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SEPTEMBER 2024

NEVER TOO LATE: Severna Park Nonprofit Forms To Honor Vietnam Soldiers

By Zach Sparks
zach@severnaparkvoice.com

“Draft beer, not boys.”
“Make love, not war.”
“Eighteen today, dead tomorrow.”

Anti-war slogans materialized before the United States committed ground troops to the Vietnam War in 1965. That sentiment continued to grow until American forces left Vietnam in 1973 and lingered as some soldiers were shunned upon their return to the United States. But not everyone made it back.

Of the estimated 58,220 U.S. soldiers killed during the Vietnam War, at least five called Severna Park or Arnold home.

Nearly 50 years after the Vietnam War, a newly established nonprofit called Severna

Park Heroes of the Vietnam War Memorial LLC wants to honor those five soldiers and give them the respect many soldiers did not receive from the public following the war.

Those Army members died between 1968 and 1971. That group included Major Ronald Britz, First Lieutenant Charles “Art” Bedsole, Chief Warrant Officer Edward “Louie” Mortimer Jr., and two men with the specialist fourth class rank, Danny Quaitte and Richard Nitsche Jr.

Doug Nichols attended Severna Park High School with some of the men, and some were coached or taught by former Severna Park High School coach and athletic director Andy Borland. Nichols and Borland decided to start a nonprofit because the cause was close to their hearts.

“I feel obligated, having served from April

1968 through January 1971, (although I) only served here in the continental U.S. while the four from my generation gave their lives in Vietnam,” Nichols said. “I feel indebted to them.”

Borland said the idea to honor the men was originally pitched by Walter Chitwood, who served as an officer in the Army during the Vietnam War, earning the Bronze Star and two Purple Hearts. Chitwood wondered if the men could be considered for the Severna Park Athletic Boosters Hall of Fame, but since most of the men were not athletes, Borland and Chitwood needed to find another way to honor them.

Even though Chitwood died in 2019 and won't see the memorial, Borland is proud that the project is coming to fruition.

“It's horrible to lose someone like that and not have them be honored in any way, shape or form,” Borland said of the five soldiers killed in action.

The nonprofit formed by Borland and Nichols is partnering with the Anne Arundel County Department of Recreation and Parks and the Friends of Anne Arundel County

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Back To School: AACPS Hopes Minor Changes Make Major Impact

Students are back in school for the 2024-2025 year. New principals and new policies mean that the day-to-day operations at some Anne Arundel County public schools won't be quite the same this year. Whether it's the way assignments are graded, student access to cellphones, or school-wide culture, changes are happening. **Flip to page 37** to learn more and to see back-to-school photos of public and private school students who were eager to learn when schools reopened at the end of August.



Elementary students boarded the bus for their first day of school on August 26.



Elliot Kolakowski kicked off his fourth-grade year at Jones Elementary School with a photo marking the first day of school.

Photo by Lauren Cowin

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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.

Jon Korin Promotes Cycling Safety For All

By Sarah Sternhagen

Jon Korin has been cycling for the better part of his life. Like many people, he started when he was a kid, riding his bike to school, his friend's house, a bowling alley – anywhere a kid needed to go. Now, he's an avid cyclist, president of Bicycle Advocates for Annapolis and Anne Arundel County — BikeAAA for short — and the person who helped start the Lifeline 100 bike ride.

"We launched the event really with the motivation of just bringing attention to the joys and benefits of cycling," Korin said.

The event got its start a decade ago. Korin wanted to get involved in the community after moving to Severna Park — the B&A Trail access being a big part of it — so he joined the Leadership Anne Arundel flagship program, which aims to help people become contributors to their community. Part of the course was doing a project to serve the neighborhood.

No bicycle advocacy groups existed yet in the county, so a national association couldn't even give the area the lowest rating for its bike-friendliness.

"Six of us picked a project called 'Let's make Anne Arundel County more bicycle friendly.' It was that simple," Korin said.

That turned into BikeAAA. Now the organization works as an advocacy group for bike safety, working with Anne Arundel County government, and encourages everyday people to reap the benefits of a bicycle.

"Try to use the bike as much as possible," Korin suggested, "both for exercise, fun and for transportation."



Photo by Sarah Sternhagen

Jon Korin (center) enjoys cycling along the B&A Trail with his grandsons Zach (left) and Nate Lentz.

That's BikeAAA's goal with the Lifeline 100. Set for October 6 this year, Lifeline 100 will fill the B&A Trail with cyclists on 15-, 20-, 60- and 100-mile routes. The different lengths are meant to attract cyclists of all skill levels, from avid fans to leisure bike riders. But, as Korin knows best, a love for cycling starts young; that's why kids ages 4-10 can participate in the free Children's Bike Rodeo at Kinder Farm Park. Spots require reservations, and they fill up fast. At the same time, the Family Fun Safari Ride will happen around the park as a scavenger hunt, encouraging participants to find all 20 hidden creatures along the course.

"You don't have to be a strong, strong road warrior cyclist," Korin said. "Come out and do one of the trail rides. We encourage everybody to come out and ride."

The event caps around 1,000 participants and it can get close to that number. Bikes of all shapes and sizes are welcome, from regular road bikes to lay-down bikes and anything in between.

"Since we launched ... the event has raised over \$350,000 for local nonprofits," Korin said.

That total comes from 10 years of both registration fees and sponsors. Several nonprofits take a portion each year, and BikeAAA supports several charity programs with its share.

Wheels of Hope is one of the newer beneficiaries. The organization aims to take old bikes, refurbish them, and pass them to those who need them — from adults recovering from addictions to school

athletes who need transportation to practice. Wheels of Hope is meant to give people access to transportation. Cycling Without Age gives seniors a chance to feel the wind in their hair on a trishaw while someone pedals on the back. And BikeAAA advocates for bike safety at a government level.

"One of the most basic rules for a driver encountering cyclists on the road is what? You give them three feet minimum space," Korin said. "We got a bill passed a few years ago to make it legal for drivers to cross over the double yellow line in order to give a cyclist three feet of space."

Korin said most drivers were already doing it, but since there was no exception for going over a yellow line, technically it was breaking the law. Now, it's formally recognized, and cyclists are entitled to the three feet rule on all roads.

At the 10-year anniversary of the Lifeline 100 ride, BikeAAA always looks forward to the variety of skill levels the event brings out.

"It's not a race," Korin said. "It's a ride. You do it at your own pace."

County Fire And Police To Host 9/11 Ceremony



Twenty-three years after the tragic events of 9/11, the Anne Arundel County fire and police departments are continuing to honor the men and women who died. The departments will gather for their annual joint 9/11 memorial ceremony at police headquarters, located at 8495 Veterans Highway in Millersville, on September 11 at 9:00am. All are welcome to attend.

Earleigh Heights To Throw Its First Silent Auction And Gala

The Earleigh Heights Volunteer Fire Company (EHVFC) will host its inaugural silent auction and fundraising gala on September 14 from 5:00pm-10:00pm. Event organizers hope to offer an unforgettable night of dinner and dancing with guests dressed in semi-formal/cocktail attire.

EHVFC has set a \$200,000 fundraising goal to support the day-to-day activities of the fire station, duties that include responding to 911 medical and fire calls. Donations will also contribute to the construction of the community's new volunteer fire station, as well as the purchasing of new firetrucks and ambulance units that will be used to save lives and protect personal and commercial properties in Severna Park, Millersville, Pasadena and all of Anne Arundel County.

Individual tickets are \$125, couples' tickets are \$200, and a table of eight is \$800. Multiple sponsorship levels are available, and August 14 is the deadline for sponsorships.

Anyone can support the station by emailing rsvp@ehvfc.org to make a contribution or ask questions.



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New Commanding Officer Joins Eastern District Police Station

By Zach Sparks

zach@severnaparkvoice.com

After nearly 19 years with the Anne Arundel County Police Department, Captain Jon Mahaffee has seen it all. He has worked as a patrol officer, investigated fatal crashes, served as a public information officer and worked in the county's training academy, among other roles.

Now, the Shipley's Choice resident is the new commanding officer for the Eastern District Police Station.

Mahaffee was the Greater Severna Park Council's guest speaker in August, weeks after taking over his new post. During the meeting, he shared his experience and his thoughts on public safety in Anne Arundel County.

"I have been fortunate in my career in the sense that I have a diverse background with a variety of things," Mahaffee said. "It's not just patrol or it's not just SWAT or something like that, or something specialized like traffic, with the investigations and the fatal crashes in the detective unit ... (but also) learning how to run a district as the executive officer."

As commanding officer of the Eastern District, Mahaffee said one challenge is getting "new school" and "old school" police officers on the same page. Both, he said, need to rely on the community to be their eyes and ears.

Mahaffee does not plan to "reinvent



Jon Mahaffee

the wheel." He believes the Eastern District has a fantastic group, including Lieutenant Tommy Pleasant.

"It's a lot easier to take something that's working and just me adapt to it by myself rather than take something that's working and make 130 people change and do it my way," Mahaffee said. "Obviously, there might be tweaks along the way. If something

is not working then we work to fix it, but that's how I generally operate."

His focus is working with the community, addressing crime spikes and giving officers the support they need.

"I want them to feel empowered, like they actually have the autonomy to come up with a solution to the problem," he said. "It doesn't always have to be dictated. Sometimes when you give somebody the ability and the freedom, you might provide the parameters with which to do it in, but you give them the ability to solve that problem themselves, it goes a long way.

"I will have the officers' back as long as they give me a reason to have their back," he said. "We make a mistake, we fix it. Yeah, there are going to be some sort of consequences at times depending what it's for, but we fix it, we move on, and we get better."

Body cameras, he said, have allowed the police department to fix mistakes before they become bigger problems.

"For the first time ever, the whole profession, not just in our department, has the ability to call balls and strikes on themselves," Mahaffee said.

fee said. "Everybody has probably had that experience with a police officer at some point in time where they didn't like how he or she talked to them. That's the most common thing we get. And for the longest time, those types of issues would become that he said/she said battle and we can't really prove it one way or another. But with a body camera, we can pull it up and see exactly what happened."

Mahaffee talked about accountability and answered a question about school resource officers (SROs) being removed from schools to serve on patrol. SROs handle law enforcement matters in schools but also act as mentors, instructors and positive role models to students.

"As for school resource officers, that is not being cut," Mahaffee said. "That was one area, it was discussed, but the decision was not to do it because it is such a highly visible spot that is important to have."

Beyond his work with the Anne Arundel County Police Department, Mahaffee has coached youth hockey at the United States Naval Academy. Eastern District is the only one of the four Anne Arundel County districts that he had not previously served.

"The exciting thing for me is this kind of completes the full revolution as I will now have worked in every district and department, so that is cool," Mahaffee said. "Not everyone gets a chance to say that."



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County Council To Consider Leaf-Blower Ban

By Zach Sparks

zach@severnaparkvoice.com

If the Anne Arundel County Council passes Bill 67-24 this fall, homeowners and businesses will no longer be allowed to use or sell many leaf blowers and vacuums.

Proposed by Councilwoman Lisa Rodvien of District 6 — which includes Annapolis, Crownsville and part of Millersville — the bill is scheduled for a public hearing and possible vote on September 16.

Per the drafted legislation, banned equipment will include devices exceeding an A-weighted decibel (dBA) rating of 70 or more at a distance of 50 feet. According to the Maryland General Assembly website, that dBA sound level is equivalent to an alarm clock, the noise level in an office environment or the inside of a car driving at 60 miles per hour.

Bill 67-24 primarily affects gas-powered equipment. Rodvien said she is suggesting the ban for multiple reasons: noise disturbances, especially with more people working from home; reducing the county's carbon footprint; and because prolonged exposure to the noise emitted by leaf blowers and vacuums can lead to hearing loss, difficulties with balance, high blood pressure, cardiac disease, insomnia and mental health disorders.

"Gas-powered leaf blowers are far less efficient than automobiles with respect to emissions," Rodvien said. "On average, only 60% of the fuel in a gas-powered leaf blower is actually consumed. The other



Councilwoman Lisa Rodvien is suggesting the ban for multiple reasons: noise disturbances; reducing the county's carbon footprint; and because prolonged exposure to the noise emitted by leaf blowers and vacuums can lead to harmful health issues.

40% is spewed directly into the atmosphere.

"Edmunds (the automobile reviewer) conducted a study comparing the emissions of a two-stroke gas-powered leaf blower to a (Ford) F-150 Raptor and concluded that 'to equal the hydrocarbon emissions of about a half-hour of yard work with this two-stroke leaf blower, you'd have to drive a Raptor for 3,887 miles, or the distance from Northern Texas to Anchorage, Alaska.' Finally, they emit large quantities of nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, and a known carcinogen, benzene."

To help the environment, individuals and business owners will be asked to make the switch in equipment. Eric Blamphin, president of Barks

Road Landscape Architecture in Arnold, believes that banning gas-powered leaf blowers is not a sound idea.

"The current difference in 'horsepower' of gas vs. battery-powered blowers is not close," Blamphin said. "Typical spring and fall landscape maintenance requires proper tools, and the gas provides the power to complete projects efficiently. The battery power would require more manpower, trips and expense."

In other jurisdictions that have made the change, Rodvien noted, landscapers are buying extra batteries rather than charging out in the field.

Citing data compiled by the Santa Cruz Coalition for a Healthy & Safe Environment, Rodvien said that after 10-11 months, electric leaf blowers

pay for themselves in savings, and the cost-savings continue afterward.

"They do this in several ways: the cost of charging an electric leaf blower is significantly lower than purchasing gas and oil," Rodvien said. "The maintenance costs are also lower as there are no spark plugs, air filters or fuel filters to replace in an electric leaf blower."

After talking to her constituents in Severna Park and Arnold, District 5 Councilwoman Amanda Fiedler said, "A company could go so far in the red to replace their fleet of tools, that any future savings would be irrelevant."

Battery-powered tools are not exempt from the bill. As District 5 Councilwoman Amanda Fiedler explained in a column for the Severna Park Voice, from 50 feet away, her family's small battery-operated machine has a dBA of 72 to 75 depending on where the reading is taken. It would be illegal to continue to use this leaf blower under Rodvien's bill.

Fiedler is concerned about homeowners having to pay increased fees to lawn care companies and about those companies having to replace all their tools.

"Businesses have shared that they would need to have the ability to purchase and charge enough batteries to get through a day without returning to a 'home base' or be able to charge on-the-go, using an energy source like a gas-powered generator that would run regularly throughout the 10-hour day for just one truck carrying one crew of workers," Fiedler said. "Each crew would need their own gas-powered generator to charge throughout the workday."

She is also worried about the burden on police officers.

The new regulations, if passed, will be enforced by police and violations will be a civil offense.

In Montgomery County, which passed a bill in 2023 to phase out the sale and use of gas-powered leaf blowers and vacuums, Zack Kline owns a business called A.I.R., which offers organic lawn care, robot-mowing, and ecological landscaping services.

Kline thinks any landscaping or lawn care company can make the necessary changes. The biggest hurdle is education, he said. For his company's equipment needs, he found a company called STIHL. But the education piece is also important for homeowners.

"In the fall with leaves, a lot of people use backpack blowers ... and put the leaves to the curb for pickup or drive them to a facility for composting," Kline said. "It's better for the plants and grass to leave a lot of that onsite. People can use mowers to mulch leaves or put the leaves on a flower bed and have the fertilizer nature provides and don't have to haul it off."

