair.org

Five days of fun are in store for county residents at this year's Anne Arundel

County Fair, marking 74 years of the beloved tradition. Fairgoers can meet live animals, explore homegrown and homemade exhibits, observe tractor pulls, compete in pie eating contests, watch pig races, brave rides and more. Opening acts on September 16 will include a rodeo and live performances by local student musicians from Priddy Music Academy, who kick off the event's concert lineup. Dinosaur and

firefighter training shows are new at this year's volunteer-run county fair.

Annapolis Baygrass Music Festival
September 19-20
www.baygrassfestival.com

Set on the shore of the Chesapeake Bay, the Annapolis Baygrass Music Festival is a two-day showcase of bluegrass, jamgrass, Americana and other music genres performed on two side-by-side

alternating stages. This year's featured artists include Little Feat, Yonder Mountain String Band, Béla Fleck, Sam Bush, Mountain Grass Unit and others. Festivalgoers can also enjoy local food and outdoor activities for all ages at Sandy Point State Park. Baygrass is described as "a vibrant celebration of community, conservation and connection, championing two vital causes — protecting the Chesapeake Bay and promoting mental health awareness."

Kunta Kinte Heritage Festival
September 26
www.kuntakinte.org

Now in its 36th year, Annapolis' 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 festival drew over 10,000 people in 2025 and will take place at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium again this year. Attendees can look forward to live music performances, dancing, food and beverages, arts and craft vendors, children's activities and more at the volunteer-run festival.

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NPO Presents “A Season Of Song & Story”

Performances Slated For September 2026 Through June 2027

The Naptown Philharmonic Orchestra (NPO), under the baton of Music Director/Conductor Anna Binneweg, announced its 2026-2027 season, a celebration of emotion and evocative music that touches everyone. Themed “A Season of Song & Story,” the performances will transport audiences to delightful places through unforgettable classical masterworks and contemporary classics from stage and screen.

“Music serves as one of humanity’s most powerful ways to connect and share stories,” Binneweg said. “A Season of Song & Story” invites audiences on a journey that explores unforgettable narratives, timeless melodies, and shared experiences that bring our community together.”

September 19: ¡Viva la Música! A Night of Fire & Flair

Featuring soprano Colleen Daly
Maryland Hall, 7:30pm

To honor Hispanic Heritage Month, selections include “Cuban Overture” by American composer George Gershwin, “Symphonic Dances” from “West Side Story” by American composer Leonard Bernstein, “Paconchita Latin Overture for Symphony Orchestra” by Spanish composer Óscar Navarro, “Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5” by Brazilian com-



Photo courtesy of Michael G. Stewart

The NPO’s 2026-2027 season will be a celebration of emotion and evocative music.

poser Heitor Villa-Lobos, “Si Tú Me Faltaras” by Cuban composer Luis Hernández Alfonso, “Four Dances for Orchestra” from “Estancia” by Argentine composer Alberto Ginastera, and “Conga Del Fuego Nuevo” by Mexican composer Arturo Márquez.

October 25: Halloween Spooktacular!

Featuring Violin/Viola Marcolivia Duo
with master of ceremonies Michael Hughes and a costume contest for all ages
Key Auditorium, St. John’s College, 3:00pm

Designed to appeal to the NPO’s younger patrons (and their parents), selections include “Mars, the Bringer of War” from “The Planets” by English composer Gustav Holst; “Funeral March of a Marionette” by French composer Charles Gounod; “Double Con-

certo for Violin and Viola” by English composer Benjamin Britten; highlights from “Wicked” by American composer Stephen Schwartz; “How to Train Your Dragon” by English composer John Powell; the main theme from “Beetlejuice” and “This is Halloween” from “The Nightmare Before Christmas” by American composer Danny Elfman; and “Pictures at an Exhibition: Baba Yaga/Great Gate of Kiev” by Russian composer Modest Mussorgsky.

