

Severna Park, Broadneck
Basketball Teams Clash
» Page 22



Troop 995 Eagle
Scouts Honored
» Page 32



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JANUARY 2022

Legislative Session Could Spur Changes To Life In Severna Park, Arnold

By Zach Sparks

zach@severnaparkvoice.com

Are speed cameras coming to Severna Park? Is more oversight coming to the Anne Arundel County Board of Education?

Maryland lawmakers in the Senate and House of Delegates have 90 days from January through April to lobby for their priorities and pass legislation. While much of the debate during the 2022 legislative session will involve redistricting, whether to spend or save the state's \$2.5 billion budget surplus, and fixing the economy, several proposed bills involve issues specific to Severna Park and the Broadneck peninsula.

Senator Ed Reilly is sponsoring Senate Bill 43 to authorize the placement of speed cameras on Baltimore-Annapolis Boulevard between Hoyle Lane and Cypress Creek Road. Collected fines would fund speed reduction and pedestrian safety measures.

As of January 17, Delegate Heather Bagnall has introduced eight pieces of legislation. One of those, Bill 167, intends to alter the way the Anne Arundel County Board of Education conducts public business. If the law passes, the board would be prohibited from voting on any action after 10:00pm. The law would also require the board to elect a parliamentarian.

Bagnall said the bill is intended to
» Continued on page 8

Berrywood Woman Raises \$49,500 For Sister's Family After Colorado Wildfire



Derek and Devon Drechsel were raising their two kids near the Flatirons in Superior, Colorado, before the wildfire struck.

By Zach Sparks

zach@severnaparkvoice.com

Derek and Devon Drechsel were visiting family in Pennsylvania on December 30 when they learned that their home in Superior, Colorado, was engulfed in flames.

"We got the evacuation orders through alerts on our phone," Derek said. "We started streaming the local news and we could kind of project where the fire was by seeing where the reporters were setting up."

In one of the live broadcasts, a deck

appeared in the background.

"We have distinct rails on our deck, so we had a good idea that was our house burning down," Derek said. "Before seeing that, maybe we could have held out hope."

Fanned by wind gusts, the wildfire destroyed more than 1,000 homes and caused more than \$513 million of damage, according to the Boulder Office of Disaster Management. On the street where the Drechsels lived, nine homes were ravaged completely and two more suffered damage but maintained some

of the structure. Over homes were unscathed.

"There's neighborhoods where, because of the nature of the fire spread by gusts of up to 105 miles an hour, it would spread to a house here or there, over other houses, past other streets — a very unusual burn pattern," said Jared Polis, governor of Colorado, during a press conference on December 31. "And the other unusual factor is, just in the blink of an eye. This was a disaster in fast mo-

» Continued on page 10

Student Appears On "Harry Potter" Show

Annie Bennett, a former Severna Park resident and current Emerson College student, appeared on the TBS trivia show "Harry Potter: Hogwarts Tournament of Houses" in December. Read about her experience on page 44.



Inside

Community	1-13
Politics & Opinion	14-19
Religion	20-21
Sports	22-30
School & Youth	31-39
Health & Fitness	40-41
Arts & Entertainment	42-46
Business	47-56

Margueritte Mills Volunteer Of The Month

By Haley Weisgerber

Severna Park resident Kim Walker was named the Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) December Volunteer of the Month for her dedication to serving the Severna Park High School (SPHS) Business Advisory Board (BAB). Walker said serving the youth is one of the greatest joys of her life and she hopes that she plays an important role in their lives.

"People say they are our future, but they're not," Walker said. "They're our today."

Walker has been volunteering with young people for over 20 years in youth ministry as a certified lay minister. After many years in that position, her pastor at Baldwin Memorial United Methodist Church in Millersville asked her to begin working with senior members of the church, affectionately referred to as "seasoned saints."

She was originally sad to leave the youth, but after a few months, she became attached to the seniors. Her pastor said he put her in the role because of the way she talked about her grandmother, who raised her. Her grandmother is the reason that Walker felt inspired to serve others.

"I think about the fact of her giving her heart and her love wholeheartedly, not just the financial part, but making sure I had a home, making sure that I felt love," Walker said. "I always want to make sure that I am making others feel loved."

Walker began working with the

Volunteer Wins Award For Dedication To Students



Kim Walker was named the AACPS December Volunteer of the Month for her dedication to the Severna Park High School Business Advisory Board and for supporting students.

BAB when her son, Miles, started at SPHS. She was actively involved in Miles' education through elementary and middle school, so when she heard about the BAB at a back-to-school night, she immediately jumped at the opportunity to assist children with professional advice, mock interviews and general life advice.

"I was blessed to have Miles at Severna Park and the opportunities that it has for parents to be involved, not just directly involved with your kid but just being there for all of the kids," Walker said. "As the old saying goes, 'It takes a community to raise a kid.'"

Walker, who works full-time in

clinical research, has now served on the BAB for five years and is currently the treasurer. Although her son has graduated, she has continued to work with the business advisory board and has no plans to stop.

"What I love about Severna Park is that Miles graduated in 2019, but I'm still allowed to be a part of the business advisory board," Walker said. "There are a lot of parents whose kids graduated, but they are still a part of that because it's a community."

In December, Severna Park's signature program facilitator, Joanne Brack, invited Walker to a Board of Education meeting to support Brack as she presented information about the BAB to the board. Walker didn't think anything of it, even after her son asked to join her, until they announced that she was the December Volunteer of the Month. She said it was unexpected and a great honor.

"Just the fact that somebody would even think enough of me to put my name up for it was just awesome, but to actually be recognized," Walker said. "That's not why I do it. I do it because I love doing it. I love being with the young people."

Walker said that people often say they are too busy to volunteer, but she encourages people to make time to serve others.

"The world is a community and I think if we treated each other better, if we respected each other more and if we showed God's love to each other," Walker said, "this world will be a better place."

The Best Of Severna Park Contest Is Back

Each year, we count on you — our loyal readers — to help us choose the best businesses and professional services in Severna Park, Arnold and Millersville. Restaurants, places for entertainment, fitness centers, attorneys — you name it. We want to highlight the best of the best.

The official Best of Severna Park ballot will be printed in our February edition, and we will begin accepting votes (print and online) immediately. Voting will continue through March, with the winners being announced in the April edition. Rules will be printed with the February ballot, but you can start now by brainstorming your favorite businesses and services.

Good luck with voting! We can't wait to see your choices.

Community Grants Program Accepts Applications

Anne Arundel County Executive Stuart Pittman and Arundel Community Development Services Inc. (ACDS) are accepting applications for community support grants. The community grant programs offer Fiscal Year 2023 funding for eligible nonprofit organizations that provide vital services to county residents.

Priority consideration will be given to applications that are:

- Responding directly to a COVID-19 safety net need in the community and/or addressing a gap in nonprofit revenues due to COVID-19.
- Making services available to underserved populations, addressing the health and well-being of communities, promoting equity and inclusion or working toward eliminating the opportunity gap in Anne Arundel County.

ACDS will once again oversee the grant process for the county. Last year, the county awarded 52 nonprofit organizations a total of \$1.8 million in funding.

"We are excited we can help the county build the capacity of our community partners who are providing much-needed services for our residents," said Erin Karpewicz, ACDS executive director. "Programming can range from GED and jobs skills training for adults seeking to improve their employment prospects to respite services for families with children who have disabilities."

The application period is open now and will close on Monday, February 21, at 4:00pm. Funding is available for the period of July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023, and is contingent on the Anne Arundel County Council approval of the Fiscal Year 2023 budget. If awarded, funds will be made available on or around July 1, 2022.

Applications will be accepted through the ACDS Neighborly Portal online. New applicants must first register to access the portal; anyone who needs assistance registering or has questions about the grant process should contact Laura Shaffer, ACDS grants associate, at 410-222-3964 or lshaffer@acdsinc.org.



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Introducing Ashley Earle

Ashley Earle is proud to be a fifth generation resident of Severna Park, Maryland. Her family's history in Severna Park dates to the founding of Woods Memorial Church and Severn School. After graduating from Severna Park High School, then Salisbury University, she worked as the Marketing Director for an assisted living company. She loved helping residents transition to their new home and took great joy in helping the whole family during this time. These experiences reinforced how important it is to skillfully guide families through life changing decisions. After six fulfilling years, she made the decision to raise her children.

Transitioning back to the work force, Ashley decided to pursue a life-long love of real estate. She can see the potential in that diamond-in-the-rough and the best way to decorate that new beautiful room. Having a large family in both Severna Park and Annapolis, Ashley has extensive knowledge of all the individual communities that make this area so special. Her down-to-earth approach is matched by her desire to exceed expectations. Ashley understands that selling or purchasing a home is one of the most significant decisions a person can make. When not busy with real estate, Ashley, her husband and their three sons stay very active. They are a family that loves sports including hockey, soccer, lacrosse and swimming. When not on a sports field or ice rink you will probably find them on the water kayaking or paddle boarding in the summer months. This area is so special to Ashley and her family and she feels very lucky to be able to work where she loves to live.

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Businesses Collect Coats For People In Need

During its coat drive benefiting One Warm Coat this winter, Stahley Thompson Homes of TTR Sotheby's International Realty had help from generous partners around Severna Park. Savvy Consignment provided more than 100 coats. Half of the overall donations will go to the Helping Hands of America office in Severn and the other half will be shared with Afghan refugees.



Newman Family Wins Petco Love Story Competition And Grant



We're a 2021 Winner!

petco love stories

pitties & purrs org

I too was biased and afraid ... Zeke has proven that pit bulls are indeed misunderstood."

Each year, Petco Love Stories invites adopters to share how their pets have changed their lives. Winners get the reward of giving grants to the organizations that they've adopted from. Newman's story won Pitties and Purrs in Baltimore a 2021 Love Stories award and a \$10,000 grant from Petco Love and BOBS from Skechers. Newman also personally won a pair of BOBS shoes, a canvas print and \$100 in-store Petco shopping spree, which she generously used to purchase Christmas gifts for the foster pups in Pitties and Purrs' care.

Pitties and Purrs Rescue Inc. is a nonprofit, all-volunteer, all-foster organization that takes in approximately 100 dogs and 25 cats each year. Most of the animals it rescues have medical issues, which can add up quickly. In fact, last year, its expenses came to over \$220,000.

"Grants like this literally save lives, like the three pups Pitties and Purrs rescued on Christmas Eve from being euthanized at a shelter in Georgia," Newman explained.

After winning the initial \$10,000 grant, Newman had a shot at winning up to \$25,000 more in the People's Choice awards that were public voting based. While she finished heartbreakingly close at sixth place — when the top five won additional grants — Newman, along with her husband, Rob, and 11-year-old daughter, Cara,

have all become advocates for pit-bull-type dogs.

"My daughter proudly wears her pit bull lover sweatshirts and T-shirts to school," Newman said. "I continue to dispel myths/untruths and promote fundraising and advocacy where I can."

Due to the pit bulls' appearance and the heart-wrenching history of dogfighting, there's a common misconception that all pit bulls are aggressive and dangerous. "But for those of us who know and love them, we know that pit bulls are often the biggest love bugs who just want to snuggle up with you on the couch and play with their friends at the dog park," Newman said.

Most recently, Newman started a fundraiser through Facebook to crowdsource more funds. In two weeks, Newman raised \$1,100 in donations through her Facebook page, plus a \$500 matching gift from Rob's employer, Stanley Black & Decker.

"Zeke is our first pit bull, but he won't likely be our last, and I will continue to raise awareness for him and dogs like him whenever I can," Newman said.

To learn more about Pitties and Purrs or donate, visit www.pittiesandpurrs.org.



By Lauren Burke Meyer

For Severna Park resident Julie Newman, adopted pit bull Zeke is her family's "perfectly imperfect match." So much so that Newman was compelled to enter the Petco Love Story competition. Her submission was one of 101 out of 10,000 that was selected a winner in December.

The Newman family adopted Zeke in April 2021 after they'd originally been looking for a retriever. According to Newman's submission:

"Zeke is nothing like what I thought I wanted, and yet he's everything I didn't know I needed. He is incredibly smart, loving, loyal, silly and sweet ... Most importantly, he's taught me not to judge a book by its cover. Although intellectually I had always felt bad for the unfair reputation of the pit bull and would donate money to their cause, I didn't want to adopt one. On some unconscious level,

Riggs Building Has Storied History As Former Telephone Exchange

*Financial Advisor
Jason LaBarge Moves
Into New Space*



By Zach Sparks

To a younger generation that has grown up with cellphones and iPads, it may sound like something out of a science fiction story. Human operators connecting telephone lines or virtual circuits of digital systems to establish telephone calls. That was the system many telephone exchanges used through the first part of the 20th century.

One such location was the Severna Park Telephone Exchange. The first exchange was located in the back of the Grotsky store building, as author Nelson Molter recounted in his 1969 book "An Illustrated History of Severna Park, Anne Arundel County, Maryland." In 1913, the system became part of the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company, with 26 telephones.

The telephone exchange moved several times, from Oscar Hatton's house initially to the Lamont house on Maple Avenue — property owned by Severn School — to a house across the street. In 1938, the telephone exchange moved to Riggs Avenue,



This building was home to the Severna Park Telephone Exchange from 1938 until the 1960s.

occupying one-half of the first floor of a two-story stucco building directly across from Severna Park Elementary School.

That building is now home to LaBarge Financial advisor Jason LaBarge and his team. A Round Bay resident, LaBarge was fascinated by the building's history.

"I have always been interested in history and in antiques," LaBarge said. "I wanted my practice to have an element of both, and when I heard

the building was for sale, I jumped right at it."

LaBarge was also told that the American Medical Association of Maryland offices were upstairs for over 20 years. "The building has been home to several doctors and dentists over the years, so many Severna Park residents got their teeth cleaned here or their cold treated here more than likely," he said.

Starting in 1931, the telephone exchange was run by Minerva Howard,

who had two daughters. Customers often paid their telephone bills at this location. One of Howard's daughters, Lydia, who started working with her mother at the exchange when she was just 16, retired in 1981.

Severna Park historian Scott Jay compared Lydia to Sarah, the telephone operator for the town of Mayberry on "The Andy Griffith Show."

"Lydia was the 'go to' if we wanted to know if school was open on snowy days or where our mothers were playing bridge," Jay said.

As Molter explained in his book, there was no directory for people making calls.

"For local calls, you merely cranked the old-time battery telephone and asked the operator to give you the Smiths, the Jones, etc.," Molter wrote. "When you left home to visit neighbors, you merely called

the operator and asked her to switch your calls to the home where you were visiting. When you returned home, you always called the operator to 'report in.'"

Following the conversion to the dial system in 1960, the Severna Park exchange became a part of the large Glen Burnie telephone complex. In 1975, the Severna Park exchange was moved again to a centralized office on Dorsey Road.



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Shipley's Choice Family Wins Inaugural Voice Holiday Lights Contest



The home of Jim and Jeanine Malena eclipsed 700 votes, more than 40 percent of the overall total between five finalists, to win the Severna Park Voice's first holiday lights contest, as chosen by our readers and followers online. Jim and Jeanine won a \$100 Cafe Mezzanotte gift card, presented by owner Kosmas "Tommie" Koukoulis. Their home on Rustling Oaks Drive captured the attention and awe of spectators throughout December. Congratulations to the Malena family!



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Starting The New Year With Thankfulness

Michele Sabean
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“When the song of the angels is stilled, When the star in the sky is gone, When the kings and princes are home, When the shepherds are back with their flock, The work of Christmas begins: ...To find the lost, To heal the broken, To feed the hungry, To release the prisoner, To rebuild the nations, To bring peace among brothers, To make music in the heart.”

- Howard Thurman

I am writing this article as we start the new year with cold, dark days filled with snow, rain and the relentless backdrop of COVID. My family knows that I like waiting to take our outside lights down. It is not just a means of procrastination, but even after Christmas is over, I like the lights to help us on the darkest days and as a reminder of Christmas and the work that needs to continue. Working at SPAN, I am constantly reminded, especially during the holiday season, of this community's generosity and love for others. I am reflecting on that strong commitment to others, and I love having that as a launching point as we start into this new year.

So many people and groups have donated money and gifts these last couple of months; there are many more than I can name. Thanks to our generous community, SPAN's Holiday Caring program provided close to 150 families with food for Thanksgiving dinner and over 170 families with food and Christmas gifts for their 377 children. So many made this all possible, from businesses such as Emidio Vincenzo Escape Salon and LaBarge Financial, to schools and community groups such as Girl Scout Troop 2120 and



Edinboro Early School.

We are thankful for all of our member churches for their regular pledges and many of which, such as Severna Park United Methodist Church, Woods Memorial Presbyterian and Baldwin United Methodist Church, sponsored many families. We are also thankful for our volunteers, who are essential in making this all happen, working many hours and sometimes even coming in over the weekends.

We are extremely grateful for all who keep our pantry and bank account filled including School of the Incarnation, which delivered a pickup truck full of cereal boxes! There was also a generous community member who stopped by to ask me what we needed most and then a couple of days later, Amazon boxes started arriving! We are definitely thankful for all of the neighborhood groups, which are a big part of our shelves staying filled; examples include Dunfer Hill Road, Pondview community and Point Field Landing in Millersville. We are blessed and grateful for all the donations. We regularly get to hear the



gratitude from our clients. You have helped so many. Our clients, some almost in tears, thank you!

From seeing this community in action, it is clear to me that we are ready to do and continue to do the work of Christmas! I look forward to the year ahead and the actions that we all will take to make things better for those around us!

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. SPAN serves 14 zip codes in Anne Arundel County. SPAN is located behind Our Shepherd Lutheran Church at 400 Benfield Road in Severna Park. Hours are Monday through Thursday from 10:00am-12:45pm. For more information, call 410-647-0889, email spanhelps@yahoo.com or visit www.spanhelps.org. Financial donations may be made through the website. Food donations may be dropped off anytime using the storage bin behind SPAN's building. Please "like" SPAN on Facebook.

Legislative Session Could Spur Changes To Life In Severna Park, Arnold

» Continued from page 1

“put some guardrails” into the meetings without limiting the work done by the board members.

“We’ve gone from an appointed to an elected board, and that comes with some growing pains for sure, and they are working really hard to reign those meetings in,” Bagnall said. “... We really didn’t do a good job of providing resources [for the board], unlike the Maryland General Assembly where we have a committee system and we have chairs, vice chairs, institutional knowledge and counsel. The board has very limited resources, so it also means when the meetings don’t have some level of control and consistency, it makes it hard to recruit board members to want to do this job.”

“To ask board members to take votes at 1 or 2 in the morning, to ask folks with kids to watch a board meeting until 10:00pm, 11:00pm, 12:00am, 1:00am — it’s just a little untenable,” she said.

Another one of Bagnall’s bills would establish a commission to build a memorial dedicated to Maryland women veterans. Although Cecil County has a monument dedicated to women in the military, it’s not strictly for veterans.

“We wanted one dedicated to women veterans because women veterans are becoming a larger and larger part of the military force and they have unique service and unique challenges,” Bagnall said.

She is also sponsoring bills to require inspections for elevators installed in privately owned single-family residences and to create the Commission on Student Behavioral Health and Mental Health Treatment. That last bill, House Bill 56, is being reintroduced after it passed in the House of Delegates in 2021 but failed to reach the Senate before session ended.

“It’s to try and address an issue that constantly comes up, and that issue is that we ask educators

“To ask board members to take votes at 1 or 2 in the morning, to ask folks with kids to watch a board meeting until 10:00pm, 11:00pm, 12:00am, 1:00am — it’s just a little untenable.”

— DELEGATE HEATHER BAGNALL

to be health providers,” Bagnall said. “We really want a commission that is working with education but is under the umbrella of the Behavioral Health Administration so that we’re really looking at what our resources are, what our need is, and how we can have a common language. Because even the language we use around behavioral health services — in a health setting, you have a diagnosis. In an education setting, you have a 504 or an IEP (individualized educational program). In a health setting, what you call a counselor is not necessarily the same thing as what you call a counselor in an educational setting. So we really need those two aspects working in tandem.”

She is also working on a protection bill for state employees.

