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# 4<sup>th</sup> of July

## PARADE EDITION

Page 2

### PARADE DAY HIGHLIGHTS

From youth groups to patriotic displays and antique cars, the parade scenes were a welcome sight.

Page 11

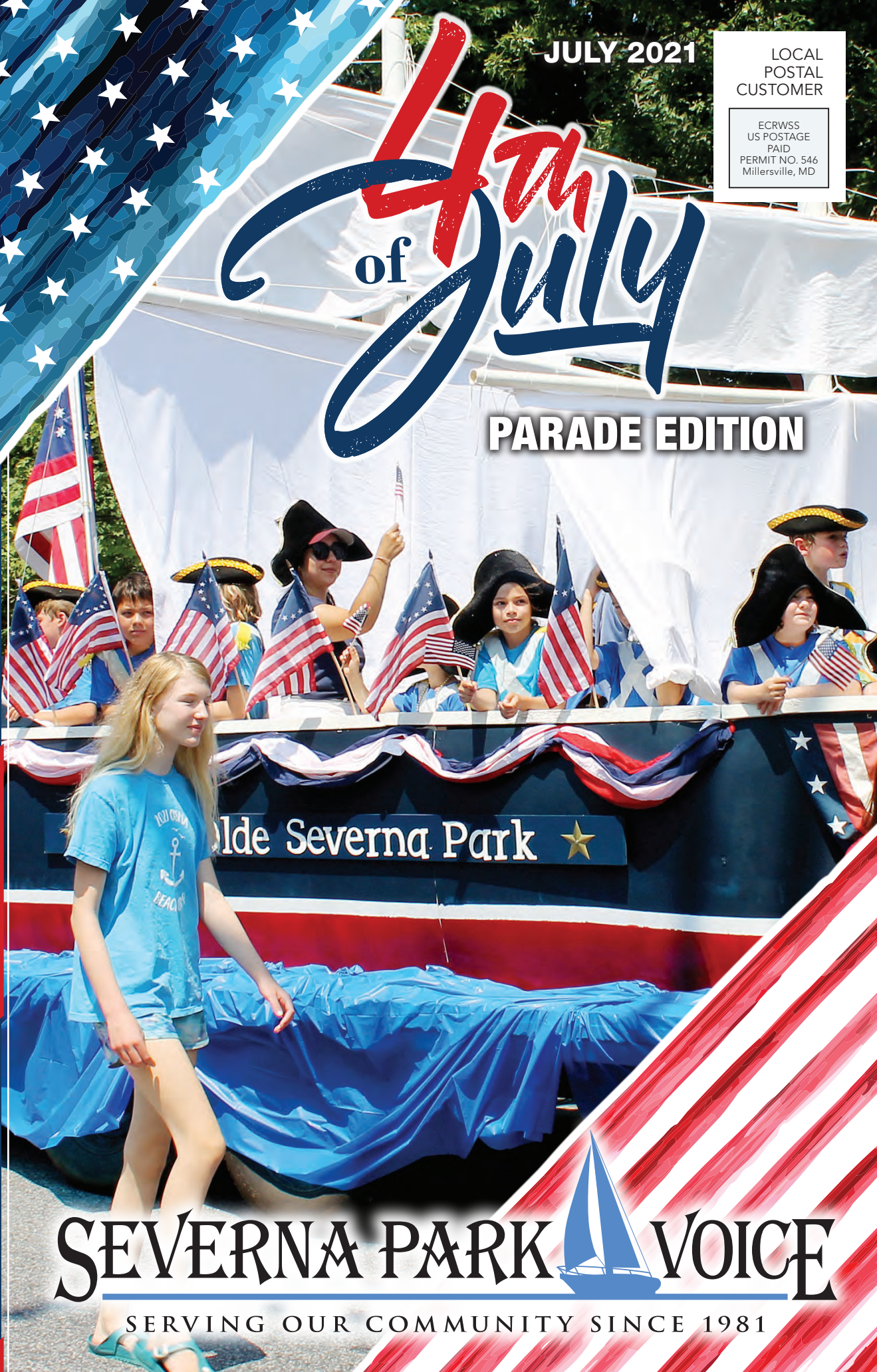
### DECORATED BIKE CONTEST

Children ages 2 through 11 competed for Most Beautiful, Most Original and Most Patriotic honors.

