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AUGUST 2024

Hall Of Fame Judo Instructor Keeps Moving

By Judy Tacyn

At 88 years young, Edwin Takemori, highly accomplished in the judo discipline, is still an active judo instructor. Takemori, who earned his first black belt in 1957, is currently sensei of United States Naval Academy Judo Club, and in April at the United States Judo Federation's 2024 Hall of Fame and Lifetime Achievement Awards banquet in Herndon, Virginia, Takemori accepted his HOF induction and achievement award.

Takemori began his judo journey as a young boy. His elder brother of 10 years, James Takemori, was competing and teaching judo and felt that the discipline was imperative for a successful and meaningful life. Following the younger Takemori's move to the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, his prolific judo career took off in the early 1950s at the Washington Judo Club, a club founded by his elder brother in the 1940s.

"My brother was not only highly skilled in judo, but he was a decorated World War II veteran. I looked up to him," said Takemori of his brother, who died at age 89 in 2015 following an extensive and impressive list of military and judo accomplishments. "I am the kind of instructor that I am because of how he

» **Continued on page 4**

SIGNING OFF

Severna Park's
Mark Viviano
Retires
From Sports
Broadcasting
To Be With
Family, Serve
Community

By Meredith Winter

"I will be signing off with my WJZ family on July the 18th, and this is going to give me the time that I need to be with my family at home, and time to devote to God's calling to all of us to help those in need in our community and to help lead and mentor our young people, and to do it with faith, hope and charity."

Severna Park resident Mark Viviano shared these words with his social media followers on July 1 as he announced his decision to retire from his role as WJZ-TV's sports director following a 40-year career in broadcasting.

Viviano grew up in St. Louis, Missouri, with two brothers and two sisters in



Photo by Meredith Winter

Severna Park resident Mark Viviano retired from his longtime post as WJZ sports director on July 18 to spend more time with his wife, Megan, and their two sons, Christian and Michael, and to focus on helping those in need.

a "very sports-oriented family." Their father coached their Little League teams, and Viviano aspired to be a professional baseball or basketball player from a young age. He admits he wasn't proficient enough to seriously consider either, but he realized he could stay close to the action as a sportscaster and earned a degree in broadcast journalism from the University of Missouri School of Journalism.

His career began before he received his diploma. Viviano worked as a news

reporter and weekend sports anchor for the university's commercial television station during his senior year and landed a sports job in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, after he graduated. From there, his journey in sports broadcasting took him to Dayton, Ohio, before bringing him to Maryland. Viviano worked for WBAL for five and a half years, then for CNN in Atlanta for two and a half years, before ultimately landing back in Baltimore at WJZ in 2002.

» **Continued on page 11**

Setting Sail For Cancer

By Margaret Bates

"Honoring those being challenged by cancer by harnessing the healing powers of wind, water and sail." This is the mission of Sail Beyond Cancer Annapolis (SBCA),

a nonprofit organization dedicated to putting the winds back in the sails of cancer patients throughout Anne Arundel County.

"Sail Beyond Cancer offers boat rides, completely free of charge, to cancer patients — a brief respite from their struggles, where they can relax and spend time with loved ones out on the open water," said Suzanne Snyder, interim executive director of Sail Beyond Cancer Annapolis. "On this ride, for just a while, they take the helm and control their destiny."

As a cancer survivor, Snyder aspires to help others with their struggle.

"Sail Beyond Cancer was started in Burlington, Vermont, in 2014 with our

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Severna Park resident Jim Snider was nominated by his son for a trip with Sail Beyond Cancer Annapolis after his cancer returned.

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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.

Kasey Turnock Builds Baseball Bridges Across The County

By Judy Tacyn

As a freshman on Severna Park High School's 2022 junior varsity baseball team, Kasey Turnock was able to participate in Opening Day for Anne Arundel County's Challenger Baseball. That experience was so powerful for Kasey that he has continued to volunteer with the program.

On June 8, at a season-ending celebration, Terri Hamrick-Oeschger, Challenger Baseball program coordinator and coach, presented Kasey with the Making A Difference Award for his season-long dedication to the program, including coordinating a special day of play between the adaptive players and middle-school-aged travel baseball teams.

Completely designed and managed by Kasey, a special day of play took place on June 1 at Lake Waterford's adaptive ballpark, Freedom Field, between the Challenger athletes and travel teams from the Greater Severna Park Athletic Association's Green Hornets baseball program and Rawlings A's Prospects.

"I remembered how great it felt as a freshman to play with the Challenger players at their Opening Day. I wanted other young players to experience that," Kasey said. "The Challenger baseball players were so happy to play and talk with us. I knew from their smiles that we were making a difference in their lives. That felt really good."

He reached out to Michael Phillips, Green Hornets baseball commissioner, and several travel teams to create the fun-filled event.

"Kasey did a phenomenal job communicating and coordinating this opportunity," said Green Hornets 14U baseball coach Dan Smulow. "He took the time to talk to our players about the Challenger program. The experience taught my players that baseball is more than a game. As a coach, I was thrilled to see everybody playing the game we love with the entire focus on making new friends and having fun rather than an outcome on a scoreboard."

Smulow added that he greatly appreciated the opportunity and believed he and his team benefited more from the experience than the Challenger players.



Student-athlete Kasey Turnock accepted the Making A Difference Award from Terri Hamrick-Oeschger, the Anne Arundel County Recreation and Parks Challenger Baseball program director.

He plans to participate in future Challenger events.

Heidi Hostelli's son Brock has been a Challenger player for four years, two seasons a year.

"I think it's great that the Green Hornets take part in Challenger Baseball because the kids feel like they are part of a larger community," Hostelli said. "Our kids are part of baseball, not just Challenger Baseball. When the Green Hornets athletes play with them, it gives our kids a sense of normalcy in this crazy world we live in."

Guy Taylor is an adaptive player who graduated from Severna Park High School, where he played unified bocci, tennis and bowling. He said he "loves to play with" the Severna Park players. "They are fun (and) teach some things about baseball, but really, it's just fun to have more people to play with."

Kasey, a rising senior at Severna Park High School who plans to study sports management in college, has volunteered with Challenger Baseball since his experience as a freshman. He plans to continue to volunteer during his senior year and during his college breaks. Future events with county travel baseball teams are already in the works.

"Kasey's idea and coordination of this event was just tremendous," said Kevin Lyons, Green Hornets 15U travel baseball coach. "We will definitely partici-

pate again. It was very rewarding ... just a great day for everyone involved."

Although Challenger Baseball has been in Anne Arundel County for two decades, many people, including those in other baseball programs like Green Hornets, don't know about the program. Hamrick-Oeschger said that when young people like Kasey take an extra step to make a difference, they are helping the program spread its wings and reach more people, and she is grateful.

Kasey volunteered two days a week throughout the Challenger season. He also proudly accompanied the teams during Little League Day at Oriole Park at Camden Yards when players and coaches walked around the warning track in their team uniforms and were cheered on by Orioles players and coaches.

Other Severna Park players have also gotten involved. Earlier this year, SPSHS seniors Samuel Cook and Daniel Lynn led a team of fellow students to raise awareness and funds for the organization Challenger Baseball as part of the high school's Leadership Institute. The project raised funds, collected equipment and created more than 40 supportive cards for Challenger Baseball.

"I am not surprised that Kasey stepped up and got involved in Challenger Baseball," said Dave Ferris, a former Severna Park High School junior varsity head baseball coach who first introduced Kasey and his teammates (including Lynn) to adaptive sports at Challenger Baseball Opening Day events attended by Ferris' teams. "Opening Day is emotional. It's a lot of fun, for me and for the players. Kasey immediately approached me and asked for (Hamrick-Oeschger's) contact information because he wanted to do more, get more involved."

"I am not surprised at all that Kasey, and other high school players including Daniel (Lynn), were moved by participating in the Challenger Baseball program Opening Day and continue to be involved," Ferris added. "These young men are going to be great leaders in the community long after their playing days are over."



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Preparing The Next Generation Of Sailors

By Ed Tracey and Grace O'Brien
Magothy River Sailing Association

One of the bylaws of the Magothy River Sailing Association (MRSA) directs us to "participate in the training of juniors ... in the skills of sailing and seamanship." We have done this for 24 years through our junior training program, and we're pleased to say that we made it back on the water for a third year after COVID!

Thirty sailors ages 9 to 16, many with no previous sailing experience, participated in the two-week training program

we ran in conjunction with the Grachur Club, which has graciously partnered with us through the years. The combination of our boats and their incredible waterfront location made this a memorable experience for the junior sailors.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to John Fales, president of Grachur, along with the following club members: the fleet captain of junior training, Grace O'Brien, and fleet master Shep Drain. With their help, we can now say that 30 more aspiring sailors have increased their water safety and

sailing skills.

It's never too late to plan for next summer. If you want to learn more, visit www.magothysailing.org/junior-training. MRSA and Grachur members are eligible for discounted registration. We are also looking for a new fleet captain - junior training for 2025. The ideal candidate will have some sailing skills with experience instructing while also being organized and able to manage others. For more information on the position, reach out to our commodore, Ed Tracey, at commodore@magothysailing.org.

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David is peerless as the top-selling agent in Severna Park, Arnold and Anne Arundel County since 2013 in total sales. With 284 FIVE-STAR reviews, it is understandable why David's leading source of business is referrals and word of mouth marketing.

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Instructor Earns USA Judo Hall Of Fame Honors

» Continued from page 1

taught me to mentor,” Takemori added, recalling his brother’s seven-day-a-week practices and rigorous physical training, a practice he tries to maintain even now in his late 80s.

Takemori’s competitive career lasted from 1955 to 1980, but his greatest achievement may be his dedication to passing his extraordinary skill and talent to the world.

“Look, competing is great and, of course, you learn something from the experience,” said Takemori, who participated in the 1964 Olympic trials, “but competing is for yourself. What do you have when your competing days are over? My knowledge isn’t my own. It’s my duty to pass what I’ve learned on to others. Getting better, doing better every day, is what is most important.”

Of the many skills he’s mastered, the Ashi-Harai technique (how to safely

throw a competitor) is one that led him to his wife of 62 years, Alice. A judo student in the Baltimore Judo Club, Alice was sent to the Washington Judo Club to learn the technique from Takemori. After a judo-related injury in 1959, Alice needed to further her instruction with a teacher who was skilled in sacrificial throws, so as not to be reinjured. Takemori became her man, on and off the mat.

“None of the men in my club wanted to throw a ‘girl,’ especially one with an injury,” Alice said with a laugh as she recalled their meeting. “Edwin didn’t have any problem doing that!”

In 1963, he opened his first judo club, the Goddard Judo Club, which would be the first of six he would go on to form. In 2001, he took over as the head coach of the United States Naval Academy Judo Club, a role he still holds today.

Although Takemori has earned numer-

ous awards and accolades throughout his nearly life-long judo career, it’s his instructor and mentor roles he cherishes the most. He was a longtime referee and current member of the Shufu Board of Examiners and Board of Directors, a branch of the U.S. Judo Federation charged with maintaining and supporting the rules and standards of judo. Today, he still gets invited to watch judo matches to critique referees. His expertise as a referee earned him the title national referee emeritus.

“Being a referee made me a better competitor and a better instructor,” Takemori said. “Being experienced in all areas makes for a better judo person.”

Takemori has no plans to stop instructing judo. “They are going to have to pull me off the mat,” the senior expert said resolutely. “Every day, we can get better. Every day is a chance to learn something and be a better judo person. I



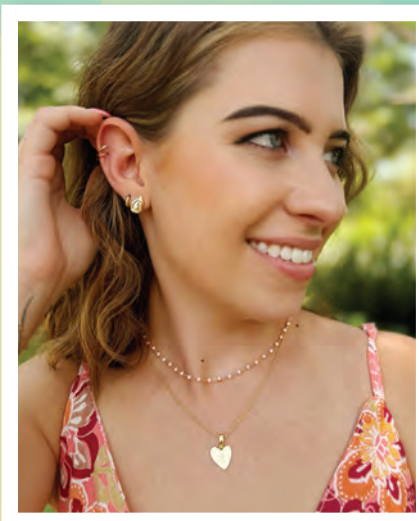
Photo courtesy of Roy Nanjo

Edwin Takemori accepted his Hall of Fame and Lifetime Achievement Award from the United States Judo Federation (USJF).

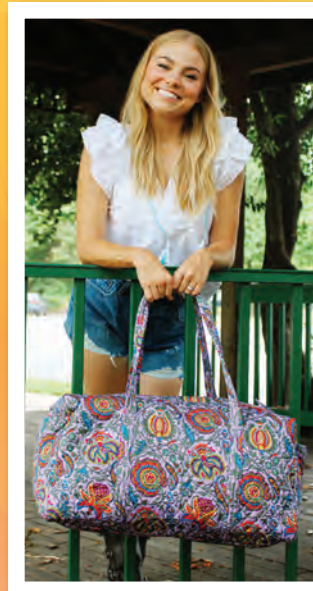
cannot take this (experience and knowledge) with me. I have to pass it on.”

To learn more about judo and Edwin Takemori’s career, or to find a judo club, visit www.usjf.com.

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At Age 93, Bowler Lynn Davis Keeps Rolling

By Sharon Mager

The Tuesday Afternoon Ladies League (TALL) at Severna Park Lanes is a mix of mostly retired women from all walks of life, but don't be fooled. Some of these ladies are high rollers.

Every few weeks, someone hits a 200-plus game, and many women carry high averages. There are always cheers when someone picks up a split or a tough spare. Some women bowl in multiple leagues, and some have bowled for decades. Lynn Webber began bowling in 1959 when The Platters were singing "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes." She turned 93 last November, and she keeps on going.

Lynn began bowling when she and her husband, Richard "Dick" Webber (ironically not the famous bowler of the same name), lived in Michigan, and Dick was employed at Bendix while working on his graduate degree at the University of Michigan.

A group of wives from Bendix invited Lynn to join a bowling league.

"I told them, 'I can't do that; I have five small children.' They said, 'We have a free babysitter who is wonderful.' It didn't take me long to say yes," Lynn said with a laugh.

"In those days, we bowled for \$2 and got free coffee, and I took my five children with me to bowl," she continued. "The lanes were on the second floor of a store, so I was carrying a port-a-crib and a diaper bag and getting five kids up a steep set of stairs. Fortunately,



Lynn Davis (front center) bowls on the Tuesday Afternoon Ladies League. Lynn's daughter Kerri (front right) is the team secretary.

the next year, they built a new bowling alley on the ground floor."

Dick and Lynn moved to Maryland in 1971, and she began bowling at Severna Park Lanes in a "newcomers" league. Lynn was fully invested in the sport. She served a term as vice president of Maryland's bowling association and represented the state in national competitions.

"We used to go to a national tournament once a year," she said. "They were looking for a delegate to go, and the meeting was in Denver. I had graduated from high school in Denver, so it was a chance to go back. I said I'd go."

From there, Lynn traveled to various

places throughout the United States — Los Angeles, Seattle, Las Vegas, New Orleans and Reno.

She has bowled in multiple leagues. Just a few years ago, she bowled on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Friday nights at Severna Park Lanes. Her highest score was 246, and her highest average was 171, but she said she mostly stayed in the 160 range.

When asked about bowling highlights over the years, Lynn immediately said, "Friendships. It has been the friendships." She also enjoyed the travel.

Regarding TALL, Lynn said it's like a family, and it's unique. The ladies

celebrate birthdays each month, have carry-in lunches for holidays, and, of course, hold an awards banquet. They support one another in times of sickness or a family death. And they even sing together. When oldies music plays, the ladies sometimes dance or sing. Several of them love singing together for "Downtown" by Petula Clark.

Lynn is loved and respected by the league's bowlers.

"Lynn is like the Energizer Bunny," said league secretary Mary Kay Heath. "She keeps going and going. She is an amazing woman!"

TALL President Dani Johnson said, "Lynn has changed her delivery to accommodate her age change, but what hasn't changed is her ability to make some fantastic shots. We're always amazed at the curve her ball takes, yet she gets it right where it needs to be."

Johnson said she and her mother joined the league in 2008 and found Lynn to be welcoming and kind. Johnson's mom was a bit younger than Lynn and enjoyed trying to keep pace with her. "Lynn always spent time with her each week, giving Mom much pleasure," Johnson said.

Lynn continues to buoy those around her. "Lynn is always ready with a caring or encouraging word for all of us, and she's here every week!" Johnson said. "How inspirational is that?"

The league starts for the new season on August 27. Call Severna Park Lanes at 410-647-0811 for more information.

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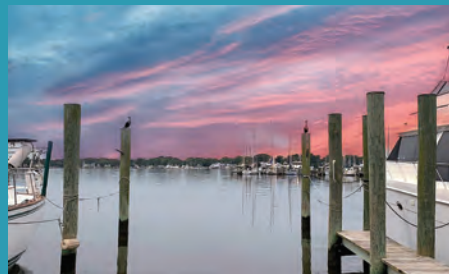
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Setting Sail For Cancer

» Continued from page 1

first cancer mission sails offered in the summer of 2014," she said. "Since then, we have changed the name and have added two more chapters: Sail Beyond Cancer North Shore, Massachusetts, and Sail Beyond Cancer Annapolis."

SBCA provides three-hour private respite sails for cancer patients and their loved ones.

"The sails are kept short to accommodate the needs of cancer patients," Snyder said. "And if they start to feel bad at any point, we turn the boat around."

Although brief, these rides are packed with enough memories, warmth and relaxation to last a lifetime.

"We invite the cancer patients to bring friends and family members, allowing them to share the experience as they sail, talk, bond, de-stress and take pictures," Snyder said. "Cancer, after all, affects not only the patient but their family and friends as well. Here, everyone gets a respite."

Anyone in treatment for any type of cancer, regardless of their age, income or other life circumstances, is eligible to sail with SBCA.

And those who sail appreciate the ride.

"Words cannot express how thankful we are that we were given this opportunity. Living through cancer a second time, I have learned to appreciate and value every single moment in life as we are not guaranteed the next," wrote Brittney, a breast cancer patient, in a testimonial submitted to Sail Beyond Cancer. "Thank you for giving me those moments; we could not have asked for a better day. God bless you in all that you do."

The SBCA Annapolis chapter was founded in 2022. It is nearly an all-volunteer organization with more than 72 individual volunteers — a team that features 38 captain and crew members. This 501(c)3 is led by a board of three individuals and an executive director.

During its first season in 2022, SCBA Annapolis provided 27 sails to 130 passengers. In its second season in 2023, SCBA Annapolis expanded its offerings to 66 sails for 344 passengers.

Snyder cited research that indicates that support networks are directly linked with increased quality of life and a reduction of stress for cancer patients. To her, a good sail is the ultimate source of support and rest for those dealing with cancer.

"Life on the ocean is similar to life with cancer in that the trek is always a little uncertain," she said. "But on our boats, it's all smooth sailing for a while."

Perhaps the most crucial part of the program is how it makes patients and their families feel. Severna Park resident Jim Snider was nominated by his son for a sail after his cancer returned. The big motivation for the request was that, post-treatment, it would no longer be safe for Snider to be out on the water. SBCA Annapolis granted that request, leaving a grateful Snider to praise their program.

"My children and their spouses came from Tennessee, New York and Vermont to spend time with me on a sailing excursion with Sail Beyond Cancer Annapolis," he said. "It was a great family talk-fest and feast for everyone's senses, including a bounty of delicious food my children prepared. Within days, I would have a laryngectomy, losing my voice box permanently. And it is now two months since I've been able to eat anything without a feeding tube, which means no smelling or tasting my food and eating the same vitamin-enriched, milk-like mixture day in and out. What a contrast from that spectacular, sensory-rich day on the Chesapeake! If you have the opportunity, I highly recommend a sail with this organization."

To learn more about the program or to support SBCA Annapolis, visit www.sailbeyondcancer.org.

July Fourth Parade Winners Receive Prizes

In the weeks following the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce's Independence Day parade, businesses around town delivered cash prizes to this year's float winners.



