

Lacrosse Teams Get Off To Strong Start

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Students Perform Spring Musicals

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Through Philanthropic Foundation, Katherine's Light Shines On

By Meredith Winter

From a young age, Katherine Mueller radiated light and positivity. As a child, she was a girly-girl: She loved frilly tutus and all things pink. To her mother Robin Sells' amusement, she also loved bugs. Early on, her benevolence manifested in humor, generosity and a desire to make people happy. It would later evolve into relentless advo-
» **Continued on page 10**



A League Of His Own

Former Severna Park Falcon Jackson Merrill Makes Baseball History With Padres

By Zach Sparks

zach@severnaparkvoice.com

When professional baseball trainer Juan Palacios started working with Jackson Merrill after Jackson's junior year of high school in 2020, Palacios was stunned.

"I told Jackson's dad, 'Jackson has the hands of Francisco Lindor and the power swing of Carlos Correa,'" Palacios said. "I told him, 'I think we have a first-rounder here.'"

Palacios would know. He coached both Lindor and Correa, who have been selected to a combined six Major League Baseball All-Star games.

Not only was Jackson a first-round pick — selected No. 27 overall by the San Diego Padres in the 2021 MLB draft — but the 20-year-old made history this

March as only the third player since 1965 to start in center field on opening day before the age of 21, joining Ken Griffey Jr. and Andruw Jones.

Jackson earned the spot out of spring training after moving from shortstop to center field and batting over .300 while showcasing his powerful left-handed swing. The ascension was surprising because of Jackson's age and because he had not played in a Triple-A league and logged only 187 Double-A at-bats, hitting .273 with five home runs and 31 RBIs last season after being promoted from High-A.

So far, he has demonstrated that the moment is not too big for him. Through the Padres' first 12 games, Jackson batted .324 with one home run, two RBIs and four walks.

Fans have appreciated Jackson's energetic style and he has noticed their passion from the stands.

"I feel like you got to come to the field and be the same person every day," Jackson told 97.3 The Fan. "The fans as well. Come to the stadium and be the same fans every day. Be loud, be energetic and be here for us because we're here for them."

In an interview with 97.3 The Fan, Padres manager Mike Shildt called Jackson "a special young man."

"He continues to have that hunger to continue to improve and he's clearly got talent, but he also uses every day and other people's experiences to grow from, and he's ready for the opportunity," Shildt said.

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Before her death in 2021, Katherine Mueller (center) advocated for fellow cancer patients through fundraising and research along with her family and friends including her mother Robin (left), husband Matt (right) and stepfather Larry.

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The 2024 Best Of Severna Park Winners

Over the last two months, we asked our readers and followers online to nominate their favorite businesses, organizations and community members for this

year's Best Of Severna Park contest. To be eligible, each business must have a commercial address within Severna Park, Arnold or Millersville except where otherwise noted.

Turn to page 8 to see the list of winners.





Margueritte Mills - Volunteer Of The Month

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



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Educator Is Involved Beyond The Classroom

By Judy Tacyn

Allison Davis, an English teacher at Broadneck High School, is making a huge impact on her community both in and outside of her school. Davis has been with Anne Arundel County Public Schools for 17 years, which includes Glen Burnie, Severna Park and Broadneck high schools. In addition to English, Davis is also the lead teacher in the Environmental Literacy Signature Program at Broadneck and an advisor to the National Honor Society and the gardening club.

"I often say Allison is the only reason anything grows at Broadneck," joked Stacy Roth, a signature program facilitator at Broadneck who nominated Davis as Volunteer of the Month. "We have nine raised garden beds, several in-ground gardens, including an award-winning (United States Department of Agriculture) certified People's Garden, successful rain garden, a new pollinator garden and a greenhouse.

"Allison manages all of that on top of her teaching load. Broadneck is not only more beautiful due to her efforts, but we are an example of sustainability and stewardship because of the expertise and dedication she brings to the table."

On May 4, under Davis' guidance, Broadneck High School students representing 11 clubs will host Goshen Farm Family Day, a free community event for young children and their families centered around nature and the environment. Now in its third year, the event continues to grow, and is completely run by student volunteers.

"It is a unique event because the entire thing is hosted by student groups,"



Under the guidance of Allison Davis, Broadneck students will host Goshen Farm Family Day on May 4.

Davis explained. "We have clubs from the Eco-Action Club to robotics club, to volunteers from our AVID classes. This year, we are adding a few new activities such as a scavenger hunt nature walk, sand sifting and pressed-flower art. In addition, some of our most-loved events will be back, like face painting, story time, and the robots."

As the environmental literacy lead teacher, Davis helps student groups plan Family Day and implement their activities for the event. Participants this year can paint recycled flowerpots, play a cornhole game that teaches recycling, watch robots build reef balls, etch leaves, make birdfeeders, and much more. Additionally, Davis has booked a student to provide live music, and a Broadneck alum will bring his Moonlight Basin BBQ food truck.

"This event is important because it connects Broadneck High School students with their local community. They independently run all the tables at the event; they come up with the ideas for the activities, they plan them, create

them, assemble and disassemble the tables on event day, and volunteer their time," Davis explained. "This is a great leadership opportunity for our students right here in our community as positive environmental advocates and role models for the younger generation. It's not only a fun day for the little kids, but it is a great growth and learning experience for our high school students."

Roth added that Goshen Farm Family Day is a passion project for Davis, noting that much of the coordination and leadership happens on Davis' own time and is driven by a desire to serve her community and the environment.

"Allison has helped countless students connect with the environment in new ways and has made herself an extremely valuable asset to the environmental literacy program at BHS," Roth said.

Environmental Literacy at Broadneck is a class to help students become more knowledgeable about their relationship with the environment as human beings. Students learn how common practices affect the environment and how that environmental reaction will impact them in return.

"Instead of saying 'save the planet,' we should really be saying 'save the humans,'" Davis said. "The Earth will continue to exist, but in what condition? Protecting the environment is essential for our own survival, and the status quo is not sustainable."

Davis has three children enrolled at Broadneck Elementary School, so she volunteers at the school often.

To learn more about the Goshen Farm Family Day scheduled for May 4 from 10:30am-3:00pm, visit the "Goshen Farm Family Days" Facebook page.

For Earth Day, April 22, Davis has the following suggestions:

1. Reduce consumption. Spend Earth Day outside enjoying nature without consuming products (especially ones that contain single-use plastic).

2. Plant a native tree or shrub to provide essential food and shelter for native wildlife and to help draw carbon dioxide from the air.

3. Cancel your mosquito spraying regimen. Even treatments advertised

as "natural" or "organic" will also harm or even kill bees, ladybugs and any native pollinators in your garden.

4. Call your local representative to remind them of your interest in environmental activism.

Community Announcements

Cabaret And Silent Auction To Benefit SPAN

Laurette Hankins-O'Connell and Anita O'Connor will headline Broadway Bonanza, a cabaret performance and silent auction to benefit the nonprofit SPAN, on April 21 at the St. Martin's-in-the-Field parish hall. Doors will open at 3:30pm and the show will start at 4:00pm.

Tickets are \$25 and all of the net

proceeds will support SPAN. Tickets must be purchased in advance.

For tickets or more information, visit www.spanhelps.org/cabaret_concert_silent_auction.

Shop Local Fun Festival

Save the date for the Spring Shop Local Fun Festival, coming up on Saturday, May 4, at the Park Plaza shopping center. Hosted by the Greater

Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce, the free festival will highlight why local businesses and nonprofits are an essential part of the community. Attendees can look forward to music, shopping, food, a photo booth and more. Families can enjoy a day out while supporting local businesses. The festival will run from 11:00am-3:00pm. Sponsorship and exhibitor information can be found at www.gspacc.com.

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County To Construct New Community Park In Millersville

By Meredith Winter

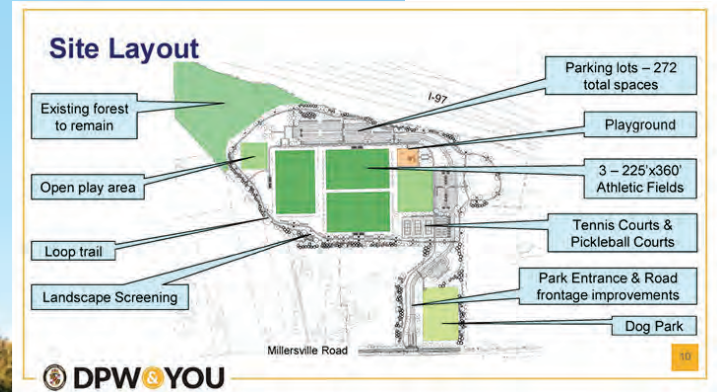
As early as this summer, Anne Arundel County anticipates breaking ground on a new community park in Millersville. Located across from Millersville Elementary School, the 33-acre park will offer numerous amenities and host local athletic organizations for sporting events.

Millersville Park is expected to cost just shy of \$12 million, and it will include tennis courts, pickleball courts, play areas, a playground, a dog park, a one-mile trail loop and open areas. Three multipurpose athletic fields will include irrigation, lighting and bleachers. Pavilions and picnic tables will be available for the public to rent. An onsite parking lot will accommodate nearly 280 vehicles.

Anne Arundel County Recreation and Parks Director Jessica Leys explained that the county purchased the property, which is located near the intersection of Millersville Road and Waterbury Road, in 2008, and they are excited for it to be near the finish line. The park will be comparable to Broadneck Park and Davidsonville Park.

"First and foremost, fields are in huge demand in Anne Arundel County. The athletic community in general in Anne Arundel County has been begging for more field space. We tend to fully utilize the fields that we have," Leys said, emphasizing the need for the three new fields coming to Millersville. "So the idea when we build a new park is to relieve some of that stress on existing park structure, but also serving the growing participants in the athletic organizations. Groups like Arden (Athletics), GORC (Gambrells-Oden-ton Recreation Council) and Crofton (Athletics) were all at the table during the stakeholders' group."

Millersville Park will be accessed from Millersville Road, where Leys said the county purchased an additional two acres



Photos courtesy of the Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks

A 33-acre park is coming near the intersection of Millersville Road and Waterbury Road. The property is currently a large field with old barns.

of property to provide adequate turn lanes and better access into the park.

Leys noted that the playground will be a welcome amenity for the community as well as the athletic fields, and the loop trail will give people a new opportunity to get out walking in a safe environment, perhaps with their dogs before or after visiting the dog park.

The county desired for Millersville Park to be a collaborative result that would serve the most people with the most amenities possible. To that end, the county hosted several community meetings and solicited feedback from stakeholders including athletic associations, the Friends of Millersville Park, the Recreation Advisory Board, homeowners associations and individual community members. The process resulted in a decision on how many recreational fields to include, among other outcomes.

During the stakeholder process, groups including the Old Millersville Neighborhood Association (OMNA) expressed concerns about the size of the park and its potential impacts on local traffic and the environment.

"We have always welcomed a park in our community. We recognize that people need a place to play, relax, socialize, and we've always supported a park," OMNA President Deborah Weller said. "But what we've always wanted was a mixed-use park that serves multiple user groups and ages, and reflects the county's own land preservation parks and recreation plan and protects the environment and fits in the traffic infrastructure."

Weller expressed gratitude for the county's inclusion of a playground, pickleball courts and tennis courts in the plans for Millersville Park, but she contends that community concerns regarding traf-

fic and environmental impacts were not adequately addressed.

With the design phase for the park wrapping up soon, next steps for the county include the Department of Public Works receiving bids from contractors. Construction of the park is expected to take approximately 10 months from start to finish, and it will likely begin this summer or fall.

Leys shared that the plans for the park reflect a collaborative effort. "I really think that this park represents the importance of public feedback and the community's role in our project development process, so I think the community can look forward to something that they were part of," she said.

To learn more about plans for Millersville Park, go to www.aacounty.org/recreation-parks and browse the Capital Projects tab.

Community Members Express Concerns Over Proposed Chick-fil-A

By Meredith Winter

The fast-food restaurant that generates more revenue per store than any other chain is eyeing a new location in Arnold. Preliminary plans have been submitted for a 2,656-square-foot drive-thru only Chick-fil-A to be constructed along Route 2 just south of the intersection with Arnold Road, past the CVS and Sunoco gas station. If approved, the one-story store would serve guests through two drive-thru lanes at 1500 Ritchie Highway.

Since Truett Cathy opened the first Chick-fil-A in an Atlanta, Georgia, shopping mall in 1967, where the original chicken sandwich sold for 59 cents, Chick-fil-A has opened over 3,000 locations across 48 states, Washington, D.C., Canada and Puerto Rico, with its sights set on international growth in 2025. Almost 90 of those locations serve customers across Maryland, with a dozen operating in Anne Arundel County.

"While we are still early in the process, Chick-fil-A is happy to share that we are currently pursuing a new location in Arnold," the company said in a provided statement. "We are working closely with Anne Arundel County to approve plans, and we look forward to expanding our

presence in the Broadneck Peninsula and continuing to serve our customers great food with remarkable service."

Though the chicken chain is wildly popular among consumers, not everyone in Arnold is ready to welcome the restaurant with open arms. Area residents were notified in February of an informational community meeting by Bohler, a company working with Chick-fil-A that provides land development consulting and site design services, according to its website.

In March, roughly 100 community members turned out for the meeting — a county-required prerequisite to the development plan approval process — to express their concerns about traffic issues, environmental impacts and other implications of the proposed location for the Chick-fil-A.

Among them were Arnold Preservation Council past president and board member Elizabeth Rosborg. She, along with the council, shares many of the community's concerns.

"Arnold Preservation Council is very supportive of Chick-fil-As in general, just not at this location," Rosborg said. "We feel like they're shoe-horning it in. There will be a significant disturbance to steep slopes, they are asking for a modification

to tear down specimen trees, there's a significant amount of grading that would need to be done, and we just feel like there are other opportunities for them to build that are better suited."

Renderings of the proposed site indicate that the Chick-fil-A would be accessible from Route 2 South and a driveway behind the CVS that connects to Arnold Road. Because of how busy other area Chick-fil-As, including those in Severna Park and Parole, get during peak hours, some residents are concerned about traffic stacking on Route 2 during lunch and dinner times. Rosborg explained this could present a potential safety issue for southbound traffic because the idling vehicles could be less visible due to a hill.

She also shared the council's concern for the potential impacts of increased traffic on pedestrian safety at the Route 2/Arnold Road intersection. A pedestrian crossing Route 2 southbound against the traffic signal was struck and killed there in 2022. Increased traffic on Arnold Road accessing the driveway to Chick-fil-A behind the CVS could also impact residents of communities that are located behind the proposed restaurant including Arnold Manor, Pines on the Severn, and Winchester on the Severn, Rosborg noted.

Following the March community meeting, development plans will be submitted to the Anne Arundel County Department of Planning and Zoning. For some residents, questions remain about traffic flow in and out of the Chick-fil-A property, forest conservation, stormwater management and other issues — concerns that would likely be addressed with Anne Arundel County agencies as plans progress.

The proposed Chick-fil-A is still in the preliminary planning process, though it has been a topic of discussion for several years. Similar concerns regarding traffic and the environment were expressed during a community meeting in 2021. Since then, letters between Bohler and Planning and Zoning indicate the county has granted Chick-fil-A three extensions on preliminary plan submission. The county will continue to work with Chick-fil-A and its developers to reach a decision. It is too early to estimate an opening date for the restaurant.

Site renderings and additional documentation about ongoing discussion of the proposed Chick-fil-A can be found at www.arnoldpreservationcouncil.org/projects. To learn more about Chick-fil-A, go to www.chick-fil-a.com.

A League Of His Own: Jackson Merrill Makes Baseball History

» Continued from page 1

To the family and mentors who have been part of Jackson's journey, there is no doubt that he is ready for the opportunity.

A New Gear

Jackson's parents are Joshua and Jennie Merrill, elementary school teachers who encouraged but never forced Jackson's interest in baseball. As a young player, Jackson was coached by Joshua to have productive at-bats.

"First, don't take a strike looking," Joshua instructed Jackson. "Anything close, foul it off until you get a good pitch or make him throw it off the plate."

At the end of his freshman year at Severna Park High School, Jackson was 5-foot-9, 146 pounds. To better prepare for the physical rigors of baseball, Jackson started working with HappyLee Fitness owner Chuck Hall.

"We knew we had to increase his protein intake and lifting," Hall said.

Hall also worked with Jackson to improve speed and explosion. Jackson did broad jumps, single-leg jumps, acceleration-deceleration drills, and cone and ladder drills.

"Shortstop is a flat-footed position, so they're on their toes and all of a sudden a ball is hit 105 miles per hour and they have to explode to that ball," Hall said.

The hardest exercise was finishing workouts by running 20 hills at Bronco Field, the turf field at Kinder Farm Park.

"Running hills creates power and explosion because you have to lift your knees up, drive your legs up and you have to extend," Hall said.

By senior year, Jackson was 6-foot-2 and about 190 pounds. While he worked with Hall on his power, agility and nutrition, Palacios coached Jackson on his hitting and fielding.

"He wanted to be a pro player and it's an eight- to 10-hour day," Palacios said. "He had no problem with that, and the work ethic took him to the next level."

His work ethic was undeniable. Scouts attended Falcons baseball games, leaving impressed by his skills and intangibles.

Severna Park High School varsity baseball assistant coach Bob Felts called Jackson a sponge, always soaking up information from head coach Eric Milton, who had an 11-year major league career.

"His questions were mainly about strategic at-bats — what a batter is thinking at 0-2 and how is that different from 1-1? Should the batter be guessing what pitch is coming?" Felts said.

Jackson belted a grand slam in a state semifinal playoff game against Laurel to help Severna Park reach the state championship during his senior season. It was not a storybook ending, as the Falcons lost 5-4 in extra innings to Sherwood.

After being drafted by the Padres, Jackson carried over that knowledge and ability as he began his professional career in the Arizona Fall League.

"I couldn't believe how much spin he had, so when he was hitting the ball to the opposite field, how much it carried," Felts said. "Against Laurel, he's hitting pitches that are 58 to 65 miles per hour, and months later, he's hitting 95 just like he was hitting that 65. It's hard to explain."

Wendell Wright saw that same ability

when he coached Jackson during summer baseball for the 5 Star Carolina and 5 Star National teams. The best thing Wright did for Jackson was give him praise.

Wright recalled one trip when Jackson traveled out of state for a tournament and his team did not make the bracket.