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### FLOAT DECORATING

Go behind the scenes to see how some of this year's entries were assembled.



# SEVERNA PARK VOICE

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# It's Back!

## Independence Day Parade Brings The Community Together

By Zach Sparks

After the pandemic caused the community to miss out on the beloved Fourth of July parade in 2020, the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce (GSPACC) was back this year with the event on July 5, and one common sentiment was expressed by spectators.

"It's great to be out and sort of back to normal," said Ray Landrum, a Navy veteran who watched the parade from Benfield Road.

With a theme of "Celebrating Our Community," the parade brought together neighbors, friends, nonprofit groups, businesses, pets and more for a patriotic display. Of the 99 parade entries, Olde Severna Park earned the honor of Best Overall by constructing a ship whose crew consisted of children donning Revolutionary War era clothing (read more about the design in the float decorating story).

"Olde Severna Park had a perfect score," said Matt Wyble, one of the parade judges. "Everybody worked hard [on all of the floats],

**Right:** For all the support he gives to various causes in the community, Eddie Conway, owner of Garry's Grill, was honored as this year's grand marshal.



Continued on page 6

### Congrats To The Winners!

#### Best Overall

Olde Severna Park

#### Best Theme

Cub Scout Pack 994

#### Most Patriotic

Nathaniel McDavitt Memorial Flag

#### Best Commercial

- 1 Homestead Gardens
- 2 Emidio Vincenzo ESCAPE Salon & Spa
- 3 Park Books & Literacy Lab

#### Best Community

- 1 Olde Severna Park
- 2 Linstead on the Severn

#### Best Nonprofit Organization

- 1 Orphan Grain Train
- 2 Chartwell Golf and Country Club
- 3 Chesapeake Harmony Chorus



The memorial flag and float honoring Severna Park High School graduate Nathaniel McDavitt has been voted Most Patriotic in the last four Independence Day parades. McDavitt, an F-16 crew chief in the United States Air Force, was killed in 2016 while on active duty.



**Above:** The beautiful float created by the Olde Severna Park community captured Best Overall entry in the parade for the second consecutive time. It was also named Best Community entry.

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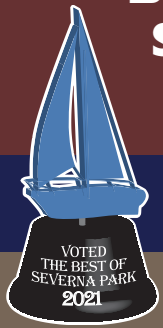


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# Independence Day Parade Brings The Community Together



Led by cubmaster Don Shinnamon, Cub Scout Pack 994 took home the honors for Best Theme.



Continued from page 2



**Above:** The always-impressive float from Homestead Gardens was named Best Commercial entry. **Below:** Orphan Grain Train took top honors among nonprofits.



and it was great to see everybody back. Olde Severna Park stood out above the rest, and they deserve recognition."

Before Olde Severna Park's float made its way along the parade route, the crowd had a chance to greet Eddie Conway, the owner of Garry's Grill, who was chosen as this year's grand marshal. Over the last year, Conway and his staff supported Polar Bear Plunge, Partners in Care, SPAN, Harvest for the Hungry, Tucker's Teddies and several other charitable causes.

"I always knew that I was the type of person who loved helping people," Conway said. "This year allowed me and my staff to show our customers who we are and how we care so much about people."

Organized by GSPACC CEO Liz League, the parade afforded people from Severna Park and beyond the chance to show how much they care about one another. Stacey Cassidy, a parade judge and owner of Savvy Consignment, expressed how the event is special to so many people.

"This is my 12th year doing this," Cassidy said. "I will say it's always fun. I am happy just to be back."

The Fourth of July parade judging is chaired by the Severna Park Voice publishers, Dianna and Lonnie Lancione, with the help of the following chamber members: Stacey Cassidy of Savvy Consignment, Mike Hall of Severna Park Lanes, Dawn Wilson of Side Street Framers & gift gallery, Molly Connolly of Gardiner & Appel Group, and Matt Wyble of the Matt Wyble Team of Century 21 New Millennium. ■

## “Celebrating Our CommUNITY” Theme Represents Community’s Approach To Pandemic

**W**hen Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce CEO Liz League learned that the chamber would be able to host the annual Fourth of July parade, she knew it had to represent the community’s unified approach to the pandemic.

“The parade will not only celebrate our country’s independence but also our own independence in putting our lives back together and resuming so many beloved activities with others that we were unable to enjoy for the past 16 months,” League said.

