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SEVERNA PARK, MD **NOVEMBER 2026**

Oktoberfest Tradition Brings Neighborhood Together For Fall Fun

West Severna Park Event A Staple For Past Three Decades

By Judy Tacyn

When Amy Dell and her husband moved from their Arnold waterfront community of Bayberry on the Magothy to West Severna Park (WSP) in 1996, she recognized many similarities in the neighborhoods. Those similarities included kind neighbors, active families, a beautiful beach and mature trees that turned brilliant colors in the fall. But something was missing, and that something was an event she was eager to bring to WSP.

"Bayberry hosted an annual fall oyster roast, and it was fabulous," Dell said. "We have a beautiful beach (in WSP), so I spoke to several people about hosting a family-oriented event right here and we decided on an Oktoberfest. We've been hosting it ever since."

On October 24, roughly 300 West Severna Park residents gathered for brats and beer, games and contests, silent auctions and live music - and new this year, a stein-holding contest.

Dell coordinated the Oktoberfest for more than 20 years before turning over the planning to Kristin Gagnier and Hanni Monroe three years ago.

"There really isn't much we've added or changed," said Gagnier. "The Oktoberfest is perfect just the way it has always been."

For the first few years, Dell purchased bratwurst from a local wholesale food chain and husbands fought for the grill master title at the beach. Neighbors across roughly 250 homes were asked to bring a side dish or dessert, depending

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Mac Bartgis Steps Up To Lead Down Syndrome Walk



By Laura Ascione

When Mac Bartgis wants to do something, there's a good chance he's going to find a way to do it.

The 11-year-old Severna Park resident has Down syndrome, but that has never stopped him from filling his days with school, sports, clubs, friends and plenty of other activities.

"I can do it," Mac said. And he usually does.

This year, Mac carried that determination into one of his biggest leadership roles yet.

On October 24, as captain of Team Mac Attack, Mac co-chaired the Step Up for Down Syndrome Walk, an annual fundraiser and walk supporting the Down Syndrome Association of Maryland (DSAmd).

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Mac Bartgis, pictured with parents Samantha and Michael Bartgis, led Team Mac Attack, which raised more than $8,000 for the Step Up for Down Syndrome Walk, an annual fundraiser and walk supporting the Down Syndrome Association of Maryland.

Oliver Brewing Co. Leaves Baltimore For Millersville

Opening Targeted For Late November

By Dan Baldwin

After more than 20 years calling Baltimore home, Oliver Brewing Company will relocate to its "forever home" in Millersville.

One of the longest-running craft breweries in Maryland, Oliver Brewing Company was started in 1993 by Bill Oliver in the basement of what is now Pratt Street Ale House in downtown Baltimore. Now owned and operated by partners Justin Dvorkin and Donald Kelly under the 206 Restaurant Group, the brewery will join three other restaurants owned by the hospitality group in Anne Arundel County: JB's and Park Tavern in Severna Park and Donnelly's Dockside in Arnold. The parent company also owns Pratt Street Ale House, Chesapeake Cider Company and Peake Catering.



Photo by Dan Baldwin

Oliver Brewing Company and 206 Restaurant Group partner Justin Dvorkin shared that the new Millersville brewery is slated to open in late November or early December.

The partners decided to move production out of the restaurant's basement over a decade ago to settle into a larger facility in east Baltimore. With larger, more modern equipment and a full packaging line, Oliver Brewing Company grew into a contract brewing co-packing business for other area brewers. But it didn't take long to realize the larger space wasn't large enough, and the search began for the brewery's next home.

"We had several locations that almost came to fruition over the years, but when (the Millersville location) became available, it was right in our backyard, right in the community we

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Marguerite 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.

Volunteer Of The Month: Leah Paley Inspires Others To Give Back

By Sharon Mager

When Oak Hill Elementary School's Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) needed a volunteer to serve as first vice president of fundraising, Leah Paley stepped forward.

"I knew they were struggling to find someone, so I threw my name in the hat," Paley laughed, acknowledging that yes, hers was the only name.

Paley, whose son Hudson Merriman is a fifth grader at Oak Hill, has volunteered at the school since her daughter, Keegan Merriman, now an eighth grader, was in kindergarten. She has volunteered in numerous ways at school and community events and fundraisers, in addition to her full-time job as CEO of the Anne Arundel County Food Bank.

Last school year, Paley co-chaired the PTO's silent auction with her friend Laura Little, and they, with a team of hardworking volunteers, raised more than $31,000 for classroom SMART boards and other technology upgrades.

Paley is quick to praise her fellow PTO board members and their dedication to supporting the school.

"There are seven of us on the board, and the other six have all been involved longer than I have, and they've been doing an incredible job," she said.

Looking ahead, Paley tapped into her professional background in nonprofit leadership and thought as a parent to help encourage more people to volunteer.

"I'm doing fundraising work every day in conversations with donors and identifying ways to increase giving to support our operations," she said. "I think that lends itself to ideas and structure that have worked very well professionally and can translate to the school setting."



Leah Paley believes a life of giving and serving is one worth pursuing.

As a busy parent, she understands the difficulties of adding more to the calendar and the many requests for help.

"I know some of these events are a huge lift for those coordinating them," she said. "I began thinking, are there ways we can still raise just as much money without making it such a huge lift for anyone who might be interested in chairing them?"

After some brainstorming, Paley shared ideas and suggestions for family-focused events that may be easier to run, along with streamlining creative communication with the board, and PTO members agreed to give them a try.

"Now we are planning to have a pickleball tournament and a family-friendly 5K event. It's early in the planning phase, but I'm excited that people have stepped up and expressed enthusiasm to make them successful," Paley said.

In addition to fundraising with the PTO, Paley co-leads the school's monthlong Harvest for the Hungry: Kids Helping Kids Food and Fun Drive, benefiting the Anne Arundel County Food Bank. Oak Hill has ranked among the top schools for food donations for years.

Why does she volunteer when she is involved in so much already? Paley said she has a heart for the school and community. She also wants her children to lead a life of giving and serving.

"It's so important to set that example. I certainly learned it from my parents and my grandparents," she said.

She includes Keegan and Hudson in volunteer work whenever possible. Hudson accompanies his mom to the store, helps select food for Harvest for the Hungry, and likes taking several items to school each day.

For the past four or five years, Paley has served as a neighborhood captain for the Good Neighbors Group's Souper Bowl food drive, benefiting local food pantries. Hudson and Keegan both help.

"On the day of the collection, Keegan has come with me to receive the donations. My son always helps me count our neighborhood's number of items donated," she said.

Last Thanksgiving, Keegan joined her mom at a Brooklyn Park food distribution. "Teenagers don't like getting up early, but Keegan really enjoyed it and told me, 'Mom, that wasn't that bad.' She asked if we would be doing it again this year."

Laura Little said of Paley, "I saw firsthand that not only is Leah a volunteer, but she has such grace, honesty and strength, with a conviction of justice and compassion, that I was just blown away.

"If we had more Leahs, I believe we could make such a huge difference in our community and beyond."

Community Mourns SPHS Student Killed In Crash



A memorial has been set up at the scene of a fatal crash following the death of 14-year-old Ryan Beales.

On October 21, Anne Arundel County police officers responded to the intersection of the B&A Trail and Robinson Road for a collision involving an e-moto, similar to an electric dirt bike, and a pickup truck. Beales, who was operating the e-moto, was flown to an area hospital and died from his injuries the next day.

Community members have left flowers, candles, balloons, stuffed animals and other tributes at the site, where many have gathered to remember Beales, who was a freshman at Severna Park High School (SPHS).

In a letter sent to families and staff on October 23, SPHS principal Nathan Johnson wrote, "This was Ryan's first year in the Severna Park community, and he quickly made friends in our school. He was a positive presence in our hallways, classrooms, and cafeteria, and he approached instruction with a positive attitude. He was very supportive of our students with special needs, and he had a great smile."

The Severna Park Voice staff extends sincere condolences to Beales' family and friends, who are in our thoughts and prayers.

SEVERNA PARK VOICE

Publishers
Dianna Lancione
Lonnie Lancione

V.P., Business Development
Jonathan Katz

Editor
Meredith Winter

Assistant Editor
Laura Ascione

Sports Editor
David Bashore

Sales Account Executive
Larry Sells

Graphic Designer
Will Nauman

Reporters
Dan Baldwin
Dan Elson
Sharon Mager
Kevin Murnane
Judy Tacyn
Julia Tucker

Columnists
James Buxton
Liz League
Michele Sabean

Contributors
Lisa Bogan-Reohr
David Diggs
Jason LaBarge

Photographers
Chris Fincham
Dennis McGinley
Matthew Wojtowycz

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Please send your news to:
spvnews@severnaparkvoice.com

P.O. Box 608
Severna Park, MD 21146

410-647-9400

SevernaParkVoice.com

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Oktoberfest Tradition Brings Community Together For Fall Fun

» Continued from page 1

on the first letter of their last name. Soft pretzels were added to the menu and baked at home before appearing at the event. As the celebration grew, neighbors volunteered to take on different aspects of the Oktoberfest.

"At one point someone said, 'Why don't we get brats from Binkert's?' Someone else suggested purchasing soft pretzels from a German bakery, and someone else said they had a relationship with a local brewery for Oktoberfest beer," Dell said. "Many of the original ideas may have come from Bayberry, but we have certainly put our own spin on it."

Because the event is one of the most popular family gatherings of the year, the WSP Oktoberfest committee asks that each family planning to attend help by volunteering in some way, and there are plenty of ways to help.

"We really want the Oktoberfest to benefit not just WSP families, but greater Severna Park as well," Gagnier noted. "Our silent auctions help raise money for beach maintenance, and we ask each attendee to bring a canned good, which we donate to SPAN. A volunteer coordinates the pickup and delivery of the food to SPAN, and we recently purchased Adirondack chairs for the beach."

Gagnier said a portion of the low ticket cost is donated to the Good Neighbors Group, which is run by a WSP resident.

Social media and email groups have replaced flyers that once had to be stuffed into mailboxes to announce the event, but by and large, the Oktoberfest is just as festive as it was in 1996. Residents laughed, lounged, and polkaed the day away to the music of Aiden Hayward and MD Polka, an oompah band that plays traditional German, Austrian and Bavarian folk music.

"My family moved here 10 years ago, and we've attended every Oktoberfest since," Gagnier said. "It's an investment in the community that every resident looks forward to."



The youngest Oktoberfest attendees faced off in a pie eating contest, with one 6-year-old participant losing a tooth during the frenzy.

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After A Fire Pit Accident, Ben Ward Is Back To Being Himself

By Laura Ascione

For Severna Park kindergartener Ben Ward, some of the best parts of his recent hospital stay were the scooter rides and dinosaur slippers.

The bandage changes and needles were another story. "The needles were big," he recalled.

After a backyard fire pit accident left Ben with serious burns, he faced surgery, daily wound care and uncertainty about his recovery. Now, he is back to playing soccer, riding his bike and enjoying kindergarten — and his parents are sharing their experience to help other families prepare for accidents that can happen in seconds.

The July 2026 evening began with a familiar family routine. After spending the day outside cleaning up the yard, Angela and Dewey Ward gathered with their children around a fire pit for s'mores.

"Everything was going like any other Saturday where we were having family time around the fire," Angela said.

As the family began to head inside, Ben tripped and fell into the fire pit. Relatives were nearby, but no one was looking directly at him at that moment.

"It was just a random fall," Dewey said.

The family immediately removed Ben's loose clothing, brought him inside and ran cool water over his burns. His grandmother, a registered nurse, was present, and both parents had some first-aid training.

They drove him to Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center and staff arranged his transfer to Johns Hopkins Children's Center, where he ultimately spent 10 days.

Dr. Alejandro Garcia, director of the Children Center's Pediatric Burn Program, oversaw Ben's care. Garcia explained that burns involving flames can cause deep injuries. Ben's burns affected areas on the back of his body and his hand.

Doctors initially cleaned and bandaged the wounds while assessing whether surgery would be necessary. By the fourth day, Garcia said, they determined that some damaged skin needed to be removed and replaced with grafts using Ben's healthy skin.

Ben's hand was treated with a biosynthetic wound covering, Angela said. Watching the treatment work offered a measure of reassurance during a frightening experience.



Ben Ward, with parents Dewey and Angela Ward, reunited with his Johns Hopkins Children's Center care team.



Ward's treatment included regular bandage changes, along with physical and occupational therapy.

Ben's recovery involved more than healing skin. For young children, Garcia said, the injury itself, an unfamiliar hospital environment and repeated wound care can cause considerable anxiety. Psychologists and other specialists help children cope alongside their medical treatment.

Angela said a member of the psychology team at the Children's Center checked on Ben every day. Physical and occupational therapists also helped him keep moving.

"They were very busy mornings, but he was very supported, and it did make a difference," she said.

Between treatments, Ben found ways to play. A small scooter became a favorite hospital activity, sometimes padded with pillows to make riding more comfortable. His dinosaur slippers inspired what the family called "big monster steps" during physical therapy.

He also formed lasting connections with his nurses. During return visits for therapy, he has asked to stop by his former floor, bringing cupcakes on one visit.

Ben reached another milestone on his first day of kindergarten: He no longer needed bandages.

His recovery continues, including follow-up appointments, scar care and compression garments. Angela said Ben's doctors are pleased with his healing, and a recent occupational therapy appointment confirmed that his mobility was progressing well.

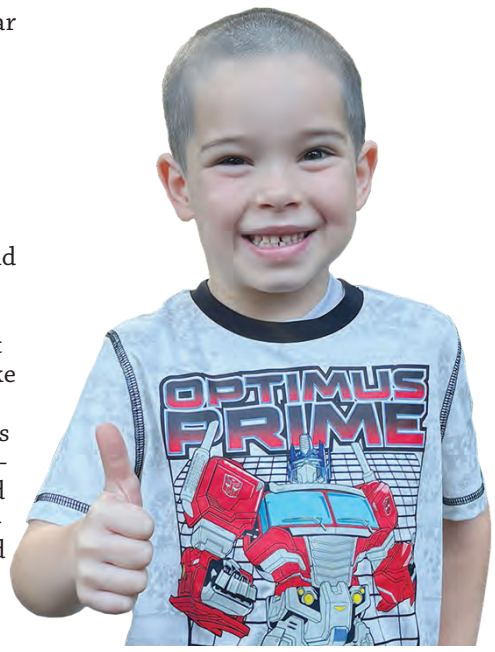
"He was happy. He was playing," she said of his time in the hospital. "And that was him the whole time."

For the Wards, the experience reinforced the importance of preparation, even during activities the family has enjoyed many times.

"We have rules. It's something we do all the time," Dewey said. "But all it takes is a second."

Garcia echoed that concern. Having several adults nearby does not eliminate the possibility of a child falling or reaching toward something hot.

He also cautioned that a fire pit remains dangerous after visible flames disappear. Embers can retain enough heat to cause serious burns for hours, and children who fall often put out their hands to catch themselves.



Kindergartener Ben Ward is recovering and back to normal activities after a fall into a backyard fire pit in July of 2026.

Children should keep their distance from a fire pit and only adults should tend the fire. Maintaining a child-free perimeter of at least 3 feet is advised, along with keeping a bucket of water nearby to thoroughly extinguish and cool embers rather than letting the fire burn down on its own.

If a burn occurs, Garcia recommended cooling the affected area with cool water, protecting the injury with a clean covering and getting prompt medical care.

The Ward family hopes Ben's experience encourages awareness while acknowledging that accidents happen — and that recovery is possible.

For Ben, the answer to how he feels now is simple.

"Good," he said.

When the conversation turned to soccer, he had something else to add. "I win almost every soccer game," he shared.

Veterans Are Invited To Share Service Stories And Experiences

The Library of Congress Veterans History Project collects and preserves firsthand accounts from U.S. military veterans, ensuring their stories and experiences are accessible to future generations. Veterans from all military branches and ranks who have served since World War I are eligible to participate, regardless of whether they experienced combat.

As part of the initiative, the office of Congresswoman Sarah Elfreth will conduct 30-minute interviews with interested veterans in Elfreth's district Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., through November 20. Interested veterans must register by November 13. Before each interview, a staff member will contact participants to review necessary forms, gather background information, and arrange a convenient interview location.

Eligible veterans interested in sharing their stories are encouraged to sign up and help preserve an important part of American history. Visit *https://tinyurl.com/5h9s4nn2* to register.



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Gloria Dei! Pastor Settles Into Area, Role

By Judy Tacyn

Pastor Sarah Garrett Krey has called several places home throughout her life, from her native Nashville to Baltimore and Washington, D.C. But after more than a year leading Gloria Dei! Lutheran Church in Arnold, she has found a community where she feels right at home.

Gloria Dei! began as a mission congregation in 1981, making it a relatively young church by Lutheran standards. Its congregation worshiped in several places before settling at the church's current location at 461 College Parkway.

"I love the people of Gloria Dei! and I love being their pastor. It is a joy and a holy privilege," Garrett Krey said. "I love that so many original members and families (are still here), are passionate about sharing their faith, and invite new folks into the community. We continue to grow and be blessed by the presence of new families who bring fresh perspective and vision while holding the memory of humble and courageous beginnings."

Lutheran is not a large denomination in the Bible Belt, Garrett Krey said, and the church she grew up in was certainly an outlier, both in denomination and the fact that it had a female pastor in the early 2000s, which wasn't typical in her area of Tennessee.

"I wouldn't realize it until much later, but seeing a woman in the pulpit during my formative years would have a huge impact on my own discernment and call to ministry," Garrett Krey said. "Ultimately, my call story isn't especially flashy or exciting. It was less 'burning bush or thundering voice of God' and more whispers, nudges and an occasional hearty shove from the Holy Spirit pushing me out of my comfort zone and into deeper trust and relationship with God."

She earned a bachelor's degree in Christian leadership from Belmont University in Nashville before earning a Master of Divinity from United Lutheran Seminary in Philadelphia (formerly The Lutheran Theological Seminary of Philadelphia). There she met her spouse, Pastor Micah Krey, while both were seminary students.

The couple moved to the Baltimore area when she served her first call at Salem Lutheran in Catonsville. In 2022, she was called to serve as assistant to the Bishop for Candidacy and Mobility in the Metro D.C. Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, where she assisted with the transitions of new pastors and deacons. After three years, she longed to be rooted in the life of a singular congregation and parish ministry. In late 2024, her husband was called to serve as the pastor of St. Martin's Lutheran Church in Annapolis. By the following spring she was called to serve as the pastor of Gloria Dei! in Arnold. Her ministry officially began in July 2025 when she and her husband moved into the Gloria Dei! parsonage.