"Another player said, 'Why aren't you heading home?' because he had a long drive," Wright said. "Jackson said, 'No, I love to play.' He just loves baseball. He never had a good excuse to not play."

Jackson is also an all-star person, according to his coaches and family. Last Christmas, he visited Jennie's third-grade class at Severna Park Elementary and read to students. He also flew from Arizona to Maryland last fall to attend the Severna Park Athletic Boosters Hall of Fame induction ceremony for Felts.

Becoming A Star

Jackson's hot start might catch many people off guard but not his coaches.

"The maturation process he has made in three years has been astounding but not surprising," Wright said. "Everyone loves to see the results, but you have to love the process to get to the level Jackson is at."

Jackson enjoys the grind. One testament to that is his offseason training. From November to January, he was in Maryland working with Hall and with Palacios. Leading up to this season, he was about 6-foot-3, 215 pounds, Hall said.

In a story written by Dennis Lin for The Athletic, Padres hitting coach Victor Rodriguez said he likes everything about Jackson's ability to hit the ball to all fields and to stay up the middle of the field.

"We would like him to, at times, get the head (of the bat barrel) out to the pull side," Lin said. "But hey, one thing you cannot teach is staying in the big part of the field. I think eventually he will learn who's pitching and he will take his chances middle-in and get the head out. But right now, it works."

Not only has Jackson been one of his team's most consistent hitters so far, he also has played with confidence that he belongs in the major leagues.

"He has a fine line he walks," Jennie said. "He's not cocky; he's confident."

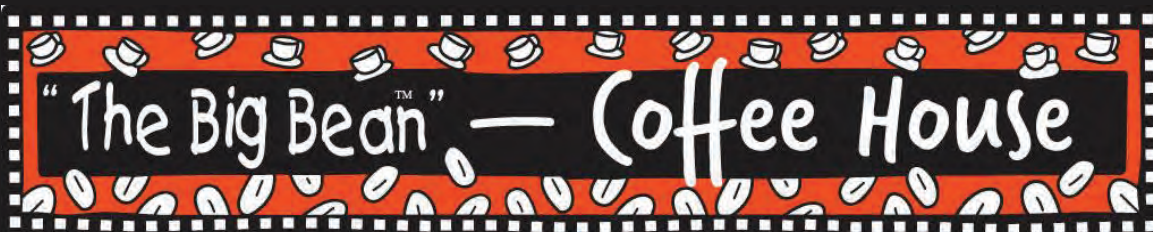
Joshua and Jennie traveled to San Diego to witness Jackson's first home series with the Padres in March. Jackson will return to the East Coast from July 23-28 for three games against the Nationals followed by three games against the Orioles. Joshua and Jennie have heard from many family members and friends who are getting their tickets early. People all over Severna Park have reached out to commend Merrill.

"You can't ask for much more than that support," Joshua said. "People say congratulations and want to support him. It's a good small-hometown feeling."

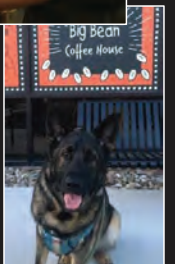
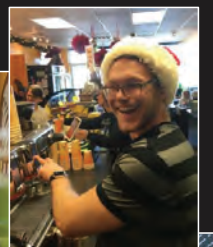
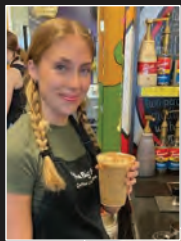
Seeing the magnitude of the support and size of the crowd is new to the Merrills, making the experience surreal, but one aspect is not new: Jackson is on a field, where he is meant to be.

"He never blinked an eye," Jennie said. "He goes right out and wants to win. He's doing what he loves every day."

Read the full story at
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And The 2024 “Best Of Severna Park” Winners Are...

COMMUNITY

- Most Desirable Community To Reside:** Chartwell
- Best Community Beach:** Linstead
- Best Community Pool:** St. Andrews Swim & Tennis Club in Chartwell
- Best Club/Organization:** Green Hornets
- Best Nonprofit Organization:** SPAN
- Best House Of Worship:** St. John the Evangelist
- Best Pastor/Church Leader:** The Rev. Erik Arnold
- Best Preschool:** Woods Child Development Center
- Best School:** Severna Park High School
- Best Business To Open In 2023:** Park Hardware

KIDS' ACTIVITIES

- Best Activity Center:** Severna Park Community Center
- Best After-School Program:** Kwon's Taekwondo
- Best Children's Dance Company:** Creative Force Dance Center
- Best Day Care:** Vineyard Child Care Center
- Best Music Instruction Program:** Theater in the Park
- Best Educational Services:** Mathnasium
- Best Party/Special Occasion Venue:** Eco Adventures
- Best Playground:** Kinder Farm Park
- Best Summer Camp:** Creative Force Dance Center
- Best Sports Facility:** Green Hornets/Kinder Farm Park
- Best Youth Sports League:** Green Hornets

BEAUTY & FITNESS

- Best Fitness Club:** Park Fitness
- Best Hair Salon/Barber Shop:** Image Creators
- Best Martial Arts Program:** Kwon's Taekwondo
- Best Place For A Massage:** Face It! Spa and Wellness
- Best Nail Salon:** Bella Luxe Nail Care and Spa
- Best Spa:** Face It! Spa and Wellness
- Best Weight-Loss Program:** Park Fitness

HEALTH

- Best Medical Practice:** Inspire Integrative Medicine
- Best Physician:** Dr. Victor Plavner
- Best Women's Specialty Practice:** Inspire Integrative Medicine
- Best Chiropractic Practice:** Fare Chiropractic
- Best Dental Practice:** Severn River Dental Health Center
- Best Orthodontic Practice:** Wright Orthodontics
- Best Eye Care/Ophthalmologist:** Severna Park Eye Care
- 8. Best Audiologist**
- Hearing Solutions Audiology Center**
- Best Pediatric Practice:** Annapolis Pediatrics
- Best Pharmacy:** Park Pharmacy
- Best Physical Therapy Practice:** Patterson Physical Therapy
- Best Mental Health Care:** Waves of Wellness Studio
- Best Speech Therapy:** Bayada Home Health Care
- Best Veterinary Practice:** Severna Park Veterinary Hospital
- Best Senior Living Facility:** Brightview Severna Park
- Best Home Health Care:** Visiting Angels Annapolis
- Best Health Care Provider Outside Severna Park:** PT Solutions of Glen Burnie

Notice: We Do Not Sell Plaques!

Unfortunately, we find it necessary to print this notice. We do not sell plaques or any other products in conjunction with the Best Of awards. Every year, we announce the Best Of Severna Park winners in the April edition and the awardees are proud to display their accomplishments in the form of a plaque. Many third parties know this and make their living off selling plaques, trophies or other items to awardees. While we have no problem with a reputable company making money in this way, we have a problem with them representing themselves as the Severna Park Voice. Please beware of any company that calls to sell you a Best Of product and pretends to be affiliated with the Severna Park Voice.

If you would like to purchase a plaque, we recommend that you shop local and support a reputable company that cares about our community.

FOOD/DINING

- Best Restaurant Overall:** Cafe Mezzanotte
- Best Wait Staff:** La Posta Pizzeria
- Best Breakfast:** The Breakfast Shoppe
- Best Lunch:** Garry's Grill
- Best Dinner:** Cafe Mezzanotte
- Best Kids' Menu:** (tie) Park Tavern JB's, Severna Park
- Best Barbecue:** Adam's Taphouse and Grille
- Best Burger:** Five Guys
- Best Coffee:** The Big Bean
- Best Crab Cake:** The Point Crab House & Grill
- Best Bakery/Cakes:** Adam's Taphouse and Grille
- Best Dessert:** Park Tavern
- Best Ice Cream/Frozen Treat:** The FroYo House
- Best Pizza:** Little Carmine's N.Y. Pizza Kitchen
- Best Salad:** Park Tavern
- Best Sandwich/Sub:** Jersey Mike's Subs
- Best Seafood:** The Point Crab House & Grill
- Best Wings:** JB's, Severna Park
- Best Fast Food:** Chick-fil-A
- Best Asian:** Thai Paradise
- Best Italian:** Cafe Mezzanotte
- Best Mexican:** Señor Chile Cafe
- Best Gluten-Free Menu:** Park Tavern
- Best Vegetarian Menu:** Adam's Taphouse and Grille
- Best Caterer:** Be My Guest Catering
- Best Bar:** Severna Park Taphouse
- Best Food Truck:** Greek on the Street
- Best Special Occasion:** Cafe Mezzanotte
- Best Outside Seating:** The Point Crab House & Grill
- Best Restaurant Outside Severna Park:** Two Rivers Steak & Fish House

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- Best Accountant:** Gardiner & Appel Group
- Best Insurance Agent:** Moran Insurance
- Best Investment Adviser:** Jason LaBarge — LaBarge Financial
- Best Lawyer:** Rachel Muñoz — Muñoz Estates & Trusts
- Best Mortgage Lender:** Main Street Home Loans
- Best Real Estate Agent:** David Orso — Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Pen Fed Realty

BEST HOME SERVICES

- Best Fence/Deck Contractor:** Fence & Deck Connection
- Best Cleaning Service:** Checkmark Power Washing
- Best Home Improvement Contractor:** Landmark Roofing
- Best HVAC Contractor:** Cornett Heating & Cooling
- Best Electrician:** HGW Electrical Construction
- Best Interior Designer:** Severna Park Kitchen and Bath
- Best Kitchen/Bath Remodeling Service:** Severna Park Kitchen and Bath
- Best Landscape/Lawn Service:** Boucher Lawn and Landscape
- Best Pool Service:** Goudy Pools
- Best Plumbing Contractor:** W. A. Booth Plumbing Services

BEST COMMUNITY SERVICES

- Best Auto Repair:** Severna Park Automotive
- Best Bank:** M&T Bank
- Best Car Wash:** Great American Car Wash
- Best Dry Cleaner:** Admiral Cleaners
- Best Marine Repair:** South Shore Marine
- Best Pet Care:** The Pup Camp

RETAIL/SHOPPING

- Best Overall Customer Service:** The Cottage
- Best Art/Photography/Frame Shop:** Side Street Framers & gift gallery
- Best Bicycle Shop:** Pedal Pushers Bicycle Shop
- Best Consignment Shop:** Savvy Consignment
- Best Clothing Store/Pop-Up Shop:** The Cottage
- Best Florist:** Peaceful Petals Flower Shop & Truck
- Best Garden Center:** Homestead Gardens
- Best Gift Shop:** The Cottage
- Best Grocery Store:** Harris Teeter
- Best Hardware Store:** Rommel's Ace Home Center
- Best Home Décor:** Park Home
- Best Jeweler:** Marc Todd Jewelers
- Best Liquor Store:** Dawson's Liquors
- Best Toy Store:** Franklin's Toys

ENTERTAINMENT

- Best Place For Family Entertainment:** Severna Park Lanes
- Best Live Music Venue:** Severna Park Taphouse
- Best Happy Hour:** Severna Park Taphouse
- Best Place To Watch The Game:** JB's, Severna Park
- Best Experience On The Water:** The Point Crab House & Grill
- Best Place To Take Out-Of-Towners:** The Point Crab House & Grill
- Best Entertainment Venue Within 25 Miles:** Rams Head On Stage

NAMI AAC Gala And Awards Dinner Set For May 18

“Never give up hope.” That is the message that NAMI AAC will deliver during its fourth-annual mental health gala and awards dinner on May 18 from 6:30pm–11:00pm at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Annapolis.

NAMI AAC is the National Alliance on Mental Illness, Anne Arundel County affiliate, an organization that provides support, resources, advocacy and education for raising awareness, fighting stigma and inspiring hope.

NAMI AAC provides advocacy, education, support and training in mental health for all Anne Arundel County

residents for free. The nonprofit has weekly support groups for people with mental illness and for caregivers.

NAMI facilitates its signature eight-week Family to Family course, currently four times per year, created for families, parents, caregivers and friends of those with mental health challenges. The classes focus on topics such as the brain, communication skills, empathy, medicines, psychiatry/psychology and other topics. NAMI also offers its peer-to-peer class that provides education about mental illness and recovery. In addition, NAMI does many community education events focused on

mental health.

Tickets to the upcoming dinner are \$125, and attendees will be treated to their entree choice of chicken Annapolitan, duroc pork chop or vegetarian tortellini. NAMI AAC is also seeking corporate and individual sponsorships for the annual gala and awards dinner. Sponsorship levels range from \$500 to \$15,000 in return for varying amounts of event signage, recognition on the NAMI AAC website and tickets to the event.

For more information, contact NAMI AAC Executive Director Fred Delp at fred.delp@namiaac.org.



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Katherine's Light Shines On

» Continued from page 1

cacy for people facing cancer diagnoses.

Katherine met her husband, Matt, while the two were attending Severna Park High School. After graduating from Towson University, Katherine spent her nine-year career teaching health-based classes to the community through Anne Arundel Medical Center (now Luminis Health). Katherine and Matt married in 2015 and began building a life together — they purchased their first home and became parents to a French bulldog named Luna.

Just days after bringing the pup home, though, their world — and that of their family and friends — was turned upside down. Katherine had been experiencing ongoing gastrointestinal issues and other symptoms for nearly a year. In November 2018, she was diagnosed with a neuroendocrine tumor. Cancer in her pancreas had metastasized to her liver. Tragically, the slow-growing disease had gone undetected for too long.

"It was a life-sentence as soon as we found out that it was cancer, that it was stage IV," Matt said of his late wife's diagnosis. Katherine's stepfather, Larry Sells, who was a huge part of her life for nearly 20 years and is an account executive with the Severna Park Voice, compared receiving her diagnosis to "falling off a cruise ship in the middle of the Gulf of Mexico at midnight without a life jacket."

Larry explained that little is known about the rare form of cancer, which affects roughly four in 100,000 adults according to the National Cancer Institute.

The cause of neuroendocrine tumors is unknown.

"None of us had ever heard of it," Matt emphasized, adding that once Katherine had a clear understanding of her prognosis, she shifted her focus to helping others. "She immediately turned it around and used it as a way to bring light to this rare cancer. Her whole goal was to save somebody else — another family — from going through this," he said.

In August of 2019, Katherine and Larry spearheaded a fundraiser to benefit the Neuroendocrine Tumor Research Foundation (NETRF), and the community response blew them away: The event drew roughly 550 people and generated over \$73,000 for NETRF. Ultimately, they raised over \$200,000 for the organization.

During her three-year battle with cancer, Katherine underwent chemotherapy, radiation, a liver transplant and other treatments. She continued to advocate for NET cancer patients and research, doing research of her own and helping to educate others who faced the same diagnosis. On December 27, 2021, she passed away peacefully at the age of 31, surrounded by loved ones and her beloved companion Luna.

In the months and years that followed, Larry explained, her passing cast a pall on birthdays and holidays. Ordinarily happy occasions became sad reminders of great loss. To help cope with grief, Larry resolved to do something that would again fan into flame Katherine's bright light.

In 2023, he and Robin founded Katherine's Light Foundation (KLF), a nonprofit that exists to not only honor her memory but also generate funds for NET cancer research and benefit organizations that deal with education, awareness, treatments and support that will lead to potential cures and assistance for those facing cancer diagnoses. KLF is run by a board of directors who knew and loved Katherine, including Larry, Robin, Matt and others.

"Losing anyone you love, but especially a child, you want them to be remembered," Robin said. "Katherine had been such a positive force in the lives of so many people, and this was a way for her name to carry on — by us doing good deeds in her honor. The foundation has helped to repurpose sadness into a positive movement."

Larry shared that KLF held an initial fundraiser in December 2023. The event generated \$12,500, which was immediately dispersed to community organizations. Through KLF, Larry and Robin gave \$5,000 to establish the Katherine

Mueller Nursing Scholarship at Anne Arundel Community College, in honor of Katherine's desire to be a nurse. They also donated \$2,500 to the Wellness House of Annapolis, \$2,500 to the BWMC Foundation's Patient Care and Comfort Fund, and \$2,500 to the Katherine Mueller NET Cancer Research Fund.

They are planning to host an all-day music festival on June 15 in Katherine's memory to raise additional funds. The event will run from noon to 8:00pm at Severna Park Taphouse and will feature performances by local artists including The Crayfish, Red Betty & The Ruckus, Miggs Rangel and many others. Tickets are \$25, and sponsorships are available from \$200-\$5,000. Proceeds from the music festival will support organizations that focus on education, awareness, treatments and individuals with cancer diagnoses.

To purchase tickets for the June fundraiser, or to learn more about the work of Katherine's Light Foundation, go to www.katherineslight.org.

Elks Recognize Member, Burn Mortgage

The Severna Park Elks celebrated two milestones in March.

Members dedicated a pavilion to Navy veteran Charles "Chuck" Fitchet, a dedicated Elks member who died last August. During his time with the Navy, Fitchet received the Defense Superior Service Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Commendation Medal, as well as other honors.

Fitchet was a member of the Severna Park Elks Lodge for 26 years. He served on various committees including the house committee and board of directors, many of those years as committee chair. He was also a member of the American Legion Post 175.

Members of the Severna Park Elks also "burned" their mortgage, celebrating their debt-free status after 52 years.


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Severna Park Community Center To Honor Carl Gutschick

By Kevin Murnane

Carl Gutschick grew up in Montgomery County, but since moving to Rugby Hall in Arnold in 1993, there's no question where he calls home.

Gutschick has volunteered thousands of hours to help numerous area organizations including Woods Memorial Presbyterian Church, Severna Park Community Center, Habitat for Humanity and Special Olympics.

"Carl embodies what a volunteer is," said Severna Park Community Center Executive Director Sarah Elder. "He has a true desire to help his community and he's invested so much of his time, talent and treasure to improve not only this area but people in other states through Habitat for Humanity."

The Severna Park Community Center will honor Gutschick at its annual fundraising gala on April 27 at Chartwell Golf

and Country Club.

Gutschick began volunteering in 1997 at Woods Memorial Presbyterian Church by helping with small repairs and improvements to the building. "I'm pretty handy," said Gutschick, who has a civil engineering background.

The leaders at the church recognized Gutschick's community spirit and asked him to serve on the community center's board of directors in 1998. He became chairman of the board in 2002.

As chairman, Gutschick guided the group through the fundraising for and rebuilding of the community center. The project was done in two phases, and with



Carl Gutschick

the help of other volunteers and contributors, including project chairman Andy Borland, generated millions of dollars to fund the expanded center.