Rodvien said she plans to create a phase-in period, so homeowners and businesses have more time to make the change. Like the Montgomery County bill, she also wants Anne Arundel County's to include a rebate or tax-credit fund to offset some of the cost of replacing gas-powered leaf blowers.

She hopes that will make the requirements less of an obstacle, as does Kline.

"Change is inevitable, but growth is optional," Kline said. "This kind of growth is beneficial for everyone."

Blamphin said nobody likes the sound of the gas leaf blowers — including landscapers and lawn care workers — but he recommends regulating time windows for use or small-engine maintenance schedules.

"The demand for leaf removal and other services is real and growing," Blamphin said. "And it is typically a low-price service. Taking away the best tool for providing that service will have significant follow-on effects to many small contractors, and all of their customers, as well."

Councilwoman Amanda Fiedler said the council will likely discuss this legislation during a work session on September 10. Anyone can contact her with feedback by emailing amanda.fiedler@aaacounty.org.

Read her full column about this subject on page 16.



Photo courtesy of the Anne Arundel County Fire Department

Jones Station Firefighter Earns Special Operations Patch

After four years of rigorous training and dedication, Nick Swigert of Fire Company 23 - Jones Station has been "patched" in special operations. Firefighters earn patches when they prove expertise in numerous specialties in technical rescue by mastering skills in rope rescue, high angle rescue, structure collapse rescue, confined space rescue, hazardous materials, trench rescue, swift water rescue, and water rescue. The process takes three to five years.



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The Magic Of 30 Days

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“That home will sell fast” is a common prediction for beautiful homes in premium neighborhoods. It turns out to be an extremely safe statement to make about local home sales in 2024. As of August, 78% of homes sold in Anne Arundel County have been placed under contract in under 30 days. A closer examination of the home sales statistics displays this data is congruent within local zip codes:

	Total Homes Sold (YTD)	Homes Sold In Under 30 Days	Percentage
Severna Park	172	145	84.3%
Arnold	161	126	78.2%
Annapolis	767	591	77%
Pasadena	401	322	80.2%

**Data collected from local Multiple Listing Service from January 1, 2024 – August 1, 2024*

Why Is The Market Moving So Fast?

There are two primary reasons why homes sell so quickly in the modern era. The first is homebuyers are waiting for new listings to hit the market. Currently, there are more homebuyers than available listings, so the homebuyers are anxiously awaiting new homes to hit the market daily. Homebuyers react quickly at the prospect of a new listing that meets their requirements.

The second reason for the high velocity is the information about new listings is moving instantly to the consumer via online home searches. Research has found that 93% of homebuyers in today’s market found the home they selected from the internet. Homebuyers have proactively set them-

selves up to be notified via mobile devices and are receiving new listings the instant they hit the market.

Whether they call the listing agent directly or hire a buyer’s agent, the homebuyers are urgently trying to see the new listing because they are very well aware the market is moving fast and do not want to miss out.

What Can Be Learned

If you are a homebuyer then the message is straightforward: you need to be extremely well educated, pre-qualified and ready to decide quickly. There is no dragging your feet.

If you are a home seller then you need to prepare your home appropriately prior to placing it on the market for public viewing. Preparation of your home includes the obvious home preparation tasks related to condition and updates. The less obvious is the pricing of the home.

Many sellers interpret this feeding frenzy as an opportunity to “push the list price,” which is a major error. The “push” comes from the competitive market bidding! Homebuyers are highly educated, and as stated earlier, homebuyers are finding homes online, so they have all the data. I tell all my clients, “The first showing is online, not onsite.” If they do not perceive online that the pricing of a home is commensurate with the condition of the home from the pictures and location of the home, then they will simply not preview in person or wait for a price reduction. The idea that a homebuyer will make an offer on an overpriced home is erroneous. Homebuyers are not interested in playing games or having unnecessary negotiations with unrealistic sellers.

The proper strategy for a home seller is to understand the flow of information, the velocity of decision making and do whatever is required to create a bidding war. The most optimal outcomes I have seen in my 24-year career have almost exclusively occurred when competitive forces are at play.

Play the odds and play the odds to win!

David Orso was born and raised in this community and is a proud graduate of Severna Park High School. Orso is a local market expert whose office is based in Severna Park at the corner of Evergreen Road and Riggs Avenue. He has been a top agent in Severna Park and Anne Arundel County for sales since 2013 and has almost 400 five-star reviews online. David and Dawn Orso are well known for their philanthropy and community involvement. They have three children, and outside of kids’ sports, they spend their time playing golf and tennis or boating on the weekends.



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Severna Park High School Reunion News



Ribbon Cutting

September 14 at 2:00pm

SPHS Memories CEO Robyn Turner, along with planning committee officers Jenni Lucke and Sandi Parrish, will hold a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Mother's Peninsula Grille to celebrate the first all-class Severna Park High School reunion. Turner started preparing for this reunion nine months ago and close to 100 classmates have RSVP'd to the event.

Do you have questions or want help to plan a reunion? Contact Turner at robyn@sphs-memories.com.

Reunion For Class Of 1967

October 4 from 4:00pm-9:00pm

Severna Park High School's class of 1967 is having a 57th reunion on October 4 at American Legion Post 175. Graduates from the class are inviting graduates from 1966, 1968, 1969 and 1970 to attend the cocktail party and mingle with all their high school friends.

SPHS Memories CEO Robyn Turner is giving a free drink card with each ticket purchased. There will be a 50/50 raffle and a food spread for everyone's enjoyment.

The class of 1967 was the last class that attended Severna Park High School from grades seven through 12 when it was Severna Park Junior Senior High School.

Severna Park Elks Donated Stuffed Animals To First Responders

With a community grant, the Severna Park Elks Lodge purchased and distributed 300 stuffed elks to the Anne Arundel County police, fire and sheriff's departments over the summer. The Severna Park Elks club also bought 100 stuffed elks to promote the lodge at future events.

"The goal is to provide a comforting and morale-boosting gift to children who may be anxious or scared when first responders respond to their homes," said Severna Park Elks Lodge Exalted Ruler Andre Denault. "Our goal was to help these young people who were in a difficult situation and potentially enhance community relations."

The stuffed elks are also meant to offer a tangible token of appreciation to police, fire and sheriff's department personnel.

"This project represents a thoughtful and appreciative gesture toward our first responders and the people they serve," Denault said. "Several of them have indicated they think it has a greater impact on the parents, who really appreciate the thoughtfulness to help their children. We hope we can make this an annual activity."



With 300 stuffed elks from the Severna Park Elks Lodge, Anne Arundel County police, fire and sheriff's departments will have another tool to provide comfort to children who may be anxious or scared when first responders visit their homes.

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Coastal Conservation Association Of Maryland Annapolis Chapter — Habitat Today For Fish Tomorrow

By **Michael Dardick**

President, CCA Annapolis Chapter

The Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) of Maryland's Annapolis chapter is making a significant impact on the Chesapeake Bay, and we're not slowing down anytime soon! We are a group of passionate volunteers dedicated to keeping the bay healthy and thriving for future generations.

Whether you're a professional angler or just starting out, the Annapolis chapter offers a variety of educational events (Anglers' Night Outs) to help you hone your skills. The most recent Anglers' Night Out featured a seminar on fishing for the invasive snakehead, and previous events have included seminars on effectively using boat electronics to locate fish.

The Annapolis chapter has become a go-to organization for anyone who cares about the Chesapeake Bay. We have been involved in various projects, from restoring oyster populations to advocating for cleaner water and more sustainable fishing practices. The chapter has been instrumental in planting millions of oysters in the bay, which helps filter the water and provide habitat for marine life.

In the community, CCA Maryland collaborates with Busch Library in Annapolis and both Calvert and Carroll County public schools to build artificial reefs. In Calvert County, every fifth-grader has participated in the Living Reef Action Campaign (LRAC) over the last three school years. Community support makes it possible for CCA Maryland to continue working

with local students to build "Habitat Today for Fish Tomorrow," CCA's flagship campaign.

Beyond our hands-on work, our chapter also focuses on advocacy. We're not afraid to speak up when it comes to protecting Maryland's coastal resources, often working to support legislation that reduces pollution and safeguards wetlands. We also emphasize educating the public and getting people involved in conservation efforts.

Engaging the communities on the Severn and Magothy rivers is what it's all about. We want everyone to feel connected to the bay and to understand how important it is to protect it.

If you're motivated to support our efforts or just want to learn more about becoming a better angler, we would love to have you in our chapter.

A great upcoming event is our annual chapter banquet. This year, it will be on October 10 at the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, where you can enjoy spectacular views of the bay and indulge in food, drinks, oysters, raffles, and live and silent auctions. This fundraising dinner directly supports CCA Maryland's mission to ensure the health of our marine resources and anglers' access to them, as well as our objective to conserve, promote and enhance our marine resources for the benefit of the public.

Join our chapter and come have fun on October 10!

For more information on how you can get involved, check out our website at www.ccmaryland.org/annapolis or find us on Facebook at "CCA Maryland — Annapolis Chapter."

Anne Arundel County Literacy Council To Hold Book Fair Fundraiser

The Anne Arundel County Literacy Council (AACL) will host a book fair fundraiser on September 28 from 10:00am to 4:00pm.

The book fair will take place outside Discoveries: The Library at the Mall at the Crate & Barrel court. Annapolis Mall generously donated space and marketing support.

The fair will feature hundreds of gently used books, including children's books, cookbooks, bestsellers, romance novels, memoirs, mysteries, thrillers, historical fiction and more. Books will be priced at \$2 for hardbacks and \$1 for paperbacks. Shoppers can fill a special edition Anne Arundel County Literacy Council tote bag with books for \$20.

PayPal, credit cards, checks and cash will be accepted. The book fair will also include gift basket raffles featuring restaurant, movie, and local shopping gift cards; fine wine selections; National Aquarium passes; and other goodies.

In collaboration with the literacy council, Discoveries: The Library at the Mall will offer book readings and an activity with local children's author Julia Inserro during the book fair.

Proceeds from the fair will support the council's free adult tutoring programs in Anne Arundel County.

Information about the book fair is available at www.icanread.org/bookfair.



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Family Protection: Exculpatory Clauses To Be Void As Against Public Policy

By Lisa Bogan-Reohr
and David Diggs

It's so awkward: you bring your child to a birthday party at a trampoline park, rock-climbing gym or other recreational facility and are required to sign a waiver of liability for him or her to participate in the birthday party. Don't sign the waiver, and your kid cannot be a part of the birthday party. Sign the waiver, and you agree that the facility is not liable for its own negligence.

We don't know about you, but it always made us uncomfortable to sign these agreements. Of course, we wanted our children to have fun at the birthday party. As lawyers, however, we felt it was not fair to be waiving any entity's liability for injuries or death caused by its own negligence. Were we confident that the entity's employees were adequately trained, that the equipment was properly maintained, or that the employees would follow all the safety rules? Not really – which caused me to watch my kids' participation with a nervous stomach, ensuring that safety harnesses were put on properly and that employees were paying attention.

In a case from 2013, Maryland's highest court affirmed that a parent who signed an agreement containing an exculpatory clause on behalf of his minor child could not prevail in his suit against BJ's Wholesale Club for the child's injury while playing on the "Harry the Hippo" apparatus in a supervised play area. In that case, a 5-year-old child fell off the hippo three feet in the air and headfirst onto the floor, which resulted in massive bleeding between his brain and skull. The child was taken to Sinai Hospital and transferred to The Johns Hopkins Hospital, where he had to have emergency brain surgery. Fortunately, the surgery saved his life. The Maryland Supreme Court's decision was based on, and constrained by, prior case and statutory law, and thus, the parents were without redress.

This office had a case in which an 8-year-old child sustained severe fractures to her leg and ankle because of a 40-foot fall from the top of a climbing wall as a result of improper safety precautions. Fortunately, we were able

to obtain a substantial settlement for our client despite a signed waiver of liability by persuasively arguing that the release should not have applied in that situation, where the employees of the facility knew about the heightened dangers at the "speed wall" and failed to warn parents.

Marylanders finally have some relief. During the 2024 legislative session, the legislature passed and the governor signed a bill declaring that such agreements or contracts purporting to waive liability for negligence of recreational facilities are void and unenforceable as against public policy. The law will become effective on October 1. As of that date, commercial recreational facilities, commercial athletic facilities and amusement attractions, including gymnasiums and swimming pools, will no longer be able to require customers to sign their rights away before using the facility.

Per the law, "recreational facility" does not include hotel workout rooms or facilities leased by state or local government. The law also does not apply to health club services rendered to an adult under an agreement for personal or family use for at least three months and for which three months of payment was collected in advance.

This new law will hold recreational facilities to the same standard that other businesses and professionals must meet: a duty of reasonable care. Consumers, especially children, will be safer because facilities will not be able to hide behind lax standards while knowing that they cannot be held responsible for their own failures to take reasonable care.

If you find yourself or your child injured by a recreational facility's negligence, you will have questions about what redress is available to you and other issues. You should consult with an attorney who is familiar with this area of the law and who will assist you in making informed decisions. David Diggs is an experienced tort lawyer. If you need further information regarding this subject, contact the Law Office of David V. Diggs LLC, located at 8684 Veterans Highway, Suite 302, in Millersville, by calling 410-244-1189 or by emailing david@diggsllaw.com.

Book Sale To Benefit Women's Education

The American Association of University Women (AAUW Anne Arundel County) is once again collecting used books to benefit scholarships for local women. Collection dates and times are as follows: 9:00am to noon on September 7, September 21 and October 5.

Collection sites will be in the parking lots of St Martin's-in-the-Field Episcopal Church at 375 Benfield Road in Severna Park; Anne Arundel Com-

munity College at West Campus Drive (off Route 2) in Arnold; and St. Philip's Episcopal Church at 730 Bestgate Road in Annapolis.

The book sale will be held in early November.

For more information, visit www.annearundelcounty-md.aauw.net or the "AAUW Anne Arundel County Book Sale" Facebook page.

For large book donations, call 410-647-7041.

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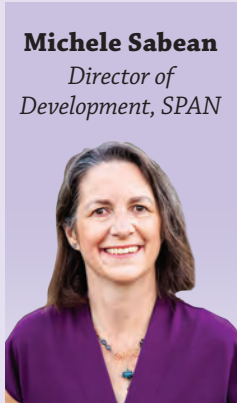
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Someone Is Paying Attention



Michele Sabean
Director of Development, SPAN

Someone's listening.