Pastor Sarah Garrett Krey said she is inspired by the Gloria Dei! congregation and how members are passionate about sharing their faith with the community.

"There is a lot of conversation in Christian circles about the decline of mainline Protestant churches. And indeed, many people — and young adults especially — are seeking spiritual nourishment outside of traditional worshiping communities for good reasons. But I also know that so many people are wondering where God is in the midst of suffering, how to engage with a world that feels so deeply fractured, and what, if anything, the Gospel of Jesus Christ has to do with their day-to-day lives," Garrett Krey said.

She added, "And in a moment when we are told that we can outsource any problem or question or spiritual hunger by throwing it into an AI chat, I find it deeply encouraging that many people are still turning to ancient words, wisdom, scriptures and embodied ritual."

Garrett Krey believes there is something radical and miraculous about the fact that people choose to wake up on Sunday mornings and join people with whom they would not ordinarily interact to hear centuries-old words, pray and sing together, and proclaim their belief that the love of God continues to call the world to abundant life.

She highlighted that people have always been and will always be hungry for meaning and hope.

"My hope is that people who find their way to Gloria Dei! encounter the love of Jesus through a group of people who are trying to live out their Gospel calling faithfully," she said. "Visitors should know that they will not find perfection here. They won't find uniformity or a shiny, polished utopia where everyone has it together. But they will find welcome and a place at Christ's table."

Oliver Brewing Company Leaves Baltimore For Millersville

» **Continued from page 1**

live in," Dvorkin said. "Don lives in Arnold, I live in Severna Park. My kids play soccer at Elvaton Park. We are very integrated into this community."

The new Oliver Brewing Company facility, located at 8370 Jumpers Hole Road, began production earlier this spring and the owners are excited to welcome the community in late November or early December when the taproom officially opens. Customers can expect outdoor seating, a kitchen with a full menu featuring pizzas made in-house, a banquet room to host events, and beverages to wet anyone's whistle.

Along with the brewery's signature beers and seasonal releases, customers can enjoy wine and cocktails. Non-alcoholic beverages will also be available, making the new brewery a family-friendly destination.

Patrons can also expect to see more experimental small batch beers. Because the previous Baltimore location had limited space, the smallest batch of beer that could be brewed was 600 gallons. This required every product to have a marketing plan with dedicated precommitments from multiple distributors and regional distribution.

With the new facility's larger size, the brewery has the space needed to house the necessary equipment to brew beer in seven different batch sizes.

"The guys can really take the gloves off and try ideas and come up with different things, because we're going to have the facility to support that direct customer feedback," Dvorkin said.

With the variety-sized tanks now on site, Oliver Brewing Company can make appropriate beer quantities catering to any ideas its brewers can imagine. Whether it's an experimental idea or tinkering with beer recipes, brewing in smaller batches is a more cost-effective way to taste new beers before deciding to produce them in larger quantities. It is also a great way to experiment with local ingredients.

"There are growing options for brewing malts and hops that are grown in Maryland," Dvorkin said. "It would make complete sense to go talk to local farmers about ingredients we can use both for the beer and the food."

While all the production staff followed the company from Baltimore to Millersville, the brewery will create 30-50 additional jobs. Every position, from front of the house to the back of the house, needs to be filled before the grand opening.

"These concepts really thrive when they are the community gathering place first," Dvorkin said. "The beer will sell itself. A lot of our effort is making sure that when people need to host events or meetings, or groups or teams after their games and tournaments, we want to be thought of as the first place to go."

An exact date has not yet been announced for the official grand opening. To learn about hours of operation and the food menu, check Oliver Brewing Company's social media or visit *www.oliverbrewingco.com*.



The new Oliver Brewing Company will have equipment to brew beer in seven different batch sizes. This will allow the brewery to produce experimental small batch beers for the first time.

A Lager With A Purpose: Oliver Brewing Company Partners With Katherine's Light Foundation



Oliver Brewing Company and Katherine's Light Foundation are teaming up to launch Katherine's Light Lager this November, with proceeds supporting the foundation's work funding cancer research and helping people facing a cancer diagnosis. The new light beer is expected to be available in cans at local liquor stores and on tap at area restaurants. A release date has not yet been announced, but plans include an official launch party and smaller tastings and sampling events at local businesses.

Katherine's Light Foundation honors Katherine Elizabeth Mueller, who died in 2021 at age 31 after living with neuroendocrine tumors for more than three years. The nonprofit supports the Neuroendocrine Tumor Research Foundation and other organizations providing cancer research, education, awareness and patient support.

A release party for Katherine's Light Lager will be held on November 5 from 6-8 p.m. at Severna Park Taphouse.

For more information about Katherine's Light Foundation, visit *www.katherineslight.org*. To learn more about Oliver Brewing Company's offerings, visit *www.oliverbrewingco.com*.

Hometown Heroes

Hometown Heroes: David "Doogie" Price, Anne Arundel County Fire Department

By Meredith Winter

"I tell everybody, 'Be nice.' The whole reason we are here is to help and be nice. The people that have called us — it's their worst moment. That's why they've called 911. … I tell all the rookies, that's what you need to do: Be nice."

Retired Captain David "Doogie" Price worked alongside many rookies over his 36-year career with the Anne Arundel County Fire Department, which began in 1990 and concluded on October 1, 2026.

Price was born and raised in Geneseo, New York, a small town south of Rochester. He vividly remembers the firefighters who came to speak to his kindergarten class and show them their fire engine. When Price turned 18, he began volunteering as a firefighter and experienced a full-circle moment when he got to ride with those men who had planted a seed 13 years earlier.

A seed had also been planted at home. Price's father was a volunteer firefighter for over 60 years. Price set out to study chemistry and psychology in college, but once he began to volunteer with his dad, he knew what he wanted to do.

Before the era of email, he wrote to a company he found in the back of "Firehouse" magazine that sent him lists of departments that were hiring around the country. On the last page of the list, he found the first opening that was for a firefighter, not a paramedic



David "Doogie" Price

or chief. He wrote another letter, this time requesting that the Anne Arundel County Fire Department send him an application.

He reported to the training academy on August 30, 1990.

"When I got hired, I was 20 years old and looked like I was 12," Price recalled, adding that the other guys in the academy determined to give him a nickname. Their EMT instructor, Captain E. Mark Dubel, beat them to it. He looked at Price and said, "Doogie Howser, EMT."

"Doogie," or "Doog" to some, stuck.

"I answer to that more than I do 'David,'" Price shared.

LABARGE FINANCIAL EST. 2013 *Hometown Heroes is proudly sponsored by LaBarge Financial.*

His 36-year career crisscrossed the county. Price began his first assignment in Shadyside, then went to Cape St. Claire. He was promoted to lieutenant while at the South Glen Burnie Fire Station and was later promoted to captain while at the West Annapolis station. He spent the final six years of his career as captain at the Arnold station.

"I ran calls out of every house except for the brand new one down at Herald Harbor," Price said.

Over the years, Price served as a public information officer and as a staff officer at the training academy. He was part of the department's Peer Support Team for nearly 25 years and has been a member of the Honor Guard for 30 years.

Price didn't keep track of how many calls he ran over three and a half decades, though the number would likely be in the tens of thousands. What he did take note of was the people — those with whom he served, and those whom they served together — including a baby he delivered in a Cape St. Claire family's bathroom 33 years ago.

"The people of Arnold are wonderful," Price shared. "I love showing off my fire engine. The guys (at the station) will tell you, we will spend time on calls afterwards to show it off to kids.

"I still to this day remember the guys that came to my kindergarten class. So I wanted to do that and pass that on. You never know who you're going to (inspire) to become a firefighter."

He enjoyed mentoring new recruits as they began their careers, just as firefighters in Glen Burnie had mentored him. Witnessing Arnold firefighter Joe Sary's promotion to lieutenant, a young firefighter becoming a paramedic, and another being promoted to driver are highlights for Price.

"Seeing where the next generation is going in the fire service and having a hand in guiding what they're doing has been amazing for me," he said.

A hockey player since the age of 7, Price feared he would have to hang up his skates when he moved to Maryland. On the contrary, he discovered an opportunity not only to play with an adult hockey league for over 20 years, but also to become a founding father of the Anne Arundel County Fire Department's Pickheads hockey team.

At 56 years old, Price knew it was time to retire, though he still loved the job. His last shift ran 20 minutes long because he ran a late call. "I still wanted to help as much as I can right up to the very end," he said.

He is now looking forward to the next chapter of life with his wife Sheri. They have two adult children and plan to relocate from Pasadena to become snowbirds, splitting their time between New York and Florida. He will continue to play as much hockey as he can, too, touting a new life motto: "Have stick, will travel."

Mac Bartgis Steps Up To Lead Down Syndrome Walk

» **Continued from page 1**

It's a role Mac happily embraced, and this year's theme — "My Life, My Choice" — was especially fitting given the way Mac approaches his own life.

Asked if he was excited about the responsibility, Mac didn't hesitate. "Of course," he said.

This year, he enjoyed walking at the front of the event and, perhaps just as importantly, getting his face painted.

"I think that 'My Life, My Choice' and (DSAmd) asking him to be the chair this year fits perfectly with who he is, because he sets goals for himself, and he accomplishes them," said Samantha Bartgis, Mac's mom. "It's really inspiring to me as his mother — and I think to people around us as well."

For Mac and his family, however, advocating for inclusion isn't limited to one walk or one day of the year. It is something Mac demonstrates throughout his everyday life in Severna Park.

A fifth grader at Benfield Elementary School, Mac has participated in the school's variety show, sung in the chorus, and joined STEM Club — activities that keep parents Samantha and Michael just a little busy.

He has been a Cub Scout since kindergarten and has played a variety of Green Hornets sports since first grade. Mac also participates in boxing and dance club and takes ukulele lessons.

Mac is particularly passionate about sports. Asked to name his favorite, he quickly answered, "Soccer."

Not long ago, while playing Green Hornets soccer, Mac asked to play goalie shortly after taking a ball to the head during practice. Samantha was nervous when his coach agreed to put him in goal during a game, but Mac's teammates had a plan.

"Protect Mac! Protect Mac!" they called to one another as they worked to keep the ball away from their goal.

Mac's willingness to put himself out there extends beyond athletics.

Last year, after participating in groups in prior school variety shows, Mac decided he wanted the stage to himself and planned to play his ukulele to Coldplay's "A Sky Full of Stars" and dance.

At dress rehearsal, the curtains opened and Mac froze. By showtime, he was still nervous, and he asked his mom to come onstage with him. She told him this was his show and he could do it.

And do it, he did.

Samantha said Mac seems to connect with everyone he encounters, from teachers and students at Benfield to neighbors, teammates and friends throughout the community. That ability to connect with people has also made him a natural advocate for people with Down syndrome.

For Mac, inclusion is part of his everyday life. Samantha noted that Mac has a community where he is known, valued and able to contribute.

"I know that the people in the community are looking out for him and his friends, and he knows everybody," she said. "Everybody is aware that Mac is there."

She is grateful for the friends, classmates, teachers, coaches and others who support her son, but she has also seen how much Mac gives back to them.

In school, Mac's close friend Paul Nowottnick helps him navigate the day when needed. Paul is "truly another gift from the community," Samantha said. But the friendship is not one-sided.

When Mac worried that he would be bad at strings because he was a beginner, Paul reassured him.

"Don't worry," Paul told him. "You're just going to be a beginner. We'll just practice, and you'll get better."

Later, Paul complained that he was "trash" at putt-putt.

Mac immediately returned the advice. "Don't worry," he told his friend. "We'll just practice, and you'll get better."

It's a lesson Mac demonstrates simply by being himself: Inclusion isn't only about what a community can do for someone. Sometimes, it's about recognizing everything that person is already doing for the community.

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- **Delivering for District 33:** Secured millions for local schools, public safety, nonprofits, and community projects.



Senator Dawn Gile is an attorney and a military family advocate who lives in Severna Park with her husband, DJ, a retired Army Sergeant Major, and their three daughters.

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Cypress Creek Community Celebrates First Dill Road Bog Appreciation Day



Cypress Creek community members learned about the importance of preserving and protecting the Dill Road Bog and removed English ivy from trees.

Cypress Creek community members gathered at the Dill Road Bog on October 10 to celebrate the ecological importance of the neighborhood's most environmentally sensitive area. Organized by community member Amanda Schuler Zepp, the event focused on educating residents about the importance of preserving and protecting the bog, removing invasive English ivy from trees and planting five Atlantic white cedar saplings donated by Underwood & Associates.

Dennis Whigham, scientist emeritus at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center and a board member of the Center for Ecosystem Recovery, spoke to the group about the unique characteristics of the Dill Road Bog and the negative impacts that development and rising sea levels have had on the area.

Whigham discussed a wetland study he conducted in the 1970s that examined six bog-like areas in Anne Arundel County. According to Whigham, the Dill Road Bog is the most distinctive because, unlike the others, which were created through human activity, it is the only one that formed naturally.

Whigham emphasized the environmental diversity that Anne Arundel County residents enjoy, noting, "There's no other place … in the coastal plain of Maryland or in the Piedmont of Maryland where you have as many of those kinds of environments as you have just in your backyard."

Whigham added that Anne Arundel County's bogs are struggling to survive amid development and rising sea levels. Their preservation is particularly important because these wetlands play a significant role in filtering water before it enters surrounding estuaries.

"These are special places, and I assume most of you live in this community and cherish it. Do whatever you can to keep places like this and support the county's efforts to secure them, to make sure that they're in your children's future and your grandchildren's future," Whigham said.

Sally Hornor with the Magothy River Land Trust also spoke with the group about the importance of conserving wetlands and forests within the Magothy Watershed and how the organization works with property owners to create conservation easements that protect land from development.

"It's in perpetuity, so when you preserve that land, you can sell the land or do whatever you want in terms of transferring it. But it stays protected forever, so that's a really wonderful thing," Hornor said.

Led by Brian Gugerty with the Anne Arundel County Watershed Steward Academy's Save Our Trees program, neighbors freed numerous trees that were compromised by English ivy, which competes with the trees for water, nutrients and sunlight. The invasive vine also can rot tree bark and eventually cause trees to topple.

More than 30 community members attended the event, which included the unveiling of a new educational sign for the bog provided by the Anne Arundel County Bureau of Watershed Protection and Restoration.

"I've been absolutely blown away by the support I've received from the county. This began as a 311 report asking for help removing English ivy," Schuler Zepp said. "Before I knew it, I was being connected with county and nonprofit resources and encouraged to organize an event to not only begin restoring the health of the Dill Road Bog, but also to encourage neighbors to continue protecting this vital environmental area. It's been so refreshing to connect with conservation-minded individuals in our community and county."



Community Generosity Helps Make The Holidays Brighter

We are approaching what many call the most wonderful time of the year. Thanksgiving is a time for gratitude, good food and spending time with others. I love Thanksgiving, and I especially love working at SPAN, where I see the spirit of the season lived out through the generosity of our community.

Michele Sabean
Director of Development, SPAN Inc.



For SPAN, the season starts each year with Severn School's annual Spirit Week food drive, which is truly amazing! The amount of food collected is incredible and makes a tremendous difference in keeping our pantry shelves stocked. Also, Severna Park Elementary once again donated boxes of macaroni and cheese, a contribution that has sustained our pantry for months in past years.

With today's high cost of living and more people turning to SPAN for help, these donations make a real difference. At this time of year, SPAN is blessed by the many individuals, businesses and community groups that donate food to help us serve our neighbors. Your generosity has a real and lasting impact.

Some of our most-needed food items right now include:

- **Canned meat**
- **Canned vegetables and fruit**
- **Tomato products, including diced tomatoes, paste and sauce**
- **Side dishes and meal helpers, such as rice, potatoes, stuffing and boxed meal kits**

While SPAN is best known as a food pantry, we assist as many households with emergency financial assistance as with food. We have been especially busy helping families avoid utility shutoffs as energy costs rise and the six-month state moratorium on BGE shutoffs has ended.

One family we assisted recently includes a grandmother raising her three grandchildren after the recent death of their mother. Life can bring unexpected challenges to any of us, but those challenges can be especially difficult for people living on a fixed income or without emergency savings.

Thanksgiving is, of course, also about food. Working at a food pantry reminds me that food is about so much more than nourishment. If eating were simply a matter of fueling our bodies, we wouldn't put so much thought, time and effort into what we eat. Food carries memories, meaning and traditions. We each have our comfort foods and dishes that remind us of family gatherings, childhood memories, cultural traditions or religious observances. Sharing a meal and breaking bread together also brings people closer and creates a sense of belonging.

For many of our clients, the holidays can be an especially stressful time of year. SPAN's Holiday Caring Program serves to lighten the load for these families. Thanks to the generosity of people like you, this program helps provide holiday meals for our clients and Christmas gifts for their children. This year, we are also collecting gift cards so that more of our clients can celebrate the holidays with a good meal, choosing the foods that make the holidays meaningful to them and their families. For more information email *spanhelps@yahoo.com*.

Thank you for including SPAN in your holiday plans and for showing what it means to care for our neighbors. Your generosity helps make the season brighter for families throughout our community.

*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**.*

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Give Thanks By Giving Back Through Two Local Holiday Programs

A grocery gift card, a Thanksgiving dinner box or a few hours spent volunteering can help a local family celebrate the season. This Thanksgiving, local nonprofits SPAN and Sunflowers for Sallie are inviting residents, businesses and community groups to help put holiday meals on their neighbors' tables.

SPAN, short for Serving People Across Neighborhoods, has helped local families navigate food shortages and financial emergencies since 1990. Its primary service area includes Severna Park, Arnold, Millersville and the Broadneck Peninsula.

Through its Holiday Caring program, SPAN is seeking additional sponsors to provide Thanksgiving grocery gift cards or assemble dinner boxes. Donors can contribute a $75 grocery gift card in place of a box; smaller denominations of $25 or $50 are also welcome. Giant and Visa gifts cards are preferred for Thanksgiving donations.