"One of the goals for the expanded center was to help additional people in the community with new programs and improve the community's health," Gutschick said. "The rebuilding and enhancement of the center

has benefitted so many people in this area and has become a true community center."

Gutschick has also been involved in numerous other charitable organizations such as Habitat for Humanity.

"We called the program WoodsWork,

and for 25 years we took our younger church members to help build homes for the less fortunate," he said. "We have gone to areas from South Carolina to New England, and for a week we would build the core of the house and basically leave the house with just minor construction needs to finish. It was a great experience to work with the young people and teach them new skills and enjoy the camaraderie. We slept on the gym floor of local high schools and also had time for faith-building as well."

Elder said, "Carl has been instrumental to the rebuilding of the center and has helped the community in so many ways. I love this man, and he's so deserving of all the recognition and gratitude we have for him."

Read the full story at www.severnaparkvoice.com.

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Three Ways To Vote During 2024 Primary Election

The Maryland State Board of Elections (SBE) has released important voting information for the 2024 primary election, including the three ways Marylanders can cast their vote and important deadlines to ensure every voter can exercise their right to vote.

“It’s never too early for Marylanders to learn about the three ways to vote in this year’s primary election and make a plan to vote,” said State Administrator Jared DeMarinis. “Whether voting early in person, voting by mail, or voting at their local polling place on Primary Election Day, I encourage every Marylander to familiarize themselves with the important election deadlines to ensure their voices are heard.”



Three Ways to Vote

Marylanders have three ways to cast their vote in the primary election: in-person early voting, mail-in voting, and in-person voting on Election Day, Tuesday, May 14. The key dates below will help Marylanders register to vote and cast their vote.

Important Deadlines for Three Ways to Vote

Vote Early In-Person: In-person early voting begins May 2 and ends May 9. Polls are open from 7:00am to 8:00pm. Voters who are in line by 8:00pm will be able to cast their vote. A list of early voting locations can be found at www.elections.maryland.gov. Please note that some locations have been changed or added since the last election.

Mail-In Voting: Requests for a mail-in ballot via mail or fax must be received (not just mailed) or submitted online by **May 7**. Requests for a mail-in ballot via email must be submitted online by 11:59pm on **May 10**. Learn how to request a mail-in ballot online. Mail-in ballots returned by mail must be postmarked by or before 8:00pm on **May 14**. If returned by hand, ballots must be dropped at a ballot drop box or local board of elections by 8:00pm on Primary Election Day, **May 14**. The first batch of mail-in ballots began to be transmitted to Maryland voters who requested them on Monday, April 1.

Vote in Person on Primary Election Day: The final day to cast a vote is Primary Election Day, May 14. Polls are open from 7:00am to 8:00pm. Voters who are in line by 8:00pm will be able to cast their vote. Find your polling place online.

Register to Vote

The last day to register to vote, update voter registration or change party affiliation online or by mail is **April 23**. Registrations being mailed must be postmarked by this date. Residents not registered to vote can do so using the online registration system. Those who

prefer not to register to vote online may print the registration form and submit it at the local board of elections office.

If you miss this deadline, you can still register the same day you vote in person.

Make sure to bring a document that proves where you live when you visit your local polling place. You cannot change your party affiliation after the deadline. Maryland is a closed primary election, meaning only registered voters of the Democratic and Republican parties can vote in those

primary elections. Be sure to check your party affiliation prior to the deadline if you are a registered voter.

Ballot Drop Boxes Installed

SBE has completed the installation of 286 ballot drop boxes in all counties and the city of Baltimore. A list of locations is available online. Voters may submit their completed mail-in ballots at any official drop box until Primary Election Day, May 14, at 8:00pm. Ballot boxes will be locked at 8:00pm.

Additional information about Maryland’s primary election can be found at vote.md.gov/vote2024. Part of the SBE’s VOTE!MD campaign, the website includes a voting checklist, important deadlines that can be added to your calendar, and information on how to apply to be an election judge.

Breaking Down The Blueprint For Maryland’s Future

Rachel Muñoz
Delegate
District 31



There have been a lot of concerns circulating in our community about how an education plan called the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future will affect our local schools. After working with both state and county agencies and elected officials on both sides of the aisle, I would like to provide some insight into how the implementation will impact our community.

Under the blueprint, funding is calculated per pupil based on various factors. The factors themselves do not change significantly — it is the weight given to certain factors that has changed dramatically. These include considerations such as whether the student has an individualized education plan (IEP), is an English-language learner (ELL), or qualifies for free and reduced meals (FARM), among other factors. The per-pupil funding is then aggregated to determine the total amount of money each school receives.

Here’s where it gets interesting. The money follows the child, and that amount is based on the new formula with new weighted factors. The total sum of money a school receives may be used like a salary

cap in the NFL draft. It could be used to determine how many teachers the school can afford based on their years of experience, as more experienced teachers command higher salaries.

This means that while some schools may receive more funding due to factors like higher numbers of students with IEPs, ELL students, or FARM-eligible students, other schools may face challenges in retaining all their current teachers. Consequently, we may see teacher transfers between schools as some schools struggle to retain their staff within the constraints of their funding allocations. This could potentially disrupt the continuity and stability of teaching staff within our local schools, affect the student-teacher ratios, and impact the quality of education provided to students.

As we navigate these changes, it’s clear that legislative action may be necessary to address the concerns raised by the blueprint’s implementation. While the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future represents a step forward in promoting equity in education funding, it also presents challenges for communities like ours. Is the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future actually defunding some of our schools in the name of equity? I will continue to work with both state and county agencies and elected officials to better understand how the blueprint’s new formula and implementation will affect each school in our community and share that information as soon as possible.

Letter To The Editor — House Bill 1515

Editor’s note: *This bill has not been advanced from the House to the Senate for further review, but it may be up for consideration again next year.*

Government officials often tout the importance of restoring trust in government, creating economic opportunity for all, implementing smart growth policies, and promoting health and wellness. They stress transparency and community engagement as being the core of their values. Yet I wonder, are those just nice soundbites or really behaviors we see in our government?

To put this question into context, a little about me. I am a mother and wife born in Baltimore City and raised in Pasadena. Now a middle-aged woman living outside of Annapolis, my life has become what I made it. I currently own and manage an affordable housing company, own and work at an aerospace consulting firm, own and distribute from my own charitable fund through the Community Foundation of Anne Arundel County and have sat as a board chair for a local nonprofit. I pay my fair share of taxes and follow the law. These are not meant to impress, but instead to set

the framework for an opinion.

Since December 2023, I have contacted our county and state government senior leadership six times to express an opinion on proposed Maryland House Bill 1515, what I will call a “tax increase under disguise.” Let me repeat, six times. And never a response. Not even a polite, “We’ll get back with you.”

The stakes for all Marylanders are serious with House Bill 1515. If you have not followed the legislation, it essentially proposes to reduce the current state sales tax from 6% to 5% but in parallel to expand the sales tax to 10 categories of services not currently taxed. Those services could include legal and accounting services; everyday home maintenance ranging from cleaning to pest extermination to landscaping; personal care such as haircuts, massages and tattoos; fitness and personal training services; admission to recreational venues including sports, theaters, amusement parks and museums; and personal services spanning veterinary care to dry cleaning to even funeral services. Proponents argue that the bill must be implemented in order to cover a government budget shortfall and predict net-net that the

state would enjoy more than \$2 billion in increased tax revenues.

I strongly believe the government should look at other ways to cover revenue shortfalls. In looking at the bill, this is going to put a substantial burden on businesses not currently taxed, whose increased costs would in turn most likely be passed on to consumers. In addition, government itself would need to get larger to manage and enforce the changes. Lastly, even with a reduction to 5% of the overall sales tax, I believe that is simply temporary and an optics play to get this bill passed.

I would rather see the government cover the budget shortfall by reducing its overall size (headcount), streamlining, stressing efficiency and even reducing non-value-added services. The government should look internally first.

If the golden rule is the principle of treating others as one would want to be treated, then will constituents support elected officials the same as they support them? Still waiting for a call back to voice this opinion, which I also know is shared by many other Marylanders.

Nicole Hassannia

Bruin Baseball Wins Five Of First Six

By David Bashore

For a team with championship aspirations, the Broadneck baseball team is starting the season out on the right foot: some wins, a little adversity, and a whole lot of close, competitive games.

Through April 7, the Bruins are off to a 5-1 record, including two extra-inning victories and equal parts dramatic moments and growing opportunities.

The most recent of those victories, an 8-7, eight-inning win over Annapolis Area Christian School (AACS) on April 5, had it all rolled into one.

Middle Tennessee State-bound **Calvin Cook** homered to help stake the Bruins to a 6-1 lead after five innings. But AACS came back to take the lead heading into the bottom of the seventh, forcing Broadneck to scratch across a run just to extend the game.

Nate Schilling ended it in the bottom of the eighth when he rattled the foul pole in left field for walk-off solo home run.

"We have a veteran team and offensively they never panicked," said Broadneck coach **Matt Skrenchuk**. "Nate's a senior, and he's got a lot of poise, a lot con-

fidence in his game, and he came up and put a good swing on the ball."

Broadneck figured to get solid production from their experienced lineup, anchored around catcher **Nick Cicale**, shortstop **Cook**, and first baseman **Devin McGowan**. The Bruins have gotten a pleasant surprise from freshman second baseman **Avik Cherry**, who demonstrated a propensity to emerge in big moments, like when he homered and tripled in the team's 9-3 win over Chesapeake on April 4.

The Bruins started the season with a 5-4, eight-inning win over St. Mary's on March 22, and followed that up with a 7-5 win over Annapolis and a 13-0 win against Leonardtown. Their only blemish came on March 28, a 2-0 loss to Colonel Zadok Magruder.

» Continued on page 17

Photo by Dennis McGinley

Broadneck celebrated Nate Schilling's walk-off home run, which gave the Bruins an 8-7 victory over Annapolis Area Christian School.



Park Boys Lax Unbeaten Through Seven Games

By David Bashore

So far, so good for the Severna Park boys lacrosse team in their bid for yet another state championship.

Through April 7, the Falcons are off to a 7-0 start, hitting double-figures in six of their games and only one of the margins being within seven goals.

Severna Park opened the season with a 17-1 win over Arundel on March 22. They scored just 29 seconds into the game and never looked back. **John Burkhardt** scored three goals in the win, while UMBC commit **Fish**, **Sam Salas** and **Ben Rupert** added two. **Tucker Moran**, **Nolan Grizzle**, **Brayden Arnold**, **Mason Pugh**, **Merric Warren**, **Tyler Lawhorne**, **Hunter Reed** and **Porter Hill** also scored for the Falcons.

"That's (how they want) the offense. Some of the young guys, they're already really good facilitators, and we're working with them to finish and create offense for us," Fish said. "Just trying to build their confidence where it needs to be to win big games."

In addition to the Arundel win, Severna Park took three spring break wins, beating Virginia schools West Potomac 17-3 and James Madison 8-7, before beating Queen Anne's 13-1. The Falcons also beat Glenelg 17-10, Shaker (New York) 18-3, and North County 14-3.

Having won so many titles in a row — seven and counting — Severna Park keeps trying to test the championship pedigree in different ways. Under new coach **Bob Zichelli**, the Falcons rolled right from last season into this one with an almost seamless transition.

"We didn't skip a beat in the offseason, and we played right up to our potential from the first whistle," John Burkhardt said. "We always want to win —

» Continued on page 19



Photo by Will Faulk

The Falcons had a dominant showing against Shaker, beating the New York school 18-3 on April 4.

SP Girls Cruising In Dominant Start To Season

By David Bashore

The last glimpses of the Severna Park girls lacrosse team saw the squad hoisting a championship trophy.

So far in 2024, the Falcons are laying down a marker that they are once again the team to beat in the 3A field.

"We've been grinding ever since November, getting ready for the season to start, so we were excited," said senior standout **Alyssa Gore-Chung**. "Severna Park is lacrosse, and lacrosse is Severna Park."

Severna Park, ranked 13th in USA Lacrosse's April 4 public school rankings and in the "others receiving consideration" category for the combined public/private Top 25, are 6-0 and rolling into the teeth of their schedule. They've netted at least 12 goals in every game, including beating

» Continued on page 20



Photo by David Bashore

Alyssa Gore-Chung scored four goals to go with four assists during the Falcons' 13-2 season-opening triumph over Arundel.

Falcon Baseball 4-1 To Open Season

The Severna Park baseball team pushed their record to 4-1 on the young season, with results through April 7.

The Falcons opened the season with a 10-0 win over South River on March 25, with **Evan Boucher** and **Reese Davis** combining for a shutout on the mound.

They then split a pair of holiday tournament games, losing 3-2 to Huntingtown before beating

Calvert 6-3. In the win, **Dylan Grice** tossed five innings and struck out eight.

After an April 2 showdown with Archbishop Spalding was rained out, Severna Park edged Old Mill 2-1, wrapping play thus far up with a 16-2 win over North County. **Charlie Hartman** hit a three-run home run in the win.

The Falcons continued play April 8 at Arundel and April 11 at Chesapeake.



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STUDENT-ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

NICK CICALE

Broadneck Baseball
By David Bashore

Between the lines, **Nick Cicale** is an all-state level catcher and one of Broadneck baseball's cornerstone players. In the classroom and in the community, though, is where the junior really wants to leave his mark.

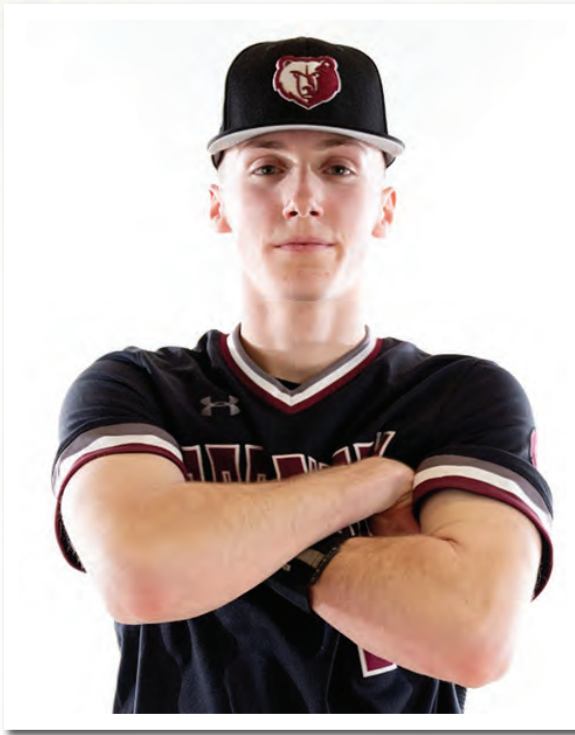
Cicale has garnered acclaim by the state's collective coaching acumen, but it's his work of serving others that really drives him to be the best version of himself.

In addition to helping lead his team and serve on the Broadneck Athletic Leadership Council, Cicale is already a volunteer firefighter, a veteran of the United States Naval Sea Cadet Corps, and a service academy hopeful.

Cicale joined the Cape Saint Claire Volunteer Fire Company in November of 2022, as soon as he was old enough. Since then, he's completed a rigorous, monthslong fire training academy and gotten a national firefighter certification in case he wants to pursue that as a career.

"My mom and dad were both police officers, so growing up I've been devoted to a life of service and I've always wanted to help the community," Cicale said. "I figured, if this is the quickest way I can help the community, I'm definitely interested."

On the field, Cicale batted .350 last season and serves as Broadneck's cleanup hitter. He was named a preseason all-state selection by the Maryland State Association of Baseball Coaches, one of



Nick Cicale batted .350 last season and serves as Broadneck's cleanup hitter. He also serves on the Broadneck Athletic Leadership Council, and he is a volunteer firefighter and a veteran of the United States Naval Sea Cadet Corps.

With the service academies firmly in mind, Cicale has worked hard in the classroom — he has a 4.2 GPA and is loading up on STEM classes — in the community as a volunteer firefighter and youth baseball coach, and in pre-military programs. He has been part of the Sea Cadet Corps for almost six years and has soaked up everything he can to prepare for his next dream move.

"It's had a huge impact on me, and I did it to prepare myself for the military because I knew that's what I want to do," Cicale said. "We go on military drills, color guards, field operations, learning everything about the Navy, and participating in a lot of community events. I've made a lot of great buddies and learned a lot of things from some great leaders. The leaders are retired Navy and prior Marines, so lots of experience there."

Baseball, volunteer firefighting, homework, community service, and other activities all eat up Cicale's day-to-day schedule. But since he aspires to grind daily — and play ball — at a service academy after graduation, he wouldn't have it any other way.

"Sometimes I have to take a second to chill out, because it's definitely a grind, but I love the grind," Cicale said. "The grind has helped me so much over the years."

two Bruins (**Calvin Cook** was the other) and four Anne Arundel County players to receive the recognition. He hopes to lead the Bruins to even loftier heights than they attained in 2023, when they won their first county championship.

"That was a big thing for us and it was really cool, but it really widened our guys' horizons," Cicale said. "Our school hasn't won a state championship in a long time (since 1995)."

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Falcon Softball Battles Back To .500

By David Bashore

Photo by David Bashore

Severna Park's Quinlyn Bary delivered a pitch against Archbishop Spalding.

Severna Park dropped three of the first four games to start the season, almost by design. The Falcons loaded up on tough matchups early in the season, with an opening game against Chopticon and then successive games in their home one-day tournament against Queen Anne's and Archbishop Spalding.

They lost all three (10-1 to Spalding, 11-0 to Chopticon, and 7-2 to Queen Anne's), but the quality opposition taught them some valuable lessons.

"Chopticon reached out and asked if we wanted a game, and I said yeah, because I want to start out our season with tough matchups," said Severna Park coach **Bailey Benedick**. "I wanted to start strong, because that was going to be the best way to figure out what we needed to fix early so that when we get to county play, we're a lot more sound."

So far, it's paid dividends. Severna Park is unbeaten against county opposition, topping South River 7-2 and getting back-

to-back big wins against North County (10-0) and Old Mill (12-2) to level their record at 3-3 on the season.

Severna Park has quality upper-class leadership, led by catcher **Sally Trent**, and quality freshmen, led by pitcher **Quinlyn Bary**, on the roster as well. A lot of the season from here, Benedick said, comes down to how well they can hit. Against Spalding, they hit the ball hard, but routinely right at Cavaliers defenders — it wasn't until the last inning that Severna Park got a hit.