February 21: Echoes of Love & Longing

Featuring violinist Irina Muresanu
Maryland Hall, 3:00pm

Just a week after Valentines Day, the romance continues with “Roses from the South” by Austrian composer Johann Strauss, “Romance for Violin & Orches-

tra” by American composer Amy Beach, “Salut d’amour” (Love’s Greeting) by English composer Edward Elgar, “Carmen Fantasy for Violin & Orchestra” by Spanish composer Pablo de Sarasate, and “Symphony No. 6 ‘Pathétique’” by Russian composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky.

April 11: It’s Magic! Hits of the Hi-Fi Era

Featuring vocalist Joan Ellison and winners of the 2027 Young Artists Concerto Competition
Maryland Hall, 3:00pm

Including “Serenata” by American composer Leroy Anderson, and songs made famous by Rosemary Clooney, Keely Smith and Eydie Gormé as well as by Judy Garland, Ella Fitzgerald and Doris Day.

June 5: Landscapes of Radiance & Light

Featuring the Naptown Philharmonic Orchestra Chorus directed by Jeanne Kelly and Apex Arts Vocal Ensemble directed by Lauren Walker with master of ceremonies John O’Leary
Maryland Hall, 7:30pm

The final concert of the season will include the “William Tell Overture” by Italian composer Gioachino Rossini, “Appalachian Spring Suite” by American composer Aaron Copland, “In a Summer Garden” by English composer Frederick Delius, “Illuminare” by American composer Elaine Hagenberg, and choral selections.

Tickets for all Naptown Philharmonic Orchestra concerts are \$25, and students of all ages are admitted free. Tickets are available at www.naptownphil.org.



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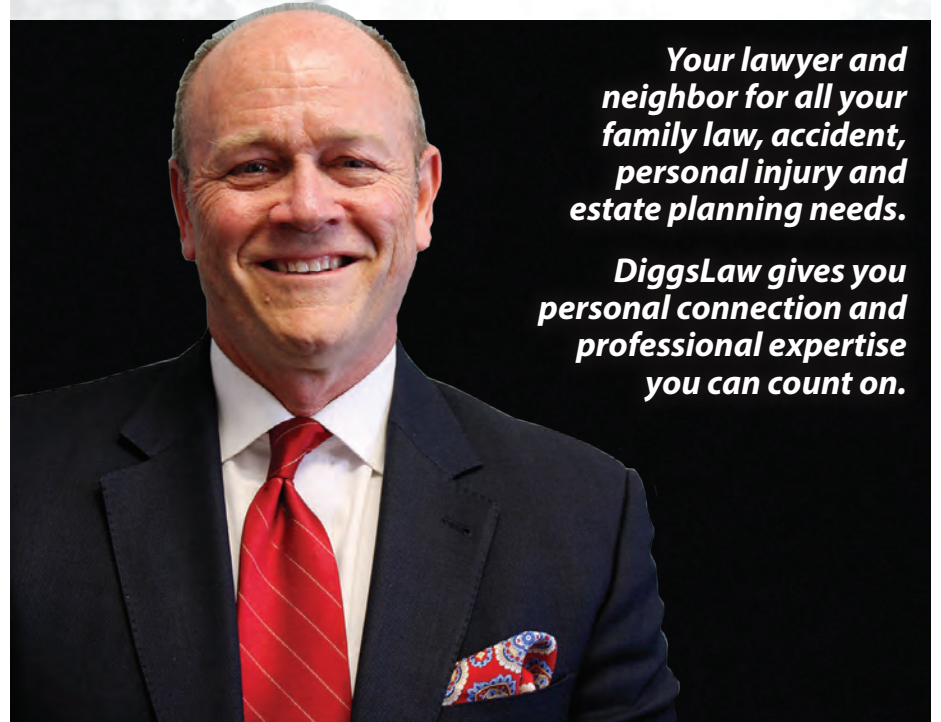
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on November 3*

Art In The Park Returns To Cafe Mezzanotte September 27

Hosted by the Severna Park Voice and Cafe Mezzanotte, the sixth annual Art in the Park music and arts festival is coming up on Sunday, September 27. From 1:00pm-5:00pm, attendees can enjoy live music performances by Sweet Leda and Mama's Black Sheep along with displays from local artists, vendors and art galleries. The bottomless picnic pavilion will offer all-you-can-eat smoked and grilled meats, grilled vegetables, seafood, pastas, salads and more, and the event will include a wine and beer garden as well. This year's Art in the Park is sponsored by KMA Law Office and will benefit the Walk the Walk Foundation. Purchase tickets at www.cafemezz.com.