One summer morning, SPAN's shelves were completely out of shampoo. Later in the day, we were fortunate that a community member stopped by to donate shampoo and some cleaning products. It is amazing and a blessing that it often happens that way at SPAN! Many times, it is because this community is so generous at responding when we share our needs. And sometimes, amazingly, it is as if someone is listening and a donation shows up when we have just been talking about it, even before we have a chance to share the need. Someone's watching. One of the things I love about working at SPAN is the examples

I see of children being involved in helping. For example, a woman named Gigi recently stopped by with her grandkids. She had the cousins for a week of fun activities and family camp. Once again, one of their stops was to bring food to SPAN. Our children are watching and learning from those around them. During the S(ouper Bowl food drive, there was a set of siblings helping to move food into our basement. I remember them confidently explaining that this was something their family always did – helping at SPAN was one of their core memories. Another time, I was giving a Girl Scout troop a tour of SPAN and loved hearing from the girls how each of them knew of SPAN – one through her church, another from her family sponsoring a family for our Holiday Caring program, and another from participating in a neighborhood food drive. SPAN will celebrate 35 years next April! As we plan for that milestone, I keep thinking of the number of people in this commu-

nity who have been impacted by SPAN. We are starting to tally the numbers of community members SPAN has helped with food and/or emergency financial assistance over those 35 years. In just the last five years, thanks to the support from this community, SPAN has helped over 16,000 people. Many of those clients have appreciated our food pantry when they have struggled to make it through a month. And many of those clients have also been helped when things have just gotten too difficult. Perhaps a crisis, such as a job loss and/or a health crisis, caused them to get behind on their bills and face an eviction and or utility turnoff. In the last five years, thanks to support from this community, SPAN has provided more than \$750,000 for emergency financial assistance. In addition to thinking about the number of people who have been helped by SPAN over the years, I keep thinking of all the community members who have made that pos-

sible. I am reminded of the many cases of community members who donated to SPAN as children and now, years later, are showing their children how to do the same. There are people watching, and noticing, as this community works to help its neighbors. Thank you for all you do in listening and responding to our needs. Thank you for helping us help others. And thank you for modeling that generosity for others.

SPAN (*Serving People Across Neighborhoods*) is an independent nonprofit food pantry and emergency services provider that has been helping local families with eviction prevention, utility turnoffs, medical/prescription bills, and food since 1990. SPAN serves 15 zip codes in Anne Arundel County. SPAN is located behind Our Shepherd Lutheran Church at 400 Benfield Road in Severna Park. Hours are Monday through Thursday from 10:00am-1:30pm. For more information, call 410-647-0889, email spanhelps@yahoo.com or visit www.spanhelps.org. Financial donations may be made through the website. Food donations may be dropped off 24/7 using the storage bin behind SPAN's building. To learn more, "like" SPAN on Facebook.

Never Too Late: Severna Park Nonprofit To Honor Vietnam Soldiers

» Continued from page 1

Trails to reserve a memorial location at Hatton-Regester Green along the B&A Trail in Severna Park.

Severna Park Heroes of the Vietnam War Memorial will fund the creation, installation and landscaping for the memorial. The Department of Recreation and Parks will identify, select and survey a site at Hatton-Regester Green that is compatible with in-ground electrical and water resources. The Friends of Anne Arundel County Trails has agreed to maintain the Hatton-Regester Green gardens.

Nichols hopes to have the first memorial dedicated during a celebration at Hatton-Regester Green in 2025, the 50th anniversary year of the end of the Vietnam War.

Remembering The Soldiers Nichols and Borland shared everything they could recall about the men.

Britz, the oldest of the five soldiers, likely went to Annapolis High School because Severna Park High School was not open yet. Quaitte, according to Nichols, was an introvert who lived in Arnold but attended Severna Park High School.

Nitsche was in the Severna Park High School class of 1966, the same graduating class as Nichols. Even though he was six-feet-six-inches tall, he did not play on any sports teams.

Nichols played Little Loop baseball with Mortimer. As Nichols explained, Little Loop was the Green Hornets version of Little League baseball.



Photo by Zach Sparks

Two Anne Arundel County groups are partnering to find a memorial location near Hatton-Regester Green in Severna Park.

bered by the Severna Park community for years to come. They plan to share details about the memorial during the Severna Park High School all-class reunion on September 13-14, when they will be accompanied by Severna Park historian Scott Jay.

"The group who created the (memorial) wall in Washington, D.C., to honor all who gave their all between 1964 and 1975, have a saying — it can bring tears to my eyes — NEVER FORGET, boldly lettered on a yellow ribbon with designation for Vietnam War stripes on one end of the ribbon," Nichols said. "Andy brought me into this opportunity to memorialize my 'brothers' lost in combat. I am grateful to Andy for this opportunity!"

Borland said, "They were spit on and all that kind of stuff. I don't care what your feelings were on war, but they gave their lives doing that. If I was looking at you right now, I would have tears in my eyes. It means a lot to me."

Tax-exempt donations are accepted by cash or checks made out to S P Vietnam War KIA, 82 Point Somerset Lane, Severna Park, MD 21146. For more information, call 410-544-4686 or email s.p.vietnam.war.kia@gmail.com.



Charles "Art" Bedsole

"Louie played catcher and was very good at it, but later in life, he was given a full-size trampoline that he excelled at," Nichols said. "Louie had me over to his house a couple of times and taught me the essentials for doing some basic tricks on the trampoline. He really had an outgoing personality and was everyone's friend."

Borland also remembered Mortimer being a "great



Ronald Britz

trampolinist" and putting his country first.

"As a helicopter pilot, he finished his first tour and came home and volunteered to go back," Borland said.

Under Borland's coaching, Bedsole played junior varsity football his freshman year and varsity wrestling from his freshman through senior years for Severna Park High School. According to Nichols,



Edward "Louie" Mortimer Jr.



Richard Nitsche Jr.

he was a good student and athlete. His younger brother, Danny, now deceased, looked up to Bedsole and became a barber in Severna Park.

Nitsche has an older sister who currently lives out of state. Mortimer has a sister who resides in Maryland.

Only a few siblings are still living, as far as Borland and Nichols know, but the duo hopes the soldiers are remem-



Danny Quaitte

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Himmel's, Anne Arundel County Food Bank Partner For Hunger Campaign

During September, Himmel's Landscape and Garden Center is taking action to help alleviate food insecurity and bring awareness to the growing hunger problem in the Anne Arundel County community. The business is teaming up with the Anne Arundel County Food Bank to be a drop-off site for nonperishable food items and monetary donations.

Himmel's is encouraging the community to be a part of the solution during a family friendly event on September 26 from 2:00pm-8:00pm. The landscape and garden center will have crafts, live music, a food truck, special speakers, and a sunset hangout at the fire pit after 5:00pm. Himmel's is also donating 10% of its sales that day to the Anne Arundel County Food Bank.

Volunteers Needed For Fall Festival At Kinder Farm Park

Members of The Friends of Kinder Farm Park, a nonprofit volunteer organization, are busy planning for the park's biggest event of the year, the annual Fall Festival, scheduled for October 12 from 10:00am-4:00pm. The family event will include hayrides, a pumpkin patch, a straw maze, fall crafts, kids' games, and a variety of food and craft vendors. The historic farmhouse and the blacksmith shop and sawmill will be open, among many other activities and demonstrations.

To make this event a success and raise money to be used at Kinder Farm Park, the Friends group needs volunteers - both students and adults. Consider volunteering for a shift or all day. The group needs adults to check in guests at designated entrance locations, and it needs students and adults to assist with loading and unloading hay wagons, at kiddie and teen games, at the straw maze, with fall crafts, and at the pumpkin patch. To volunteer, go to www.kinderfarmpark.org and click "Support," then "Volunteer," and finally, "Fall Festival." Possible volunteers will be instructed to register on Sign-Up Genius.

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Proposed Leaf Blower Ban Takes Center Stage

Amanda Fiedler
Councilwoman
District 5



How you clean them up may drastically change if a proposed bill before the Anne Arundel County Council passes. I want to be sure you are aware, and I want to hear your feedback.

Bill 67-24, proposed by the councilwoman for District 6, bans the sale, use, or permit of sale or use of any leaf blower or leaf vacuum that has an A-weighted decibel (dBA) rating of 70 or more at a distance of 50 feet. dBA refers to the level of sound based on how humans hear a variety of frequencies. The bill is proposed to become part of the county's noise ordinance law, which is a section of the county's criminal code that is enforced by our county police.

For reference, the existing county noise ordinance states that "a person may not: (1) at any time use, operate, or permit the use or operation of a radio or other music producing device, a television, an amplified musical instrument, or any other audio producing device at an unreasonably loud volume that can be heard in a residen-

Fall is just around the corner. Leaves are already changing colors before they begin their great descent to the ground, your deck or gutter, or anywhere else they may land.

tial district; or (2) between the hours of 10:00pm and 7:00am, use, operate, or permit the use or operation of a musical instrument or a machine, tool, or similar device at an unreasonably loud volume that can be heard in a residential district."

What is a 70 dBA? It's the sound of a washing machine or being in an active room where you don't need to raise your voice, but it is moderately loud. It isn't silence, but it is a noise level that would be heard if you were sitting in relative silence and it suddenly became an active sound.

I understand why some residents become frustrated with the sound of leaf blowers. It isn't a pleasant sound. They are loud — but in most cases, they are quick jobs with seasonal ebbs and flows of activity. Lawn equipment, by nature, is loud: leaf blowers, lawn mowers, chainsaws, weed whackers, snow blowers, woodchippers. Most are machines we can carry and push that are redistributing a large volume of material from heavy snow to days' worth of wet, settled leaves. Regardless of the material being moved, the quicker the job is done, the more efficient it is for our wallets, and our backs. This is why individual residents, community homeowners associations, and commercial property owners either use or hire a company that uses a machine that gets the job done fast. These are primarily gas-powered machines. But this isn't a bill to ban gas-powered equipment, though it
» **Continued on page 18**

Less Supply, Greater Demand Will Equate To Higher Prices — Energy Is No Exception

By Brian Chisholm and Aysia Rodriguez

Delegate and Chief of Staff
District 31

"The truth is incontrovertible. Malice may attack it, ignorance may deride it, but in the end, there it is."

Winston Churchill

Who would have thought there would be such profound consequences from progressive policies regulating an industry that keeps the lights on for millions of people? It's almost as if policymakers expected power plants to operate indefinitely without considering the impact of ambitious climate policies on our energy infrastructure. As Maryland faces the closure of crucial power plants, we are confronted with a looming crisis: the infrastructure needed to replace their energy output may not be ready until 2028 at the earliest.

Maryland's push toward cleaner energy — specifically, the goal to source 50% of power from renewable sources by 2030 — has resulted in the retirement of numerous coal and natural gas power plants. This shift has led to rising transmission costs for Maryland ratepayers and will continue to do so until new generation capacity is developed. The situation is exacerbated by the planned or completed retirement of 14 power generation units and inad-

equate transmission infrastructure to bring in needed energy.

Susan Buehler from PJM Interconnection highlighted this issue, noting that while PJM has 38,000 megawatts of mostly renewable energy projects approved, developers claim that project delays are due to supply chain issues, financing difficulties, and local siting problems. While these factors are outside of PJM's control, they underscore a critical issue: it remains challenging to bring new generation resources online swiftly, especially when new generation is urgently needed to replace the retiring resources.

In summary, PJM has approved 35 renewable energy projects in Maryland, which collectively promise to yield 38,000 megawatts of energy production; however, as of August 26, not a single project has come to fruition. These initiatives remain nothing more than theoretical concepts, penned on paper, awaiting construction. Despite Maryland's extensive incentives to bolster the renewable energy market, tangible results that address the rising energy demand continue to elude us.

I support any energy production methods that can safely help us confront this pressing challenge. Moreover, the Maryland General Assembly's effort to eliminate reliable energy sources is drastically compromising supply. This approach, while simultaneously advocating for total electrification and anticipating increased demand, is a recipe for soaring costs for Marylanders — a scenario that aptly illustrates the definition of insanity. It is frankly misguided to believe that we can defy fundamental principles of supply and demand to satisfy our appetite for renewables without imposing significant cost increases on consumers, which is both misleading and unjustifiable.

Once again, we find ourselves navigating a precarious and costly dilemma in Maryland, one that is self-inflicted by poorly conceived policies originating in Annapolis. This legislation, rather than fostering growth and prosperity, predictably burdens consumers with escalated and often crippling expenses.

Such financial strain not only affects individual households but also has broader implications for local businesses and the overall economy. It is imperative that we advocate for more thoughtful and strategic legislative decisions that prioritize the well-being of Maryland residents.

The Reliability Must-Run (RMR) agreement, which is pending approval, will temporarily keep Brandon Shores and Wagner plants operational from 2025 to 2028 to prevent power shortages and brownouts until new transmis-

» **Continued on page 19**

Letter To The Editor: Homeport Farm Park

Our public parks must remain public. Our public funds must be used for the public good. The county must abandon its efforts to force rowing into Homeport Farm Park and divert public funds for private benefit and instead invest public money in public water access for all.

For the fourth time in 15 years, the Department of Recreation and Parks is trying to turn our public Homeport Farm Park into a publicly funded rowing center for the benefit of private rowing clubs. That rowing center would effectively privatize Homeport Farm Park and the only usable public water access point on the South River. That rowing center would use \$25 million in tax money for private clubs. This is wrong.

Strict deed restrictions on Homeport stopped the three prior attempts. Those deed restrictions are unchanged. In 2022, Rec and Parks ignored the deed restrictions and spent \$25,000 for a feasibility study of a rowing center in Homeport from AECOM, an international consulting firm. Rec and Parks has not released the 2022 AECOM feasibility study, despite numerous requests



under the Maryland Public Information Act. This is not open and transparent.

Although we do not know the plan specifics because Rec and Parks is hiding the 2022 AECOM feasibility study, we do know that it will cost a lot of money. The current proposal is the first installment payment on a taxpayer funded \$25 million rowing center for private clubs. The stealth \$3.3 million that Rec and Parks moved through the Fiscal Year 23 P567500 Boat Ramp

Development account is only for the half-acre of floating docks and acres of parking lots required for a rowing center. That stealth \$3.3 million is more than the county paid for the Discovery Village public boat ramp and Solley Cove Park public boat ramp combined. And remember, that stealth money is just the first installment. It does not include any of the very expensive structures. This is a misuse of public funds.

Diverting millions of taxpayer dollars into a private rowing center is not public water access. Eighty percent of the people in Anne Arundel County do not live in waterfront homes or water privileged communities. Public dollars must pay for water access for the public, not expensive private facilities.

Anne Arundel County must dedicate public money and public parks to the public good. The county must, once and for all, reject a rowing center in Homeport Farm Park and return to spending public water access funds for public water access for all.

Lisa Arrasmith
Chair, The Public Water
Access Committee



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Proposed Leaf Blower Ban Takes Center Stage

» **Continued from page 16**

would likely have the most impact on gas-powered models.

Gas- and battery-powered equipment both make noise, speaking from experience as a homeowner who uses a battery-powered, handheld leaf blower for small yard maintenance projects. Our small battery-operated machine hits a particular octave that sounds like nails on a chalkboard. I checked from 50 feet. It has a dBA of 72-75 depending on where the reading is taken. It would be illegal to continue to use this leaf blower under this proposed bill.

Opponents and supporters are weighing in. Supporters have expressed frustration over interrupted work-from-home days, children napping and the disruption of the tranquility in their yards. Environmental concerns have also been raised.

The opposition has come from a variety of fields, from one-person lawn maintenance workers who do yard work as a side job to support their families, to local small businesses started by people in our community and employing people in our community, to mosquito treatment companies, gutter cleaning companies and lawn machine rental businesses. The concern is consistent and clear. The cost to replace one piece of equipment is at least two to three times the cost of the original unit, and that is before the purchase of backup batteries may be calculated. A company could go so far in the red to replace their fleet of tools, that any future savings would be irrelevant.