"The field umpire told me three or four times that we were just really unlucky," she said. "But if we can hit consistently, that stuff is going to drop in more routinely."

Severna Park visited Arundel on April 8. The Falcons will host Chesapeake on April 11 and head to Glen Burnie the next day.



Broadneck's Cornelius No-Hits Annapolis

The Broadneck softball team is ready to get back at it.

Through a combination of built-in scheduling and unfavorable weather, the Bruins have played just two games and went two weeks between games when they faced off against Crofton on April 8.

The highlight of the season so far came in an 18-0 win over Annapolis on March 25, in which **Addie Cornelius** tossed a seven-inning no-hitter and struck out 11. **Dianna Owens** went 4-for-4 and drove in two runs, while **Rylan Crisafulli**, **Bella Herrera** and **Grace Purdum** also plated two runs.

Broadneck opened the season with a 13-0 win over Southern on March 22. **Sam Waters** tossed a complete game, striking out 10. Waters and **Mara Gilkey** each drove in two runs, while Cornelius had three hits.

A scheduled April 4 game against Wellsville (New York) was lost due to rain. After the Crofton game, Broadneck faced off against Dulaney, who knocked the Bruins out of the 4A state semifinals last season, on April 9. Then they have games against Northeast on April 11 and Old Mill on April 12.

Bruin Baseball Wins Five Of First Six

» Continued from page 14

The team's two primary starting pitchers have had similar stuff and quality outings, but vastly different outcomes in the record book. **Noah Forman** is 3-0 already, but while **Kobe Owen** has pitched equally well, he only has two no-decisions to show for it.

The combination of pitching and experienced batters has Broadneck

upbeat about where things stand, but they know that there is still more room to improve.

"One of the things we've been preaching this year is focusing on getting better each day," Skrenchuk said. "I think our offense will continue to keep us in ball games, and I think our pitching will continue to grow as we go. We have two pitchers that gained a lot of experience

last year, and they're throwing well."

That pitching staff, and the collective team experience, will be put to the test in a different way, as Broadneck embarked on a stretch of seven games in 11 days beginning on April 8, with a test against rival Severna Park in the middle of that stretch.

The Bruins and Falcons play on April 15 at Severna Park.

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Bruins Survive South River Showdown To Remain Perfect

By David Bashore

For most of Broadneck's boys lacrosse showdown with South River on April 5, it was just one of those nights for **Tanner Boone**.

The senior attacker was hounded, chopped at, and otherwise blanketed by South River defenseman **Nick Sweeney** every time he had possession. But with a little over eight minutes remaining in the game, Boone found the tiniest of openings.

He feinted toward the back of the South River goal then raced to his left, and as Sweeney wedged himself between Boone and the crease, Boone flicked a no-look shot over his head toward the goal. It came out of the pocket much like a baseball changeup, catching everyone by surprise and nestling into the top of the South River net.

Boone's instinctive moment of genius would prove to be the decisive goal, as Broadneck held off South River 10-8 in a battle of nationally ranked teams.

"Honestly, I don't really think a lot when I play; I just kind of do," Boone said. "**Jed Pellicano**, he gave me some words, that I was having a tough game, that I needed to make something happen, and I did. It definitely felt good and there was a sense of relief after I scored that."

Tyler Hicks scored three times for the Bruins, who were ranked ninth in USA Lacrosse's April 4 rankings of the top 25 public schools nationally — South River was ranked 10th. Nobody else scored more than once for Broadneck: Boone, Pellicano, **Braden McCassie**, **Logan McGill**, **Tyler Stewart**, **Brayden Schmidt** and **Liam Komlosy** all also found the net.

In a dogged, physical game that largely stayed on the legal side of the edge all players try to live on, Broadneck was able to keep their nerve, their discipline and their focus. They



Photo by David Bashore

Graham Hartman secured and defended his own faceoff win.

committed just one penalty, a late slashing call that led to a Seahawks goal, while South River twice went down two men — Broadneck couldn't convert on either instance.

The game got scrappy and stretched late on, but the Bruins were able to prevail.

"Gotta find a way," said Broadneck

coach **Jeff McGuire**. "They did exactly what we asked of them. We only had three goals for this game, and that was just drop on the ride to not let them clear it early, for our middles to get it up and out — failed on that one — but then be disciplined."

"Discipline was the key to the night, and I think we stayed the most disciplined," McGuire said. "That was the one thing we wrote on the board in the locker room. Even the guys who didn't get in were fired up and that helped us a lot."

The win was the fifth for Broadneck on the season, as the Bruins pushed their win streak to 25 games dating back to last season.

Broadneck started the season with a 13-6 win over Kent Island on March 22, then backstopped that with a pair of spring break tournament wins over Virginia opponents, beating James Madison 14-5 and Langley 16-7. They also beat Marriotts Ridge 13-5 before the showdown with South River.

Perhaps ominously, Boone alluded to the season as being something of a "slow start."

"We had a couple of guys coming back, but we're starting to figure some things out and this game shows that," he said.

The tests keep coming for the Bruins: Broadneck faced Mount Hebron on April 8, before heading to Severna Park on April 12.

Park Boys Lax Unbeaten

» Continued from page 14

focused on winning, and nothing else."

Severna Park's schedule figures to toughen up in the next week-plus. The Falcons went to Marriotts Ridge on April 8. They also have back-to-back home dates with nationally top 10-ranked Broadneck and South River on April 12 and April 15, respectively.

Severna Park was 19th in the April 4 USA Lacrosse public school rankings. The three schools are the only Maryland programs in the top 25.

No matter the opponent, the Falcons want to keep their own standards going and let the chips fall where they may.

"We have a standard, and it's our tradition," Fish said. "A lot of our coaches played here at Severna Park, and they help us keep that standard high."



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Broadneck Girls Lax Taking Uneven Start In Stride

By David Bashore

Falling behind two goals early in the third period, and fresh off a disappointing one-goal loss earlier in the week, it could have been a “here we go again” moment for the Broadneck girls lacrosse team.

But they learned from their previous game and rose to the occasion.

Broadneck scored five of the game’s final seven goals, including **Olivia Orso’s** game-winner with 2:31 to go as the Bruins outlasted South River 10-9 on April 5, evening the three-time reigning 4A champions’ record at 3-3 on the young season.

Lily Trout had four goals to pace the Bruins, while Orso added three. **Ceci Facciponti, Nora Lopes** and **Sienna Miller** also found the cage for Broadneck.

Trout’s opening goal, and Facciponti’s tally that kickstarted a rally in the third period, both were the product of a combination of improvisation and ingenuity. Facciponti’s was flicked behind her back into the roof of the net, while Trout let fly with a backhanded shot that wrapped around her body facing away from goal.

“A lot of it’s practice, but honestly in that moment, I was just like, ‘Let me try and see what I can do here,’ so it’s just playing in the moment for me,” Trout said. “We focused on moving the ball, driving, and looking for opportunities. Moving the ball quickly helped a lot.”

Coming up with things on the fly worked for Broadneck’s attack, which also benefited from five goals on free-ball restarts. But the major adjustment Broadneck showed in the game was neutralizing

South River’s standout **Ava Linnell**.

She had five goals, but just one in the second half, and that came not even two minutes into the third period. After that, junior midfielder **Savanna Libby** essentially marked Linnell out of the game.

“We just marked her up with someone different,” Broadneck coach **Katy Kelley** said. “(Libby) has a great reach, so I figured that was kind of a good matchup. And she’s a sound one-on-one defender, so that’s a difference-maker for us.”

Broadneck opened the season with an 8-7 loss to Cape Henlopen (Delaware) on March 23, then beat James Madison (Virginia) 20-7 four days later. They split a couple of holiday tournament games, losing 12-6 to Manchester Valley before beating Towson 15-9.

The Bruins faced Mount Hebron on April 8 and will go to Severna Park on April 12.



Photo by David Bashore

Olivia Orso muscled through the South River defense to secure a ground ball.

Read the full story online.

Falcon Girls Cruising In Dominant Start To Season

» Continued from page 14

last year’s 4A runner-up Dulaney 12-9 and USA Lacrosse’s 22nd-ranked team in the nation, Glenelg, 14-9.

The Falcons opened the season with a 13-2 win over Arundel, in which **Go-re-Chung** scored four goals and assisted on four others. **Sara Kreis** had three goals, while **Maria Bragg** and **Erin Hussey** netted twice. **Francesca Dunoyer** and **Lizzie Thompson** also found the net

for Severna Park, while **Allison Schiavone** made four saves.

In addition to those three wins, Severna Park also beat Howard and Fallston by identical 17-5 counts, and North County 18-3.

Though the Falcons graduated some key components to last season’s squad, the talented and seasoned senior class is relishing its opportunity to shine.

“Being on the field last year, playing

with such talented people, and doing it again this year, we’ve put so much time and effort into these kinds of games,” Kreis said. “We knew how to set the tempo, and we know how to move on and get even stronger going forward.”

Severna Park’s schedule beefs up the next three games. The Falcons hosted Marriotts Ridge on April 8, and they’ll host Broadneck on April 12 and go to South River on April 16.

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Boys Basketball Teams Clinch Green Hornets Championships

The Greater Severna Park Athletic Association, also known as Green Hornets, crowned several boys rec basketball champions at the end of the winter season. Green Hornets recognized the following champions for scrub league (high school), seventh/eighth grade, and A and B brackets for fifth/sixth- and third/fourth-grade teams.

Scrub League

Champions: Suns

Head Coach:

Rob Hanley

Assistant Coach:

Rob Blanck

Team: Adedamola Adepaju, Benjamin Anderson, Andy Blanck, Caden Blanck, Cayden Decker, Charles Hilgartner, Hayes Hilgartner, Connor Kemezis, Benjamin Kennedy



Third/Fourth-Grade A Bracket Champions: Bulls

Head Coach: Kimberly Bloomfield **Assistant Coach:** Derek Howells

Team: Thomas aBecket, Lawton Bloomfield, Zachary D'Orlando, Tucker Esposito, Caden Howells, Jeremy Kamas, Luca Lembo, Benjamin Lucas, Graham McGuire, Caden Smith



Third/Fourth-Grade B Bracket Champions: Pelicans

Head Coach: Ashley Miller **Assistant Coaches:** Thomas Hamlett

Team: Francis Barr, Beau Bruffey, James Corona, Elliott Dorn, Luke Hamlett, Neil Loovis, Karim Mahfoudi, Jack Miller, Jackson Minor, Calvin Schwabenbauer



Fifth/Sixth-Grade A Bracket Champions: Clippers

Head Coach: Juan Dominguez **Assistant Coach:** Kevin O'Brien

Team: Asher Ahmad, Rory Barone, Sean Brunner, Marcellus Dominguez, Graham Fretwell, Dean O'Brien, Miles Richardson, Eli Schaufele, Silas Sprinkel, Lucas Thaner



Fifth/Sixth-Grade B Bracket Champions: Spurs

Head Coach: Matt Dougherty **Assistant Coach:** Jonathan Peery

Team: Ethan Bunk, Max Carpenter, Ryan Dougherty, Ryan Kingston, Shane Lamb, Andrew Mueller, Joshua Ottoson, Charlie Peery, Benjamin Waters

Boys Basketball Teams Clinch Green Hornets Championships



Seventh/Eighth-Grade Champions: Magic

Head Coach: Aaron Matthews **Assistant Coaches:** Bryan Raino

Team: Jack Baillie, Sebastian Boyle, Jake Coleman, Maximus Cornett, Ethan Fish, Brody Makowski, Thomas Matthews, Jack Mazcko, Carter Moden, Luke Raino

Parker Jackson Receives Sportsmanship Award

Green Hornets boys basketball player **Parker Jackson** earned a special recognition during March, which was National Sportsmanship Month. A member of the 12U A team, Parker was honored with the Anne Arundel County Sportsmanship Award.

Each youth basketball league in Anne Arundel County was encouraged to nominate a boy and girl athlete for the honor. The Green Hornets felt Parker was a perfect choice for the award.

“Parker is a true competitor and leader by example,” said **Marshall Rumney**, coach of the 12U A team. “He embodies sportsmanship by his ability to compete fiercely between the lines, leave it all on the court, but throw a smile on as soon as the competition is over. He has been in our program for five years now, and has always done what was asked of him, without hesitation. He is always respectful of competitors, coaches and officials — win or lose — and embodies a class act on and off the court.”



Basketball player Parker Jackson was recognized in March as the Anne Arundel County Sportsmanship Award winner for Green Hornets boys basketball.

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It's "Freaky Friday" All Weekend This April At SPMS



By Judy Tacyn

Teenagers think their parents are clueless. Parents think their teenagers are from another planet. What better than an earthquake to shake up an otherwise ordinary weekday into a "Freaky Friday" when a mother and her daughter magically trade bodies?

That's the premise for this year's Severna Park Middle School (SPMS) drama production, "Freaky Friday," based on the original 1972 novel, later released as a movie in 1972 and again in 2003. The musical will run April 26-28 at Severna Park Middle School. Kylie Sjolie, director and choreographer, said that audiences familiar with the earlier versions of the story will be pleasantly surprised with a slightly different storyline.

Music Director Arden Titus and Sjolie



Photo by Judy Tacyn

Cast members of SPMS's "Freaky Friday" hit all the right notes in a rehearsal for the fast-paced family musical.

chose "Freaky Friday" because it is very different from last year's "SpongeBob" musical. With 47 student actors and 20 tech crew kids, there were many opportunities to participate. The show will feature great music and "a beautiful message about accepting and understanding others and yourself," added Sjolie.

Students have been rehearsing since late January. "The kids are very much

enjoying this show and storyline," Sjolie said. "Because the story was made into multiple movies, and a musical version, the kids were pretty familiar with the concept of the show going into it. I think that made it even more fun for them to be able to recreate this story on the stage."

Brooke Latone plays one of the leads, Katherine Blake, the mother.

The eighth-grader gets to play her adult character while also playing the character's teenage daughter for part of the show.

"Over the course of the show, Katherine learns to better appreciate her daughter and literally walk in her shoes," Brooke said. "Freaky Friday" is a really fun show that both kids and

» Continued on page 32

Student Group Qualifies For Odyssey Of The Mind World Finals

By Judy Tacyn

A group of 9- and 10-year-old friends from Severna Park accepted a mission to solve a specific problem with an infinite number of solutions: designing, building and running a vehicle with a team-created rider that traveled to a drive-in theater.

Mission impossible or fascinating exercise in ingenuity?

The Odyssey of the Mind (OM) program was co-founded by C. Samuel Micklus and Theodore Gourley in 1978 to challenge New Jersey students in 28 schools to stretch their creative problem-solving skills through writing, art and theatrical performance, with a specific focus on science, technology, engineering and math, long before the discipline of STEM was formalized. The demanding yet quirky problems presented to students — along with the expansive evaluation rubric — quickly caught on and the Odyssey of the Mind program went international by the 1980s.

Today, more than 800 international seven-member teams from around the globe take on a long-term problem from one of five categories — vehicle, technical, classics, structure and performance — for a chance to show off their creative solutions at the world finals held each year in the United States in late May. Teams from four age divisions, from



The Odyssey of the Mind team posed in front of their backdrop after completing their skit. The team included Annie Kamas, Wes Kamas, Clayton Wise, Nadia Cortes, Mia Cortes and Valerie Plessinger.

"Clayton has a natural curiosity to go beyond a problem or answer and to really look at the process of getting to a conclusion," Wise said. "He asks questions, challenges answers and considers other options."

OM challenges the participants to choose one of the identified problems and find a solution using creativity, science, technology, engineering, the arts and math. This was the Severna Park group's first year participating in OM, but the seven students collectively took first place in their division for their chosen problem, which qualified them for the world finals at Iowa State University from May 21-24.

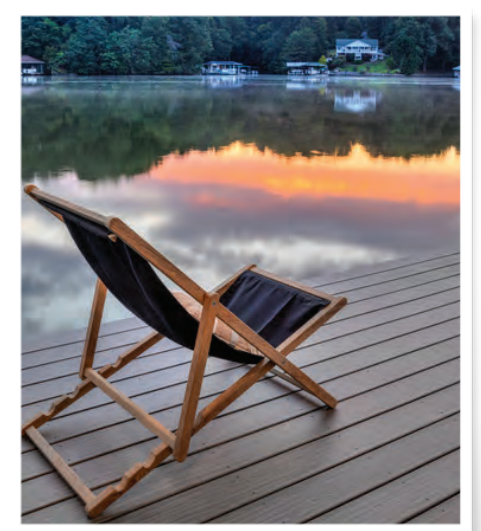
Wise said the team worked together for many months, creatively challenged each other, and ultimately came up with a solution that all of the team members were proud of and that included each of their contributions. The seven friends learned cooperation, compromise and ultimately changed their thought process to problem solving.

» Continued on page 34

third grade through college, work on their assigned problem for months with highly restricted adult involvement and limited to no more than \$150 for all supplies.

Nicole Wise grew up in the southwest and was an "OMer" from a young age. She recalled how the OM creative think-

ing nurtured her natural propensity to think and analyze in a certain way. Wise now recognizes that her fourth-grade son Clayton's approach to learning is similar to her own. She decided to form an OM team to fuel his appetite for critical thought learning. She invited six of his friends to form a team.



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Oak Hill Entertains Audiences During Production Of "Annie Jr."



"The sun'll come out tomorrow" — at least that is the prevailing thought of Oak Hill Elementary students who put on their production of "Annie Jr." in March. According to choreography director Deanna Ortiz, Oak Hill selected the musical in 2020, but the school was not able to share a complete production at that time because of COVID-19 shutdowns.

"We wanted to give it the second chance it deserved and create a better memory of the 'Annie' experience for years to come," Ortiz said.

Students put a tremendous amount of time and effort into this year's production, Ortiz said.

"When they stepped out onstage, faces beaming, it was evident they realized their hard work had contributed to something great," Ortiz said. "That is something they should all feel proud of. Being witness to that is truly special."

"The students were so dedicated," she continued. "I think it is safe to say they enjoyed every moment of it, but I'd imagine they especially enjoyed the friendships they cultivated and getting to perform onstage at school. I've had several students ask me recently if we can do another production before the end of the year because they miss it so much!"

Kids engaged audiences with their performance of "Annie Jr." at Oak Hill Elementary in March. The show was made possible by musical director Nathan Peachey, stage director Amanda Gorski, technical director Lisa Christesen and choreography director Deanna Ortiz.