“We have had two whistleblowers in two months who have been either early retired, moved to a different department, or have been relieved of their duties — who brought forth some important information,” she said.

For example, she cited spoiled vaccines distributed at the Maryland Renaissance Festival and Sandy State Park.

As of January 17, neither Delegate Sid Saab nor Delegate Rachel Muñoz — the other two District 33 representatives — had introduced legislation. Entering her first session, Muñoz expects a busy year.

“As a delegate and a mom, I am going to be fighting for the next generation and the taxpayers,” she said. “We should save much of the surplus for a rainy day.”

While Republicans and Democrats will disagree on how to use that budget surplus, members from both sides agree that some of those funds should be saved.

Republican Governor Larry Hogan proposed saving funds for the state’s rainy day fund and using the rest for tax relief benefiting retirees and work-

ing families.

Appearing on WYPR’s program “Midday” with host Tom Hall, appropriations committee chair Maggie McIntosh, a Democrat, said she would like some money to be put into reserves. She also supports one-time expenditures instead of tax cuts.

“If you cut taxes, those revenues will not be there for you to fix the roads, and send kids to school, and provide public health and transportation,” the Baltimore City delegate said.

The Maryland legislature has a Democratic majority, so Hogan and his fellow Republicans will need to compromise to get their wish list funded. Senate President Bill Ferguson, a Democrat, said he is focused on Marylanders’ health and the economy. The House of Delegates has the same priorities: health care, public safety, education, and helping families hit hard by the rising costs of goods and services.

“Our focus will be getting more people back to work, strengthening Maryland families and ensuring everyone can put food on the table and afford basic necessities,” House Speaker Adrienne Jones told her fellow lawmakers.

Whether Marylanders reside in Anne Arundel County or elsewhere in the state, many of them face those same challenges because of the coronavirus, Bagnall said.

“The economic impact is still there, the supply chain issues are still there, the unemployment issues are still there within the department itself,” she said.



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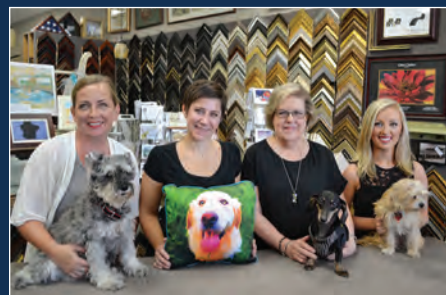
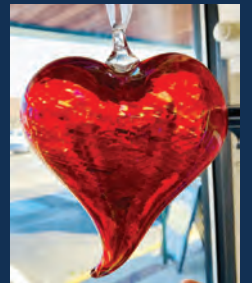
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Berrywood Woman Raises \$49,500

» Continued from page 1

tion all over the course of half a day, nearly all the damage. Many families having minutes, minutes to get whatever they could — their pets, their kids — into the car and leave.”

As of January 17, the FBI — along with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and the U.S. Forest Service — were still investigating the cause of the fire, with their search focused on an area where a burning shed was spotted on land owned by a religious sect.

Whatever the cause, the damage is irreversible.

Derek and Devon cannot repurchase many of the items lost to the fire. Gone are wedding photos saved on hard drives. Gone are treasured possessions from their fathers, both of whom died in 2021.

“We had pictures, mementos and things that remind us of them and the other people we don’t have around anymore,” Derek said. “Our daughter lost all her art projects that she’s so proud of. We had them tacked all over the playroom and she would show them to people.”

Devon’s sister, Severna Park resident Courtney Clarke, started a GoFundMe page to help them replace what they could. Within five days, the GoFundMe surpassed \$36,000. By mid-January, that total was up to \$49,540.

“It’s crazy the number of people who have shared it and don’t even know us,” said Clarke, who lives in Berrywood. “We’re absolutely blown away by the generosity of people.”

After the fire, the family moved in with Derek’s brother in Littleton, Colorado. Now they are staying in the house of a friend who lives in Boulder, closer to their former home.

With a 6-year-old daughter and 3-year-old son, they will navigate the hardships ahead.

“As adults, something like this

is incredibly difficult,” Derek said. “I can’t imagine how a 3-year-old is comprehending this. Even our daughter is mourning the loss of her stuffed animals and art. We have talked about, ‘How do we manage this as parents? Are we handling it the right way?’

“We were lucky we didn’t have to rush to the car while smoke and fire were billowing out on the town, while we’re wondering, ‘Did we get the dog? Did we get this?’” he said. “We didn’t have to put our children through that trauma, but many families had to.”

The family’s dog was safe with Derek’s brother when the fire struck. Despite everything lost, they try to focus on the positives.

“We haven’t thought, ‘Why me?’”

Derek said. “I don’t think we have had that sentiment. It’s a devastating loss. We have gone through so many emotions from devastating sadness to being overwhelmed with gratitude and appreciation for our community and friends in our lives and for people we’ve never met who have supported us.”

“We have gone through so many emotions from devastating sadness to being overwhelmed with gratitude and appreciation for our community and friends in our lives and for people we’ve never met who have supported us.”

— DEREK DRECHSEL

That gratitude keeps them going and gives them hope of building a new home in Superior.

“We moved to this community 8 or 9 years ago because it seemed like a pretty good place,” Derek said. “For us being here to raise our family, being integrated into the community, this has solidified our intent to stay in the place where we have made so many connections. We’re going to appreciate the moments and the place where we are. The outpouring of support gives us reassurance that this is the place we want to be.”

To learn more about the Drechsel family’s losses, visit GoFundMe. For more information on general donations to victims of the wildfire, go to www.boulderoem.com.



Almost nothing remains where the Drechsel house stood in Superior, Colorado.



Remembering Katherine Mueller

Katherine Elizabeth Mueller passed away on December 27, 2021, after a courageous three-year battle with neuroendocrine tumors. She died peacefully while in the arms of loved ones and with her French bulldog, Luna, by her side.

Katherine was born on January 28, 1990, in Silver Spring, Maryland, to Robin Ann Sells and Dennis Doane. Katherine was raised in Millersville and graduated from Severna Park High School in 2008. She then earned her Bachelor of Science degree from Towson University in 2012. She went on to work at Anne Arundel Medical Center for the duration of her career as a community health education specialist. During Katherine's nine years at Anne Arundel Medical Center, she taught numerous health-based classes to communities of all ages and socioeconomic backgrounds. She was involved in community coalitions, advisory boards, committees, and planning groups that impact underserved communities in Anne Arundel County and on the Eastern Shore.

Katherine's favorite things in life were spending time with family members and friends, creating handcrafted pieces of art and snuggling with Luna. Katherine married Matthew Mueller on September 12, 2015. Their love was pure. Laughter and generosity con-

quered all obstacles for them in their six-year marriage. The high school sweethearts made the most of every day, no matter where their journey had taken them.

Katherine is survived by Matthew Mueller; her mother, Robin Sells (Larry), of Millersville; father, Dennis Doane, of Punta Cana, Florida; mother-in-law and father-in-law, Lisa and Ralf Mueller, of Severna Park; brother, Brian Doane, of Baltimore; brother, Drew Mueller (Jennette), of Edgewater; sister-in-law, Holly Ware (Colin), of Glen Burnie; stepsister, Katie Murphy (Kevin), of Park Ridge, Illinois; stepbrother, David Sells (Ryan), of Severna Park; stepbrother, Tommy Sells (Elizabeth), of Annapolis; grandparents Don and Betty Holck, of Savannah, Georgia; and many loving aunts, uncles, cousins and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, the Mueller and Sells families kindly ask that donations be made to the NET Research Foundation to the Katherine Mueller NET Research Fund in support of funding NET research focused on Katherine's type of cancer, pancreatic neuroendocrine tumors (pNETs). Donations in Katherine's memory can be made by mailing a check to NETRF, 31 St. James Avenue, Suite 365, Boston, MA 02116 or online at www.netrf.org/get-involved/give-now.

District 5 Budget Town Hall Scheduled For February 1

County Executive Steuart Pittman is holding budget town hall meetings to give residents a chance to share their priorities for the Fiscal Year 2023 budget.

Beginning in January, the Pittman administration kicked off the first of seven in-person town halls, one for each council district, and one countywide virtual town hall. The virtual meeting for District 5, which encompasses Severna Park and Arnold, is set for February 1 at 6:00pm.

Residents in attendance will be given two minutes each to share public testimony about what they would like funded in the county budget. To share input, register for the Zoom meeting by visiting www.aacounty.org/budgettownhalls. All budget town halls will be streamed live to www.facebook.com/aacoexec where residents will be able to watch them in full after the meeting and provide written comments.

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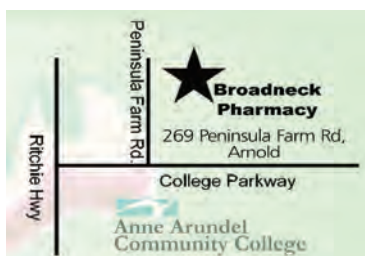
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Lauren’s Law: 2021 Year In Review



Lauren Burke Meyer

clean slate of a year — which is 2022 for anyone else still struggling — to recap some of my favorite Lauren’s Law moments from last year.

January 2021

In “New Home, New Baby,” I shared how literal I took this sentiment. My husband and I found out we received our new home in Severna Park a few hours before my daughter, Riley, was born.

One year later, and we’re still getting settled. Will there ever be a day where we don’t feel like there are big projects or things to organize? Please lie and say “yes.” Anyhow, I’m still beyond grateful that my family was able to move back to this incredible community.

February 2021

My horrific matchmaking skills were on full display in honor of Valentine’s Day. I haven’t learned my lesson to stop trying to set up family and friends. In case you’re

W hat year is it any-way? Anyone else feel that 2020 and 2021 completely bled together as one crazy year? Yeah, me too. Giving into that blur-like feeling, I’m pausing a moment on this

wondering, the following sentiment remains unchanged: *“I’m not above introducing myself to tall strangers while waiting in line for the Best Buy Geek Squad.”*

March 2021

The one where my sister, Kristen Burke, and I remembered our Severna Park High School field hockey coach, Lillian “Lil” Shelton. This was one of my two favorite columns of the year with so many beautiful memories of the winningest high school coach in Maryland’s history. From end-of-year banquets with thoughtful gifts to ski trips to bagel breakfasts and team dinners, many of my favorite memories of coach Shelton weren’t even on the field.

I’ll be coaching lacrosse in the new year and hope to make sports nearly as fun as she did.

April 2021

My other favorite column of the year was titled, “Two Lessons from Mister Rogers and Reverend Schoener.” I leaned into my newfound Mister Rogers obsession and spoke with the Rev. Terry Schoener, who was a few years behind the sweater-wearing legend at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

As I wrote in April about unique ministries like children’s television or journalism, *“Leave it to both Mister Rogers and Dr. Schoener to inspire us all to find our ministry — even when it’s outside of a church or right under our noses.”*

Another key takeaway? Let’s all work hard at being a good neighbor to our

literal neighbors and those outside our community.

May 2021

I shared how I’m a terrible cook — even for simple dishes like instant mashed potatoes. Enough said.

June 2021

When traveling 24 hours round-trip in a car with a toddler and infant, you need a vacation after a so-called beach “vacation.” Must remember to ask my toddler to hold the side of sand from my bagel this year.

July 2021

This month’s article title was “Does Spinach And Artichoke Dip Really Need Spinach And Artichokes?” Spoiler: the answer is yes, and it’s possible to need three grocery store trips to get the ingredients for a simple five-ingredient recipe.

August 2021

In August, I talked about my musical stints with piano, recorder and violin. This part still makes me laugh:

“The recorder. The first instrument all elementary school students have no business playing. We all thought we were such musical geniuses playing this woodwind. On the contrary. What’s the opposite of music? Noise.”

September 2021

I recounted the time my immediate family traveled by RV during a nor’easter to tailgate with our fellow Penn State football fans.

“From the get-go, the weekend getaway resembled George Clooney’s classic film ‘The Perfect Storm.’...Three hours of pounding rain

and gusty winds shook, rattled and almost rolled the RV over.”

My poor father would be the only one left in the RV with a cramped bed, cold shower and broken toilet after Penn State suffered a loss to Ohio State.

October 2021

In honor of National Orthodontic Health Month, I talked about my baby Dracula teeth that needed pulling and my quasi-traumatizing five years as a metal mouth.

November 2021

According to my article, “playing with toys at work was turning out more stressful than I’d expected” back in my public relations days when I had to construct my then-client’s magnetic toy design for NBC4 Washington. In the end, the toy’s ball did what I desperately needed it to do — and that’s shoot out and down the slide for its 953,000 viewers.

December 2021

This time last year, my then 2-year-old daughter, Charlotte, jumped into a giant, muddy puddle as we were headed to Christmas Eve dinner. I learned not to sweat the small stuff — or at least am working hard not to.

Happy New Year to all and thanks to each one of you who regularly read my columns. I appreciate you laughing along with me!

Lauren Burke Meyer is a Severna Park native who was inspired to write Lauren’s Law as a humorous play on the well-known Murphy’s Law adage: “anything that can go wrong, will go wrong.”

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County Council Update

Amanda Fiedler
County Council
District 5



was Bill 112-21, which I introduced at the close of the year.

This was my second attempt to address an important lack of oversight related to the \$112 million in COVID-related federal funds. I introduced a nearly identical bill in November. The bill received four votes, which is the majority needed to pass standard legislation. However, because I introduced the legislation as "emergency," it required five votes to pass.

Undeterred, I immediately revived the legislation in standard bill form, in Bill 112-21. The revived bill allows for public discussion on any expenditure over \$500,000 if three or more council members request a public hearing. The bill also codifies monthly reporting of all American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) dollars. Why was this bill so critical?

Funding oversight is an important function of the legislative branch. As the final fiscal authority for the county, the council amends and votes on the annual budget and many other fiscal matters, including grant funding.

In 2008, the county council passed legislation that created section 4-11-114 of our code and the handling of grant funding. The conditional appropriation of the unanticipated grants section was created in cooperation between the then administration and auditor. At the time, any unanticipated grant fund, even as small as \$5, required approval by the county council. This created a significant amount of legislation and visits to the council. Since the passage of that legislation, grants have been appropriated, without council approval, so long as certain conditions are met.

Until 2020, it was unusual for an unanticipated grant award to the county

The Anne Arundel County Council closed out the 2021 year with a flurry of legislation and a historic number of bills — 118 to be exact. One of the bills that successfully passed at a recent council meeting

to be above \$250,000 and rare to be above \$500,000. Federal COVID relief funds changed that. Without the passage of Bill 112-21, there was no mechanism in which the public could weigh in on the historic amount of tax dollars being spent by the administration. This will no longer be the case. A victory for fiscal accountability.

As we kick off the new year, the council is also preparing to hear, discuss and debate some significant legislation. While these bills have not yet been introduced, they are required by recent state and the county charter, respectively.

Last year's General Assembly session made sweeping changes to police accountability procedures, removing the longstanding Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights. The state passed legislation that requires every jurisdiction in the state to create a three-tiered police accountability procedure, including the police accountability board, administrative charging committee, and the trial board.

Each county in the state must have this new, multi-tiered system in place with appointments to positions made by July 2022. As a result, legislation from the office of the county executive will be introduced in the coming weeks.

With final discussion of the charter revision commission concluded, you can also expect to see a proposed change to the county council district map. Like the federal and state maps, Anne Arundel County has a district map that outlines the borders of all seven councilmanic districts. The county charter requires that an appointed charter revision commission make recommended adjustments to the county map every 10 years, based on the most recent census data. The council maps have historically been condensed to areas that are geographically close.

The council is currently reviewing the finalized report from the charter review commission and will discuss map adjustments in future legislation.

You can review these and all other bills on the Anne Arundel County Council website at www.aacounty.org/departments/county-council.

For any questions, concerns, or to sign up for the District 5 newsletter, please email me at amanda.fiedler@aacounty.org.

Happy new year!

Happy 2022

Dana Schallheim
Board of Education
District 5



of you, I want nothing more than our children to remain in school buildings and learn in-person. I am quite tired of our children bearing the brunt of this pandemic while life occurs relatively normally outside of school. I know there are many rumors swirling, so let me be as clear as I can. I cannot and will not ever

support a system-wide closure of our schools under any circumstances due to COVID-19 until or unless restaurants, malls, movie theaters and other businesses are also closed. Cohort, class, grade, or individual school closures on a temporary basis due to an

outbreak is the call of the county health officer and will inevitably continue to occur as has been the case since the fall.

Many of you have also asked about virtual instruction in lieu of taking a systemwide inclement weather day. The Maryland State Board of Education and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) have not indicated to us or to the other Maryland public school systems that a virtual day in lieu of an inclement weather day would be acceptable. Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) has posed this question and this scenario would seem to be a reasonable course of action, in my view. Due to a fourth snow day occurring on January 7, while I write this article, the school year will be extended by one day. This must occur officially before AACPS officially asks for a waiver from MSDE, which we will do.

Happyest of new years to you and yours! Like you, I am praying for a better year than the last and am hopeful that the current COVID surge subsidies as quickly as possible.

Like many

"Had we started after Labor Day, we would be in school until at least the end of the third week of June, which would be unacceptable to most, including this board member."

Next, let me address the 2022-2023 academic calendar that was adopted by the Board of Education during its January 5 meeting. This calendar includes start dates that correspond with Dr. George Arlotto's recommendation as well as the recommendation of the AACPS Calendar Committee. The calendar committee, under AACPS policy, produces draft calendars every year and consists of volunteers from every stakeholder group including students, parents, teachers, PTA, CAC (Citizens Advisory Committee), and members from every bargaining unit. The calendar includes three snow days as required by state law, the third marking period ends before Easter/spring break, and this calendar conforms to state law, which requires a minimum of 180 school days as well as a minimum of 1,080 hours of instruction (1,170 for high school) per academic year.

Had we started after Labor Day, we would be in school until at least the end of the third week of June, which would be unacceptable to most, including this board member. I applaud the board for establishing an inclusive and equitable calendar based on

logic, heeding nearly all calendar committee recommendations.

Finally, now that it is January, our budget season is in full swing. Our second, and final, budget hearing occurred at Old Mill High School on January 13. A budget workshop was held January 18 in the AACPS board room. As always, your concerns and ideas can be shared at any time with me and the entire Board of Education by writing to boardoffice@aacps.org.

Additionally, the county executive is hosting budget hearings for each of the seven councilmanic districts. All of these hearings are virtual this year due to ongoing COVID-19 concerns. The hearing specifically for District 5 residents will occur on Tuesday, February 1, at 6:00pm. For more information or to register to speak, please visit www.aacounty.org/budgettownhalls. As always, I can be reached at dschallheim@aacps.org or 443-534-2660.

Work Is Underway In The Maryland House Of Delegates

Rachel Muñoz
Delegate
District 33



session that started January 12, I am excited by the opportunities to make a positive difference for you.

Happy new year! We have a new year and new beginnings. The opportunity to represent our community in the Maryland House of Delegates is the honor of a lifetime. As I begin my first

The General Assembly will consider thousands of new bills that will impact every aspect of Maryland life. These range from introducing a referendum on legalizing recreational marijuana use to prohibiting Governor Larry Hogan from using apps that automatically delete text messages with his staffers. I will do my best to keep you informed.

I am already getting to work on your behalf. We have launched our office hours so you can speak with me directly about a problem with our state government or a concern on legislation. I am also honored to be one of only two

Republicans appointed to a judicial transparency workgroup by House Speaker Adrienne Jones. We have been meeting with experts to better understand Maryland's sentencing guidelines and practices. As a mother, I am strongly hoping our recommendations will be in line with the legislation governor Hogan has been proposing in past sessions to help reduce crime in Maryland and keep our families safer.

People who know me well will tell you that I am a person who values integrity, honesty and family values. I am keenly aware that as a delegate, I am not only

representing myself and my family, but I am representing over 140,000 people who live in our district. My goal is to represent our community to the best of my ability and remain true to our shared values. I aim to operate my office with open communication and transparency.

If there is a bill or a specific topic that you feel passionate about, please reach out to my office. Share your thoughts and ideas with us so that we can accurately represent them to the best of our abilities. Above all, I promise to work hard and diligently to help make Maryland a better place for everyone.