Businesses are concerned about the financial impacts of this bill, and they are worried about what those impacts mean for their staff and their ability to

keep them employed. Batteries don't run on endless power. They die. They take time to charge fully. They need to be recharged. They need to be in ideal circumstances for recharging, per manufacturer recommendations, to avoid overheating and fires — fires that we know are an incredible challenge to extinguish, unless you are able to submerge the source (battery).

Businesses have shared that they would need to have the ability to purchase and charge enough batteries to get through a day without returning to a "home base" or be able to charge on-the-go, using an energy source like a gas-powered generator that would run regularly throughout the 10-hour day for just one truck carrying one crew of workers. Each crew would need their own gas-powered generator to charge throughout the workday.

Private property owners have

expressed concerns over the ability to use the investments they have made in their lawn equipment and the added financial burden of replacing those investments. What other tools may be banned next? For those using a lawn maintenance company, how much will their service fees increase? A lot of households use these services because they are no longer able to maintain the yard on their own and are on a fixed retirement income.

I have concerns about this bill, not only for small businesses but also for private homeowners, as well as enforcement responsibilities that would fall to our police.

Bill 67-24 is scheduled for its first public hearing and a potential vote on September 16. The council will likely discuss this legislation during a work session on September 10.

You can reach out to me on this legislation, and any other county matter, at amanda.fiedler@aacounty.org.

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Letter To The Editor: Model Railroad Club

The Severna Park Model Railroad, housed in the 105-year-old train station for 58 years, is a national treasure. The club's display has been on the cover of Model Railroader, a national magazine, five times — each with a featured article. In addition, it appeared on the cover of a special edition also published by Model Railroader. No other model railroad club in the United States has had that honor.

We are the only completely finished club layout in the Balti-

more-Washington corridor. Every time there is a national convention within 100 miles of Severna Park, visitors come to see the layout and spend time in Severna Park. Its reputation is also known internationally as evidenced by a visit from the head of state from Denmark.

The model railroad club spent over \$8,000 just this year, updating the train system from analog to digital, thus making the experience more realistic for visitors. Three open houses are held every year and are

well attended. Our door is always open every Thursday evening except Thanksgiving. Severna Park Model Railroad Club is an active member of and an asset to the community for the unique experience it provides.

The old railroad station building is now being considered by the landlord, the Olde Severna Park Improvement Association, to house new tenants, thus bringing interior changes that would not include the model railroad.

There currently is no air-condition-

ing system and no plumbing in the building. New tenants would also need to have the electrical system updated. It would require spending thousands and thousands of dollars to install these major renovations. It means completely removing the long-standing, popular and nationally valued Severna Park Model Railroad Club's display!

Mike Zitzmann
Secretary/treasurer of
the Severna Park Model
Railroad Club

Less Supply, Greater Demand Will Always Equate To Higher Prices

» Continued from page 16

sion infrastructure is completed. Yet, this stopgap solution highlights a broader issue: Maryland's aggressive clean energy policies are escalating costs and will strain our energy system. The hefty investments for renewables and infrastructure upgrades reflect the immediate consequences of these ambitious goals.

Addressing Misconceptions About Environmental Impact

The Brandon Shores facility, which had two coal-fired units, was initially planned for conversion to oil. According to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), Brandon Shores emissions will be equal or less than prior years since there is no change in fuel type. However, since PJM is also only calling these units into operation for RMR events and not for market needs, emission would probably be less than prior years.

Most people do not realize that the visible emissions from the stack are actually water vapor. Brandon Shores had installed wet scrubbers, an air pollution control system, that has cut sulfur dioxide emissions by 95% and these improvements, supported by Maryland's Healthy Air Act, have greatly enhanced air quality. MDE has informed my office that emissions from the plant are expected to be the same as or lower than in previous years.

Legislative Efforts and Ongoing Challenges

Last session, I introduced House Bill 1315, the "Keep the Lights on Act," which aimed to address energy reliability and the costs associated with power plant retirements. This legislation sought to protect Maryland constituents by ensuring that any changes to our energy landscape were based on comprehensive analysis and stakeholder input.

Looking Ahead

BGE is hosting a community stakeholder meeting on October 1 at 6:00pm at Orchard Beach Volunteer Fire Department, located at 7549 Solley Road in Glen Burnie, to discuss the Brandon Shores Retirement Mitigation Project, which will be essential for neighboring communities to learn more about what will be happening in their backyard. Balancing the pursuit of clean energy with the immediate need for a reliable energy system requires a nuanced approach. The challenge lies in ensuring that our transition to a greener future does not compromise the stability and affordability of our current energy infrastructure.

In conclusion, the unintended consequences of overregulating Maryland's energy sector highlight a critical need for a balanced approach. While our climate goals are vital for a sustainable future, they must be pursued in tandem with practical solutions that address the immediate realities of maintaining a reliable and cost-effective energy system.

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Girls Soccer Preview



The return of All-County sophomore Emerson Scott gives the Falcons a foundational piece to build around.

By Mauricio Palmar

Just like the summer of 2023, a significant sporting event has brought women's soccer to the attention of sports fans in America. Last year, it was the Women's World Cup, where a powerhouse Spain team defeated England to win the tournament. This year, it was the Paris Olympics, where the U.S. Women's National Team beat Brazil 1-0 to claim the program's fifth Olympic gold medal.

Both events set the stage for women's soccer, as local fans await the start of

the new athletics season. Broadneck reached the state semifinals as recently as 2022, when their undefeated record was ruined at the hands of Quince Orchard forward **Caroline Donmoyer**. And as for Severna Park? Their 2023 season was spotless, as they went 17-0 en route to a Class 3A state championship win over Mount Hebron. Archbishop Spalding and Severn have also been competitive in recent years, and there's plenty more reasons to be optimistic about every team.

Severna Park

Of the four local teams, the Falcons were easily the strongest in 2023. Head coach **Rick Stimpson** led his team to an undefeated season, going 17-0 and defeating Mount Hebron to claim the team's seventh state championship, their first since 2003. It was a dream season for the Falcons, making it difficult for Stimpson to set his sights on new heights as the team heads into 2024.

"Our goal is to have a strong regular season and hopefully compete for a state championship," Stimpson said. "We are excited by the group that is returning, and we have confidence in the players that will be stepping up."

It's not going to be easy for Severna Park to repeat their 2023 performance, especially with the loss of the class of 2024. The state champions had depth across the roster, but more than anything, they were led by a remarkably strong senior class. Capital Gazette Player of the Year **Ryn Feemster** was rock-solid in the defense, and her partnership with **Francesca Dunoyer** and **Caitlyn Boucher** made it nearly impossible for opposing teams to score.

With all three now graduated, as well as

» Continued on page 30

Boys Soccer Preview



Senior midfielder Eneko Allen (right) hopes to lead Severna Park to another county championship in 2024.

By Mauricio Palmar

Soccer has been on the rise in America, with the sport seeming to break into mainstream culture. During the World Cup less than two years ago, students across the country watched games during school, a level of commitment that is usually reserved for March Madness and other cultural phenomena. The United States' brief exit from Copa America still attracted the attention of millions this past summer.

That enthusiasm for soccer is evident

within the Severna Park community, as each of the four high school teams in the area experienced success in 2023 and have high hopes for 2024.

Severna Park

Another year, another season with head coach **Ryan Parisi** leading a loaded Falcons team. In the years since he has become the Severna Park boys soccer coach, Parisi has established a culture of excellence at the program. In 2023, the team went undefeated in county play, going 9-0 en route to a 3-2 victory over South River in the county championship.

This level of success has become so routine for the team that 2023 almost feels like a disappointment, despite the county championship. Their 2022 team made it to the state final, and the 2021 roster reached the state semifinals. The team has become accustomed to deep runs in the state championships, so it's no surprise that late-season success was on the forefront of Parisi's mind when asked for the team's primary goal next year.

"Our goal is to be playing our best soccer at the end of the season," Parisi said. "We are looking forward to working with each of our players and watching them grow as the season progresses."

The Falcons have big shoes to fill now that their All-County trio of **Andrew Campbell**, **Evan Campbell** and **Nate Parkison** has graduated, but Parisi is confident that the developmental successes of the JV squad will mitigate those losses. The team is still set to return several key seniors: All-County second-team goalie **Matt Schisler**, forward **Sam Blake** and the midfield partnership of **Eneko Allen** and **Jason Blain**. Severna Park has the potential to

» Continued on page 30

Football Preview



With the dual-threat combo of quarterback CJ Watkins and running back Ian Mauldin, Broadneck expects to keep defenses off balance.

By Kevin Murnane

"There are some really good football teams in Anne Arundel County," said second-year Severna Park football head coach **Nick**

Marks after his first day of summer football camp. "People need to come out and see the outstanding teams we have in our county."

In central Anne Arundel County, there is a football team that is ranked in the top 100 in the country, another that went to the 4A state championship game, a team that just made a giant leap to the Maryland Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) B Conference, and a team that is relying on new energy and enthusiasm to get back to its glory days.

Severna Park

The Falcons are coming off a disappointing 2-8 season, but their head coach is banking on a new coaching staff, new players and new energy to return the program to its glory days.

"We had a huge turnout for camp this year with 120 players coming out," Marks said. "That's 25-30 more than last year, and they have brought great energy and enthusiasm with them."

Several new coaches have brought new offensive and defensive strategies to the program this year.

"Last year, we were extremely young; we were playing up to 10 sophomores every game," Marks said. "Many of the teams who beat us went to win playoff games in their regions."

This year, the offense will be led by quarterback **Vince Nguyen**, who is a two-year starter and holds school records for completions and yardage. Nguyen's favorite targets are wide receiver **Cole Cavanaugh**, who had 35 receptions last year, and tight end **Ryder Halloran**.

"We have a new positive energy in camp and we're looking to improve on last year's record," Marks said.

Broadneck

Last year, Broadneck reached the 4A state championship game and eventually lost to the Wise Pumas of Prince George's County, 21-0.

"It was a great year, and we had our chances in the state championship game but just couldn't get into the end zone," said Broadneck head football coach **Rob Harris**.

On the way to the state championship game, the Bruins beat powerhouses Northwest and Winston Churchill while going 7-1 against county opponents.

Harris will miss many graduating players, including his son, Eli, who will play for Navy.

"Last year was a special season because it was Eli's last year with me and I've known all of those seniors since rec ball in Cape St. Claire," Harris said. "Eli's been around summer camp since he was out of diapers."

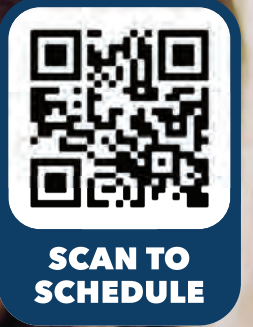
Harris is eager to turn the page and is excited about this year's team as Broadneck adds a few transfers and several players from last year's JV squad.

The Bruins return five offensive linemen, all their linebackers, quarterback **CJ Watkins**, running back **Ian Mauldin**, and two receivers. The Bruins added linebackers **Zion Lowder** from Spalding and **Marlo Brown** from Saint Frances.

Broadneck also welcomed back former head coach **Jeff Herrick**, who will coach the running backs.

"We have a chance to be a special team," Harris said. "We have lofty expectations, and our goal is to win the state championship."

» Continued on page 29



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Volleyball Preview



Broadneck junior setter Sydney Lawrence can facilitate to four other players at any time to create a multifaceted attack.

By David Bashore

Severna Park

Severna Park is gearing up for another season in which they return plenty of experience but also must replace their two most impactful players.

The Falcons graduated leading attacker and blocker **Perry Stevenson**, now at Canisius University, and libero **Annabelle Mora**. But they return seven players from last season's squad, including second-leading attacker **Lizzie Ranaghan**, second-leading blocker **Stella Kidney**, third-leading blocker and second-most efficient attacker **Courtlynn Edwards**, as well as setters **Jennifer Hong** and **Genevieve Willis**. Defensive specialist **Kathryn Rojek** and outside hitter **Margaret Morgan** also return with experience.

Though they return experience, Severna Park is in the second year of a youth movement within the program. Of the 16 varsity players, only two — Edwards and right-side attacker **Maevie Byrne** — are seniors.

The youthful Falcons also have a new voice at the head of the program, as **Caitlin Mills** takes over for longtime coach **Tim Dunbar**.

Broadneck

In 2023, Broadneck's volleyball team loved winning games, and they won a lot of them. But the love to win has been replaced by an even stronger emotion.

The 2024 Bruins already hate to lose.

Broadneck closed the 2023 regular season with an 11-1 record, losing only to perennial power Arundel, but the season ended far too abruptly for anyone's tastes. The Bruins lost three of their last five matches and exited the postseason after losing their best player to injury.

In 2024, they return 11 players from last season's county and region finalist, including five starters. With so much

experience returning, they're drawing on the past to drive themselves even further this time around. Injuries, setbacks, successes, wins, losses — all of it is now fuel.

"I think no matter what happens, or what happened in the past, we're moving on from it and building up our positivity. I feel like we're prepared for anything to come in this season," said junior outside hitter **Anna Graves**. "It creates and builds connections with each other. We have so much trust in each other, and it makes us feel like we're all together no matter what."

Having been put on the deck multiple times at the end of last season, Broadneck adopted a fighter's mantra. Each year, they pick a theme. In 2024, it's a line originating from "Rocky V" and popularized in "South Park" — "I Didn't Hear No Bell."

"We always have a mantra and we're going for it. Never quit. Never let a ball hit the floor. We're never giving up until we're told to, and even then, we'll be fighting," said middle blocker **Amanda Protzman**, one of three seniors on the 2024 team. "Watching volleyball in the Olympics — the mentality is exactly right. We want to never give up, always fight, always pushing forward."

With so many people pulling in the same direction, and so much experience returning, the Bruins have been able to add more into their offense and make things more difficult for opposing defenses.

That makes the game far more flexible and fluid for junior setter **Sydney Lawrence**, who can facilitate to four other players at any time to create a multifaceted attack. That represents a departure from last season, where do-everything **Brin Chesnut** carried huge chunks of offense.

"It feels great to know that wherever I put the ball, someone's going to be there to put it away. I have such a connection with my hitters that I know no matter where it goes, there's a great chance for it to be a kill," Lawrence said. "I don't have to force a ball to a certain player all the time; I can go anywhere I want to. Trying to pull the block is important to us. Trying to hold the middle with me as long as possible and trying to confuse them and run a faster offense is important."

Other returning players with varsity experience include seniors **Addison Sladke** and **Julia Rubino**; juniors **Chloe Richie**, **Kennedy Smith** and **Addison Britton**; and sophomores **Marley Evans**, **Chloe Hays** and **Barrett Bolter**.

That much experience, combined with the unrelenting belief and determination sharpened through a quick-burst bout with adversity, has the coaching staff feeling bullish about the Bruins' chances in 2024.

"From the start, when we asked how we feel about this season, it's been, 'We're not losing,'" said Broadneck coach **Tracey Realbuto**. "There hasn't been a, 'We're going to win it all.' It's just, 'We're not losing.' That's a good mentality to have."

"These girls are determined to make it to states this year, and that's the end goal," Realbuto said. "We feel like we have a competitive six on each side when we do practice, so that's good. They're pretty confident going in. They've been starting for two years now, so we're excited to see what it looks like."

Severn School

As Severn School's new volleyball team

practiced in late August, the team celebrated milestones big and small.

They celebrated winning a set in their first scrimmage. A couple of days later, they cheered getting the ball over the net in a passing drill.