Anticipated Community Tradition

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The Beatles; The Eagles; James Taylor; Cat Stevens; Jim Croce; Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young; and others.

Switching between six- and 12-string guitars, bass, harmonica and piano to back up rich harmonies, Sparks & McCoy create an impressive, full sound coming from just two people.

September 27: Celtic Music Club

Comprised of amateur musicians spanning a range of experience levels, the Celtic Music Club meets weekly in Catonsville to play together and enjoy the community of musicianship. They perform traditional Celtic music — primarily Irish and Scottish jigs, reels and hornpipes — on flutes, fiddles, guitars and tin whistles among other instruments. During weekly gatherings, their dance tunes also feature mandolin, concertina, cittern, accordion, cello and/or bodhran.



The Celtic Music Club meets weekly to play Irish and Scottish jigs, reels and hornpipes.

To learn more about the Hatton Regester Green concert series, visit www.friendsofatrials.org.

Annapolis Symphony Orchestra, AND Creative And City Of Annapolis Bring Art Installation To City Dock



Photo courtesy of Julian Jaques, City of Annapolis

“An Exhibition of Sight & Sound” pairs photographs of Chesapeake landscapes and wildlife with musical works from the Annapolis Symphony Orchestra’s 65th season.

A stretch of construction fencing along the waterfront promenade at Annapolis City Dock now features an outdoor, walkable art gallery that showcases naturescapes of the Chesapeake Bay region as captured by Maryland photographers, and a series of portraits by local visual artists.

The Annapolis Symphony Orchestra (ASO), creative consulting group AND Creative, and the City of Annapolis partnered to install a series of large-scale photographic panels along City Dock, entitled “An Exhibition of Sight & Sound.”

The project was conceived as a way to transform a necessary piece of the City Dock construction landscape into an artistic experience that gives residents and visitors another reason to walk the waterfront, explore downtown Annapolis, and patronize the businesses surrounding Dock Street.

Stretching approximately 180 feet along Ego Alley, the installation pairs photographs of Chesapeake landscapes and wildlife with musical works from the ASO’s 65th season, “In Nature’s Realm.” The project presented an opportunity for the ASO to take the theme of its upcoming season, which explores the relationship between music and the natural world, beyond the concert hall.

A celebration of the free exhibit was held on August 26.



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Ballet Theatre Of Maryland Opens Season With Ballet In The Garden And “La Sylphide”

This fall, Ballet Theatre of Maryland (BTM) will kick off its season with a VIP event, Ballet in the Garden, at the historic Hammond-Harwood House on September 19 followed by the romantic ballet “La Sylphide” at Maryland Hall, October 16-18. This will mark the company premiere of “La Sylphide,” an enchanting story ballet set in Scotland.

Ballet in the Garden provides audiences with a unique preview of the season ahead. The annual VIP event, set in the natural beauty of Hammond-Harwood House’s gardens, often features performance pieces plucked from BTM’s upcoming repertory.

Artistic Director Nicole Kelsch said, “The beginning of the season is always an exciting time at BTM. As we prepare for Ballet in the Garden, which has become one of our favorite traditions, the company premiere of ‘La Sylphide’ is already on the horizon. This whimsical production is the world’s oldest surviving story ballet, and we are delighted to continue its legacy by introducing it to audiences here in Annapolis.”