BEST OVERALL

Linstead on the Severn won the coveted title of Best Overall during this year's Independence Day parade for a float featuring a huge blue whale with a working blowhole. In late July, the Linstead Community Association accepted a \$500 prize sponsored by the Jing Ying Institute of Kung Fu & Tai Chi.

BEST THEME

The Olde Severna Park Improvement Association received the \$500 prize for Best Theme for their giant crab float that delighted crowds at the 2024 Independence Day parade. Kitchen Tune-Up sponsored the prize.



MOST PATRIOTIC

For their awe-inspiring parade entry, representatives of the Nathaniel McDavitt Memorial Flag from Pack 855 and Troop 855 received the \$500 prize for Most Patriotic. The award was sponsored by People Rise.



Friends Of Kinder Farm Park To Host Historic Burial Sites Speaker

Tina Simmons, a member of the Coalition to Protect Maryland Burial Sites, will speak at Kinder Farm Park on August 25 at 2:00pm. Kinder Farm is the site of at least three historical cemeteries, with the oldest known tombstone being that of Rachel Foreman and dating back to the 1820s.

Simmons has had a long interest in genealogy studies and her areas of work include document-

ing old and neglected cemeteries based on information from death certificates, obituaries, newspapers articles, land and church records, funeral programs, and interviewing community residents. She has worked with cadaver dogs and their owners to discover new graves in historic cemeteries in Anne Arundel County. Based on Simmons' long association with historic cemeteries, she will be able to present the group with

an understanding of the people who came from prior generations and their final resting places in central Maryland.

Light refreshments will be served. Members of the Friends of Kinder Farm Park organization will be admitted for free, and the cost for non-members will be \$3. Online registration and payment for the event are available on the events page at www.kinderfarmpark.org.



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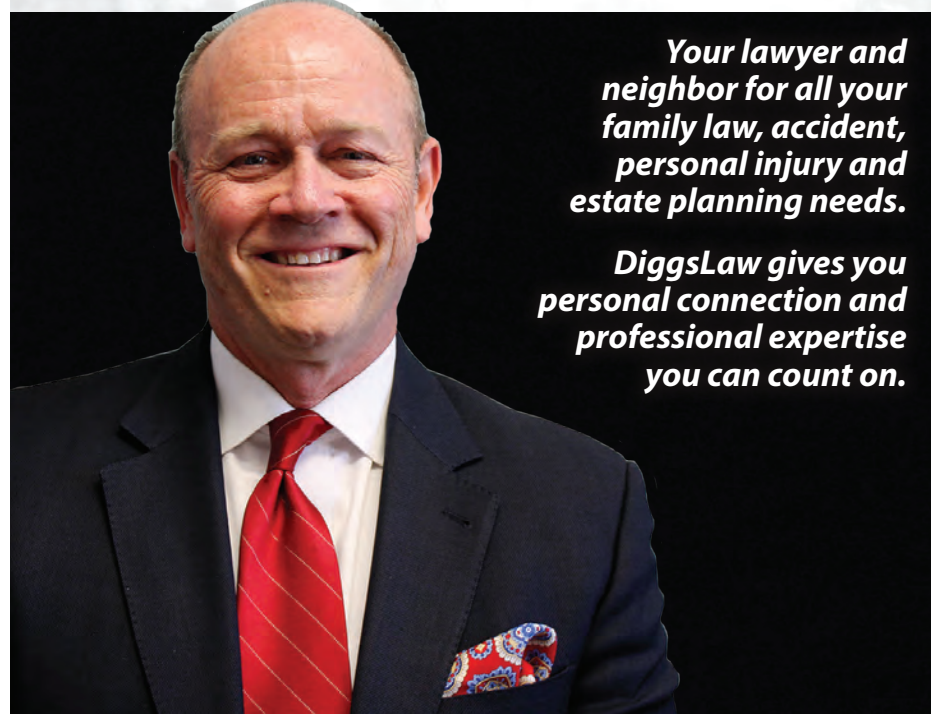
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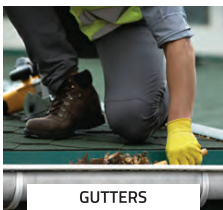
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Kids Triathlon To Continue Honoring Karen Stevens

The Friends of Anne Arundel Trails will host the 15th annual Karen Stevens Memorial Kids Triathlon at the Severna Park Community Center and B&A Trail on September 21 from 7:30am-10:30am. The triathlon is open to children under the age of 14 and offers three courses for different abilities.

Distances are as follows:

- **Junior Tri-It Swim:** 50-yard swim, one-eighth-mile bike ride, one-tenth mile run
- **The 10 & Under Swim:** 200-yard swim, two-mile bike ride, three-fourth mile run
- **The 11-14-Year-Old Event:** 400-yard swim, four-mile bike ride, 1.5-mile run

The recreational triathlon was established in memory of Karen Stevens, a treasured member of the Severna Park Community Center family. Stevens was a dedicated, patient and a successful instructor. She died in 2009 after a year-long battle with cancer. All proceeds from the triathlon go toward the Karen Stevens Memorial Fund, which provides swim lessons to children.

Registration is at www.active.com by searching for "Karen Stevens Memorial Kids Triathlon."

Gil Carlson Crowned King Of Severna Park Chess Club

By Judy Tacyn

After a summer-long round-robin tournament, the Golden Knights Chess Club, a joint club of the Annapolis Chess Club and the Severna Park Chess Club, crowned its latest champion, Gil Carlson of Severna Park, at an awards ceremony on July 18.

Chess can be traced as far back as the 1500s with origins in India and southwest Asia. The first official World Chess Championship was held in 1886. The first American world champion was Bobby Fischer in the early 1970s, a particularly poignant accomplishment as he defeated a Soviet Union champion during a politically charged period of U.S. and Soviet relations.

In Severna Park, tensions are not nearly that high, but the militarist game of strategy is just as popular.

"I think chess continues to be popular today because of the intricacy of the moves and the almost infinite possibilities in each match," said Severna Park Chess Club president John Benkert. "It can be a very enjoyable game. It makes you think, and every match is different."

Chess masters often strategize 10 to 12 moves ahead, trying to anticipate the seemingly infinite number of moves an opponent could make, followed by what their next move would be. That's a lot of mental



Photo by Judy Tacyn

Golden Knights Club champion Gil Carlson (center) accepted the club championship trophy from Severna Park chapter president John Benkert (left) and Annapolis chapter president Joe Coppola on July 18.

maneuvering.

"You can think ahead all you want," said Benkert, who's been in the Severna Park chapter for more than 20 years and has been president for the last four, "but if an opponent does something you didn't expect or anticipate, you have to rethink everything."

This club championship is the second of its kind that the club plans to do annually. Club members voluntarily enter the round-robin tournament, which means players compete against each other twice and the one with the most matches won is declared the winner. The top three competitors receive trophies, along with the highest

senior and most improved players. The tournament begins in late spring and runs until all matches are completed. The tournament was sponsored by Forget-Me-Not Flowers in Millersville, and the awards ceremony was held July 18 at the Severna Park Starbucks.

"If you're looking for competitive in-person games with no commitments and easy to get to," said Carlson, a five-year-member, "the club is a great place."

The combined chapters meet in person three times a week for drop-in play. They meet Sundays and

Thursdays at 1:00pm in Severna Park at the Starbucks on Ritchie Highway, and on Tuesdays at 4:00pm at Whole Foods Market in the Annapolis Town Center. The usual drop-in is 20 players or more, with players as young as 9 years old through seniors. The play is competitive during the matches, but Benkert assured that "it's all friendly play." New members and anyone curious are always welcome to stop by.

For more information on the Golden Knights Chess Club or either chapter, contact John Benkert at jbenkert111@verizon.net or Joe Coppola, Severna Park resident and president of the Annapolis chapter, at jrc14@comcast.net.

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EHVFC Carnival Brought Summertime Entertainment



Photos by Meredith Winter
From July 11-20, the Earleigh Heights Volunteer Fire Company's carnival offered a good time for attendees of all ages in the forms of dizzying rides, fun games and iconic concessions. Thrill seekers young and old braved The Zipper, The Raptor and other stomach-churning rides, while kids and kids at heart vied for prizes including large stuffed axolotls among the many games like the Duck Pond.

Mark Viviano Retires From Sports Broadcasting

» Continued from page 1

Over the years, he dutifully covered the ups and downs of the Baltimore Orioles and Ravens, from turbulent seasons to division titles and Super Bowl victories. In 1995, Viviano broke the story of the Cleveland Browns relocating to Baltimore. The following year, he was selected to carry the Olympic torch through Baltimore en route to Atlanta. In 2002, he interviewed the NFL's most decorated player following his first-ever playoff appearance, a snowy scene in which the young Tom Brady helped the Patriots defeat the Raiders.

Yet, in his 40 prolific years of sports coverage – during which he was named Maryland Sportscaster of the Year five times — Viviano credits the ordinary people he met along the way as some of the most memorable.

“The ones that have impacted my life are not famous athletes, they are everyday-type people,” he said, reflecting on his career. “One in particular who I always mention and I’ll never forget is a gentleman named Joe Abbas who was a runner in Dayton, Ohio. He was 75 years old when I met him and had run 75 marathons, and he had survived World War II, he had survived cancer. He was just this amazingly optimistic, energetic, spiritual man, and I remember leaving

that interview with him ... just feeling compelled and inspired to run.”

Viviano had run before, but after meeting Abbas he set his sights on long-distance goals. Since then, he has run 35 marathons in 32 states. He met a fellow runner at WJZ named Megan, who worked as an executive producer, and they began running together as training partners. They ran seven marathons together, and in the process, they became friends and fell in love. During an eight-mile run on Baltimore County's NCR Trail, Viviano told Megan he had a rock in his shoe. He bent down, pulled a ring out of his pocket, and proposed. They wed in 2013.

The couple acknowledged how one small thing — such as meeting a man named Joe Abbas on the job — can change the whole trajectory of one's life. “Joe stands out as the most influential person that I interviewed,” Viviano said.

Today, the couple has two sons, 8-year-old Michael and 6-year-old Christian. Viviano's recent retirement from sportscasting and a demanding TV schedule will allow him to be present for more of his sons' milestones, big and small. “I should say (the decision) wasn't difficult because I knew full-well ... what is most important, and it is Megan and the boys, and my time devoted to them

and to the number of charitable things we do as a family,” Viviano said.

Megan departed WJZ when they had their first child and now works as editorial director for Chesapeake Bay Magazine. She noted that her husband had a clear conviction about what he felt he was being called to do in this season of life. Viviano agreed, emphasizing, “It wasn't about being tired of or wanting to leave broadcasting. It was the strong pull to be with my family, and to really be a servant of God in the community.”

He will miss the people he interacted with daily, from coworkers to people at the ballpark and stadium, to folks who greeted him on the street. But Viviano is eager to spend more time volunteering at Benfield Elementary School, where his boys attend, and helping to coach their sports teams.

Viviano recalled that raising good, God-fearing children who were devout in their Catholic practices was his parents' highest priority. Now, the same holds true for him and for Megan, who grew up in Severna Park attending St. Martin's-in-the-field Episcopal Church.

“You can talk about your job, you can talk about your responsibilities, possessions, friends — but without God as the center, what meaning does any of it really have? That's my outlook on life,”

Viviano said a week after his last day on air. “What does any of this mean? We were created by love to love one another, take care of each other, and love our creator. That to me is the center of everything.”

The Vivianos are active parishioners at St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church, where they serve on the welcoming committee for new families. Megan is a regular volunteer at the St. Vincent de Paul food pantry, and Mark frequently helps stock their shelves too. He also helps transport food from St. Casimir Church in Canton to those in need at Baltimore's Helping Up Mission.

They serve together on the board of the Casey Cares Foundation, a nonprofit that supports families of children with critical illnesses. Viviano also recently joined the board of Partners In Excellence, which provides scholarships for Baltimore City children to attend Catholic schools.

Of course, sports will remain a passion for Viviano, whether that be rooting for the Ravens this fall, coaching Michael and Christian, or throwing out the ceremonial first pitch with his boys at the Orioles' July 30 game against the Toronto Blue Jays. But for now, he'll just be a regular fan, focused on serving his family, God and the community.



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Severna Park High School Reunion Is One Month Away



A Severna Park High School multi-class alumni reunion will be held on September 14 from 2:00pm-6:00pm at Mother's Peninsula Grille. All alumni are welcome, and 1961-1981 graduates are especially invited.

Organizers are honored to have Andy Borland, the Hall of Fame coach, and Severna Park High School class of 1966 member Doug Nichols to share insight about their current project: a Severna Park Vietnam War memorial.

Light fare will be served and there will be a cash bar. The cost is \$30 per person. Make checks pay-

able to SPHS Memories and mail to 801 Hughes Shop Road, Westminster, MD 21158 prior to August 15.

Attendees are encouraged to come by and help volunteers install the 10-foot flagpole and display the SPHS Memories flag welcoming SPHS classmates. Alumni are also invited to meet for happy hour at Mother's Peninsula Grille on September 13 from 3:00pm-6:00pm. RSVP by emailing robym@sphs-memories.com. Anyone who has questions can email jennilucke@gmail.com.

Speed Cameras Installed

In June, the Anne Arundel County Police Department began implementing its Automated Traffic Enforcement Speed Program by installing portable camera units (PCUs) at five school zones, giving drivers a 15-day warning period. Oak Hill Elementary (Truck House Road), Shipley's Choice Elementary (Governor Stone Parkway) and Broadneck Elementary (Shore Acres Road) were three of the five locations.

Five additional automated enforcement speed cameras were activated in July, with one in Severna Park at Folger McKinsey Elementary, located on Arundel Beach Road.

According to the police department, the units were inspired by community feedback about traffic-related fatalities, serious injuries and roadway safety.

"The Automated Traffic Enforcement Speed Program is both data-driven and community-driven," County Executive Steuart Pittman said in a statement. "Residents came to us with their concerns about the impact of speeding on the safety of their communities and we listened and acted by implementing this program to promote safe driving habits and ultimately save lives."

Now that the warning period has ended, motorists traveling 12 miles per hour or more over the posted speed limit will be issued a citation along with a \$40 fine.

Anne Arundel County plans for 40 PCUs to occupy school zones and residential areas that have been identified based on traffic pattern data, crash history, resident concerns and accident history.

In accordance with state law, speed cameras in school zones will operate from 6:00am-8:00pm Monday through Friday, including holidays and during the summer. Cameras placed in residential areas will operate around the clock.

Wes Guckert, president and CEO of The Traffic Group, has provided consultation to multiple communities in Maryland, detailing traffic calming and safety measures. While many people are not enthusiastic about speed cameras, he said, several studies have proven that the cameras encourage safer driving while reducing crashes and injuries.

"Further underscoring this point, a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report entitled Automated Speed-Camera Enforcement found that speed cameras reduced total crashes anywhere from 8% to 49% and fatal and serious-injury crashes anywhere from 11% to 44% in studies that compared pre- and post-crash data collected near camera sites," Guckert said in a column about Vision Zero.

First implemented as the national road policy in Sweden in 1997, Vision Zero is a global movement to end traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries by taking a systemic approach to road safety. The premise of this strategy is that road deaths and injuries are unacceptable and preventable.

The core strategies of Vision Zero - installing traffic cameras, creating separated bike lanes, or imposing road diets - either force drivers to slow down or create safe space for vulnerable road users, such as those on foot or bicycle.

As Guckert said, this national push comes after data from the World Health Organization ranked the U.S. 41st worst among 49 high-income nations in traffic deaths.

For more information about the Automated Traffic Enforcement Speed Program, to pay citations, and to view an interactive map of active and planned locations, go to www.aacounty.org/speedcameras.



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Woods Church To Welcome New Senior Pastor This Month

Rev. J.C. Austin Brings Broad Ministry Experience, Heart For Community

By Meredith Winter

Late this month, Woods Memorial Presbyterian Church will welcome its 10th and newest senior pastor. Since the Rev. Susan DeWynngaert's retirement in January 2022, pastoral staff and interim leaders have shepherded the dynamic congregation. On August 27, the Rev. J.C. Austin will take up the position of senior pastor and head of staff at Woods.

Woods' Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) was formed in June of 2023 and largely facilitated the search for a new pastor. Qualified candidates were interviewed, and over time, it became apparent that one of them was best suited to assume the senior pastoral role for the 112-year-old Severna Park church.

Administrative Head of Staff Sue Ward noted that Austin's compassion, biblical depth and preaching skills helped set him apart. When the Key Bridge fell, PNC co-chair Ellen Oakes said the PNC took note when candi-



On August 27, the Rev. J.C. Austin will take up the position of senior pastor at Woods Church. He brings to the role a varied ministry background spanning nearly 30 years and a passion for outreach.

dates including Austin were so attuned to the area that they reached out and offered prayers.

The Rev. Nancy Lincoln-Reynolds, associate pastor for pastoral care and

evangelism and acting head of staff, highlighted the importance in selecting a new senior pastor of not only carefully evaluating qualifications and fit, but also listening to the Holy Spirit. "Lots of prayer goes into this, which it should — not just prayer on the part of the Pastor Nominating Committee or the congregation, but on J.C.'s part," she said, "and we just kind of trust the spirit to put us together."

Austin was born in Knoxville, Tennessee, and moved frequently due to his father's work. His family landed in Georgia when he was 12, and he considers Atlanta his hometown. It was there that he was ordained, and his parents and brother remain in Atlanta today.

A lifelong Presbyterian, Austin was raised in the faith. "I like to joke that I was born in the church," the reverend said. "My parents had been trying to have a child for a long time, and had basically given up hope for doing that, and I was a surprise. When I was born, they were part of a new church plant in Knoxville, so they ended up donating the first pulpit Bible to the church in thanksgiving for my birth."

Austin attended a Tennessee liberal arts college, Sewanee, for his undergraduate studies, and received his

Master of Divinity from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1998. At graduation, he was awarded the Graduate Study Fellowship in Parish Pulpit Ministry, which opened the door for Austin to spend a year pursuing post-graduate studies in South Africa.

Back in the United States, Austin served for nearly 10 years as an associate pastor at Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church before devoting over eight years as vice president for Christian leadership formation at Auburn Theological Seminary, both in New York City. Most recently, he was called to serve as senior pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem in Pennsylvania for the past seven years.

After helping that congregation move beyond a difficult split, navigate a global pandemic, and coalesce around a strategic vision, Austin felt at peace with the notion of leaving Bethlehem when he was asked to consider pastoring at Woods. His last Sunday there was July 28.

Austin is looking forward to being a part of the Woods family in large part because of the church's enduring commitment to serving the community.

"When God first calls Abraham in
» Continued on page 17

Jamaica Outreach Ministry Hopes To Inspire Support For A Charitable Cause

By Molly Beirsto

In the Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium parking lot outside of Annapolis Blues FC games, a group of people have been donning bright traffic vests and waving red flags to attract attention. For the group, the Jamaica Outreach Ministry (JOM), such a reaction is the hope.

In 2007, St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church adopted two sister parishes in Jamaica — St. Philomena and St. Margaret Mary. In doing so, parishioners volunteered to run the JOM as a chapter that personally delivers resources and funds raised to the churches, including an annual mission trip to visit the communities.

The JOM website says that the group aims to "aid and support the needs of the parishes through education and training of the local residents."

Members decided to spread awareness of their cause at Annapolis Blues FC games after they learned they would no longer have a site for their monthly yard sales, so they got creative.

"This year, we were fortunate enough to get involved with directing parking for the Annapolis Blues FC at the Navy stadium," said JOM member Barbara Perez. "We each pay our own way — including flight, room and board — to go to Jamaica, so all the funds raised go directly to supporting our mission."

The mission to reach those in need of resources resonates deeply with the parishioners who choose to volunteer. They provide the "basics we take for granted," Perez said.

When discussing those basic needs with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Mandeville, which presides over the sister parishes, one priority is always mentioned: schools. However, much of the donations JOM gives are not simply supplies for education but also for necessities within the community,

» Continued on page 17

Rabbi Goldstein Marks 20 Years Of Service At Temple Beth Shalom

By Meredith Winter

On June 1, community members and congregants of Temple Beth Shalom gathered to celebrate a significant milestone in their 64-year-history: Rabbi Ari Goldstein's 20th anniversary serving the Jewish community at the Arnold synagogue.