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Addressing Mental Health Resources

Heather Bagnall
Delegate
District 33



January 12, we gaveled in for the 444th Maryland General Assembly session, once again in the shadow of a COVID surge that has taxed our hospital system like never before, and as we not only navigate the challenges of COVID but the necessity and urgency of the people's work. For anyone who follows my writing, my commitment to behavioral health is no mystery, and with the ever-changing landscape of COVID and the disruptions to so many aspects of our lives, the toll to our constituents in the recovery community as well as those suffering from mental health issues has been significant, and the wave of overdoses and mental health crises is not yet cresting.

When I started working in the House of Delegates and I met with the students from Our Minds Matter, I reflected on my own experiences from my youth and the challenges

to accessing mental health resources, knowing how many families are touched and impacted by behavioral health issues and the stigmatization of mental illness, how many people have suffered the loss of a family member, friend, or colleague to suicide, and I was determined to make things better. At the same time, I attended a talk about some really innovative programs for behavioral health being piloted in our prerelease incarcerated communities. It was a session that stayed with me because although I was grateful we were providing services, and that the outcomes were extraordinarily impressive, I just couldn't stop thinking, "Why do we have to wait not only until someone is in the legal system but until right before they are coming out to get them help?"

I know it's an unfair question, because we do have many dedicated people doing this work every day, and we've seen the value of diversion programs and drug courts. But we lack a system of care, because as a nation we have been disinvesting in behavioral health care since the repeal of the Mental Health Systems Act, creating an equitable and often cost-prohibitive

patchwork of providers, and relying on the legal system, the school system, and the nonprofit world to provide for the social-emotional needs of our communities. Even as the cries and demand for services grow louder, the price tag remains an impenetrable barrier not only for many seeking help but also from cynical legislators who claim they want mental health services, just not the services we seek to fund.

Three years ago, I sat down with my colleagues who were working in the behavioral health sphere, laid out my idea for a coordinated system of preventative mental health care, and the response was, "Go for it, but this is going to take at least six years, so you'd better be here for at least two terms."

For three years we've been mapping the monster, as I call it, identifying gaps in service, barriers to care, and strategies to coordinate care, the "warm handoff" as our crisis intervention team would describe it. I sponsored the bill, which identifies emergency facilities that could more readily intake, assess and treat emergency petitions. I co-chaired the Crisis Bed Registry Workgroup and sponsored the bill to pilot a dynamic database to

better identify and coordinate with state hospitals and behavioral health providers. I sponsored the bill to expand the use of behavioral health telehealth and ensure that reimbursable services would be equitable, and, of course, I sponsored the Mental Health Access Initiative, which came from that meeting with Our Minds Matter, to remove a barrier to care for adolescents in need of mental health services.

It's year four and despite the challenges and delays of COVID, this year, I, along with my behavioral health champion and partner Senator Malcolm Augustine, am sponsoring the Behavioral Health System Modernization Act, a comprehensive bill to make statewide coordination of behavioral health resources a reality. It isn't going to be easy and it will not be cheap, but the cost of doing nothing is too great. I promised four years ago that I would ensure my time here made a difference for however long I have the honor of serving you. I hope, regardless of what happens in November, that a comprehensive, effective, robust, world-class behavioral health system will be my legacy.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Battle Over Mount Misery

Mount Misery is a long-forgotten piece of local Civil War history. In 1861, Union troops built Fort Grey on Carpenter's Hill in Severna Park. Fort Grey became known as Mount Misery during the war and was a Union fortification protecting troops moving from Annapolis to Washington. When the war ended, as trees replaced the fort's earthworks, the military significance of Mount Misery faded into history.

Now, 160 years later, a developer is attempting to build two large multi-story homes on the steepest section on Mount Misery where the fort was located, in the designated critical area of the Severn River. To build these homes, the developer has requested a variance (or modification) to the county codes relating to building on steep slopes in the critical area. This variance was granted by the county hearing officer despite the promise of the current county administration to reduce variances, especially in the critical areas of our rivers.

This variance approval presents an extremely serious problem for the residents of Round Bay who live downhill from these proposed houses because the slopes on Mount Misery are extraordinarily steep. A profile of the builder's site plan shows a 51% slope on the Severn River side and a 33% slope

on the Magothy side of the hill. The builder will have to reduce the slope down to 20% to build the driveway. To do this, he will have to disturb more than 50% of the project site and cut away "half" the mountain side by removing 77 dump truck loads of the hillside.

Round Bay residents are concerned that removing that much hillside will destabilize the hill, causing mudslides and flooding, and cause severe environmental damage to both the Severn and Magothy rivers.

In July 2020, the Anne Arundel County administrative hearing officer granted the variance to build a driveway on a "slope greater than 15%" when, in fact, the slope was more than double the limit. Round Bay residents downhill from the building site filed an appeal to this variance, hoping to voice objections to the extreme grading and subsequent flooding and mudslide problems that would result from building on the hilltop. Due to a COVID-related technicality, their appeal was dismissed and the residents were not permitted to even submit written objections.

Building codes relating to steep slopes in the critical area were established to protect the rivers, and as the health of both the Magothy and Severn continue to decline, it is imperative that the county adhere to the protections that are afforded in the critical area codes. Mount Misery raises a number of concerns relating to the county approval process.

The Magothy River Association strongly objects to builders being allowed to bypass any of the critical area codes, especially when the voices of the residents who are directly impacted are denied a chance to object and when the potential damage to both county citizens and the health of two rivers is at stake.

Paul Spadaro, President
Magothy River Association
president@magothyriver.org

Chocolate Milk: The Ultimate Sports Drink

Chocolate milk. Most people like it for its rich taste and sweet flavor. However, what if I told you this chocolaty beverage could do more for you than just satisfy a sweet tooth. Well, you might be surprised to hear that chocolate milk offers a wide range of health benefits — especially to athletes!

With the Green Hornets and high school basketball season underway, athletes all over are in need of a great drink to fuel up with after a strenuous day on the court. When you play hard, you lose essential nutrients like calcium and protein. These nutrients are critical for the development of strong muscles and healthy bones. Fortunately, they can be restored

in the body with a helping of low-fat chocolate milk 30 minutes after your workout. However, strengthening your muscles is not all that chocolate milk is good for. The potassium it supplies combats muscle cramping and it being a source of Vitamin A means chocolate milk improves your eyesight and helps your body fight infection!

At this point, you might be wondering, how does chocolate milk compare to the other sports drinks out there? Well for one thing, popular sports drinks contain far more sugar, which can contribute to tooth decay — especially in children. In comparison, the righteous combination of the muscle-building nutrients available in chocolate milk does wonders for the health of your pearly whites. But don't take all these benefits of chocolate milk from me; take it from NBA star Klay Thompson: the face of the Built with Chocolate Milk campaign. This Golden State Warrior believes this rich dairy product is essential when it comes to taking your recovery routine seriously and has partnered with the Milk Processor Education Program (Milk-PEP) to send out this message.

So, the next time you're looking for a drink to refuel with after a tiring day of playing hard, consider supporting Maryland's dairy farmers by picking up a bottle of chocolate milk!

Elizabeth Karides
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A Roadmap For Maryland's Historic And One-Time Surplus

Peter Franchot
Maryland
Comptroller



Maryland has an extra \$6 billion in its bank and a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to invest in meaningful, life-changing ways that deliver immediate results for our citizens. With rising COVID

cases, we must use our historic surplus to help fellow Marylanders who continue to struggle, while also investing wisely for the future by bolstering our rainy day fund and paying for critical infrastructure projects.

At last month's Board of Revenue Estimates meeting, I joined my fellow board members — Budget Secretary David Brinkley and then-Treasurer Nancy Kopp — in approving an increase to Maryland's revenue projections for the current and following fiscal years by a total of \$1 billion. This comes on the heels of the board's actions in September, when we increased our projections by \$2 billion, and several days earlier, when I announced the state closed Fiscal Year 2021 with a surplus of \$2.5 billion. All told, the state has an eye-popping \$6 billion in unexpected, one-time revenue.

Although our state's economy appears to be on the road to recovery, the pandemic continues to prolong our rebound while taking its toll on the health and

welfare of our citizens. The governor and General Assembly — after depositing \$2 billion in our rainy day fund to help protect us during future economic downturns — must be deliberative in how to spend the remaining surplus.

Over the past 20 months, the state's top earners — billionaires, millionaires and business executives — are more likely to have come out ahead, while the bottom half of earners bore the brunt of the pandemic's financial impact. Our lower-wage workers and those who lost their jobs through no fault of their own experienced a multitude of challenges that still prevents them from returning to the workforce. Delayed or denied unemployment checks and slow-to-arrive rent relief wiped out the fragile financial security that so many were already struggling to maintain. There are too few high-paying jobs that can restore financial independence, and, to make matters worse, the shortage of affordable child care has prevented so many of our fellow Marylanders, particularly women, from returning to the workforce.

With the uncertainty of the Omicron variant, the governor and our state lawmakers must seize this historic opportunity to take action now to help our most vulnerable and protect our emergency reserves. Here's what I believe they should do.

First, the state should immediately enact another round of economic survival payments for the most financially insecure, but this time, increase the amount to \$2,000. I advocated for this proposal

last year, but opponents said we couldn't afford it and capped checks at \$500 per household. Now we know that we can, and tens of thousands of Marylanders still need our help. Price tag: \$1 billion.

Second, we must provide immediate financial support to our child care industry. Over the past 20 months, more than 750 child care providers in Maryland have closed due in large part to the government's inability to distribute promised financial assistance in a timely manner. Without reliable, accessible and affordable child care, our economic recovery will be stunted. A portion of our surplus should be set aside for the child care industry, incentivizing shuttered operators to reopen, hiring qualified staff at higher wages and following the federal government's lead by subsidizing the cost of child care for families that can't afford it. Price tag: \$500 million.

Third, we should support the mom-and-pop stores that represent the beating heart of the state's economy by providing direct financial relief to small businesses. They're still struggling to keep the lights on, and now they face another decline in sales as customers scale back their in-person shopping due to Omicron. This relief needs to be immediate and target small businesses in hard-hit industries, particularly our minority-owned and women-owned entities. Our MBEs and WBEs bore the disproportionate brunt of the economic impact of COVID. We must remedy that injustice, and we can do so with a new round of economic relief. Price tag: \$500 million.

Fourth, the state should shore up our rainy day fund. COVID-19 caught us flat-footed; we must do a much better job at financially preparing for the next economic crisis. So let's get ahead of the curve and allocate one-third of this historic surplus into our reserves. Price tag: \$2 billion.

Lastly, the state should allocate the remaining \$2 billion to fund its share of high-priority infrastructure projects that will have lasting, meaningful impact. Specifically, the state should invest in three critical infrastructure areas: Baltimore City's Red Line, green energy projects that will allow the state to transition to 100% renewable energy by 2030, and high-speed internet connectivity for all Marylanders.

This ambitious proposal for economic relief and investment isn't cheap, but it's a good problem to have to figure out. While \$6 billion may seem like a lot of money, the truth is our inaction — or failure to meet this crisis with a proportionate response — will have far more devastating financial consequences.

This road map allows our state to strengthen its finances, invest in consequential infrastructure projects, and provide support to those small businesses and state residents who have been hit hardest by the pandemic. We can't "build back better" if everyone doesn't have the opportunity to share in the prosperity of this economic recovery.

Peter Franchot, a Democrat, has served as comptroller since 2007.

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Students Weigh In On COVID-19 Restrictions

By John Singleton

For the past two years, children have compromised their educational goals to satisfy coronavirus restrictions.

"I'm a junior and I've never had a normal year of high school," said Cami Glebocki, a 16-year-old student at Severna Park High School. "Most of my classmates, I wouldn't even recognize their faces."

After all the broken promises about flattening the curve and the efficacy of vaccines, young people, who beat COVID-19 quicker than the annual flu, are increasingly aware of the injustice of their situation.

"I loved musical theater and chorus," said Caitlin Gillespie, a 2021 graduate of Broadneck High School. "When those activities were canceled, I ended up getting treatment for an eating disorder. It took four months to find a program. There are hundreds of kids on that waitlist."

Taking a gap year, Gillespie is now working part-time at a local retail shop.

"During my senior year, our school traditions were tossed out the window," the 18-year-old said. "No homecoming. No senior section at football games. Interaction with friends was strictly texting and FaceTime for an entire year."

Fifth-grader Savanna Goodman of Pasadena struggled under COVID restrictions at Lake Shore Elementary



Picture courtesy of Michelle Lansberg

Elaiza Albin, a fourth-grader at Tracy's Elementary School, wore a face mask while playing clarinet during a school concert on December 15.

tary School until her parents started homeschooling.

"If a girl in my class would cough then she'd be taken to the nurse's office," Savanna said. "Sometimes she'd stay there for the rest of the day. When a friend let a mask slip under her nose, the teacher and the principal yelled at her."

On January 7, the seven-member Anne Arundel County Council rejected mask mandates with four members in favor and three opposed. The mandates need a supermajority, five votes, to pass. The council saw that decision reversed

by the county health officer under the direction of County Executive Stuart Pittman. With many schools now adopting a more restrictive "masks at recess policy," there are fewer opportunities for Anne Arundel County students to simply breathe fresh air.

"I have a friend who has panic attacks," added 10-year-old Savanna. "She's gotten worse during COVID."

For many young people, the constant rule changes have eroded their sense of dignity. At Broadneck Elementary, some teachers are touting a new stopwatch-enforced five-minute "snack time" policy that requires students to eat with masks on, removing their face covering only long enough to take each bite of food.

"For chorus, some of my friends have been asked to wear a mask that looks like a duck beak," Gillespie said. "If you play a wind instrument, there is a requirement to wear a face mask with a slit by your mouth. And for musical theater, the actors have to wear full face shields."

"It seems intentionally dehumanizing," she added.

Some members of the younger generation are losing hope in the system they are meant to inherit.

"When I think about the future, it makes me feel I won't be ready for middle school," Goodman said. "It makes me feel upset. I feel like things keep getting worse."

“

I loved musical theater and chorus. When those activities were canceled, I ended up getting treatment for an eating disorder. It took four months to find a program. There are hundreds of kids on that waitlist.

— **CAITLIN GILLESPIE**
BROADNECK HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE

Questioning authority has become a last resort.

"Young people have no voice. We can't vote. We don't own TV stations. We don't own newspapers," Gillespie said. "Where are the adults who will stand up for us? Who will defend our generation? Our future is being stolen."

In Anne Arundel County, the Board of Education promotes something called Unity Days where social justice and equity are celebrated, while the real systemic injustice aimed at the young and the vulnerable is hidden in plain sight.

"I wish the school board and other adults would understand that these are important years for us developmentally," Glebocki said. "We're young and healthy and we're being held to a standard that doesn't apply to us and has no basis in science."

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Woods Senior Pastor Susan DeWyngaert To Retire

By Haley Weisgerber

After 11 years at Woods Memorial Presbyterian Church and 39 years in ordained ministry, senior pastor and head-of-staff Susan DeWyngaert is retiring from ordained ministry at the end of January. DeWyngaert felt the call to ministry at a young age, although it took her some time to understand it.

"When I was in my teens at a youth camp, I felt a sense of call from God to be in ministry," DeWyngaert said. "I didn't really know what that meant at the time because there were no women pastors."

At the time, it was possible for a woman to be ordained, but DeWyngaert had not encountered a woman pastor. When she was in college, the chaplain at her university was replaced by a woman who was nine months pregnant and the experience changed DeWyngaert's perspective. She became a pastor, a wife and a mother during the early '80s.

"I went into my first assignment as a pastor really knowing very little about how this would all work, and I was quite blessed to have my first church be a very nurturing community," DeWyngaert said.

She served as a pastor for family life at two congregations for 15 years and became a senior pastor at First Presbyterian Church of Sarasota Florida in 1997. She was there for 14 years when she was recruited by a friend to consider taking on the role at Woods. She came for a visit and was instantly drawn to the community.

"We hit it off," DeWyngaert said. "I could very much feel their vision. And I felt like God was calling me here."

With more than a decade under her belt, DeWyngaert is proud of the growth she has witnessed at Woods, particularly the leadership development, dismantling racism initiatives and sponsoring a Syrian refugee family. DeWyngaert made the difficult decision to retire from the congregation that she loves and to move back to the south to be closer to family.

"Every church has had to change its approach to ministry to meet the needs of the post-COVID world and Woods is no exception to that," DeWyngaert said. "We've really developed ourselves technically, but we're going to have to do everything differently in the future. For that reason, they really need to be led by somebody who can be here for a length of time."

She said she will miss Woods for many reasons, but mostly for its character and the important role it plays in the Severna Park community.

"Anything is possible because of the strength of the congregation and because of the history of the congregation," DeWyngaert said. "You can pretty much do anything. And that is such a refreshing feeling."

She is looking forward to spending time with her daughters and grandchildren and finding her new role in church.

"I have no idea how to be anything else but a minister," DeWyngaert said. "So it is going to be a big learning curve for me. I'm going to do some crazy things, like I'm going to sing in the choir, teach Sunday school, work with the youth group and things I haven't been able to do because I've been senior pastor."

DeWyngaert said she hopes that the congregation continues to push itself to always accomplish something, and to always strive to serve the community to the best of their ability.

"In a world where churches feel restricted by lack of resources, Woods does amazing things," DeWyngaert said.

Susan DeWyngaert, pictured below before COVID, said she is excited to explore a new role in the church after 39 years as an ordained minister.

"DeWyngaert said she hopes that the congregation continues to push itself to always accomplish something, and to always strive to serve the community to the best of their ability."



Remembering Archbishop Desmond Tutu

By the Rev. Heather Bobbitt

One day in the brutal Minnesota winter of 1999, I remember rushing through the snow to get into the sanctuary of a huge Presbyterian church in downtown Minneapolis to see Archbishop Desmond Tutu speak. I was a little bit late and the head of the local presbytery was already into his speech to introduce "the esteemed South African hero of the anti-Apartheid movement, the chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, winner of the Nobel Prize."

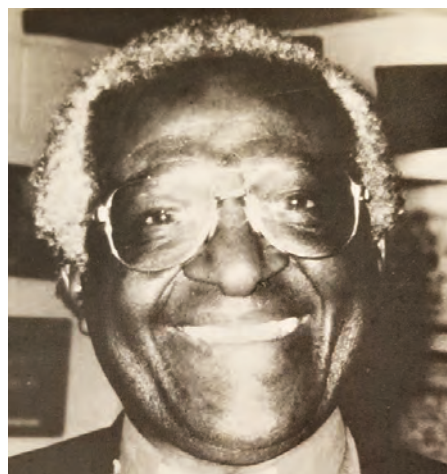
I was grateful the introduction was going on for a long time. It gave me a moment to stand at the side door into the sanctuary and peek to try to see where I could sneak in and grab a seat without being too disruptive. It was a packed house, too. Oh boy.

"Dang" I muttered to the man standing at that door. "Shall I just go in now?" I said to him.

He shook his head. "Wait for the applause — then go."

"OK. Are you the pastor here?" I asked him.

"No. Just visiting. Like you."



Heather Bobbitt has kept this postcard picture of Desmond Tutu taped in her kitchen every day since 1999.

The man seemed to me to be an older pastor, probably from Africa, judging by the accent. His attire was formal but not ceremonial. I thought he was one of the many pastors, like me, who had come to hear Tutu speak.

We waited together, listening through a crack in the door to the general presbyter

making a full speech just to introduce the real star. I rolled my eyes at my brother and said, "This guy is really being thorough, I guess."

The older gentleman smiled and shrugged his shoulders.

Then he asked me, "Have you ever seen the archbishop speak?"

"No, just listened to him on the radio. But I can hardly wait to see him."

Again, he shrugged and said, "I heard he is not all that..." And he shook his head and frowned to finish the sentence.

Blasphemy!

In a whisper, I exploded at the old man: "What are you talking about? Desmond Tutu is absolutely touched by God! He's so important in history! The Truth and Reconciliation Commission could not have happened without him."

"Yeah," the older man said with a sigh. "But still. What if today, he's bad? It happens, you know."