Those who enjoy gathering supplies can assemble a dinner box, along with a $25 grocery gift card for meat and perishables. Email *spanhelps@yahoo.com* for the complete guidelines before shopping. Dinner boxes should include:

- Grocery gift card for $25
- Stuffing (1)
- Turkey gravy (2 10.5-ounce cans or 3 packs of gravy mix)
- Green beans (3 14.5-ounce cans)
- Condensed cream of mushroom soup (1 can)
- French fried onions (1 6-oz. container)
- 4-5 pound bag of russet potatoes or a 13.75 ounce box of mashed potatoes
- Canned yams (2 40-ounce cans)
- Mini marshmallows (1 small bag)
- Brown sugar (1 bag)
- Cranberry sauce (1 can or jar)
- Biscuit or bread mix (1 package or box)
- Pumpkin or apple pie filling (1 container)
- Evaporated milk (1 can; only for pumpkin pie)

Dinner box drop-off is Monday, November 16, from 12:30-3 p.m. at Our Shepherd Lutheran Church, located at 400 Benfield Road in Severna Park. Thanksgiving gift cards are needed before November 17.

Sunflowers for Sallie has set its largest Thanksgiving goal yet: providing 500 Baskets of Hope in 2026. The Millersville-based nonprofit works with schools, churches and other organizations to help address food insecurity and bring families together over a meal.

Community members can support the effort financially or volunteer to assemble and distribute baskets on Saturday, November 21, at 10 a.m. at North County High School. To volunteer, email *sunflowersforsallie@gmail.com*.

Financial gifts can be made through *www.sunflowersforsallie.org*. Churches, businesses and community groups can also help by organizing volunteers, encouraging donations, and sharing the effort with others.

Community Shows Local Support At GSPACC's Shoptoberfest



LogoZone Promotions was one of many exhibitors at Shoptoberfest, which paired a shop-local focus with fall and Halloween festivities. The event featured plenty of sunshine and community fun.



Community members gathered at Park Plaza on October 24 for Shoptoberfest, celebrating fall while supporting local businesses. The annual event is hosted by the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce.

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Bruin Boys Repeat As County Champions

By David Bashore

The 2026 boys soccer county championship game between Broadneck and Crofton was part soccer match, part rock fight.

For 100 minutes, both teams traded attacks, physical plays and goalkeeper saves. Neither team gave an inch, nor could either side find the net.

As the contest entered a penalty-kick shootout, the question became which team would blink first. The first nine takers didn't.

With Crofton needing to score to extend the shootout, Broadneck keeper **Dalton Bashore** gambled on intuition — and came up trumps. He dove low to his left, turning the spot-kick away before racing to his oncoming teammates to celebrate winning a second straight county championship.

"I had a feeling he would go to his right because he's right-footed and that's the safest way to get it on target. I don't gain anything by just standing and reacting, so I had to trust my gut and go with it," said Bashore, who finished with seven saves in the game,

» **Continued on page 20**



Photos by David Bashore

Dalton Bashore dove low to his left to make the winning save in the shootout that decided the county championship against Crofton.

Milnes Stunner Nets Broadneck Girls County Championship

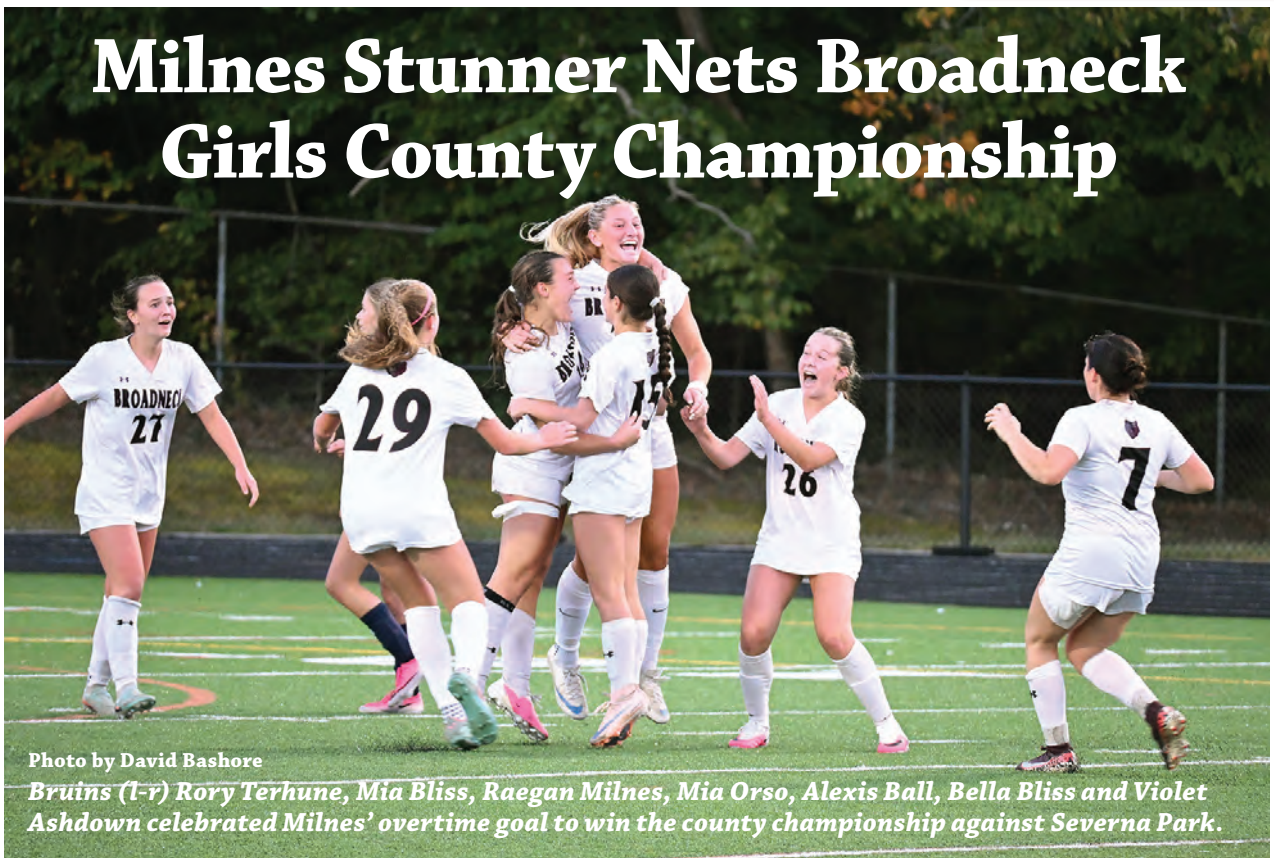


Photo by David Bashore

Bruins (l-r) Rory Terhune, Mia Bliss, Raegan Milnes, Mia Orso, Alexis Ball, Bella Bliss and Violet Ashdown celebrated Milnes' overtime goal to win the county championship against Severna Park.

By David Bashore

Late in regulation of the October 24 girls soccer county championship game with Severna Park, Broadneck forward **Raegan Milnes** had a golden chance to score her team's second goal and likely seal the championship.

But as she rounded the keeper, the junior forward slipped to a knee and couldn't get enough power on the shot into the open goal, allowing a defender time to hustle back and clear it off the line.

In overtime, Milnes maximized her second opportunity and ensured she wouldn't need a third.

With teammate **Mia Orso** cutting in from the right to put the ball on her left foot, Milnes surged from midfield and got to a slightly heavy touch, lashing it from 25 yards past the outstretched arm of the diving keeper. The shot rippled into the side netting inside the left-hand post, giving Broadneck a 2-1 win and setting off wild celebrations.

"We had been trying to rush, but we needed

» **Continued on page 32**

Surging Bruins Claim Third Straight County Title

By David Bashore

When onlookers considered the Broadneck volleyball team, they thought about all the departed players from the 2025 state championship squad.

They considered the fact that two of the key returners for the Bruins were lost to injury before the season even started.

What they didn't account for, though, is that the returning players had been playing four to six days a week against a dominant championship-caliber team for multiple years in practice. That standard is all they know.

And now they get the chance to show what they can do, and they're making the most of it.

Behind a rock-solid system that doesn't give points away and a punishing attack, Broadneck is 13-2 on the season and claimed its third straight county championship on October 24, sweeping Severn Run in straight sets, 27-25, 25-13 and 25-15.

"These girls have always been talented. I don't want to take anything away from them, thinking about like we're some underdog team. I've been excited to see them play all offseason, and I'm glad they're getting the opportunity to play in front of everyone," said Broadneck coach **Tracey Regalbuto**. "I never felt like we didn't have control, even though the score was tight. We were playing too consistently to lose that set. We made some changes and talked about what we were going to attempt to do in the second set, and it was a completely different story. Severn Run is a good team, and we might see them again in the playoffs."

Broadneck got kills from across the board in the county championship. **Neely Olish**, the team's leading attacker, had eight kills to lead the way, while **Chloe Hays** added seven, **Ella Luscomb** had six, and **Marley Evans** added five.

» **Continued on page 18**



Photo by David Bashore

Marley Evans attacked the ball during Broadneck's county championship win over Severn Run.

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Falcon Girls Win Another Cross Country Title



The Falcon girls won their seventh straight title, with five scoring runners placing in the top nine, and all seven finishing in the top 15.

By David Bashore

Despite the two-time reigning county cross country champion coming across the line second, **Josie Kamas** couldn't hide her excitement.

After the Severna Park senior crossed the line just short of a personal three-peat on October 24, she turned and saw her six white-and-pink-clad teammates come home within 86 seconds and 13 places.

The Falcons' five scoring runners all finished in the top 9, and all seven runners overall placed in the top 15, as they breezed to another girls cross country team county championship, their seventh on the trot.

Kamas tried to hang with Severn Run's **Adriana Vastag** before the sophomore pulled away to win by 17 seconds.

"Today I feel like my focus was more on embracing everything my body allows me to do. In the past I've been a really anxious person, but going into this I just wanted to stick with her and go out with her, and at some point in the race she was just stronger than me, and that's OK," Kamas said of Vastag after the race. "I just reached a point in the race where it was going to be me versus me and I started ... reflecting and realizing that there's so much value in being able to do this, and I have so much gratitude for the people in my school and my community. When I run this race, I can hear people shouting my name and my teammates behind me, and relishing that was more important to me than winning."

Right behind Kamas was **Siena Pegues** in fourth, with teammate **Mari Matthews** in tow. **Caitlynn Nunn** and **Lexi Fitzsimmons** rounded out the scoring runners, placing eighth and ninth, with **Ella Daniels** and **Lucy Crawford** also placing in the top 15.

"Seeing them coming in behind me, I feel more happy seeing that than I would my own personal success, and I'm so grateful to have that connection with the team," Kamas said. "I can't even put it into words. We have built up such a strong team, and I'd do anything for these girls."

On the boys side, Broadneck senior **Evan Whitford** placed second, leading his team to a second-place finish in the team standings. Whitford finished ahead of Severna Park's **Brenden Woods** in third, who led the Falcons to a third-place finish.

Severna Park's **Anton Sifuentes** was ninth overall, while Broadneck's **Matthew Parker** was 10th.

Surging Bruins Claim Third Straight Title

» **Continued from page 16**

The county championship win was the team's sixth win in a row, and their seventh in the month of October, five of them coming in straight sets.

The Bruins' only setback in that stretch was a four-set loss to the Academy of the Holy Cross, which is loaded with talent and one of the premier private schools in the Washington, D.C., area. Otherwise, they've taken all comers, including five-set marathons with both Arundel and Crofton in the same week.

Unlike other sports, the volleyball season extends for an additional week past the county championships. Broadneck will play Howard and Reservoir in the final two games, knowing that a pair of wins means that everyone has to come to them in the playoffs.

Because of the youth on this team, there has been a huge amount of growth, and there is further room to improve.

"We're still not done with the progression that we want, with still a week left in regular season, we can still grow even more," Regalbuto said. "We have a tough last week of the season, and we want to do everything we can to win these two games."





Local Golfers Scoop County, District Honors

By David Bashore

The Severna Park golf team has been the talk of the county circuit this season, with as much promise and as many heavy hitters as they seem to have.

Broadneck has reminded folks that they shouldn't be slept on, either.

Both schools qualified for the state meet on October 26 and 28, and they took three of the four medalist honors in the county and district meets as well.

Severna Park successfully defended its team county championship, led by a championship-winning score of 70 posted by freshman **Davis Balderstone**, one shot ahead of sophomore teammate **Chase Connell**.

On the girls side of the county championships, Broadneck senior **Caroline Viscardi** claimed the individual championship on the first playoff hole over South River's **Sarah Valencia**, with whom she had many battles over the course of the season.

Connell returned the favor the following week, carding at 66 to win the 4A/3A District 5 title as Severna Park finished second in the team standings to River Hill. Broadneck was third, paced by **James Jonker's** 71, which was tied for third.

Both teams will send four golfers to the state semifinal round, where they will compete for team and individual honors.

Severna Park's qualifiers were Connell, Balderston, freshman **Colin Barry** and junior **Chris Jenkins**. Broadneck is sending Jonker, senior **Max Harada**, junior **Michael Peterson** and sophomore **Micah Gossard**.



The Severna Park golf team successfully defended its county championship.



Davis Balderston (right, pictured with Chase Connell) won the medalist honors at the boys county championship golf tournament.



Broadneck High School's Caroline Viscardi won the girls medalist honors at the county championship, defeating a South River rival on the first playoff hole.







Bruin Boys Repeat As County Champions

» Continued from page 16

including a stunning triple save early in the second half to keep the game scoreless. "I felt it hit my knee and I was looking for the ball, so I got up quickly and turned to find it. But I saw my teammates running toward me, and then I knew I'd gotten it.

"This is the best group. The defenders know what I need them to do, and I know what they need me to do. These guys are the best group I could have asked for, and they deserved my best."

Wilson Banwell, **Ryan Ball**, **Hale Verrusio**, **Julian DiBenedetto** and **Erik Akhtar** all successfully converted their spot-kicks, allowing Bashore to make the decisive save on the 10th and final allotted kick before moving to sudden-death rounds.

Though regulation and both overtime periods yielded no goals, it wasn't for a lack of the effort required to win the county championship.

"I knew what it was going to take to get a win here, and I think the rest of the team knew what it was going to take," Verrusio said. "We knew what the atmosphere was going to be like, that it was going to be elevated, and we came out hard."

Part of what it took was an unanticipated late retooling of the back line.

With five minutes left in regulation, center back **Dylan Katzen** clashed heads with one of the Crofton midfielders and had to leave the game. That left **Cooper Gaver** to slide from left wing to left back, and Verrusio to slot over from left back to center back opposite **Ryan Donnelly**.

Both players get spot duty in those positions, but it's not their primary role on the team. But the Bruins didn't miss a beat, keeping Crofton at bay to get to the shootout. The statement moment in the extra time was when Verrusio stepped out to press an opponent toward the touchline and Gaver stole in and snatched the ball away, clearing it to safety.

"We do formation drills all the time, so we can plug and play everybody if someone gets hurt or something," Gaver said. "Even when I'm playing on the left wing, Hale is right behind me so we're always talking. It's even better in the back line because then we talk and work together more closely."

The win, Broadneck's second over Crofton in three days and their seventh in a row, marked a high point thus far in their quest to finish the season on a high. Since a 1-0 loss at South River on October 1, they've scored 30 goals and conceded nine.

For a team that had struggled to score, something clicked late in the first half of the first of those seven games, a 6-3 win over Arundel. Trailing by two, Bashore made a point-blank save to keep Broadneck within touching distance, then Ball netted twice in five minutes to tie the game before halftime.

The Bruins blew Arundel away in the first 20 minutes of the second half, scoring four more times, and they've never looked back. They followed that with a 7-0 win over Chesapeake Science Point, tacking on wins over North County (3-2), Chesapeake (3-1), Old Mill (7-1) and Crofton (4-2) to end the regular season.

Through the county championship, Banwell has continued his assault on the scoring columns, posting six assists and 10 goals, bringing his career total to 37. Ball has eight goals and five assists, while Akhtar leads the team with nine assists. The keeper room has saved 67 of 82 shots this season, led by Bashore with 56 stops.

Broadneck earned the No. 2 seed in the 4A East 2 regional playoff, meaning there's another potential trip to Leonardtown in the region finals, barring an upset.

Of course, they have to get there first, and the Bruins will face a home test against either Annapolis or North Point in the region semifinals on October 30.

***Top**: Julian DiBenedetto drove the touchline to help generate offense in the county championship.*
***Left**: Ryan Donnelly headed the ball in traffic, both helping clear the ball away from the defense and attempting to score a goal on set pieces.*

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STUDENT-ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

KATIE WISEMAN

Severna Park High School | Field Hockey

By Kevin Murnane

Part of Merriam-Webster's definition of leadership is to mold individuals into a cohesive team.

Severna Park High School senior **Katie Wiseman** models that quality to her field hockey teammates during summer workouts, practices and games.

"As a coach, it's nice to know that I can always count on Katie to be a team-first player, and she leads by setting a hard-work example for her teammates," said Severna Park varsity field hockey coach **Shannon Garden**. "It's just super impressive how Katie handles herself."

Wiseman has been on the varsity field hockey team since her sophomore year and has earned her teammates' respect over those three seasons. This year, she was named a team co-captain.

Wiseman's dedication to the sport is evident. She coordinated the Falcons' summer conditioning program and captained one of Severna Park's summer field hockey teams.

"I know that we take our offseason conditioning very seriously, so I took that responsibility and brought a positive and supportive attitude to our summer sessions," Wiseman said. "We met at Kinder Park at 7:30 a.m. three days a week and focused on flexibility, sprints and agility, but it also helped our team chemistry."

Wiseman plays right forward on the team and was the Falcons' third-leading scorer on last year's 10-3 team, which reached the 4A state championship game.



Photo by Fincham Photography

Katie Wiseman models leadership to her field hockey teammates during summer workouts, practices and games.

This year, Wiseman planned, marketed and coordinated the Falcons' annual Green Hornets Spirit Game, where young field hockey players see how the varsity field hockey team prepares for a home game before taking the field with the players during the national anthem.

Wiseman also runs indoor track for the Falcons, competing in the 800-meter and 1,600-meter events.

Wiseman strives to make a positive impact in the classroom and her community through her involvement in the school's Leadership Institute and fundraising for the Make-A-Wish Foundation. This summer, she interned at the pediatric unit at Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center in Annapolis and volunteered with the Green Hornets girls lacrosse program. In addition, Wiseman has a part-time job at Severna Park's Sugar Shoppe.