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Kids Participate In Annapolis Running Festival

Fifteen young members of the Braveheart Run Club put their training to the test when they entered the Annapolis Running Festival 10K in March. Runners included (l-r) Gambrills resident Madison Joyner; Severna Park residents Isla Clark, Maggie Turnock, Madilyn Stevenson, Audrey Clark, Tom Brockett and Colin Bixby; Pasadena resident Toby Goularte; and Severna Park residents Kieran Gibson and Andy Watkins. Not pictured are Severna Park runners Charlotte Gibson, Clare Wieland, Olivia Daley, Ryan Higdon and Rosie Favret.



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Educator Of The Month

Jessica Berstein Severn River Middle School



By Lauren Burke Meyer

Like many people, Jessica Berstein was inspired to become a teacher from a fellow educator — specifically, her high school English teacher for 11th and 12th grade, Mrs. Polek, who taught at Centennial High School in Howard County.

“Because of her classes, I fell in love with talking about texts and connecting it to the real world/ personal experience,” said Berstein, who teaches sixth- and eighth-grade English Language Arts (ELA) at Severn River Middle School.

Polek is the reason Berstein chose English. “Her classes were so fun and made reading and writing less intimidating and more enjoyable,” Berstein said. “I wanted to do for others what she had done for me.”

Berstein, who grew up in Ellicott City, always knew she wanted to be a teacher. When she was little, she would force her younger siblings into playing school.

“I would use my dad’s Xerox to run copies of homework and give my little brother detention when he misbehaved,” she said.

Fast-forward many years: Berstein resides in Baltimore and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English language and literature from the University of Maryland, College Park, and a Master of Arts in teaching in leadership from Notre Dame of Maryland University. She is now in her ninth year of teaching.

“I was fortunate enough to be hired at the same school (where) I completed part of my student-teaching internship,” Berstein explained. Before Severn River Middle School, she earned experi-

“My favorite lessons are where the students have their own independence to showcase their understanding versus the traditional assessment structure.”

— JESSICA BERSTEIN

ence with all grade levels K-12. “I’ve always had a soft spot for middle school,” she said.

Her favorite lessons are the ones where students take the lead. “I believe each student has the ability to teach others, so when students become the ones driving the conversation, it makes for the best lesson,” Berstein said.

During her classes, students participate in collaborative work with opportunities for higher-level discussion with classmates based on the text of study. Some of the highlights from her curriculum include Socratic Seminars and Philosophical Chairs discussions, extended writing tasks, as well as some creative, project-based assignments for students to best show their understanding of standards.

“My favorite lessons are where the students have their own independence to showcase their understanding versus the traditional assessment structure,” Berstein said.

Examples of these types of lessons from her eighth-graders included the podcasts they created to demonstrate their understanding of “The Outsiders” and acting for “Romeo and Juliet.”

For Berstein, it’s always a great sign during these lessons when it’s time to clean up, and she hears: “Class is already over?”

In addition to student-led lessons, she believes in the power of strong relationships. “If my students feel safe and welcome, they are open to learning,” Berstein said.

The ELA educator wants her classroom to be a safe space where it’s OK to make mistakes, and students are encouraged to take risks because there will be no judgment.

“I want to create the same classroom I had when I was growing up because I know how much of a difference it can make,” she said.

Berstein was among the 2024 Anne Arundel County Public Schools Teacher of the Year nominees, and she will be honored at the 38th annual Excellence in Education awards event on May 3 at The Hall at Live! at Arundel Mills.



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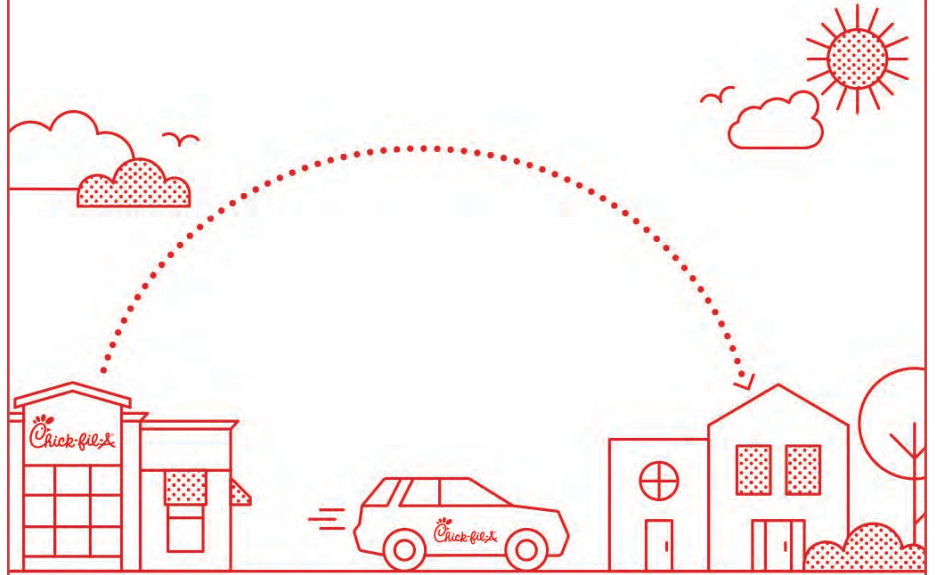
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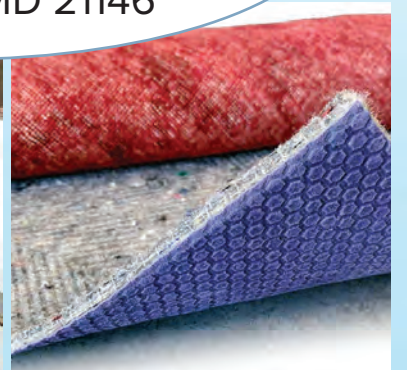
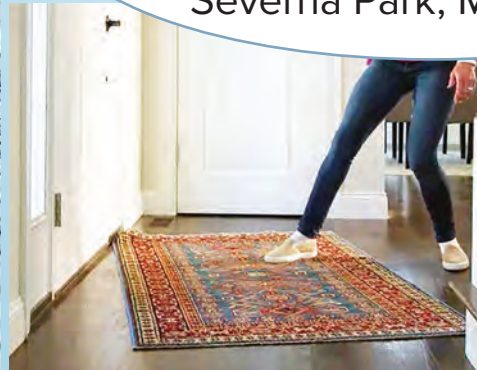
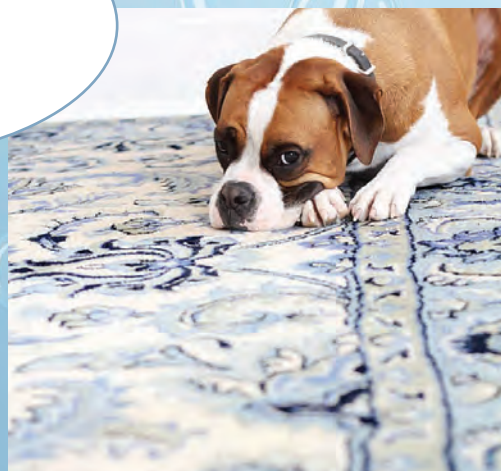
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Severna Park Students Get Hands-On Learning At UM Baltimore Washington Medical Center

By Zach Sparks

zach@severnaparkvoice.com

March 15 was not an average day for members of Severna Park High School's Future Doctors of America club. Some students witnessed a C-section while others watched surgery.

Those activities were part of a field trip at the University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Medical Center (UM BWMC), which invited students to hear from a panel of doctors, clinicians and nurses; ask questions; and shadow professionals after being split into groups based on their interests.

Dr. Jean Jauregui, director of nursing for critical care and intermediate care at UM BWMC, talked about working as a nurse in an intensive care unit, an emergency department patient care technician and specializing in festival medicine at large concerts before working at UM BWMC. Her two tips: "volunteer so you can see everything available to you" and "have a mentor."

Vascular surgeon Dr. Marshall Benjamin shared his journey and talked about having a low grade-point average in high school and turning around his life with a career in health care.

Dr. Chirag Chaudhari, chairman of the UM BWMC emergency department and medical director of informatics, recounted his 20 years at the medical center. He wanted to be an engineer but discovered a passion for health care.

"For me, I quickly started thinking, 'Well I never want to have the same day twice. I don't want to be in a career where I sit at the same desk and I do the same work and I sit at the same computer and every day I go home at 4:59pm,'" Chaudhari said.

Dr. Jason Heavner, vice president and associate chief medical officer at UM BWMC, highlighted the many opportunities within health care: business, research, the arts and humanities.

"I interviewed someone for med school a number of years ago who was a writer on 'The Dr. Oz Show,'" he said. "So you can choose a career path (within health care), but fundamentally, you're always in a good position ... It gives you the opportunity to have a really nice career and explore whatever you want to do."

The experience was inspiring for Severna Park High School students, including senior Gabby Rosati, who started interning with UM BWMC last August. Before the field trip began, she had high expectations.

"I want to see a day in the life of a doctor," she said. "What does a registered nurse do compared to a physician assistant or primary treating physician or a radiologist? I think it's a great opportunity."

The day did not disappoint and reinforced her desire to work in health care. "It's difficult ... you're on your feet constantly, and you never know what is going to happen, but you're saving lives," Gabby said.

Junior Camryn Lowman was interested to see how operations at UM BWMC differed from those she has



Photo by Zach Sparks

One group of SPHS students removed paperclips and other items from a dummy to replicate the job of a surgeon.

seen on the TV show "Grey's Anatomy." "I've just always realized I wanted to help people," she said.

As vice president of the Future Doctors of America club at Severna Park High School, Kelsey Rowe helped plan the trip with Gabby, Camryn and the staff at UM BWMC. A junior, she makes slideshows to teach other teens about anatomy and plans club activities like making fake wounds so club members can practice stitching. Her current plan is to work as a physician assistant in pediatrics or orthopedics although that could change.

During the field trip in March, her group shadowed staff in the pediatric department.

"We saw a baby with jaundice and

watched the nurse take her vitals," Kelsey said. "It was cool to see how the hospital runs."

She hopes to return to UM BWMC as an intern during her senior year.

"I am so extremely grateful for the staff at BWMC for spending time with us, and experiences like these are so important to students like myself to get a better understanding of what it means to be in the medical field," she wrote in an email thanking the staff. "It's an opportunity to learn beyond what we can in a classroom. Hopefully our club and these types of field trips will inspire others to want a career in health care like it has for me."

The professionals had plenty of other insight for students.

Teen To Perform Live As Finalist For WISH Talent Show

"WISH - Let's Fly to Japan!" is a Japanese talent show similar to the popular American TV shows "America's Got Talent" and "The Voice." Severna Park High School freshman Destiny Felder, whose Carnegie Hall performance was highlighted in The Shout newsletter in February, has auditioned for "WISH." After several submissions and rounds, she has made it to the U.S. finals.

The final 10 Americans will perform on April 14 at Sakura Matsuri (Cherry Blossom Festival) in Washington, D.C. Their performances will be recorded and become part of the show "WISH." Then one performer will move on to perform live in Japan with other international performers. A famous J-pop group, Da Pump in Japan, will fly to D.C. and they will be a guest on the show and perform after the show.

Severna Park Middle School choir teacher Arden Titus had nominated Destiny to perform at Carnegie Hall and at the time stated, "Traveling to a new place is one of the most invaluable experiences a student can get, and to get to perform while doing so is such an amazing privilege!"

Destiny agreed, stating, "Traveling is

one thing I have always loved doing. The opportunity to visit another state and/or country and learn about different cultures is truly an honor and privilege. It's something I think a lot of us take for granted when having the opportunity to travel.

"Going to Japan would be the most amazing experience and has been a dream of mine since I was 7 years old," Destiny added. "When I lived in Leuven, Belgium, one of my best friends was Yui, who shared so much about her rich culture and pictures of Japan. I never thought my talent in being a performer could one day help me to achieve that dream, possibly so early on in life."

Destiny has been singing since she was 3 years old but began taking it more seriously after her first audition for "Willy Wonka Jr." at Jones Elementary School in partnership with Stage & Screen Studios. She originally lacked the confidence to perform or audition in front of anyone but her family. Her mom promised to take her out for yogurt if she would just sing her favorite song, which at the time was "The Phantom of the Opera." Then Pete Garvey, director and instructor at Stage & Screen Studios, asked her to sing again and helped her gain the confidence and ability to perform in front of others.



Severna Park High School freshman Destiny Felder advanced to the U.S. finals of a Japanese talent show.

She also recalled how two "amazing" moms helped her feel more confident in her abilities during her fourth and fifth grade years, Jennifer Degnan and Kim LaBrier. Now, having just turned 15 years old, she has studied music for six years and is a member of the Severna Park High School vocal ensemble under the direction of Sara Metcalfe.

Anyone can cheer on Destiny at the Cherry Blossom Festival on April 14 from 1:00pm-3:00pm at Sakura Matsuri in Washington, D.C., at the J-pop or Sakura stage. More information can be found at www.wishflytojapan.com.



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It's "Freaky Friday"

» Continued from page 24

parents can appreciate. It has lots of fun songs, high energy and a great story."

Sjolie said audiences can expect to laugh, sing, dance and maybe even cry. "This show has such a powerful storyline that pulls at the heart-strings," she said. "Our two leads in the show do an amazing job telling the story of a mother and daughter who switch bodies and have to navigate a day in each other's lives while also belting their little hearts out!"

In addition to amazing acting by the SPMS cast, the songs in "Freaky Friday" have tricky harmonies, which the students have beautifully mastered.

Eighth-grader Mari Matthews is a seasoned actor of four years who plays Ellie Blake. She loves her character's great sense of humor and that she stands up for what she believes in.

"We have amazing instructors and teachers here at SPMS," Mari said. "They help make our production great!"

She promises that the show is so fun that audiences will leave their production with the songs stuck in their heads in a happy way.

The set is made by parents and students in the show. When the curtain goes up, a tech crew of students will run the lights and sound for the production.

As part of the cast, Sophie Miller may only be in sixth grade, but she is

already a veteran actor of six years. In "Freaky Friday," she has a dual role as Mrs. Time and as a student. In her opening scene, she gets to wear pajamas.

"Acting is a great way to spend time with friends and work on new projects," Sophie said.

Lexie Urrea is in sixth grade and has been acting for six years. She plays a student in the production, which means she sings and dances nonstop in the background. This is an important role because she's responsible for moving props and ensuring smooth scene transitions.

"I enjoy theatrical drama because I love to perform and I feel like the stage is my home but also because I love how everything is so enthusiastic and exaggerated so there is never, and I mean never, a dull moment in theater!" Lexie said. "I think people should come and watch 'Freaky Friday' because when watching our show, you can see how much work everybody has put into it and how all of the characters get a chance to shine."

Sjolie reminded everyone to support the arts and come see the incredible talent and passion of the SPMS students. "Musical theater is such a beautiful and vulnerable experience that is so captivating to witness, especially with young actors," she said. "It is such a heartwarming experience to see how proud they are of the hard work they've put in."

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Broadneck's Habitat For Humanity Club Visits North Carolina

By **Mauricio Palmar**
Student Intern



A group of Broadneck students spent spring break on a service trip.

People always say that your senior year is one of the fastest years of your life. I was never one to buy into the hype, but as I stood in the Broadneck High School parking lot with other students last month, waiting to depart for our spring break trip, I started to understand it for the first time.

On August 10, I was rushed out of The Y in Arnold in the middle of my shift, waltzing into the Habitat for Humanity meet-and-greet with my counselor T-shirt still on, 45 minutes late. Now, 224 days later, I waited to embark on the culmination of countless hours spent fundraising: our service trip to Cape Fear, North Carolina. It was a really sobering moment, and one that caused me to reflect on how much all of us in Broadneck's Habitat for Humanity club have grown throughout the year.

A silent auction, endless yard work, hours of club meetings, and a fair amount of sock sales all went into this trip. As the money coordinator, I didn't think we'd make it at times. In one of our earlier meetings, I remember joking about how my bank account had more money in it than the club account. Fortunately, depending on how you choose to view it, that is no longer the case.

It took us eight hours to reach the campsite. Its surrounding environment consisted of apartments undergoing development, a highway, and a BP gas station that shined its green light on us from across the road.

Throughout the trip, the weather was

not on our side, at all. One of our planned build days, on March 23, was canceled due to a rainstorm that left several of our tents flooded. It was also much colder and windier than any of us expected North Carolina to be during late March, and it was mostly cloudy with few exceptions.

"The weather was cold, wet, cloudy, windy, and we were all tired," said club facilitator Brian Hussey, who teaches AP world and European history at Broadneck. "Yet the laughter never disappeared. At the build sites, eating dinner, around the campfire, the laughter was always there."

At the build sites, the Cape Fear Habitat affiliate was a pleasure to work with. All

members of the affiliate were unbelievably charismatic, and they did everything they could to make us feel comfortable on the build sites.

Some days, we were landscaping, weeding and laying sod over top of yards, eerily reminiscent of the yard work that we did to raise money for the trip. But we got some more action later in the trip, as we got to paint rooms and install doors in houses.

"This trip renewed my faith in humanity," said Faith Culp, a facilitator for the club and a counselor at Broadneck. "It was so nice being with a group of philanthropic individuals who were willing to give up

spring break in order to give back to the community."

The parts of this trip that will stick with me the most are those that did not involve construction. For example, one of my friends was unwittingly forced to be a sword swallower's assistant. Also, my tent-mate, Miller Bogarde, and I went on a gourmet cuisine tour of Wilmington. There is also the time everyone taught the teachers slang while sitting around the campfire. Plus, the time that we plunged into freezing waters at Wrightsville Beach. And even the time that we did calculus on a whiteboard, sitting around the campfire as we lost our minds.

The connections you form with people are intriguing once you disconnect from the world for a bit. We were allowed to have our phones for only one hour each day, so we didn't have much of a choice but to take the time to get to know everyone else. Sometimes, it was exhausting. But other times, it gave us an opportunity to get to know people on a deeper level, and I appreciated that.

"My favorite parts of this trip were talking around the campfire and being able to disconnect from your phone," said student Paige Reilly. "It made me realize that I didn't need every necessity."

One night, I was around the campfire with the adult facilitators. One of them, Ashley Goldberg, was my honors English 11 teacher last year. I remember thinking to myself, "There's no way you could have ever seen yourself sitting around a campfire with Mrs. Goldberg a year ago." Life comes at you fast, doesn't it?