It occurred to me that this fellow minister was teasing me. He was being playful, dissing the archbishop. I did not appreciate his levity.

"He's already given many wonderful

speeches and done so much good in this broken world. I have prayed for him so many times for years. It makes me happy to just see him! And I bet he won't stink."

"I hope he doesn't stink."

"No, he'll be fine. He might be great!"

"He might be funny. There's hope for that."

Right then, the swell of applause happened, and the older man opened the door for me. So I zoomed in and was met with a thousand sets of eyes looking right at me. I immediately just sat on the floor at the end of the first row — I could see there were no seats left at all. The eyes then all focused on the African-sounding pastor walking in behind me, smiling broadly and spryly walking right up to the pulpit.

Overwhelmed with emotion, I sat there weeping silently the whole time. To think, he tricked me into defending Tutu to Tutu. I was honored to have been fooled by such a great man. And, it was an excellent speech, of course, with great humor throughout.

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Broadneck Boys Basketball Shuts Down Severna Park 53-46



Photos by Christopher Fincham Photography

The rivalry between the Falcons and Bruins inspired tough play from both sides, and in the end, Broadneck enjoyed a 53-46 victory.

By Conor Doherty

The Broadneck Bruins made a statement to the rest of the county after beating the Severna Park Falcons 53-46 on January 14. The Falcons had been riding high, coming into the game with a 6-1 record, with their only loss being by one point to Meade. Broadneck had also been doing well, compiling a 7-4 record going into the game.

Broadneck jumped out to an early 8-2 lead before Severna Park went on a 12-0 run to end the first quarter. A 3-pointer at the buzzer ended the drought for the Bruins, who rode the momentum gained from that buzzer-beater into the second quarter. A suffocating defense made points hard to come by for Severna Park, and the Bruins outscored the Falcons 16-6 in the second quarter to take a 27-20 lead into halftime.

The Bruins came out of halftime swinging, increasing their lead to 34-24 midway through the third quarter. However, a 15-6 run by the Falcons cut the lead to 40-39 going into the fourth quarter. Broadneck responded with their own 8-2 run and led 48-41 midway through the fourth quarter. Severna Park completed a 3-point play to make it 48-44, but that was as close as they got as the Bruins made several free throws to close out the game.

Senior **Tromaine Jones** led the Bruins with 16 points while Severna Park senior **Anthony Bocchetta** led all scorers with 21 points.

"I really appreciated how we competed," said Bruins head coach **John Williams**. "Severna Park is a very disciplined, well-coached team that can be difficult to play at times if you're not patient, persistent and poised, and I thought we took care of those three aspects."

While Williams liked
» Continued on page 27

Thrilling Ice Hockey Matchup Ends With 5-4 Falcons Win Over Bruins



Photos by Zach Sparks

The Falcons' Josh Testerman kept Broadneck defenders off balance with precise passing and stickwork.

SPHS Believes They Can Make Strong Postseason Run

◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇

By Zach Sparks

zach@severnarparkvoice.com

"The kids take the Broadneck-Severna Park rivalry like it's the Washington Redskins playing the Dallas Cowboys." That's how Falcons head coach Eric St. Lawrence described the game between the two teams, which clashed at Bowie Ice Arena on January 10.

Severna Park came into the game undefeated at 6-0-1, a tie with Harford County the only blemish on their record. Broadneck also came in with a strong record at 5-1-1.

The back-and-forth contest was

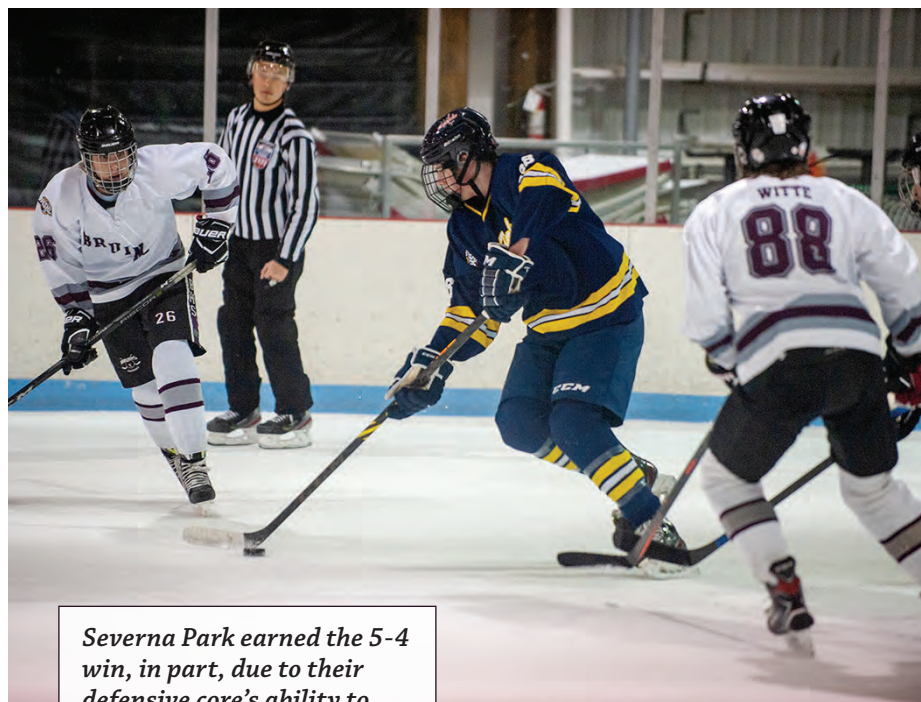
full of intensity, with Broadneck racking up seven penalties and Severna Park accruing five.

Henry McChesney kicked off the scoring for Broadneck in the first period. Less than two minutes later, Severna Park took advantage of a power play after a Broadneck interference penalty. **Jake Cuiba** scored for the Falcons on an assist from **Ryan LaRocque** to even the score. **Graham Cohen** put Broadneck back ahead, 2-1, with 3:45 left in the first period.

St. Lawrence's message to his team was simple.

"My instruction coach, Dennis, and I told them to play our game, be smart in the defensive zone, be fast in the neutral zone and score some goals," St. Lawrence said.

The second period was a scoring
» Continued on page 30



Severna Park earned the 5-4 win, in part, due to their defensive core's ability to distribute the puck.

Old Mill Dominates Severna Park, Broadneck In Wrestling



Photos by Christopher Fincham Photography

Severna Park, Broadneck and Old Mill wrestling competed in December, with the Patriots getting the best of their rivals. Broadneck won 55-18 over Severna Park, but Old Mill beat the Bruins 55-24 and the Falcons 72-6.

Christmas Classic Tournament Comes To Severna Park Racquetball Club

By Conor Doherty

The Severna Park Racquetball and Fitness Club (SPRFC) hosted the 29th annual Christmas Classic Tournament from December 10-12. The Christmas Classic is one of the most popular and longest-running events on the calendar for the Ladies Professional Racquetball Tour (LPRT).

The No. 1 ranked women's player in the world, Paola Longoria from Mexico, won in both singles and doubles at the tournament, continuing her incredible form from the world championships held just a week prior, when she also won women's singles and doubles titles. Longoria has been the No. 1 women's player for 10 consecutive seasons and 12 of the past 13 seasons overall. After winning her first match, Longoria expressed the enjoyment she got playing in smaller tournaments like the Christmas Classic.

"When we saw the schedule, it was good for us to see tournaments like this one still on it," Longoria said. "It's a new location for us on the tour. I love the club, I love the people here, and the support has been great for us."

Along with Longoria, fellow players like Rhonda Rajsich, the top U.S. ranked player, talked about what the Christmas Classic meant to her. "I've played in this tournament every year that I've been a pro player," Rajsich said. "It's one of the tournaments that we can always count on being there for



(L-R) Pro singles winner Paola Longoria (Mexico) and pro singles finalist Maria Jose Vargas (Argentina) enjoyed the Christmas Classic at SPRFC in December.

us to play."

This was the first time the SPRFC hosted the Christmas Classic, which was previously held in Virginia before moving to a club in Laurel for a few years.

SPRFC owner Deborah Badro hopes to see players return next year. "We just want to show them what it meant for the tour and its players to be here playing at our club, and it looks like we were able to do just that," Badro said.

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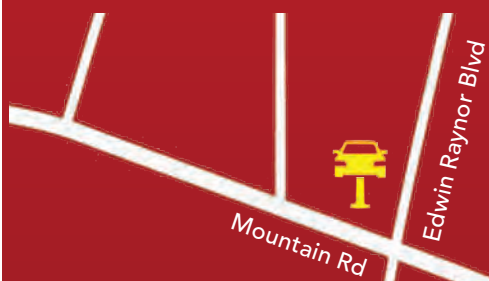
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Severna Park Wins Defensive Battle With Broadneck, 29-25

By Conor Doherty

Led by junior guard **Hannah Verreault's** 11 points, the Severna Park Falcons girls basketball team defeated the Broadneck Bruins on the road, 29-25, on January 14. Broadneck looked strong early, taking a 7-2 lead midway through the first quarter. The Falcons then responded with a 9-0 run that lasted into the second quarter.

However, the Bruins relied on their strong defense and full-court pressure to force Severna Park into several key mistakes and turnovers, with the Bruins taking a 13-12 lead into halftime.

"Defensively, we played outstanding," said Broadneck head coach **Juan McKinney**. "Going forward, we'll be fine defensively."

Both offenses were affected by the strong defensive performances, along with the game not having a good flow due to a high number of foul calls. Due to that, the game went into the final



Photo by Conor Doherty

Severna Park's Madeline Sullivan contested a shot by Broadneck's Alexis Dupcak during the 29-25 Broadneck win on January 14.

quarter tied at 19. Foul trouble became a problem in the fourth quarter as both teams were in the double bonus less than halfway through the quarter. Despite having scoring chances, Broadneck failed to capitalize, missing foul shots down the last stretch of the game, while Severna Park was able to make theirs to extend their lead and close out the game.

"The biggest takeaway was foul shots," McKinney said. "Late in the game, I know we can make those shots, but you win some, you lose some. Unfortunately, we had a tough night at the foul line."

Broadneck's leading scorer, Lilly Kelley, agreed with her coach, saying that there were points for the taking that Broadneck was unable to get.

"We would have had 10 or more points if we had just made our shots," Kelley said. "We did a good job getting fouls, and I also think that we need to

no-foul so far away from the basket we're defending and give away those free one-and-one opportunities."

Even Severna Park head coach **Kris-tofer Dean** shared the same sentiment as his counterpart. "A lot of late-game situations that we need to talk about, I'm sure that the girls already know what," Dean said. "Our job is just to get better every day and see where we are at the end of the year."

Verreault said that being the starting point guard meant everyone else seemed to look to her for leadership, especially toward the end of the game, but it was a team effort.

"I couldn't do anything without the rest of my team," she said. "We've been down a couple games, but winning this game could be a turnaround for us for the rest of the season."

With the win, Severna Park moved to 3-4 on the season, while Broadneck fell to 2-7.



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STUDENT-ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

Jacob Randall

Severn School Basketball

By Conor Doherty

When it comes to basketball, it's uncommon to see a freshman in high school be a starter out the gate, but Jacob Randall has seized that opportunity, having led all scorers in his first high school game. However, it isn't just his play and work ethic on the court that led to him being named a starter; it's his volunteerism off the court that has impressed his coaches, both past and present.

Growing up in Capitol Heights, Randall played for the New World Basketball Academy, one of the top Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) basketball academies in the country. Despite his family moving to Severna Park to be closer to the school, Randall wanted to give back to the community he had been a part of for so long. New World head coach Tim Womack came up with the idea to give back, and so together with several of his old teammates, Randall did just that.

"This was our first year doing this," Randall explained. "I wanted to make sure that I could help out my old neighborhood and make sure that some of the families there got Thanksgiving meals this year."

Randall and his teammates distributed 35 Thanksgiving meals to families in need. Five of those meals came after he consulted his former middle school coach at William Hall



Jacob Randall is starting for Severn School's varsity team as a freshman.

Academy and personally delivered food to five families that attended his old school.

"Knowing I can still help out my friends and peers in my old neighborhood is just a good feeling," Randall said.

Severn School assistant coach Juan Wansely said, "I'm so proud of the values Jacob lives by and executes. His off-court work in the community is exemplary."

For Randall, it reminded him how lucky he is to be in his situation. "I know that I had some friends who were struggling and it's good to help out whenever you can," he added. And while Randall was able to help his old neighborhood, he's now turned his sights to helping out the new community he calls home.

"I hope that we can make a change here as well," he said. "Every year, I feel like it's going to be one of my goals to help out."

Along with the goal of giving back to the Severn community during his time there, Randall plans to continue working with his old teammates to support his old community in the coming years. Of course, while Randall has those goals off the court, he is just as ambitious with regards to his goals on the court.

"For the team, I hope that we finish with a pretty good record, maybe even win the conference," Randall said. "As for myself, I want to average around 20 points per game and do what I can to help the team win. I'm just glad that I've been given this opportunity by my coaches and the community."

In partnership with The Matt Wyble Team of Century 21, the Voice's Student-Athlete of the Month series recognizes the many student-athletes in our area who make an impact not necessarily by way of statistics or stardom, but by their unique contributions. Contact **Zach Sparks** at zach@severnaparkvoice.com to nominate a young person in our community making a positive impact through sports.

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Former Falcon Campbell Kline Named Infielder Of The Decade

By Conor Doherty

Former Severna Park Falcons and current Maryland Terrapins softball player **Campbell Kline** has been named the Infielder of the Decade by Varsity Sports Network (VSN). Kline was chosen due to the incredible hitting numbers she compiled and stellar career she had playing for the Falcons.

Campbell's best season at Severna Park was her junior year when she helped lead the Falcons to the school's first state title in 20 years. That season, she set the state record for hits in a season with 69 and had a batting average of .750. She hit 12 doubles, six triples, eight home runs, scored 53 runs and drove in 39 RBIs while playing as the team's leadoff hitter. She was named Maryland's Gatorade Player of the Year, along with being given VSN and *Baltimore Sun* Player of the Year honors. For her career, she hit .634 and set another state record with 185 career hits.

"It's a big honor to be given this award," she said. "Being in college now, finding my way and what I enjoy, it means a lot to be reminded that my game is still pretty great."

During her time at Severna Park, Campbell played mostly shortstop, while occasionally pitching. Shortstop was not her natural position before high school, though.

"I came into high school as an outfielder and then my high school coach said she needed a shortstop, so I was like, 'OK, let's do that,'" she explained. "So I learned how to play shortstop throughout those four years of high school."



While Campbell thinks that her defensive ability was part of the reason why she was chosen as Infielder of the Decade, she believes that it was also because of her ability to do anything while batting.

"My hitting is kind of what pushed me over, made me a little bit different as I could hit, I could bunt, I could slap, I could do anything," she stated. "So if people were staying back, I could lay down a bunt or if people were playing in, I could hit something hard. I think it's because I could just do whatever hitting wise, people weren't ready for it and that's why I had such a great time hitting."

Severna Park softball coach **Meredith McAlister** attributed Kline's success to her relentless passion and work ethic.



Campbell Kline helped Severna Park softball claim a state title in 2018. She also set a Maryland record with 185 career hits.



"She is the kind of player who was up at 11:00pm in her garage, taking swings while her mom held a flashlight," McAlister said. "The kind of player who sprained her wrist and broke her thumb diving for a ball at practice and refused to sit out preseason scrimmages, still managing to hit .500 on the day. You can't teach the desire to be on the field, to work at home, to sacrifice time with friends, to really enjoy the grind. That just comes from within."

"You see that attitude in some players, but every once in a while, you see that combined with elite talent and a humble mind that isn't satisfied and still needs to be better. That is the kind of athlete Campbell is, and she has earned her recognition. We are incredibly proud of her as an athlete and as a young woman."

Now a junior at Maryland, Kline said it took time for her to adjust to the speed of the college game, especially with her

freshman season being cut short due to the pandemic.

"The game moves a lot faster, and in college, we practice a lot on movement pitches and spin on the ball," Campbell explained. "Additionally, I learned that I needed to stop thinking so much. My high school coach said that when I get in the box and think too much, that's when a lot of not good things start to happen. So you just have to stop thinking so much but still have a plan for how you're going to handle the pitcher you're facing."

For girls who play softball, regardless of the level they play, Campbell said being thankful for the support of family, teammates and coaches will go a long way.

"My high school coach is still a very important person to me to this day," she said. "Never take those relationships for granted and also thank your parents for giving you the opportunity to play."

Broadneck Boys Basketball Shuts Down Severna Park 53-46

» Continued from page 22

how his team played overall, he felt that his team could have done more to keep the Falcons from clawing back during the fourth quarter.

"I would like for us to be able to hold, carry and even extend a lead in the fourth quarter," Williams stated. "I thought that we had opportunities and some empty possessions, some bad defensive breakdowns as well, that kept them in the game."

Broadneck senior point guard **Josh Ehrlich** said, "Our mindset was to take care of business late in the game. We were a little more athletic than they were, and we thought that we could run them out of the gym. Some things kind of changed throughout the game, but we stuck to our game plan, and we played really well defensively in the second half."

The Falcons were set to play Annapolis on January 18, after the *Severna Park Voice* went to print, and they still have to make up canceled games against Southern and Old Mill. Broadneck next plays against Southern at home on January 21.

Severna Park Alum Lila Slattery In Rarefied Air After Winning National Championship

By Conor Doherty

Severna Park High School is home to the most successful field hockey program in Maryland history, with 25 state titles, countless more county and regional titles, and many individual accolades. But despite the high school success of many players over the years, there hasn't been as much success at the collegiate level with regards to winning national titles.

So, when the Northwestern Wildcats made a surprise run to the 2021 NCAA Division 1 national championship and defeated Liberty in the title game on November 21, sophomore **Lila Slattery** became the first player from Severna Park to win a national title since Amanda Himmelheber won her second title in 2010 playing for Maryland, with her first one coming in 2008. Since the turn of the century, Slattery and Himmelheber are the only former players from Severna Park to win a national championship, putting them in a unique position compared to many of their former teammates and fellow alums.

For Slattery, the gravity and importance of the game wasn't apparent to her until the final few minutes. "It was surreal, as it felt like any normal game," Slattery said. "It was so close for like the whole first half and we were all getting kind of anxious. After halftime, we started standing on the bench, in-



Former Falcon Lila Slattery and the field hockey team at Northwestern beat Liberty 2-0 on November 21 to become national champions.

stead of in front of it. We weren't really thinking like, 'We're going to win the national championship.' We're like, 'We just need to win the game.'"

Going into college, Slattery had been told that the level of competition was going to get tougher, but nothing could have prepared her for how much of a difference high school was to college.

"Everyone says that it's a completely different level, but it's so true," Slattery explained. "I thought that I was really

fast in high school, and I still am really fast, but everyone's that much faster and just that much more competitive."

As a junior next year, Slattery will be a team leader, but she feels like she won't be the only person the team will look toward to help lead them to a win, which will be a far cry from her time playing for the Falcons.

"Senior year, if we wanted to win, I felt like I was the one who needed to score a goal," she said. "So that year, I feel like I had more pressure and responsibility on myself, but then when we won, I also felt like 'I had done this.' But now, I feel like I really contributed to the team."

Additionally, going forward into next season, Slattery said that there will be a target on the backs of her team since they'll be defending champions, something which she is used to from playing at Severna Park.

"It's all about building off the energy we ended with and just keep going up from there and try not to have a setback that'll make us start over," she stated. "Next year, I won't try to put too much pressure on myself, just because no one on my team is really the star; we're all such big contributors to the success of the team. I'm just going to do the best that I can, and everyone else will do their parts together as a team."

Arnold Resident Michael Corbi Makes Second Team All-American



Photos courtesy of Villanova University

Michael Corbi began his football career with the Green Hornets. He has since developed into one of the best offensive linemen in the Football Championship Subdivision.

By Kevin Murnane

It's hard to imagine that Michael Corbi, a 6-foot-3, 330-pound offensive lineman for Villanova University has played organized football for only 10 years.