With all these activities, Wiseman maintains a 4.3 weighted GPA and has taken many Advanced Placement classes. She hopes to major in kinesiology in college and would like to pursue a career in the medical field.

Before that, Wiseman still wants to enjoy her senior field hockey season with her teammates and relish the bond she has helped create.

"We have a really close team, and we're all best friends and love to hang out together by going to Chick-fil-A for breakfast before games and Chipotle after games," she said. "We also have team dinners the nights before the games at everybody's houses, and they are great for the team and the parents."

The team relies on Wiseman to be one of its senior leaders, and the coaching staff wants younger players to witness the qualities that help shape a leader.

"Katie shows up every day, works extremely hard and plays her heart out when she is in the game," Garden said. "Katie is easy to be around. She's happy and always positive and she will be a great leader in whatever field she eventually goes into. I'm very proud of her."

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Falcon Football Looking For A Little Extra As Playoffs Loom



Photos by Fincham Photography

James Malena made an over-the-shoulder catch in the Falcons' loss to Old Mill.



Declan Sprinkel (23) made a tough tackle during Severna Park's narrow 22-20 defeat against Meade.



Graham Guenther returned to score three touchdowns in the Falcons' 34-26 win over Arundel.

By David Bashore

For the Severna Park football team, much of the 2026 season has been a case of almost, but not quite.

The Falcons sit at 3-5 but have come up on the short end of several close contests. After coming up a little short against Crofton in a 22-11 setback where they led at halftime, Severna Park then fell 21-14 to Severn Run and 22-20 to Meade. That was followed by a 39-17 drubbing by Old Mill, before they righted the ship with wins over Arundel (34-26) and North County (42-7) ahead of the season's finale.

The story of the season has been trying to find enough offense to complement a gritty defense.

The Falcons defense has continued to grind, allowing an average of 22 points per game — removing the two games where they were outclassed by Severn School and Old Mill, it's 17 per game. But the offense has found tough sledding, averaging around 200 yards of total offense and 20 points per contest.

In the first six games, Severna Park quarterback **Ben Greenlee** had a hand in all eight of the team's offensive touchdowns (four rushing, four passing), while the return of **Graham Guenther** added another dimension. He found the end zone three times against Arundel, twice on the ground and once through the air.

Greenlee has rushed for five scores and leads the team with 198 yards on the ground. He has also thrown for close to 1,000 yards and nine scores, three to **Caden Guerra** and two each to **Brody Pugh** and **James Malena**.

Guerra leads the team with better than 300 receiving yards, and he and **Charlie Cavanaugh** have both returned an interception for a touchdown. Cavanaugh also has taken a punt back for a score. Both ballhawks have three interceptions on the season. Placekicker **Joe Caffiero** is perfect on extra points and has missed just two field goal attempts on the season.

The Falcons have one more regular season game, where they'll look to end a 15-year losing streak to Broadneck. After that, they'll be on the road for the first round of the playoffs, likely with a rematch against Severn Run or Crofton.



Broadneck Football Bounces Back After Old Mill Bump

By David Bashore

In football, Broadneck doesn't lose against Anne Arundel County Public Schools opposition often. In the occasional event the Bruins suffer a defeat, it has almost always been a single-digit loss.

So, when Old Mill won 35-7 against the Bruins at Severn Run High School on October 16, it felt stunning, even seismic. And that wasn't on account of the brewing thunderstorm and lightning that ended the game 100 seconds early: Broadneck hadn't lost like that in the county in 14 years.

Although the Bruins were flummoxed by Old Mill's two-way smashmouth game, and though the Patriots left them with plenty of food for thought, it only temporarily dropped them one spot in the 4A East Region standings, a place they reclaimed the following week after bouncing back with a 42-35 win over Meade, combined with Old Mill beating short-term region leader Annapolis.

Prior to the Old Mill game, the Bruins were cruising: They invoked a rolling clock three times in four games, topping Arundel 48-12, Annapolis 41-0 and North County 49-13, with a 39-21 win over Glen Burnie sandwiched in between.

Dual-threat QB **Nathan Kropkowski** has led a balanced offense, throwing for more than 1,600 yards and 20 touchdowns against just four interceptions. He's also run for more than 200 yards and five touchdowns, as part of a rushing attack that is averaging more than 110 yards a contest. **Jack Schein** leads the rushers with just better than 300 yards, to go with five scores.

Receiving, **Aiden Tupper** is over 600 yards and nine touchdowns, while rush-receive dual threat **Max Fresty** has nine total touchdowns and 500 yards from scrimmage.

Broadneck's bend-don't-break defense has largely held up, piling up nearly 250 tackles without any single player logging more than 30.

With two losses on the season, Broadneck still has it all in front of them. Win against Severna Park on October 30, and they'll earn a first-round bye and have one home game to make it back to the state quarterfinals.







Photos by David Bashore

***Above**: Grayson Boone (11) and Cooper Weekly (44) combined for one of Broadneck's tackles in the Bruins' loss against Old Mill.*

***Left**: Nathan Kropkowski has quarterbacked the Bruins to more than 2,400 yards of offense through seven games.*

***Right**: Geanni Coates took a tip-drill interception back the other way to help the Bruins stop Old Mill's offense on a second-quarter possession.*



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Falcons Tie For Top Spot In Region

By David Bashore

Turns out rumors of the Severna Park girls soccer team's demise were largely unfounded.

Though heavy turnover took place between last year's third straight state championship and this year's edition, at the end of the regular season the results were largely the same: playing for a county championship and vying for a region title and a return to the state playoffs.

The Falcons have played 13 games and won 11. Their only two losses were to Broadneck early in the season, and again to the Bruins in overtime in the county championship game, which ended their three-year reign atop the county.

It took them some time to get this edition of the team balance right, but once they did, the season really took off.

"They've been improving every single game. We left (the first Broadneck) game disappointed but we weren't disappointed with the way we played," Severna Park coach **Rick Stimpson** said. "I don't think the score was reflective of how that game went, but we had some things we needed to tighten up and we were still, in that point of the season, figuring a few things out. The girls have done a really good job of being open to moving around to different positions.

"It's really about finding that cohesion. I knew we had a lot of talent coming back but we had to find a way to get it all to fit together, and we've seen that happen over the course of the season."





Photos by David Bashore

***Above**: Emma Dooley provided pace on the wing, putting the Arundel defense under pressure.*

***Right**: Eva Jones battled for possession and anchored the Falcons' attack against Arundel.*

The two goals surrendered to Broadneck in the county championship game were the first two goals Severna Park allowed in the month of October. They closed the regular season with eight straight shutouts, a hallmark indicative of the traditional Severna Park style: keep possession, knock the ball around, pull the opponent out of position, and strike like a coiled snake.

It worked to ruthless effect as they strung together 10 straight wins and the eight straight shutouts, against Northeast (1-0), Crofton (3-0), North County (4-0), Chesapeake (1-0), Severn School (4-0), Arundel (2-0), Southern (3-0) and Old Mill (5-0).

> *"I'm super proud of us to continue going forward."*
>
> **— Coach Rick Stimpson**

"Ever since our loss in the beginning of the season, our mentality has been to attack and go forward, having each other's backs," said senior midfielder **Izzy Burleson**, who scored both goals in the win over then-undefeated Arundel. "Our communication has been really good, and I'm super proud of us to continue going forward."

Severna Park finished the regular season tied atop the 3A East 2 region standings on win percentage, alongside Stephen Decatur. They'll get a first-round bye and will open the region semifinals at home on October 31.

Depending on the results of a coin toss held October 26 after press time, they will either be the 1 seed and host the winner of Arundel and South River, or the 2 seed and host the winner of Old Mill and James M. Bennett.

Severna Park Earns Regional Bye, Eye States Berth



Photos by Fincham Photography

Ethan Ribeiro attempted a jumping shot against Arundel.



Henry Bauer has backstopped the Severna Park boys soccer team to five clean sheets this season.



Caden Morris brought the ball up the field out of defense during SPHS's game against Arundel.



Franco Gonzalez celebrated scoring in the Falcons' 3-1 win over Southern.

By David Bashore

As things tighten up heading into the end of the regular season and postseason, the Severna Park boys soccer team has a room with a view.

A little good fortune from a coin over the weekend would make the path even straighter.

After finishing September with a 7-0 mark, the Falcons went 6-1 in the second half of their season. The goals that came so freely in the first half haven't come quite as frequently, with Severna Park netting just 18 goals compared to 30 in the first half, but the defense has been equally strong, as they've conceded just 13 goals in the 14-game regular season.

Ethan Ribeiro and **Caden Morris** lead the way with six goals apiece, followed by **Nick Reed** and **Gavin Cliffe** with five. On the assist side, **Conner Hall** paces the team with six. In total, the squad has had 16 players find the net and a total of 22 players have a goal involvement on the season.

Severna Park grinded out several close results, winning 2-1 over Arundel, 2-1 over North County, 2-1 over Chesapeake, 3-1 over Southern and 3-2 over Old Mill. That was combined with a comfortable 5-0 win over Northeast. The lone slip-up during that sequence was a fiercely contested 2-1 loss to Crofton.

That loss, the Falcons' only blemish on the season, denied them a fourth-straight trip to the county championship game, as Crofton will appear for the first time. The setback also put them in a coin-toss situation with Stephen Decatur to determine the No. 1 overall seed in the 3A East II region playoffs. The results of that coin toss were not available at press time.

What is known is that Severna Park will receive a first-round bye for the region tournament, and they will open with a region semifinal home game on Saturday afternoon, October 31, against one of the first-round winners between Old Mill-James M. Bennett and Arundel-South River.

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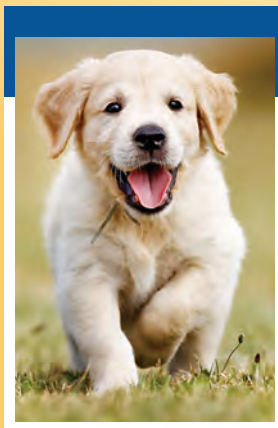
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Local Lacrosse Player Makes Youth National Team

By Dan Elson

A 13-year-old Severna Park Middle School student represented USA Lacrosse in an international lacrosse tournament September 25-27.

Wyatt Priem was one of six eighth graders selected for the 24-player 2026 U.S. Boys' U15 Youth National Team. Freshmen and sophomores made up the rest of the roster. In September, Team USA earned a gold medal in the Brogden Cup, held in Sparks, Maryland. Wyatt , a defender, finished top five in goals scored for the team during the sixes competition.



Wyatt Priem played for USA Lacrosse's Boys' U15 Youth National Team in the Brogden Cup.

The sixes competition is a game format comprising five outfield players and a goalie per side. Players face off to begin the game and in the second half. Team USA beat Team Canada and the Haudenosaunee squad.

"I've always had a good strong suit in sixes," Wyatt said. "I'm not one of those guys who's just going to be dodging, but I'm more of a guy who's just getting cuts, just getting looks, helping out my team. But it definitely feels good to be one of those guys who makes plays for the team."

In the tournament, Wyatt had to adjust early on to better and deeper competition.

"You have to be smarter in that sort of way, and you just have to know to take your moments in those scenarios ... the game moves faster, quicker, everybody's stronger," he said. "It makes you play better as your own player."

Adding more players to the mix for the weekend full-sided tournament made the game faster and more complex, but it also provided a beneficial experience off the field.

"We made a lot of great memories together because we had a lot of time together through breaks between games," Wyatt said. "We were just in the hotel, all hanging out together and it was very fun ... all the team dinners we had."

Lauren and Ryan Priem, Wyatt's parents, said it was a special moment to see their son play for Team USA.

When he put the uniform on, they all realized how big an honor it was to represent the country.

"He went out there and he played with his whole heart, and he gave it all he had and you could tell," Lauren said. "I think that came through too, with how the team did as a whole for all of them. He had the chance to really be coached by some incredible coaches. That was also something new for him; he had been with the same club team since third grade."

Wyatt brought both sides of the game for Team USA. He has built a reputation as a knockdown defender who creates turnovers and is also athletic enough to get the ball up field and produce offense.

He was selected for the team from the Team USA combine, which takes the top 100 U15 players from around the country. At the combine, players scrimmaged against each other and performed the 40-yard dash and broad jumps.

"Like his mom, I kind of look at the moments like in warmups and stuff and just kind of see how he is with his teammates, and he fit in like a glove with them," Ryan said. "They're still connected now."

Ryan said Wyatt will look back fondly on his experience playing for Team USA, and Lauren said he enjoyed competing with different players.

Wyatt has always demonstrated responsibility for the people he cares about, whether it is his sisters, parents or teammates.

"You see that as he grows as a player and as a person," Lauren said. "He's fiercely protective of the people he cares about, and I think it's that instinct that you can see translate on the field too."

USA Lacrosse forms new youth teams each year, so while the Priems hope Wyatt's USA journey is only beginning, it's up to his desire, development and progress as a player and teammate as to whether it can continue.

"You've got to go back out there and prove again why you think you belong, and (we) certainly like his chances," Ryan said. "But you know, I think the way we've always approached things is ... (you are) only as good as your last game, so you got to go out there and produce."

Regardless, Wyatt has certainly put himself on the development program's radar, and he's got the itch to keep going.

"It was a new team for him, and he really enjoyed playing with kids who were older, and learned a few things from them too," Lauren said. "He said it was the best sports weekend he's ever had."



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SPHS Alum Wingate Faces Former Coach

By Dan Elson



Photo by Dan Elson

Severna Park alumnus and Old Mill boys soccer coach Miseker Wingate (right) exchanged a handshake with Severna Park coach Ryan Parisi, who coached Miseker years prior, after their recent matchup.

Old Mill boys soccer head coach **Miseker Wingate** said it was a crazy feeling to face his former coach on the opposing bench.

Wingate attended Severna Park High School from 2012-2016. He made the Falcons soccer team in his freshman year and was part of the team's most recent state championship in 2013. He took the Old Mill job this season and the Patriots squared off with Severna Park on October 22, a game the Falcons narrowly won 3-2.

Wingate and Falcons head coach **Ryan Parisi** have kept in touch since Wingate's playing days and were all smiles in the postgame handshake line. Wingate called it a full-circle moment.

"The older you get, the relationship changes a little bit," Wingate said. "Obviously back in high school he was my coach, I was an athlete. Now we're friends, you know, we talk quite a bit."

After high school, Wingate attended Wheaton College and was a winger for the soccer team. He returned as an assistant soccer coach for the Falcons from 2020-2021.

"I'm blessed to be able to give back to the county that I played in," he said. "I absolutely love being a head coach. I'm making ... other relationships with other head coaches in the county, and (I'm enjoying) just being able to talk to them, learn from them."

It's important to establish a family culture and emphasize accountability as a coach, according to Wingate. Parisi's approach influenced Wingate on how to coach games and run practices.

The players have bought into his coaching philosophy, and team members say they appreciate that he cares and puts them first, Wingate shared.

"My biggest goal this year is making a family environment," Wingate said. "These kids are not coming just to play soccer ... they're looking forward to being with their teammates."

The biggest adjustment the players have made centers on taking accountability, according to Wingate. If players miss a practice without a good reason, they should expect not to play in the next game. If Wingate decides the team will exercise on a certain day, they should expect a workout.

"Guys are starting to open up to me and (are) sharing some stuff," Wingate said. "So, I think we're starting to get to that point where they're starting to feel more comfortable with me."

With the goal of landing a varsity head coaching job, Wingate spent the past five years building experience as a junior varsity coach at different schools. When Old Mill's varsity head coach job opened up, Wingate said it was an "absolute great fit."

"I have a great vision for what I want this culture to be, and not just the team, but the whole program," Wingate said. "I'm very, very invested in my JV team. I make sure to say hi to them every practice. I make sure to make myself known to them, and I try not to see them as a JV team. I try to see them all as just one program."

If the Patriots play the Falcons in Severna Park next year, Wingate said his return will feel like a homecoming.

"I am going to have a lot of people coming out to that game," he said.

Parisi said Wingate is like a little brother to him, sharing how their relationship has grown over the last 10 years. Wingate was an easy player to coach - someone who brought talent and the ability to build relationships with others, according to Parisi.

When the Patriots hired Wingate, Parisi said he knew Wingate would leave a long-lasting impact on his players.

"He's a tremendous man, great leader of young men," Parisi said. "I think (he) brings a lot of positivity to all the kids that he works with, which is ultimately the end goal of a great coach."





Falcon Spikers Peaking as Playoffs Near

By David Bashore

After falling in a four-set match to Severn Run in what, in hindsight, amounted to a county championship match eliminator, Severna Park's volleyball team took stock.

Their four-match win streak — straight-set victories over South River, Huntingtown, Annapolis and Chesapeake — was gone. Losses to perennial power Broadneck and the up-and-coming Wolves were their only two blemishes thus far, and those were the only six sets Severna Park had dropped all season to date.

But there was a brutal week ahead. Would that loss be the beginning of a long end to their season, or were they made of sterner stuff?



Photo by Matthew Wojtowycz

Severna Park's Hannah McKinstry (3) and Sydney Hamilton (15) attempted to block the ball at the net.

Indeed, the Falcons showed their mettle in an on-paper challenging stretch where they played Arundel and Crofton on the road in successive matches.

Where previous iterations of this team struggled down the stretch against those types of opponents, this time they found a way to win both.

Behind 16 kills from **Hannah McKinstry** and 10 from **Savannah Smart**, along with 21 digs from **Frances Santiago-Cruz**, the Falcons stunningly brushed Arundel aside in four sets. McKinstry (10 digs) and **Jennifer Hong** (27 assists, 13 digs) added double-doubles in the win.

They parlayed that momentum into a ferocious five-set win over Crofton, winning 19-17 in the fifth, leaving the Falcons sitting not only on the periphery of the county championship conversation, but in command of the 3A East II region standings heading into the season's final week.

Severna Park finished the pre-county championship campaign by beating Old Mill and Meade, sandwiched around a tough road test at Bishop McNamara, which they dropped in straight sets.

Though the Falcons fell just short of reaching the county championship match, they have taken a major leap forward by being in the conversation until the final week, as well as an improved region seeding. If they overcome River Hill and Long Reach in late October, they will assure themselves of the top overall seed and home-court advantage for the region tournament.

The region tournament begins on November 4 with the quarterfinal round. Severna Park will host an undetermined opponent or will receive a bye into the semifinals that weekend.