This year’s theme, “Celebrating our CommUNITY,” represented the light at the end of the tunnel and the community’s dedication to sticking together during the pandemic.

“It is the perfect expression of what the parade is all about, and the bonds that were formed during the pandemic,” League said. “It wrote itself.”

The inspiration came from seeing chamber members, who were struggling themselves, emphasize the importance of supporting nonprofits and donating funds. League also cited the generosity of community members who ordered from local businesses, sewed masks, made care packages for health care workers and more.

“It was amazing to see the businesses, particularly restaurants that had been so battered, still helping to raise funds for charities,” League said. “The partnerships and friendships that were formed during the pandemic will be lifelong.”

This year, the parade featured more neighborhood entries than past years. League was excited to see people reconnecting with their neighbors. She was also overwhelmed by the support of the 54 sponsors who came together in a big way to support this

year’s parade.

“The generosity is astounding, and reflects that people want to help and be part of an event that is completely community-centric and positive,” League said.

League hopes that the community enjoyed the parade, but more importantly, she wants the theme to encourage the community to shop local, eat local and give local. Now that the world is returning to “business as usual,” League hopes that the community will continue to band together to support small businesses.

“Local small businesses give us jobs, desired goods and services, donations, and keep dollars circulating in the local economy,” League said. “Without them, we wouldn’t have a community. So I hope this message inspires the community to always support local businesses.” ■

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# Bike Decorating Contest Gives The Whole Family A Chance To Participate

By Haley Weisgerber

The Fourth of July parade is an event for the entire family. Each year, a bike decorating contest is held at the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce office on Holly Avenue. This year, children ages 2 through 11 put their decorating skills to the test to create a fleet of bikes decked out in red, white and blue to join the last leg of the parade.

Awards were given out for first, second and third place

in the Most Beautiful, Most Original and Most Patriotic categories.

Piper Allee is a veteran of the bike decorating contest. This was her third year participating in the parade, and according to her mom, it's her favorite time of the year. Since her first year, she has outgrown two bikes and collected countless decorations.

"We've had these for like three years," Piper said. "We just buy things and add them every year."

This year, Piper's hard work earned her the first-place award in the Most Original category.

Avery Jackson, another veteran, won first place in the Most Beautiful category and spent a half an hour putting together her bike. She said she was most excited for "everyone to see all the decorations on my bike."

The Dornblaser sisters — Gemma and Everleigh — won first and second place, respectively, in the Most Patriotic category. The duo said it took half

a day to decorate their bikes. While Gemma was excited to see if her friends were watching the parade, Everleigh was excited for the popsicles that waited for her at the end of the route.

Neighbors Emma Gramil, Chris Gramil and Sophia Zimmerman were excited but also nervous to ride in the parade. Their bikes were decorated with American flags, which was Chris' idea, and balloons. Sophia was awarded first place

*Continued on page 12*



Avery Jackson

Winner  
**Most Beautiful**



Winner  
**Most Original**

Piper Allee

**Congratulations To All The Winners!**

**Most Beautiful**

- 1 Avery Jackson
- 2 Sophia Zimmerman
- 3 Emma Gramil

**Most Original**

- 1 Piper Allee
- 2 Lily Lewis
- 3 Natalie and Amelia Maslanik

**Most Patriotic**

- 1 Gemma Dornblaser
- 2 Everleigh Dornblaser
- 3 Justin Wilkins



Gemma Dornblaser

Winner  
**Most Patriotic**



Lily Lewis

Runner-Up  
**Most Original**

# Bike Decorating Contest Gives The Whole Family A Chance To Participate

Continued from page 11

and Emma received second in the Most Beautiful category.

Lily Lewis, who won second place in the Most Original category, was excited to join the parade, but she was more excited to collect candy along the route. She entered the contest with her 2-year-old sister, Grace.

The contest was also a family affair for Melody, Natalie and Amelia Maslanik. Melody entered her bicycle, while her younger sisters, Natalie and Amelia, entered with a sailboat-inspired wagon. Natalie and Amelia were awarded third place in the Most Original category.