Corbi, an Arnold resident, was still playing soccer for St. John the Evangelist School in eighth grade when he decided to try football with the Green Hornets organization.

"My dad played defensive line for Towson University and he always took me to the Ravens games, so I was around football and liked the game, so I thought I would give it a chance," Corbi said.

After years of relentless training and great coaching, Corbi was named to the Associated Press All-America Second Team this year for the Football Championship Subdivision (FCS).

Corbi's storybook journey started out at Mount St. Joseph High School in Catonsville where he was a 5-foot-8, 200-pound lineman on the JV squad. He began to see what it would take to play at the varsity level and had excellent coaching to prepare him for varsity the next year.

"Coach Blake Henry was the coach my freshmen year, but coach Rich Holzer came in my sophomore year and was a great coach and extremely innovative with his offensive knowledge," Corbi said.

Corbi grew physically during his three years on Mount St. Joe's varsity team and even played both offensive and defensive lines in his senior year.

"I started looking at colleges and I took a trip to Villanova with my dad and just loved the campus," Corbi remarked.

Corbi received encouragement from his family and decided to send his senior film to the Villanova football staff. He was offered a preferred walk-on position on the team.

He redshirted his freshman year as the strength and conditioning staff wanted to "reshape" his 350-pound frame. Corbi dropped to 260 pounds that year and then the team built him back up to compete at a major college level.

"I lost all that weight through workouts and diet," Corbi said. "My daily intake consisted of oatmeal, fruit and walnuts for breakfast and lots of chicken, brown rice and green beans."

Villanova's strength and conditioning staff continued to motivate Corbi, and through his toughness and improvement, he made second string his redshirt freshman year. His sophomore year was shortened due to the pandemic, but Villanova went 4-0 that spring season. He made his first start and gained attention from the other teams and writers who cover their league.

Going into the 2021 season, Corbi was named preseason all-conference at left guard and Corbi was also the backup center, the quarterback of the offensive line.

"Offensive line coach Sean Devine really worked with me and my teammates, so we were a very cohesive unit," Corbi said. "We have improved every year and we're a very tight group of players and appreciate each other's hard work."

That hard work is extremely evident during summer workouts.

"The summer workouts include weight-training and cardiovascular work," Corbi said. "We run five days a week with two days being conditioning and three days working on speed, agility and plyometrics."

Corbi was awarded a scholarship and Villanova finished with a 10-3 record in 2021. They went to the FCS playoffs and eventually lost to South Dakota State, 35-21. They were also competitive playing Penn State, losing 38-17 in Happy Valley.

The Villanova lineman has NFL aspirations but is a great student as well. He has a double major in mechanical engineering and psychology. Corbi is also minoring in biomedical ethics and cognitive science. He hopes to take the entrance exam for medical school after he graduates.

Corbi is looking forward to his senior year and has circled the game with Army in West Point.

"Growing up in Arnold and Severna Park, I always heard 'Beat Army' every fall, so that is the game I'll be the most fired up for," Corbi said.

Spalding Football Players Commit To Big College Programs

By Kevin Murnane

By going undefeated in the regular season and beating some of the mid-Atlantic's most heralded teams, Archbishop Spalding's football team had four defensive stalwarts sign a National Letter of Intent (NLI) in December to continue their playing careers.

All four players were multi-year starters, including linebacker **Kellan Wyatt** and safety **Lavain Scruggs**, who committed to the University of Maryland; defensive back **Mansoor Delane**, who will play at Virginia Tech; and linebacker **Jalen Robertson**, who is headed to Saint Francis University in Pennsylvania.

By having success on the football field and in the classroom, Spalding has drawn a myriad of college coaches to the Severna campus.

"We had 60 coaches come to the school before the early signing day," said head football coach **Kyle Schmitt**. "It's a great opportunity

for our players to be recruited and hopefully gain a scholarship. Football is different than other high school sports as the college coaches need to go to the games, acquire film, and have in-home and in-school visits to recruit players."

Schmitt, a former offensive lineman at Maryland, is pleased that the Terps have taken an interest in his program and signed two players from this year's squad as well as one player, **Jayon Venerable**, from last year's squad.

"Maryland's recruiter in this area, Brian Williams, does a great job and our players want to go to college locally and have their families see them play," Schmitt said.

Spalding will have additional players sign their letters of intent in February; 11 players made the all-county first or second team.

Spalding's storybook season was abruptly stopped in the MIAA playoffs, so the "Remember the Cavaliers" season came to a nightmarish end.



Photo courtesy of Archbishop Spalding

(L-R) Jalen Robertson, Mansoor Delane, Lavain Scruggs and Kellan Wyatt, who were all part of Archbishop Spalding's stout defense in 2021, signed National Letters of Intent in December.

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Thrilling Ice Hockey Matchup Ends With 5-4 Falcon Win Over Bruins

» Continued from page 22

frenzy. Cuiba scored his second goal to again tie the game before **James Terry** put Broadneck ahead 3-2. But Severna Park was not ready to concede to their rivals. In the span of two minutes, Severna Park got goals from team captain **Johnny Clements** and **Michael Wiley**, who got an assist from LaRocque, to take their first lead, 4-3.

When asked how Severna Park kept their poise, Clements said, "We kept ourselves accountable. I think everyone on the bench was keeping positivity and trying to complement one another. At the end, we all gave 100 percent and worked as a team."

That lead did not last long, though. With 1:07 left in the second period, **Matthew Bonsignore** connected with **Ryan Kucharski**, who scored to tie the game at 4-4.

Both goalies made several stops in the third period. With 11:59 remaining, Clements assisted **Ryan Laughlin** on the go-ahead goal.

Laughlin credited the team's passing for their scoring efficiency.

"In practice, we worked with a lot of breakouts and using the open ice and using the passing," Laughlin said. "The puck moves a lot faster than the player, so we were trying to get a lot of puck movement going

Photo by Zach Sparks

Broadneck's offense kept Severna Park goalie Alex Auchincloss busy in his second game back from injury.



instead of skating."

Cuiba said the wins are a byproduct of the effort players put in on and off the ice.

"We have good chemistry," Cuiba said. "We all go to school together. It's like a family."

Laughlin said, "We have a big group chat, and we all joke together, get dinners together and have fun together."

The Falcons believe that if they play as a team, they can reach their goal.

"We help each other to know how we're going to be effective on the ice," Clements said. "If we work together, I think we have a good chance to win states this year."

The team started the season without goalie **Alex Auchincloss** for the beginning of the season. The

Broadneck contest was his second game back, so he will continue to knock off the rust.

St. Lawrence said Severna Park has the team to make a playoff run.

"Johnny Clements is our team captain, and some people call him Johnny Hustle because he never stops working," St. Lawrence said.

Josh Testerman is our alternate captain, and he is just an absolute goal-scorer. Our other alternate captain is Jake Cuiba, a junior. The other captains are seniors. Jake is very skilled.

"We have a strong defensive core," St. Lawrence continued. "Jake Cuiba, Ryan LaRocque, **Keegan Clifford** — these guys are all very strong defensemen ... their ability to carry and distribute the puck is at the top of the game."

The biggest obstacle, he said, are teams from Montgomery County and western counties that are comprised of athletes who will all play ice hockey at the next level.

"We have two very strong lines, and the third and fourth lines can hang with any team," St. Lawrence said. "If we can stay out of the penalty box and play five-on-five hockey, I think we can play anyone."

Severna Park's graduating seniors include Ted Glistler, Aidan Salb, Ryan Laughlin, John Clements, Josh Testerman, Sam McNeilly, Drew Robinson, Lucas Alpert, Tyler Blue, Elliot Sutherland and Mike Wiley.

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Teens At SPHS Make A Difference Through Leadership Projects

Each year, students in the Severna Park High School Leadership Institute make a difference in their community and raise awareness for a cause. The three-year course culminates in the seniors leading a Leadership III service project of their own. These are some of the projects completed this academic year.

Girls For Ivy

A group led by seniors Summer Sims and Lily Becker partnered with the Ivy Girl Academy to teach girls to overcome insecurity and make meaningful relationships with others in their lives through the Ivy Girl curriculum during the fall.

Ivy Girl Academy began with the founder, Jessie Funk, being bullied, suffering from bulimia, and dealing with her parents' divorce. She noticed that this internal stress and anger resulted in her becoming a bully. She formed the Ivy Girl Academy to create workshops, camps, and lessons that teach girls how to go through adolescence with confidence and respect while also preparing them to be the leaders of the future.

To accomplish their mission of helping young girls gain confidence and knowledge surrounding ladyhood, Sims and Becker met with a group of five middle school girls. During these meetings, they taught 12 lessons of ladyhood provided by the Ivy Girl Academy. With help from the Leadership I students, they also raised more than \$200 to donate to Ivy Girl, met with the girls virtually, and instilled the values and lessons that Ivy Girl Academy spreads in the community.

"One thing that I learned by teaching these lessons of ladyhood is that small interactions can have big impacts and internal confidence is the most important thing," Becker said. "If we feel good within ourselves, we can be better off for the people around us. Finally, the most important thing is girls sticking together!"



For their Leadership III project, Summer Sims (left) and Lily Becker taught ladyhood lessons to five middle school girls.

Sarah's House

To aid their community during the ongoing COVID crisis, seniors Rory Wahlig and Grace Marburger raised donations for a homelessness and crisis center just outside of their town, in Fort Meade.

Sarah's House, the organization the girls worked with, helps residents of Anne Arundel County and surrounding areas by providing temporary shelter, food and other forms of support to people in need. The nonprofit organization relies heavily on donations from the public.

To accomplish their goal of helping Sarah's House, Wahlig and Marburger held a Chipotle fundraiser night, accepted monetary donations from friends and family, and put out donation bins to collect items that were needed.

Wahlig and Marburger partnered with five underclassmen in Leadership 1 who greatly aided their project by posting on social media and informing their families about the need to give to Sarah's House. They raised just over \$690 and collected many items that were delivered to Sarah's House in January.

Believe In Tomorrow

Tyler Moran and Josh Higgins partnered with the Believe In Tomorrow Children's House at Johns Hopkins Children's Hospital to raise money and facilitate donations for the foundation. The Believe In Tomorrow Children's House provides housing and accommodations to the families of children receiving treatment. Their goal is to keep families together during a child's medical crisis, as the presence of normal family life in these hard situations has a powerful influence on the healing process.

Moran and Higgins raised money, collected donations of video games and frozen dinners, volunteered at the Port to Fort 6K sponsored by Believe In Tomorrow, and brought guest speaker Kelly Nguyen to their school to talk about Believe In Tomorrow.

"It was rewarding to see the gratitude on the people's faces at the event, and it showed how we can really make an impact in our community," Moran said.

Higgins added, "I definitely learned a lot about service and leadership from the experience. It's always humbling to help out with great organizations like Believe In Tomorrow, and I'm grateful we had the chance to make a difference."



Josh Higgins (left) and Tyler Moran raised money, collected donations of video games and frozen dinners, and volunteered at the Port to Fort 6K sponsored by Believe In Tomorrow.

Maryland SPCA

Josie Dike and Kylie Milton partnered with the Maryland Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) to raise money, pet supplies and awareness for animals in need at the SPCA's shelter and around the community.

Founded in 1869, the Maryland SPCA has endured with the motto that "every animal deserves to be treated with compassion and care." Located in Baltimore, the organization not only houses animals in need of shelter but also provides veterinary services and even food for pet owners in need. Vaccinations and certain surgeries are offered at a reduced price. Approximately 99% of the Maryland SPCA's budget comes from donations and fees. Dike and Milton recognized the urgency of the issue of animal homelessness and abuse, especially during the pandemic.

As pet owners themselves, the girls know how important it is to give their fuzzy friends love and care. They decided to raise \$200 in monetary donations, collect supplies in bins at Severna Park High School, and create an Amazon Wish List. Items being collected include leashes, cleaning supplies, food, blankets and toys. With help from underclassmen, they have created Facebook and Instagram pages to increase awareness between classmates and friends.

As of January 5, they have raised \$167, filled around three bins full of donations, and collected seven items from the Amazon Wish List. They hope to raise even more donations and awareness as they finish their project in early 2022.

» Continued on page 34



Left: Isabella "Izzy" Renzi took home a first-place trophy as U11 girls champion in December. Right: Annabelle Baker earned second place in her class to advance to the world competition in Belfast, Ireland.



Two Dancers Represent Severna Park At Southern Regional Oireachtas

During the Irish Dance Teachers Association of North America (IDTANA) Southern Region Oireachtas in December, Isabella "Izzy" Renzi took home a first-place trophy as U11 girls champion. Annabelle Baker earned second place in her class.

Both girls dance for the McGrath Morgan Academy of Irish Dance.

"I was so happy and excited that I won," said Izzy, a sixth-grader who attends Severna Park Middle School. "It was my first Oireachtas, and I worked really hard to prepare. It felt like a dream to achieve a huge goal of mine

with the amazing help of my teachers."

The Oireachtas (pronounced Uh-rock-tus) is a three-day regional championship where Irish dancers compete to qualify for national and world championships. More than 2,000 dancers from across the southern region, which includes Alabama, Arkansas, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia and Mexico, competed in Greensboro. Each competitor danced one soft shoe and one hard

» Continued on page 35

Scouts From Troop 995 Reach Eagle Status



On January 15, five Broadneck High School students, (l-r) James Beard, Aiden Dement, Andrew Gable, Liam Doyen and Samuel Landon, earned Eagle Scout rank as members of Troop 995.

Troop 995 of Arnold recognized five new Eagle Scouts on January 15. The Eagle Scout award is the seventh and highest rank in Scouts BSA, and typically only achieved by 8% of all scouts yearly.

"We are so proud of this group of young men," scoutmaster Peter Kaiser said. "It shows their hard work and dedication to the program, and to achieve this honor, especially through the COVID-19 quarantine, is amazing ... And believe it or not, these scouts are just the first five being honored, because we are planning

an early spring ceremony for another four more scouts. It's an exciting time for the troop."

James Beard, Aiden Dement, Andrew Gable, Liam Doyen and Samuel Landon, all Broadneck High School (BHS) students, are Troop 995's newest Eagle Scouts.

James Beard, a junior, passed his board of review for the Eagle rank on June 19, 2021, and has patiently waited to receive his award, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Beard led a group of scouts to build and install

18 custom bat boxes at Kinder Farm Park for his Eagle Scout project. He is an active member of the Order of the Arrow, participates in the Broadneck High School robotics club, and holds a red belt in American freestyle karate.

Senior **Aiden Dement** passed his board of review for the Eagle rank on October 16, 2021. Dement's Eagle Scout project was leading a team of scouts to build large compost bins for the City of Refuge Baltimore. He looks forward to studying mechanical engineering in college.

Andrew Gable, a junior, passed his board of review for the Eagle rank on October 13, 2021. He plays the bassoon for the Broadneck concert band and is currently the junior drum major and plays the bass clarinet for Broadneck's marching band. For his Eagle Scout project, Gable led a team to build a "kindness rock" garden for Gloria Dei Lutheran Church. The meditation garden started with over 300 custom painted rocks and the community adds to it regularly.

Broadneck junior **Liam Doyen** passed his board of review for the Eagle rank on October 16, 2021. For his Eagle Scout project, he led a team to build and install five kestrel/owl boxes. Doyen also created QR codes and installed posts to hold them for 24 points of interest at Goshen Farm in Cape St Claire. He enjoys sailing, the improv theater team, It's Academic team, and is the vice president of the Broadneck robotics club. In 2019, Doyen was a Carson Scholar award winner.

Samuel Landon, a sophomore, passed his board of review for the Eagle Rank on October 16, 2021. His Eagle Scout project also benefited the City of Refuge Baltimore. He led a team to build an outdoor amphitheater with a firepit to be used for spiritual outdoor gatherings, socializing and meditations.



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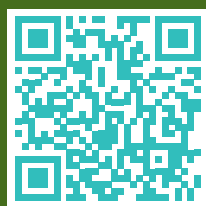
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Make Family Reading Fun With These Tips

Sara Miller
Severna Park
Tutoring &
Educational
Advocacy



this shared activity. Here are some quick ideas for making reading fun and family friendly.

1. Read aloud together

No matter the age of your children, they will enjoy it when you read to them aloud. Think about classic books with engaging characters. Take turns reading in different voices or different chapters. Think back to memorable books that you enjoyed as a child and reread them together. You may be surprised by what you enjoy about them when you examine them again. Plus, it gives you a chance to share some of the memories of your childhood with your children.

2. Pick books about the same topic

If reading the same book together doesn't work for your family, select reading material on a similar topic. Consider topics that your family enjoys. If last

Is your New Year's resolution to read more? Are you looking for a nice way to spend family time that does not revolve around screens? Reading together can help you do both. Adults and children alike benefit from



month's ski trip was a highlight of your year, have everyone in your family pick a book that involves skiing. Come together and discuss what you read about, what interested you, and what connections you made between your experience and those in the books.

3. Make a movie choice

Select a novel that has been made into a movie or check out the movies based on novels that are being released this year. Many children enjoy seeing how their visualizations of a book compare to the imagination of the film creators. Kids also love discussing the similarities and differences between the book and movie. After reading the book together, celebrate by watching the movie together in the theater.

4. Don't forget the humor

If you are looking for text that will ap-

peal to your whole family, look for books that include humor. Nothing engages even the most reluctant reader more than funny characters navigating silly situations. Local librarians, media specialists, and teachers have a wealth of knowledge about which authors are masters of comedy and which series appeal to humor-loving children of all ages.

5. Identify the right time

Establishing a habit is an important part of sticking to your resolution. Choose a time of day based on your family's individual preferences and routines. Many families enjoy reading together at night, but other times of the day might work better with your family's schedule. Maybe your family would enjoy cozying up together on the couch on Saturday morning, or perhaps relaxing with a book together after dinner would suit your family best.

6. Get comfy

Make yourselves comfortable when you read. Find a spot by the fire where you can all read together. Lay out a bunch of pillows and blankets to make a relaxing oasis to read in. Let your little ones build a "reading fort" and gather your reading materials to take inside. Popcorn isn't just for movies. Grab your favorite snack or beverage to enjoy as you dive into your reading.

7. Find a local book club

There are many options for book clubs for both children and adults. Look at your local library, tutoring center, or bookstore for organized groups that read and discuss books together. If you can't find one that fits your needs, get some families together and start your own!

8. Have fun

The easiest resolutions to keep are those that you enjoy. Have fun with your reading on your own and with your family. Try a new genre or author. Read a book that will teach you something new. Have your children or spouse select your next read. Be a model for your children of enjoying a good book, and they will follow suit!

9. Keep a list of each book

At the end of 2022, revisit your list and discuss the titles you shared together and separately. Which were most memorable and why? What authors would you read again? By celebrating your year of reading together, you create a tradition that you can carry into every new year.

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Teens At SPHS Make A Difference

» Continued from page 31

Fish For A Cure

A team led by James Glebocki and Eddie Sullivan raised money and spread awareness for Fish For A Cure, an organization that funds critical psychosocial services needed throughout the cancer diagnosis.

The Fish For A Cure Organization was founded in 2007 when business associates wanted to enjoy their passion of fishing, enjoy the beauty of the Chesapeake Bay, and have fun with friends. They quickly changed their focus to cancer funding after one of the founder's wives was diagnosed with cancer. As avid fishers and students who have loved ones affected by cancer, Glebocki and Sullivan made it their goal to "kick cancer's bass."

Together, Sullivan and Glebocki helped Fish For A Cure's Junior boat raise over \$2,000. This was done by advertising their cause on Instagram and other social media platforms, spreading awareness through word of mouth, and holding a restaurant night at Brian Boru Irish Restaurant and Pub.

Ronald McDonald House

Jenny Bertha and Mackenzie Farrell partnered with the Ronald McDonald House (RMDH) in Baltimore to support children with life-threatening illnesses and their families. The girls planned to raise money, collect pull tabs and collect supplies as a part of their Leadership III project, Helping Hands.

The Ronald McDonald House provides shelter for families whose children are fighting life-threatening illnesses. Each night, the organization also gives hot meals and homes to 42 families, totaling 2,400 families per year.