These were baby steps in a program poised for a big trajectory in a short amount of time, and for players coming from diverse backgrounds and skill sets, everything is a cause for encouragement.

That relentless positivity has rubbed off on the players and is fostering a fun atmosphere as the Admirals program prepares for its maiden voyage.

"So far, I'm really excited about the personnel that we have across the board. We have some great senior leadership. We are developing our younger players and building some skills and volleyball IQ, but there's a lot of room to grow," said Severn coach **Erin Bernhardt**, who played collegiately at Gardner-Webb and then professionally in the now-defunct Premier Volleyball League.

"Even with some of the girls who have played before, it's been a little bit since they've played, so we're still working through that even with those who had experience. ... It gives us a freedom to really enjoy the experience and enjoy the game. There's no pressure this season, so we can relax and have fun, and try to implement some of the things we're putting in, but otherwise just have fun."

With a mix of experienced volleyball players and those who are experiencing the sport on the competitive level for the first time, it could be easy for the built-in gaps in competition level to cause friction.

Not so for the Admirals, however. They thrive on learning together, regardless of

skill level or experience.

"It's just super important to make sure that everyone's included in terms of volleyball. Even if you're not the best, or if you've played your entire life, being included still matters," said senior **Charlotte Reilly**, who is playing organized volleyball for the first time this fall. "I'm not the best one out there by any means, but getting everyone involved in the huddle, in the cheers, and playing the game is super important. The teams that I'm a part of that have done that have been the most fun to be a part of."

That experience will be tested in games against an assortment of public and private school opponents. Severn will compete on a club basis in 2024, meaning that they get around two months together before the season ends. No hope of a postseason, no all-conference awards, nothing other than building the program for the future. They're on course to receive full Interscholastic Athletic Association of Maryland (IAAM) program status in 2025.

Still, that carrot was enough to get seniors like Reilly to buy in and leave a standard for those who will follow.

"Most of the seniors are some of my best friends, and we made the decision to come out together. We were going to be the oldest players on the team, so we wanted to come out and help set what it means to be a Severn athlete and a Severn student into this program, considering it's so new," said Reilly, who also plays lacrosse at Severn. "That comes from the people above you, so we've followed the lead of those who came before us, and we want to set that tone here now that we're the oldest players."

Fair Oaks Residents Bond Over Volleyball League



The Fair Oaks on the Magothy community has a competitive summer volleyball league where neighbors come together to compete. The neighborhood completed its season in late August, and the champions were crowned. (L-R) Tim Merritt, Kevin Laughlin, Kenny Watt and Alicyn Bassler won the Fair Oaks summer volleyball championship.

Field Hockey Preview



Photo courtesy of Elizabeth McGrail Imber

Kelsey Rowe (right) is expected to play a pivotal role for Severna Park field hockey this season, while Broadneck will miss the presence of midfielder Chloe Page, who is out for the season with a hip injury.

By David Bashore

Severna Park

After winning two straight state championships, Severna Park found the playoff road full of pitfalls and pain the last two seasons: they ran into a buzzsaw named Broadneck in 4A regionals in 2022, and they lost 2-1 to Mount Hebron in the 3A semifinals last season.

More painfully for the Falcons, Hebron rolled in the championship game a few days later.

But with a large senior class, 14 returning varsity players, and motivation from successive postseason disappointments, the Falcons feel

like they have the right formula to return to the top of Maryland field hockey in 2024.

"This team is hungry. They don't want to lose in the semifinals this year, so we are working very hard on mentality," said Severna Park coach **Shannon Garden** after the team's first day of practice. "Right now, their mentality is: we're in this to win it, and anything else isn't worth it. ... I feel like we have the players to do it this year. For the large senior class and returners, it stung to lose in the semifinals by one goal, and they don't want that to happen again. And that starts here, now, in practice."

The Falcons return several players

with experience and will look to build from the defense out, as is Garden's bent. With returners like **Ava Zimmerman**, **Emma Weber**, **Sydney Day** and **Kelsey Rowe** leading the attack and bringing on some young, speedy attackers, there is no predicting where the next goal will come from: it could be any of them.

That frees Severna Park to not be perfect and instead pepper the opposing goal with shots. Someone will be on hand to cash in, if the original shot doesn't find the back of the goal. It also allows the Falcons to be more proactive and dictate play, rather than be reactive to what the opponent is trying to do.

"We've got some really strong forwards coming back, and they've been practicing a lot on their shooting and having an attacking mindset rather than a reactive mindset. We're trying to attack and make the defense react more," Garden said. "It's a mindset — some kids just have it naturally, and you see it in every sport that they want the ball. Some kids are a little more methodical and want things to bounce their way. We're just telling them to take the shot, it doesn't need to be perfect, and let your teammates clean it up if need be. We don't need to count on one person to score a ton of goals. It's not one person's job to score goals. It's everyone's job to score goals."

In a battle in what Garden called the best top-to-bottom county in the state for field hockey, that attitude should pay dividends as they seek to keep pace with Broadneck and two-time reigning state champion Crofton.

"We're not going to take anybody lightly because every team has at least a few good players. Crofton and Broadneck have a lot of good players, and we have to work hard and want it more to stay in the games with them," Garden said. "But I think we have more talent this year that we can push each other to get there and not be intimidated. That's half the battle, to not be intimidated by teams that haven't lost and things like that."

Broadneck

In the 4A ranks, the story is markedly similar: a former champ dealt with semifinal heartache seeks to flip the script in 2024.

Broadneck won the county championship over Crofton last season but ended up ceding their state crown when the Cardinals got revenge with a 2-0 state semifinal win.

Though the Bruins lost their crown, they approach the 2024 season the same as they did in 2023 when they were reigning champs.

"They know that not only are we a very competitive program and every year we should be able to compete for a state playoff run — I think the girls have that mindset and they weren't shaken. I think they know they're capable of making it as far as they can," said Broadneck coach **Shannon Hanratty**, who invoked the three-part season mantra preached by her counterpart in Broadneck girls lacrosse, **Katy Kelley**. "Sometimes in sports, you need a reminder that it's the postseason. I think one thing we have to remind ourselves is that even if we have a few bumps along the road

in our preseason and regular season journey, it all comes down to peaking at the right time.

"The goal is to get ourselves figured out when it matters, which is in the postseason. They've been such highly competitive athletes for such a long time at this age, that most people don't get that, that their mentality is the same whether they win or lose. It's just, next game."

The Broadneck team returns virtually all of their attacking firepower, anchored by three NCAA Division I committed field hockey players: **Faith Everett** (Maryland), **Katelyn Kearns** (UMass) and **Raleigh Kerst** (Ohio State). Where they might be light, and where those bumps may come, is in the midfield, as Syracuse commit **Chloe Page** is out for the season following a hip injury, and fellow midfielder **Gabby King** may also miss the season as she recovers from an ACL injury suffered during the lacrosse season.

That puts an extra onus on senior leadership in defense, spearheaded by defender **Grace Figueroa** (committed to York College) and goaltender **Mia Moody** (Salisbury), to plug the gaps while the best solution shakes out in front of them.

"The strength of our core of senior leaders are committed field hockey players, because they want to play this for the next four years, and that opens their leadership opportunities to help bring the younger players along and show them the way, because they've been shown the way," Hanratty said. "Our job as coaches is to figure out the best plan for our personnel, and that's the goal for preseason. It's probably going to be something different than in years past, but that's what sports is: you look at what you have, and you fit the plan to what you have and what's best for the team. And we have many players who are in that mindset, which makes it easier for us."

Archbishop Spalding

Under the leadership of longtime coach **Leslee Brady**, Archbishop Spalding finished 14-1 in 2023, reaching the IAAM championships and losing 3-1 to Garrison Forest.

The Cavaliers have plenty of reasons to think they might return to the IAAM finals. This year's squad features three juniors — defender **Stella Bumgarner**, forward **Skylar Gilman** and defender **Jilly Lawn** — who were named first-team All-County as juniors last fall. Gilman had five game-winning shots for her team, and both Bumgarner and Lawn also earned All-State first-team honors.

This team boasts plenty of experience, with 15 seniors including Severna Park residents **Shannon Curtis**, **Grace Lamon** and **Madeline Lancione**, and Arnold resident **Gabrielle Prentice**.

Severn School

Head coach **Giovani Gordon's** squad went 5-10-1 last season. The Admirals' lone All-County athlete, senior defender **Grace Frankl**, will return to lead the program. The team has a mix of experience and youth, with eight seniors, nine juniors and two sophomores.

Arnold Resident Tapped To Be Tennis Alliance's Executive Director

The Tennis Alliance of Anne Arundel County chose Arnold resident Marie Sokoloff to join its leadership team as executive director starting in September. The executive director will focus on growth, development and sustainability.



Marie Sokoloff

The Tennis Alliance mission is "to expand tennis opportunities to all in Anne Arundel County and to promote the sport of tennis for health, wellness and life." The Tennis Alliance of Anne Arundel County has been providing sport and educational opportunities to youth for over 10 years.

Sokoloff has an extensive and successful background in youth sports and business management. She previously served as the executive director for the Maryland State Youth Soccer Association for eight years. She is rec-

ognized for her innovative approach to solving complex challenges and her proven track record for driving significant growth.

"We are incredibly excited to have Marie step up to the role of executive director," said Louise Thomas, president of the Tennis Alliance and acting executive director. "By filling this significant leadership position with an accomplished and committed person like Marie, the Tennis Alliance can continue its commitment to using the sport of tennis to deliver health and wellness to youth and adults in Anne Arundel County. Marie's significant expertise and wealth of experience will significantly contribute to our continued success."

The new executive director lives with her husband, Dr. Alan Sokoloff, and their two dogs, Traxx and Gunner.

The Tennis Alliance of Anne Arundel County is a 501(c)3 United States Tennis Association (USTA) community tennis association and a USTA National Junior and Tennis and Learning chapter.

STUDENT-ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

JACOB FORD

Severna Park High School
Track and Field

By David Bashore

Jacob Ford had so much fun participating in Green Hornets track and field growing up, he felt it natural to try out for the Severna Park High squad when he became a freshman.

He didn't make the team.

But the now-senior at Severna Park took it in stride, choosing to focus on what he could improve to make the cut as a sophomore — which he did.

"I asked the coach what I could do better to come back in the winter (of sophomore year) and make it. I got specific exercises, and I got the workouts for the team, so I did those and came back into the winter," Ford said. "I've always had this down-but-not-out mentality. Something may not go your way, but it's never over just because one person says no sometimes. It may take a little bit of extra effort and some more time, but eventually you'll be able to get there if you commit to it."

Since then, Ford has gone from strength to strength, qualifying for Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association regional meets in both throwing disciplines. He has qualified for regionals twice in the discus, and he qualified in the shot put as a junior. He hopes to make it back to regionals in both disciplines as a senior, and maybe to the state meet in the discus, his specialty.

Ford took a massive leap at his sophomore last chance meet, in which he qualified for regionals. Last



year was a down year by his standards, with his gains not as dramatic as before. But he learned more about himself and his techniques, and he finally felt ready to do something he had his eye on for over a year.

This summer, he returned to the Green Hornets program to help with the throws, teaching the next generation of throwers the importance of technique, power and tenacity.

"Between sophomore and junior year, I was considering helping out, and I was thinking about my time in Green Hornets. I really enjoyed those years and the people who helped me become who I am in track," Ford

said. "Everybody deserves someone to help them in this, but not a lot of people understand how to throw a shot put or discus. I didn't feel like I was ready, because I hadn't made it to regionals in shot put yet. But this summer, I felt like I was at a high enough level that I could show them how to do it, but I could make it fun as well. This was the year I could give back to everyone who helped me during my years at Green Hornets."

In 15-minute bursts a couple of times a week, Ford tried to cram in as much technique, skill and fun as he could: some showing off proper technique, and lots of challenge games to keep kids interested. And he realized he could take some pressure off of himself and just enjoy the ride while he's still on it.

"My hope is to try to make it to states this year in one or the other, (shot put or discus). I'm just going to go through the year with an open mind," he said. "Last season I ended up pushing myself down because I wasn't making as many milestones, so I'm hoping this year to keep pushing step by step."

Having to make nearly 15 feet to hit the state qualifying mark and having to hit that mark at the regional meet, is daunting. But Ford has technique on his side, a little more power, and perspective. He hopes that his hard work will pay off one final time before he goes off to college, and that's the message he hopes to impart to both the Green Hornets students and his schoolmates.

"The bottom line is really just, I started out and I never stopped. I feel like the most important thing a person can have is the feeling that they need to keep pushing forward, and that aspect of perseverance and working hard to reach your goals," he said. "That's something that's more important in your life than a lot of other things."

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Cooperstown Bound: Green Hornets 12U Baseball Team Wins Around The Horn Competition

The 12U Severna Park Green Hornets baseball squad traveled to Cooperstown, New York, from July 19-25 and won the Around the Horn competition against 94 other teams from across the country.

The skills competition was part of the Cooperstown Dreams Park week 10 tournament. During the throwing and fielding challenge, eight or nine players from each team took their positions on the field and were timed as they threw the baseball in the following sequence: pitcher to catcher, to third base, to second base, to first base, to the catcher, to the shortstop, to the right fielder, to second base, to the center fielder, to third base, to left field, and then finally back to the catcher. Each base had to be tagged during the sequence.

The Green Hornets won the challenge with a time of 24.63 seconds, ahead of the NH Diamond Dawgs from New Hampshire at 27.44 seconds.

The tournament was more than skill challenges. After finishing pool play with a 4-1 record and the 11 seed, the Green Hornets made it to the Sweet 16 before losing to the Whitecaps from Southern California. The Green Hornets finished with a spring record of 44-16-1.

"The boys always fight for each other," said coach **Pete Buck**. "No matter what is happening, someone is always there to pick up another teammate. They are a true team that enjoys being on the field together. They play at a high level and it's very gratifying to watch as they are a family at the same time!"



The 12U Green Hornets made it to the Sweet 16 of the Cooperstown Dreams Park week 10 tournament before losing to the Whitecaps from Southern California.



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SPHS Boys Lacrosse Program To Host Golf Tournament Fundraiser

To support the Severna Park High School boys lacrosse program, a golf tournament is set for October 26 at Bay Hills Golf Club, located at 545 Bay Hills Drive in Arnold.

The format is a four-person scramble. Register as a foursome (\$500) or as an individual (\$145). All pricing includes the following: greens and cart fees, short game area putting and chipping green, lunch and select

beverages.

Registration starts at 8:00am, with a shotgun start at 9:00am. There will be a 50/50 and basket raffles after the tournament at Bay Hills.

To sponsor the event with a payment by check or to donate a basket for the raffle, contact Bethany Fish at blfisho4@gmail.com. For more information about the tournament, visit www.sphs-boys-lacrosse.square.site.

Football Preview

» Continued from page 20

Archbishop Spalding

Coming off their second consecutive MIAA A Conference championship, the Cavaliers have added regional powerhouses like DeMatha and Archbishop Stepinac of New York to their 2024 schedule, which also features anticipated battles with McDonogh, Loyola, Mount Saint Joseph, Gilman and Calvert Hall.

"Every week in this league will be a battle," Spalding head football coach **Kyle Schmitt**. "We have a massive bullseye on our chest, and staying healthy and playing our best football in November is always the goal."