Bruins Aim For Consistency To Hit Peak Performance

By David Bashore

As soon as the ball hit the back of the net to end Broadneck's 2-1 overtime loss to Severna Park in their field hockey clash on October 13, the Bruins trudged off the field and immediately began the self-diagnosis.



Photo by David Bashore

Broadneck's Shea Fitzpatrick drove a cross-field pass against Severna Park, a game in which she scored the Bruins' only goal.

The manner of defeat was frustrating, compounded by the fact that Broadneck scored first courtesy of junior midfielder and captain **Shea Fitzpatrick**. But in a season that has continued a long transition, there was a healthy dose of perspective and optimism about the road ahead.

It was just Broadneck's third loss of the season. They had an early-season defeat against reigning 1A champion Liberty, and setbacks against the two teams who contested the county championship and are each expected to make deep runs in their respective state tournaments. Severna Park reached the 4A final last year and returned just about everyone, and South River is favored to win it all in 3A.

Broadneck, meanwhile, has worked on consistency to build toward the playoffs. They have solid players and the makings of a formidable unit. They dispatched Chesapeake 5-1 the next time out, to go with similarly comfortable wins over Arundel and Southern.

"We've had moments, and we are having more moments, but we are looking for that consistent 60 minutes of play," said Broadneck coach **Shannon Hanratty**. "Against Severna Park, I thought both teams played well; they just played better than us in overtime and that was the difference."

After the Severna Park game, the Bruins' path forward was all but sealed: out of county championship game contention and effectively locked into second place in the 4A East II region standings.

They bounced back to beat Chesapeake (5-1), Annapolis (6-1) and North County (9-0) to close the regular season. The Bruins host Annapolis again on October 29 in the region semifinals, with — barring the unlikeliest of upsets — defending 4A champion Leonardtown waiting to welcome the winner the following week in the region final.

The development in the last two weeks will chart the team's course ahead of what they hope is a reclaiming of the region championship and a return to the state tournament.

"You always want to learn from a loss, and that's what we're trying to do," Hanratty said. "Learn all that you can from it, and don't waste a loss."

Falcons Field Hockey Returns To County Championship

By David Bashore

Severna Park's field hockey tussle with Broadneck was as tense as has become customary.

Both teams tried to grind the game to a halt, and with the score tied 1-1 in overtime, neither side wanted to give the other an opening.

Addy Hill found one, though, catching the Broadneck defense unaware of her movement, and she ghosted into a dangerous position.

Emerson Clarke let a shot fly. Hill's stick clipped the ball mid-journey, sending it looping just over the defenders. The ball thunked the back wood of the cage.



Photo by David Bashore

Addy Hill (11) provided pressing defense from the front and scored the game-winning goal against rival Broadneck.

The next thing Hill saw was a dizzying spiral of navy and gold, as her teammates mobbed her just outside of the Broadneck goal. Though they hadn't officially clinched it, everyone knew that was the goal that put Severna Park back in the county championship.

Perhaps more importantly, it gave the Falcons the upper hand in their 4A East 1 region race with Crofton, ensuring they would have home field throughout the regional playoffs.

Severna Park got there by ripping off seven straight wins over Annapolis, Crofton, Chesapeake, Broadneck, Southern, Glen Burnie and Arundel. That demonstrated that the monstrous opening schedule — River Hill, Kent Island, Manchester Valley, South River and Notre Dame Prep — paid off in all the ways coach **Shannon Garden** had hoped.

Though it didn't pay dividends in the rematch against South River in the county championship, where the Seahawks won 4-1, the Falcons are still right where they hoped to be as the calendar turns to November.

Though they might have to play road warriors in the state rounds, should they advance that far, the Falcons have assured themselves at least two more home games as long as they keep winning.

They open the region tournament by hosting Meade, and should they win, the region final will be played at Severna Park against either Crofton or Severn Run.

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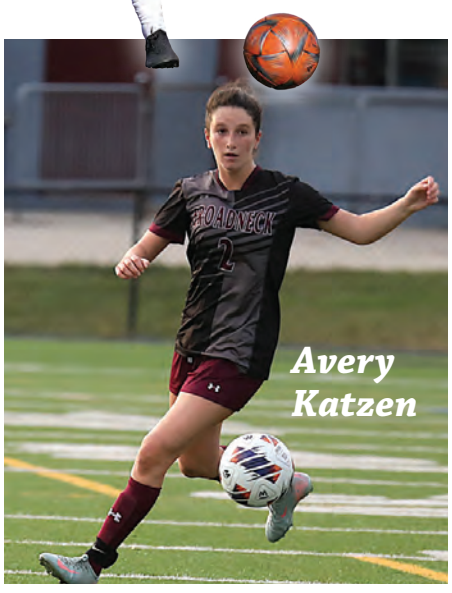
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Family Matters: Broadneck Siblings Contribute To Soccer Success









By David Bashore

Often in high school sports, teams will have a succession of family members come through. Maybe they play different sports at the same time, or are at different levels of the same sport, or they come through one at a time. Occasionally, you'll get a sibling set or two in the same sport at the same time, and they end up contributing to differing degrees or are at the back end of the bench.

But between the 2026 boys and girls varsity soccer teams at Broadneck High School, five sibling sets exist, and all are contributors for teams that had a combined record of 23-3-1 heading into the county championships.

Ryan Ball has become a vital goal scorer for the Broadneck boys, while fellow seniors **Hale Verrusio** and **Dylan Katzen** have formed part of the solution to the problem left by the Bruins' entire starting defense graduating last year. On the girls side, freshman **Rory Terhune** is in double figures in both goals and assists, while junior **Cameron Terhune** has been a mainstay in goal. Senior **Avery Katzen** has been a defensive stalwart, and sophomores **Alexis Ball** and **Kate Verrusio**, and freshman twins **Mia** and **Bella Bliss**, have all seen significant action this season as well.

And that's all before mentioning four other duos where one is on varsity — **Henry Cukor** and **Brayden Butitt** for the boys, **Grace Hedges** and **Emma Davis** for the girls — and the other is on JV (**Evan Cukor, Braxten Butitt, Caleb Hedges** and **Carly Davis**).

That can lead to loosely organized chaos trying to get everyone everywhere — "nobody's home a lot at my house," Ryan Ball quipped — but it's also got the benefit of another player going through the same season, with similar ups and downs, in your corner.

"Especially when we were younger and having practices in different places, it was tough," Ryan Ball said. "Now we try to catch each other's games, like when we played St. Mary's (Alexis) was able to come, and after the Severna Park game I came back to watch the end. It's not a lot of time that we have (between games), but to make that 20-, 25-minute drive to see each other play and cheer each other on, it's really important."

Sibling rivalry is natural, and these pairs are no exception. Alexis Ball scored in Broadneck's 4-0 win over Severna Park, and she let her brother know about it, as well as the fact that, at that point, she had scored more goals.

The Katzens routinely try to prank each other. The Bliss twins try to one-up each other in practice and in games. Kate Verrusio copied older brother Hale's shot technique. Cameron Terhune pretends to begrudgingly praise Rory every time she puts a ball in the net.

But beyond the typical teenage sibling interactions, the admiration, respect and affection are clear.

"It's nice to have motivation and competition. Both of those are fun," Alexis Ball said. "I got to see two of his goals (against Arundel), and it's really nice to see that he's doing well and it motivates me to be doing more."

Kate Verrusio said, "It feels like I have someone to talk to, and it's easier to talk to (Hale) about sports because we've always done similar sports."

Rory Terhune burst onto the scene with a goal glut at the beginning of the season. Now, as the season hits the home stretch, she is taking it in and continuing to learn from the older players, including her goalkeeper and sister.

"Cameron's a leader for me, and it's really easy to follow in her footsteps and do what she asks, because I know that she has the experience," she said.

The older Terhune, for her part, has brought Rory along and views herself almost like a mother hen guiding the younger players along en masse.

"It feels great being a leader on the team and helping all the underclassmen, like I had," Cameron Terhune said. "The seniors took me under their wing and showed me what it means to be a Bruin, and it's great to be able to pass that on."

One of the unseen things each player quickly highlighted was the sheer commitment involved: not only for them, but also for the families that have delivered them to so many practices and games over the years.

"Tuesdays and Thursdays are my parents' busiest days at work, so it's right from work to soccer and another four hours supporting us," Avery Katzen said. "It's family night at the soccer field for us."

The Blisses, the newest additions to this sibling bonanza, literally bring family night to the field.

"When I'm out on the field I feel like I'm representing Bella, and then when she's out there she's representing me and the family, so that makes you want to do well for each other," Mia Bliss said.

That the two came in together has helped the adjustment process from middle school soccer to high school varsity, and the jump in both skill level and the demands of playing a high school varsity sport.

"It's nice because we both rely on each other and support each other when we play," Bella Bliss said. "It's really fun also because we're both experiencing it together for the first time."

As the Bliss twins have come in together, Avery and Dylan Katzen, also twins, will go out together. They were able to walk out together on senior night when Broadneck hosted Old Mill on October 20. It brought their athletic journeys full circle.

"It was super surreal. We had a lot of family in the crowd and a big support system, so it was a nice moment for my family to be able to do that," Dylan Katzen said. "This might be the last year we get to play this sport, so it's fun to be able to play with the friends and family we've been playing with for so long."

Though four of the 10 will graduate this year, that family tie will keep them coming back over the next couple of years to drive that bond forward.

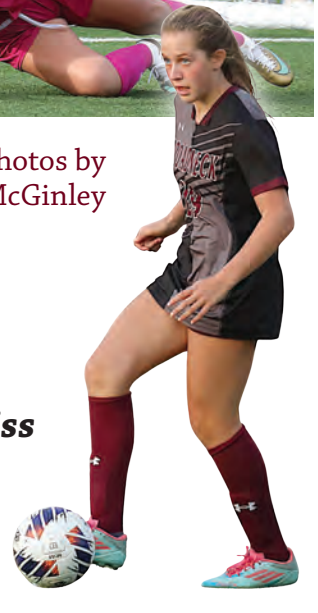
"I'm definitely going to try to catch games when I'm back on break," Hale Verrusio said. "It's awesome seeing (Kate) come up and do some of the things I did. Freshman and sophomore year it was just me, but as a senior now, it's great to be able to see her do her thing."







Photos by Dennis McGinley



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Milnes Stunner Nets Broadneck Girls County Championship

» **Continued from page 16**

to calm it down and take our time. That helps us do our best to get it in the goal," Milnes said. "Mia was about to take the shot, but I decided that I'd let it rip and see how it went."

The score punctuated a wild 96 minutes in which much of the game felt more like basketball on turf. The teams traded attacks and counterattacks, before Severna Park settled into its possession game in the overtime period. When both teams spurned golden opportunities to score into an open goal, it became clear a moment of magic would settle the matter.

The game went 83 minutes between goals, after **Delaney Jones** tied the game for Severna Park nine minutes after Broadneck senior defender **Avery Katzen** opened the scoring.

Katzen, one of the smallest players on the field, spotted an open patch of turf on a fourth-minute corner. As Orso played the ball in, a Falcon came to mark Katzen, who shrugged the defender off and drifted into another pocket of space. Now completely unmarked, she guided a header back the other way inside the post to give the Bruins an early lead.

"I don't get a lot of opportunities to score, so when I go up for corners that's the only thing I'm thinking of," Katzen said. "Our No. 1 goal is to start every game as hard as we can. To score in the first five minutes really boosted us and helped us remember that no matter what we're in the game and we need to keep going."

> *"I feel like we have great confidence in each other, and we will be able to get it done, no matter who it is."*
>
> — **Raegan Milnes**

It was that kind of mentality that allowed Broadneck to rally from an apparent knockout blow from Crofton two days prior. Milnes put the Bruins up 2-0 with 12 minutes left in the game, only for five more goals to go in, the next three to Crofton in a five-minute stretch to send Broadneck reeling.

But Orso immediately tied it again, and in officials' time **Rory Terhune** was judged to have been pulled down in the outermost corner of the Crofton penalty area, allowing Orso to dispatch the penalty kick and help the Bruins escape.

"I feel like that game helped us build our courage up and reminded us to not give up," Milnes said. "We didn't let down and we were able to stay motivated to get the goal. I feel like we have great confidence in each other, and we will be able to get it done, no matter who it is."

Through the county championship, Broadneck has had balanced scoring from a trio of players. Milnes' winner gave her the team lead with 16 goals, while Orso is at 15 and Terhune has 11. Terhune leads the team with 13 assists, with Orso at nine and **Lola Banks** at seven.

Broadneck (13-1-1) finished the regular season tied with Leonardtown atop the 4A East 2 standings, meaning a coin toss was necessary to determine the seeding order for the playoffs. That toss was held after press time on October 26.

The Bruins will host a region semifinal game on October 30 against either the Annapolis-North Point winner or the Crofton-Bowie winner.



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High Schools Prepare For Fall Theater Productions



The cast of "Legally Blonde" rehearsed before opening night at Severna Park High School.

"Legally Blonde" And "The 39 Steps" Are Onstage In November

By Julia Tucker

With autumn's arrival come cooler temperatures, cascading leaves and the fall high school theater season. This month, Severna Park High School (SPHS) is staging "Legally Blonde," and Broadneck High School (BHS) is presenting "The 39 Steps." Rehearsals are currently underway, and students and staff are excited for the performances.

Elle Woods Takes Center Stage in "Legally Blonde" at Severna Park High School

This musical adaptation of the iconic film is based on the book by Heather Hach, with music and lyrics by Laurence O'Keefe and Nell Benjamin. "Legally Blonde" revolves around Elle Woods, an upbeat Delta Nu sorority sister. Her boyfriend, Warner, ends their relationship to attend Harvard Law School and look for a more serious and suitable romantic partner. Elle subsequently enrolls at Harvard to win Warner back, navigating multiple challenges along the way.

The Falcons' staging is directed by Pete Garvey, a 1987 SPHS alum. Nearly 100 students are involved, including 48 actors, a 20-piece orchestra, and 30 crew members. Garvey is thrilled to bring such a well-known story to the stage.

"It's going to be amazing. It's going to be incredibly awesome. We've got amazing talent, we've got a great directorial team across the board," Garvey said.

Junior Everly Hendricks stars as Elle Woods. She was surprised to have landed the lead role, which

» Continued on page 40

Broadneck Elementary: 50 Years Of Bee-Ing Together

Arnold School Welcomes Generations Of Broadneck Bees To Celebrate Milestone Anniversary On November 13

By Laura Ascione

For 50 years, Broadneck Elementary School (BES) has been more than a place where children learn to read, write and solve math problems. For generations of Arnold families, it has been a place to build friendships, create lasting memories, and find a sense of belonging.

As the school prepares to celebrate its 50th anniversary on November 13, current and former students, teachers, staff and families are invited to reflect on five decades of learning, laughter and community.

The celebration will embrace a theme of past, present and future, beginning with a daytime assembly for students featuring guest speakers, performances

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Photos by Laura Ascione

Broadneck Elementary School principal Jamie Miller (left) and Triple E STEM teacher Angela Wakshul said strong community relationships are one aspect of the school's legacy.

Young Readers, Shelter Animals Bond As Bedtime Book Buddies

By Laura Ascione

Reading aloud can help children build confidence, and at the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) of Anne Arundel County, some furry and feathered friends are more than happy to listen.

Through the SPCA's Bedtime Book Buddies program, children ages 5-10 can practice their reading skills while spending time with adoptable animals at PAWS at the Mall in the Annapolis Mall. The program offers a welcoming environment for young readers while helping socialize and calm animals awaiting their forever homes.

For Severna Park resident Jen Dopkowski, who has volunteered with the SPCA for four years, the program has made a difference for her 9-year-old son, Zachary.

"Reading to the animals really helped him learn to read and feel more confident reading — and it also taught him to be kind to animals," Dopkowski said.

The experience was equally rewarding for Arnold resident Leanne Bulla and her 9-year-old son, Jack, who recently attended their first Bedtime Book Buddies session.

Bulla appreciated the program's structure and the opportunity it provided to strengthen Jack's confidence in reading." "It gives him additional opportunities to read aloud, more so than just to us," she said.



Severna Park resident Zachary Dopkowski read aloud as a curious chinchilla listened attentively.

Each session begins with an opportunity for children and their accompanying adults to visit the animals

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Jones Elementary School



Students in Mrs. Fickinger's class described what it means to be a good friend.

Question of the month

Each month, the Severna Park Voice poses a question to a local fifth-grade class. This month, students from Mrs. Fickinger's class at Jones Elementary School answered the question:

What do you think makes someone a good friend?

If you are having a bad day, they know how you feel if you tell them.

Charlotte A.

A good friend is a person who helps you, plays with you and laughs with you and not at you.

Flavius B.

Kindness.

Brynn B.

If they show kindness and if they're kind and helpful.

Caleb C.

For the friend to be nice and listen to you and your ideas, to not ditch you and to never leave you for someone else. Also, to be smart and kind to not just you, but others, and play when you want to play.

Charlie C.

What makes someone a great friend is the way they treat you.

Bennett C.

What makes a good friend is if they are nice to you. Also, if they treat you kindly.

Remi D.

I think that being kind and caring for your people makes a good friend.

Ryder D.

When someone does not tell on you for a small thing. And when they stay with you if you have a slow bike, they do not just leave you.

Drew D.

If you can put yourself in their shoes and help them out. You can help them out if they are in a big pickle and they need some help.

Nellie D.

What I think makes someone a good friend is that they treat you with kindness and that they comfort you when you are feeling down.

Lesly H.

A great friend is someone who lets you be you and supports you. Great friends should always be there for you through thick and thin.

Jillian J.

A real friend is trustworthy, reliable and honest. Also, most importantly, they should like you for who you are.

Tristan K.

I think a good friend is trustworthy, kind, supports you when you need it, and loves you for who you are.

Hannah K.

A great friend is someone who is kind, caring and friendly. A great friend would never bully you or anyone else and they would be honest. For example, if you play with your squishy and they pop it, they would tell you and that is what makes a good friend.

Saryn L.

If they are nice, play soccer and help you.

Jackson L.

They should want to hang out with you, they don't keep secrets from you, they share stuff with you, and are kind to you. Also, they value your opinion and your ideas, and they don't make fun of them.

Lennox L.

What I think makes a good friend is when they are nice to you and help you and include you.

Jack L.

Being a great friend to me is that they care about what you say, give you uplifting messages if you look sad, invite you to play, and every time they see you they wave.

Ellie M.

Someone you can trust, stands up for you and is nice.