The girls' goals included raising \$105 to donate to the RMDH, which would allow them to "adopt" a family, paying for the family's visit, for one week. Currently, the girls have raised \$280, more than doubling their goal. Additionally, the girls collected 7,000 pull tabs not only to gain support in the community but also to donate to the RMDH for additional money.

The Fisher House Foundation

Abby Johnson and Emma Marsh partnered with the Fisher House Foundation to support veterans and military families. With a team of three students, Johnson and Marsh raised \$350 for the organization, surpassing their goal of \$150, by fundraising online through social media and in person during school lunches.

The group meets during school every two weeks to advance the project. They have most recently met to create donation bins that were used to fundraise at Severna Park High School. Additionally, they have collected more than 15 home care items to donate to the organization and created COVID-19 care baskets to provide Fisher House families with necessary pandemic supplies.

To learn more and donate to Helping Heroes, visit www.instagram.com/helping_heroesfh/?hl=en.

Salvation Army — Angel Tree Program



Janna Chang and Joi Fleming chose to support the Angel Tree program because they wanted to help children in unfortunate situations feel joy during Christmastime.

Janna Chang and Joi Fleming worked with the Annapolis Salvation Army's Angel Tree program. After reaching out in the summer of 2021, the girls raised money in the Severna Park community throughout the fall before purchasing gifts and delivering them to Annapolis Salvation Army branch headquarters before the deadline on December 3. The girls aimed to raise \$200 to buy the gifts for three children. In total, they raised over \$1,000. After spending \$300 on the gifts for their three sponsored kids, they were able to donate over \$700 to directly support the Angel Tree program.

The girls chose to support the Angel Tree program because they wanted to help children in unfortunate situations feel joy during Christmastime.

"Although we didn't get to see the gifts be received because the families and sponsors were kept anonymous,

when we dropped the gifts off, it felt gratifying knowing we were helping to make a difference after such a tough year," Fleming said. "It made us appreciate what we have."

Chang and Fleming also aimed to increase participation in the program. Through the help of their group of underclassmen, they designed and hung up 20 posters around their high school and community.

"We'd like to thank our team, Athena Vangraefschep, Khyla Boodoo, Ryn Feemster, Nathan Quinn and Grace Min, for helping us pull off our project," Chang said. "Without their help, we wouldn't have been able to promote our project and fundraise as much as we did."

Repaying Kindness

*Bulldog Schwinn And Sports
Donates Bike To "Good Kid"*

◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇

By Zach Sparks

zach@severneparkvoice.com

During his time away from school during the holiday break, first-grader Hunter Brown learned a valuable lesson: kindness pays off.

Roughly two weeks prior to Christmas, he gave a holiday card and \$10 to his bus driver, Mike Prager of Bulldog Schwinn and Sports, as a gesture of kindness.

"I don't know what motivated him to do this, but I was stunned," Prager said. "He gets on the bus, doesn't say a word, hands it to me, and goes to the back of the bus."

Prager was so moved by the act, he invited Hunter to the shop on December 31 for a surprise gift: a free bike.

With his aunt, April Black, by his side, Hunter got to test his bike in the parking lot before taking it home.

"I don't want to be a bad kid; I want to be a good kid," said Hunter, a High Point Elementary student.

Black said she wasn't surprised because Hunter is a thoughtful kid.

"We talk about being kind to people and we say that's the only way is to be kind," she said.

"Hunter Brown gave a holiday card and \$10 to his bus driver, Mike Prager of Bulldog Schwinn and Sports, as a gesture of kindness. Prager was so moved by the act, he invited Hunter to the shop on December 31 for a surprise gift: a free bike.

Photos by Zach Sparks

Right: Hunter Brown was aided by his aunt, April Black, as he took a test drive on his new bike.

Below: The bike, a gift from Bulldog Schwinn and Sports owner Mike Prager, was a show of gratitude. Prager is also Hunter's bus driver.



Dancers Represent Severna Park

» Continued from page 31

shoe dance. Scores were tabulated and the top half of dancers were "recalled" to compete in the third round, which is a hard shoe set dance.

"To do so well this year was amazing and surreal," said Annabelle, an eighth-grader at St. Martin's-in-the-Field Episcopal School. "I have always imagined and wished for it. All my hard work has finally caught up to me".

Both dancers are excited to advance to the next stage of competition.

"In April, I will be going to the worlds in Belfast, where I hope to place in the top 50," Anabelle said. "I am so excited and grateful for the opportunity."

Izzy also expressed excitement for the upcoming competition.

"It's going to be such a cool experience to dance overseas for the first time and an honor to be among the dancers representing the United States on the world stage," she said. "I can't wait!"

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Superintendent Recommends \$1.6 Billion FY2023 Operating Budget

Shared by the AACPS Communications Office

Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) Superintendent George Arlotto recommended to the Board of Education a \$1.6 billion Fiscal Year 2023 operating budget on December 15, representing the first phase of a multi-year plan to move funding from state and federal COVID-related grants to the school system's operating budget, provides staffing to reduce class sizes, and provides compensation increases for all employees.

In his eighth budget address as superintendent, Arlotto recommended \$23.8 million in shifts of federal and state grants to the school system's permanent operating budget. The funding includes \$4.2 million for 70.4 existing special education positions and another \$5.1 million for 60 existing positions for the AACPS Virtual Academy, which launched this year. It also includes more than \$6.2 million for temporary teaching assistants and long-term substitutes, \$4.6 million for a portion of the leases for technology equipment acquired throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and \$2.1 million in contracts for enhanced preventative maintenance services for school HVAC systems.

Another \$24.8 million in Arlotto's recommendation is allocated to the first wave of funding dedicated to programs required by the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, a piece of state legislation aimed at creating more opportunities for students, expanding career and technical education programs, and bolstering salaries for teachers and other educators.

Funding directly related to the Blueprint for Maryland's Future requirements includes \$5 million for mandated compensation increases

for National Board Certified teachers (NBCT) and \$3.7 million for 54.5 positions necessary to convert 17 half-day prekindergarten programs to full day.

"We should not fund these blueprint-focused areas at the expense of other programs," Arlotto said. "They are critically needed investments designed — COVID or not — to help us reach the summit of this climb."

Employee Compensation

Inclusive of the NBCT enhancements, Arlotto's recommendation contains \$55.7 million for employee compensation increases. That is sufficient, subject to negotiations with employee bargaining units, for a 4 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for all employees, a compensation placeholder equivalent to step movement for eligible employees, and the final phase of back steps or step equivalents for eligible employees in Unit II through Unit VI who missed those increases due to economic constraints in Fiscal Year 2016. The expected ratification of the recent Unit I tentative agreement will resolve that issue for those employees.

Part of Arlotto's COLA recommendation will go toward funding a blueprint-mandated compensation increase of 10 percent for teachers by 2024. AACPS has already allocated 3 percent of that total.

"I believe it is prudent to take a bigger bite of this apple this year for two reasons: First, we need to provide as much as we can for our employees as soon as we can. Second, we should not push any more of this cost into future years than we absolutely have to," Arlotto said. "Doing so may imperil needed funding should the fiscal picture become more uncertain."

Staffing To Meet Student Needs

To continue to address the social and emotional needs of students, Arlotto included \$4.4 million for 36 positions, including 11 assistant principals, 6.6 teachers and aides for an alternative education elementary program, seven school counselors, 4.4 school psychologists, three school social workers, and two pupil personnel workers.

Additionally, Arlotto's recommendation includes funding for 122 teachers to reduce class sizes in the first of a three-year plan; 93.6 positions in special education to address the increased complexity of student needs; 30.3 positions to address the needs of English language learners; 19.1 positions in the final phase of staffing for Crofton High School; and 7.5 positions to expand the elementary Triple-E program to most schools in the Old Mill cluster.

Approximately 92.4 percent of the new positions in Arlotto's recommendation interact with students on a daily basis.

Student Transportation Issues

To help address ongoing issues with bus driver shortages and student transportation, Arlotto included in his recommendation \$3.4 million to provide approximately a 10 percent COLA for contracted bus drivers and aides. There is an additional \$2.3 million for 32 buses to address existing bus overcrowding issues identified by Prismatic Services Inc., the consultant hired by the Board of Education to facilitate

changes in school start times next year.

Arlotto's recommendation also includes \$575,000 for drivers, aides, and vans to begin to transport students to nonpublic settings as allowable under state regulations that remain under review.

Capital Budget Recommendation

Arlotto's \$193 million FY2023 capital budget recommendation contains \$122.9 million in construction funding for six major school projects: Quarterfield Elementary, Hillsmere Elementary, Rippling Woods Elementary, Old Mill West High School, West County Elementary and Old Mill Middle School South.

It also includes \$5.3 million for design of a new Center of Applied Technology – North to be built on the current Old Mill High School campus, and \$10 million for classroom additions at Southgate Elementary School and Crofton Middle School.

There is also \$30 million for building systems renovations, and \$3.5 million for athletic stadium improvements in the capital budget recommendation.

The Board of Education held a budget workshop on January 18, following several public hearings, and is set to vote on any changes.

Arlotto's full Fiscal Year 2023 operating and capital budget recommendations, as well as a text of his budget address and a Budget in Brief document, are posted online at www.aacps.org/fy2023budget.

Jones Elementary Named One Of Three Wellness Schools

Shared by the AACPS Communications Office

The Anne Arundel County Public Schools Wellness Council has chosen Jones Elementary School, Marley Middle School and Crofton High School as the 2021 winners of the AACPS Wellness School of Distinction award.

The award recognizes schools that demonstrate a high priority for the health and well-being of students, staff, and school supporters by going beyond the curriculum to produce positive outcomes for the entire school community.

To win the prestigious honor, schools must show that their cultures encompass wellness as reflected in the 10 components of the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) model. WSCC is a coordinated and collaborative school health approach outlined by the Centers for Disease Control. The components of the WSCC are health education; physical activity; health services; nutrition

environment and services; counseling, psychological and social services; social and emotional climate; physical environment; employee wellness; family engagement; and community involvement.

Despite the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, these schools remained steadfast in their efforts to support student and staff wellness. From approaches that incorporate equity to monthly fitness challenges for students and staff to health-focused afterschool clubs, each winning school's approach to creating a culture of wellness is unique, but with one common factor: collaboration and motivation to be a healthy community.

This year, schools that won the award in 2018 were eligible to apply to maintain their statuses. Jones Elementary School and Marley Middle School earned their second designations. As an extension of the Board of Education policy on wellness and the AACPS Wellness Council, the award is given annually.

AACPS 2022-2023 School Year Calendar

August

- 15-18 | New teacher onboarding activities.
- 19-26 | Opening activities for all teachers.
- 29 | Schools open for grades 1-5 and grades 6 and 9 only.
- 29-31 | Staggered openings for ECI, pre-k, and kindergarten.
- 30 | Schools open for grades 1-12.

September

- 1-7 | Staggered openings for ECI, pre-k, and kindergarten.
- 5 | Schools & central offices closed. Labor Day.
- 26 | Schools & central offices closed. Rosh Hashanah.

October

- 5 | Schools & central offices closed. Yom Kippur.
- 19 | Two-hour early dismissal. No afternoon ECI or pre-k. Project Unity Day. Professional development.
- 20 | Two-hour early dismissal. No afternoon ECI or pre-k. Parent/teacher conferences.
- 24 | Diwali.

November

- 3-4 | Two-hour early dismissal. No afternoon ECI or pre-k. End of first marking period.

- 8 | Schools & central offices closed. Election Day.
- 21-22 | Schools closed for all students. Parent/teacher conferences.
- 23-25 | Schools & central Offices closed. Thanksgiving holiday.

December

- 7 | Two-hour early dismissal. No afternoon ECI or pre-K. Project Unity Day. Professional development.
- 23-30 | Schools closed for students. Christmas/Winter break. Schools closed for students, teachers, and schoolbased Unit IV employees. School offices & central offices closed December 26, 29, 30.

January

- 16 | Schools & central offices closed. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday commemoration.
- 23-24 | Two-hour early dismissal. No afternoon ECI or pre-k. End of second marking period. Teacher workdays.
- 25 | Schools closed for all students. Semester break.
- 26 | Mo Gaba Day.



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Q.

Question of the month

Each month, the *Severna Park Voice* poses a question to a local fifth-grade class. This month, students from Ms. Ender's class at Benfield Elementary School answered the question:

What do you want to be when you grow up and why?

Medical field - I think it would be interesting to find new discoveries about different medicines.
Avery F.

Makeup artist - I like to explore with makeup and inspire people.
Calla B.

Video game designer - I enjoy coding and creating things.
Calvin C.



Real estate agent - I like selling things.
Colin D.

Professional soccer player - I like soccer. It would be fun to travel and do what I have liked doing since I was little.
Ella G.

Professional lacrosse player - I love playing lacrosse and learning new moves. I have been playing since I was 4.
Elsa C.

Fashion designer - I love to design clothes and make

people feel beautiful.
Emme W.

Professional hockey player - I enjoy practicing and playing games. I also think it is really fun.
Evan A.

Cancer doctor - I want to cure people who have cancer and make them feel better.
Gray N.

Guidance counselor - I want to work in a school and it seems fun.
Hannah F.

Professional baseball player - The players on TV inspire me.
Harrison R.

Professional soccer player - I love watching, playing and learning about soccer.
Heath G.

Professional soccer player - I like to inspire people and I like to work hard.
Hunter F.

Coder - I feel like it would be fun to make games other people can play.
Jack B.

Professional soccer player - They inspire me to keep playing and I try hard.
Kate W.

Dolphin trainer - I have been swimming my whole life and I think marine life is cool.
Lucia V.

Professional soccer player - I have played since I was little. I enjoy learning new skills and having fun playing in games.
Marin S.

U.S. Navy - I want to protect

our country.
Mason S.

Professional halfback in the NFL - I have loved running and catching the football since I was 5.
Owen T-H.

U.S. Navy - A lot of my family members are veterans.
Roman W.

Professional soccer player - I like playing soccer and I think it is really fun.
Ryan B.

Clothing designer - I think it would be fun to work with different materials and dresses.
Sophie F.

Professional photographer - I have always liked taking photos of nature and everything around me. Sometimes what I see on the camera looks different from what I see in real life.
Sophie T.

Video game designer - I love to be creative, inspire others and be proud of my amazing work.
Tiara G.

Professional baseball player - I have been playing since I was 5 and I really like baseball.
Tripp S.

Professional basketball player - I can inspire people and get paid really well.
Waseem H.

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Critical Point In COVID-19 Response

By Kathleen McCollum

President and CEO

University of Maryland Baltimore
Washington Medical Center

We are at a critical point in our response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and we need your help. In the last few weeks, COVID-19 hospitalizations have dramatically increased at every hospital in the state, including UM BWMC here in Anne Arundel County. Combined with a nationwide shortage of health care workers and the rapid transmission of the Omicron variant, we have reached an unprecedented juncture.

It is important that we recognize the significant burden our teams have carried for nearly two years — they are tired. They have been working relentlessly to ensure every patient and family receives the high-quality care they deserve. You have supported us in countless ways over the last two years, and once again, we need your support to get us through this current surge.

The smallest daily habits can make an enormous impact. Wash your

hands, wear a well-fitting mask when you leave your home, stay home if you are sick, practice social distancing, and avoid crowds. If you haven't already, now is the time to get fully vaccinated and receive a booster shot. You will be better protected from severe illness and death from COVID-19. The majority of patients hospitalized have not been vaccinated and/or boosted. Testing may be limited, but if you can, get tested if you have been exposed to COVID-19 or are experiencing symptoms.

There is a reason you hear these recommendations over and over — because they are all effective in slowing the spread of the virus and it will take all of us working together to get through this.

We've made great progress and we will not give up. Through every new variant and surge, we are committed to serving you. Thank you for entrusting us with your care and for doing your part to protect your family, friends and loved ones. We wish you a healthy, happy new year, and hope for a bright 2022.

Is Your Cat So Sweet, They Need Insulin?

Let's Talk Diabetes In Cats



By Dr. Dani White

Associate Veterinarian

VCA Calvert Veterinary Center

Diabetes can look like several other common cat diseases including hyperthyroid and kidney disease — the main signs to look for are increased hunger, thirst and urination. Often, diabetics will be overweight and suddenly lose a large portion of their body weight over a short period of time. Sometimes, the signs are less obvious and are caught on routine wellness testing.

A diagnosis is made through bloodwork and a urinalysis. Diabetes mellitus literally translates to "sweet water," meaning a hallmark of diabetes is sugar in the urine.

So, you have a diagnosis — what next?

- **Insulin:** the best option on the market for cats is the human insulin glargine (lantus).
- **Food:** diet should consist mainly of wet food and ideally a diabetic-friendly prescription food. There are several

good options out there, including from Purina and Hills.

- **Blood glucose curves:** we used to have to rely on in-hospital serial curves, where a blood sample was taken every two hours throughout the day. Now, we use the Libre Freestyle Sensors, which have been revolutionary in pet medicine, allowing us to have pet parents perform curves at home with a far less invasive approach and less stress to your pet!

But the true key to managing a diabetic?

Consistency. This is the true secret to navigating through from diagnosis to stable disease (and even remission in some cases). Diabetics crave routine and are more accurate than most clocks in a lot of ways! Insulin should be given as close to 12 hours apart as possible and should be given at the same time every day. Cats do not need to be fed at any particular time like dogs do; most do very well with a "free-feeding" lifestyle. However, calories should be managed, and carbohydrates reduced (canned food is best).

OK, but my cat is always hungry! How do we manage its weight?

Many diabetics struggle with weight. Once their blood sugar levels stabilize, they tend to gain weight easily. Managing the extra pounds can be crucial to successful glucose control; obesity in cats leads to insulin resistance over time and can cause fluctuations in blood sugar levels. Here are some helpful hints to keeping those pounds down:

- Utilize feeder toys — this encourages natural hunting behaviors and slows down speed eaters, increasing satisfaction with smaller meals.
- Add water to food or give more canned diet — this adds bulk with less calorie density than most dry foods.
- Laser pointers, wand toys and catnip mice are old favorites to encourage playing.
- Ask your veterinary hospital for a calorie plan. This way, you know exactly how much to feed in a day.

The Main Takeaways

A new diabetic can be daunting — the first three to six months involve many insulin adjustments, glucose curves, and check-ins with your veterinary team. The important thing to remember is that this disease can be managed through consistency, collaboration and a little TLC!

VCA Calvert Veterinary Center loves your sugar-blooded fur kids, and the staff is ready to help you navigate all the trials and triumphs that come along with this process. If you have questions or are concerned your cat may have diabetes, contact your local veterinarian. VCA Calvert Veterinary Center has been serving the greater Pasadena community for over 17 years. The staff members are "your other family doctor." To make an appointment, call 410-360-PAWS.

Lung Association Tips To Begin Your Journey To A Tobacco-Free 2022

Along with hitting the gym more often and starting a diet, quitting smoking tops many New Year's resolution lists. Quitting tobacco isn't easy, but 50 million ex-smokers in the United States are proof that it's achievable.

Nationally, nearly 40 million Americans smoke. In Maryland, the adult smoking rate is 12.7 percent and the high school tobacco use rate is 27.4 percent. To encourage people to quit smoking, vaping and using all tobacco products in 2022, the American Lung Association is promoting "No Tobacco '22." To help people quit, the organization is sharing tips and resources through social media and www.lung.org.

"More than 70 percent of smokers want to quit smoking and 40 percent will make an attempt this year, but only between 4 and 7 percent can quit without support. Smokers and tobacco users who want to quit should make a plan to be successful such as setting quit date, understanding smoking triggers, talking to a doctor about quit smoking medications and finding support through family, friends and cessation programs," said Jennifer Folkenroth, national senior director of tobacco programs for the American Lung Association.

The American Lung Association offers five tips to help Americans who are ready to commit to No Tobacco '22:

1. It's never too late to quit. While it's best to quit as early as possible, quitting

tobacco use at any age will enhance the length and quality of your life. You'll also save money and avoid the hassle of going outside in the cold to smoke or vape.

2. Learn from past experiences. Most people who smoke, chew or vape have tried to quit before and sometimes people get discouraged thinking about previous attempts. Instead, treat those experiences as steps on the road to future success. Think about what helped you during those tries and what you'll do differently in your next quit attempt.