Dating back to 1832, “La Sylphide” follows the misadventures of James, a young Scotsman. As he naps by the fire on the morning of his wedding, James is woken up by a kiss from an ethereal sylph. She captivates him, and James soon abandons his wedding to chase after her into the forest. Though they are overjoyed to be together, trouble is brewing: The sylph is so airy that she slips right through James’ fingers. A witch promises that she can make the sylph his own, but James fears what her true intentions might be.

With music by Herman Severin

Løvenskiold and choreography based on that of August Bournonville, “La Sylphide” blends dramatic storytelling, high-energy Scottish dancing, and a dreamy ballet blanc of diaphanous sylphs. “La Sylphide” continues BTM’s signature programming style of staging historically significant works with characters and dancing that feel just as vibrant as they did 200 years ago.

Ballet in the Garden will take place on September 19 at 5:00pm. Tickets are \$80 for general audiences and \$60 for Hammond-Harwood House members and BTM subscribers. BTM premieres “La Sylphide” at Maryland Hall October 16-18. Single tickets for this performance are \$62, with discounts available for seniors, military members, students and children. Virtual tickets for “La Sylphide” are \$36 per household. To purchase tickets or learn more, visit www.balletmaryland.org or call 410-224-5644.



Ballet Theatre of Maryland will premiere “La Sylphide,” an enchanting story ballet set in Scotland, this October.

All-American Recital Slated For September 20 At Woods Church

Junghoon Park Will Present “Americana 250: A Pianorama”



Celebrations of the country’s semiquincentennial anniversary continue locally this month with a piano recital presented by Woods Memorial Presbyterian Church staff member Junghoon Park. Titled “Americana 250: A Pianorama,” the recital will mark the dedication of the church’s new concert grand piano.

The program will feature works by Vladimir Horowitz, Leonard Bernstein, George Gershwin and others.

The free concert will take place on Sunday, September 20, at 2:00pm. Tickets are not required. A love offering will be collected to support the Woods Church music program. For more information, go to www.woodschurch.org.

PROGRAM

“The Star-Spangled Banner,” Vladimir Horowitz
“The Stars and Stripes Forever,” Vladimir Horowitz

Carmen Variations, Vladimir Horowitz

“Tea for Two,” Art Tatum

“Tiger Rag,” Art Tatum

Etude No. 2 “Montmorency” in C Minor, Mark Maarder

Hermit Thrush at Eve, Op. 92 No. 1, Amy Beach

Piano Sonata in E flat minor, Op. 26, Samuel Barber

Intermission

Overture to Candide, Leonard Bernstein (Arr. Park)

West Side Story Concert Suite, Leonard Bernstein (Arr. Tenenbaum)

“Liza,” George Gershwin (Arr. Wild)

“Embraceable You,” George Gershwin (Arr. Wild)

“I Got Rhythm,” George Gershwin (Arr. Wild)

“Summertime” from Porgy and Bess, George Gershwin (Arr. Wild)

“I Loves You, Porgy” from Porgy and Bess, George Gershwin (Arr. Bill Evans)

Rhapsody in Blue, George Gershwin (Arr. Park)

Photographer Paul Gillespie Presents “Every Picture Tells A Story, Don’t It?”

For more than three decades, Paul Gillespie has worked as a newspaper photojournalist, photographing assignments throughout Anne Arundel County and beyond. But photography has never been limited to his work. For years, he has continued to photograph simply because it is how he experiences the world — from the moon overhead to the people and passing moments he encounters on the street.

That personal work is at the heart of his new solo exhibition, “Every Picture Tells a Story, Don’t It? People, Places, and Passing Moments,” at the Patricia Barland Gallery at the Chesapeake Arts Center in Brooklyn Park.

The exhibition’s title reflects Gillespie’s belief that photographs can carry stories beyond the moment in which they were made.

The exhibition brings together Gillespie’s street portraits and work made primarily over the past several years, along with photographs of musicians, places and fleeting moments that caught his attention. It also includes photographs of the moon, a subject dear to his heart. A selection of images from his “Journalists Matter: Faces of the Capital Gazette” project connects the exhibition to an important chapter of his life while keeping the focus on the broader range of work he has made away from his newspaper assignments.