Goldstein was born in Baltimore, but he considers New Orleans home. He spent his childhood there, and his parents still reside in Louisiana today. His father is a rabbi, and Goldstein grew up in the Jewish faith.

After completing undergraduate studies at the University of Pittsburgh, Goldstein pursued rabbinical school, spending one year in Jerusalem and four in Cincinnati, Ohio, at Hebrew Union College. He was ordained at the reformed rabbinical school in 1997.

Prior to arriving at Temple Beth Shalom in 2004, Goldstein served for two years in a Chicago-area synagogue and five at a syn-

agogue in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, where he helped bring healing to a hurting congregation.

Along with his wife, Hannah, who has also served as a rabbi, Goldstein had two children when he arrived in Maryland. They now have four nearly grown kids, ranging in age from 17

to 23, including a rising senior at Broadneck High School, two in college and one starting graduate school.

Among the many books in his office — Goldstein is an avid reader — an acoustic

guitar is perched on a stand. It is perhaps his newest interest; he began playing just two years ago and considers himself an "advanced beginner." He also enjoys playing golf, rooting for the New Orleans Saints, and spending time outdoors.

Reflecting on the past 20 years serving and leading at Temple Beth Shalom, Goldstein shared several highlights. When he arrived, this congregation, too, was in a difficult season, and over the last two decades Goldstein has helped them rebuild and become a thriving community of over 350 families. He is proud of the beautiful facility, dedicated in September 2007, that houses the temple's sanctuary and social hall.

As someone who is committed to building community, both among the Jewish people and the county as a whole, Goldstein is glad that his congregation is socially active. Whether that be helping to house the home-

» Continued on page 17



Rabbi Ari Goldstein has served the congregation at Temple Beth Shalom for 20 years, and he looks forward to many more.

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Jamaica Outreach Hopes To Inspire Support For A Charitable Cause



This year, parishioners participating in the Jamaica Outreach Ministry helped build and paint houses for the local community they were visiting.



Members of the Jamaica Outreach Ministry posed outside an Annapolis Blues FC game, where they fundraised this summer.

» Continued from page 14

such as resources to help families who need access to facilities due to disabilities or AIDS. Volunteers support those individuals through their partnership with the Mustard Seed Communities, which helps children affected by HIV.

JOM members are invited to Jamaica to visit the parishes and meet members of the communities they are supporting.

"After my first trip, I felt such a sense of gratitude and love," said Perez, adding that the group has made the trip for

10 or 11 years, excluding the years that COVID was widespread. "As they say, I got more out of the trip than I gave."

To bring their cause to the attention of those within the local community, JOM members hoped to gather support. The Annapolis Blues FC game was their call to answer.

The group, who had, as Perez stated, "become a tight-knit family of volunteers," gathered outside the game and campaigned their message to the fans. With their endorsement, the fans of the game helped a community far away without

leaving their hometown.

With such hope, JOM members want to inspire those around them to join the mission to directly help those in need. Or, to support any mission.

Perez hopes that "people gain an understanding of the struggles that people face not only at home but abroad" and that they become inspired to get involved in any nonprofit.

This past February, another group of volunteers went to Jamaica, constructing new facilities for the schools and delivering supplies. For some,

the highlight of the trip is always the appreciation from the families they get to meet.

"The gratitude of these families would put us to shame," Sister Maureen Kelly of St. John said in a message included on JOM's mission statement page. "The look in the eyes of these children when you give them a sandwich, or a cookie, makes your heart ache. Meeting a child who hasn't had much to eat in several days calls me to examine myself and all that I have in life."

Moving forward, volun-

teers hope to expand their efforts even further, especially within health education. As always, they are welcoming to anyone who is interested in a life-changing experience.

JOM president Gary Dinsick said all people are welcome to join the group's "wonderful and fulfilling mission." They plan to visit the Diocese of Mandeville next February and they currently have open slots.

"There is time to get on board," Dinsick said.

To learn more, contact 410-437-1965 or outreach.jamaica@gmail.com.

Woods To Welcome New Pastor

» Continued from page 14

Genesis 12, he concludes that in part by saying, "You're going to be blessed in order to be a blessing," Austin said, "and I feel like Woods is a congregation that clearly has been blessed in a lot of ways with its history and its membership ... but it sees itself as a congregation that has been blessed to be a blessing."

"I feel like the church exists not for itself but to be ... the body of Christ in the world, and that means being a presence of blessing and healing and reconciliation and love, and Woods is doing that and asking, 'How can we do that more faithfully and more effectively into the future?' And that's a conversation that I always want to have."

— THE REV. J.C. AUSTIN

The soon-to-be Marylander said he immediately felt at home during his candidating visit in June. That weekend, Austin went to an Orioles game, met with leaders of the church, sampled Annapolitan fare, and delivered a sermon on Sunday. He noted it was a special service to be part of because

Woods also commissioned a team to serve with Habitat for Humanity and installed deacons and elders as well. Following his candidating sermon, Austin's call to lead Woods was approved by the congregation.

In addition to his eagerness to pastor Woods, Austin is looking forward to relocating to the Severna Park area because it will bring him within an hour's drive of his son, who will enter his sophomore year at Georgetown University this fall. And, it will allow the avid baseball fan to take up residence in Orioles country.

A lover of music, Austin enjoys listening to all genres, as well as playing both acoustic and electric guitar. He has traveled the world extensively, visiting over 60 countries while seeking to be a student of various cultures. He loves to cook — particularly Italian, French, Thai and some Vietnamese cuisines — and has been learning his way around a smoker in recent years, experimenting with choice meats like pork shoulder and brisket.

"Listening to music and cooking something great on a Friday night is how I love to spend my time," Austin said of his passions. Looking ahead to life in Maryland, he added, "I've got to work on my crab recipes. I haven't had experience doing that."

Woods Church will continue to hold one blended Sunday service the remainder of summer, returning to two service times on September 15. To learn about its mission and beliefs, go to www.woodschurch.org.

Rabbi Goldstein Marks 20 Years Of Service At Temple Beth Shalom

» Continued from page 14

less through the Winter Relief program for the last 14 years or marching in the Annapolis Pride Parade, "we try to make ourselves visible as putting forth the value of social action," he said.

"I'm also very proud of our synagogue's commitment to Israel," Goldstein stressed, noting that he has led a total of roughly 200 congregants on seven trips to the Holy Land over the years. While most of these trips have been pilgrimages to visit sites of consequence to the Jewish people, the rabbi's most recent trip to Israel was "qualitatively different."

Goldstein explained that the group he led in Israel this past June was there to serve those in need. They lent helping hands at farms where fruits and vegetables were going unpicked because workers had left, and prepared meals where cooks who had been called up to be in the Army had to leave their jobs. The team also served people who had been displaced from their homes by bombings and rocket attacks, people who were living in hotels and camps and were in need of basic essentials like clothing and household goods.

Twenty years into his tenure at Temple Beth Shalom, Goldstein has no imminent plans to retire or relocate. Instead, he looks forward to continuing to serve his congregation and com-

munity, strengthening the temple's foundations so that he can one day — though not any day soon — leave it on solid ground.

"Because of what happened on October 7 in Israel, I see right now as a time in which people are really kind of reaching out in a more needing way for Jewish institutions and Jewish community to kind of ground them a little bit more, and I look forward to being up to that task of meeting people where they are and helping them feel more connected and more part of a community," he shared of his aspirations for continued service to the Jewish community.

Over the years of serving as a rabbi, Goldstein emphasized that his primary goal has always been to create a sense of community. And, he is grateful for the community that has surrounded him at the temple, as well.

"As I look back, all of the times in which I felt connected to individuals here from our congregation, whether it was in their moments of great sadness or great joy, or somewhere in between, and I felt like relationships were built and I felt like meaningful connections engaged — those are the times in which I felt like I was most personally affected," he said of walking alongside the temple's congregation through life's ups and downs.

To learn more about Temple Beth Shalom, visit www.annapolistemple.org.

Letter To The Editor: A Note To County Executive Steuart Pittman

Dear Mr. Pittman,

Anne Arundel County recently announced a speed camera was installed on Governor Stone Parkway in the Shipley's Choice community as well as four other locations. I, like my fellow Shipley's Choice residents, am happy to see the traffic enforcement speed camera. I like the new technology wherein the top portion rotates 180 degrees to monitor traffic speed in both directions depending on the time of day. I found the county bulletin found on www.aacounty.org/speedcameras.

There are several issues that I do not understand. It is my understanding that traffic on our interstate highways and Maryland roads are monitored at 12 miles per hour over the posted speed limit. Therefore, tickets will be issued at speeds of 77 mph (65 plus 12) and 67 mph (55 plus 12), respectively. Another way to look at the speed is 18.46% and 21.81% above the posted speed limit, respectively.

Anne Arundel County's Automated Traffic Enforcement Speed Program bulletin states very clearly "motorists traveling 12 mph or more over the posted speed limit will be issued a citation..." Governor Stone Parkway is posted at 35 mph. This is 34.28% above the posted speed limit.

Mr. Pittman, the residents of Shipley's Choice are already experiencing high risk to their children who travel across Governor Stone Parkway daily to the elementary school, pool and tennis club, visiting friends, and the playground located at the Shipley's Choice Elementary School.

The 35-plus-12 mph trigger speed for Governor Stone Parkway is unacceptable to me and I am sure many of my fellow residents.

Further, Shipley's Choice Homeowners Association newsletter stated the following: "The camera will be operational Monday-Friday, 6:00am to 8:00pm, with summers and holidays included."

I cannot believe my eyes. Traffic does not stop on Saturdays and Sundays. The risk to our community does not stop on Saturdays and Sundays.

Kindly have the appropriate people look into these two issues and tell me the results.

Regards,

Kevin Curran
Resident of Shipley's
Choice in Millersville

We're Fixing Stuff



Photo courtesy of Annapolis Maritime Museum

During an Anne Arundel River Days event this summer, people got free boat rides from Annapolis Maritime Museum Park Campus and two other sites.

Steuart Pittman

Anne Arundel
County Executive



Editor's note: This column originally appeared in County Executive Steuart Pittman's email newsletter on July 26.

Dear neighbor, It feels like the world stopped this week and focused attention

on the extraordinary news that President Joe Biden withdrew his candidacy for re-election and endorsed Vice President Kamala Harris. I've shared my own thoughts on that topic through non-government channels, so I won't comment here, other than to say that even in these moments of historical shifts at the global and national levels, nothing slows down locally. Life goes on, and we keep fixing stuff, or at least trying.

I signed the Region 4 comprehensive rezoning bill this week but also issued vetoes related to rezoning of two areas, the first vetoes of my time in office. One restores former zoning of land that was down-zoned in 1989, land inherited by four African American families who hope to provide house sites for their descendants. Another protects an area of forest between two streams that flow to Lake Waterford and the Magothy River. I wrote a thorough and passionate justification for these vetoes, hoping to secure the votes on the County Council to uphold them. You can read that statement here.

I did a lengthy meeting with Office of Planning and Zoning (OPZ) staff to review 111 applications by residents who seek to serve on Stakeholder Advisory Committees for Region 5 (Crofton, Odenton, Piney Orchard, Gambrills, Two Rivers), Region 6 (parts of Millersville, Crownsville, Generals Highway corridor) and Region 8 (Davidsonville, Harwood, Lothian, Friendship, parts of Edgewater). All had been scored, all had key parts of

their applications on a spreadsheet, and all were on maps to help us ensure diversity of skill, background, interest and geography. I keep being floored by the professionalism of the long-range planning team at OPZ. And I'm so glad that we divided the county into nine regions for local plans and didn't try to do all nine at once!

While I'm recognizing excellence in problem-solving in county departments, I have to mention an email I got as a follow-up to my regular meeting with Police Chief Amal Awad. I had asked how things were going with the new staffing plan that was implemented earlier in the year to reduce the number of patrol shifts that required mandatory overtime. I got back a chart showing a total of zero such instances over a 15-day period in July and an older chart showing 92 from the same period a year ago. I also know that officer feedback has been far more positive than some expected when the program was launched. Well done, team.

I write often about Anne Arundel River Days in this letter, but I have to say it again. They are truly causing our residents to fall in love with the 530 miles of coast that embraces us. Saturday, it was all smiles and discovery at Annapolis Maritime Museum Park Campus, Chesapeake Region Accessible Boating (CRAB), and Annapolis Sailing School. Hundreds of people got free boat rides from all three sites, live music from Naptown Brass, and a packed house of informational booths under the new Merrill Family Pavilion. Some even had celebrity tour guides, like Blacks of the Chesapeake founder Vince Leggett and Severn River Association Executive Director Jesse Illiff.

We still have three more River Days coming, so go to www.aacounty.org/riverdays and get them on your calendar.

Another event this week that brought a lot of smiles was Economic Development's Arundel Grown, the annual celebration of food grown on our county's farms. This year, we gathered at Homestead Gardens, and 100% of what we ate and drank (yes, local beer and wine) was from county

farms, and the food was prepared by the brilliant team at Bread and Butter Kitchen. As I often do, I found myself at the mic thanking our farmers and all of the organizations that work with them to overcome the obstacles they face getting food to our tables. Those organizations are Anne Arundel Economic Development, Anne Arundel Soil Conservation District, Anne Arundel Farm Bureau, Future Farmers of America's chapter based at Southern High School, our Agriculture Advisory Commission, and the agricultural preservation staff in our Office of Planning and Zoning. It's a team effort.

But the highlight of my week was a major step forward in addressing the problems I wrote about last week at Animal Care & Control. On Monday, the top three candidates for the position that will lead the organization through the transition that I described were brought back for second interviews, and the chair of our Animal Welfare Council and acting administrator were brought in to participate. They unanimously and enthusiastically recommended that we hire a woman with a 28-year track record of creating, merging and managing nonprofit and government organizations that operate shelters in multiple jurisdictions. Her name is Claudia Roll, and she's a resident of Severna Park.

Claudia's resume includes working as an animal welfare educator for the Snyder Foundation, chairing the progress review board and overseeing humane society recommendations to modernize what was Baltimore City Bureau of Animal Control, managing a statewide spay and neuter program in New Mexico, working as a cruelty case administrator and as an evaluator and advisor to local governments and nonprofit shelters in New Mexico, overseeing the City of Albuquerque's municipal shelter system, and for the last 12 years, overseeing operations of Washington, D.C.'s shelter system, the Humane Rescue Alliance, and it's 80-plus employees, including the navigation of two organizational mergers along the way.

I got to meet her on Tuesday via Zoom, and by Wednesday she had accepted a job offer. I sent letters informing the staff, Friends of Anne Arundel County Animal Care & Control, Animal Matters Commission, and the Animal Welfare Council this morning, and a public announcement went out after that. She starts on Monday.

Hearing Claudia's thoughts about the challenges we face in Anne Arundel County, and the opportunities that will appear if we transition to a nonprofit quasi-government agency, gave me confidence that she is the right person to have at the helm of that transition.

The fact that the photo of her first dog on the wall behind her looked exactly like the yellow lab that was my first dog, and is on the wall above my dresser, kind of sealed the deal for me.

So the world may have stopped to take stock of the news, but we're still fixing stuff, and celebrating what's good.

Summer Swim League Ends Season With Medal Meets



Photos courtesy of Alex Bardakh

Left: Tucker Wendell finished the summer swim season with a second-place finish in the boys 9-10 25-yard butterfly. **Right:** Lo Ward brought home medals in two events at her last summer meet: second in the girls 13-14 50-yard backstroke and third in the 50-yard breaststroke.

By Lauren Cowin

Local swimmers wrapped up the summer season with the Greater Annapolis Swim League (GASL) medal meets in mid-July.

This year's gold medal meet, which has the most stringent qualifications, saw multiple record-breaking swims.

Nate Decker, representing Chase Creek Swim Team in Arnold, set a new GASL record in the men's 15-18

50-yard backstroke at 25.37, taking home gold for that event.

Harting Farm Swim Team's **Dean Doubek** now holds the GASL record for the men's 15-18 50-yard freestyle, winning the event with a time of 22.00.

Also winning gold for Harting Farm was **Maggie Liscinsky**, who placed first in the girls 9-10 25-yard butterfly with a time of 15.51.

"We pride ourselves on trying to make swimming fun and develop kindness and technique and skills," said **Laura Ainsworth**, Harting Farm head coach. "And then whatever comes out of it is fantastic."

Indian Hills Swim Club had four gold medalists, including 10-year-old **Tugg Gendell**, who won three events: the boys 9-10 50-yard freestyle with a time of 31.03, the boys 10

and under 100-yard individual medley, clocking in at 1:22.56 and the boys 9-10 25-yard backstroke with 17.34.

Chance Scovel edged out a teammate for first in the boys 7-8 25-yard backstroke, finishing in 19.47.

On the girls' side, **Izzy Bialy** had her own hat trick, taking home gold in the girls 10-and-under individual medley with her time of 1:16.78, the 9-10 25-yard backstroke with a 16.60 and the 25-yard breaststroke in 17.94. **Kennedy Lyon** won the girls 11-12 50-yard freestyle in 28.43, and 50-yard backstroke in 31.94.

Severn River Swim Club had three gold medalists. **Addison Betley** won the girls 13-14 50-yard freestyle (26.62) and 50-yard butterfly (29.65). **Chloe Smith** placed first in the girls 6-and-under 25-yard backstroke (25.07), and **Lawton Bloomfield** finished first in the boys 9-10 25-yard breaststroke (19.50).

"The whole point of summer swimming is to have fun, enjoy it and figure out if it's what you want to do, or not," Ainsworth said.

» **Continued on page 32**

Archbishop Spalding's Football Foundation Was Built By A Former Severna Park Resident And Green Hornets Coach

Mike Whittles Was Founding Father Of Cavaliers' Championship Teams

By Kevin Murnane

Archbishop Spalding has one of the top football teams in the mid-Atlantic area and has sent several players to Power Five collegiate football programs such as Penn State, Virginia Tech, Navy and Maryland. One former player, Julius Chestnut, is an NFL running back with the Tennessee Titans.

But it was Severna Park's **Mike Whittles**, who was the coach of the Green Hornets 120-pound team, who approached Spalding's then athletic director **Lee Dove** about coaching at Spalding. During the interview with Dove, Whittles discussed his 20-year plan for building a program that has since won numerous Maryland Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) championships.

"Mike approached me during one of our games and wanted to talk about coaching our football team," Dove said. "He was confident, had a sense of warmth and understood young men, and thought he could build a successful program."

Whittles started coaching the Cavaliers in 1999 and went through some growing pains but slowly found better players to come to Spalding.



Photo by Kevin Murnane

Archbishop Spalding head football coach Kyle Schmitt stood next to the gates of Spalding's football field, which is dedicated to former coach Mike Whittles.

In the early years of Whittles' reign, Spalding did not have a large roster, their field was a blend of grass and dirt, and the school had limited seating for students and parents.

"I remember the field had a shed next to it and that is where the 'weight room' had an assortment of 'hand-me-down' free weights and a bench press," said **Nick Whittles**, who is the youngest child of the Whittles family and played for Spald-

ing from 2006 to 2010. "My dad had 15 to 18 guys on the team back then."

Mike Whittles' connection with the Green Hornets organization and other youth football coaches started to pay huge dividends and saw the roster increase in size and talent.

Spalding moved into the MIAA B Conference and won the B Conference championships in 2005, 2006, 2009 and 2010.

Whittles' 20-year plan had the Cavaliers competing in the prestigious A Conference, which had Baltimore-area powerhouses Gilman and McDonogh as well as all the major Catholic high schools in Baltimore.

After the 2010 football season, the Cavaliers made that leap of faith and joined the A Conference.

Whittles' plan was achieved, but he received some devastating news that same year: he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer.

"My dad was told he had five months to live but lasted 17 months," Nick Whittles said.

The players dedicated that 2011 season to Mike Whittles, even having the bus that was taking the team to play Calvert Hall stop at Johns Hopkins Hospital to visit their beloved coach as he received chemotherapy treatment.