3. You don't have to quit alone. Enrolling in a proven-effective cessation counseling program, such as the Lung Association's Freedom From Smoking program, can increase your chances of successfully quitting and staying quit by 50 percent.

4. Talk to a doctor about quit smoking medications. Talking to a doctor about including cessation medication into your tobacco treatment plan can double your chances of quitting successfully. There are seven Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved medications that are proven to help you quit. Just make sure to follow the directions and use them for the full duration they are prescribed.

5. Quit. Don't Switch. E-cigarettes are tobacco products, and the Food and Drug Administration has not found any e-cigarette to be safe and effective in helping smokers quit. Switching to e-cigarettes does not mean quitting. Quitting means ending your addiction to nicotine. Make

sure your tobacco treatment plan includes the two components proven to work: behavioral counseling plus FDA-approved cessation medication.

The American Lung Association offers resources to help adults and teens to quit all tobacco products:

- **Lung Helpline:** Not sure where to start? Call the Lung Association's free Lung Helpline and Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-LUNGUSA, which is staffed with licensed registered nurses, respiratory therapists and certified tobacco treatment specialists. They can answer all your questions and connect you with the resources that are right for your quit journey.
- **Freedom From Smoking** helps individuals create their own unique quit plan, as well as tips and techniques to stay successful in the long run. Freedom From Smoking can be accessed online, at a group clinic and through a self-guided workbook.
- **Not-On-Tobacco (N-O-T)** is a teen smoking/chewing/vaping cessation program for teens who want to quit. The 10-session program provides the tools, information, and support for teens to end their addiction to tobacco.

For more information about quitting smoking and vaping for No Tobacco '22, visit www.lung.org or call 1-800-LUNGUSA.

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Cape Resident Orchestrates 40th Poe Celebration

Virtual Birthday Celebration Set For January 22



Above: Area resident Jeff Jerome plans to broadcast a portion of this year's event live from the Poe Monument in Baltimore. **Right:** This illustration of Edgar Allan Poe was featured in Harper's magazine in 1872.

By Zach Sparks

zach@severnaparkvoice.com

The annual Edgar Allan Poe birthday celebration is set for January 22 this year, and fans of the macabre can follow the festivities from their own tomb, crypt, vault or home.

For the second consecutive year, the celebration will be virtual due to COVID restrictions. A tradition since 1982, the event has activities from noon to 5:30pm.

Cape St. Claire resident and former Poe House curator Jeff Jerome is leading the free event with his friends at the Westminster Preservation Trust.

This year's activities include a theologian's take on "The Raven," actor Tony Tsendeas' theatrical readings of "The Cask of Amontillado" and "Berenice," a discussion on the riddle of the Poe Toaster, a tribute by the current Poe Toaster, and an Amontillado toast to Poe.

"When we do these birthday celebrations, not only do we want to entertain; we want to educate," Jerome said. "We do the theatrical presentations and readings, but we also share something about Poe's life that interests people."

Some of the most common questions are about Poe's death and about the Poe Toaster — the mysterious person who left three red roses and a bottle of cognac on Poe's grave during the early morning hours of the author's birthday from about 1949 to 2009. The Maryland Historical Society chose a new Poe Toaster to continue the tradition in 2015. Jerome is excited for that portion of this year's program and the chance to dissect the mystery.

"Since I'm the one who has been observing this tradition for all these years, I figured I would seek out the truth,"

Jerome said. "I can set the record straight on when it started and possibly who was doing this."

Jerome said he had three suspects, but as each died, he had to reconsider everything he knew about the person's identity.

Many internet sleuths have speculated that Jerome is the toaster, a rumor he put to rest. Because of the layout of Westminster Hall — where the birthday celebration is usually held — and Jerome's job working for the City of Baltimore from 1979 to 2014, he said it would be an impossible task.

"If I was doing this, it would be fraud; I would be perpetrating a hoax," he said. "I was with other people when the toaster appeared. I'd have to run from one spot, catch my breath, change into street clothing. The logistics don't make sense."

While Jerome may not be the Poe Toaster, he has a lifelong devotion to the author. His passion for stories started even sooner.

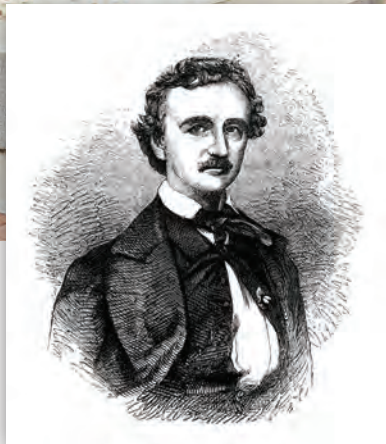
"I grew up with old Vincent Price movies and Roger Corben films," he said. "I would walk to the corner theater when I was just 8 or 9 ... and that got me hooked."

Jerome rediscovered Poe's works during his teenage years and started volunteering at the Westminster House in Baltimore before becoming the curator of the Poe House in 1979.

"Poe never gave up despite poverty, severe illness and people putting him down," Jerome said. "I loved his stories and his struggle to maintain a living."

The Poe birthday celebrations started as a simple event with friends, but those friends requested more: a story, a reading. It became a weekend full of festivities

» Continued on page 46



Dining Out

Honey Baked Ham Offers Great Taste And Fabulous Deals

By Mary Cobbler

When I informed my husband that I was reviewing The Honey Baked Ham Company, he assumed I would be bringing home a giant spiral cut ham. Not so! I assured him the restaurant offers much more than hams. The cozy café tucked into the Plaza Park shopping center in Severna Park is actually a good spot for a lunch date or quick business meeting with a colleague.

I popped into the restaurant on a frigid Tuesday afternoon and perused the menu. The staff was friendly and patient as they waited for me to decide. I chose a family dinner that featured two pounds of meat, along with two sides and rolls — all for \$39.

Also, I ordered my lunch — "The Honeybaked" sandwich with potato salad and a cookie. The sandwich featured smoked honey baked ham on a toasted ciabatta roll, with melted Swiss cheese, sliced tomatoes and my favorite part — crisp pickles and crispy onions, and all topped with zesty mustard. The ham was tender and flavorful, but not quite the sweet Easter or Christmas ham taste I anticipated. But it was a satisfying sandwich. I enjoyed all the textures and the fusion of flavors.

The potato salad, in a tiny container, was average and nothing to "write home about."

You can, however, get excited about the

» Continued on page 46

Right: This family dinner included turkey and ham, two sides, and rolls — plenty of food for lots of sandwiches.



Left: "The Honeybaked" sandwich features sliced ham on a toasted ciabatta roll with lettuce, tomatoes, crispy onions and pickles, and zesty mustard (or your choice of condiment).



"West Side Story" Gets A Much-Needed Makeover

By Audrey Ruppert

In an age of pointless and badly done remakes, when I heard that "West Side Story" was being redone by Steven Spielberg, my first thought was why? "West Side Story" is a done-to-death high school play, a cornerstone of American cinematic history, and a portrayal that is becoming increasingly dated and problematic when viewed with a modern eye. Was this necessary? Let me tell you, it was extremely necessary.

The new film is hyper-aware of its own past and appears to be a dialogue between its original Broadway source material, the classic film, and modern interpretations of American history. It could have felt like a papering over of cracks that were showing due to the story's age, but instead the film came together as a cohesive, contemporary reimagining of a timeless tale: in late 1950s New York City, Tony, former leader of the white Jets gang, falls in love with Maria, sister to Bernardo, the leader of the Puerto Rican Sharks gang. Violence ensues.

A lot has been done to remedy the caricaturist way the Puerto Ricans were portrayed in the original film, from a copious use of Spanish without subtitles, to using actual actors of color (the original actors were white people in brown face — Natalie Wood was Russian), to a much starker portrayal of racism in the film. We actually see the destruction the Jets cause



Photo courtesy of Disney

"West Side Story" retells a timeless tale: in the 1950s, Tony, former leader of the white Jets gang, falls in love with Maria, sister to Bernardo, the leader of the Puerto Rican Sharks gang. Violence ensues.

characters and makes them more three-dimensional. The tension between Tony and Riff is so much more palpable, coming to a climax with "Keep it Cool," a song that is sung and danced over the holes of an abandoned dock where their parents' generation once worked. The Jets are no longer ambiguous white people; they are Polish, they are Irish, they are the "last Caucasians" as Lieutenant Schrank puts

it — the neglected children of dysfunctional parents who have been left behind and are using violence and humor as coping mechanisms (see "Officer Krupke").

Even if you've never seen another version of "West Side Story" before, you'll likely be captivated by the flash of beautiful colors, the stunning choreography, and the incredible singing voices. Rachel Zegler makes a bold debut as Maria, and while Ansel Elgort's acting may not be up to par with his castmates, wow, can he sing!

paying homage to the film's roots. It's interesting that Spielberg chose to keep the story set in the same time period rather than bringing it to the modern day, but his understanding of what truly happened in the late '50s is very contemporary. Not only does he look at racism and trans issues; he sets the story against a backdrop of gentrification, displacement of poor communities (white and otherwise) and distrust between police and those they police. The whole lens is much starker, grittier, realist.

Not only does Spielberg flesh out the background against which the story is set, but he also breathes new life into familiar

The core message, underneath the social commentary, remains the same — hate begets hate and leads only to ruin.

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Local Native Proves Harry Potter Knowledge On Trivia Show

Below Left: In the first round of "Harry Potter: Hogwarts Tournament of Houses," Annie Bennett (left) and the Ravenclaw team advanced to the final match after beating Slytherin. **Below Right:** Actress Helen Mirren hosted the trivia show, which aired on TBS in December. Photos courtesy of TBS



Annie Bennett did not need magic to secure a spot on the TBS trivia show "Harry Potter: Hogwarts Tournament of Houses," which aired in December. The Emerson College student and former Severna Park resident proved her fandom during the application process and again during the four-part TV competition.

The show paid tribute to the 20-year anniversary of the first film in the "Harry Potter" series.

Representing the house of Ravenclaw, Bennett and her two teammates faced Slytherin in the first round. Ravenclaw is known for intelligence, and Bennett put on a performance fitting of that house by contributing several correct answers. At one point, host Helen Mirren played a sound clip and Bennett correctly identified the movie scene in which characters ventured into a cave to find a locket horcrux. She also correctly named

the number of years Sybill Trelawney taught at Hogwarts.

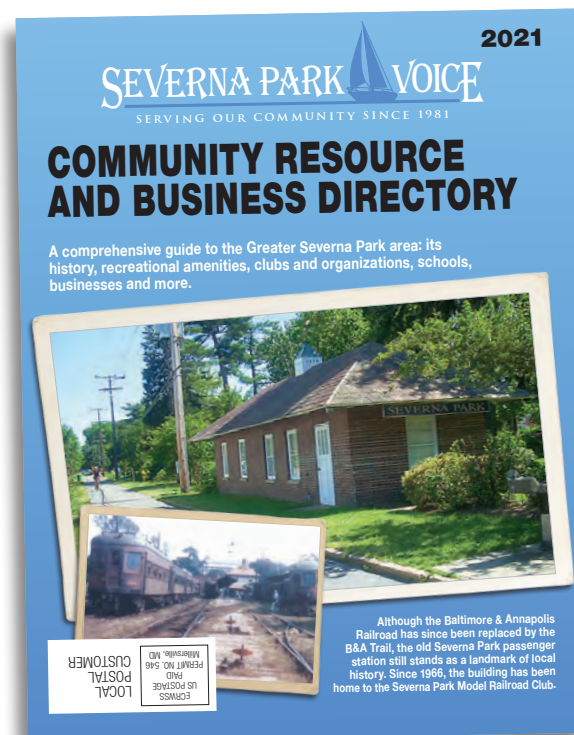
With a perfect first round, Ravenclaw advanced to the final against Hufflepuff and Slytherin, which earned a second chance after a win in the wild card round. Despite giving the first correct answer in a challenge that involved all three teams, thus removing her from the challenge, Bennett's team could not capitalize, and Ravenclaw was eliminated. Hufflepuff ultimately won

the trophy.

Regardless of the result, Bennett was thrilled with the experience, as she told Mirren.

"Harry Potter was the first story I fell in love with because it taught me the power that a good story can have," she said. "Growing up as a little gay kid in suburbia, it really has influenced my values. A good story can change the world, and I really do believe that Harry Potter has."

COMING IN FEBRUARY



The *Severna Park Voice* will publish its annual **Community Resource and Business Directory** and this beautiful, high-gloss magazine will feature everything you need to know about the **Greater Severna Park area**. It will be direct mailed to more than **24,000 homes and businesses in Severna Park, Arnold and Millersville**.

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40th Poe Celebration

» Continued from page 42

until Jerome had to scale back.

"I've had so much fun doing this because I see myself as serving a purpose," Jerome said.

To fulfill that purpose of introducing people to Poe during this year's celebration, Jerome and the Westminster House have started a GoFundMe campaign. They are seeking \$1,000, an amount that will allow them to pay the actors and do the birthday toast.

For last year's virtual event, 175,000 people worldwide tuned in, including viewers from Iraq, Bulgaria, Australia, Slovakia and South America.

"There are other birthday celebrations for Poe," Jerome said. "This is the only one where we have his grave."

To watch the free event, visit the Facebook page "Edgar Allan Poe: Evermore." To donate, visit the GoFundMe page or send a check to Jeff Jerome, P.O. Box 1226, Severna Park, MD 21146.

As Jerome noted, Poe based his stories on actual occurrences ripped from the headlines. "He never wrote about werewolves, monsters or Frankenstein," Jerome said, emphasizing that Poe also wrote adventure and comedy stories.

"Most people think of Edgar Allan Poe as this guy who sat in his garret and wrote these stories. For someone who never finished college, he was very intelligent," Jerome said. "For example, 'The Raven' is full of biblical references. He was also way ahead of his time in his ideas related to science fiction. He was always learning. He was more than a spooky guy who wrote spooky stories."

Poe Facts

- Poe was born in Boston on January 19, 1809.
- Poe died in Baltimore on October 7, 1849, while passing through. There are currently 22 theories about his death. No one knows what happened to him. He died in a hospital.
- When living in Baltimore in the early 1830s, he began his career as a short story writer and discovered that the public, while horrified and disgusted, liked the strange tales that he wrote.
- Poe also wrote comedies, early science fiction, adventure stories, detective stories, wrote poetry, was a famous and feared literary critic and a newspaper publisher, among other things.
- Poe was paid \$14 for "The Raven." The story made him the "rock star" of the late 1840s.
- Poe's grandfather, David Poe, was quartermaster general in Baltimore during the Revolutionary War. He also served in the War of 1812.
- His wife, who died in 1845 and was interred in New York City, was moved to Baltimore in 1885 and his aunt Maria Clemm is also buried under the Poe Monument.

Honey Baked Ham Offers Great Taste And Fabulous Deals

» Continued from page 42

homemade macadamia white chocolate cookie, which was dense but soft, with a satisfying, rich and sweet chocolate flavor. It was one of those desserts for which you need only a bite. Or perhaps two.

The family sized dinner I took home to prepare was delicious and a super deal! You can choose two pounds of meat — I picked a pound of ham and a pound of turkey. The dinner came with two sides, and there are plenty to pick from: Tuscan-style broccoli, country cornbread stuffing, double cheddar macaroni and cheese, russet mashed potatoes, green bean casserole, cheesy potatoes au gratin, roasted turkey gravy, and honey baked beans in addition to my choices — loaded smashed potatoes and baked cinnamon apples. Additionally, you get a package of Hawaiian rolls.

It really is a lot of food, intended for four to six diners. Depending on how thick you want your sandwiches, I think you could easily feed six or more!

The sides can be prepared in the oven or microwave, which I chose. It took about 12 minutes altogether for each dish.

The ham in the family meal was more of the classic sweet ham flavor I was expecting, and the turkey was smokey and delicious. The loaded smashed potatoes were flavorful, with cheese and bacon, but they were dry and had some extra crunchy spots (I do like well-done, extra crunchy myself, but it's not for everyone).

The apples were of the good old-fash-

ioned sugary and syrupy variety and soft but not mushy, with some cinnamon flavoring (I would prefer more). They would be wonderful if poured while still warm over some vanilla ice cream. I would have eaten the entire family size serving if I didn't have to consider my waist size.

Dine-in, order online for curbside pickup, or stop by the store to shop. Choose from a variety of ham or turkey sandwiches, salads, soups, and other offerings. You can upgrade to a sandwich box that includes salad or chips, and a cookie to go with the sandwich.

In addition to family dinners, there are special-occasion meals, specialty cakes and more.

The meal I purchased, intended for a family of four to six, was \$39. The lunch was about \$10. Altogether very affordable.

Peruse the menu and stop in for lunch or pick up a quick, filling and inexpensive take-home family meal. The food falls into the "comfort food" variety, and who doesn't need comfort food these chilly days?

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Five Steps To Take 2022 By Storm

Jason LaBarge
Financial Advisor
and President
LaBarge Financial



www.wbay.com. I am one to certainly make goals, but I have never referred to them as resolutions. Perhaps the nation could make New Year's resolutions as we had quite the year in 2021.

The year was filled with both positives and negatives, and hopefully we can hang tight to the positives of 2021 and get rid of the negatives. One way to ensure that 2022 is a positive one is to take the following five financial actions.

Max Out Your 401(k), Roth IRA Or Traditional IRA

The first step is to make sure you

I have never been one to have a New Year's resolution. I never felt the need because statistics show that 80% of New Year's resolutions fail by mid-February, according to a 2020 report on

have contributed the maximum to your retirement accounts. The IRS allows for up to \$6,000 to be contributed to your traditional IRA and Roth each year and an additional \$1,000 if you are over 50 for catch-up contributions. If you are self-employed and have a SEP, you can contribute up to \$61,000 in 2022.

One overlooked item when it comes to retirement accounts is whether or not to max out your 401(k). Most people select a contribution percentage and don't consider if they are maxing it out or not. For 2021, 401(k) maximum contributions are \$19,500. Be sure to check with your HR department to see how much your total contributions are and whether you have room to add more. It's also important to note that you have until April 15, 2022, to contribute for the 2021 tax year.

Taxes

Get your taxes done, ASAP! Believe it or not, I'm still waiting for my 2020 tax return, and I have a suspicion that many of you are waiting as well. This is not uncommon. The IRS is very understaffed now, and the

» **Continued on page 54**

CEO Report

Liz League
CEO
GSPACC



Happy new year! Please give a warm welcome to our newest members: **iTrip Vacations, Mad Soaps Inc., rose-quartz vibes** and **Severna Park Strength**

Performance. Thank you to our renewing members for keeping us "Chamber Strong!"

The Learn and Lead Committee headed by **Jenn Triplett of Tree-branch Group** and **Larry Sells of Larry Sells Consulting** hosted a "Center Stage" event profiling **David Orso of The David Orso Group**. David began his working career at Coca Cola Enterprises, eventually investing in real estate. When the market crashed, he lost everything, but over time, he rebuilt his company into a multi-million-dollar business through hard work, team building, and a total focus on customer service. Each month, the committee will feature a business owner in the community, so please join us for these virtual presentations and get to know the people behind the businesses. These events

are free and open to all.

On December 2, we held a ribbon cutting to celebrate the grand opening of **Absolute Design Studio** in Millersville. The studio features 4,000 square feet of tile and stone products including porcelain, ceramic, glass, natural stone and more. Talented owner and designer **Jessica Ford** can help you bring your project to life within your budget. Donations were collected for **Orphan Grain Train** at the ribbon cutting.

Our holiday tree lighting and chamber open house was held on Friday, December 3, at the chamber. Community members flocked to see Santa and the Grinch and celebrate the beginning of the holiday season. We enjoyed performances from **The Dance Center of Severna Park, the Severna Park Elementary School chorus** and **Creative Force Dance Center**. We were joined by County Executive Stuart Pittman, and our sponsors were **Chick-fil-A of Severna Park, Steak 'n Shake, The Big Bean, Delegate Heather Bagnall, COSTCO** and **United States Insurance Services**. Revelers were treated to cookies, hot chocolate and Vermont cider (The Big Bean specialties), candy canes, and pictures in front of the beautiful tree. Many thanks to our sponsors, our

» **Continued on page 53**

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Make Your Home Fit Your Family By Consulting 50 East Remodeling

By Zach Sparks

Whether they are installing a roof or siding, or renovating a bathroom, the team at 50 East Remodeling is in the business of transforming homes.