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BENFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



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

If you could choose any animal from the zoo as a pet, what would it be and why?

If I could choose any animal as a pet from the zoo, I would choose a giraffe because they are really friendly and you could feed or pet them from your window.

Ali C.

I would choose a great white shark because they are big, fast in the water and can smell blood.

Ben S.

I would have a baby bear because they are so cute. I would like to bring it to school.

Chris A.

I would choose a flamingo because they are fun and pretty and amazing animals.

Cora D.

If I could choose any animal from

the zoo as a pet, I would pick a black panther because they are sneaky and I could scare people with my pet.

Dylan M.

I would choose a sloth because sloths are one of my favorite animals and they are easy to feed.

Edison M.

I would choose a penguin because they are fun to play with.

Edward G.

I want a monkey because they are so cute and I would train it to get candy from my candy bin and they would chill with me on the couch watching "Young Sheldon."

Elise M.

I would choose a dolphin because they are my favorite animal and they are nice.

Emery F.

I would pick a monkey because

they are smart, funny and fun to care for. Also, they can help around the house.

Faith A.

The animal I would like from a zoo is a blobfish because they look hilarious.

Grace S.

I would pick the strongest brown bear in the world because I would want to ride it.

Julien B.

I would choose an amethystine python. I chose it because I love snakes. Also, it is so big and cool.

Landon G.

I would choose an octopus because I would have eight extra arms to do more stuff at a time and it could open all of my pickle jars because they have a really high IQ level.

Maddie C.

If I could choose any animal from a zoo as a pet, I would choose a monkey because they are intelligent and entertaining to watch swing around.

Max L.

If I could choose an animal from a zoo, I would want an albino tiger because I want an animal that is big and something that I could ride to school.

Nathan G.

I would choose a black jaguar cub because I love their athletic abilities and where they live in the Amazon rainforest.

Orson L.

I would pick a koala because they are cute, fun to care for, and friendly.

Riley B.

I would choose a tortoise. One reason is it is cute and won't hurt me. Also, it's calm and eats lettuce and it won't run fast and make me work hard to catch it. Finally, they are very cute and won't try to attack anything or anyone.

Sophie K.

My animal from the zoo would be a monkey. I choose this because they are smart, cute, adorable and amazing. They would play with me all day and I would never get bored.

William M.



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St. John The Evangelist School Advances In The National Blue Ribbon Application Process

St. John the Evangelist School has advanced to the next level of the National Blue Ribbon application process. Up to 50 private schools across the nation can be nominated for the National Blue Ribbon award each year.

"We are so excited to advance in the National Blue Ribbon Award process," said Casey Buckstaff, principal of St. John the Evangelist School. "Realizing this level of excellence for St. John the Evangelist School is a goal teachers, students and leadership set our sights on and worked toward as we developed academic and extra-curricular programming to support our strong Catholic identity year after year. We are blessed to work collaboratively and with high expectations among faculty and families for the benefit of our students, and being able to apply and move forward toward receiving this national award a second time

is certainly a capstone achievement for our school family."

The National Blue Ribbon Award is the highest honor bestowed upon schools by the United States Department of Education. Established in 1982 by Secretary of Education Terrell Bell, it recognizes public and private elementary, middle and high schools that fall in either or both of the two performance award categories: exemplary high performing or exemplary achievement gap closing. St. John the Evangelist School qualified as exemplary high performing based on its outstanding academic performance on national and state assessments.

The next step in the application process will involve a review of the selected National Blue Ribbon applications by the United States Department of Education. The recipients of the 2024 National Blue Ribbon award will be announced in September 2024.

Student Group Qualifies For Odyssey Of The Mind World Finals

» Continued from page 24

"Through the OM team, my mind has changed to think a different way. When I can find a way to solve a problem, I now think and ask if it is a good way," explained Valerie Plessinger, a fourth-grade team member. "For example, if a teacher says, 'This is the way to solve this problem,' I now think of other ways to solve a problem, too. I also think about if those ways would really work."

Elysa Wilt said her experience with Odyssey of the Mind made her realize that no idea is a bad idea, and just because something seems impossible at first doesn't mean that it is.

"This experience will help me in my classes because I think it will help me reach more creative answers that I wouldn't normally consider or come up with different ways of solving things," Elysa said. "It was really fun to work together and see how our different creative skills [complemented] each other."

Monica Wilt, Elysa's mother, said she saw the group grow in their ability to compromise with each other and blend their ideas to come up with the best possible solution.

"Elysa is very creative and likes to come up with problems and stories in

her mind and with her friends," said the elder Wilt. "What I liked about this experience was that she was given a problem to solve, and the final result might not have been something she would have normally done so it stretched her creativity."

Rather than being overwhelmed with a problem he might initially think is too complex or too difficult to approach, Wes Kamas said the Odyssey of the Mind experience taught him "that the more interesting the questions and problems, the more fun you can have with the solutions." Wes added that he truly enjoyed working with his friends to fix a problem together, and learning more about engineering, magnets, circuits and even art.

Although the inaugural team qualified for the world finals this year in Ames, Iowa, they opted not to attend the competition. Now that they have experienced the entire process, the team is excited to participate in OM next school year for a second opportunity at worlds.

Schools and individuals interested in forming an Odyssey of the Mind team can visit www.odysseyofthemind.com for more information on the program or to register a team.

Docksiders Gymnastics Summer Camps 2024!

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Week 2 June 24-28

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Simba, having become king of the Pride Lands, is determined for his cub to follow in his paw prints while his late father Mufasa are explored. The rise of one of the greatest kings of the Pride Lands goes back to Africa to tell the story.

Week 3 July 1-5 (Closed Thursday, July 4)

Animal Adventures



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Week 4 July 8-12

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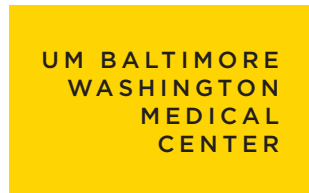
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Report: Three-Fourths Of Conventionally Grown Produce Has Pesticide Residue

Brett Peveto

Maryland News Connection

Marylanders shopping for fresh produce may want to consider a new report that finds chemical residues in much of the crop. In its 2024 “Shoppers Guide to Pesticides in Produce,” the non-profit Environmental Working Group found residue of potentially harmful pesticides on 75% of all conventionally grown produce tested.

The group relied on data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration, which tested more than 47,000 samples of 46 fruits and vegetables.

Alexa Friedman, senior scientist for the Environmental Working Group, said pesticides have been linked to several health problems.

“Things like cardio metabolic disorders, different types of diabetes, as well as some cancers,” Friedman outlined. “If you are exposed to multiple pesticides over the course of a lifetime, they might lead to a greater risk in any of these health outcomes.”

Many of the fruits and vegetables were washed and peeled prior to testing. Nonorganic strawberries were found to be the most contaminated item. Maryland has more than 12,000 farms, but as of 2022, only 62 farms in the state were certified organic.

The Shoppers Guide features a Dirty Dozen list of the most contaminated fruits and vegetables. It includes spinach, kale, grapes and peaches. There’s also a Clean Fifteen list of conventionally grown produce found to be low in pesticide contam-

ination, including avocados, papaya, mangos and carrots.

Friedman emphasized that the Environmental Working Group encourages people to buy organic when possible.

“We always recommend continuing to consume fruits and vegetables, and up your fruit and vegetable intake,” Friedman noted. “If you are interested in purchasing organic versions of the produce that’s on the Dirty Dozen, there are also some more budget-friendly options in the frozen aisles.”

In addition to pesticides, the report found high concentrations of fungicides, which are used to avoid such diseases as powdery mildew and are also applied to harvested produce to prevent mold. The report said fungicides are less studied than other pesticides, but emerging evidence suggests some may disrupt hormone systems in the body. While the quantities of pesticides detected are within allowed amounts, Friedman stressed people should still be cautious.

“Even if the amounts of pesticides are within legal limits on these produce (items), it doesn’t mean it’s safe for everyone, particularly susceptible populations like children,” Friedman cautioned.

This story was shared by the Maryland News Connection (MDNC), which is part of a network of independent public interest state-based news services pioneered by Public News Service. MDNC’s mission is an informed and engaged citizenry making educated decisions in service to democracy.

“Even if the amounts of pesticides are within legal limits on these produce (items), it doesn’t mean it’s safe for everyone, particularly susceptible populations like children.”

— ALEXA FRIEDMAN, SENIOR SCIENTIST
ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING GROUP



A report by the nonprofit Environmental Working Group found that nonorganic strawberries were the most contaminated item.

Be Your Own Superhero

Joe Bocek
Park Fitness



It seems like you can’t go to the movies anymore without seeing something related to superheroes. Now don’t get me wrong, I love a good superhero movie and even

got really into the Marvel stuff.

When we revisit the original Superman movie, there was something awe-inspiring about a hero to help us through our hardest times.

And for many, the brief daydream of us being that caped or masked person, flying through the air and running faster than a speeding bullet, was truly special.

But before we completely come back to earth, realizing this fantasy may never come true, it is possible for us to be our own superhero. Not the vigilante type, fighting crime and evil geniuses, but a hero to ourselves with the ability to save ourselves from harm’s way.

Of course, I’m talking about your health and fitness. The way we can be our own superheroes is through realizing that we are in control of ourselves and our actions.

Without boring you with tons of info and details from our exercise psychology textbooks, we are going to touch on perhaps the biggest idea of what contributes to a more successful mindset with health and fitness goals.

And that is where the control is coming from (sometimes called the “location of control”).

You see, if the location of control is viewed as coming from outside of ourselves, we often find this doesn’t lead to success. Feeling like our success is based on outside circumstances and events can be overwhelming.

Feeling that you are too busy, that you have never been able to make exercise work in the past or maybe that you just aren’t a fitness person, are all scenarios where the control lies outside of ourselves.

Now don’t get me wrong, they are all understandable reasons. Life can get in the way sometimes and obviously some situations are easier than others.

The challenge is that when we place the location of control outside of ourselves, it removes a lot of our ability to take charge and make lasting change.

When it feels like our health, wellness and quality of life is up to someone or something else all the time, it makes it difficult to start and stick with a routine that supports our fitness goals. On the other hand, when we place the location of control inside ourselves, it changes everything.

If I want to change my nutrition, I



Photo courtesy of Park Fitness

To work out consistently, it helps to make and execute a plan.

may need to start small, and it might require some planning ahead. This could look like finding some lower-calorie recipes that actually taste good and determining which days you are going to eat what. It might also be starting a healthy meal service that delivers these meals to your doorstep.

Similarly, if I want to work out somewhat consistently, I am going to have to make a plan and execute it.

The first and most important step with any of this is to just start, no matter how small that step may be.

Whether it is going for a walk, calling a friend to work out together, or booking a workout at the gym, just do the thing.

When we begin to view the location of control for these things as something inside ourselves, it opens the door to so much more. You can make this happen, you can be successful, and you can do the things necessary to make the change.

Regardless of what you do, just the act of doing something and taking a step forward is powerful and can also be empowering because you are in control.

Being a superhero of your own is probably the greatest thing you can do for yourself as well as those in your life.

And a little real talk here: the reality of this life is that no one is coming to save you. We have to do it ourselves. But with this simple mindset shift, we can put on our own boots and cape and begin flying today.

Severna Park High School Student Pens A Fantasy Novel With Adventure And Espionage

By Alyson Kay

In her debut fantasy book, "Gift of the Fallen," Severna Park High School junior Sabrina Richter weaves a tale of mystery, adventure and espionage in a magical world.

Richter started writing in May 2023 after spending about a year coming up with the plot. She was inspired to write after she came to a realization while reading fantasy books.

"I just wanted the plot to go a certain way and it never would because it was someone else's book," Richter said. "I decided at some point to write a book that I would want to read. I want to write a book that goes exactly the way I would want it to go."

Richter created the medieval

continent of Anzelon with the human country of Valea and the neighboring Shalin Empire, populated by the magical faul race. The plot centers around Melkin Evarith, a spy hired by Valean Queen Gladia to infiltrate the sacred annual negotiations between the two

countries and uncover the truth after a series of mysterious explosions in Valea sparks fears of a Shalin plot.

Inspired by fantasy and adventure series, including "Ranger's Apprentice" and "The Lord of the Rings," she wanted to create non-romantic character dynamics based on those characters working together on an adventure. She was also inspired by how her favorite fantasy authors crafted their plots.

"I'm the kind of person that hates plot holes and contrivances. I want everything to logically flow and that will take precedence over everything else," Richter said.

She decided to write under a pen name, S.B. Richter, to manage the expectations that some readers might have of female authors.

"I think there's this totally reasonable stereotype that female authors will write romance books," Richter said. "I'm not disguising my name, but I wanted that first impression to not be a romance book, because it's not a romance book. It has no romance in it."

At first, she felt that the project sounded more like a creative writing

project than a book. Through rewriting and editing, a more professional writing voice emerged.

"It was practice," Richter said. "A lot of practice with writing, and this was a great experience to get that practice."

Series like "Six of Crows" and "Percy Jackson and the Olympians" also influenced Richter's style, inspiring her to periodically shift perspectives to different characters.

"You have this group of main characters that are traveling together," Richter said. "I think that having the different perspectives is really important to see all of their thoughts and how they are processing the events that are going on. There's sort of a point in the book where every main character feels like they are the center of the action."

Aside from her writing and schoolwork, Richter also works a part-time job and has a role in the stage crew for major Severna Park High School productions including "Rock 'N' Roll Revival." It can be difficult to fit writing into her busy schedule.

"Sometimes it's a frustrating pro-

» Continued on page 44



Sherlock Holmes Fascination Continues With Local Group

By Judy Tacyn

The Guinness Book of World Records lists Sherlock Holmes, a fictional detective that debuted in 1887 by British author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, as the most portrayed human literary character in film and television history. Since then, more than 25,000 stage adaptations, films, television productions and publications have featured Holmes. Over the last 137 years, Holmes has spurred worldwide fandom and countless groups dedicated to sharing and learning more about the detective, including the Society of the Naval Treaty (also known as TNT) in Anne Arundel County. Formed in 1997, the group is celebrating

more than a quarter of a century together.

Founded by Lynn Whitall, the group now meets at St. Paul's Anglican Church on Crownsville Road on Sunday afternoons, every other month, to discuss the 56 stories and four Sherlock Holmes novels written by Doyle. Members take turns leading the bimonthly discussion and choose one of the works, collectively called the "canon," that will be read. Over the last 27 years, the group has worked its way through the canon multiple times.

"Sherlock Holmes is a wonderful character! He's smart, brilliant actually, but there are so many things about him that you won't like," Whitall said. "Good

"Everybody loves a good mystery, and generally in the end, the good guy usually wins."

— MICHAEL GALLAGHER

» Continued on page 48

"Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire" Does Little To Build On Franchise's Legacy



Photo courtesy of Sony Pictures

The "Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire" cast of characters includes (l-r) Trevor (Finn Wolfhard), Lucky (Celeste O'Connor), Gary (Paul Rudd), Nadeem (Kamail Nanjiani), Podcast (Logan Kim) and Callie (Carrie Coon).

By James Buxton

It shouldn't be this difficult to make a good "Ghostbusters" movie.

Despite sporting nothing in the way of character growth, a driving narrative or any semblance of deeper themes, the 1984 original was an absolute slam dunk

of a movie. The final villain was an afterthought even during the grand finale, any plot twists were devised and executed in the moment, and the movie ended with every character exactly where they started, having undergone no life-changing lessons or challenges to their ego.

For all intents and purposes, the original film was an extended "Saturday Night Live" sketch helmed by three or four of the biggest names in comedy. Above all, it was a fun romp that didn't take itself remotely seriously, and it couldn't have been more of

» Continued on page 43

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— **Mariya Hutto**



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Londontowne Symphony Orchestra To Present “Brilliance Unleashed” On April 14

During its “Brilliance Unleashed” show at Maryland Hall on April 14, the Londontowne Symphony Orchestra will feature both the Ballet Theatre of Maryland and the winners of the 10th annual Young Artist Concerto competition along with rousing music from the classical repertoire: “L’amant anonyme Overture” by Boulogne, “Firebird Suite” by Stravinsky and “Bolero” by Ravel.

The Young Artist Concerto competition, open to high school students in Maryland, was held last November. In addition to the opportunity to learn from and perform as a soloist with members of the Londontowne Symphony Orchestra, each winner will receive a \$250 award at the concert.

“The musical caliber of the high school students who competed was astounding,” said Dr. Anna Binneweg, music director/conductor of the Londontowne Symphony Orchestra. “We can see that classical music has a bright future in Maryland.”

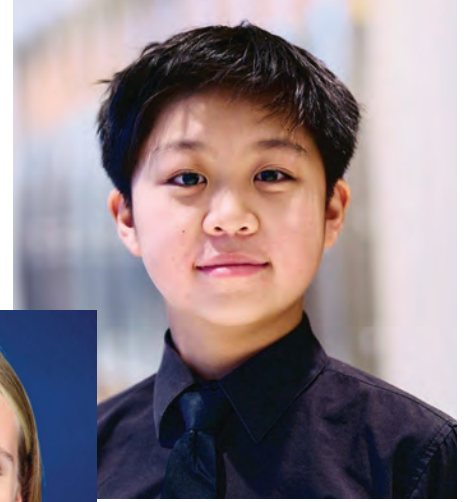
Competition winners who will perform in “Brilliance Unleashed” include Yixhuan Li, a 14-year-old violinist from Rockville; Tessa Miller, a 16-year-old pianist from Silver Spring; and Issac Won, a 14-year-old trumpeter from Potomac.

“Brilliance Unleashed” will start at 3:00pm on April 14. Tickets are \$25 and free for students of all ages. Get tickets at the door or from www.marylandhall.org/events.

What Is Londontowne Symphony Orchestra?

The Londontowne Symphony Orchestra provides family-friendly, affordable classical and light classical concerts for the enrichment and enjoyment of Central Maryland residents of all ages and backgrounds, and provides an opportunity for professional, student, and community musicians to learn and grow under professional and experienced leadership.