Whittles was more than Spalding's football coach; he was a father figure to his players. His memorable pregame speeches and his fun-loving personality galvanized his players.

One game against St. Mary's, which was played in a torrential rainstorm, the Cavaliers were victorious after a late fourth-quarter touchdown. Whittles was so ecstatic after the game, he did mud slides with his team at the 50-yard line.

Whittles did more than coach football. He also taught life lessons every day. He

» **Continued on page 30**

STUDENT-ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

MATT SMITH

Severna Park High School and American Legion
Baseball

By David Bashore

Knowing he wasn't going to play competitive baseball in college, **Matt Smith** was determined to make his final stretch of competitive ball be as fun, and as long, as possible.

The class of 2024 Severna Park High graduate reflected on his season, and his high school experience, before he hangs up the spikes and enrolls as a student at Jacksonville University later this summer.

Smith, an outfielder and pitcher both for the Falcons and for the senior American Legion Post 175 baseball team, took it upon himself to be a leader, and sometimes the ringleader, for the summer as the senior Legion team advanced to the states round.

"I wanted to focus on my education, and if it worked out, I would have done (baseball), but it just didn't work out that way. It's been a big part of my life, and I just wanted to keep playing as long as possible," Smith said. "American Legion doesn't have the same pressure as high school ball, so playing with your friends, keeping it loose and trying to win at the same time, that's really fun. I'm glad I got to have one more season with them."

Smith got to utilize leadership experience he gained both on the diamond and in the dugout, as an Eagle Scout, and in the classroom at Severna Park High. He went through both the three-year leadership program and the four-year Project Lead



the Way campaign as a Falcon.

"It's a lot of work in and out of the classroom, and a lot of event planning. I think that helped my leadership in baseball as well, because you're partnered with someone to execute your final projects," Smith said. "You're in it together just like you are on a team, so communication is key. You aren't going to be able to finish the project if you're not communicating how it needs to be done."

That communication was key, and it turned him into a leader during the American Legion season.

Photo courtesy of Fincham Photography

An outfielder and pitcher both for the Falcons and for the senior American Legion Post 175 baseball team, Matt Smith took it upon himself to be a leader, and sometimes the ringleader, for the summer as the senior Legion team advanced to the state competition.

On the field, he was making sure communication was clear between teammates so that all nine of them knew what the other eight were doing. Off the field, he was the one leading cheers and keeping it loose, but at the same time, he took it upon himself to ensure that the team wasn't getting too loose and losing sight of the game.

"He exudes leadership and is a great teammate," said Severna Park American Legion coach **Ralph Suppa**. "Love having him in the dugout, but he's also a very good ball player."

Smith's journey has taken him to some unexpected places. He enrolled in Project Lead the Way as a potential engineering major — Smith now plans to study aviation management and flight operations, with a view to becoming a commercial pilot. He wanted to play baseball in college, but education comes first.

Like many of his teammates, though, he is able to look back at his final days of competitive baseball with the satisfaction of finishing up on his own terms.

"We played how we liked to play," he said. "We aren't expecting to dominate everyone, but as long as we try our best and we make the plays we should make, we're happy with how we play."

I'm excited to congratulate all the incredible student-athletes who have been honored as "Athlete of the Month" during the 2023/2024 school year!

Your hard work, dedication, and love for sports have truly shone through. Your achievements and commitment to excellence are a beacon of inspiration for your peers and our entire community. Whether you're on the field, the court, or in the pool, your skill and sportsmanship are nothing short of inspiring.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to the coaches, teachers, parents, and supporters who have played a vital role in guiding and encouraging our student-athletes. Your steadfast support has been key in helping them reach their full potential and chase their dreams.

As we enter the sixth year of the Student-Athlete of the Month series, I'm excited about the future. We aim to expand and enhance this recognition even more. Together, let's continue to foster an environment that promotes growth, teamwork, and personal development for all our student-athletes.



Matt Wyble

410-562-2325 MattWyble.com

Warm regards, Matt



The Voice's Student-Athlete of the Month is proudly sponsored by **Matt Wyble of Next Step Realty**.

Contact **Zach Sparks** at zach@severnaparkvoice.com to nominate a local student making a positive impact through sports.

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SPHS Grad Jon Garvey's One-Year Journey From Beginner To College Athlete

By Hannah Bates
Student Intern



Jon Garvey

One athlete on the Severna Park High School (SPHS) cheer team is now heading to Division 1 cheer at Clemson University in South Carolina after only starting the sport this past year. His name is Jon Garvey.

Garvey's rapid rise from beginner to standout high school and now college athlete wasn't easy. As he fell in love with the raw, physical challenges of cheerleading and the kindness of the close-knit team, he also came face to face with the stigma surrounding cheerleading. Yet, the more passionate he became about the sport, the more his view of it changed. Now, this dedicated college athlete urges anyone on the fence about cheer to try it.

Before Garvey began cheering, he was a football player. For all four years of high school, he played on the Falcons football team with mild interest. Although Garvey was a great asset to the team, his favorite part of football wasn't the game, but the conditioning. To stay in shape for football, he tumbled and quickly found that he enjoyed it more than playing football. After this discovery, he tried out for SPHS' cheer team, which uses a lot of tumbling skills. Once on the team, however, Garvey felt nervous about doing cheer, thinking that "this might be socially challenging."

Part of why Garvey initially believed this was because of the perception some people have of cheer. Garvey said, "(The

first impression for just any high-schooler is like, 'Oh, it's just these cute girls dancing around on the field.'"

For some people, including Garvey at first, there is a common misconception that cheer is a less athletic sport

or more focused on appearance rather than physical ability. When Garvey tried it, though, he found it far harder than he anticipated.

"It's the best athletes (who do cheer), in my opinion, (because) you need to be the master of your own body," he said.

Garvey explained the physical demands put on male cheer athletes who have three roles in the sport: dancing, tumbling and stunting. Tumbling includes backflips, cartwheels or anything usually done in ground gymnastics while stunting is lifting girls up into the air with only brute strength. Garvey said that in tumbling or stunting, "you are putting your body on the line" since stunting requires an athlete to throw cheerleaders 10 to 15 feet in the air and then catch them without making a single mistake, while tumbling requires superb physical control and awareness to prevent personal injury during stunts. While cheer can be dan-

gerous, Garvey loves the challenge of the sport, as does the rest of his team.

This shared goal for excellence in performance turns what would be an average sports team into a real family. He explained that in the hard work, sweat and tears, he and his teammates are "all in it together ... and we are all working toward the same goal." The companionship Garvey feels with his team even extends to his coaches. He reported that while he had worked under many coaches for different sports, the cheer coaches "are the most caring and personal," and that "they care about you so much, and because of that, we performed really well. I mean, we were fifth in the state!"

Garvey thinks that his team could have possibly landed even higher in the state because of the training the SPHS coaches provide. While the team always scores well, "our scores don't reflect what we do ... because when we're on the mats in the arena, we're really pushing boundaries," he said.

In high school cheer, there are a limited number of allowed stunts, and due to the risk of injury, many of the most challenging stunts are not permitted in competition. Teams that do these stunts, even if they land them perfectly, get points deducted. However, while this may be the case, the SPHS cheer team chooses to push boundaries by performing college-level stunts even at the risk of a reduced score.

This is why, while SPHS officially landed

fifth in the state, Garvey believes they could have placed higher if the scoring were different, but he also wouldn't have it any other way. He said, "We're not coming in first or second, but we're the crowd favorites, and if you come to a competition, you will absolutely see that."

The stunts SPHS pulls and lands go beyond what is expected for any high school cheer team, and Garvey said that the team has and will continue to "go past what the judges think we can do."

As Garvey looks forward to college, cheering at Clemson, and hopefully later at the Naval Academy through a civilian prep program, he not only feels prepared for the challenges, but his coaches think he's ready, too. Assistant SPHS cheer coach and active Ravens cheerleader Chris Riley said, "[Garvey] is going to go into college far more prepared than most cheer athletes. Jon has the discipline, the ability to learn, and the background of skills necessary to be a cheerleading star one day."

Reflecting on his time in cheer so far, Garvey said that he has only one regret: that he didn't start sooner. "I was in probably 10 or 11 sports seasons throughout all of high school," he said, "and cheer was by far my favorite part of high school. I wish, if I could go back to freshman year, that I started then because ... instead of one cheer season, I would have had eight."

From Garvey's amazing experience in cheer, he offered advice to anyone considering trying out the sport: "Absolutely try it. It will be the best experience you will ever have."

He had one final message for his high school cheer team and a warning for his high school competitors. "Severna Park is coming for first next year!" he said.



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England-Based Metros Come To Kinder Park For Girls Lax Series



Girls from the Anne Arundel youth leagues and the Metros from Stockport, England, contested a game at Kinder Farm Park on July 31 as part of the annual Crosse Over exchange series between the two programs. Since the first girls lacrosse game between the programs in 1996, the Metros have come to Maryland in even-numbered years, with a select Anne Arundel squad traveling to the United Kingdom in odd-numbered years.

Photos by David Bashore

Left: Crosse Over's Izzi Scarfo (5) ran past Stockport Metros' Lily Tyler during their game on July 31 at Kinder Farm Park. **Right:** Grace Mathews (26) looked downfield as she sprinted with possession during Crosse Over's game against Stockport.



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Former Broadneck Athlete Makes History As AACC's First Female All-American Golfer

Ela Simpson Finishes Seventh At National Junior College Tournament

By Kevin Murnane

Anne Arundel Community College's (AACC) **Ela Simpson** has had a storied athletic career in her two years at the Arnold campus.

Simpson capped off that athletic prowess by becoming the first All-American female golfer at AACC after finishing seventh at the National Junior College Athletic Association Division III women's tournament in Chautauqua Golf Course in New York. It was a four-day, 72-hole tournament and she finished with a 93-stroke average per 18 holes for the tournament. Simpson won the Region 20 golf tournament by 24 strokes.

"I'm beyond proud of Ela's accomplishments on the golf course," said AACC athletic director **Duane Herr**. "Ela adds her All-American achievement to an impressive resume at AACC, which includes four sports, including a women's soccer national appearance and a women's lacrosse national championship."

Simpson played guard on the AACC women's basketball team this year and played forward in soccer and attack in lacrosse. This was Simpson's first year playing golf for the Riverhawks.

"I don't know of too many athletes from Anne Arundel County who can say they have played in three national championships," said **Jim Griffiths**, who was Simpson's coach in soccer and lacrosse at AACC.

To provide an example of Simpson's athleticism, she was primarily self-taught in golf. She began playing golf with the encouragement of her grandfather.

"He used to take me to the driving range, and at first, I thought golf was boring," Simpson said. "But he was always positive and motivated me to keep playing. Then in my sophomore year, I went out for Broadneck's golf team and started to enjoy the game, make new friends, and I improved."

Simpson's strengths are the length of her drives and pinpoint short game. Off of the tee, Simpson averages between 200- to 230-yard drives.

"Ela is really good at every component

of the game," said AACC golf coach **Dave O'Donnell**. "She's 100% committed to improving her game, and because we don't have a women's golf team yet, Ela practiced with the men's team the entire year. She has a true love of the game and has an outstanding positive attitude."

That positive attitude, as well as being extremely focused, are critical to success on the golf course.

"In golf, you compete within yourself and you can't blame other people if you have a bad shot," Simpson said. "The mental challenge of the game is to stay positive and not get frustrated when you hit that bad shot."

Simpson will attend Stevenson University this fall and continue playing golf for the Mustangs. She plans on majoring in criminal justice and would like to be an Anne Arundel County police officer after graduation.

"I give credit to my grandfather for my positive outlook and exposing me to golf," Simpson said. "In fact, he was the first person to text me after the national tournament."

O'Donnell said Simpson's impact will resonate long after her time at AACC.

"We will miss Ela next year as she has added so much life into the team," O'Donnell said. "Partly because of Ela's success, we will add a women's golf team to the college's athletic offerings next year."

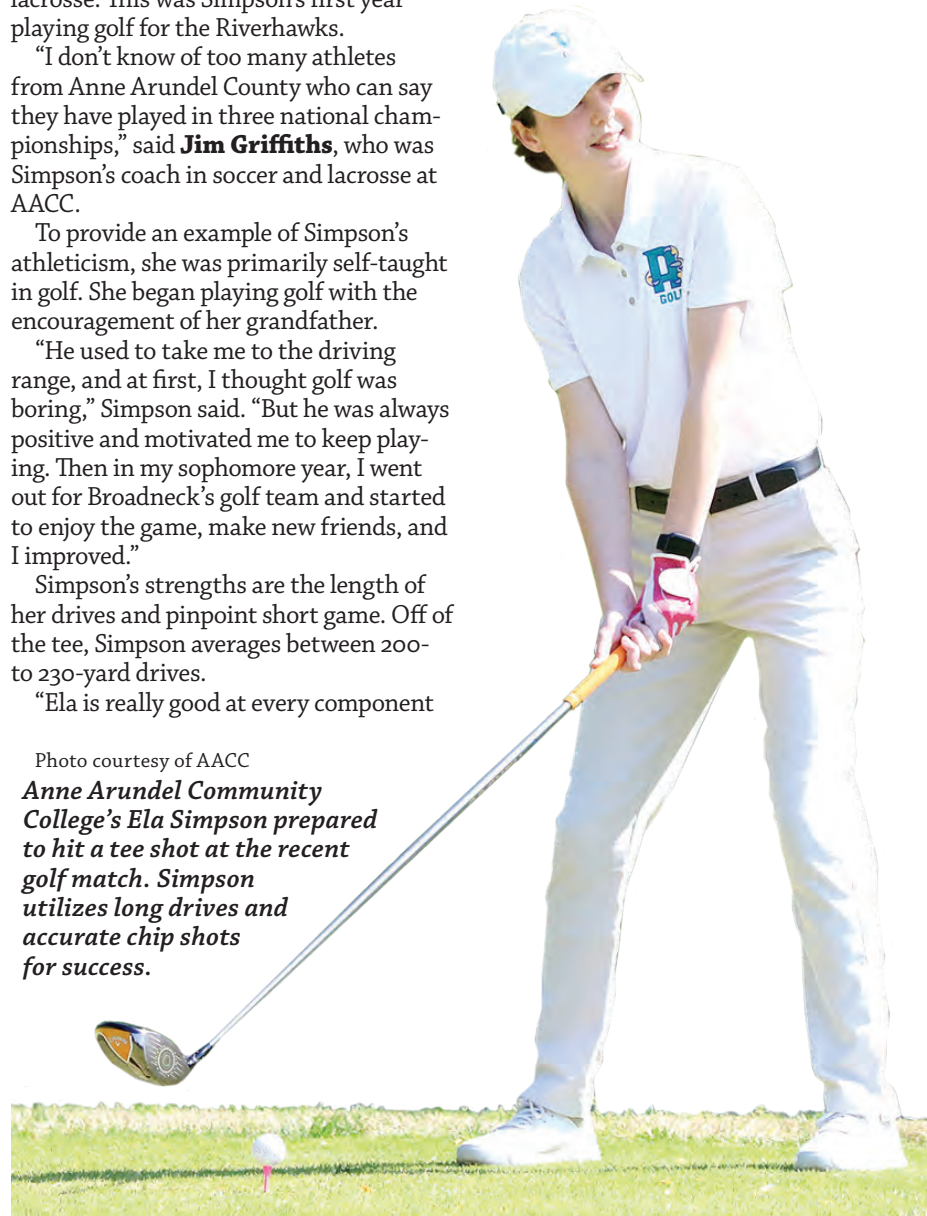


Photo courtesy of AACC

Anne Arundel Community College's Ela Simpson prepared to hit a tee shot at the recent golf match. Simpson utilizes long drives and accurate chip shots for success.

Addi Hurst Named Second-Team Division II Region 20 Outfielder

Arnold Athlete Combined Outstanding Offense, Defense For AACC Riverhawks

By Kevin Murnane

Arnold's **Addi Hurst** knew she had to face tough challenges going from high school softball to battling college-level pitching with more velocity and movement. Compounding that, Hurst was the first person in her family to attend college.

After a stellar freshman year both on the field and in the classroom at Anne Arundel Community College (AACC), Hurst exceeded her expectations by earning second-team Region 20 softball honors as a center fielder as well as finishing with a 3.69 grade point average (GPA) for the spring semester.

Hurst began playing softball in fourth grade, but basketball was her primary sport growing up.

"It was in middle school when I began to really enjoy playing softball and playing travel ball for the Brooklyn Park Bandits," Hurst said. "We played against some talented travel league teams and went to numerous United States Specialty Sports Association (USSSA) tournaments at Bachman Sports Complex in Glen Burnie."

That travel ball experience and competing against elite competition paid dividends as Hurst entered Broadneck High School and helped the Bruins win the regional championship during her senior year.

"I learned a great deal from coach (**Beth**) **Mackel** at Broadneck and developed close friendships with my teammates," Hurst said, referring to Broadneck's former head coach for softball. "At Broadneck, I learned to relax more and make the game more fun and embrace (that) 'it's just a game, so let's have fun' philosophy."

Hurst chose AACC for her next challenge and experienced a big difference in the level of competition.

"I learned that the pitchers were super, super fast and threw a lot of 'rise balls' in college," Hurst said. "I had to quickly make adjustments as the season began."

Hurst made those adjustments and had a stellar year for the Riverhawks, hitting for a .434 average, with four home runs and 27 runs batted in. Hurst also had a .495 on-base percentage and .904 fielding mark. Hurst was named to the second-team All Maryland Junior College team as an outfielder. That award is given to players competing in all Maryland junior colleges.

"When we scouted Addi at Broadneck, we immediately knew she would be an asset both on offense and defense," said Riverhawks head softball coach **Guy Klingensmith**, who coached 10 years in the Green Hornets organization, including both baseball



Photos courtesy of AACC

Arnold's Abbi Hurst had an outstanding freshman year as she batted .434 with four home runs and 27 runs batted in for the Anne Arundel Community College Riverhawks. She also played a great defensive center field and robbed a home run against Howard Community College.

and softball.

Hurst had to miss some time this season as she was in concussion protocol after making a spectacular catch against Howard Community College.

"Abbi made an ESPN highlight catch in center field by robbing an opponent of a home run," Klingensmith said. "Unfortunately, she paid the price with a concussion when she hit the wall, but Abbi continued to be part of the team by attending meetings and games while she was in concussion protocol. She also maintained her high academic marks throughout the spring."

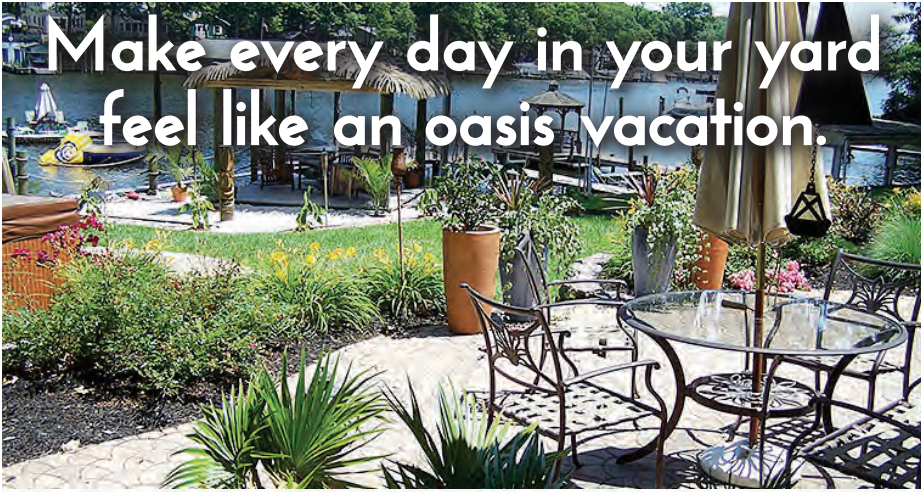
Balancing being a full-time student and a vigorous softball schedule, Hurst also works part-time at Oishi Japanese Cuisine, a restaurant in Arnold.