After the winners were announced, the children put their entries to the test and joined the parade alongside the Boy Scouts and PedalPower Kids. ■



Everleigh Dornblaser

Runner-Up  
**Most Patriotic**



Sophia Zimmerman

Emma Gramil

Third Place  
**Most Beautiful**

Runner-Up  
**Most Beautiful**

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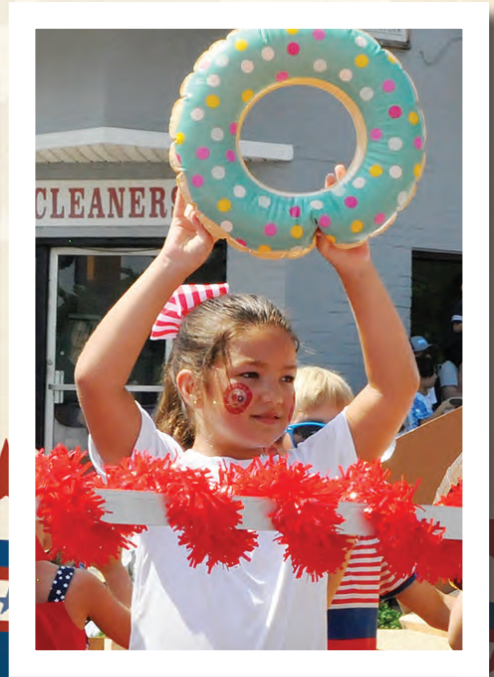
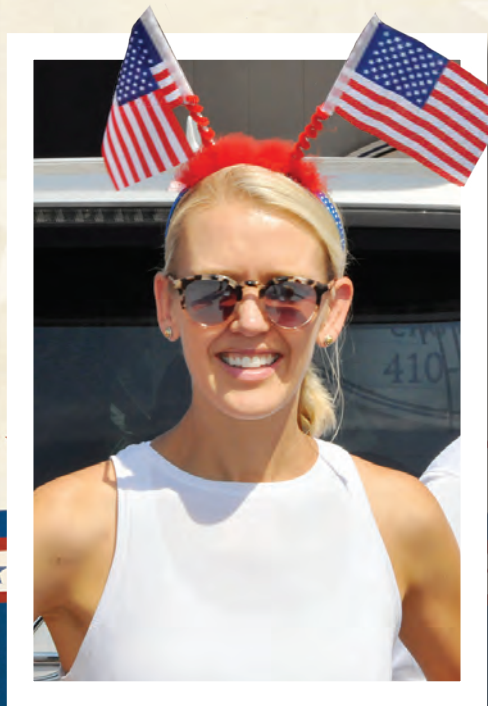
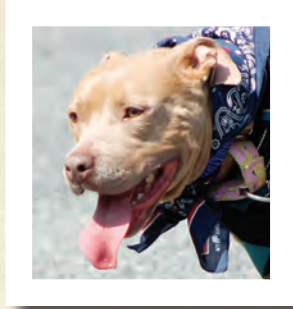
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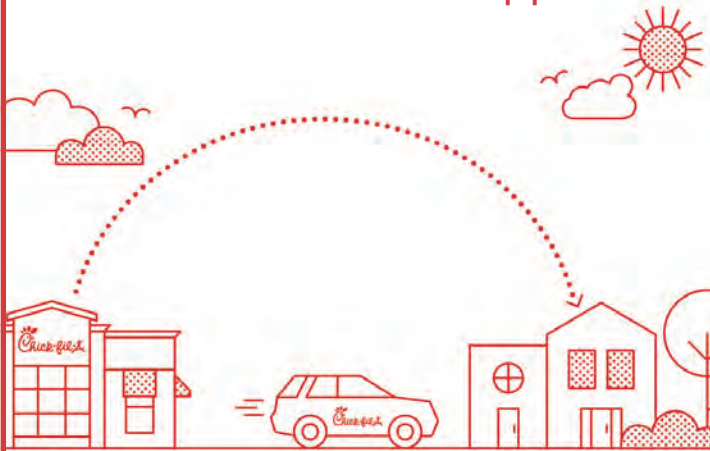
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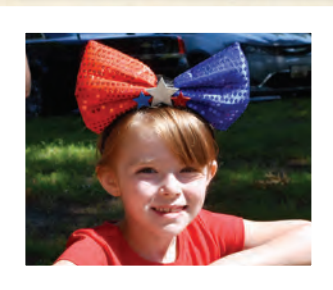
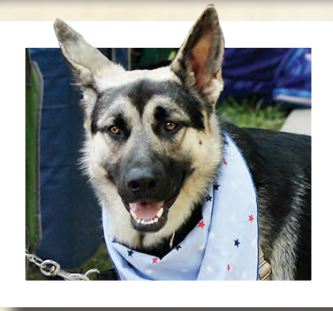
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# Communities, Businesses, Nonprofits Get Creative With Parade Float Designs

By Haley Weisgerber

From local businesses and nonprofits to community associations and clubs, everyone goes all out for the annual Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce's Fourth of July parade (well, July 5 this year). Whether the groups assemble their floats for months or simply days, a lot of work goes into the incredible floats that line the streets, and this year was no exception.