Spalding, which is currently ranked 85th in the country by MaxPreps, is led by the Baltimore area's two-time player of the year, **Malik Washington**. He is ranked the 23rd best quarterback in the nation by 247 Sports Composite and committed to Maryland over the summer.

"Malik is throwing the ball extremely well and has an excellent grasp and ownership of the offense," Schmitt said. "I'm cherishing each day with him and grateful I can coach him for another four months."

Washington wasn't the only Cavalier to commit to a major college football power over the summer. Defensive back **Jayden Shipps** and defensive tackle **Delmar White** also committed to the Terps. Defensive back **Trent Gillis** will attend Navy and **Alijah Jones** will attend Northwestern.

The areas where graduation hurt the Cavaliers were the offensive line and linebacker units. But with numerous players coming up from the JV squad, as well as true freshmen, the Cavaliers have built depth across their roster.

"We used 10 different offensive linemen last year and many of our younger players received significant playing time," Schmitt said. "**Grant Little, Blake Wanless, Gavin Laupp** and **Kyle Lucas** played the most last year. We also have **Michael Byrne, Owen Rickard** and **Quinn Purcell** for our offensive line depth."

To balance out the Cavaliers' warp-speed offense, led by Washington's passing attack, the defensive front four is led by White and **Zack Philpott**.

"They are the strongest players on the football team and White is a game-wrecker who is unblockable when singled up with offensive tackles

and guards," Schmitt said.

Other stars in Spalding's summer camp were wide receiver **Kam Miller**, running back **Antonio Ledbetter** and linebacker **Joey Scheffers**.

Severn School

Severn School is making a giant leap to the MIAA B Conference and will now play St. Paul's, John Carroll, St. Vincent Pallotti and Boys Latin in league play.

Severn School head football coach **Demetrius Ballard** is excited about the challenge, as he has been recruiting from local youth football programs to grow his program.

"It's a tougher schedule, but we have the athletes to compete in this division and we have added size and speed along with a great strength and conditioning program to prepare for the next step," Ballard said.

This is Ballard's third year as head coach. His biggest loss from last year was Severna Park resident and tackle **Bo Fowler**, who is now playing at the University of Richmond.

"We've added some players from the Eastern Shore in **Nate Eakins** and **Chase Krukiel** to give us some size up front," Ballard said. "One of the biggest additions will be **Nate Michalski**, who is 6-foot-4 and 240 pounds and can bench press 280 pounds already."

The Admirals return quarterback **Ty Bussard** of Severna Park, and he added 15 pounds during the offseason.

"Ty has a cannon of an arm, commands the offense and has the potential to be a Division I quarterback. I rate him just behind **Malik Washington** as far as quarterback talent in the county," said Ballard, who previously was an assistant coach at Spalding.

Broussard will throw to talented receivers, including last year's All-MIAA C Conference wide receiver **Daniel Growney** and **Cayden Decker** of Arnold. Decker is also the team's kicker and can make field goals from 45 yards.

Ballard is also thrilled about his defense, which features linebackers **Jack Fowler** of Severna Park and **Julius Floyd**. "Our defense will surprise people," Ballard said.

Severn's coach continues to heavily recruit from the football feeder programs throughout the area, especially the Green Hornets. Now with the program moving to the MIAA B Conference and a strength and conditioning program led by **Dan Mahoney**, the football program is bright on the Evergreen Road campus.

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Severna Park Youth Soccer Players Are Annapolis Cup Champs

The 2016 Severna Park boys (U9) soccer team, led by head coach **Tony Malcolm** and assistant coach **Mat Merriman**, started their fall campaign in Elite Development Program-Central Maryland Short Sided League (EDP-CMSSL) play with a bang. They battled top teams from the region during the 2024 Annapolis Cup from August 17-18 in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, and emerged as champions.

The action was back and forth, and this group of dynamic boys showed grit and determination, as their wins didn't come easily. The tournament was a preview of what's to come for this group, as they will face many of these same opponents during league play in the coming months.

The team included (left to right) assistant coach **Mat Merriman**, players **Christian Ribeiro**, **Chris Comegys**, **Brody Bombard**, **Mitchell Baker**, **Leo Malcolm**, **Liam Harvey**, **Ethan Phippen**, **Oliver Taddeo**, **Cal Viera**, **Grant Locher**, **Hudson Merriman**, **Bruno Buras** and head coach **Tony Malcolm**.



Boys from the U9 Severna Park squad battled top teams from the region during the 2024 Annapolis Cup from August 17-18 in Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

Boys Soccer Preview

» Continued from page 20
hoist another county championship at the end of the 2024 season.

Broadneck

Under the tutelage of longtime head coach **Sean Tetterer**, the Broadneck boys had a strong campaign in 2023, much like their female counterparts. However, their success on the field was ultimately overshadowed by the work of their archrivals, Severna Park. The Bruins finished with another winning record, going 11-5 and appearing in the regional finals.

But unfortunately for the Bruins, Leonardtown proved to be too much for them to handle, as Broadneck ultimately faltered in a crushing 2-1 defeat. It was a tough way to end the season for Broadneck, as the team hasn't made it to a state semifinal since 2018, and they haven't been to a state final since 2005. The team is hoping that they can make a deeper playoff run in 2024, but the amount of roster turnover they're experiencing might make that difficult.

Broadneck lost longtime goalkeeper **Matt Tetterer**, as well as All-County midfielder **Harlan Welsh**, key forward **Patrick Robillard** and several defenders including **Sam Petz** and **Ethan Colon**. It will be a year of transition for the Bruins, who are going to have to rely on underclassmen to step up in a big way.

Junior **Brady Miller** should be able to lead the defense, **Wilson Banwell** is set for a big sophomore season in the attack, and senior **Jed Meehan** is expected to be a cog in the midfield. But if Broadneck can unearth some more unforeseen contributors, they could be a tough out.

Archbishop Spalding

Since even before the COVID-interrupted 2020 season, Spalding's soccer team has floundered in the MIAA conference. The team has not had a winning campaign since 2012, when the Cavaliers barely managed to secure a winning record by finishing 8-7-1. Head coach **Fred Sporrer** has been with the team since 2021, but it only took him three seasons to flip the team's fortunes.

In 2023, Sporrer led the team to a 9-6-4 record, taking them to the MIAA conference semifinals before falling to Loyola Blakefield. The team hasn't seen this level of success in over a decade, and now that Sporrer has a taste of it, his desire

for postseason progress has become insatiable.

"Our primary goal is to build on last year's semifinal MIAA bid and continue to compete in the postseason," Sporrer said. "Our group is much younger this year but full of quality players ready to step up and compete."

The team's 2024 first-team All-County players, **Declan Karney** and **Brett Rice**, graduated in the spring. Thus, there's going to be massive holes to fill for the Cavaliers, but with the talent that he's expected to return, Sporrer has enough reasons to feel optimistic. **Marco Mazzo** has been a key player for Spalding since he arrived on campus, and he's expected to lead a strong senior class that features **Kyle Crawford** and **Quinn Conlan**. And as for the underclassmen, **Mo Lonergan** and **Christian Sporrer** both showed sparks in camp.

Severn School

In 2023, the Admirals went 12-2-2 and had the opportunity to win a third consecutive conference title. The team made a deep playoff run, going to the MIAA conference championship before falling to St. Paul's in a 2-1 affair. Head coach **Mike McCarthy** isn't a big fan of losing, and he made that fact clear when asked where he was setting his sights in 2024.

"This year, the Admirals are laser-focused on one goal: getting back to the championship," McCarthy stated. "Getting back to the championship will require the team to maintain our strong defensive identity, while also finding consistency in our attack."

Graduating talents **Hudson Lamb**, **Alex Mussog** and **Matt Sotiropoulos** are leaving holes to fill in various aspects of the team, but McCarthy is confident in the team's ability to adapt to these changes. The Admirals are set to return seven starters, with a mix of four seniors and three juniors. The team will need to rely on underclassmen to step up into the other four spots in the lineup, but they have the talent to fill those gaps with ease.

The attack is going to be led by striker **Will Cawfield**, but other seniors, including **Nick Melfi** and **John Caswell**, are also expected to contribute. If **Sam Long**, **Mike Burns** and other juniors can continue to progress in their starting roles, the team could be in the conference championship come November.

Girls Soccer Preview

» Continued from page 20

attackers including **Sara Kreis**, Severna Park has their work cut out for them when trying to shape up their defense, but the return of All-County sophomore **Emerson Scott** gives them a foundational piece to build around. The midfield is also expected to be a strength for Severna Park, with junior **Ava Scott**, sophomore **Izzy Burleson**, and seniors **Bella Van Gieson** and **Abby Cover** expected to contribute to the middle for another potential championship charge.

Broadneck

Broadneck's 2023 team wasn't nearly as strong as their team that won the county championship in 2022, but they still had a successful campaign last year, and head coach **John Camm** is hoping to continue their success going forward. The team went 6-3 in county play last year, and they managed to make a deep run through the playoffs before losing a penalty shootout to North Point in the 4A Region II championship.

"We are optimistic regarding this upcoming season," Camm said. "We are skillful and athletic, and we expect to perform well all season long."

The team graduated a strong senior class that featured **Olivia Orso**, **Lily Trout**, **Maddie Capps** and **Kyleigh Bland**, but that leaves more opportunities for the younger players on the roster to step up. The team has 10 sophomores and five freshmen, and they're led by sophomore **Mia Orso**, an All-County midfielder who collected seven goals and 11 assists in her debut season.

Senior **Grace Gartrell**, and juniors **Hadley Crooks** and **Ellie McGilvray** are all names to watch for the Bruins, with the latter two being named to the Capital Gazette's All-County second team at season's end. The youth movement is in full swing for Broadneck, and the potential of this roster is limitless over the next couple of years.

Archbishop Spalding

Of the four programs on this list, Archbishop Spalding finished with the worst record, but the season was not bad for the team. Despite entering the playoffs with a 5-7-2 record, they made a run to the conference championship before falling to McDonogh in a 6-1 rout. The Cavaliers have plenty of talented players, but they

couldn't string together enough wins to claim the elusive MIAA conference crown.

Fortunately for head coach **Ashly Kennedy**, Spalding is set to return a vast majority of their talent from last year's roster, including their robust forward duo of **Riley Wills** and **Olivia Nardone**. Wills collected eight goals and seven assists last year, while Nardone claimed 11 goals and four assists of her own, and both players are set to play key roles as they head into their senior years.

The graduation of long-time All-County second team goalkeeper **Maeve Konstantoulas** may loom large over the team, but junior **Sophie Fedorchak** could fill her role. If things go right, the Cavaliers could make it back to the conference final in 2024.

Severn School

Prior to the 2023 season, former professional futsal player **Denison Cabral** took over for head coach **Erika Mahon**, who subsequently moved into an assistant role with the team. In Cabral's first year at the helm of the girls soccer team, the Admirals went 8-7, although their MIAA playoff run came to an end in the quarterfinals at the hands of St. Timothy's.

This year, Cabral thinks he has a mix of players who can make a deeper run in the playoffs and possibly even contend for a title. The Admirals weren't heavily dependent upon their senior class last year, as they only graduated four players from the 2023 roster. Cabral is set to return 15 players from last season's team, as well as 12 seniors. The chemistry on the team is undeniable, and their experience could give them a leg up on the rest of the conference.

"(We are hoping) to be competitive, enjoy the experience, and fight for the title," Cabral said. "This year, we will have many seniors who will make the difference, and we will be counting on all of them to help this program accomplish its goals and have a great season."

Senior **Eliana Valencia** is expected to take a leadership role in the midfield this season, following a season that earned her an All-County second-team appearance. She'll work alongside senior **Madison Watson** in the midfield, while **Sally Reed** and **Nia Hudson** are set to lead the line in the attack. Severn has the ingredients to make a deep run in the playoffs, and it's up to Cabral to put the pieces together.

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Four Severn School Students Hike Mount Whitney To Honor Friend



Nick Melfi, William Cawfield, Tanner Huber and Peter Urban completed a climb atop Mount Whitney in California to honor Sullivan Shields, a friend who died of cancer in 2023.

By Judy Tacyn

Lying on the boundary of Sequoia National Park and Inyo National Forest, Mount Whitney, the tallest peak in the contiguous United States, is one of California's most popular destinations for avid hikers and adventure seekers. There are a couple trails and starting points to get to its summit at 14,500 feet, each one treacherous enough to require hikers to obtain a permit.

For four Severn School seniors and

their fathers who completed the hike on August 2, getting to the top wasn't simply an aspiration; it was a mission. They weren't just going to the peak to see something. They were going to honor someone: Sullivan "Sully" Shields, a Severn student and close friend who passed away in fall of 2023 from cancer.

Nick Melfi (Severna Park), William Cawfield (Arnold), Tanner Huber (Severna Park) and Peter Urban (Annapolis) had heard the stories of how

difficult the climb would be. Two years earlier, Cawfield's father, Andrew, and his older brother had made the same trek with three friends and their fathers — one of the eight didn't make it to the summit. All scholarly, multi-sport athletes, the four friends worked out and went on long runs all summer to prepare their bodies for the hike.

Starting at a basecamp 8,000 feet above sea level, the young men and their fathers, Nicholas Melfi, Andrew Cawfield, Don Huber and Chris Urban, left shortly after dawn and hiked seven miles up the mountain to a basecamp. They rested as best as they could, and at 2:00am, the group was again hiking up the mountain.

"We were determined to get to the top to watch the sunrise," Tanner said. "We had to hike the last five miles in the pitch dark."

The group carried their gear in backpacks that weighed 35-40 pounds and wore headlamps. Without guides or handrails of any kind, parts of the trail skirted the mountain cliffs where steep drop-offs were as deadly as they were beautiful. Along the way, two of the headlamps went out, making the hike even more difficult.

"Some parts of the trail were just normal hiking trails," said Peter, "but there were parts so narrow that you'd look over the edge and know you'd die if you slipped and fell."

With every step, the group thought about their friend Sully. They would not quit this mission. They would honor Sully by reaching the peak. At around 5:00am, the mission was accomplished. Atop Mount Whitney is a book to sign for those brave and strong enough to complete the hike. The group members each took turns signing the

» Continued on page 38

Margot Argeles Selected As AACPL's Second Student Board Member



Severna Park High School senior Margot Argeles began serving her yearlong term as AACPL's student board member this summer.

By Meredith Winter

She's exemplary in academics, a second-dan (degree) black belt in taekwondo, captivated by STEM subjects, a committed volunteer, active in numerous school clubs, an avid photographer, a world traveler, and an ardent plant collector. And this school year, Severna Park High School (SPHS) senior Margot Argeles is serving as the Anne Arundel County Public Library (AACPL) system's student member of the board of trustees.

Argeles is only the second student to serve on AACPL's 18-member board. Library CEO Skip Auld shared that the newly created position was inspired by Anne Arundel County Public Schools' student board seat. Uniquely, both student members have full voting rights.

An AACPL statement announcing Argeles' selection for the board seat explained that the student trustee position "provides the selected individual with an opportunity to learn about board governance and gain valuable real-world experience serving on a governing body. Additionally, the library and its board gain insight into students' points of view on library resources, programs and materials."

In addition to serving with the greater board of the trustees, Argeles is now a member of the board's governance, strategy and organization subcommittee as well. She attended her first committee meeting on August 15.

Auld noted Argeles is a full participant who is not only a likable person, but she also offers good insights.