Hurst will return to AACC for her sophomore year and bring her offensive and defensive talent and fun-loving philosophy to the Arnold campus.

Klingensmith is thrilled that Hurst is coming back, and he misses Hurst enjoying sunflower seeds during practice and games.

"You won't find Abbi without sunflower seeds. She loves her seeds," Klingensmith said.

The Riverhawks will look to improve their record next year as they finished with a 9-26 mark. They had victories over Howard County and Cecil County community colleges as well as Butler County and Westmoreland County community colleges in Pennsylvania.



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Broadneck And Severna Park Fall Sports Schedules

BROADNECK

Football

- Sept. 6: vs. St. Mary's, 6:00pm
- Sept. 13: vs. Arundel, 6:00pm
- Sept. 20: at Meade, 6:00pm
- Sept. 27: vs. Glen Burnie, 6:00pm
- Oct. 4: at Severna Park, 6:00pm
- Oct. 10: vs. Old Mill, 6:00pm
- Oct. 18: at Annapolis, 6:00pm
- Oct. 25: vs. North County, 6:00pm
- Nov. 1: at Severn Run, 6:00pm

Boys Soccer

- Sept. 7: vs. Mount Hebron (at Bowie), 11:00am
- Sept. 7: vs. River Hill (at Bowie), 4:00pm
- Sept. 10: at Crofton, 5:00pm
- Sept. 12: vs. St. Mary's, 6:45pm
- Sept. 17: vs. Severn Run, 5:00pm
- Sept. 19: at Southern, 7:00pm
- Sept. 20: vs. Chesapeake Science Point, 6:45pm
- Sept. 24: vs. Severna Park, 5:00pm
- Sept. 26: vs. Arundel, 7:00pm
- Oct. 1: vs. Annapolis, 5:00pm
- Oct. 4: vs. Chesapeake, 7:00pm
- Oct. 7: at Old Mill, 5:00pm
- Oct. 15: vs. TBD (county playoffs)
- Oct. 17: vs. TBD (county playoffs)
- Oct. 19: vs. TBD (county championship)

Girls Soccer

- Sept. 10: at Crofton, 7:00pm
- Sept. 14: vs. Urbana (at Glen Burnie), 11:00am
- Sept. 14: at Glen Burnie Mixer, 3:00pm
- Sept. 17: vs. Severn Run, 7:00pm
- Sept. 19: at Southern, 5:00pm
- Sept. 20: vs. Chesapeake Science Point, 5:00pm
- Sept. 24: vs. Severna Park, 7:00pm
- Sept. 26: vs. Arundel, 5:00pm
- Oct. 1: vs. Annapolis, 7:00pm
- Oct. 4: vs. Chesapeake, 5:00pm
- Oct. 7: at Old Mill, 7:00pm
- Oct. 9: vs. Archbishop Spalding, 7:00pm
- Oct. 14: vs. TBD (county playoffs)
- Oct. 16: vs. TBD (county playoffs)
- Oct. 19: vs. TBD (county championship)

Field Hockey

- Sept. 7: Bruin Invitational, 11:00am
- Sept. 7: Bruin Invitational, 11:00am
- Sept. 10: vs. Crofton, 6:30pm
- Sept. 12: at Long Reach, 6:00pm
- Sept. 17: at Chesapeake, 6:30pm
- Sept. 19: vs. Southern, 6:30pm
- Sept. 24: at Severna Park, 6:30pm
- Sept. 26: at Arundel, 6:30pm
- Oct. 1: at South River, 6:30pm
- Oct. 4: at Bryn Mawr, 4:30pm
- Oct. 7: vs. Old Mill, 6:30pm
- Oct. 9: at Garrison Forest, 4:30pm
- Oct. 15: vs. TBD (county playoffs)
- Oct. 17: vs. TBD (county playoffs)
- Oct. 19: vs. TBD (county championship)

Volleyball

- Sept. 9: vs. St. Paul's, 6:00pm
- Sept. 10: at Severn Run, 6:00pm
- Sept. 17: vs. Old Mill, 6:00pm
- Sept. 19: vs. South River, 6:00pm
- Sept. 24: at Arundel, 6:00pm
- Sept. 25: at Musselman, 6:00pm
- Sept. 26: at Glen Burnie, 6:00pm
- Oct. 1: at Severna Park, 6:00pm
- Oct. 7: vs. Crofton, 6:00pm
- Oct. 9: vs. TBD (county playoffs)
- Oct. 15: vs. TBD (county playoffs)

- Oct. 17: vs. TBD (county playoffs)
- Oct. 19: vs. TBD (county championship)
- Oct. 22: at Reservoir, 6:00pm
- Oct. 24: vs. River Hill, 6:00pm

SEVERNA PARK

Football

- Sept. 6: vs. Glenelg, 7:00pm
- Sept. 13: vs. South River, 6:00pm
- Sept. 20: at Annapolis, 6:00pm
- Sept. 27: vs. Chesapeake, 6:00pm
- Oct. 4: vs. Broadneck, 6:00pm
- Oct. 10: at Northeast, 6:00pm
- Oct. 18: vs. Severn Run, 6:00pm
- Oct. 25: vs. Crofton, 6:00pm
- Nov. 1: at Glen Burnie, 6:00pm

Boys Soccer

- Sept. 10: vs. Meade, 5:00pm
- Sept. 17: at South River, 5:00pm
- Sept. 19: vs. Chesapeake, 7:00pm
- Sept. 24: at Broadneck, 5:00pm
- Sept. 26: vs. Glen Burnie, 7:00pm
- Oct. 1: at Northeast, 5:00pm
- Oct. 7: vs. North County, 5:00pm
- Oct. 15: vs. TBD (county playoffs)
- Oct. 17: vs. TBD (county playoffs)
- Oct. 19: vs. TBD (county championship)

The schedule for Severna Park boys soccer was partially complete before the Severna Park Voice went to print.

Girls Soccer

- Sept. 10: vs. Meade, 7:00pm
- Sept. 13: at Arundel, 6:30pm
- Sept. 17: at South River, 7:00pm
- Sept. 19: vs. Chesapeake, 5:00pm
- Sept. 24: at Broadneck, 7:00pm
- Sept. 26: vs. Glen Burnie, 5:00pm
- Oct. 1: at Northeast, 7:00pm
- Oct. 2: at Notre Dame Prep, TBD
- Oct. 7: vs. North County, 7:00pm
- Oct. 11: at Severn School, 5:00pm
- Oct. 14: vs. TBD (county playoffs)
- Oct. 16: vs. TBD (county playoffs)
- Oct. 19: vs. TBD (county championship)

Field Hockey

- Sept. 9: at St. Mary's, 6:30pm
- Sept. 10: at Southern, 6:30pm
- Sept. 12: at Crofton, 6:30pm
- Sept. 17: vs. South River, 6:30pm
- Sept. 19: at Chesapeake, 6:30pm
- Sept. 24: vs. Broadneck, 6:30pm
- Oct. 1: vs. Arundel, 6:30pm
- Oct. 4: at Kent Island, 5:30pm
- Oct. 7: at Annapolis, 6:30pm
- Oct. 9: vs. TBD (county playoffs)
- Oct. 15: vs. TBD (county playoffs)
- Oct. 17: vs. TBD (county playoffs)
- Oct. 19: vs. TBD (county championship)

Volleyball

- Sept. 5: vs. Archbishop Spalding, 6:00pm
- Sept. 10: at Glen Burnie, 6:00pm
- Sept. 12: vs. Annapolis, 6:00pm
- Sept. 13: vs. McDonogh, 6:00pm
- Sept. 17: at Arundel, 6:00pm
- Sept. 19: at Crofton, 6:00pm
- Sept. 26: vs. South River, 6:00pm
- Oct. 1: vs. Broadneck, 6:00pm
- Oct. 7: vs. Old Mill, 6:00pm
- Oct. 9: vs. TBD (county playoffs)
- Oct. 15: vs. TBD (county playoffs)
- Oct. 17: vs. TBD (county playoffs)
- Oct. 19: vs. TBD (county championship)
- Oct. 22: at Glenelg, 6:00pm
- Oct. 24: vs. Atholton, 6:00pm

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Green Hornets, Severn River Rugby Team Up For Clinic



Photo courtesy of the Severn River Rugby Football Club

The Severn River Rugby Football Club and Severna Park Green Hornets connected during the inaugural Green Hornets youth rugby clinic on July 11.

There's a steady chain developing in the Severna Park rugby scene. The Severn River Rugby Football Club and Severna Park Green Hornets connected during the inaugural Green Hornets youth rugby clinic on July 11, ahead of the Green Hornets hosting the Maryland Youth Rugby Festival later in the month. Severn River, comprised of senior men's and

women's teams and coaches, introduced young players to running an effective defense, defending one-on-one, proper passing technique, and drop-kicking. The clinic ended with the Green Hornets' U13 and U16 teams scrimmaging against Severn River. Green Hornets rugby participates in touch rugby from May to July and is open to youth players, ages

5 to 16, of all skill levels. Severn River Rugby runs touch rugby sevens during the summer and participates in rugby union during the fall and spring. They field both competitive and social teams and welcome men and women of all skill levels. The club practices Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7:00pm at American Legion Post 175 on Manhattan Beach Road in Severna Park.

Professional Wolves Coaches Train BAYS Soccer Athletes



Photos by David Bashore
Under the watchful eye of Wolverhampton Wanderers (Wolves) academy coaches Shawn Briscoe and Ty Stewart, as well as Wolves partner club coach Richard Eaton of Virginia's Player Sports Academy, players representing Broadneck Area Youth Sports travel soccer teams went through an academy-style training series put on by Wolves and PSA from July 29-30 at Broadneck High School. The program was part of Wolves' U.S. preseason friendly tour, as their senior team played Crystal Palace at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium in Annapolis on July 31.



Premier League Teams Clash In Annapolis



Annapolis played host to an international soccer match between Wolverhampton Wanderers (Wolves) and Crystal Palace on July 31, with Crystal Palace prevailing 3-1. Held at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium, the match was part of a three-city tournament called The Stateside Cup, which also included Jacksonville and Tampa. The Wolves beat West Ham 3-1 on July 27 to take the opener. Crystal Palace then defeated West Ham in Tampa on August 3 to win The Stateside Cup.



Pair Of Local Athletes Earns AAYSA Scholarships

Jude Lascola and Nate Campion were each awarded Anne Arundel Youth Soccer Association Arundel Cup scholarships this summer. Lascola graduated this June from Severna Park High School. Campion was homeschooled and dual enrolled at Anne Arundel Community College, where he earned his associate's degree in transfer studies.

Lascola has been playing soccer for the Greens Hornets since he was in kindergarten and Campion has been playing since age 4. Both played for a Green Hornets U19 rec boys county soccer team coached by Doug Mules the past couple of years.

"Jude and Nate have always been easy to coach," Mules said. "They are both extremely versatile players and approach any new position or challenge with a positive attitude — a trait that will serve them well through college and beyond."

Both players have many great memories of playing with their friends and making new ones along the way. Lascola said his parents wanted him to start soccer so he could stay active, but he started to enjoy the sport during middle school as he made those friendships and formed a bond with coaches.

"I kept playing throughout high school because I was able to continue playing with the same coach I'd been playing with since about sixth grade and many other players had been too," he said.



Jude Lascola



Nate Campion

"Because of this, I became pretty close with a lot of my teammates, making everything from practices to games more enjoyable. Overall, I've enjoyed playing in this league because it's not as competitive and stressful as a high school or travel team would be. We're all just playing for fun with the goal of winning."

Lascola lives in Severna Park and will attend the University of Maryland, College Park in the fall to study electrical engineering, and Campion lives in Millersville and will attend the University of Maryland, Baltimore County in the fall to study music technology and minor in entrepreneurship.

"I'm very grateful that the scholarship exists, and I've encouraged other players on my team to apply for it and definitely encourage other players in the league to apply for it," Lascola said. "A big part of why I chose an in-state school was for the tuition, so being able to get scholarships like this is extremely helpful in bringing down college expenses."

Spalding's Football Foundation

» Continued from page 19

would encourage his players to ask their parents how their day went and to call their grandparents.

"My dad always emphasized how to act off of the field," said Nick Whittles. "He always taught respect for others, being polite and it was always 'no sir,' 'yes sir.' He was everyone's dad. He loved every single player."

One of Whittles' main assistants, **Brian Probst**, became the interim head coach in 2012 after Whittles died. The athletic director (AD) at the time, **Jeff Parsons**, wanted to make a change and hired a rising star, **Kyle Schmitt**, out of Howard County. Schmitt took over the program in 2013.

Schmitt, who played offensive guard and center at Maryland and had great success at Atholton High School, impressed Parsons with his thoughts for the program and how he was going to achieve them. Schmitt wanted a year-round strength and conditioning program, and with Spalding's outstanding new football stadium, he knew it was a program that was on the rise.

Schmitt's first few years provided numerous lessons in playing the "big boys" of the A Conference.

"I will always remember we lost to Gilman 69-40 one year and I knew I had to recruit bigger, faster and stronger players as well as get talented quarterbacks to compete in the A Conference," Schmitt said.

He vigorously went to work and gathered outstanding assistant coaches who had strong roots in the region from

Prince George's and Howard counties as well as local youth football leagues. Part of Schmitt's recruitment strategy is to have area eighth-graders visit Spalding's campus on game nights and witness the atmosphere of the football stadium, which is named after Mike Whittles.

As much as Schmitt gathered talented football players, he reinforced what Whittles stood for in a football program: respect and hardworking, dedicated players who represent the school in the community.

"We select players who will be good teammates," Schmitt said. "Good people have strong values."

Spalding has won two consecutive A Conference titles and is ranked 85th in the country by MaxPreps' preseason list for this year.

The program has also had three players commit to the University of Maryland over the summer, including star quarterback Malik Washington.

Schmitt continuously states that the foundation of the program was built by Mike Whittles, the assistant coaches and dedicated players.

"I tell the players all the time that they are standing on the shoulders of so many great players and coaches, especially coach Whittles who had the vision of getting Spalding to compete in the A Conference," he said.

Nick Whittles was proud to play for his dad, and he adheres to his dad's motto of "make every day count." Nick Whittles also became a father for the first time in July and named his son Michael Whittles II.

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Anne Arundel Filipino Stick Fighters Bring Home World Titles

By Judy Tacyn

Grand Master **Carlos Patalinghug Jr.**, owner of Kick Connection in Millersville, traveled to the Philippines in July with a group of 18 local athletes for the 17th biannual World Eskrima Kali Arnis Federation (WEKAF) championships. Patalinghug and his trainers have been empowering the community, producing black belts and world champions for more than 35 years in Anne Arundel County. In addition to the competition, Patalinghug showed his group parts of the Philippines, including his hometown.



The Kick Connection team fared well during the 17th WEKAF championship at the Mandaue Sports Complex in Mandaue, Philippines, in July.

There are two U.S. nationals — east and west. Winners in those tournaments are invited to the worlds. The east nationals were held at Earleigh Heights Volunteer Fire Company on April 13.

Fifteen countries participated in the world championships, with the U.S. receiving the second-highest number of medals, followed by the Philippines with the most medals earned.

Patalinghug is the current president of WEKAF USA. He brought a group of more than 100 participants, including family members and friends, to the competition. Eighteen competitors were from Kick Connection, ranging in ages from 8 to 56 years. Every Kick Connection competitor earned at least one medal.

“The Kick Connection students of Anne Arundel County demonstrated great skills, determination and fortitude, even being a group of mostly novice participants that started in a little less than six months of training,”

Patalinghug said. “They were able to garnish gold, silver and bronze medals.”

Patalinghug added that for him one of the highlights of the competition was when a Filipino coach asked him how long his athletes have been training.

“The coach was shocked to hear that for some of the competitors, this was their first world championship and they had been training for only six months,” Patalinghug said. “The coach said the Filipino competitors had been training for seven to 10 years! I am so proud of my students and their accomplishments; they went toe-to-toe with such esteemed fighters. I give credit to my head instructors, Master **Matt Cerbas** and **Kim Everett**. Their training and preparation of the students of this event were exceptional.”

Leo Kirby, a rising sophomore at Mount Saint Joseph and Severna Park resident, also credited his success to

Everett and Cerbas. To prepare for the tournament, the athletes spend many training hours with their coaches. He said they have coached some of the best competitors of Team USA, and their training regimen is meticulous.

“They have so much experience in training and spar, and they have been in tournaments themselves,” Kirby said. “They know how far to push us, but they are also very supportive.”

Besides the world championships, the students were able to assist with philanthropic activities such as feeding the less fortunate, building water wells, donating school supplies, and clothing distribution. Patalinghug wanted to give the athletes the opportunity to serve the local community. There was time to enjoy some of the sites of the island, such as swimming with whale sharks and seeing tarsiers, tiny primates.

Read the full story at www.severnaparkvoice.com.

Kick Connection competitors and medalists included:

- Coach Matthew Cerbas** - 1 bronze
- Andrea Young** - 1 gold, 2 bronze
- Hutch Ro-Young** - 1 silver, 2 bronze
- Lauryn Moody** - 3 bronze
- James Dupreay** - 2 gold, 1 silver
- Tracy Meyer** - 1 gold, 2 silver
- Leo Kirby** - 1 gold, 1 silver, 1 bronze
- Cooper Geldmacher** - 2 gold
- Mackenzie Ferko** - 1 silver
- Mary Rogers** - 1 gold, 2 bronze
- Fiona Laque** - 1 silver, 1 bronze
- Hopper Laque** - 2 bronze
- Artem Yousefian** - 1 gold, 1 bronze
- C.J. Patalinghug** - 1 silver
- Emmanuel Patalinghug** - 1 silver
- Gabriel Patalinghug** - 1 silver
- Angelique Patalinghug** - 1 silver
- Jared Patalinghug** - 1 silver

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Evergreen Dolphins Swim To A Solid Season Finish



Photos courtesy of Alex Bardakh

The Evergreen Dolphins finished 3-2, good enough for second place out of five teams in the Greater Annapolis Swim League's Division C, during July. Along the way, the Dolphins competed against Severn River Swim Club and Admiral Heights.

Summer Swim League Ends Season With Medal Meets

» Continued from page 19

Here are some other notable finishes from Severna Park and Arnold swimmers at the GASL gold medal meet.