That has been the goal of owner Steve Wheatley since he started the company in April 2015.

"I saw a big hole in the market," Wheatley said. "If you don't spend a certain amount with these companies, you're just a number. Spending \$20,000 or \$30,000 is not something everyone can do."

Over the last seven years, 50 East Remodeling has grown to include several carpenters, roof and siding professionals, and an entire bathroom division. But that hasn't stopped Wheatley from being a hands-on owner who offers the personalized customer service that he felt other businesses were lacking.

"I meet every one of my customers," he said. "I don't



The team at 50 East Remodeling includes owner Steve Wheatley (center), several carpenters, roof and siding professionals, and an entire bathroom division.

necessarily run each job and can't visit before, during and after. But when someone calls, I'm the one who returns their call. I measure their product and write their estimate. While it is easy to confuse names, like Carl and Charles, it's important to me to know each one of them."

That customer service goes

beyond what's expected. For example, a customer was recently out of town and told the 50 East crew they could work on his home while he was away. The team spotted a leaking drain pipe.

"Even though that leaking pipe wasn't our fault, it's important to take care of the customer," Wheatley said.

That last year has been exciting for 50 East Remodeling, which grew its customer base while also keeping up to date on current industry trends.

"We are transforming regular and master bathrooms with electric fireplaces, chandeliers, floating benches and extensive marble work,"



Wheatley said. "We can also keep it simple, modern and inexpensive."

He works with customers to make those projects affordable, and he keeps his team stocked with loyal workers. Among them is his brother, a project manager, and two friends from elementary school.

They also keep most of their work local, hence the name 50 East Remodeling.

» **Continued on page 48**

Watch Out For Tax Scammers

Brian M. Conrad
CFP, Financial
Advisor



Sadly, identity theft happens throughout the year — but some identity thieves are particularly active during tax-filing season. How can you protect yourself?

One of the most important moves you can make is to be suspicious of requests by people or entities claiming to be from the Internal Revenue Service. You may receive phone calls, texts and emails, but these types of communication are often just “phishing” scams with one goal in mind: to capture your personal information. These phishers can be quite clever, sending emails that appear to contain the IRS logo or making calls that may even seem to be coming from the IRS. Don’t open any links or attachments to the emails and don’t answer the calls — and don’t be alarmed if the caller leaves a vaguely threatening voicemail, either asking for personal information, such as your Social Security number, or informing you of some debts you supposedly owe to the IRS that must be taken care of “immediately.”

In reality, the IRS will not initiate

contact with you by phone, email, text message or social media to request personal or financial information, or to inquire about issues pertaining to your tax returns. Instead, the agency will first send you a letter. And if you’re unsure of the legitimacy of such a letter, contact the IRS directly at 800-829-1040.

Of course, not all scam artists are fake IRS representatives — some will pass themselves off as tax preparers. Fortunately, most tax preparers are honest, but it’s not too hard to find the dishonest ones who might ask you to sign a blank return, promise you a big refund before looking at your records or try to charge a fee based on the percentage of your return. Legitimate tax preparers will make no grand promises and will explain their fees upfront. Before hiring someone to do your taxes, find out their qualifications. The IRS provides some valuable tips for choosing a reputable tax preparer, but you can also ask your friends and relatives for referrals.

Another tax scam to watch out for is the fraudulent tax return — that is, someone filing a return in your name. To do so, a scammer would need your name, birthdate and Social Security number. If you’re already providing two of these pieces of information — your name and birthdate on social media, and you also include your birthplace —

you could be making it easier for scam artists to somehow get the third. It’s a good idea to check your privacy settings and limit what you’re sharing publicly. You might also want to use a nickname and omit your last name, birthday and birthplace.

Here’s one more defensive measure: File your taxes as soon as you can. Identity thieves often strike early in the tax season, so they can file their bogus returns before their victims.

To learn more about tax scams, visit the IRS website (www.irs.gov) and search for the “Taxpayer Guide to Identity Theft.” This document describes some signs of identity theft and provides tips for what to do if you are victimized.

It’s unfortunate that identity theft exists, but by taking the proper precautions, you can help insulate yourself from this threat, even when tax season is over.

Brian M. Conrad is a certificated financial planner and financial advisor with Edward Jones. His office is located at 479 Jumpers Hole Road, Suite 202, in Severna Park. To learn more, call 410-544-8970, email brian.conrad@edwardjones.com or visit www.edwardjones.com/brian-conrad.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones financial advisor.

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50 East Remodeling

» Continued from page 47

“I was on Route 50, heading to Queen Anne’s County, and it just hit me,” Wheatley said, “because most of our work is in Severna Park, Arnold, Annapolis, Glen Burnie and Pasadena.”

Working locally has other benefits too: Wheatley has more time to spend in his community. He has helped rebuild the Mago Vista pier in Arnold, contributed to a community food drive that collected over 2,000 pounds of food for the Anne Arundel County Food Bank in 2021, and his team regularly supports Toys for Tots during the Christmas season. Beyond that, there are countless other favors he does for neighbors.

“People will reach out and ask, ‘Can you help this neighbor out?’” he said. “They might just need their closet doors unstuck. If it’s up the street, it’s fun. I get to meet the neighbors that way.”

Wheatley hopes that the company keeps growing, able to take on big and creative projects, while keeping its roots in Anne Arundel County.

“I like that I’m still learning,” he said. “We’ve hit a lot of plateaus, but it’s like there is a whole other side of a mountain [to explore].”

For more information on 50 East Remodeling, call 410-500-2266, visit www.50eastremodeling.com or find the business on Facebook.



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David Orso Joins Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices PenFed Realty

In December, Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices PenFed Realty welcomed the David Orso Team.

"We are truly delighted to welcome David Orso and his first-class team

of real estate professionals to the company," said Baltimore Metro & Eastern Shore Regional President Terri Bracciale. "The David Orso Team has created a new standard of service for their clients and built life-long relationships that are the ultimate model of PenFed Realty's 'Forever Agent' philosophy."

A founder and team leader, Orso began his career as a Realtor in 2003 with a vision of delivering a thoughtful approach to selling and buying real estate to clients in his hometown of Annapolis and the surrounding area. Orso has since built his team of six, managed well over 1,000 residential transactions and sold nearly \$1 billion of real estate. His dedication to creating a value-driven client experience has resulted in Orso being named the No. 1 agent in Anne Arundel County for seven years running and one of the top 10 agents in the country.

"Our team's mission is driven by a client-first mentality, and we are excited to join a brokerage with the level of support and resources that PenFed Realty offers to continuously take customer service to the next level," Orso said. "This is a company that shares our determination to elevate the residential real estate experience."

The David Orso Team can be reached by phone at 443-372-7171 and by email at david.orso@penfedrealty.com. To learn more about the team, visit www.davidorso.com.



David Orso

Daniel Cason Joins Rutzen Eye Specialists

Rutzen Eye Specialists & Laser Center welcomed a new residency trained optometrist in 2021: Dr. Daniel Cason.

Cason received several awards and scholarships while completing his Doctor of Optometry degree, including the Beta Sigma Kappa Silver Medal and the dean's scholarship. He has experience in treating and managing a variety of ocular conditions, with a particular interest in glaucoma, uveitis, and corneal conditions. He has presented a poster at the American Academy of Optometry meeting and is a co-author of a case report that is to be published in *Optometry and Vision Science*,



Daniel Cason

the journal of the American Academy of Optometry. He is also a member of the Maryland Optometric Association and the American Academy of Optometry. Cason earned his bachelor's degree with honors from Auburn University in 2016. In 2020, he earned a Doctor of Optometry degree and Master of Business Administration from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Frame & Frame Welcomes Richard Adams III

Richard "Ricky" Adams III has joined Frame & Frame Attorneys at Law as an associate attorney. For over 65 years, the law firm of Frame & Frame has been serving the legal



Richard Adams III

needs of the community, providing legal services, often to several generations of the same family, for thoughtful planning and during times of crises. Adams is licensed to practice law in Maryland and he received his Juris Doctor degree from the University of Baltimore School of Law in 2017. He earned a certificate in estate planning from the University of Baltimore School of Law in 2020. He received his bachelor's degree in gerontology and legal studies from the University of Maryland Global Campus. His primary practice areas are estate planning; elder law; Medicaid planning; estate, probate and trust administration; and adult guardianship. He has also built a solid reputation for assisting clients with special

needs planning and LGBTQ planning, which involves unique strategies and considerations.

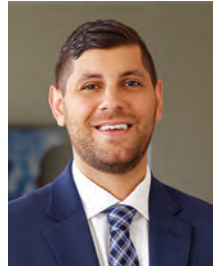
Adams is involved in various roles of community service and professional organizations, including serving as the treasurer for the Maryland LGBT Chamber of Commerce, serving on the board of directors for the Baltimore County Provider Council, and serving as the co-chair of the Estate & Trust Section Study Group for the Maryland State Bar Association. He strongly believes in giving back to those in need and recently earned the Mentor of the Year award from the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service for his mentoring of volunteer pro bono attorneys. He has also been named a Maryland Super Lawyers Rising Star in Estate Planning & Probate from 2019 through 2021.

"We are so excited for Ricky to join our team," said Tara Frame, managing partner of Frame & Frame Attorneys at Law. "His knowledge and experience will allow us to expand our firm to our clientele and provide specific guidance to meet the needs of our diverse community. Ricky is a warm and compassionate person who dedicates himself to the needs of his clients and he shares our passion for helping people in our communities. He will be an essential part of our growing team."

Liff, Walsh & Simmons Welcomes New Associate Attorneys



Kelly Callahan



Andre Habib

Liff, Walsh & Simmons welcomed Andre Habib and Kelly Callahan as associate attorneys to the growing firm in 2021.

Habib joined the firm in June 2021, joining the business law, real estate, and the estate planning and administration practice groups. He assists the firm's business law practice in areas focusing on mergers and acquisitions, negotiations, contract disputes, corporate finance and securities, and general corporate matters. Within the firm's real estate practice, Habib supplies services in the areas of acquisition, development, leasing, and lending to represent buyers, sellers, and private and commercial lenders. He further counsels individuals and families to help develop custom estate plans and business succession plans to address each client's specific needs to help protect each client's current and future assets.

Callahan joined Liff, Walsh & Simmons in August of 2021, focused on the business law, commercial finance, real estate, and land use and zoning practice groups. She assists in the firm's diverse practice areas in matters involving general business counseling, business transaction negotiations, real estate and commercial property transactions, loans, and land use and zoning.

On December 14, 2021, Callahan took her oath to become a licensed attorney to practice law in Maryland. She is fluent in Spanish.

Transworld Business Advisors Adds New Business Broker



Brandon Trippett

Transworld Business Advisors of Annapolis, a local business brokerage firm dedicated to helping Anne Arundel County small and mid-size business owners sell their business, has announced the addition of Brandon Trippett to its team of business brokers.

Trippett brings over 20 years of experience in the sales and finance industry, with a major focus on sales management and business development.

"I am looking forward to applying the

vast network that I have developed living and working here and using it to help connect Anne Arundel County residents and business owners," Trippett said.

When asked about what Trippett's job duties entail, Transworld principal broker Steve Palmer stated, "We are excited to have Brandon because he's going to extend our ability to help business owners in Severna Park, Arnold and Annapolis who are looking to sell their business; business owners looking to grow their business; and entrepreneurs looking to chase their dreams of business ownership and find the right opportunity for them."

To learn more about Transworld Business Advisors, visit www.tworld.com/annapolis.

Liff, Walsh & Simmons Attorneys Named Maryland Super Lawyers

Liff, Walsh & Simmons, a business and real estate law firm based in Annapolis, received pleasant news in December when three of its attorneys were named Maryland Super Lawyers and seven were honored as Maryland Rising Stars.

Thomson Reuters named three Liff, Walsh & Simmons partners as "Super Lawyers" including Jim Crossan, Terrence Liff and Melissa Menkel McGuire. Crossan received honors for the business litigation, Liff for the field of business and corporate law, and McGuire for employment and labor law. Super Lawyers represent the top 5% of attorneys in Maryland.

Additionally, seven attorneys received recognition as Maryland Rising Stars: James "Jay" Walsh, Tom Simmons, Greg Ferra, Phil Dales, Paul Skrickus, Jon McGowan and Brad Walsh. Rising Stars represent the top 2.5% of attorneys in Maryland who are 40 or younger or have been in practice for 10 years or less.

Jay Walsh, Simmons, Skrickus and Brad Walsh were all named top in the field of real estate. Ferra received top honors for estate planning and probate, while McGowan was honored in the field of business and corporate attorney. New to the Rising Star list was Dales, receiving honors for land use and zoning law.



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Luminis CEO Named Among Most Influential Women

Victoria "Tori" Bayless, CEO of Luminis Health, was named among the 2021 Most Influential Women of the Mid-Market by CEO Connection. The list recognizes outstanding CEOs in the U.S. based on their ability to influence change, innovation, and standards for excellence in companies with annual revenues between \$100 million and \$3 billion.



Tori Bayless

Employing 6,400 staff, Luminis Health operates 635 licensed beds with \$1.1 billion in revenue and \$63 million in community benefit. In partnership with its 1,300 volunteers and donors, 1,800 medical staff members, county health departments and numerous community organizations, Luminis Health treats a region of more than 1.5 million people across eight counties.

An Arnold resident, Bayless joined Anne Arundel Medical Center (AAMC) as vice president of clinical and

support services in December 2005. She was promoted to chief operating officer in 2006. In September 2009, she was named president and chief operating officer and was promoted to CEO in 2011.

Bayless has more than 25 years of experience in management and leadership roles, specializing in strategic planning, health system operations, community health and outreach, medical staff relations and physician practice management, talent management and business development. Prior to joining AAMC, she was vice president of clinical services at MedStar Washington Hospital Center and held several previous roles there since 1993.

She was recognized by *Modern Healthcare* magazine as one of 12 national health care leaders in the publication's 2007 "Up and Comers" report. In 2007, the Baltimore Business Journal recognized Bayless as one of "40 under 40" business leaders in the region. She is a 2007 graduate of Leadership Anne Arundel and the 2011 recipient of the YWCA's Tribute to Women & Industry (TWIN) Award.

GSPACC CEO Report

» Continued from page 47
elves from the **Toast of Severna Park Toastmasters Club, ProSound Karaoke, Freeman Bagnall** as Santa, and **Jim League** as the Grinch!

Our wonderful Holiday Taste and Sip 11th anniversary event was held at the **Chartwell Golf and Country Club** on December 9 from 6:00pm to 9:00pm. This event featured our restaurants, caterers, liquor stores and bakeries all under one roof so you could taste and sip throughout the evening. The presenting sponsor was the **Matt Wyble Team of Century 21 New Millennium**. Gold sponsors were **The Gardiner and Appel Group** and **What's Up? magazine**, the music sponsor was **Spring Arbor of Severna Park**, and bronze sponsors were **Griswold Home Care, Meridien DermSpa, Emerald Financial Group** and the **Treebranch Group**.

Zachary's Jewelers donated a gorgeous Alor designer bangle for our raffle, and the silent auction table was overflowing with wonderful donations from our local businesses. **Mike Prager** of **Bulldog Schwinn and Sports** generously donated a fantastic dual-purpose Challenger bike for another raffle.

We had live performances by the **Chesapeake Harmony Chorus** and a high school soloist provided by **Pete Garvey** of **Stage and Screen Studios**.

On Monday, December 13, our Successful Women in Business held its annual luncheon at **Cafe Mezzanotte**. The event was sponsored by **Lisa's Cake-pops**, and vendors include **Skinlogic, Q Sciences, Silhouette Yoga, the Jing Ying Institute of Kung Fu & Tai Chi, Deca Wrap** and **Higgins and Friends Pet Sitting**.

Our annual board meeting luncheon was held at **Ledo Pizza** in Severna Park

on December 16.

As we begin the new year, we always want to remind and encourage our community to support local businesses and nonprofits. During the height of the pandemic, online purchases soared as our businesses were closed and working on creative ways to provide their goods and services. For many, much innovation came out of the lockdown; for some, they shut their doors forever.

Small business owners are neighbors, friends, and providers of jobs for us and our children. They pay local taxes, which strengthens our infrastructure, keeps our property values high, and keeps our communities desirable places to live.

We are looking forward to our 2022 new board installation dinner, to be held at the newly renovated **Romilo's Restaurant and Bar** on February 17. Members are **Dianna Lancione, The Voice Media (past president); Crystal Wiley-Gazic, Shore United Bank (president); Patrick Lee, Chesapeake Think Tank (first vice president); Tammie Neall, Anne Arundel Community College (second vice president); Christina Rawlings, Emerald Financial Partners (treasurer); Christina Prieto, Christina Josephs Salon (secretary); Sherri Norton, Live! Casino and Hotel (director); Melanie Ferragut, PNC Bank (director); Kristine Pennington, The Y of Central Maryland (director); Tommy Sommers, LogoZone Promotions (director); and Anita Dewling, Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation (director)**. Congratulations to all and welcome!

To reach me, please email ceo@gspacc.com or call 410-647-3900. Our website is www.gspacc.com.

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Five Financial Steps To Take 2022 By Storm

» Continued from page 47

problems created from COVID-19 aren't helping. That does not mean, however, that you should wait to complete your taxes. Many of you have received your refund, and if you are entitled to a refund this year, you should get that as quickly as possible. Getting your taxes done quickly also enables you to complete the first goal of max out your retirement plan. The sooner you get your taxes done, the sooner you know if you max out your plan.

Focus On Your Health

COVID-19 is something familiar to all of us at this point. We have faced hardships — business closings, family illness, canceled trips, rerouted life plans, the list goes on. It is clear that COVID isn't going away, as we face new variants and mandates that alter our daily lives.

Last year was a time to catch up on our losses from the global changes resulting from the initial 2020 COVID outbreak, which means 2022 is a year to focus on your own health. The dust has settled, and I am sure that most of us have adjusted our personal, professional and

social lives to the new norms caused by COVID. Focus on your physical and mental health this year and give yourself a break here and there.

We have all been through a lot — COVID hardship looked different for everyone — as this pandemic was something not in anyone's playbook. Don't forget to focus on your health and wellbeing this year, cut out time for family, and give yourself the breaks you need.

Create Reasonable, Attainable Goals For The Year

I have always said that success is the point where preparation and opportunity meet. January is the opportunity to prepare for your own success. That starts with defining what success looks like for you. To do that we need to create goals.

Goals should be both short-term and long-term. I am a big believer in writing down your goals. I am also a big believer in writing strategies on how to attain those goals. Goals should be both financial and non-financial. Your financial goals should be to check on whether you

are on pace to retire, buy your first house, etc.

Establishing a game plan around paying off debt is another great example of a great goal. Creating goals is just the beginning. Having a plan around keeping yourself accountable is important. Eighty percent of New Year's resolutions fail because most of us stop keeping ourselves accountable. Don't let that happen when you are trying to pursue your goals.

Find A Mentor Or Hire An Advisor

Tom Brady is my favorite athlete. I know I may have just lost many of you reading this as he is hated around these parts, but he is a great example of why it's important to hire or look for help. He has been to 10 Super Bowls, won seven of them, and he is constantly looking for ways to improve. Think about that!

He is at the pinnacle of his profession, and he looks to coaches and other players for ways to improve. He has a health "guru" who never really leaves his side to help him keep his body in shape and it is clearly work-

ing. He is 44 and still at the top of his game. I encourage all of you to find a mentor to help you with your career or life decisions.

Hire an advisor to help with your financial goals (I happen to know a great advisor if you need any assistance there). Mentors and advisors are there not only to help you pursue the moves and goals I talked about above, but they are also there to keep you accountable. Do you want to be among the 80% of people who don't achieve their New Year's resolutions? I know I don't!

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