"She's keenly interested in the library, she's used libraries her whole

» Continued on page 38

Arnold Elementary Fifth-Grader Named National Winner Of Investment Essay Competition

Shared by AACPS

When it comes to writing about investments, students — and, perhaps, adults — could learn a lot from Arnold Elementary School fifth-grader Johan Zacharia.

Johan's essay was named national champion out of 959 entries in the elementary school division of the national InvestWrite essay competition, the culminating activity to the Stock Market Game program utilized in schools across the United States and organized locally by the Maryland Council on Economic Education (MCEE).

Johan's work detailed what he learned from his experience in the Stock Market Game, discussed which investment in his portfolio performed the best, and provided a recommendation on a future hypothetical investment.

"I feel proud to have won the InvestWrite award," Johan said. "I learned a lot and hope to use what I learned in the future."

Johan wrote that while his involvement in the Stock Market Game was challenging, he learned tactics and strategies that paid off in the end.

"My portfolio performed well because I have a mix of food, entertainment and drinks," Johan wrote in his essay. "I have Costco because people buy groceries every day. I have Disney, Netflix and Spotify because people watch movies and listen to music. I purchased Pepsi because it is

» Continued on page 38

Arnold Elementary School Principal Shauna Kauffman and Johan Zacharia hoisted a trophy after the fifth-grader won a nationwide InvestWrite competition.



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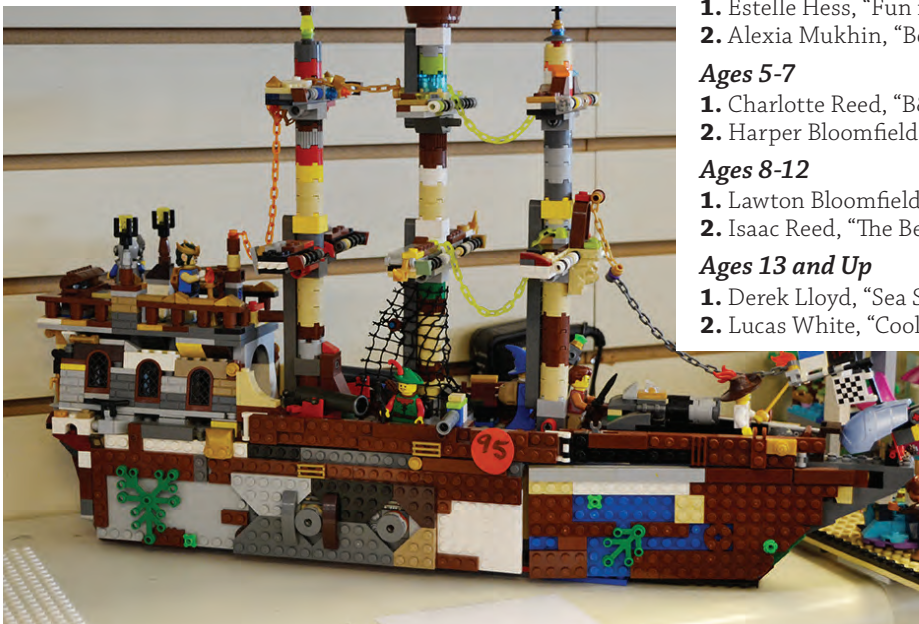
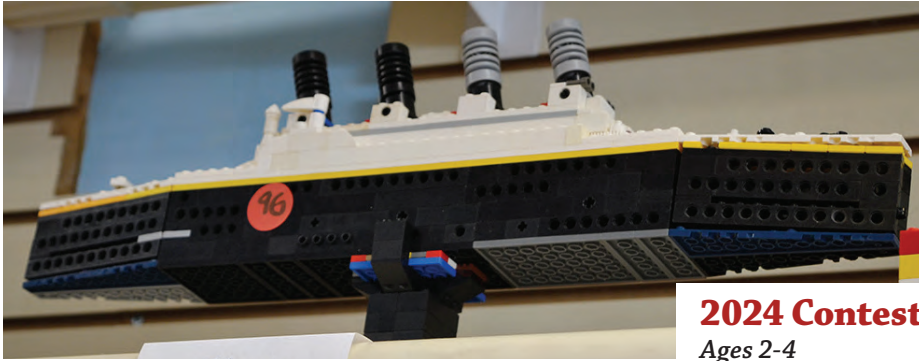
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Franklin's Toys LEGO Contest Shows Off Creative Minds

A steamship, a winged creature, a Severna Park business and several other creative entries became part of the Franklin's Toys LEGO expo and contest in August. Winners were chosen in the following age categories: 2-4, 5-7, 8-12, and 13 and up. Staff picks were also chosen.



2024 Contest Winners

Ages 2-4

1. Estelle Hess, "Fun in the Forest"
2. Alexia Mukhin, "BeeBee"

Ages 5-7

1. Charlotte Reed, "B&A Bike Trail"
2. Harper Bloomfield, "Sports Goods"

Ages 8-12

1. Lawton Bloomfield, "D Day"
2. Isaac Reed, "The Beginning and The End"

Ages 13 and Up

1. Derek Lloyd, "Sea Sprite"
2. Lucas White, "Cool Cactus"

SEVERNA PARK LIBRARY END-OF-SEASON CELEBRATION



This month, the Severna Park Voice posed a question to a group of local students. With classrooms still getting settled for the school year in September, we asked children aged preschool to middle school who attended the Severna Park Library's end-of-summer celebration the following question:

What was your favorite book you read this summer?

"The Princess in Black" because I like the monsters.
Alexandra Z.

My favorite book of the summer is "Guts." I felt like it really related to me.
Audrey T.

My favorite book of the summer is ... I like them all.
Brooklyn D.

I got this cool space book. I forgot the name, but it was all about different planets and stuff. It was cool.
Carl R.

"The Baby-Sitters Club." I'm on the fourth one. I really like that they get to take care of kids.
Caroline M.

I don't know. I read a lot of good books!
Francis R.

"Where the Sidewalk Ends," because I liked all the funny rhymes.
Harrison H.

"Never Let a Unicorn Wear a Tutu," because she wears all the jewelry.
Hattie H.

"Ricky, the Rock That Couldn't Roll," because he had a feather on his eyeball.
Henry H.

"Fancy Nancy" and "American Girl."
Julia M.

My favorite books were "The Baby-Sitters Club." I liked the series, and I want to keep reading it.
Katie B.

I read "Diary of a Wimpy Kid." It's a good story with lots of plot twists.
Leo T.

"Fly Guy" because he's funny.
Levi L.

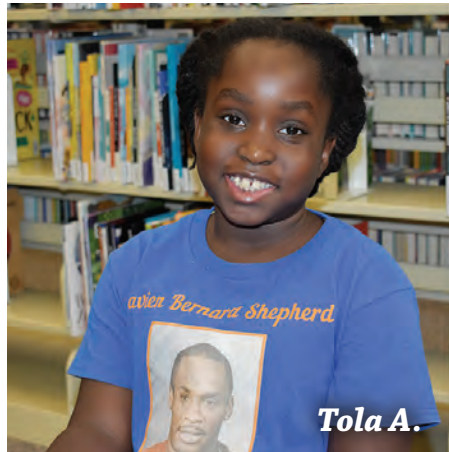
"Fancy Nancy" books. I read them by myself, and my brother helped me, too.
Lucille T.

"Slugfest" - it's about sports and a bunch of people have to go in and retake a gym class.
Olivia K.

My favorite book was "Sea Otters: A Survival Story" because my favorite animal is sea otters, and I like all the detail it gave.
Savannah M.

The "Bad Guys" graphic novel series. It just has so many characters.
Sawyer P.

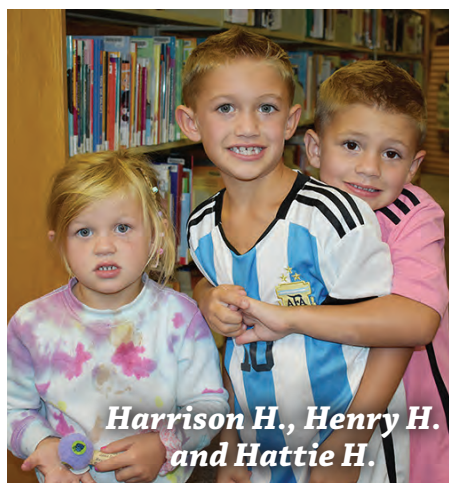
"The Baby-Sitters Club" - I read all the way to seven and a few more.
Tola A.



Tola A.



Caroline M. and Julia M.



Harrison H., Henry H. and Hattie H.



Lucille T. and Leo T.



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Educator Of The Month

Travis Kyker Acton Academy Annapolis



Travis Kyker is a middle school guide at Acton Academy Annapolis, an Arnold program that encourages students to develop independent thinking, communication skills, and character.

By Zach Sparks

zach@severnaparkvoice.com

When Travis Kyker joined Acton Academy Annapolis last year, the 22-year-old was signing on to teach at an institution younger than his students.

Located on the Gloria Dei! Lutheran Church campus in Arnold, but unaffiliated with any religious organization, the program was in its first year, open to elementary level students, with plans to expand.

Kyker was a St. John's College graduate student, eager to teach but uninterested in the "mainstream" public school model. He had never heard of Acton. When he did, he was impressed.

Acton students work collaboratively on projects. Ages are mixed at each level — elementary, middle and high school — with outdoor activities being a large part of the curriculum.

"Children or students are naturally so curious, and (traditional classrooms) just left them feeling squashed and stifled, not enriched," Kyker said. "We take that curiosity that exists and nourish it and encourage it."

Kyker became an educator because he was inspired by the great teachers from his youth and because learning has been a central part of his life.

"I love this great conversation that is being had all the time, in all places, and meeting the great figures throughout history," said Kyker, a fan of the Greek philos-

ophers Plato and Aristotle. "It coheres well in an Acton context."

As Kyker said, that philosophy pairs well with Acton, which seeks to foster a learner-driven environment that develops independent thinking, communication skills, and character.

Acton Academy Annapolis has a few guides, or teachers, who empower the kids to learn while granting them independence. Kids create their own contracts with rules to uphold and they design their own scripts at a "peace table" when they need to work out their differences.

"They're building their own little society," Kyker said. "We call ourselves guides because we're not here to solve all their problems, but we provide them with the tools so they can solve problems for themselves."

Students learn math, reading and grammar daily, but they also embark on weekly adventure trips.

"The adventure trips are everything from zoos and parks to, last year, we went to a robotics lab in Washington, D.C. and met some people who worked for NASA and did deep-sea exploration," Kyker said.

Acton also has themes that cycle out every month to six weeks.

"It's everything from coding and robotics to the history of inventions and marine science," Kyker said.

This year will look different for the Arnold program. Kyker will serve as a guide for the new middle school studio. This is the next step of the vision formed by Roman and Jenny Hardgrave. The Hardgraves founded the Maryland Curiosity Lab in 2022 and adopted the Acton model because they liked how students became motivated when they owned their education.

With Kyker, they believe they have found a great role model for the students.

"He's spent the summer radically adapting our hands-on projects (what we call quests) to make them more engaging and beneficial to our learners," Roman Hardgrave said. "He's so passionate about learning and helping children find their calling."

Eventually, Acton Academy Annapolis will add a high school studio. For now, Kyker is excited about its progress. One of the most rewarding parts of being a guide, he said, is supporting the kids as they learn about themselves and the world.

"If they pick up a hobby or an interest, they are encouraged to follow that rabbit trail as far as it goes," Kyker said. "When adults see the kids are passionate and excited, it inspires us too."



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

Area Schools Welcome New Leadership

Last spring, Anne Arundel County Public Schools Superintendent Mark Bedell made a series of principal swaps and promotions. Below are the new principals serving this year at Severna Park and Arnold schools.



Belvedere Elementary
**Head Principal
Stephanie Seidl**

Benfield Elementary
**Assistant Principal
Missy Fuson**



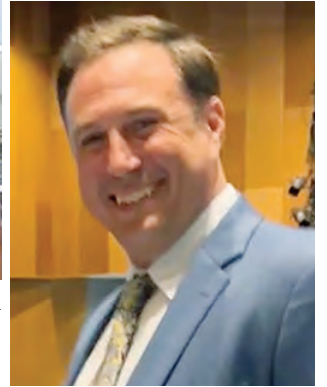
Jones Elementary
**Head Principal
John Panitz**

Severna Park Elementary
**Assistant Principal
Cheryl Slack**



Magothy River Middle School
**Head Principal
Lindsay Abruzzo**

Severna Park High School
**Head Principal
Nathan Johnson**



Public Schools Update Grading Policy

Alterations to Anne Arundel County Public Schools' (AACPS) regulation on the grading of student work are going into effect this school year and are focused on increasing student responsibility and providing more time for teachers to focus on instruction, AACPS Superintendent of Schools Dr. Mark Bedell announced in August.

Bedell discussed the changes at the Board of Education's July 17 meeting. The changes came after thorough discussion with principals and school leadership teams as well as with students and parent groups.

"Just as our teachers have a responsibility to deliver quality instruction, our students have a responsibility to get their work done on time," Bedell said. "Our school system granted a great deal of leniency during the pandemic, but the pandemic is over, and we need to strengthen the regulations and allow teachers to focus on instruction and not as many redoes of student work."

The changes have the greatest impact at the high school level. They include:

The number of allowable redoes that can be done by students has been reduced from three to two per class per marking

period and must be categorized as "assessments" in teacher gradebooks.

Late work will continue to be accepted, but with a progressive penalty structure for each class period of lateness. Assignments that are turned in late are not eligible for redo.

Students must once again exhibit a "good faith effort" to earn a minimum grade of 50% on an assignment.

Students who are chronically absent may have credit withheld in a course, regardless of their grade in that course.

Students in all grades who take Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses may opt out of the fourth marking period quarterly assessment in that course if they are taking the AP or IB exam in that course.

At the middle and high school levels, the grading scale now defines an E in the 50% to 59% range.

Principals at the secondary level have been provided with guidance on communicating the changes to teachers, students and families. Teachers will spend time in the first part of the school year discussing the updates with students, and principals will communicate with families during the same period.

First Day Of School Brings Start Of New Adventures

With summer temperatures still lingering, Anne Arundel County public and private school students returned to the classroom at the end of last month. Students in grades one through five, six and nine kicked off their academic year August 26, with their peers in seventh, eighth, 10th, 11th and 12th grades following on August 27. Pre-K and kindergarten students had a staggered start throughout the week.



County Schools Adopt New Cellphone Policy

Starting this school year, students across Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) will use their cellphones less during the school day. AACPS shared the decision by Superintendent of Schools Dr. Mark Bedell in August, citing a need to maximize focus on instruction, remove distractions, and improve mental health.