## Homestead Gardens

At Homestead Gardens, Fourth of July parade planning begins when the previous year's parade ends. This year, planning began almost a year ago, but the theme wasn't decided until about two months ago.

"This year the theme is 'Refresh your Nest,' and it is just like something we get excited about because it's different," said Homestead Gardens general manager Heidi Tyler. "It's a very on-trend theme. Surrounding yourself with green and then those trends that have come full-swing back, like macro hangers, all the textiles and woven rugs."

In the past, Tyler designed the float on her own. This year, she recruited Stephanie Stowell and Christy Lyon to assist her in bringing the vision to life. They worked tirelessly over the past few weeks to secure the plants and products needed for the float. With green being the highlight, securing the plants and flowers from the growers was the most important part.

"The most difficult part was figuring out what was going to be the structure that would hold the weight of what we wanted to hang," Tyler said. "We have these awesome moss balls with monstera plants coming off of it and they have some weight to them."

Mike Dudderar and Larry Hoffman from the Davidsonville location worked on the structure.

After a year off, the team at Homestead Gardens was eager to get creative with the float. Tyler said it is one of her favorite events of the year.

"We look forward to it every year," Tyler said. "Seeing the neighborhood's reaction and seeing everybody's sense of community. I know everybody's been waiting for it with it not happening last year, so we feel the same way. It's something we need."

“We look forward to it every year,” Tyler said. “Seeing the neighborhood’s reaction and seeing everybody’s sense of community. I know everybody’s been waiting for it with it not happening last year, so we feel the same way. It’s something we need.”

— HEIDI TYLER, GENERAL MANAGER  
HOMESTEAD GARDENS

## Orphan Grain Train

Glenda Paxton from Orphan Grain Train (OGT) worked hard, alongside her husband and other OGT volunteers, to plan and perfect this year's float. This year, Paxton aligned the float with the chamber's theme, and the result was noticeable — OGT earned the distinction of Best Organization/Club for its entry.

"The two things that are iconic about OGT are the train symbolism and the warehouse that is over on East-West Boulevard," Paxton said. "We have kind of combined those two things for our float this cheer and really play that for the theme 'All Aboard.'"

The theme represented the nonprofit's efforts within the community and abroad. The float featured a replica of both the OGT warehouse and the iconic train on a flatbed truck. Because the nonprofit has been participating in the parade since 2017, Paxton said the OGT team has the preparation process down to a science. Where in the past it has taken four months, the team of about eight volunteers spent only a couple months putting it together. They rebuilt banner holders and learned how to customize the material they have used in the past.

OGT is excited to be a part of the parade and to continue to support the community.

"I think it's exciting because it gives us an opportunity to showcase the good that OGT is doing here in the community and abroad," Paxton said. "It just helps solidify that we're here helping the community and helping others."

“I think it’s exciting because it gives us an opportunity to showcase the good that OGT is doing here in the community and abroad. It just helps solidify that we’re here helping the community and helping others.”

— GLENDA PAXTON  
ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN

## Olde Severna Park Improvement Association

DJ Giles of the Olde Severna Park Improvement Association fulfilled a four-year-old dream of his by creating a tall ship on a trailer, donated by Environmental Landcare LLC, as the foundation of the float. The children dressed in Revolutionary War era clothing and red, white and blue themes.

"I thought it would be something cool to do with the naval history here," Giles said.

Giles called on the community for donations and for materials to build the ambitious ship structure.

"Lumber costs have gone through the roof, so it kind of pushed us a lot more to reduce and reuse mentality and simplify the design a little bit," Giles said.

A group of three neighbors and Giles spent two days building the structure, which was the most difficult part, and neighborhood children decorated the float the weekend before the parade.

Giles said that it is all worth it when the parade makes its way to Evergreen Road, through the Olde Severna Park community.