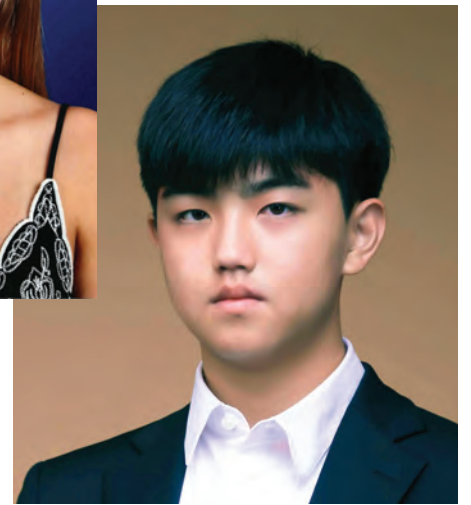
As music director/conductor of the Londontowne Symphony Orchestra and a frequent guest conductor on the national and international scene, Binneweg repeatedly captures audiences with her enthusiasm and passion for music. Binneweg aspires to have her programs and performances be alluring, engaging and attract audiences of all ages, particularly making classical repertoire appealing to all audiences.



Yixhuan Li



Tessa Miller



Issac Won

Key School To Host 21st Annual Annapolis Book Festival



Attendees can browse through thousands of new and used books at the Annapolis Book Festival, slated for April 27.

Key School will host the 21st annual Annapolis Book Festival on April 27 from 10:00am-5:00pm. The festival brings together nationally renowned authors and thousands of book fans for author talks, panel discussions, book signings and other activities. Interactive, multi-generational and free of charge, the festival has something for book lovers of all ages.

Combining entertainment, children’s activities, ComicKey! (a family-friendly comic con) and food trucks with compelling author panels, the festival attracts more than 3,000 attendees each year.

This year’s lineup will include the following:

- National Book Award winner and best-selling author **Alice McDermott**
- Peabody and Emmy Award winner and former NPR host **Michele Norris**
- Acclaimed presidential historian and bestselling author **Douglas Brinkley**
- NBC News Capitol Hill correspon-

- Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist **Wesley Lowery**
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- Peabody and Emmy Award-winning journalist **Antonia Hylton**
- Bestselling author, editor and journalist **Evan Thomas**
- Award-winning author and director of the Department of Medicine, Health and Society at Vanderbilt University, **Jonathan Metzl**
- Director of MFA Creative Writing at the Institute of American Indian Arts and memoirist **Deborah Jackson Taffa**
- Bestselling author and CNN Supreme Court analyst **Stephen Vladeck**
- Constitutional lawyer and president of the Brennan Center for Justice, **Michael Waldman**
- Former White House executive chef **Charlie Redden**
- Acclaimed sportswriter and bestselling author **John Eisenberg**

AJ Bisto To Perform “Key Of G Live!” In Severna Park

Garth Brooks Tribute Set For April 15

AJ Bisto plans to bring all of Garth Brooks’ chart-topping hits to the stage in a high-energy concert at Severna Park High School on April 15 at 7:30pm. The show is part of the Anne Arundel Community Concert Association’s current season.

Bisto started singing when he was 5 years old and has been entertaining ever since. Having performed as Garth Brooks in a cruise line variety show, Bisto was inspired to create his own tribute and thus “Key of G Live!” was born. This show features a six-piece band performing all of Brooks’ biggest hits, including “Ain’t Goin Down,” “Rodeo,” “The Thunder Rolls,” “Callin’ Baton Rouge,” “If Tomorrow Never Comes,” “Friends In Low Places” and others.

Tickets will be available for purchase at the door for \$30. Season tickets for the 2023-2024 concert season are available for \$70 for adults.

For more information, visit www.aacconcerts.weebly.com, or call Gale Gillespie at 410-647-4881 or Roberta Mason at 410-647-6830.



Led by AJ Bisto, the show will feature a six-piece band performing all of Garth Brooks’ biggest hits at Severna Park High School on April 15.

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“Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire” Does Little To Build On Legacy

» Continued from page 38
a success.

Fast forward 40 (yes, 40) years, and the Hollywood landscape has changed somewhat. Shameless comedies are out, it seems, and the unstoppable force that is nuclear-grade nostalgia for middle-aged men is at an all-time peak. “Ghostbusters” isn’t a franchise that still needs to be active in 2024, and aside from some flagrant fan service and an unsustainable obsession with classic imagery and callbacks, it seems like the minds behind this latest entry agree. “Frozen Empire” is barely a “Ghostbusters” movie, appropriating the aesthetic and intellectual property for a bog-standard adventure movie that pushes no boundaries beyond the idea that a self-declared comedy doesn’t even have to try to be funny anymore.

While 2021’s “Afterlife” set the tone of this new era as a hyper-serious musing on legacy and family, “Frozen Empire” makes an attempt to return to what made the original tick in the first place. Regrettably, it doesn’t succeed. We’re inexplicably back in New York, but that’s about where the changes end. Despite stemming from a movie where the most serious moment involved a giant marshmallow man, this film seems insistent on elevating a series in which Dan Aykroyd receives sexual favors from a ghost to something that dares ask the meaning of family and the metaphysical questions behind life after death. There’s no Murray-esque irreverence or in-your-face snarky comedy, and the movie suffers for it.

It also falls victim to the unfortunate paradox of being both overlong and overstuffed. The movie takes forever to get going, and when the plot does finally kick into gear, there’s barely any time to develop anything. Where the original film mastered the balance of three to four main leads and a small handful of supporting characters, “Frozen Empire” sees the Ghostbusters employ what feels like half the population of New York. Well over a dozen named characters are vying for our attention, which results in many of them being relegated to the background at best, or straight up vanishing for the sake of pacing in some cases.

James Acaster’s Lars, who is perhaps the only new character to feel like he belongs in a “Ghostbusters” movie, is entirely absent for the finale, and Finn Wolfhard, whose character Trevor was arguably the lead of the previous film, is nowhere to be seen for most of the last hour. Story threads established during the first act are put on hold for much of the runtime, only to be hastily resolved during the final few minutes, and only one or two of the core cast end the movie with any kind of concrete resolution. Given how seriously the film expects to be taken, it’s difficult to see this as anything more than an unfortunate rush job.

The main issue is that it just doesn’t feel like “Ghostbusters.” Sure, you’ve got the car and the

proton packs, and I guess Slimer is there too, but a movie is more than its props and merchandise. What made the franchise work back in the day is it felt grounded in the real world. This is our New York; there just happen to be ghosts everywhere. “Frozen Empire” feels detached from that realism, like the characters exist in some kind of fantasy equivalent. This is most evident during the third act, wherein this year’s big bad comes to exact his plan. Despite the previous 90 minutes establishing Garraka as a world-ending threat, the general lack of any pedestrians during his onslaught leaves him feeling somewhat neutered. His powers extend to making New York look a little brisk, and that’s about it.

What’s more, the villain has next to no motivation beyond simply being a malevolent spirit. When he finally awakens (and boy, does he take his time), he gets about 20 minutes of action before the film comes to an end.

What hurts is that, despite its numerous drawbacks, there is an echo of a fun adventure movie in here. It’s more reminiscent of “National Treasure” or 2022’s “Uncharted” than its own source material, but if you can ignore the strained attempts to keep it relevant to the franchise, there’s something quite simply enjoyable about certain parts of it.

Dan Aykroyd is having a whale of a time, having finally been given something substantial to do for the first time since 1989, and I’m sure Bill Murray received a substantial paycheck for his spectacular display of how to phone-in a performance across two scenes. The fan service is egregious at times — a fun action scene around the midpoint is brought to a screeching halt so Aykroyd can interact with the library ghost from the first movie for no discernable reason — but its prevalence makes it easier to ignore as it blends into the background.

As mentioned above, James Acaster’s Lars Pinfield is a solid addition to the mythos as Winston Zeddemore’s assistant, and despite playing the exact same persona he brings to his stand-up, he feels perfect for this franchise. Maybe it’s that spark of irreverent humor, or his utter lack of a character arc, but more than anyone else, he feels like he could have slipped right into those first two movies.

The biggest issue, though, is that it simply isn’t interesting enough to be memorable. Any attempts to pin down the highlights fall short, as the whole thing is just beige and homogenous enough for nothing to really stand out. It has all the visual flair of a credit card commercial and possesses the narrative weight of a CW filler episode. Beyond being a leg-up for Acaster and another confident step toward blossoming careers for McKenna Grace and Finn Wolfhard, there’s nothing here that’ll warrant a second thought after the credits roll.

For a movie all about ghosts, it’s astounding just how little soul it has.

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Toby's Invites Audiences To "Be Our Guest"

Toby's Dinner Theatre in Columbia is presenting a tale as old as time: "Beauty and the Beast." Disney's popular story is onstage now through June 16. Featuring the animated film's Academy Award-winning score, this musical is the story of Belle and the Beast, who happens to be a handsome prince cursed by a beautiful enchantress. If the Beast can learn to love and be loved, the curse will be lifted. If not, he and his servants will be doomed for all eternity. Will their love bloom before time runs out? Tickets are available by calling the Toby's box office at 410-730-8311 or by visiting www.ticketmaster.com.

Rachel Cahoon and Justin Calhoun are starring in "Beauty and the Beast."



Photo courtesy of Jeri Tidwell Photography

Severna Park Student Pens Fantasy Novel

» Continued from page 38

cess, but a lot of times, I genuinely enjoy it and it's a good break from the work," Richter said.

Even though she had roughly a quarter of the plot planned out when she started writing, Richter still ran into tight spots trying to figure out where the plot would go as she wrote, which taught her about organization and planning out arcs.

"I've really grown as a writer doing this," Richter said. "It's been such an educational project."

She's currently working on a longer project planned as a duology or trilogy separate from the "Gift of the Fallen" world. It's expected to be about a disease spreading on a warfront with plotlines about overcoming government corruption and a military commander gaining the respect of his troops set in a 1500-1700s era fantasy world.

Although she has almost the whole story planned out chapter by chapter, Richter anticipates that she will be working on the project for at least two years.

"I want to make sure the plot is consistent throughout all of the books before I release any one of them," she said.

Paperback and e-book copies of "Gift of the Fallen" are available for purchase on Amazon. The Kindle version can also be read through Amazon's Kindle Unlimited subscription.



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A Moving Experience: Preparing For A Colonoscopy

By Ben Schwalb
Humor Columnist

This is a public service announcement. Starting at age 50, you should get a colonoscopy every 10 years. This will enable doctors to find undesirable things that lurk in the dark, such as polyps, cancer and Roger Stone. I will tell you about my experience so you can see that any idiot can do it.

The day before the procedure, I was instructed to drink an intestinal scrubber called MoviPrep. Within an hour, the first runnings started to appear. And believe me, “runnings” is the correct word. Let’s just say that BP and the Exxon Valdez had nothing on me. “OK, that’s that,” I thought. I flushed, washed, left the bathroom and — oh my God — ran right back in, sat down

and exploded. I swear that if I weighed just a few pounds less, I would have wound up in my attic. I couldn’t fathom how it was even possible for my body to spray at such impossible angles, but I was too busy unrolling toilet paper to think about it. After what seemed like a week and a half, I set about cleaning up. Let me give you some helpful advice. When

you drink MoviPrep, you will need the following items:

- An industrial vat of Formula 409
- 8,000 rolls of paper towels
- A copy of “War and Peace”

I don’t need to explain the first two items. The third is to give you something to do because you sure won’t be going anywhere for a while. I finished cleaning just in time for another Bouncing Betty, followed by small arms fire and a flamethrower. Eventually the agony ended and I got to clean up again.

Here’s some more advice that I highly suggest you follow when using MoviPrep:

- Cancel all social plans
- Notify next of kin
- Remove all clothing and dentures
- Turn on the bathroom fan and do not turn it off until Halley’s Comet returns

I had to get up early the next morning for another round of MoviPrep. Not having learned from the previous day’s experience, I flushed, washed and left, only to make a hasty return to the perch. A while later, the coast seemed clear, but this time I hadn’t even finished washing my hands when the urge to purge returned. The watery

discharge was accompanied by an intestinal symphony that sounded like a sink backing up. I had never gone to the bathroom in C minor before. Several hours later, a friend dropped me at the gastroenterologist. The secretary informed me that the doctor was running about an hour behind (tee hee) schedule. Eventually they brought me into the prep area where they checked my pulse and blood pressure and inserted an IV line. Then they wheeled me into the operating room where they had me lie on my side and the anesthesiologist injected a milky white fluid into the IV line that made me feel... Nothing. I was out for the entire procedure. The next thing I knew, a nurse was pushing on my belly. You see, in order to get a good view of your colon, they fill it with air. Well, that air has to come out. I hadn’t expelled so much air since my last trip to Mexico. So that’s it. That’s all there is to getting a colonoscopy: poop your brains out, go to sleep, and deflate yourself. Oh, and in case you’re wondering, my results were stellar. No polyps, no cancer, and no signs of Roger Stone. At least until the 2024 election.

Woods Church Wins Award



When Woods Church’s production of “The Secret Garden” ended in mid-March, music director Dave Merrill and his team earned a big accolade: a Theatre Bloomie. The award was designed to celebrate theatrical excellence based on execution of a show, the design and creative elements, and the overall experience. Amanda Gunther (right) presented a Theatre Bloomie to Merrill (left) during the closing night performance on March 17. The production included over 125 people, with 53 main-stage performers, a 17-person orchestra, and dozens of others lending their hands both in the choir and on the production and tech teams.

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Ballet Theatre Of Maryland Performs "Sleeping Beauty"



Ballet Theatre of Maryland (BTM) will present "Sleeping Beauty" from April 26-27 at Maryland Hall. This classic story of good versus evil brings some of ballet's most well-known scenes and dances together with a vibrant, family-friendly cast of storybook characters. This joyful production will conclude the company's 2023-2024 season.

Artistic Director Nicole Kelsch said, "The familiar story of 'Sleeping Beauty' makes it an incredible vehicle for the excellence and precision of classical dance. At every step of the story — whether it's the Lilac Fairy subverting Carabosse's wicked curse, Princess Aurora meeting her suitors and pricking her finger on a spindle, or Prince Florimund awakening her with true love's kiss — audience members will enjoy the grace and majesty of (Marius) Petipa's choreography."

The traditional staging of "Sleeping Beauty" has an international history. Based on a French fairytale, it was first staged in St. Petersburg in 1890 with the celebrated Tchaikovsky score. Its choreographer, Marius Petipa, brought the refinement of the French style to the grand spectacle of the Russian stage. Since then, it has been performed by ballet

companies all over the world.

Ballet Theatre of Maryland's rendition will honor this tradition and its most iconic moments. In the prologue, this includes the gifts of the fairies at Aurora's christening. As each fairy bestows the baby princess with a different virtue, they personify their gift in the dance they perform. At Aurora's 16th birthday, four suitors vie for the princess's hand in marriage in a pas de cinq (dance for five) known as the Rose Adagio. In the final act of the ballet, fairytale characters such as Puss in Boots and Little Red Riding Hood famously dance as guests at Aurora and Florimund's wedding.

Enjoy Ballet Theatre of Maryland's performances of "Sleeping Beauty" on April 26 at 7:30pm and April 27 at 1:00pm and 4:30pm. In-person tickets are on sale with discounts for seniors, military, students and children. For virtual audiences, tickets are \$33 per household. To purchase tickets or learn more, visit www.balletmaryland.org.

BTM cautions that www.balletmaryland.org and www.eventbrite.com are the only official websites for purchasing tickets to performances. Ballet Theatre of Maryland is not responsible for tickets purchased through unauthorized third parties.

Sherlock Holmes Fascination Continues With Local Group

» Continued from page 38

grief, you'd never invite him over for dinner! This kind of dynamic character development lends itself to wonderful, spirited discussions."

Michael Gallagher of Severna Park has been regularly meeting with the group for the past three years. "I really like Holmes' personality and his supernatural abilities (as a detective)," Gallagher said. "I also enjoy the Victorian London setting."

But it's the mysteries and the writing of Doyle that Gallagher appreciates the most. "Holmes wouldn't be so famous if it wasn't for the writing of Doyle," added Gallagher, talking about the complex and compelling character. "The fact that there are so many adaptations shows what a great character Holmes is. Everybody loves a good mystery, and generally in the end, the good guy usually wins."

Gallagher appreciates the closeness and diversity of the TNT group, noting that there is always good conversation. "You don't have to be an expert to participate," added Gallagher of the nonintimidating nature of the group. "If you're interested in Sherlock Holmes or Doyle, this group is a great way to learn more."

Whitall, who teaches three sections of Sherlock Holmes courses at Anne Arundel Community College (AACC), said that group members come from as far as the Eastern Shore and Laurel.

Richard Honafous, a Severna Park "Sherlockian" resident, joined the group a few years ago after taking one of Whitall's classes at AACC.

"Sherlock Holmes is such a well-developed character that he often outshines the author," said Honafous of Holmes' larger-than-life persona. "Doyle was a brilliant writer who we lose sight of behind his most famous character."

Whitall added, "Doyle was a prolific writer, but he didn't like Sherlock Holmes! Doyle was a brilliant man and is credited with creating new genres of writing like crime, mystery and science fiction. As his life went on, he hated Sherlock Holmes more and more because he took his other writings more seriously. Despite Sherlock Holmes' popularity, Doyle wanted to concentrate on what he considered to be more serious, good, heavy literature."

Whitall and the group try to stay up on the stage and screen adaptations of Sherlock Holmes stories and discuss



Photo by Judy Tacyn

Over the years, Lynn Whitall has collected or been gifted Bearlock Holmes, a Sherlock Holmes dog chew toy, and Sherlock nesting dolls.

them during their meetings.

TNT is always accepting new members. Whitall added, "Come for the stories, but stay for the people. This is

a nice group of people."

To learn more about the local Society of the Naval Treaty (TNT), contact Whitall at lwhitall@comcast.net.

“What Storm, What Thunder” Is 2024 One Maryland One Book Selection

Maryland Humanities has selected “What Storm, What Thunder” by Myriam J.A. Chancy for the 2024 One Maryland One Book program.

The Haitian-Canadian-American author’s novel follows a cast of characters during the 2010 earthquake that struck Haiti. They realize that everything they thought was certain suddenly isn’t, as they endure the chaos of a natural disaster. Readers witness an architect, a water-bottling executive, a drug trafficker, an immigrant cab driver and others in scenes before, after and during the earthquake.

“What Storm, What Thunder” made the shortlist for the Aspen Words Literary Prize and the longlist for the OCM Bocas Prize for Caribbean Literature. Chancy’s 2010 novel “The Loneliness of Angels” also made the latter list.

Maryland Humanities will announce details on the tour this summer and a calendar of free public events, including an author tour, will be available online beginning this summer.