Men Open 100-yard Medley Relay

Second – Indian Hills Swim Club, 1:00.25
(Beau Gendell, Marcus Cembrano, Cash Gendell, Tugg Gendell)

Women Open 100-yard Medley Relay

Second – Indian Hills Swim Club, 1:02.00
(Kennedy Lyon, Izzy Bialy, Aubrey Whalen, Hannah Raspet)

Boys 10 and under 100-yard Individual Medley

First – Tugg Gendell, Indian Hills Swim Club, 1:22.56

Girls 10 and under 100-yard Individual Medley

First – Izzy Bialy, Indian Hills Swim Club, 1:16.78

Boys 11-12 100-yard Individual Medley

Third – Beau Gendell, Indian Hills Swim Club, 1:10.18

Boys 13-14 100-yard Individual Medley

Third – Aidan Noordhoorn, 1:01.54

Men 15-18 100-yard Individual Medley

Second – Nate Decker, Chase Creek Swim Team, 54.75

Third – Kohl Hanes, Indian Hills Swim Club, 55.37

Girls Six and under 25-yard Freestyle

Third – Nora Cosgrove, Ulmstead, 21.60

Boys 7-8 25-yard Freestyle

Third – Chance Scovel, Indian Hills Swim Club, 16.13

Boys 9-10 50-yard Freestyle

First – Tugg Gendell, Indian Hills Swim Club, 31.03

Girls 9-10 50-yard Freestyle

Second – Maggie Liscinsky, Harting Farm Swim Team, 31.41

Third – Lilly Emery, 32.16

Girls 11-12 50-yard Freestyle

First – Kennedy Lyon, Indian Hills Swim Club, 28.43

Third – Hannah Raspet, 29.40

Girls 13-14 50-yard Freestyle

First – Addison Betley, Severn River Swim Club, 26.62

Men 15-18 50-yard Freestyle

First – Dean Doubek, Harting Farm Swim Team, 22.00

Men 15-18 50-yard Freestyle

Second – Katie Mentasana, Indian Hills Swim Club, 26.71

Girls 6 and under 25-yard Backstroke

First – Chloe Smith, Severn River Swim Club, 25.07

Boys 7-8 25-yard Backstroke

First – Chance Scovel, Indian Hills Swim Club, 19.47

Second – Braden Dunlap, Indian Hills Swim Club, 21.03

Third – George Barron, Ulmstead, 21.37

Boys 9-10 25-yard Backstroke

First – Tugg Gendell, Indian Hills Swim Club, 17.34

Girls 9-10 25-yard Backstroke

First – Izzy Bialy, Indian Hills Swim Club, 16.60

Third – Scarlett Piggrem, Severn River Swim Club, 18.00

Boys 11-12 5-yard Backstroke

Third – Beau Gendell, Indian Hills Swim Club, 32.59

Girls 11-12 5-yard Backstroke

First – Kennedy Lyon, Indian Hills Swim Club, 31.94

Girls 13-14 50-yard Backstroke

Second – Lo Ward, Evergreen, 31.13

Men 15-18 50-yard Backstroke

First – Nate Decker, Chase Creek Swim Team, 25.37

Third – Dean Doubek, Harting Farm Swim Team, 25.75

Boys 9-10 25-yard Breaststroke

First – Lawton Bloomfield, Severn River Swim Club, 19.50

Third – Stone Gendell, Indian Hills Swim Club, 20.73

Girls 9-10 25-yard Breaststroke

First – Izzy Bialy, Indian Hills Swim Club, 17.94

Third – Laken Alexander, Severn River Swim Club, 19.18

Boys 13-14 50-yard Breaststroke

Third – Aidan Noordhoorn
Harting Farm Swim Team, 32.21

Girls 13-14 50-yard Breaststroke

Third – Lo Ward, Evergreen, 35.78

Men 15-18 50-yard Breaststroke

Second – Marcus Cembrano
Indian Hills Swim Club, 28.32

Third – Jack Hamilton, Chase Creek Swim Team, 29.06

Boys 9-10 25-yard Butterfly

Second – Tucker Wendell, Evergreen, 15.68

Girls 9-10 25-yard Butterfly

First – Maggie Liscinsky
Harting Farm Swim Team, 15.51

Boys 11-12 50-yard Butterfly

Third – Kevin Yang, Harting Farm Swim Team, 31.14

Girls 11-12 50-yard Butterfly

Second – Kennedy Lyon, Indian Hills Swim Club, 30.09

Boys 13-14 50-yard Butterfly

Second – Aidan Noordhoorn,
Harting Farm Swim Team, 26.78

Girls 13-14 50-yard Butterfly

Second – Addison Betley, Severn River Swim Club, 29.65

Men 15-18 50-yard Butterfly

Second – Dean Doubek, Harting Farm Swim Team, 24.26

Third – Nate Decker, Chase Creek Swim Team, 24.78

Women 15-18 50-yard Butterfly

Third – Aubrey Whalen, Indian Hills Swim Club, 28.85

Women Open 150-yard Freestyle Relay

Third – Indian Hills Swim Club, 1:27.90
(Lilly Emery, Cassidy Lewis, Kennedy Benjamin, Katie Mentasana)

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Benfield, Severna Park Elementary Schools Add Assistant Principals



Missy Fuson
Benfield ES



Cheryl Slack
Severna Park ES

By Lauren Cowin

Two local elementary schools added assistant principals to their faculties for the 2024-2025 school year.

On June 26, Missy Fuson joined Benfield Elementary School, and Cheryl Slack began at Severna Park Elementary School. The moves were two of many in a significant reshuffling of staff by Anne Arundel County's superintendent of schools, Mark Bedell.

This is the first administrative assignment for both Fuson and Slack, and the first time their schools have had an assistant principal on staff.

Fuson, who previously taught fifth grade at Nantucket Elementary School in Crofton, felt drawn toward leadership early on in her now 20-plus-year career in education.

"The moments in the classroom when the kids feel like they get a concept, and you see their confidence grow, that's what really drives me every day in education," Fuson said. "Looking at it now through an administrator lens, I feel like I can offer that same thing to teachers. I want them to also feel supported."

At the top of the list for Fuson is closing the gap between general education and special education students through collaboration with the special education team. One responsibility she expects to lift from the plate of teachers and head principal Sue Myers is the coordination of adaptive education, or 504, plans.

Myers said she advocated for this new position at the campus for the past few years as the school's population has steadily grown over her six-year tenure.

"That's one more person that's at this building that's going to be a champion for kids, that's going to be a collaborative member of the community, and I look forward to that," Myers said.

Severna Park Elementary School welcomed Slack, who has been an educator for Anne Arundel County Public Schools her entire career. She spent 18 years teaching at Belvedere Elementary School and most recently served as the elementary co-lead for the Right Start program, which mentors new teachers who have either just entered the field or recently moved to the county.

After years spent collaborating with leaders at every grade level and specialty at schools throughout the county with Right Start, Slack decided it was time to more narrowly tailor her focus.

"I was making an impact at a lot of other schools, but I was ready to make a bigger impact at one," she said.

» Continued on page 38

Students Provide Online Language Learning, Resulting In Diverse Cultural Exchange



Lucas Du (left) and Kateri Jarvis are part of a three-member team that started Youth Bridge Inc. four years ago to offer English language education classes and various learning opportunities.

Globalization has increased the flow of goods, services, capital, people, learning and ideas over international boundaries with everything being more tightly connected than ever before.

Severna Park High School rising senior Kateri Jarvis, alongside Howard County rising seniors Connor Wu and Lucas Du, started a nonprofit four years ago to provide English language education classes and various learning opportunities through their Global Conversation Café discussions.

"Youth Bridge Inc. (YBI) is a nonprofit initiated to promote globalization through tailored English classes and diverse learning opportunities," Lucas said.

"The nonprofit was started to bridge the gap between cultures and create a space for language learning and a worldwide culture exchange."

YBI was born from a shared commitment among Lucas, Connor and Kateri to create an online inclusive environment for engaging students who want to explore English as a second language, aiming to break down language barriers and promote positive cross-cultural exchanges.

"We facilitate students' language learning through personalized, interactive and challenging online English lessons, enabling them to enhance their communication skills and cultural understanding," Kateri said. "The platform encourages interactive experiences, allowing students to engage in real-time Zoom calls with various students. The nonprofit not only provides weekly lessons but also facilitates monthly conversation café sessions for students to share about global topics and their relativity in their communities."

YBI has approximately 300 students from 28 countries consistently engaging in either the conversation café or weekly English lessons, fostering cultural connections that transcend geographical boundaries and allow students worldwide to learn and connect with others.

"The objective is to build connections between foreign students through a common language and contribute to the globalization of worldwide issues," Lucas said.

Conversation topics during the discussion cafes include technology, global warming, food and local cuisine, to name a few.

"These discussion cafes are important
» Continued on page 36

Longtime AACPS Music Educator Transitions Into New Career At The U.S. Naval Academy

By Alyson Kay

After 38 years of teaching music across Anne Arundel County Public Schools at the elementary, middle and high school levels, Rob Stojakovich is embarking on a new challenge with the U.S. Naval Academy's Drum and Bugle Corps.

Stojakovich grew up surrounded by music. His grandfather and father were both musicians. His father played for the Army Band while he was stationed in Fort Meade during the Korean War.

Starting at 8 years old, Stojakovich and his family, which included his two older brothers and an older sister, performed in a family band around western Pennsylvania.



Rob Stojakovich

"By the time I was 11, I'd already performed at 100 weddings and country club functions," Stojakovich said.

When he went to Duquesne University, Stojakovich was originally interested in studying music composition, but changed his mind when he did his student teaching.

"I enjoyed the experience so much that I decided to pursue education at that time, versus composition," said Stojakovich, who spent the last 11 years at Magothy River Middle School following stints at Southern High,

Southern Middle, South River High School, Edgewater Elementary, Bates Middle School and Chesapeake High.

He enjoys starting at the beginning of a learning cycle and guiding his students to their final concert, youth symphony or performance at the end of that education cycle. Each group will have a different personality makeup than the previous year, even if some students return.

"It's always a clean slate and it's always a chance to create something new and to watch their minds at work and their skills develop over the course of that time," Stojakovich said.

Across all the schools he has served, Stojakovich has found that the key to
» Continued on page 36

Q

Question of the month

BENFIELD SPORTSCENTER



This month, the Severna Park Voice asked a group of campers at Benfield Sportscenter the question:

What Olympic event would you most want to participate in or add to the games?

I would choose water polo because I love swimming and soccer.

Austin W.

I would like to do kickball because it's really easy and it's like baseball.

Ben S.

I would add dodgeball to the Olympics because I like playing dodgeball and I like hitting people with the balls.

Brendan F.

I'd choose soccer because it's the best sport, and the stars, the crowd, the heat of the contest and atmosphere are wild.

Colin B.

I would do track because I'm really good with running, and I can run

for a long period of time.

Dominic B.

I would choose basketball because I play it and it's a really fun sport to play.

Graham D.

I would choose soccer because I've been playing since I was 3.

Giuseppe J.

Discus, because I have a really strong arm and it always looked fun and enjoyable.

Jameson M.

I'd do swimming because I'm pretty fast at it, and I go to the pool a lot and do laps.

John B.

I'd pick spikeball. I just really enjoyed playing it at St. Andrews and with my friends.

Justus G.

I would choose basketball because it's just fun.

King M.

I would want to do track because I

like running and I've been doing it my whole life.

Kirk H.

The Olympic sport I would participate in is snowboarding because I grew up going to different resorts around the United States.

Liam F.

I would choose soccer because I'm really passionate about it and it's fun to play.

Liam T.

I would pick volleyball because my best friend plays it. I've always enjoyed watching her play, and I thought it would be a fun sport to play.

Lily A.

I'd pick powerlifting.

Lucas G.

I would pick baseball because I love baseball and I've been playing for a couple years.

Luke B.

I would choose soccer because it's a very fun sport and I like playing with my friends.

Madelyn B.

I would choose dodgeball because I'm really great at throwing dodgeballs.

Magnus E.

I'd play soccer because it's the only sport I like.

Matthew S.

I would choose softball.

Neyla O.

I would do swimming because I've swum since I was a little kid.

Robert F.

Basketball, because I grew up playing it.

Rylan B.

I would choose bobsledding because in kindergarten we made bobsleds and I think it's fun.

Vern K.

I would do basketball because I already play basketball and I think it's a fun sport.

Watson K.

I would do volleyball because it's fun.

Zach G.



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Music Educator Transitions Into New Career

» Continued from page 35

his success in teaching is by fostering connections with students.

"The one commonality amongst all the levels is students are more successful if you build culture and connection first, and then worry about content later," he said.

Throughout his career, Stojakovich has enjoyed working with many administrators and teachers and witnessing all the ways that his colleagues work to connect with and teach their students.

"There are times where I've kind of walked through the hallways to go to the copier," Stojakovich said. "Maybe I'll walk through the science hallway and see an incredible class in the hallway and (teachers are) physically showing them through an activity cycle, the stages of the moon. I see so much great education."

One thing Stojakovich will miss about teaching kindergarten through grade 12 students is the energy.

"It's frantic energy," Stojakovich said. "It's kind of like riding a wave in the ocean. You can't beat it up. You have to ride it responsibly in the right direction. You learn to take the energy of that classroom and then re-channel that into something where they can focus and understand what the goal is."

Although he is retired from his role as a public-school teacher, Stojakovich believes his work as an educator is far from over. He has started to work as the director of the U.S. Naval Academy's Drum and Bugle Corps, which is now nearing the end of Plebe Summer, a training program for incoming freshmen from June through August. Plebe Summer is designed to prepare freshmen for the academy's four-year curriculum.

"We start with kids, about 50% of whom have never played an instrument before, and by the end of the summer will put on a performance for their upper classmates," Stojakovich said. "We're in the middle of that educational cycle now. It's exciting to see where we started and the possibilities of that final performance."

The time he has with his students can consist of only a couple of hour-long classes before their national TV performances on Saturdays, but his students have risen to the challenge.

"They're amazingly smart and quick and clever," Stojakovich said. "You go over some concepts, you explain it, they try it. You make a correction, they try to get it, they get it."

Stojakovich is also excited about helping U.S. Naval Academy students prepare to serve America in the military.

"These kids, some of them are rocket scientists and they'll be leaders of men and women in battle," Stojakovich said. "They're willing to do the hard stuff. So, to me, the perk of the job is whatever I can do to help."

Students Provide Online Language Learning

» Continued from page 35

as they introduce a diverse spectrum of views to current event topics," Lucas said. "With so many different perspectives, an understanding of circumstances around the world is fostered, allowing participants to understand their similarities and differences. Furthermore, a sense of familiarity is created as students share how they are affected by the same events."

YBI offers a virtual experience where everyone is encouraged to appreciate commonalities and differences while expanding their perspectives and developing new skills.

"A vivid memory that comes to mind originates from (a summer) climate change webinar," Lucas said. "One of the students from Kyrgyzstan presented information about the impacts of climate change on his country. An interesting fact I learned was the importance of glaciers in Kyrgyzstan. In Kyrgyzstan, glaciers act as natural reservoirs of freshwater, crucial for the country's water supply and agriculture. However, climate change is causing these glaciers to melt and collapse, endangering the economy of the country."

Most youth, no matter where they live, are worried and concerned about the same issues. However, as the students are

usually younger, they do not recognize many issues beyond the circumstances in their countries. By seeing how others are also concerned about the same issues, students are more prone to be more involved.

"The work we put into our nonprofit has shown to be significant for students by offering individuals across the world an accessible language education," Kateri said. "Learning English is a crucial skill for global outreach and communication due to the vast amounts of resources, information and opportunities that can come from international relations using English. For educators, the diverse platform provides for a fulfilling opportunity to contribute to making a meaningful impact on multi-national individuals."

Knowledge is power. The students hope that as people and ideas move more easily around the globe, the connections and experiences people have around the world will help in understanding that people cannot truly succeed unless they succeed together.

"The lessons in place not only empower students with learning skills and cross-cultural connection; they also provide all participants, including me, valuable insight into the diverse perspectives of all individuals," Kateri said. "Mentoring students with varying experiences allows us educators to improve on our cultural understanding and adaptability, fostering immense growth in contributing to a more inclusive educational environment globally."

For more information or to get involved, go to globalyouthbridge.wixsite.com/youth-bridge.

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Educator Of The Month

Corinne Shuck Seidel

Broadneck Elementary School



much excitement the students have when they come to my class," she said. "The students love the fun fall stations that we set up. We turn the lights out and have the gym glow in the dark. Crab soccer is another favorite in the gym."

As the name suggests, crab soccer is played when kids use their hands and feet to move around a gym. Beyond those games, Shuck Seidel oversees the school's Polar Bear Plunge team, field day, Water Ready with Drownproofing safety program, and the spring fling show, which includes two dance teams, a jump rope unit, a gymnastics team and a hula hoop contest. Roughly 180 kids participate each year.

That widespread involvement in Broadneck Elementary activities and Shuck Seidel's approach to teaching made her an easy choice for the school's Teacher of the Year nominee. She was one of 15 semifinalists for the honor, which ultimately went to Lake Shore Elementary music teacher Elizabeth Heist.

When asked about the recognition, Shuck Seidel said, "Being named Broadneck Elementary School Teacher of the Year was a great honor. I appreciate my principal for nominating me and was grateful to have made it as a semifinalist."

As she prepares for another year at Broadneck Elementary, Shuck Seidel feels reassured by her decision to become a teacher.

"I wanted to have a positive impact on children, showing them how much they matter," she said. "I sincerely care for each one of them. By encouraging them every day, I give my students the confidence that they can do anything. I provide them with the encouragement and eventual perseverance and determination to overcome challenges."

Lauren Burke Meyer contributed reporting to this story.

By Zach Sparks
zach@severnaparkvoice.com

When Corinne Shuck Seidel took over as Broadneck Elementary's full-time physical education teacher two years ago after being part-time for 16 years, she had big shoes to fill. Her predecessor, Colleen Rowe, was a mainstay at Broadneck Elementary for 35 years and the school gymnasium was named in her honor before her retirement in 2022.

Shuck Seidel was up to the task. A former University of Delaware lacrosse player, she had a passion for fitness and teaching, and she became the school's Anne Arundel County Teacher of the Year nominee during the 2023-2024 school year.

"What I like most about being an elementary school PE teacher is how

skill set will assist in achieving our school's goals," Butler said. "I am looking forward to her meeting families, staff and students throughout the summer and being a member of the SPES community."

Both Fuson and Slack acknowledge they are entering schools that have an established reputation for high academic achievement, and they hope to encourage their students to reach beyond the status quo.

"Learning has no limits," Fuson said. "We can always learn more, so even when you're getting straight A's, this is a very big world."

The Educator of the Month is proudly sponsored by Cafe Mezzanotte.



Schools Add Assistant Principals

» Continued from page 35

For Slack, it was a former intern who first planted the seed that perhaps she should pivot from the classroom to leadership. A similar remark from a former principal was all the nudge she needed.

"It wasn't so much something that I saw within myself; it was what other people saw," Slack said.

Slack hopes to aid in the implementation of the new literacy program county schools will be using this year, in addition to alleviating the workload previously carried by teachers and the head principal, Kyle Butler.

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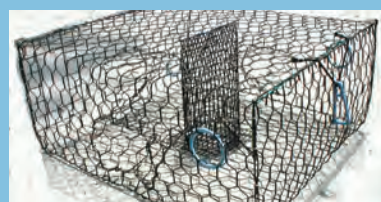
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New Designation Elevates UM BWMC On U.S. News And World Report's List Of Best Hospitals



Photo courtesy of the University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Medical Center

U.S. News & World Report's 2024-2025 Best Hospital's list ranked UM Baltimore Washington Medical Center No. 5 in Maryland.

The University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Medical Center (UM BWMC), a member organization of the University of Maryland Medical System (UMMS), is ranked No. 5 in Maryland and the Baltimore metropolitan area on U.S. News & World Report's 2024-2025 Best Hospital's list, released in July.

The hospital was also rated "high performing" for the care it provides in eight common procedures: chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), colon cancer surgery, diabetes, heart attack, heart failure, kidney failure, lung cancer surgery and pneumonia.

"COPD, pneumonia, stroke, lung cancer, colon cancer — these diseases have a significant impact on our population," said Dr. Jason Heavner, senior vice pres-

ident and chief medical officer at UM BWMC. "Lung cancer has the highest mortality rate of any cancer across the country."

As Heavner explained, the hospital's leadership is always assessing how they practice medicine and deliver care. He said it's about "being able to recruit experienced staff in each of the areas — medical staff, nursing staff and technologists — and giving them the resources they need for education and a knowledge base ... and having the technology, the tools and equipment, like state-of-the-art robotics programs, in the hands of our surgeons."

UM BWMC is one of three UMMS hospitals ranking among the top five hospitals in the state, according to U.S.

» **Continued on page 43**

Prepare Your Kids For School: Protect Their Mental Health

Joy Hudson
Clinical Director of
Behavioral Health
Luminis Health



As the school year approaches, no doubt you're shopping for new clothes and supplies. But it's crucial to consider your children's mental well-being.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), one in six students ages 6 to 17 has a treatable mental health issue like anxiety or depression. As is the case with physical health issues, early identification and intervention of mental health issues can safeguard academic performance and personal growth.

WHAT CAUSES MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES IN CHILDREN?

Several factors contribute, including the following:

Academic pressure: High grades, tests and college admissions can create anxiety and chronic stress, impacting emotional health. Some levels of stress are normal, but chronic stress can lead to burnout and emotional distress. Encourage your children to take a balanced approach to schoolwork.

Social dynamics: Positive peer interactions boost self-esteem, while bullying can lead to severe consequences like anxiety, depression and even suicidal thoughts.

Promote healthy relationships for your

child and take immediate action if bullying is suspected.