"The kids just love it, and they are beaming because they're seeing their neighbors cheering them on," Giles said. "Building it is fun, but I think making the turn down Evergreen Road into our neighborhood and seeing them cheering us on is the most fun part of the parade."

*From the design of the hull, to the construction of the masts, to the detail of the uniforms, nothing was overlooked. The result was an award-winning float that made Olde Severna Park Best Overall for the second consecutive time.*



## Park Books & Literacy Lab

Park Books, which made its Fourth of July parade debut, displayed a "Charlotte's Web" themed float, complete with a live pig.

Owner Melody Wukitch said she wanted to create a book-themed float that appealed to both adults and children. "Charlotte's Web" stood out for its nostalgia factor and the fact that the Wukitch family has a pet pig named Gilbert. Alongside Gilbert, who played Wilbur, was a large spider statue, representing the title character, Charlotte.

Other than figuring out the logistics of having a pig on the float, the most difficult part about the float-making process for the Park Books team was finding time. The Park Books float was built entirely by Wukitch and eight of her family members. They secured a trailer for the foundation and built a barn structure. Wukitch was excited for the community to see their hard work.

"It's very exciting because the community has really welcomed the bookstore and I think everyone will be very excited to see a 100-plus-pound pig in the parade," Wukitch said prior to the event.

The Park Books float represented a love for reading, and Wukitch hopes that this float, along with the chamber's "Celebrating Our CommUNITY" theme, will inspire people to get back to a sense of normalcy.

"We hope to inspire people to come into the store, not necessarily to buy books but just to re-engage with reading," Wukitch said. "I think that we really want the community to get back to some of those things that we all used to do." ■



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### Our Shepherd Lutheran Church

- Tommy Sommers, LogoZone Promotions
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- Colette Barnes, KinderCare
- Suellen Gerbracht, Edinboro Early School
- Rod Reddish, Pedal Pushers
- Greg and Christie Coster

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- Earl Schaffer

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- Dianna Lancione, Severna Park Voice
- Lonnie Lancione, Severna Park Voice
- Stacey Cassidy, Savvy Consignment
- Mike Hall, Severna Park Lanes
- Dawn Wilson, Side Street Framers & gift gallery
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# Saluting Veterans

Several veterans attended the Severna Park Independence Day parade. The Voice caught up with some of them to see what inspired them to join the military and why, in their words, it's important to recognize the Fourth of July.

**Bob Elder** - After Officer Candidate School in 1966, Bob Elder spent two years in a communications station, served one year in Vietnam supporting PBR (patrol boat, river) forces and then went into the reserves for roughly 20 years.

"I was finishing up at the University of Maryland and figured I would make a choice as to what service I would go into," Elder said. "I made a silly choice by saying, 'Well, I don't want to go in the Army because if your fox-hole is hit, you're dead. If you're in the Air Force and your plane gets shot down, you're dead.

Marine Corps was out of the question. In the Navy, if your ship sinks, you can swim for a while."

Observing Independence Day is important, especially for youth, Elder said.

"Their educators don't teach them the real history, and unfortunately, the real history is not pretty, so I think that all needs to be covered," he said. "I have three grandchildren and I try to present that to them. I have a granddaughter who was just inducted into the Coast Guard Academy, so she has a handle on it."

**Ray Landrum** - Ray Landrum served in the Navy from 1954 to 1989, but he doesn't remember why he enlisted.

"I was 18 years old, so it was a long time ago," he said.

Landrum was proud to watch the parade and to be outdoors with his fellow neighbors.

"It is to help us try to forget the pandemic that wiped out over 600,000 people," he said of the parade.

**Peter Quinton** - A member of the Naval Academy's graduating class of 1963, Peter Quinton served on three ships in Vietnam from 1964 to 1970.

"I had always wanted to go to the Naval Academy since I was 10 years old," said Quinton, a commander retired. "My ancestry back in Great Britain were all British sailors; one was a real admiral in the British Navy. Once I found that out, it sparked my interest, so that's why I enlisted."

Quinton hopes that people embrace this year's parade theme of "Unity in the CommUNITY" throughout their daily lives.

"With the divisions that this country has, I think we have to remember why the country was founded and that was equality for everybody," Quinton said. ■

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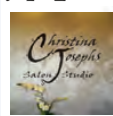
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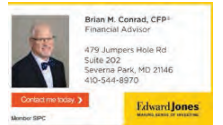


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