A selection committee consisting of 18 Marylanders — including teachers, scholars, librarians, writers, booksellers and community workers representing 10 counties and Baltimore City — chose the novel for One Maryland One Book. A public call for books under the

theme of “restorative futures” garnered nearly 250 titles, from which the committee made their selection.

“The novel takes its title in part from an epigraph by Frederick Douglass,” said Chancy, “himself from the Baltimore area, writing in his essay, ‘What to the Negro is the Fourth of the July?’ in 1852: ‘For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder. We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.’ Of course, Douglass was not calling for disaster but for seismic change in America’s social order in ways that I believe the reality of the earthquake called for in the Haitian context in more recent years.”

Chancy added, “It is not lost on me that Maryland has been home to many people from what was once called Saint Domingue, from the period of the Haitian Revolution to Douglass’s appointment as U.S. ambassador to Haiti from 1889-1890, to the more recent influx of Haitian (immigrants).”

Maryland Humanities CEO Lindsey Baker said, “This year’s One Maryland One Book theme feels important and timely. I’m looking forward to seeing what resonates with Marylanders about ‘What Storm, What Thunder’ and the amazing programming I know our partners will come up with.”

Hatton-Regester Green Spring Concert Series



The spring concert series will open with a performance by Guava Jelly, featuring (l-r) Bridgette Michaels and Dawn Madak.

The Friends of Anne Arundel County Trails organization has planned the following concert series at Hatton-Regester Green, located at the intersection of Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard and Evergreen Road in Severna Park. Concerts are provided through a grant from the Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks. All concerts are from 4:00pm-6:00pm and are weather dependent.

May 5 — Guava Jelly

An Annapolis-based group, Gua-

va Jelly has been weaving reggae vibes into their music for over 15 years.

May 12 — Josette and Bill

Josette and Bill play live acoustic music covering a variety of genres and decades.

May 19 — Incidental Brass

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Dental Hygienist Bids Adieu To 50-Year Career

By Lauren Cowin

For more than 50 years, patients at Severna Park Family and Cosmetic Dentistry have sat in hygienist George Albergo's chair, where their semi-annual teeth cleanings have also been opportunities to catch up on life.

"You won't believe the conversations I have, and it has nothing to do with dentistry; it has to do with people," Albergo said. "This is way more than teeth."

Albergo will retire on May 3 after a career that was spent almost entirely at one dental practice.

The son of Italian immigrants, Albergo attended the Medical College of Virginia in Richmond, where in 1973, he was the only male in his graduating class of 15 hygienists.

Upon graduation, Albergo returned home to Edgewater, Maryland. He had a summer job lined up working at a boatyard and ended up helping out at his own dentist's office, as well.

"Back then, there weren't (many) hygienists ... in fact, my license number is 967; it's over 6,000 now," he said. Albergo stepped in for a hygienist who was on leave in the summer of 1973.

The move proved to be a fortuitous



Left: George Albergo was the only male in his college graduating class. It would be another 10 years before the school had another male hygiene student. **Below:** Albergo will retire after a 50-year career as a dental hygienist.



one. Grateful for his help that summer, the office manager put Albergo in touch with Dr. Richard Cheskis in Severna Park. On October 1, 1973, Albergo began his new job, where he has remained a steadfast presence.

When Cheskis retired and handed the baton to Dr. Alison Wright, she

had the built-in bonus of a hygienist who brought a wealth of first-hand knowledge about and personal relationships with their patients.

Wright described Albergo as "the cornerstone of the office," adding that "the fact that he's seen generations of families is huge."

In the office, Albergo is known for wearing many hats. In addition to being a hygienist, he owns a lab and has done dental repair for patients as they sit in the waiting room. He's also "the guy" for any necessary

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BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Woman-Owned Apparel Brands Offer Athletic, Travel Friendly Attire Made In USA

Southwind

By Meredith Winter

Playful prints, sun-smart material and breathability are just some of the distinguishing qualities of Southwind Apparel and Spunkwear. The two woman-owned brands offer extensive lines of athleticwear and dresses designed with on-the-go women in mind.

Severna Park resident Christine Maly is owner and CEO of the brands, which are headquartered on Kent Island. She explained that Spunkwear is the original product line featuring "sporty, stylish and spunky" clothing that is also comfortable and versatile enough to be worn on the playing field or along the sidelines. A little more "athleisure," the brand is performance-driven and can be found at the Kent Island warehouse and online. Southwind Apparel was created six years ago and includes all of the latest styles and prints spanning dresses to skorts that are available on Kent Island, at local retail partner stores and online.

Maly is proud that her product is made in the USA, not far from Maryland. Every article of clothing is fashioned from a nylon/spandex material that is also used in swimwear, making them comfort-



Severna Park resident Christine Maly, pictured wearing her product, is the owner and CEO of USA-made athletic women's clothing brands Spunkwear and Southwind Apparel, which are headquartered on Kent Island.

able, wrinkle resistant and chlorine resistant. "We have a lot of customers who wear our product for boating because it's great, it dries super fast, it holds up really well, and it's all UPF50 (Ultraviolet Protection Factor 50), so it's great for the sun," Maly said.

She also noted, "We're really known for three

things across the brands — our prints, our great fabric because it's super comfortable and easy to travel, and our fit."

All Southwind and Spunkwear clothing is multi-functional, including the many colorfully patterned styles of dresses that are appropriate for everything from girls' night out to casual weddings. Southwind offers three skorts of varying lengths designed for golf, tennis and pickleball. The brand also offers several styles of pants, tops, leggings and accessories.

"Women are busy. They're wearing multiple hats, they're doing multiple things — whether they're busy raising a family, working a full-time job, even if they're empty nesters, they still have a lot of things they are doing and they're taking care of," Maly said. "My goal is to create some product that encourages them to go out and pursue whatever (their) passion is."

New styles will be released later this spring, including a mommy-and-me line that will launch closer to Mother's Day and the brand's first items for men, polos and hooded pullovers, that will be available in time for Father's Day.

Maly, her husband Nick — who serves as the company's chief operating officer — their teenage daughter and their dog, Winnie, have made their home in Severna Park. As a family, they enjoy being outdoors and on the water, whether that be boating, fishing or paddleboarding.

Maly has built her career around the apparel and footwear industry, which she studied in college. She began working for small, family-owned businesses before a stint with major brands including Adidas

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Please give a warm welcome to our newest members and enjoy reading about all the small businesses that make our community the best place to live! Find them in our directory at www.gspacc.com.

Sizar Wellness – Sizar Wellness is dedicated to elevating your life expectancy and empowering you to prevent and detect disease states before they arise. This business offers the latest technologies including genetic, cognitive and VO₂ Max (maximal oxygen consumption) testing, hyperbaric oxygen, and infrared sauna treatments, and can work with you to create personalized nutrition, exercise, sleep and longevity plans. Dr. Sizar is also a member of the International Lyme and Associated Diseases Society. (www.sizarwellness.com)

Barks Road Landscape Architecture (new silver member) – Founder Eric Blamphin has a degree in landscape architecture, over 30 years of experience in the industry, and has been licensed in Maryland since 1996. Barks Road Landscape Architecture is passionate about creating timeless and sustainable outdoor spaces through land-

scape design, planning, installation and management services. The team believes each homeowner can have a truly special oasis whether intimate or spacious, elegant or modern, classic or contemporary. (www.barksroad.com)

Bernie's Boat Storage – This business offers safe and secure boat, trailer and RV storage in Arnold.

Optavia – Its motto is “Lifelong Transformation, One Healthy Habit at a Time.” Starting with weight loss, this often leads to all kinds of breakthroughs for health (body, mind and finances). Jennifer's story: She was obese for over 20 years and diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS). After trying many other programs and nearly giving up, she lost more than 50 pounds despite MS and no exercise with the Optavia Habits of Health Transformational System. (www.coachfreeland.optavia.com/coachfreeland)

In My Defense LLC – In My Defense (IMD LLC) is a veteran-owned company offering awareness, avoidance, combative skills, firearms and emergency medical training to give you options when you or your family are attacked or facing an emergency medical situation and “you are all you have.” (inmydefensellc.com)

The Wright Team of Coldwell Banker – With over 70 years of combined experience in the industry and superior local real estate knowledge, the Wright Team specializes in historic homes, new construction projects, marketing homes to sell and assisting buyers to identify homes to purchase in the local area. (www.thewrightteam-homesofannapolis.com)

We held three ribbon-cutting celebrations this month. The first was the grand opening of **Coastal Kitchen + Bath** in Severna Park. They provide expert remodeling services, and they offer handmade rivertops and exotic wood tops for a custom and unique look.

Next, we held a ribbon-cutting for the launch of the **Severna Park Community Center's** new website and remodeled facilities. It was a packed house, and tours were given following a presentation. The community center is indeed a place to “gather, play, grow and thrive.”

The last celebration of the month was the grand opening of **Be The Change, the Healing Collective**. Owner Cheryl Pace, who also owns the popular **Change Your Pace Therapeutic Massage**, has created a beautiful environment for wellness practitioners to offer classes, events and more.

Our Wellness Business Connections group held its monthly meeting at the **Jing Ying Institute of Kung Fu & Tai Chi**. We were treated to a mini demo of tai chi, a wonderful movement-based activity to relieve stress. Many thanks to Nancy and Billy Greer for their hospitality.

Our Successful Women in Business “First Cup Club” enjoyed a delicious breakfast and great networking at **Eco Adventures in Millersville**. We were surrounded by a rainforest and animals. Owners Mei Len and Dr. Brady Barr are marine biologists, and Dr. Barr had a TV program with National Geographic for 20 years. Eco

Adventures offers camps, educational series and classes, and hosts field trips. Adults can rent space as well. Eco Adventures even hosted a wedding at its amazing facility.

Mark your calendars for our Spring Shop Local Fun Festival on May 4 from 11:00am–3:00pm at Park Plaza! We are so excited to have over 60 exhibitors, food, music and fun for the whole family. Our gold sponsors are **Jing Ying Institute of Kung Fu & Tai Chi, Landmark Roofing, SERVPRO Annapolis/Severna Park** and **Kogen Dojo**. Silver sponsors are **Griswold Home Care** and **Kwon's Taekwondo**. Bronze sponsors are **Mosquito Squad of Annapolis, Severna Park Community Center, LogoZone Promotions** and **Delegate Heather Bagnall**.

Registration is open for our Independence Day parade, to be held on Thursday, July 4, from 10:00am–noon in Severna Park. We will again offer a \$500 prize in three categories — Best Overall, Best Theme and Most Patriotic. We encourage communities to gather their teams and start building their floats!

The grand marshal of the parade is Dr. Dawn Lindsay, president of Anne Arundel Community College. Lindsay has dedicated more than 30 years to the community college system. We are so honored that she accepted our offer to participate in the parade.

For more information about the chamber and our events, visit www.gspacc.com. As always, remember to shop local and support our small businesses!

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Dental Hygienist Bids Adieu To 50-Year Career

» Continued from page 50

office maintenance. He attributes his handyman skills to his time working at the boatyard as a young man.

“He's got a tool for everything,” said Dr. Stacey Russell, who joined the practice in 1995, after more than a decade spent as a patient there.

Albergo's proverbial tool belt apparently includes career consulting, as well.

After Russell graduated from dental school, her mom, also a patient, mentioned to the hygienist that Russell hoped to practice there. Albergo set up a meeting with Cheskis, and the rest is history.

Russell is not the only one whose career was impacted by her time in Albergo's chair. One young man, who had been a patient since he was a toddler, was advised by his dental hygienist to try his hand at being an elevator mechanic.

Albergo was delighted when he received the update that his recommendation was pursued, and his hunch was right — the field was a fit.

This particular young man is the grandson of a couple who are

longtime patients of Albergo. He's come to be such a fixture in their lives, he was even invited to their 50th wedding anniversary, and he proudly displays a photo of the occasion in his office.

“Every time they come in, I get giddy. They're a blast,” Albergo said of the multi-generational family.

Just as the practice has found ideal fits to take over for retiring dentists, allowing for seamless shifts over the years from doctors Cheskis, Hooper, Schatz and Russell to its current lineup of doctors Russell, Deasey, Wright and Zitofsky, a new hygienist will begin a few days after Albergo leaves.

“This is long-term successful because it's like family,” Albergo said of the small dental practice.

As for his retirement, Albergo looks forward to more time with his wife and traveling. He will also continue to be a presence in the office with his lab business, working on dental repairs, setups and the like.

Severna Park Family and Cosmetic Dentistry is located at 22 Truck House Road, Suite 3. The team can be reached at 410-647-4269 or www.thetoothplace.com.

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Avoid Election Hype To Help Protect Your Finances

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The stage is set for another Biden-Trump showdown in the 2024 U.S. presidential election. While there might be mixed reactions about the rematch itself, there is some concern among investors about what will happen with the stock market. Over half of surveyed investors say they're worried the presidential election may impact the performance of their portfolios.

Some of this stock market fear can be attributed to news headlines touting market mayhem, which can cause emotions to cloud people's financial decisions. Fortunately, much of the nervousness about the stock market in an election year is misplaced because historical trends show a different reality.

History Provides A Positive Market Outlook

Contrary to popular belief about markets being down during election years, historical data shows markets have actually risen during presidential election years, with the S&P 500 recording positive returns in 83% of the 24 election years since 1928. So,

while election years create economic uncertainties, history is on our side when it comes to the stock market. The bottom line is that as an investor, you should approach an election year much like any other year. If the stock market dips, don't allow fear to cause you to pull out of your investments. Conversely, don't jump the gun and buy in as soon as the market rises.

Market Performance Is Not Contingent Upon The Party In Power

Think about how many times during an election year you've heard statements like, "This is the most important election ever," or "Democracy is on the ballot!" Investors often think market performance depends on whether a Democrat or Republican wins the election. They'll point out that the average return during election years from 1928-2016 was 15.3% when a Republican was elected and only 7.6% when a Democrat took office. However, this doesn't take into account that the average return was 11.28% across all of those election years. Who gets elected and how it will impact the market is mostly noise because the reality is the candidates themselves have little direct influence on the markets.

Policies Have More Impact Than Presidents

Investors must understand that

enacted policies have more market influence than the candidates themselves, and it's the decisions candidates make about specific industries that create shifts in the market. For example, former President Donald Trump is big on import tariffs, tax cuts and strengthening the U.S. military, while President Joe Biden is focused on student loan forgiveness, green energy tax cuts and limitations on how businesses impose fees on customers. Investors need to pay attention to significant policy changes and not just election results.

Navigating The Road Ahead

Even if you're not an investor, pay attention to the policies each candidate is proposing and how they may affect your finances. Don't hesitate to seek help from a financial professional if you feel you don't have a solid grip on your money. My biggest advice to investors? There's no need to fear what will happen with the market based on the outcome of the election. Regardless of who wins, you need an investment strategy that works for your unique situation. As you're working with your financial advisor to adjust your investment portfolio, be mindful of the language they use about the election. Remember that a good financial advisor who has your objectives and goals at heart will not allow partisan bias to influence how they advise you.

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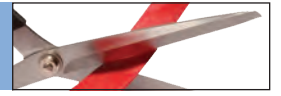
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RIBBON CUTTINGS



Community Center Shows Off Updated Facilities

During a ribbon-cutting ceremony in March, Severna Park Community Center Executive Director Sarah Elder showed off the newly renovated locker room and dance studios. The Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce, along with community officials, joined Elder for the celebration.



Be The Change Healing Collective Holds Grand Opening

Cheryl Pace invited the community to a grand opening for Be The Change, The Healing Collective in March. The new wellness studio is designed to encourage individuals to embrace positive transformation, reclaim their inner power, and live a life filled with balance and well-being. Be The Change, The Healing Collective is located at 844 Ritchie Highway, Suite 105, in Severna Park.

Pasadena Wine + Spirits Uncorks New Concept

Wines, beers and spirits from around the world are all in stock at Pasadena Wine + Spirits, a new liquor store at 8150 Ritchie Highway. The Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting on April 6 to celebrate the occasion, tour the store and see the walk-in cigar humidor.



Joseph Powanda Promoted To Wealth Advisor

Bay Point Wealth has promoted certified financial planner Joseph Powanda to the position of wealth advisor. This advancement reflects Powanda's unwavering dedication to professional growth and development.

"I am honored to accept this promotion and am excited to deliver comprehensive wealth management to our clients while continuing to grow professionally," Powanda said. "I am grateful to work alongside the world-class team at Bay Point."

Powanda began his journey with Bay Point in May 2021 as an associate advisor, committed to honing his skills and expertise. In just over a year, he successfully passed the rigorous CFP certification examination to become a certified financial planner professional. Currently, Powanda is pursuing his certified private wealth advisor (CPWA) designation to further expand his expertise in addressing the unique and complex needs of ultra-high-net-worth individuals and other sophisticated investors.

Bill Hufnell, founder and principal of Bay Point

Wealth, expressed his admiration for Powanda's contributions, stating, "Joe is a valuable member of our team. His steadfast dedication and passion for professional advancement truly shine through in his commitment to assisting our clients in realizing their financial aspirations."

Bay Point Wealth offers personalized services tailored to executives, entrepreneurs and business owners. The team is comprised of advisors who are all members of NAPFA and hold the CFP certification, which ensures that they have the knowledge and experience to provide high-quality, independent financial advice to their clients. The team's expertise in various areas such as cash flow management, tax planning, insurance planning, retirement planning, and estate planning helps clients achieve their financial goals and take control of their financial future.

Bay Point Wealth operates as a fiduciary, prioritizing the best interests of its clients above all else. For more information about Bay Point Wealth and its comprehensive range of services, visit www.baypointwealth.com.

Woman-Owned Apparel

» Continued from page 50

and Under Armour. When she knew it was time to return to her small-business roots, she acquired the Southwind brands. Today, in addition to running the day-to-day operations of the business, Maly personally gets involved in designing the clothing as well.

Through her brands, Maly and her small staff team give back to the community by supporting area women's shelters and donating to local charities throughout the year.

Southwind Apparel has found a home with East Coast retailers from Maine to Florida, and locally can be purchased at The Cottage in Severna Park or Annapolis, as well as the Midshipmen Store in Annapolis and The Painted Cottage in Edgewater. Both apparel lines are also available online.

The Kent Island warehouse is open to customers Monday-Friday from 9:00am-4:00pm and is located at 235 N Log Canoe Circle in Stevensville. To learn more about or shop the brands, go to www.southwindapparel.com or www.spunkwear.com.

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