Shea N.

Something that makes someone a great friend is helping each other or being kind to people.

Dean P.

I think a good friend is kind, funny and loyal.

Grace R.

A good friend means they are loyal and don't use you for everything.

Burke S.

A great friend is kind and cares about you. A great friend is also honest with you and doesn't lie.

Cecelia S.

I think a great friend is someone who is kind, caring, will stand up for you and support you during hard times.

Jude S.

I think that what makes a good friend is them always having your back and never making you feel bad. What also makes a good friend is not lying and being honest.

Ashton S.

They listen to you and they are kind. I have been through six years in Jones and over the years I made some really good friends, and I would not change them to the moon and back.

Samantha S.

When someone is going through a hard time they can try to make them feel better.

Olive W.

I think what makes someone a good friend is that they are loyal, you know they are someone you can trust, and you know they will always have your back.

Grayson W.

I am good at games and people can be friends with me. I am nice and I'm unique in my own ways.

Quentin Y.

Severna Park Middle School To Present "Rock 'N' Rollvember"

Get ready to rock! Severna Park Middle School (SPMS) is excited to present "Rock 'N' Rollvember" on Friday, November 20 at 7 p.m. Join the SPMS community for an unforgettable evening of music, entertainment and student talent as performers take the stage to showcase a variety of exciting acts, including singing, dancing and instrumental performances. Led by student emcees, this high-energy show promises something for everyone. Come support the school's talented students as they share their creativity, passion and love of performing. Tickets are $10 and will be available online at *www.spmssings.org* or at the door.



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Young Readers And Shelter Animals Bond As Bedtime Book Buddies

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before gathering for a short story read by a librarian from Discoveries: The Library at the Mall. Afterward, children can select a book provided through the program or bring a favorite from home to read aloud to the animals. Crafts and other activities are available for children who want a break from reading.

The program is one of several educational and outreach initiatives offered by the SPCA to connect community members with animals and encourage compassion and responsible pet care.

Brandy McGehee and her two sons have volunteered with the SPCA for two years through its adult-teen volunteer program, which allows children ages 13-17 to volunteer alongside a trained adult.

"It gives my kids a great opportunity to come out of their shells. Bedtime Book Buddies is such a great program," McGehee said.

She particularly enjoys seeing how the animals respond to their young visitors.

"It's so cute to watch the animals calm down," she said. "I'm excited school is back so that we're able to do the program and get kids back in here."

Paws at the Mall houses adoptable cats, guinea pigs, rabbits, rats, birds and other small animals, giving families an opportunity to connect with a variety of potential pets.

Bedtime Book Buddies is free, but advance registration is required, and all children must be accompanied by an adult. The monthly event is held at PAWS at the Mall, located between SlimeCo. and Curmudgeon Books in the Annapolis Mall.

For more information about the program, upcoming sessions or SPCA volunteer opportunities, visit *www.aacspca.org/education-outreach*.





Photos by Laura Ascione

***Left**: Jack Bulla, of Arnold, read to "Rabbit DeNero," who is up for adoption at PAWS at the Mall.*
***Below**: Cats at PAWS at the Mall make the perfect audience for young readers.*



Children's Theatre Brings Disney's "Frozen" To The Stage

Children's Theatre of Annapolis (CTA) will bring the magic of Arendelle to the stage this fall with Disney's "Frozen: The Broadway Musical," featuring a cast of 28 local performers ages 12 to 18.

Running October 30 through November 15, the production brings the Academy Award-winning animated story to life with expanded musical numbers, elaborate costuming and theatrical effects. Based on Disney's 2013 film, "Frozen" follows sisters Anna and Elsa and the powerful bond that connects them.

After Elsa accidentally unleashes her hidden icy powers on the kingdom of Arendelle, she retreats into isolation. Anna sets out to find her sister and bring her home, embarking on a journey through a frozen landscape with ice harvester Kristoff, his reindeer Sven and the warmhearted snowman Olaf.

The stage production features the film's familiar songs by Kristen Anderson-Lopez and Robert Lopez, including "Let It Go," along with more than a dozen additional songs created for the two-act Broadway adaptation.

Michelle Bruno directs the CTA production, with Jamie Levine serving as music director and Anya Lengbeyer as choreographer. Caylee Rogers stars as Anna alongside Khloe Hill as Elsa. The principal cast also includes Elliot Scar as Hans, Israel Gilbert as Kristoff, Madi Ward as Olaf, Colin Carr as Sven, Liam Cool as Oaken and Harrison Randall as Weselton. Sarabelle Stephens and JoJo Lengbeyer portray Young Anna and Young Elsa, respectively.

As part of the production, CTA is expanding the show beyond its traditional audiences through a special partnership designed to make live theater more accessible to area students.

CTA is partnering with Anne Arundel County Public Schools, local private schools and regional homeschool networks for a dedicated school-day performance on November 12 at 9:30 a.m. The field trip performance will give students an opportunity to experience professional-grade theater in their own community, with an emphasis on providing free access for local Title I schools.

Educators and homeschooling parents will also receive an educational enrichment guide connecting themes from "Frozen," including sisterhood, emotional expression, resilience and acceptance, with learning objectives.

Select performances throughout the run will further CTA's focus on accessibility and inclusion with post-show cast question-and-answer sessions, a relaxed/sensory-friendly performance, and an ASL-interpreted performance.

Children's Theatre of Annapolis is located at 1661 Bay Head Road in Annapolis. Performances are scheduled for Fridays at 7 p.m., Saturdays at 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., and Sundays at 2 p.m., with a special Halloween matinee on October 31 at 1 p.m. Tickets are $16-$20.





***Above**: (L-R) Elliot Scar plays Hans alongside Caylee Rogers as Anna and Khloe Hill as Elsa.*

***Left**: Israel Gilbert (left) stars as Kristoff and Colin Carr as Sven in the Children's Theatre of Annapolis production of "Frozen."*

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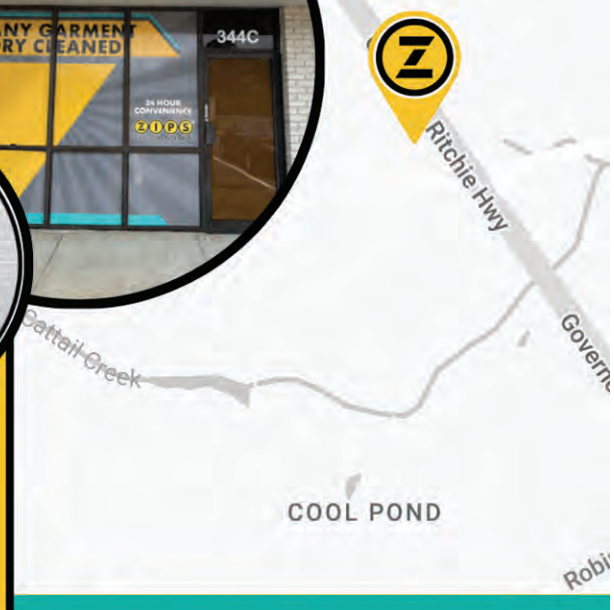
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Broadneck Elementary: 50 Years Of Bee-Ing Together

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and a special tribute to the school's history.

One highlight will be the return of the original BES school song from 1976. A former music teacher recently visited the school with a cassette recording of the song, which educators are using to teach today's students.

Principal Jamie Miller said the song has already created some special connections between generations.

During a recent Parent-Teacher Organization meeting, a parent shared that her daughter came home singing the song. Her husband, a former BES student, recognized the tune and began singing along.

"What a great way to connect everybody," Miller said.

The evening celebration will feature an open house with guided tours, including tours led by former students. Visitors can explore memorabilia, old yearbooks and photographs while seeing how the school has changed over the decades.

The event will also include cake, video presentations and another performance of the original school song, with alumni encouraged to join in.

Along with staff, the school's 590 students are creating a time capsule, and the school hopes to collect donations toward a legacy gift that will commemorate the anniversary. Possibilities include enhancements to the school's lobby, trophy display and other common areas.

For BES educator Angela Wakshul, who is helping organize the celebration, the anniversary offers an opportunity to recognize the relationships that have defined the school.

Wakshul began teaching fifth grade at BES in 2005, spending eight years there before leaving for six years and returning in 2019 as a Triple E STEM teacher.

When she first arrived, BES still featured an open-space classroom design, which encouraged collaboration among teachers.

But it was the school's culture that left the biggest impression.

"When I started teaching here, we didn't live here, but I loved Broadneck so much that after we had our first child, we moved into the community so that our kids could go here," Wakshul said.

Now Broadneck Elementary's nominee for Anne Arundel County Public Schools' Teacher of the Year, Wakshul has watched former students grow into adults, get married, and start families of their own.

"My first-year kids are getting married and having kids," she said. "It's really cool to be able to see that progression for their whole lives."

Her appreciation for the school remains as strong as ever.

"I just feel so grateful — I love where I teach and what I teach," Wakshul said.

Fifth-grade teacher Sherryl Barton has called BES home for 27 years. She has taught first, second and fifth grades and said she has never considered leaving.

"It always feels, for me, like home here," Barton said. "No matter how much things have changed, it's like there's this foundation that has stayed in place."

That foundation, she explained, includes strong relationships, a commitment to learning, and a belief in helping students achieve their dreams.

Over the years, Barton has watched the school become more diverse, welcoming new cultures, talents and educational approaches while maintaining its close-knit atmosphere.

One of her favorite traditions is fifth-grade promotion, when students reflect on their elementary school experiences before moving on to middle school. Many of their speeches, she said, echo the same sentiments expressed by longtime teachers.



Broadneck Elementary School will mark its 50th anniversary with an open house on November 13.

> *"We support each other in our learning journeys, and we support each other in our laughter journeys. she said. We value learning in the classroom and laughter in the hall."*
>
> — **Sherryl Barton**

"They write about feeling at home. They write about belonging. They write about the support that they've had here," Barton said.

She also treasures the annual return of graduating Broadneck High School seniors, who walk through their former elementary school's hallways wearing caps and gowns. Some stop by her classroom for hugs, photographs and a chance to reconnect.

BES educators have maintained their sense of humor over the years, too.

When longtime physical education teacher Colleen Rowe retired, she passed along a large dinosaur to Barton, symbolically recognizing her as the school's longest-serving teacher.

"It has been given to me because I am now the dinosaur," Barton joked. "I accept it with much respect and honor, and someday, I'll pass it on as well."

Miller, now in her fifth year as principal, said that spirit of connection extends beyond the classroom.

Community partnerships, dedicated volunteers and annual traditions such as the Halloween parade, Spring Fling and fall festival help bring families together.

Miller has made her own memories along the way, including camping on the school's roof with a former assistant principal, riding tricycles through the hallways, and getting covered in silly string after students met a fundraising goal.

But she said some of the most meaningful moments are quieter ones, like helping a student navigate a difficult day.

"I love my job. I'm so lucky to do this work," Miller said.

This year's schoolwide theme, "Dare to Dream," encourages Broadneck Bees to embrace the idea of "Small Wings, Big Dreams." The word DREAM represents discover, reach, engage, achieve and matter.

As BES celebrates its first 50 years, that message also points toward its future.

For Barton, the school's enduring appeal is simple: It is a place where students and educators continue growing together.

"We support each other in our learning journeys, and we support each other in our laughter journeys," she said. "We value learning in the classroom and laughter in the hall."

And after 50 years, BES educators, students and the community still have plenty of both to celebrate.

Broadneck Elementary School will celebrate its 50th anniversary on Friday, November 13, from 5:30-7 p.m. at 470 Shore Acres Road in Arnold.

AACPS Seeks Community Input On Cellphone Ban, AI Use

Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) Superintendent Mark Bedell is inviting community members to weigh in on two issues facing the school system: restrictions on student electronic devices and the responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI).

AACPS is hosting a series of Community Connections sessions throughout October and November. The discussions will focus on the state-mandated ban on student use of electronic communication devices, including cellphones and smartwatches, during the school day beginning with the 2027-2028 school year, as well as appropriate student use of AI.

"These sessions have proven to be very valuable to me and to our team in prior years because they allow us to hear directly from members of our community," Bedell said. "The two issues we will get feedback on this year are critical for us to address."

Each session will begin with an overview from Bedell about AACPS successes and challenges. Attendees will then participate in facilitated small-group discussions designed to gather feedback and ideas.

Sessions will run from 6-8 p.m. at high schools throughout the county. Upcoming sessions include:

November 2: Glen Burnie High School
November 5: Northeast High School
November 10: Arundel High School
November 12: Southern High School
November 17: Annapolis High School
November 19: Meade High School

Interpreters will be available at all sessions. AACPS also plans to provide an online option for residents to submit feedback.

A video of Bedell's remarks, along with information from the sessions, will be posted online after the sessions.

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Severn River Middle Earns Blue Ribbon Recognition

Severn River Middle School in Arnold has been named a 2026-2027 Maryland Blue Ribbon School for its academic performance and progress in closing achievement gaps among student groups.

The Maryland State Department of Education announced the honor on October 20. Severn River is one of 12 Maryland public schools to receive the distinction, which reflects performance on state and national assessments.

"Our entire team and school community are immensely honored to be recognized in this way," Principal Mike McCann said. "This accomplishment happens because students, staff and families both past and present have been committed to making sure our school's environment is one that fully supports every student so that they can Belong, Grow and Succeed."

Since 2022, Severn River's overall English language arts proficiency has increased by 17.8 percentage points. Gains included 32.7 points among Black-African American students and 25.6 points among students receiving free and reduced-price meals.

Overall math proficiency rose 12.6 percentage points during the same period, including a 14.7-point increase among students receiving free and reduced-price meals. Scores on the Algebra I exam averaged 87 percent over the past three years.

The school also recorded a 17.2 percentage point increase in English language learners making progress toward English language proficiency.

Alongside those academic gains, Severn River's chronic absenteeism rate declined by 5.3 percentage points since 2022.

"Maryland Blue Ribbon Schools demonstrate what is possible when strong leadership, dedicated educators and engaged families work together on behalf of students," said Carey Wright, Maryland state superintendent of schools.

A total of 23 public and private schools earned Maryland Blue Ribbon recognition for 2026-2027. The Maryland State Board of Education will honor the schools in December.

Schools Prepare For Fall Productions

» **Continued from page 33**

comes with its own unique challenges.

"I was very surprised – I didn't expect it. I was very excited, and almost nervous because of how big a role it is. One of the biggest challenges (of playing Elle) is that her vocal range is a little higher than I'm used to, and that she just has so many lines and scenes. It's definitely the most challenging role that I've had," Hendricks said.

"Legally Blonde" at SPHS runs November 6-14. Performances are Fridays and Saturdays at 7 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets can be purchased at the door or online at *www.sphsdrama.com*.

At Broadneck High School, "The 39 Steps" Delivers Mystery, Mayhem and Laughs

Written by Patrick Barlow, "The 39 Steps" is a stage adaptation of Alfred Hitchcock's 1935 film, which is based on John Buchan's 1915 novel. The play tells the story of Richard Hannay, an everyday man who unexpectedly meets a woman claiming to be a spy and lets her hide in his home to escape assassins. The next morning, Hannay discovers she has been murdered, and a nationwide search for her killer is organized. Hilarity and hijinks ensue throughout, leading to a surprising finale.

The cast includes 11 students, and eight students work on multiple production crews. Broadneck English teacher Kevin Whewell leads the theater program, is directing the show, and said he selected "The 39 Steps" because he enjoys period pieces and wanted to challenge his students.

"I love the script because it is just so tongue-in-cheek. It certainly follows Alfred Hitchcock's film, but it also pulls in comedic material from Monty Python and similar material," Whewell said. "The staging is really fascinating, and a lot of it is meant to be left to the audience's imagination. We have some scenes on a train, but we obviously can't put a train on the stage. There's a lot of pantomime work, and because of that, the students have to move very precisely."

Senior El Chambers is one of four students who alternate in the role of Richard Hannay during the show. Chambers said that being involved with the production brings both challenges and rewards.

"One of the greatest challenges is finding the time to rehearse outside the theater when combining with schoolwork and personal life. The greatest rewards are the friends I've made. Even those who graduated, I'm still friends with them, and the friendships last beyond high school," Chambers said.

Natalie Niles portrays the comedic role of Margaret, a Scottish woman who helps Hannay escape capture. The senior Bruin said that performing comedy requires precision and balance.

"You have to be a lot more physical with your acting, depending on your scene partners. It can be kind of hard to not go into a caricature, so it's a balance between making sure your character is fleshed out without being a stereotype of a comedic role," Niles said.

"The 39 Steps" at BHS runs November 19-21, with performances starting at 7 p.m. on all three dates. Tickets are available at the door, and payment can be made by cash or credit card.





Educator Of The Month

Amanda Hunter
St. John The Evangelist School



Photo courtesy of Kitt O'Brien Photography

"I love watching the students open their minds to think through how to solve a problem, realizing that there may be many ways to solve a problem"

— **Amanda Hunter**

By Judy Tacyn

Amanda Hunter covers a lot of ground each week teaching technology at St. John the Evangelist School — all 559 students in pre-kindergarten through eighth grade come through her classroom. In addition, she's using a new-to-St. John curriculum.

This year, Hunter implemented a new curriculum when she became certified to teach the Project Lead the Way learning model, which has been implemented at area schools including Severna Park and Archbishop Spalding high schools.

"The middle school courses really prepare students for high school and give them a look at many career options in STEM-based fields," Hunter said of the hands-on program.

For elementary students, learning how to use a keyboard is essential as they learn Microsoft applications, and Bee-Bots, or floor robots, introduce students to the basics of coding, directional language, and spatial awareness.

Middle school students are now working in groups to develop a foot prosthesis for a child their age who has cerebral palsy. "I love watching the students open their minds to think through how to solve a problem, realizing that there may be many ways to solve a problem," Hunter said.

"Mrs. Hunter is an exceptional teacher who is passionate about her teaching, brings joy to the classroom, and loves to engage students in hands-on learning experiences. But her reach and impact do not end there," said Glenna Blessing, principal of St. John the Evangelist School. "She is a leader in our school building who is always willing to assist, jump in, and lighten the load on projects, volunteers to cover classes (and) additional jobs, and she does so with a genuine sense of positivity and grace."

Now in her 13th year at St. John the Evangelist School, Hunter joked that her tenure is more like 45 years. "I feel like I've been here my entire life!" she said.