“Every Picture Tells a Story, Don’t It?” opens with a reception from 6:00pm-8:00pm on September 10 and runs through November 8.



Paul Gillespie’s solo photo exhibition, “Every Picture Tells a Story, Don’t It?” opens September 10 at the Chesapeake Arts Center.

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Five Financial Rules Everyone Should Know

Jason LaBarge
Financial Advisor
and President
LaBarge Financial



to apply them effectively to build a cohesive plan.

1. The 50/30/20 Rule for Budgeting

This standard guideline splits take-home pay into three buckets: 50% for essential needs (housing, groceries, utilities), 30% for wants (boating in Round Bay, travel, dining out), and 20% for financial goals (saving, debt payoff, investing).

It provides a straightforward starting framework to maintain clear boundaries between lifestyle expenses and long-term planning. However, local cost-of-living nuances and shifting personal priorities mean your exact targets should adjust over time.

2. The 2X Investing Rule

This behavioral principle encourages discipline: for every dollar spent on a luxury or non-essential item, invest an equal dollar amount into your financial future.

It acts as a personal check-and-balance system, framing discretionary spending around deliberate financial progress. Using tools like this helps main-

tain personal accountability while ensuring lifestyle upgrades directly support long-term wealth building.

3. The Rule of 72

To estimate how many years it will take for an investment to double, divide 72 by your expected annual rate of return. For example, at an 8% return, your principal doubles in roughly nine years.

It offers a quick, practical way to visualize compound interest without complex calculations. Utilizing compound growth effectively requires aligning your risk tolerance with your actual timeline to ensure growth vehicles match your personal horizon.

4. The Three-Month Emergency Fund

This rule suggests reserving two to three months' worth of living expenses in a secure, liquid account such as a high-yield savings account to cover unexpected costs like medical bills or home repairs without disrupting your long-term investments.

While three months serves as a solid baseline, the ideal buffer depends on your situation. Individuals near retirement or with variable incomes often benefit from expanding that liquid cushion to six months or more to protect against broader economic swings.

5. The 4% Withdrawal Rule

Often used in retirement planning, this guideline suggests withdrawing 4% of your total investment portfolio in your first year of retirement, adjusting that dollar amount annually for inflation, to sustain your nest egg across a 30-year horizon.

While it provides a reasonable starting point, rigid withdrawal rates do not account for changing tax brackets, fluctuating healthcare needs, or market volatility. A dynamic plan adjusts distribution rates based on real-world conditions rather than a static formula.

Building Your Comprehensive Game Plan

Guidelines provide useful benchmarks, but lasting financial security comes from connecting every piece of your financial picture. An effective budget, proper cash reserves, growth strategies and tailored retirement distributions must work in lockstep with your tax strategy and estate planning.

At LaBarge Financial, the philosophy is simple: people come first, money second. A coordinated team of strategic professionals including advisors, accountants and attorneys work together to ensure your strategy reflects your actual goals rather than general rules of thumb.

If you want to move beyond basic guidelines and build a customized financial plan for your family's legacy, contact LaBarge Financial to sit down and start the conversation.

Jason LaBarge, financial advisor
and president of LaBarge Financial
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Chamber Update

Liz League
CEO • GSPACC



Foundation Fitness of Severna Park

www.foundfitpt.com/studios/severna-park

Foundation Fitness of Severna Park is a private personal training studio that helps people improve their strength, health, confidence and quality of life. The studio provides customized one-on-one, partner and semi-private training based on each client's goals, experience, injury history, schedule and coaching needs. With body-composition testing, progress tracking, nutrition support and experienced trainers, Foundation Fitness provides the guidance, structure and accountability

needed for lasting results.