Technology: Excessive screen time, especially on social media, can foster loneliness and cyberbullying, necessitating healthy digital habits. Monitoring online activities can help mitigate these risks.

Home environment: Supportive families build resilience, while stress or conflict can magnify mental health issues.

Overscheduling: Encourage free time for rest and creativity to prevent overscheduling, allowing your kids the space to rejuvenate and explore their creativity without constraint.

DEVELOPMENTAL CHANGES

Each academic phase presents unique challenges.

Elementary school (kindergarten to grade 5) – Younger children may experience separation anxiety and difficulty with social skills and adapting to structured environments.

Middle school (grades 6 to 8) – Pre-teens face the pressures of puberty, identity formation, and increased academic demands. Social acceptance becomes more important to them, and bullying or peer pressure can significantly affect their mental health.

High school (grades 9 to 12) – Teenagers deal with the complexities of preparing for adulthood, including higher academic expectations, romantic relationships, and career planning. Mental health issues such as depression and anxiety often emerge during these years.

SUPPORT STRATEGIES

Here's how to bolster your child's mental health:

Regular check-ins – Talk regularly with your child about their feelings and experiences. Creating a safe space for those discussions can help you identify issues early.

Mindfulness and relaxation techniques – Help your child explore the benefits of mindfulness, meditation and relaxation techniques as ways to not only manage stress and anxiety but also to foster a deeper spiritual connection within themselves.

Physical activity – Regular physical activity, such as sports, yoga or even walks, can help improve your child's mood and reduce stress.

A healthy lifestyle – Make sure your child eats a balanced diet and gets enough sleep. Limiting their screen time can have a positive impact on mental health.

Professional support – Do not hesitate to get professional help when needed.

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Luminis Health AAMC Recognized As A Best Hospital By U.S. News & World Report

Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center (LHAAMC), a health care institution in Annapolis for nearly 125 years, has been named by U.S. News & World Report as a 2024-2025 Best Hospital. LHAAMC ranked No. 8 in Maryland and No. 6 in the Baltimore metropolitan area. The hospital was recognized as a high-performing hospital in eight specialties for common procedures, including cardiac care, cancer services and orthopedics.

U.S. News evaluated nearly 5,000 hospitals across 15 specialties and 20 procedures and conditions. Hospitals awarded the "best" designation excelled at factors such as clinical outcomes, level of nursing care and patient experience.

Now in the 35th year of rankings, the annual Best Hospital designa-

» **Continued on page 43**



Photo courtesy of Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center

In U.S. News & World Report's Best Hospitals report, Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center ranked No. 8 in Maryland and No. 6 in the Baltimore metropolitan area.



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New Designation Elevates UM BWMC On List Of Best Hospitals

» Continued from page 41

News & World Report. The University of Maryland Medical Center (UMMC), the system's academic flagship hospital, again ranked No. 2 in both Maryland and the Baltimore metro area. UM St. Joseph's Medical Center ranked No. 3 in the state and Baltimore metro area for the seventh consecutive year.

"Having three of our hospitals ranked so highly is indicative of the excellent academic-focused medical care available across our system," said Mohan Suntha, president and chief executive officer of UMMS. "Our team members work hard every day to deliver compassionate, high-quality patient and family-centered care."

The U.S. News rankings are designed to assist patients and their doctors in

making informed decisions about where to receive care for challenging health conditions or for common elective procedures. More than 60 hospitals in Maryland were evaluated by U.S. News & World Report for the annual list, with only eight meeting the high standards set by the rating organization.

"This ranking reflects our team's unwavering commitment to providing high-quality, compassionate care to our patients, their families and all those we serve," said Kathy McCollum, president and chief executive officer of UM BWMC. "We owe this recognition to our medical staff, clinicians, nurses and team members who collaborate daily to provide the best possible outcomes to our patients and exceptional care to our community."

Luminis Health AAMC Recognized As A Best Hospital

» Continued from page 41

tions are designed to assist patients and their doctors in making informed decisions about where to receive quality care for challenging health conditions or elective procedures.

"We are fortunate to have an extraordinary team of caregivers and staff who deserve recognition for this honor," said Sherry Perkins, president of Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center. "This prestigious Best Hospital designation highlights their commitment to excellence and patient-centered care. This recognition, together with our A safety ratings from Leapfrog and the hospital's recent third Magnet designation for nursing, shows

our dedication to maintaining the highest standards of care for the communities we serve."

To calculate the Best Hospitals rankings, U.S. News evaluated each hospital's performance on objective measures such as risk-adjusted mortality rates, preventable complications and level of nursing care.

This year, among other methodology refinements, U.S. News incorporated new data on care provided to patients with Medicare Advantage insurance and on care provided to outpatients, nearly doubling the number of patients included in its annual data analysis. The Procedures & Conditions ratings are based entirely on objective quality measures.

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Bluegrass Jam Circle Makes Music Fun For Beginners And Advanced Pickers



Photos by Zach Sparks

Musicians bring their banjos, mandolins, lutes and other stringed instruments to the bluegrass jam, held each month at the Broadneck Library.

By Zach Sparks

zach@severnaparkvoice.com

At the monthly Broadneck Bluegrass Jam Circle gathering, instrumentalists aren't afraid to get picky. Guitarists, banjoists and mandolin players can be joined in any session by musicians playing fiddles, bass, harmonica or other instruments.

Co-leaders Jen Reynolds and Nicole Snider celebrated the group's two-year anniversary at the Broadneck Library in June. They met at another jam group, now known as Cape Vibes, but wanted to form an experience that was focused solely on bluegrass.

Their shared vision was an opportunity accessible to instrumentalists of all skill levels.

"Going to an open jam is pretty intimidating," Reynolds said. "The idea for this was to have something a little more beginner friendly."

Bluegrass is a genre of music inspired by 18th century Scottish and Irish folk, intertwined with blues. Bluegrass is often compared to country music, but bluegrass tunes often have a faster tempo.

Group members meet one Wednesday per month at the Broadneck Library for six to eight rehearsed songs followed by an open jam. During the songs, players have the option to sing and perform a break, or solo, by using body language or a head signal to alert the other members.

Reynolds and Snider provide all the necessary meeting materials: a list of songs along with suggested keys, a YouTube playlist, and strum machine practice tracks.

Fifteen or 50 people could show up to any given jam. While some members live in the Broadneck area, others travel from as far as Silver Spring and Rockville.

The July event included songs by Doc Watson, Keith Whitley and Ricky Skaggs, Red Allen and J.D. Crowe, Bill Monroe and other artists.

Snider was drawn to bluegrass around 2000 when the genre was showcased in the film "O Brother, Where Art Thou?"

"Every song had a harmony, and (the music) was easy to sing," she said, reflecting on her first impressions of bluegrass. "I liked the community of it. I met people who I have picked with now for 20 years."

Members have nothing to nitpick about when it comes to the group; their experiences are all positive.

As Annapolis resident Jenni Biondi started

» Continued on page 51

Arnold Couple Brings Merriment To Annual Renaissance Festival

By Judy Tacyn

Love certainly wasn't in the England air during the 16th century. King Henry VIII had beheaded at least one wife, and Catholics and Protestants were at war. When the Maryland Renaissance Festival begins its 48th season later this month, the events of the period will come to life by professional actors.

For two Arnold performers, Mary Ann Jung and her husband, Tom Plott, the festival is a much more joyful time than 1537, the year the festival will portray this year. The two professional, full-time actors met at the Maryland Renaissance Festival in 1987 while Jung was playing Lettice Knollys as countess of Leicester, and Plott playing Robert Dudley, first earl of Leicester. In the case of art imitating life, Jung and Plott, and Lettice and Robert, met, fell madly in love and were soon married.

"On our first day of rehearsals, the first day I met Tom, my first words to him were sarcastic," Jung said. "I walked up to him and said in the snarkest voice I could muster, 'I'm in love!'"

Jung laughed as she recalled the tone she used with Plott, who could only admire how beautiful his real life wife-to-

be looked.

The performers married in 1996, but not at the festival and not in costume. "So many people ask us, 'Did you get married at Renn Fest?'" said Plott, recalling a particular conversation with a nurse friend of his. "Oh, did you get married at the hospital?"

Crownsville romances aside, Jung and Plott said there is a lot going on behind the » Continued on page 51



Photo courtesy of Tammy Jett-Parmer

Mary Ann Jung portrayed Captain Jean the Pirate Queen and Tom Plott played Sheriff Drake Mansworth during a previous Maryland Renaissance Festival. They were joined by former cast member Scott Sophos.

Award-Winning Student Filmmaker Releases Two Shorts On YouTube

By Zach Sparks

zach@severnaparkvoice.com



Nathan Winn has written, directed and produced two short films. A new Severna Park resident, the Archbishop Spalding student hopes to make many more movies.

No microphones, no budget, no problem for Nathan Winn.

Supplied with little more than his own passion for storytelling, Winn has written, directed and produced two short films that have won awards at two college film festivals in Pennsylvania.

His debut, "Gone," was shot in Davidsonville and uploaded to YouTube in March. The silent film follows a young girl named Lucy — played by Casey Rogers — who loses control of her dog late at night and desperately tries to rescue him from beings that lurk in the shadows.

"Gone" was awarded Best Cinematography in 2024 during The Villys, Villanova University's film festival, and Best Sound in the Saint Joseph's University film festival.

Winn followed "Gone" with another silent film called "What Did I DO?" in June. Filmed by Safeway in Severna Park, Winn's second film involves a teenage girl played by Sawyer Richardson. Following a long night

» Continued on page 50

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Harbor City Music Company To Present "Saturday In The Park"



The Harbor City Music Company Show Chorus, an a cappella group based in Severna Park, includes more than 100 women from all walks of life.

Harbor City Music Company Show Chorus (HCMC), a women's a cappella chorus, is bringing its show "Saturday In The Park" to Severna Park High School on September 7. This new show was created after Harbor City's competition at the Sweet Adelines international convention last November. In a worldwide field of over 500 choruses, HCMC placed third.

HCMC is a group of more than women, from all walks of life, with the common thread of a love of performing a cappella music at the highest level. With Michael Gellert as the director (and arranger of many of the songs), HCMC wants to take its audience on a musical ride.

"Saturday In The Park" will give the audience a rare chance to see HCMC outside of the competition arena. Though the chorus does "sing-outs" at various venues, it usually involves fewer than 100 performers and no costume changes. As a treat, "Saturday In The Park" will include in-house quartets Alchemy, All Fired Up, Cheers and 2018 Queens of Harmony - Lustre. First Take (of Barbershop Harmony Society) will round out the show as special guests.

Join Harbor City Music Company on September 7 for a unique musical evening. Tickets are \$15 to \$30 and can be purchased at www.harborcitymusiccompany.org/saturday-in-the-park.

Hatton Register Green Fall Concerts

The Friends of Anne Arundel County Trails organization is bringing back its fall concert series at Hatton Register Green in Severna Park this fall. Concerts are provided through a generous grant for performing arts from Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks. All concerts are on Sundays from 4:00pm-6:00pm and all concerts are weather dependent. Pouring rain and/or lightning will result in cancellation.

A limited number of benches is available in the park, so guests are encouraged to bring chairs or a blanket. All concerts are free and family friendly.

SEPT. 1: Two Stories

Rick Bailey and Steve Trzcinski are retired U.S. Navy bandmasters who served as instrumentalists and conductors in Navy bands around the world. They perform acoustic and electric versions of songs by artists such as The Beatles, The Eagles, John Mellancamp, Tom Petty and Zac Brown. Bailey and Trzcinski strive to play polished renditions of songs written by great artists and with the respect they rightly deserve.

SEPT. 8: Sparks and McCoy

A favorite at Hatton Register, Sparks and McCoy are a versatile, fun band that plays classic rock acoustic music for the masses.

SEPT. 15: Ginger and the other Dave

Ginger and Dave both sing and

harmonize, they both play guitar, and on about half the songs, Ginger plays fiddle. They play a mix of acoustic pop, rock, country and folk music from the '60s up to current songs. With the fiddle and Ginger's background, they also play some Irish tunes.

SEPT. 22: Guava Jelly

Guava Jelly is an Annapolis-based, Caribbean-influenced trio whose reggae vibes are woven throughout the fabric of the band's music. For over 15 years, families of all ages have loved their popular mix of musical genres that stem from their cultural diversity. Vocalist/guitarist Bridgette Michaels has deep roots in the Caribbean islands and percussionist/vocalist Dawn Madak hails from New Jersey. Mike Edillon has played with many bands and is pumped to be back in the music scene. The band continually looks forward to tropical weather.

SEPT. 29: Old Mill High School Steel Drum Band

Under the direction of Tim Edwards, the Old Mill Steel Drum band plays classic pop, reggae and rock tunes, and so much more. September 29 is also the celebration of the Friends of Anne Arundel County Trails' 30th anniversary. The event will include a hot dog cart, door prizes and lots of fun.

For information or questions, visit www.friendsofatrails.org or call David Greene at 443-994-8074.

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“Deadpool & Wolverine” Delivers Humor Without Super Storytelling

By James Buxton

Before being assimilated into the wider Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU), Deadpool stood apart from the wider Marvel landscape for two clear reasons: gratuitous bloody violence and a penchant for irreverent references to the wider superhero culture. His ability to poke fun at his contemporaries with a wink, a nudge and a passing reference to Ryan Reynolds’ acting career set him apart from the rest of the genre, which was otherwise desperate to prove itself worthy of respect beyond its own fandom.

The last Deadpool movie was released in 2018. In that time, the MCU has undergone significant change. For one, it’s a lot bigger, bloated beyond meaningful coherence and reminiscent of the late Roman Empire: progressively unsustainable and seemingly just a few poor decisions from effective collapse. In 2021 and 2022 alone, it produced more hours of content than the previous 13 years combined.

More content demands more interconnectedness, which resulted in last year’s “The Marvels” acting as a direct sequel to three Disney+ series and at least two movies. This overreliance on intertextual references resulted in two distinct outcomes — the first being a notable lull in the MCU’s cultural relevance, and the second being a concerning similarity to the playbook of Wade Wilson. With that being the case, it should have been no

surprise that the Merc with the Mouth would be making his grand return sooner rather than later.

The issue with Deadpool entering a universe so crucially dependent on his style is the question of how he could possibly stand out. The answer, it seems, is to push beyond the usual fare of naming actors and obscure comic book characters and move into the realm of obscure internet talking points and historical tabloid fodder. If you thought having to watch every episode of “WandaVision” to understand the latest “Doctor Strange” movie was excessive, I can only hope you’ve done your due diligence in researching multiple celebrity divorces, decades-old on-set feuds, and quietly buried contract disputes.

“Deadpool & Wolverine” is a film constructed predominantly for online nerds, rewarding audiences for knowing which stars were attached to which canceled projects in 2015, and appealing directly to people who consider the brief appearance of an otherwise retired actor from a 25-year-old movie to be comparable to actual character development.

Beyond that, there really isn’t a lot to write home about.

Even without an encyclopedic knowledge of Marvel Studios’ annual shareholder reports, “Deadpool & Wolverine” is still a fun movie — beyond a few stinkers from Reynolds about being canceled or aroused, the jokes all tend to land pretty well. Elements lifted

Photo courtesy of Disney
Ryan Reynolds and Hugh Jackman reprise their roles as Deadpool and Wolverine, respectively, in the latest Marvel superhero film.



from previous MCU outings, such as the TVA from “Loki” or the Sling Ring from “Doctor Strange,” are explained well enough for a first-time viewer, but there remains an air of impenetrability for new fans.

The movie starts on a relatively strong note, featuring a fantastic turn from Matthew MacFadyen (“Succession”) as a cosmically omniscient middle manager, but as soon as our titular heroes unite in The Void, the film does away with any semblance of plot or drive in exchange for a rotating cast of fan-favorite D-listers ready to line up and get skewered. What follows is an aimless road trip across an increasingly incongruous landscape, pivoting between arid desert, idyllic forest and, somehow, The Shire, without so much as a scene change. Villains, motivation and narrative are put to one side to allow Wade and Logan to snap at each other for 10 minutes, and while it always leads to some snappy dialogue and a fun action sequence here and there, it’s always at the cost of feeling like a real movie.

Despite some fantastic running jokes, visual gags and commendable action set-pieces, “Deadpool & Wolverine” lacks any meaningful consistency as a movie. Individual moments work well — most of which come from Hugh Jackman’s inspired performance as “The Worst Wolverine” — but nothing stands still for long enough to have any lasting impact. Characters come and go like special guests on a variety show —

beyond the two leads, it feels like not a single character is given more than 10 minutes of total screen time.

The Deadpool franchise, and the MCU as a whole, isn’t exactly known for bold cinematography, but between the often atrocious character CGI and the decision to set over the half the film in a featureless beige wasteland, “Deadpool & Wolverine” does little to avoid the title of 2024’s ugliest blockbuster. For a film so dependent on character and dialogue, it’s not the kind of disaster it could have been, but by the time the movie ends, the idea of a primary color feels like a threat to the senses.

“Deadpool & Wolverine” isn’t an inherently bad movie, but it makes the mistake of attempting to lampoon the franchise without offering any kind of alternative solution. When Deadpool welcomed Wolverine to the MCU with the qualifier that he was “joining at a bit of a low point,” it triggered some of the biggest laughs of the whole runtime. When the credits finally began to roll after two hours of self-congratulation and professional smugness, it became clear the joke was at the audience’s expense.

It’s not “Deadpool 3” — it’s “Deadpool & Wolverine” — and that’s maybe part of why it lands as a disappointment. It’s a film that posits itself as the next stage of the MCU, as well as the closing chapter of the Fox-owned Marvel movies. Unfortunately, it doesn’t really succeed at being either.

Art In The Park Returns Sept. 29

Music And Arts Festival Will Feature Picnic Pavilion, Beer And Wine Garden

Save the date for Sunday, September 29, for the fourth annual Art in the Park live music and arts festival. Hosted at Cafe Mezzanotte in partnership with the Severna Park Voice, this year’s event will benefit Partners In Care, a nonprofit dedicated to helping older adults live independently.

Attendees can look forward to an afternoon of great food and live entertainment including music by The Grilled Lincolns featuring Andy Hall with The Betas. A picnic pavilion will offer smoked food, appetizers, meats, seafood, vegetables, pasta and more.

Art in the Park will also entertain with a beer and wine garden, Annapolis Ice Cream,

gifts and more. Multiple artists will represent local galleries including Side Street Framers & gift gallery, Benfield Gallery/McBride Gallery, Gallery 564, Local By Design, Sand & Silo Marketplace and others.

Sponsors for Art in the Park include KMA Law, Key Group of Cummings & Co. Realtors, Alex Schwab of Allstate Insurance, and Face It! Spa and Wellness.

The festival will run from 1:00pm-5:00pm. Tickets are \$58 in advance and include unlimited access to the picnic pavilion. Those interested in attending are encouraged to purchase tickets early, as the event sold out last year, and can do so by following the Art in the Park link on the events page at www.cafemezzanotte.com.



Each year, Art in the Park features multiple artists. This fall, Side Street Framers & gift gallery, Benfield Gallery/McBride Gallery, Gallery 564, Local By Design, Sand & Silo Marketplace and others will participate.

Annapolis Symphony Orchestra To Present Free Concerts At County Parks

"Pops In The Park" Slated For 8/31 At Downs Park, 9/1 At Quiet Waters



Photo courtesy of Richard Brown/Annapolis Symphony Orchestra

"Pops in the Park," an annual end-of-summer tradition put on by the Annapolis Symphony Orchestra, will take place on August 31 at Downs Park and September 1 at Quiet Waters Park.

Save the date for two late-summer opportunities to enjoy the Annapolis Symphony Orchestra (ASO) for free at local county parks. The Labor Day weekend "Pops in the Park" concerts will feature a preview of music from the ASO's upcoming Season 63. They are scheduled for August 31 at 11:30am at Downs Park and September 1 at 5:30pm at Quiet

Waters Park, with a rain date of September 2 at 5:30pm at Quiet Waters Park.

Sponsored by Anne Arundel County Arts Council and Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks, the ASO's "Pops in the Park" concerts are family-friendly and appropriate for music lovers of all ages.