She is a lifelong parishioner of St. John the Evangelist Church and graduated from the school. Her older children also graduated from St. John the Evangelist School, and her youngest is in seventh grade.

Although some family members are in education, Hunter originally wanted to pursue a career in the medical field or even in marketing. She changed her major to early childhood education while in college after realizing how much she enjoyed working with children while supporting an aftercare program.

"I enjoy every day sharing technology and engineering with the students," Hunter said. "My colleagues are incredible and I love the faith-based education we provide students. I believe we are setting them up for success in high school, in their careers and in life."

As for her teaching style, Hunter believes in initial instruction, but after that, she feels her role is to be a guide. "Problem solving is a skill that we all need well beyond the classroom. I love watching the kids brainstorm together and work to find (the) best solutions through open-minded learning. That skill is needed throughout a lifetime."

Blessing praised Hunter, adding, "She models a love of learning and brings new and innovative teaching practices to the classroom. She truly brings the essence of the St. John Family to life by her compassion for others, commitment to seeing each child enjoy learning, and supporting the initiatives of our school."

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MPCP in Arnold Spotlights



Olivia Cook, MSN, RN, FNP-C

Olivia has been practicing in primary care for the past four years. Prior to becoming a Family Nurse Practitioner, she worked as a bedside RN in the ICU and as a hospice liaison. These experiences helped shape her compassionate, patient-centered approach to care. She earned her Master of Science in Nursing from Duquesne University and is a board-certified Family Nurse Practitioner.

What Made Olivia Decide To Go Into Medicine?

Olivia chose family medicine because she enjoys caring for patients throughout all stages of life and building meaningful, long-lasting relationships with them. Her background in critical care and hospice reinforced the importance of listening to patients, understanding the whole person, and providing compassionate care. She strives to create a welcoming environment where patients feel heard, supported, and involved in their healthcare.

Olivia's Favorite Things to Do:

Outside of work, Olivia enjoys staying active through hiking, biking and running. She loves spending time at the beach and, most importantly, making memories with her family.

One Fun Fact About Olivia:

Olivia grew up in Indiana and spent several years living in California before settling on the East Coast. She fell in love with the Chesapeake Bay and has chosen to make it home, raising her family here. She enjoys exploring the outdoors, staying active, and spending time with her family.

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Going The Distance: Local Runner Aims For The Finish Line After Colorectal Cancer Diagnosis

By Judy Tacyn

Last summer, Millersville resident Dave Turner was preparing to run the 2025 Marine Corps Marathon when he was diagnosed with Stage 3 colorectal cancer in June. The diagnosis was surprising, because since the 69-year-old was always active and a lifelong runner. Turner had surgery in August 2025, followed immediately by chemotherapy in September. The Marine Corps Marathon, which would have been his third, would have to wait.

"On the day of my first chemotherapy infusion, I made a commitment to keep moving — walk if I could, crawl if I had to, but keep moving," Turner said. He learned neuropathy may be a side effect of the treatment, and he refused to let cancer or its treatment slow him down.

Walking became an important part of Turner's physical and mental recovery. He told his physician he was going to walk at least 100 miles during each of the eight stages of chemotherapy.

"There wasn't a grand plan in the beginning. The objective was simply to do what I could that day and keep moving forward," Turner explained.

He walked 130 miles between the first and second sessions and clocked a 12-minute mile. By the end of eight chemotherapy sessions, he logged 654 miles - short of his 800-mile goal, but still an amazing accomplishment. Walking led to light running during treatment and early recovery, and eventually running became training.

"Yes, walking was a goal, but it also helped clear my mind, think about things, and remind me of everything I was grateful for," he said. "I cannot explain it, but I knew I wasn't going to die from cancer. I wasn't going to let anyone write the story too early."

Remarkably, Turner ran the Altra Sole of the City 10K in Baltimore in the spring of 2026 with a time of 56:17. He ran the Annapolis 10-Miler in August with a time of 1:35:19, placing fifth in his age group. In September he finished the Bar Harbor Bank and Trust Half Marathon in 2:02:27, placing third in the 70 and up age group and 71st overall among approximately 300 runners.



Photo by Judy Tacyn

Devin Conway (left) at REPS Performance and Brianna Spinnato (right) with FX Physical Therapy helped Dave Turner (center) train his way back to running after a colorectal cancer diagnosis.

Turner credits a large team for his triumph over cancer, including his trainer, Devin Conway at REPS Performance, and Brianna Spinnato, a physical therapist with FX Physical Therapy, with whom he began training in July.

"For Dave, our plan was a gradual progression of strength and conditioning training," Conway said. "The fact that he's come this far without ever having any coaching is simply amazing. I'm thankful he trusted me in his journey."

Conway added that his approach to training Turner really wasn't much different from how he prepares a younger runner; Turner just moved at a slower progression.

During his training, Turner experienced sciatica issues, and further test revealed several slight pelvic fractures. Spinnato worked on his flexibility and mobility.

"Dave's progression has been just incredible; he's a very hard worker," Spinnato explained. "The biggest challenge has been reminding him to dial it back sometimes. He's so ambitious that we need to be cautious not to overtrain."

Turner's experience led him to develop Walking For A Purpose, an initiative created around the idea that something as simple as walking can help people begin moving forward physically, mentally and sometimes in life itself.

"The message of Walking For A Purpose isn't really about running or marathons," Turner explained. "It's about starting where you are, and sometimes around the block counts. And that's OK."

Last month Turner received news that his cancer was in remission. Though his pelvic fractures are not completely healed, don't expect him to slow down any time soon. Turner insists his story isn't about running 26.2 miles; rather, it's about the hundreds of smaller steps required to get back to the point where running a marathon was even possible, and appreciating that he has the opportunity to try.

"I'm now 70. Returning to the Marine Corps Marathon starting line will be important, but simply getting back to the starting line may mean even more," Turner said ahead of the race. "I don't know yet how the Marine Corps Marathon story ends. That's probably as it should be. After October 25, there may be another chapter to tell."

Turner finished the 2026 Marine Corps Marathon with a time of 4:18:10.

Learn more about Walking For A Purpose at *www.walkingforapurpose.com*.

Tate Cancer Center Celebrates Renovated Healing Garden



On October 6, the University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Medical Center (UM BWMC) held a ribbon cutting ceremony for the Tate Cancer Center's newly renovated Healing Garden. The garden was originally built in 2004, a year after the Tate Cancer Center opened at UM BWMC, and for more than 20 years it has offered patients, caregivers, community members and healthcare teams a peaceful place to pause and reflect outside of the physical hospital walls.

The space has been thoughtfully restored and reimagined for the years ahead, funded through the generosity of community donors. The garden now includes a memorial plaque and wind art piece in honor of Katherine Mueller and in recognition of Severna Park-based nonprofit Katherine's Light Foundation.

Caregiver Academy Offers Support And Training For Family Caregivers

Chesapeake Life Center has launched a Caregiver Academy to offer emotional support, practical education and hands-on training to family caregivers throughout the community.

The program is open to all family caregivers, regardless of whether their loved ones receive services from Hospice of the Chesapeake.

Caregivers can participate in any or all of the academy's three offerings, with no required sequence.

A free virtual caregiver support group meets on Zoom from 10:30-11:30 a.m. on the second Thursday of each month. Led by licensed clinical social worker Khiana Simmons, the group offers emotional support, stress management and opportunities to connect with other caregivers. Participants are welcome to listen without speaking. The next sessions will be held on November 12 and December 10.

The virtual caregiver education series meets on Zoom from 10:30-11:30 a.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Clinical practice specialist for nursing Michelle Welle-Countiss leads sessions based on a 12-topic curriculum developed by Dr. Mary Lynn McPherson, executive director of graduate studies in palliative care at the University of Maryland, Baltimore.

Sessions are scheduled for November 24 and December 22.

For hands-on instruction, the academy offers Bedside Boot Camp, a four-hour workshop led by Welle-Countiss and Alena Dailey, manager of integrative arts and Chesapeake Life Center. Participants practice caregiving tasks such as transfers, bathing, incontinence care, feeding and positioning. The workshop also includes immersive empathy training.

Bedside Boot Camp will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Monday, November 9, in the Lovelace Learning Lab at the John & Cathy Belcher Campus in Pasadena.

Each workshop is limited to six participants. Registration is required, and a waitlist is available.

Family caregivers, healthcare professionals and community organizations can learn more or register by emailing *caregiveracademy@chesapeakelifecenter.org*.

Annapolis Jazz & Roots Festival Returns November 6-15



Trumpeter Muneer Nasser was exposed to great music by his father, jazz bassist Jamil Nasser.

The Annapolis Jazz & Roots Festival returns for its fifth year, bringing an eclectic mix of music, art, poetry and history to eight venues throughout Annapolis. The festival spans two weekends: November 6-8 and November 13-15.

This year's theme, "New World Music: Centuries of Sound," explores the evolution of American music and culture through performances and educational programs featuring international and regional artists.

The festival opens on November 6 at 7 p.m. at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Eastport with the Muneer Nasser Band. The performance will honor jazz legends John Coltrane, Miles Davis and Randy Weston, all born in 1926.

On November 7, research archivist and historian William Kelly of the Maryland State Archives will discuss slavery and indenture in colonial Maryland at 11 a.m. at the Eastport-Annapolis Neck Library. Afro-Peruvian band Perkutao will perform at the historic Peerless Rens Club at 4 and 6 p.m.

November 8 features colonial music performed on period instruments by David and Ginger Hildebrand at 2 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis. At 7 p.m., drummer and composer Makaya McCraven will bring his

» **Continued on page 46**



Lecturer William Kelly from the Maryland State Archives will lead a discussion that offers new insights into slavery and indenture in colonial times.

"Pressing Strings" Releases 10th Album

Pressing Strings Takes Annapolis Sounds To National Stages

By Judy Tacyn

Arnold resident Jordan Sokel, founding member of "Pressing Strings," took his music passion from a duo to a trio, from local bars to a national tour, and has now released 10 albums. He's not only lead guitarist and vocalist, but also the writer and arranger of the band's new music.

Pressing Strings is an electric, rock, blues and soul group consisting of Sokel, Justin Kruger (drummer) and Nick Welker (bass). The trio formed in 2011 after performing as an acoustic duo since 2007.

After graduating from Broadneck High School in 2004, Sokel headed to Salisbury University to study marketing and communications. By 2007 he realized music was his calling and his passion. He left college and formed Pressing Strings with friend Josh Kachura, who is now a solo artist.

Sokel said his obsession with music came early in life in large part due to his mother, also a talented singer. He taught himself to play the guitar, harmonica, piano and drums. He reads music but prefers to play by ear.

He said his early music was influenced by folk rock acoustic pioneers like Ben Harper, Dispatch and Jack Johnson, and classic rock from the 1970s. More recently, the Wood Brothers and The Black Keys are part of his playlist, along with lyricists like Jason Isbell, Jeff Tweedy of Wilco, Nathaniel Rateliff and Kacey Musgraves. As a songwriter, Sokel said his lyrics are personal meditations.



Photos courtesy of Front Rail Photography

(L-R) Nick Welker, Jordan Sokel and Justin Kruger are Pressing Strings, an Annapolis-based band. Welker is a graduate of Annapolis High School and Sokel is a Broadneck High School alum.

From 2011–2016 Pressing Strings played primarily local gigs from Baltimore to Washington, D.C., but in 2016 the trio was approached by a management company that felt the band had the talent to go on tour and move from the local to national scene, and into larger venues.

"We played every bar in the Annapolis area for a very long time," Sokel said of the time the group transitioned to ticketed events across the country. "We do travel quite a bit, but I make sure to be away for no longer than a week at a time."

Sokel said a perfect "off" week includes a slow wake-up, family breakfasts, hikes and Sundays watching football with his wife and three daughters.

» **Continued on page 44**

"The Social Reckoning," Sequel To "The Social Network," Is Too Late To Be Relevant

By James Buxton
Film Critic

Since it debuted in 2010, countless voices across the internet have been clamoring for a sequel to David Fincher's "The Social Network." Lauded by critics and audiences alike, the movie captured a precise moment in time, retelling the story of Facebook's founding at a time when its global domination felt all but inevitable. The final scene promised a future defined by Mark Zuckerberg, and regardless of whether the film has remained accurate over the last decade and a half, it secured a reputation as one of the defining movies of the 21st century.

So, when writer Aaron Sorkin first introduced the prospect of a follow-up back in 2019, fans were understandably excited. There had been so many developments to the story in the years that had followed, and with much of the old cast and crew hinting at a return, it seemed like a surefire way to score another generation-defining hit.

"The Social Reckoning" is not that movie.

Zuckerberg may still be a billionaire, and Facebook may still have a tight grasp over a portion of the population, but the biggest mistake "The Social Reckoning" makes is thinking that Facebook is still a contender for the most dangerous force in the world. Its influence on the rise of the



Photo courtesy of Sony Pictures Entertainment

Jeremy Strong portrays Mark Zuckerberg in "The Social Reckoning."

» **Continued on page 47**

Arnold Author Takes Aim At Washington's Strangest Habits In New Satire

Jeff Nelligan spent 30 years inside the federal government. Now he's writing about it — with a sharper pencil than any agency style guide would allow.

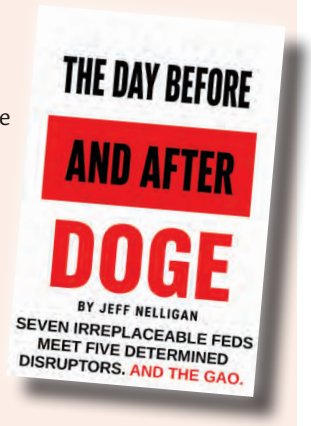


Jeff Nelligan

His new satire, "The Day Before and After DOGE," begins with an email entitled "Fork in the Road," sent to 2.2 million federal employees who didn't realize they were on a road. Soon a squad of young tech disruptors arrives at the Division of Management Systems, Operations and Policy (vending machines/mobility scooters) with one uncomfortably simple question: "What did you do last week?"

What follows is a collision between career bureaucrats and brash outsiders who are certain they can reboot the government in two weeks. Along the way, readers discover a workplace where a 25-character tweet requires a week of clearance and three consultants are paid to manage a single PDF.

"Everyone has a theory about what goes on behind federal office doors," said Nelligan, an Arnold resident. "The truth is often stranger than the satire, and the people on both sides are more human than the headlines make them seem."



The book follows seven irreplaceable federal employees as they face off with outsiders. It skewers the jargon of "robust holistic modalities that reimagine bandwidth in the paradigm space" while capturing the clash between Washington's permanent institutions and Silicon Valley's move-fast mentality.

Nelligan's career spanned Capitol Hill and the executive branch. He worked for three members of Congress, held presidential appointments at the departments of State and Health and Human Services, and served in senior leadership at the U.S. Government Accountability Office and the Food and Drug Administration.

"The Day Before and After DOGE" is available on Amazon.

"Pressing Strings" Releases Album



(L-R) Justin Kruger, Jordan Sokel and Nick Welker perform together as Pressing Strings, an Annapolis-based band.

» **Continued from page 43**

"The camaraderie of musicians in Anne Arundel County, especially in the Annapolis area, is tremendous," Sokel said, and praised the Annapolis Musicians Fund for Musicians (AMFM), a temporary emergency fund for artists who lose work. "It's a community where the majority of musicians do everything they can to lift each other up and support one another."

As an artist and a band member, Sokel feels that Annapolis is a very special and unique place with an exceptionally high output of talented artists with eclectic styles - and residents who are very supportive of the arts community.

Sokel plays at many neighborhood restaurants including The Point Crab House & Grill, with performances coming up on Wednesday, November 11 and Wednesday, November 25. For more information on future shows, check social media or visit ***www.pressing-strings.com.***



Gallery 564, Benfield Gallery Present "The Art Of Contrast"



Presented by Gallery 564 and Benfield Gallery, "The Art of Contrast" is a joint exhibition focused on how oppositions can enhance visual appeal, create tension, or convey deeper meaning. Between the two locations, 42 artists and about 100 works of art are featured. Receptions and presentations of awards were held on October 17 and 25. John Anderson (pictured) was awarded best in show overall, and other artists were honored with first place, people's choice and awards of merit at each gallery. "The Art of Contrast" will remain on display at both locations through November 21.

Local Musicians The Bards Head To Space With New Album



Annapolis-area band The Bards are trading the pub for outer space with a third studio album, "Welcome to the Universe," set for release on November 17.

Following the folk-rock sound of their sophomore album, "Tales from the Swindling Serpent," the local musicians are taking their music in a new direction with an album that blends synth rock and metal with sweeping orchestral compositions and cosmic themes.

"This is an album about humanity's place in the cosmos," said vocalist and violinist John Bachkosky, a Severna Park High School graduate. "It's about the impact of those who came before and the importance of stewardship from those looking to the future."

The new album also introduces flute to The Bards' sound, played by keyboardist Alyssa McKinney, who joined the group in early 2025.

"With this record, we wanted to tell epic, emotional stories on a cosmic scale, all while ensuring every element was painstakingly crafted by, for and about humans," said vocalist and guitarist Kevin Strasser, also a Severna Park High School graduate. "The title of the penultimate track sums it up best: 'Fire and Ice.' This album is all about finding warmth and love and purpose in a universe that can seem cold, indifferent, impossibly immense and even cruel."

"Welcome to the Universe" is the third studio album from The Bards, an independent band that releases its music through its own studio label, Shady Side Records. Strasser serves as the recording specialist, engineer and producer for the band's music. Anthony Celli created the album's cover art. The Bards plan to launch a tour in support of the album in 2027.

For more information about upcoming performances and the band's releases, visit *www.thebardsband.com*.



Annapolis Jazz & Roots Festival Returns November 6-15

» Continued from page 43

blend of jazz, hip-hop and global musical traditions to Maryland Hall.

The festival's second weekend begins November 13 at 7 p.m. with the U.S. Naval Academy Band's Superintendent's Combo performing a tribute to Miles Davis at Eastport United Methodist Church. The concert honors the late Annapolis musician and arts volunteer "TEA" Arthur.

On November 14, jazz vocalist Vanessa Racci will explore Italian contributions to American jazz at 11 a.m. at Eastport-Annapolis Neck Library.

At 2 p.m., vocalist Akua Allrich will perform at the Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum, celebrating her 2026 album "Bonya" and honoring legendary singers and civil rights activists Miriam Makeba and Nina Simone. Visitors can also explore the museum's exhibition, "She Speaks: Black Women Artists and the Power of Historical Memory."