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www.fastestlabs.com/south-baltimore

Fastest Labs of South Baltimore is proud to be your trusted partner for accurate and efficient drug, alcohol and DNA testing services. The company is recognized as the premier choice for businesses and individuals seeking reliable testing solutions. The staff's commitment to cleanliness, professionalism and outstanding customer service sets them apart from the competition. They offer a wide range of testing services tailored to meet your specific needs.

Cruise Planners — Kelly Cornwell

www.bylandandseas.com

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Opal Physical Therapy

www.opalphysicaltherapy.com

At Opal Physical Therapy, the team's

priority is to help you feel like yourself again. They treat pediatric through geriatric patients. The team provides personalized, hands-on care that helps you achieve your goals and regain your strength. Physical therapy can benefit everyone, whether you are recovering from an injury, managing chronic pain, or striving to improve your mobility. No matter your needs, Opal Physical Therapy is here to support you.

Taylor Made Wellness

www.taylormadewellness.net

At Taylor Made Wellness, every program is built around your body, your goals and your reality. Trainers go beyond the gym to help you build a sustainable lifestyle. They offer one-on-one coaching so that you can build routines, nutrition habits and a lifestyle that actually lasts. They also perform movement assessments to ensure that every session is safe, effective and appropriate for where your body is today.

The Sisters Supper Club LLC

www.thesistersupperclub.com

The Sisters Supper Club is a local family-owned meal delivery and drop-off catering service serving families throughout the greater Severna Park and Arnold area. These two sisters and moms specialize in making fresh,

homemade meals that make busy weeknights and gatherings easier! Their rotating weekly menu is available in single-size and family-size meals for convenient delivery. Their mission is to help busy families spend less time planning and preparing dinner, and more time gathered around the table making memories.

We are so grateful to these businesses for choosing our community to bring jobs, goods and personalized services that support us and our local economy!

On the first Tuesday of August, our chamber sponsored and participated in **National Night Out**, held at Kinder Farm Park. National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and camaraderie to make our neighborhoods safer, more caring places to live, and the occasion is celebrated across the country.

BD Provisions in Severna Park hosted the official grand opening celebration for **Sweet Escape Bookshop**, a mobile bookstore, in August. It was a lively afternoon shopping in the wonderful store and in the amazing bookshop.

» Continued on page 47

RIBBON CUTTINGS

Sweet Escape Bookshop Rolls Into Severna Park



Bringing “cozy reads and curated escapes” to a community near you, Sweet Escape Bookshop celebrated its grand opening with an open house and ribbon cutting hosted by the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce on August 16 at BD Provisions. The woman-owned mobile bookstore offers romance, thriller, romantasy and young adult reads, and can be booked for parties, festivals, showers, business events and more. Find a calendar of where to find Sweet Escape Bookshop at www.sweetescapebookshop.com.

Chamber Update

» Continued from page 46

We have more than 60,000 businesses in Anne Arundel County, so it makes sense that we have six chambers of commerce. We are all here to help our businesses grow and often participate in multi-chamber events to bring our members together. Our event in August was held at the **Maritime Institute of**

Technology and offered speed networking for over 150 attendees. Our Successful Women in Business mixer was held at **The Blended Essentials** in Severna Park. It was a fun time to network and see the vast array of products in the store. Owner Danielle Bowen instructed us on how to make a travel-size soap bar in a personalized scent, shape and color. Our TGIF cookout was held at the

chamber and sponsored by **Arundel Bank**, formerly Arundel Federal Savings Bank. This is a community bank that has been serving Maryland since 1906, with a focus on personal relationships, local decision-making, and helping neighbors thrive. Ice cream was provided by **Bruster’s Real Ice Cream** in Severna Park. Popcorn was made fresh by the **Negron Farmers Insurance Agency**. As kids return to class, local busi-

nesses step up — donating supplies, sponsoring school events, and helping fund the programs that make a real difference for students. When you shop locally, you are fueling the very businesses that invest directly in your children’s schools and activities, creating a cycle of support that keeps the whole community thriving. For more about the chamber, visit www.gspacc.com.

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