Attendees can look forward to a variety of pop tunes, patri-

otic songs, movie and Broadway music, and more. The program will include 13 numbers ranging from "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest" symphonic highlights by Hans Zimmer (arrangement by Paul Laverder), to Fanfare on "Amazing Grace" by Adolphus Hailstork, to "Festive Overture," Opus 96 by Dmitri Shostakovich, and many others.

Concert-goers are encouraged to bring chairs, blankets and a picnic to enjoy as the ASO performs. Concessions will be available from food trucks as well. Admission to the parks will be free during the scheduled concert times. Smoking and alcoholic beverages are not permitted in the parks.

The ASO's mission is to "inspire, educate and enrich lives near and far by creating extraordinary musical experiences with uncompromising artistic excellence."

Tickets are not required for this end-of-summer tradition. However, free tickets to the concerts can be reserved at www.annapolissymphony.org/events. Reserved tickets will automatically enter attendees in a raffle for prizes.

Student Filmmaker Releases Two Shorts

» Continued from page 44

of partying, she wakes to slowly discover the horrific consequences of her actions from the previous night.

"I want to be diverse and have ideas in a variety of genres, but I have a love for thriller films in my heart," Winn said. "I think the reason I have gone for those films is because I want to tell a story, but I didn't have the right access to tools. I needed microphones, but I didn't have that. So my movies are all silent; they're all kind of dramatic."

"With the use of camerawork, the use of set and lighting, I tried to create a mood and tell the story that way," he said. "I think the best (option) I had at my disposal is the nighttime or mood lighting, so I used that. Those always fit a horror genre."

A rising senior at Archbishop Spalding, Winn moved to Severna Park from Davidsonville near the end of the 2023-2024 school year.

"Gone" was not his first creative project. He authored and illustrated a 28-page children's book, "Forgetting Flip Flops," to raise money for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in honor of a classmate who had cancer. The children's book centers on Nate, a young boy who travels with his teddy bear named Flip Flops.

Winn started writing for the Davidsonville Living publication, now known as Stroll, during COVID to suggest activities people could do at home. Then, he started penning film reviews.

"I've always been fascinated with movies and how they were made, but doing those articles monthly, I learned about the processes and the intricate ways they are done and how they come together," Winn said.

Winn was inspired by Jordan Peele, the creative mind behind "Get Out," "Us" and "Nope." The student filmmaker also enjoys projects from the entertainment company A24, which released "The Witch," "Hereditary" and "Midsommar."

Winn had those idols on the big screen, and he also learned from the team at Filmsters Academy, an Annapolis camp for kids and teens. One of the instructors, filmmaker Tricia Cramer, was immediately impressed by Winn's ability to quickly learn both the artistic and technical sides of the filmmaking process.

"So much of filmmaking is communication and collaboration, and he was an absolute natural," Cramer said. "In the year since our time last summer, he's kept going in creating new work, and we are delighted to have him back at Filmsters Academy for a second year. His passion and drive for filmmaking has me excited to see what he will do next."

Archbishop Spalding teacher Adam Shephard has known Winn for three years from his Introduction to Film class and in the studio of the school's daily news program, Spalding AM. Throughout that time, Winn has been courteous, professional and dependable according to Shephard.

"Nate's work ethic, intrinsic motivation and genuine enthusiasm have earned him the respect of both his teachers and his peers, and now, he has garnered the attention of fellow filmmakers with his impressive work," Shephard said. "I look forward to seeing much more from Nathan in the future."

Winn set up a GoFundMe page to fundraise because he does not have his own camera or crew. In the meantime, he is continuing to hone his craft.

Earlier this year, he submitted his films to festivals nationwide through the site FilmFreeway. While touring colleges, he learned about contests and networked with filmmakers and professors. Some of the best advice came from a Saint Joseph's University professor who said, "It's not about what you have but how you use it."

He may not have a camera or microphones, but he is not letting that silence his voice as a filmmaker.

"If you have an iPhone and a dream, that's enough," Winn said. "If you're passionate about filmmaking, you'll make it happen."

For updates on Nathan Winn's journey, follow @WinnProductions on YouTube and Instagram.

Parijita Bastola Of NBC's "The Voice" To Perform At Rams Head On Stage August 19

At age 17, Severna Park native Parijita Bastola made it to the top eight during season 22 of NBC's "The Voice." Almost two years later, the Berklee College of Music student is returning to Anne Arundel County for a show at Rams Head On Stage in Annapolis on August 19 at 7:30pm.

Bastola made history as the first Nepali American contestant on the U.S. version of "The Voice," and she was proud to represent her culture throughout the season. Since then, she has stayed busy. In 2023, she performed "God Bless America" at the Baltimore Orioles' season opener. Last January, she captivated millions of viewers with her soulful rendition of the U.S. national anthem at the AFC divisional round game between the Baltimore Ravens and the Houston Texans.

In an Instagram post, Bastola explained her enthusiasm for her upcoming performance.

"I've been going to Rams Head since I was little, watching my favorite artists and bands perform," she wrote. "I would feel an overwhelming amount of butterflies in my stomach just imagining doing the same on that stage, in a venue that's incredibly intimate. It's been one of my dream venues! I'm so excited to share that I am performing at Rams Head On Stage on August 19! Come enjoy a Monday night with me."

For the show, doors open at 6:30pm and guests must be age 18 or older to attend. Tickets can be purchased at www.ramsheadonstage.com/events. For additional details, call 410-268-4545.



Parijita Bastola previously performed in Severna Park during a show at Sullivan's Cove to cap the year 2022.

Jam Circle Makes Music Fun



» Continued from page 44

delving into various genres of music, she was looking for an opportunity to play.

“For someone who knows rock and roll and mainstream music, where do you start?” she said. “I picked up the mandolin. Where do you find people who play bluegrass?”

She found a community within the Broadneck group, as did banjo player Keith Pavlischek, who lives a few miles away from the library. He praised Reynolds and Snider for making the group beginner friendly.

“If you can change three or four

chords and if you’re willing to work at it, they make it easy for you,” Pavlischek said.

Want to participate? The next jam is scheduled for August 28 from 6:30pm-8:30pm. With the library’s hours changing, the subsequent jams are planned for 5:30pm-7:30pm on September 26 and October 7.

To preserve a traditional bluegrass sound, please bring only acoustic stringed instruments. For more information or to receive details on monthly song selections, email broadneckbluegrassjamcircle@gmail.com.

Couple Brings Merriment To RennFest

» Continued from page 44

scenes to prepare for the Maryland Renaissance Festival. The festival covers 1,176,120 square feet, the size of roughly 20 football fields, and in every area, there is something going on. There are 10 stages for live shows, pathway performances, jousting, live music, 140 one-of-a-kind artisan vendors, and food galore (42 food and beverage vendors); there is truly something for everyone.

Every season, a different year during the Renaissance period is chosen to be depicted. Entertainment Director Carolyn Spedden is tasked with coming up with the scripts and character biographies for the more than 200 professional performers. Starting with the well-documented people of the time (King Henry VII and Jane Seymour as examples), Spedden then creates a supporting cast. The mayor, each individual villager, the woman who does the king’s laundry, and every possible detail are included to bring the real-life historical soap opera to life.

“Carolyn does a tremendous amount of research all year to accurately depict and create even those most minute details of the year we are performing,” Jung said.

Actors read audition every spring and are given their characters in June.

“Carolyn’s character bios are extremely detailed and well thought out, but the performers are expected to also know the history so that those characters can come to life,” Jung said. “She gives us the diving-off point to really make those characters our own within the historical context.”

Jung added that all performers can speak in Shakespearian language with a British accent.

All stage performances — except

for the hired professional acts — are scripted by Spedden, as well as the 20 five-minute pathway performances, which are interactive performances done with festival attendees on the pathway grounds. Guests are invited to talk to the performers and ask them questions about the characters they are playing.

Jung and Plott have played dozens of characters from servants to royalty over the years at the Maryland Renaissance Festival. They and the other actors appreciate the time and energy that Spedden and others put into making each year unique.

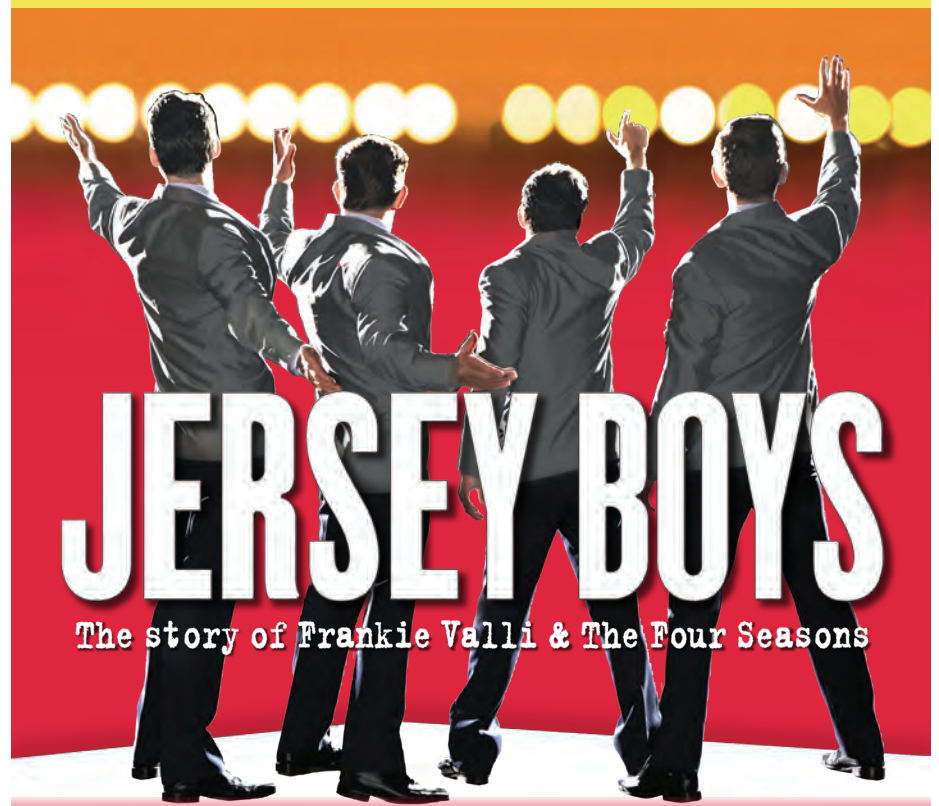
“By changing the historical timeline every year, creating new scripts, new shows, and casting actors in different roles, Carolyn keeps the professional actors fresh,” Jung said. “That’s something that makes this festival the best in the business.”

The festival opens August 24 and runs Saturdays and Sundays and Labor Day Monday through October 20 for nine weekends in Crownsville. For more information, visit www.rennfest.com.

Meet The Actors

Mary Ann Jung and Tom Plott are both full-time actors. Jung has been with the Maryland Renaissance Festival for 45 years, which includes two years when the festival was held in Columbia, Maryland. Plott is the “rookie,” entering his 37th year with the festival. Jung is the actor behind History Alive, performing portraits of famous women in history. Plott is the manager of character interpretation at George Washington’s Mount Vernon.

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Estate Planning: Protecting Your Family From The Unthinkable

Jason LaBarge
Financial Advisor
and President of
LaBarge Financial



My father passed away in November of last year. It was a devastating moment to lose someone my family and I admired so much. Fortunately, my father had things in place, making the process easier. That is not the case with everyone.

Only 32% of Americans have a will and 40% don't think they have enough assets to create one. Many people think estate planning is reserved for the wealthy or that they don't

have to worry about it until they reach old age. But an estate plan is important for documenting who will receive your assets should you become incapacitated or die. Everyone, regardless of age or income level, should have an estate plan.

The Pitfalls of Neglecting Estate Planning

Without a will or estate plan, distributing assets among beneficiaries can turn into a painful process. Your assets are likely to end up in probate, which is the legal process of settling a person's estate in court after they pass away. Careful inventory of your property is taken and everything is split up among your

beneficiaries. Probate cases can be time-consuming, taking anywhere from months to years to settle.

When my grandfather died unexpectedly in 1982, my grandma, Marcella, was left to manage all of the couple's finances on her own. She had to sort through insurance, bank accounts, funeral arrangements and more. On top of grief, she had to grapple with financial uncertainty. It pained my family to see her struggle, but I was young and had no idea how to support her. Her situation became part of my inspiration to pursue finance.

By having someone who handles all things related to estates and trusts, people can avoid the plight my grandmother experienced.

Estate Planning Considerations

The first step in estate planning is to take inventory of your assets by writing everything down. Make a list of financial accounts, insurance policies, investments and any real estate you own. Meet with an estate planning attorney who can help you carefully examine all of your assets and document who will receive what after you pass away.

Keep in mind that your estate plan is a living document that should evolve with your life. Make sure you regularly update it as you experience major life changes like marriage, divorce or remarriage. This will ensure your money lands in the right hands once you're gone. I've witnessed situations where people forgot to update their estate plan after remarrying, resulting in the ex receiving money

while the current spouse was left with nothing.

It's also important to think beyond money to account for treasured possessions like jewelry, furniture and family heirlooms. Have conversations with your family about who is going to receive what and then make sure it's in writing. Assuming that everyone is going to amicably distribute possessions is wishful thinking. I've seen family members get into nasty fights over things like gun collections or China sets.

I miss my father tremendously, and these past seven months have changed the person I am and the way I look at life. I am fortunate that I have had the perspective both from my grandmother and my mother on how things can go at the end of life. I will be certain to have things set up like my father did and I hope you do too.

Jason LaBarge, financial advisor and president of LaBarge Financial

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Chamber Update

Liz League
CEO
GSPACC



websites and find them in our directory at www.gspacc.com.

The Entrusted Group

www.theentrustedgroup.kw.com

CEO Sam Tanner has been an Anne Arundel County and Maryland resident since 1975 and has over 30 years of experience in the real estate and housing industries. For 20 years, he operated a construction and home improvement company until he decided to dedicate himself full-time to real estate in 2010. He and his team manage commercial as well as residential real estate transactions. Sam is also very active in the community, coaching youth sports and participating in civic organization events.

Yoga with Kirtana LLC

www.yogawithkirtana.com

As a yoga facilitator, Kirtana Kalavapudi guides participants in power yoga, prenatal yoga, restorative yoga, pranayama (breath work), meditation and visual imagery. She offers private, group, workplace and online classes that meet the needs of everyone

looking for restorative body work and stress reduction techniques.

Cypress Creek Waterfront Senior Living

www.cypresscreekalf.net

At Cypress Creek Waterfront Senior Living, the team believes in fostering a vibrant and inclusive community where residents feel like cherished members of a family. Cypress Creek Waterfront has a team of highly trained and dedicated professionals committed to the welfare of its residents, and its social activities, events and communal spaces are designed to encourage connection, friendship and a sense of purpose. This facility provides assisted living, memory care, respite care and rehabilitation care.

Wonderwall Backdrops

www.wonderwallbackdrops.com

Leave it to the dream weavers at Wonderwall Backdrops to design and deliver handcrafted backdrop masterpieces, stunning backdrop rentals, unique balloon designs, and beautiful custom decor for your private, corporate and brand activation events in Maryland. The team members are passionate about the very thing you are doing whether it's a baby shower, birthday party, book launch, ribbon cutting, open house for a newly listed home, or a charity event.

Magothy Roasting Company

www.magothyroasting.com

This business' slogan is "Coffee is more than a drink. It's a ritual, a tradition, a bond that connects us all." The staff's love for roasting coffee beans sprouted in the fertile soils of the Magothy region with the ability to extend their aromatic embrace from the heart of Magothy to the far reaches of the nation. Magothy Roasting Company

offers a global selection of small batch, slow roasted, specialty coffees available for wholesale and retail.

Essence of Wellness

www.essenceofwellness.net

Owner and practitioner Theresa Deramo is a board-certified acupuncturist who treats people and animals of all ages. She will even make house calls for animals within a 10-mile radius of her office. In addition, her practice offers salt therapy and Migun therapy. Using the Migun therapy table, this new technology combines traction, acupressure, massage and far-infrared heat therapy for pain management and other chronic medical issues.

On July 4, we celebrated our country's birthday and also our 49th year of bringing our Independence Day parade to the community. This year's parade entries included community floats, nonprofits, scouts, military personnel, elected officials and a few candidates, and our small businesses. Back at the chamber, we held our annual decorated bike contest for over 30 participants, who then entered the parade on Riggs Avenue. Many thanks to all who made the parade a huge success — our sponsors, volunteers, churches that offered their spaces for staging and parking; business owners who allowed us to set up the DJ, announcer and judges; the Anne Arundel County reserve officers; the Maryland Mobileers; and so many other contributors.

And we thank you, the thousands of community members who continue to enjoy and support the parade. We cannot wait until next year for the 50th anniversary!

We held three ribbon-cutting celebrations over the last month. The first was the grand opening of **Magothy**

Therapy and Wellness in Arnold.

Owner and occupational therapist Kaitlin Barry specializes in pain management and lymphatic massage and drainage, particularly helping those receiving cancer treatments.

Next, we held a ribbon-cutting for the grand opening of **Sweet Bamboo Boba**. Owners Tien Peng Ho and Olesea Maleeva have brought to Severna Park the first self-serve boba tea business in Maryland. In addition to the many flavors, textures, milks and juices you can select to personalize your drink, shaved ice and cakes are also on the menu. This business is veteran owned!

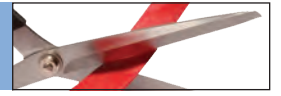
The last ribbon-cutting was held for **Design Kitchen and Bath**, newly opened in Severna Park. This is the third location for owners James and Angela Doganci. Their goal is to give you the kitchens and baths of your dreams.

Many thanks to Trillium Wellness for hosting our monthly Wellness Business Connections gathering at their location. They specialize in improving your well-being by restoring the gut-brain connection. They also provide craniosacral therapy.

Our summer cookout was held at The Sheridan at Severna Park, one of our newest assisted living and memory care facilities. The chef did an incredible job providing delicious burgers, dogs and sides. Shoutout to Gary and Hillary Feldman, the owners of Bruster's Real Ice Cream, for scooping up some delicious treats, and to Pam Negron of the Negron Farmers Insurance Agency for the wonderful popcorn. This will be the third cookout out of five that we hold in the summer months.

You can find out more about the chamber and about becoming a member at www.gspacc.com.

RIBBON CUTTINGS



Design Kitchen And Bath Celebrates Grand Opening In Severna Park

On July 25, the Design Kitchen and Bath team welcomed community members to their new location and celebrated their grand opening with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house. This is Design Kitchen and Bath's third showroom, located at 574 Governor Ritchie Highway, Suite F, in Severna Park.



CTL Financial LLC Cuts Ribbon To Commemorate Opening Of New Location

Offering comprehensive financial planning services, CTL Financial LLC celebrated its new office with a ribbon-cutting and open house on June 27. Owner Chris Locher was on hand to greet visitors and explain the services CTL provides. The business is now located at 302 Ritchie Highway in Severna Park.

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April's Table Celebrates 10 Years, New Location

In late June, the April's Table Catering and Events team hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the official opening of their new location and their 10th anniversary in business. Community members gathered to see their new showroom, event venue and catering kitchen. April's Table is now located at 541-C Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard in Severna Park.

Magothy Therapy & Wellness Hosts Open House

On July 11, Magothy Therapy & Wellness neared its first anniversary in business and celebrated with the community during an open house and ribbon-cutting hosted by owner and occupational therapist Kaitlin Barry, a specialist in neurological-, oncological- and lymphedema-based services. The practice is located at 277 Peninsula Farm Road, Building 3, Suite I, in Arnold.



Sweet Bamboo Boba To Marks Grand Opening

Maryland's first do-it-yourself bubble tea shop celebrated its official grand opening on July 18, roughly one year after a soft opening. Located at 545 Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard in Severna Park, Sweet Bamboo Boba invites customers to be their own "boba barista" by selecting unique self-serve toppings and drink bases to create one-of-a-kind beverages. Sweet Bamboo Boba also offers cakes, sweet treats and smoothies.

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