The festival concludes November 15 at 2 p.m. at Pip Moyer Recreation Center with Uhwachi-Reh, an Indigenous dance troupe led by Louis Campbell (Lumbee). The performance will feature traditional dancing, ceremonial regalia, live drumming and singing.

Some festival events are free and others require admission. Reservations are strongly encouraged. Most venues offer free onsite parking.

Annapolis Jazz & Roots is an affiliate of the Annapolis Community Foundation and receives support from state and local arts organizations.

For more information, reservations and ticket links, visit *www.annapolisjazzandrootsfestival.com*.



The United States Naval Academy Band's Superintendent's Combo will perform a tribute to Miles Davis.



Drummer and composer Makaya McCraven transforms jazz through a bold blend of improvisation, hip-hop production and global musical traditions.



Award-winning jazz vocalist Vanessa Racci will review Italian contributions to American jazz.



D.C. vocalist Akua Allrich will celebrate the release of her 2026 album "Bonya" and will honor two legendary artists and civil rights activists: South Africa's Miriam Makeba and America's Nina Simone.



Led by Louis Campbell (Lumbee), Indigenous troupe Uhwachi-Reh performs traditional dance in ceremonial regalia with live drumming and singing.





"The Social Reckoning" Is Too Late To Be Relevant

» Continued from page 43

alt-right and the instigation of the January 6, 2021, riot, which features prominently in the movie's most dramatic sequence, can't be denied. Still, five years on from the events it depicts, the movie gives Facebook far too much credit in a world that largely left it behind for the AI boom.

"The Social Reckoning" isn't an inherently bad film. While it may lack some of David Fincher's finesse, it's still got the same slick, snappy dialogue that made the first film so iconic, and Jeremy Strong's performance as Mark Zuckerberg, while occasionally cartoonish, is endlessly compelling. Jeremy Allen White and Mikey Madison both bring their own fresh talents to their respective roles, and unlike Strong, don't feel limited by any preconceived impressions the audience may have. Sorkin's direction, while nowhere near as polished as his writing, is serviceable for a movie set largely in different trial chambers and breakout rooms. It's not as pretty or as put together as "The Social Network," but it gets the job done.

Ultimately, the film struggles when directly compared to its predecessor, and it does itself no favors by regularly calling back to it. Strong may look and act a lot more like the real-life Zuckerberg, but he lacks the energy and power of Jesse Eisenberg's confident sociopath, making the whole thing feel like more of a retread of reality than a unique take on the story.

Making a film about Facebook in 2010 was a bold move, whereas this feels like a safe political thriller that exists only because people asked for it. It carries itself like it intends to be a crucial text of the decade but has next to nothing to say about the world it led to beyond the Capitol riot, and how the rise of AI made a lot of Facebook's cultural cache irrelevant. Despite being set only five years ago, it feels a decade too late to be relevant.

The idea that a film wasn't needed or asked for is a poor way to critique art, but given this is a film that was very explicitly asked for, and only came to fruition due to the legacy of its predecessor, makes it feel like an unfortunate waste of talent.

At best, it's destined for obscurity, seeing out the echoes of its relevancy as the answer to a quiz question about forgotten sequels. At worst, it's a lesson to be learned about when the boat has been missed. In a few weeks' time, Luca Guadagnino's "Artificial" releases. Based on the rise and fall of Sam Altman and his time as the head of OpenAI, it feels like a far more appropriate successor to Fincher's original film and, based on early festival responses, will undoubtedly eclipse "The Social Reckoning" as the defining corporate biopic of 2026.



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The Science Of Sharing: Why Generosity Matters

Jason LaBarge
Financial Advisor and President, LaBarge Financial



As the leaves change across Severna Park and we gather with family around Thanksgiving, November naturally invites us to reflect on gratitude. While we often view giving as a moral obligation or seasonal tradition, behavioral psychology reveals a fascinating truth: Human beings are hardwired to give.

In behavioral finance and psychology, researchers refer to the psychological benefit of giving as the "helper's high." When you give — whether it is your time, talent or treasure — your brain releases endorphins, dopamine and oxytocin. These neurochemicals lower stress levels, reduce blood pressure, and foster a deep sense of emotional well-being. Generosity is not merely an outward act of goodwill; it is an active investment in your own physical and mental health.

Understanding the Three Pillars of Giving

True generosity extends beyond writing a check. A comprehensive approach to living a fulfilled life involves allocating three distinct assets:

1. **Time:** Your most valuable finite asset. Volunteering directly connects you to your community and builds meaningful social bonds that are vital to longevity and happiness.
2. **Talent:** The specialized skills you have spent years developing. Offering professional expertise, coaching youth sports, or serving on a nonprofit board provides high-impact value to organizations that need guidance.
3. **Treasure:** The financial resources you work hard to build. Strategic charitable giving allows you to support long-term regional stability while optimizing your overall tax strategy.

Connecting Generosity to Our Local Community

You do not need to look far to make a tangible impact. Right here in Anne Arundel County, local organizations depend on community participation to fuel their missions:

- Severna Park Community Center (SPCC): As an independent nonprofit, SPCC serves as a hub for local families, youth sports and senior wellness programs. Donating funds, volunteering time, or supporting facility initiatives directly strengthens the heart of our town.
- University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Medical Center (UM BWMC): Giving your time through local blood drives hosted by UM BWMC provides lifesaving resources to neighbors facing critical health challenges.
- SPAN (Serving People Across Neighborhoods): Offering food

» **Continued on page 50**

New York Butcher Shoppe Plans November Opening In Severna Park

Severna Park residents Judy and James Sanders are preparing to open The New York Butcher Shoppe at 543 Benfield Road, bringing a selection of premium meats, prepared meals and specialty foods to the community. The family-owned shop is targeting a late November opening, pending construction completion and final approvals.

Customers will find Certified Angus Beef, poultry, pork, house-made sausages, smoked meats and a selection of seafood. The menu also includes house-made crab cakes. The shop will offer freshly prepared meals, salads and sides, including refrigerated dishes that customers can take home and heat, as well as hot meals available for same-day pickup.

Customers can earn one reward point for every dollar spent through the shop's Rewards Program. They also can choose from "Stock Your Freezer" packages and take advantage of online ordering and delivery. The shop's smoker will stay busy, and custom smoking will be available on request.

For the Sanders family, opening the business in their community is particularly meaningful. Since James retired from the military, the couple has enjoyed putting down roots in Severna Park and looks forward to becoming part of the local business community.

"We want the shop to be a comfortable place where neighbors can get to know our team, ask questions about cuts and cooking, and find something for dinner," Judy Sanders said.

New York Butcher Shoppe began in 1999 when Billy D'Elia and his family moved from Brooklyn to Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, and saw a need for a full-service butcher shop. Customers turned franchisees Jim Tindal and Todd Prochaska purchased the brand in 2006 and moved its headquarters to Greenville, South Carolina. The company has since expanded throughout the Southeast and beyond.

For more information and for opening updates, visit *www.nybutcher.com/severna-park--md*.

Chamber Update

Liz League
CEO • GSPACC



Please give a warm welcome to our newest members and enjoy reading about all the businesses that make our community the best place to live.

Carroll Counseling Centers

www.optumbhcare.com/site/carrollcounselingofmaryland/md

Carroll Counseling Center of Maryland provides compassionate, coordinated mental health and psychiatric care for children, adolescents and adults. The team offers individual therapy and medication management. With multiple offices in Mt. Airy, Columbia, Severna Park and Towson, licensed psychologists, nurse practitioners and therapists collaborate to help create a safe, supportive space where you can explore emotions, strengthen coping skills, and work toward personal growth and improved well-being.

Gristmill Home

www.gristmillhome.com

Gristmill Home was founded with a passion for creating homes that feel both timeless and deeply livable. Based in Annapolis and serving the Chesapeake Bay and Washington, D.C. regions, owner Amy Hasson works closely with homeowners, builders and architects to design spaces that balance beauty, function and the way families truly live.

New York Butcher Shoppe of Severna Park

www.nybutcher.com/severna-park--md

Quality meets passion at the New York Butcher Shoppe. This is not just another meat market; this is a culinary destination that brings the essence of a classic butcher shop right to Severna Park. With 42 locations across 10 states, they have served hand-cut Certified Angus Beef steaks, Heritage Breed Pork, naturally raised hormone- and antibiotic-free chicken, and freshly prepared entrées, sides and more since 1999.

Paychex

www.paychex.com

Paychex is a payroll, human resources and employee benefits company that helps businesses manage many of the administrative tasks associated with employing workers. Its services include processing payroll, calculating and filing payroll taxes, administering employee benefits such as health insurance and 401(k) plans, tracking employee time and attendance, and providing HR support for hiring, onboarding, compliance and employee management.

Tricia's Cookie Cups

www.facebook.com/triciascookiecups

Tricia's Cookie Cups is a specialty bakery bringing a creative twist to traditional cookies. The bakery specializes in handcrafted cookie cups filled with delicious frostings and creamy fillings, offering a unique, bite-sized treat perfect for any occasion. From signature flavors to seasonal favorites and custom creations, each cookie cup is made with care and attention to detail. Personalized desserts are available for birthdays, weddings, holidays, corporate events and other special celebrations.

Blue Hydrangea Boutique LLC

Blue Hydrangea Boutique is a women's and teen clothing boutique in Severn Park at The Station. They carry on-trend, effortless style apparel and accessories such as Nikibiki, Judy Blue, Hidden Jeans, Doe and Rae, Papermoon, Lottie Lew, Nikki Smith Designs and other brands. Look stylish at affordable prices. Visit their Facebook page for more information.

This month's Successful Women in Business group gathered at Providence of Maryland's greenhouses for coffee and conversation. The greenhouses focus on wholesale production of true Maryland ecotypes using environmentally friendly practices, while offering seasonal retail sales. They provide employment opportunities for people they support and contribute to environmental restoration, including projects like rebuilding Poplar Island in the Chesapeake Bay.

The Earleigh Heights Volunteer Fire Company hosted a multi-chamber mixer at its facility and treated us to a fascinating presentation on the station's operations. We learned that the fire company is renowned nationwide and is a model for other companies. We met their board of directors and toured the facility. They are working hard to raise funds to rebuild, and we encourage the community to support them in any way that you can.

Our Shoptoberfest Shop Local Festival was held on October 24 at Park Plaza. We had six Gold Sponsors donate $500 each to their charities of choice: Prime IV Hydration and Wellness, Kitchen Tune-Up, Jimeno & Gray, PA, SERVPRO of Annapolis/Severna Park, Senator Dawn Gile and the Severna Park Elks Lodge.

Many thanks also to Chesapeake Telephone Systems and Elephant in the Room for hosting mixers for our chamber members.

Learn more at *www.gspacc.com*.

Ribbon Cuttings

Wholesome Healing Marks A Decade Of Supporting Children And Families

Wholesome Healing, which specializes in play therapy services for children, celebrated its 10th anniversary with a ribbon-cutting ceremony hosted by the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce on September 13. Located at 770 Ritchie Highway, Suite W-16, the practice specializes in working with and supporting children and families. Founder Vanessa Kellner and the entire team of psychotherapists offer a variety of trauma-informed therapy specialties. Learn more at www.wholesomehealingforall.com.





Cypress Marine, Inc. Marks 60 Years Of Business

Cypress Marine, Inc. celebrated 60 years of business with a ribbon-cutting ceremony hosted by the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce on September 28. Cypress Marine is a year-round full-service boatyard offering high-quality service, expertise and a commitment to life on the Chesapeake Bay. Staff are well-equipped to perform custom work and repair all systems, structures and propulsions. For more information, visit www.cypressmarine.net.

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How To File A Freedom Of Information Or Public Information Act Request



When we think of the freedoms we enjoy in this country, we often think of the freedoms protected by the First Amendment: religion, speech, press, assembly and petition. The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is another important law: It furthers federal governmental transparency. Corresponding state Public Information Acts similarly allow the public access to state government information.

Under FOIA, citizens can request federal governmental records for a reasonable fee, so long as the "disclosure of the information is in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and is not primarily in the commercial interest of the requester."

The Maryland Public Information Act (PIA) mirrors the federal law, allowing for the production and inspection of state public records. A "public record" is defined as any "documentary material that is made (or received) by a unit or an instrumentality of the State or of a political subdivision in connection with the transaction of public business." There are, of course, certain exemptions.

In cases where people have been injured in motor vehicle collisions and slip-and-fall cases, often through no fault of their own, there may be governmental information that can help elucidate the facts of the case or provide a legal basis for a claim. For example, if a 911 call has been made, the 911 audio may reveal certain admissions. If a police officer responds to the scene of a motor vehicle accident, his or her body-worn camera video may provide important information about the scene, the location and condition of the vehicles, or the statements made by the parties. It might help identify witnesses who were not listed on the police report. In a premises liability case, there may be records about permitting and inspection. It is important to think creatively about which types of information may be available and from which agencies.

Under these laws, each governmental agency must set up a procedure by which citizens may request its records. If you or a family member is injured and is interested in making a FOIA or PIA request, you can usually make such a request on the agency website. Each government agency will post on its website either a form that a person may use to request certain documents or the contact information for an employee who manages the PIA requests. If a PIA request is approved, the agency generally has 30 days to respond to the citizen inquiry. The agency may charge a small fee for producing the materials.

If you are injured in a motor vehicle collision or a slip and fall, 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@diggslaw.com****.*

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

The Science Of Sharing

» **Continued from page 48**

donations or financial contributions to our local safety-net organizations ensures local families facing unexpected financial hardship have a warm meal during the holiday season.

Integrating Giving into Your Financial Strategy

While the personal and psychological rewards of giving are profound, charitable contributions also play an important role in wealth management. Strategic philanthropy can significantly impact your broader financial plan.

Tools such as donor-advised funds, gifting appreciated stocks, or utilizing qualified charitable distributions directly from an IRA allow individuals of a certain age to fulfill their philanthropic goals while managing taxable income efficiently. Aligning your charitable intentions with your tax strategy ensures your dollars go further for the causes you care about most.

A Cohesive Plan for Your Legacy

At LaBarge Financial, our founding philosophy remains simple: People come first. Money is ultimately a tool designed to support your life, care for your family, and strengthen the community you call home.

This November, take time to reflect on how you can share your time, talent or treasure. If you want to integrate meaningful charitable giving into a comprehensive, tax-efficient financial strategy, consider how to align your generosity with your family's long-term financial plan.

Jason LaBarge, Financial Advisor
and President of LaBarge Financial
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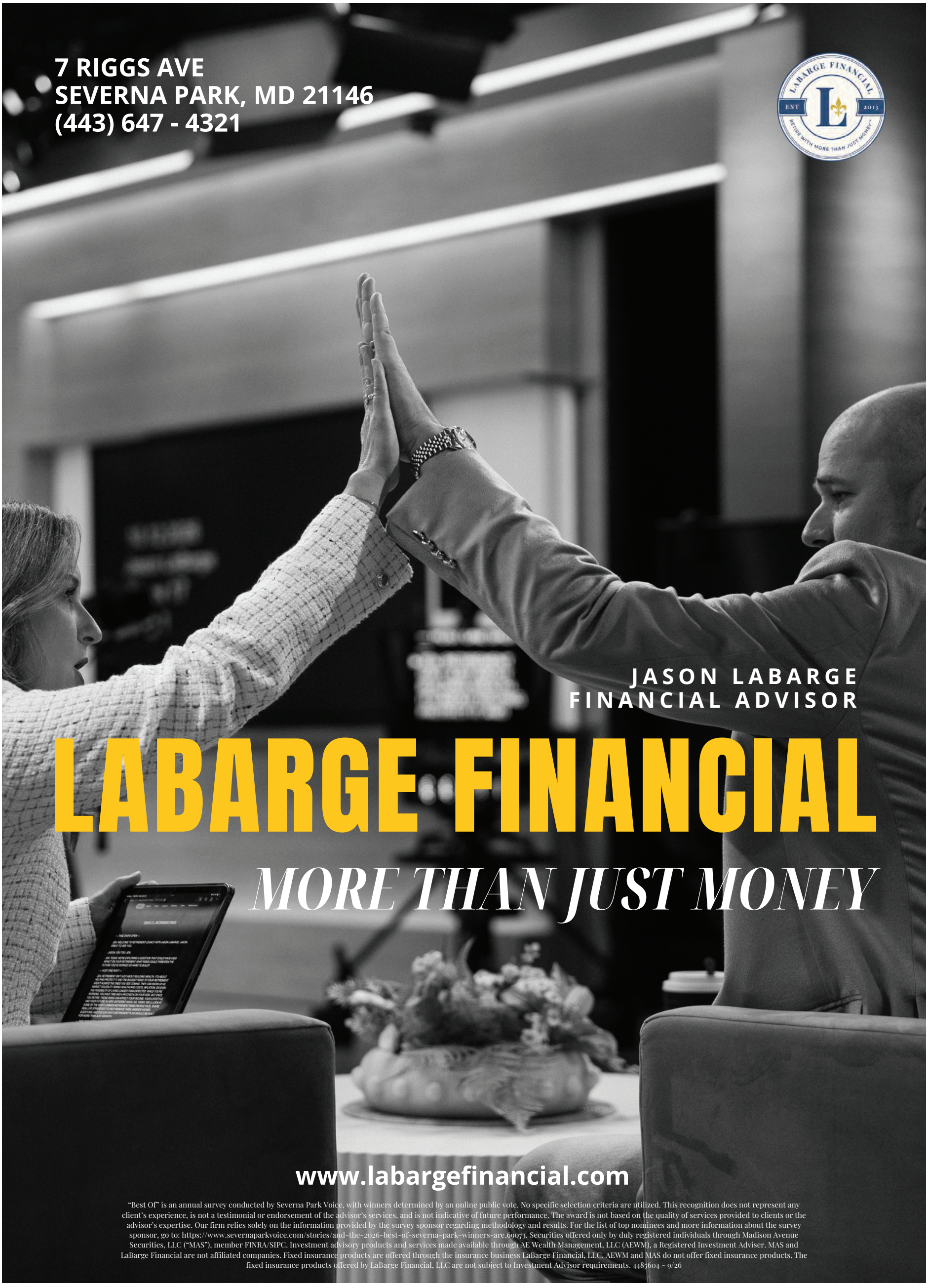
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ELECTION DAY - TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3RD



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