Here are the new guidelines:

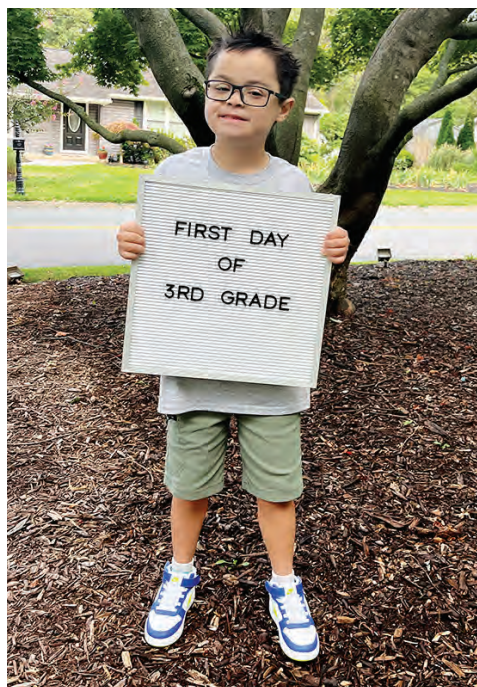
Elementary and middle school students must have their phones off or on silent mode and out of sight throughout the school day, including at lunch and in hallways during transitions between classes.

High school students may use their phones during lunch but must have them off or on silent mode and out of sight at all other times, including in hallways during transitions between classes.

"I want to be clear that this is not a ban on cellphones like other districts across the country have done," Bedell said.

"These are changes in guidelines as part of an effort to refocus precious time on instruction, which is something everyone we spoke with agreed is critically important. I have complete faith that our students, provided with the right structure, will do the right thing. However, as the superintendent, I will not hesitate to have further conversations with the school board and the community about a total ban should that become necessary."

Students who use cellphones outside of the guidelines will receive a warning followed by the confiscation of their phone and potential other disciplinary measures if necessary. Confiscated phones will need to be picked up by a parent or guardian.



Students Hike

» Continued from page 32

book at 14,500 feet above sea level and leaving personal messages for Sully, letting him know that he is thought of daily by the strongly bonded group of friends and fathers.

In complete silence, except for the fierce howling of the wind all around them, Tanner called the moment surreal. They stood in awe of their surroundings, filled with a great sense of accomplishment. At around 6:00am, with the sunrise as a backdrop, the four friends posed for a photo while wearing "Smile Like Sully" T-shirts from the Smile Like Sully Foundation (www.smilelikesully.org).

"In the clouds at that height, I felt very close to Sully," said Peter, after adding a heart and a "I miss you, Sully" note in the book register.

William said, "Being able to do something so difficult that not everyone can finish, and then being up there so close to Sully, gave us a sense of accomplishment."

Tanner recalled seeing a sign at the lower-level basecamp reminding hikers that when they get to the top, the hike is only halfway done. After a long time taking in the entire experience together, the group collected their thoughts and their gear and began the 12-mile hike down the mountain.

"I know the Shields are really proud of us," Tanner said. "To honor Sully this way was really rewarding."

As the group begins their senior year at Severn, they are already thinking ahead to senior week and beyond. "Who knows?" William said. "Maybe this is the start of a new tradition."

AACPL Student Board Member

» Continued from page 32

life, she's an avid reader — which isn't a prerequisite because libraries are so much more than just books ... and what she said in her letter of application was she really wanted to bring the student perspective," Auld said.

"I think she's going to have a great year and she's going to help us out a lot," he added.

Raised in Severna Park, 17-year-old Argeles highlighted her love of both reading and the library system. From a young age, she has enjoyed summer reading programs, book clubs, and getting lost in good reads year-round. She shared that she picks up library books once or twice a month, and frequently borrows from AACPL's online e-book collection as well.

"There's been so many times that I walk out (of the library) with too many books that I can't even carry, especially during COVID," Argeles shared with a laugh. "There was one time that I had probably 40 books on hold, and for some reason they all came the same week, which is kind of unfortunate timing, but I had to do multiple loads to the car. By the time I was home, I had a stack of books taller than me!"

As student member of the AACPL board, Argeles brings the valuable perspective of a school-age library user and hopes to impact her community by representing younger audiences.

Throughout high school, Argeles has been highly involved in extracurriculars ranging from SPHS' math team

and women's STEM club, to serving as an assistant taekwondo instructor, to participating on the Anne Arundel County Youth Advisory Council last year. During her junior year, she also studied abroad in Spain.

Helping others is a priority for Argeles, as well. With her family, she has volunteered with Giving Back, Linda's Legacy (GBLL) for the past six years. She helps with the Anne Arundel County-based nonprofit's annual toiletry drive to benefit people experiencing homelessness. And every Christmas, Argeles helps with her favorite GBLL tradition: making cakes for distribution to those in need.

"My mom bakes them and I decorate them," Argeles explained, stressing that GBLL has become near and dear to her heart.

Heading into her senior year of high school, Argeles has been applying to and visiting colleges as she contemplates what career path to pursue. Of course, campuses with spectacular libraries catch her attention. But before she gets to college, she is looking forward to all of the milestones that senior year brings such as homecoming and prom.

And, she is eager to learn more about all that AACPL does and offers as she advocates for community members of all ages to utilize the library's resources.

"Seeing an increase in students who use the library, and the younger generation, (will be) a good outcome from my time on the board," she said.

Fifth-Grader Named National Winner Of Essay Competition

» Continued from page 32

a beverage company and has a good market share of popular snack food."

Spotify sparked a particular interest for Johan in February, when the Kansas City Chiefs played the San Francisco 49ers in Super Bowl LVIII.

"My team predicted after the Super Bowl many people would listen to Taylor Swift," Johan wrote. "So we bought Spotify."

For winning the competition, Johan will receive a new laptop computer, a camera, and a \$50 cash prize. Teacher Amy Phillips will receive a \$750 award, and the school will get a trophy to display as well as funds for a student celebration during the school year.

In Maryland, the Stock Market Game and InvestWrite programs are managed by MCEE, a nonprofit organization based at Towson University that is focused on supporting instruction of personal finance and economics in all grade levels and content areas. MCEE provides professional development opportunities for educators, classroom resources, and classroom-based student learning engagement programs. MCEE partners with the Sifma Foundation to deliver the Stock Market Game.

Visit www.severnaparkvoice.com to read Johan's winning essay.

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HEALTH & FITNESS

Why This Might Be The Best Time To Jump Into A Fitness Routine

Joe Bocek
Park Fitness



“Is it really pumpkin spice season again?” I ask myself while waiting in line at The Big Bean, our local coffee shop. Our lazy summer days have turned into structured affairs

driver for our kids and their friends.

For many people, this return to routine is a great chance to restart habits or try something new. Getting back to some structure and regularity can feel refreshing and motivating.

Additionally, some people are entering a new phase of life, venturing into uncharted territory.

For the first time, you might find yourself with kids who are a little older and more independent — maybe they are driving themselves or riding with friends and are less reliant on us, their parents, day to day. Suddenly, you may have more free time and flexibility.

Or perhaps you have one or more kids off to college or beyond, and you find

yourself searching for new dinner plans and weekend activities. While this is a significant change and transition, it also presents an amazing opportunity to focus on yourself.

For example, during a recent call with a member of our gym, Park Fitness, we discussed their goals and the progress they have made.

This individual has been scheduling and showing up to workouts consistently, creating new nutrition habits, and truly embracing our coaching. They shared that with the kids off to college and busy with life, they found themselves with free time they haven’t had in years.

This new chapter made starting, or restarting, the habit of fitness the perfect

focus to jump into.

Of course, everyone’s situation is different. Some gym goers are managing fitness with toddlers and newborns, while others balance life amid drop-offs, rehearsals and practices.

However, for many with older kids, finding a little more time can be the perfect opportunity to do something for yourself and your well-being.

Getting healthier, stronger and more fit can contribute to a longer life, an expanding family, and new adventures ahead — one of the greatest things you can do for yourself.

Perhaps it can also help fill some of the extra time you may have. From starting a couch-to-5K program to diving into a new fitness community, this next chapter could very well be one of your best in its own way.

Here’s to drinking pumpkin spice lattes and embarking on your new fitness journey!

Vascular Health Awareness

Robert Dougherty, PA-C



As we enter the changing of the seasons in September, it is also important to recognize that it is Vascular Disease Awareness Month. Vascular disease, affecting both the arter-

“*One of the most common vascular diseases hidden in the shadows is vein disease, also referred to as venous insufficiency or venous reflux disease.***”**

ies and veins in your body, can lead to life-changing health problems if not properly screened and evaluated when appropriate. Whether it is concerns of a stroke, aneurysm, sources of leg pain/swelling, varicose veins, or spider veins, these topics should always be discussed by your provider. One of the most common vascular diseases hidden in the shadows is vein disease, also referred to as venous insufficiency or venous reflux disease.

What can be done to help?

There are various ways to treat venous insufficiency. Initially, conservative measures are recommended. These include using appropriately fitted compression stockings, elevating the legs intermittently throughout the day, and participating in a cardiovascular exercise regimen. If these means do not adequately control symptoms and provide relief, procedural options can be considered.

Treating the superficial venous system often entails closing a portion or portions of the leaky vein to reduce the backpressure that develops in the legs throughout the day. This is done by inserting a small catheter into the vein under ultrasound through a little nick in the skin. The catheter then emits ultrasound energy into the vein wall or injects a type of fluid into the vein, which causes the

» **Continued on page 44**

ent itself in numerous ways. Most people notice more obvious physical findings such as small spider veins on their thighs, lower legs or ankles, or perhaps prominent varicose veins in these regions. However, it can also contribute to leg swelling, leg pain, heaviness, skin discoloration, fatigue, and even prevent sores of the legs from healing if severe enough. To further evaluate the function of the veins, an ultrasound can assess the competency of the valves to better define the location of venous reflux.

Whether it is concerns of a stroke, aneurysm, sources of leg pain/swelling, varicose veins, or spider veins, these topics should always be discussed by your provider. One of the most common vascular diseases hidden in the shadows is vein disease, also referred to as venous insufficiency or venous reflux disease.

What is venous insufficiency?

Venous insufficiency refers to the dysfunction or leakage of the “one-way check valves” in our veins. These “check valves” enable the blood to fight against gravity with the assistance of the muscles, carrying deoxygenated blood back to the heart and lungs. However, when these valves are not adequately snapping closed, blood will “leak” backward with gravity, pooling in the veins of the legs and feet. This is known as “venous insufficiency” or “venous reflux disease.” It tends to have a significant association with family history but can be caused by other individualized factors.

What findings suggest venous insufficiency?

This disease process can pres-

“Do Your Best” During The Annual Stefanie Ashdown Memorial Run And Walk



Photo courtesy of Nana Sue Photography

Organized by the nonprofit Stef Ripple, the Stefanie Ashdown Memorial “Do Your Best” 5K and one-mile walk provides awareness, hope, encouragement, and support for ovarian cancer patients and their families.

Charity Event To Be Held September 15

It’s almost time to lace up those running shoes. For the eighth year, the Stefanie Ashdown Memorial “Do Your Best” 5K and one-mile walk will honor the legacy of Stefanie Ashdown, a 1996 Severna Park High School graduate who lost her life to ovarian cancer in 2017. This year’s event is set for September 15, and it has a new home: Anne Arundel Community College.

Previously held at Belvedere Elementary School in Arnold, the event will have ample parking and enhanced course safety measures this year, according to volunteers.

The mission will remain the same: to provide awareness, hope, encouragement and support for ovarian cancer patients and their families. Ashdown’s family members also want to share the principles of Ashdown’s life: be thankful, be helpful, be kind.

Awards will go to the top three male and female finishers and in the following age groups: 10 and under, 11-13, 14-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, and 60 and up. The top fundraiser, top individual donor, largest team, most spirited individual, most spirited team and participant from the furthest geographic location will also be recognized.

On race day, participants can pick up packets starting at 7:30am. The kids fun run will commence at 8:00am, followed by the 5K fun run at 8:15am, a one-mile walk at 8:30am, and an awards ceremony at 9:15am. Raffles will be held onsite and will close at 9:15am.

To register or to learn more, visit www.runsignup.com/race/md/arnold/doyourbest5k.

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Second Annual Paul R. Overton Memorial Race Set For September 28

Join the PRO-Vision Memorial Foundation on September 28 for the annual PRO-Vision run/walk. Lace your running shoes, gather your friends and be a part of a remarkable day to raise funds for Orphan Grain Train and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County.

The event offers two race distances catering to different fitness levels and goals. Whether you are a dedicated runner seeking to complete a 10K run or a group wanting to walk with family, friends and pets, this well-marked course winds along the scenic B&A Trail.

The event will begin at 8:30am at the Severna Park Elks Lodge. After the run, stay for a celebration event featuring live music, auctions and raffles.

The PRO-Vision Memorial Foundation was established in memory of Paul Overton, a 2007 Severna Park High School graduate. Last year's inaugural event generated enough funds for a \$10,000 donation to Orphan Grain Train, a nonprofit located in Millersville.

For more information or to register, go to www.paulovertonvision.org.

Cancer Survivor Hosts 5K Run/Walk To Raise Funds And Awareness For Colon Cancer Research

Wendy Paxton, a long-time Anne Arundel County resident and avid runner, is celebrating seven years of being cancer-free by hosting her third annual "Get Your Rear in Gear" 5K run/walk. The event will take place on September 29 at Anne Arundel Community College in Arnold, with proceeds benefiting colon cancer research and patient support.

Diagnosed with colon cancer in 2016 at the age of 40, Paxton said her diagnosis came as a shock. A routine doctor's visit for an unrelated symptom led to the discovery of a large malignant tumor despite her having no apparent symptoms or risk factors. Paxton credits the early detection with saving her life, allowing her to be there for her then 9-year-old son.

Since her recovery, Paxton has channeled her experience into advocacy with the help of the Colon Cancer Coalition (CCC). In the past two years, she raised over \$40,000 through her 5K and other community events, with all funds going directly to colon cancer research and assisting patients struggling financially due to their diagnoses.

"Running has always been my therapy, both physically and emotionally," Paxton said. "After my battle with cancer,



Diagnosed with colon cancer in 2016 at the age of 40, Wendy Paxton will celebrate seven years of being cancer-free with a 5K run/walk September 29 at Anne Arundel Community College.

I realized there must be a reason I'm still here, and I wanted to make a difference. This 5K is my way of giving back and helping others who are facing the same fight."

As a single mother and full-time clinical researcher for a nuclear medicine organization in Maryland, Paxton understands firsthand the challenges faced by cancer patients. Her work with cancer patients deepened her commitment to the cause, providing her with unique insight into the emotional and physical toll of the disease.

Combining efforts with the fundraising team from Northern Virginia, this year's event

will be the "Get Your Rear in Gear — National Capital" and aims to surpass last year's fundraising total. Sponsorship and volunteer opportunities are still available. The 5K run/walk invites participants of all ages and abilities to join in the fight against colon cancer.

For more information, to register, or to donate, visit donate.coloncancercoalition.org/nationalcapital.

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Coming In October!

The Severna Park Voice will publish its Retirement Living edition. This glossy magazine will feature a variety of important information that will allow you to enjoy a stress-free retirement. The special edition will be direct-mailed with the September edition of the Voice to more than 24,000 homes in the local area.

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Schindler Lecture Looks To Teach A Humanistic Approach To Caring For Seriously Ill Patients

Chesapeake Life Center invites the community to the 19th annual Emily Schindler memorial lecture, "Joyful Palliative Care: A Humanistic Approach to Connecting with Your Seriously Ill Patients," presented by Delia Chiaramonte. The lecture will be held from 9:30am-12:30pm on September 20, in the Fellowship Hall at Woods Memorial Presbyterian Church, located at 611 Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard in Severna Park.

Caring for families facing aging or illness can be both meaningful and stressful, and holding space for other people's suffering without actively taking care of one's own wellbeing can lead to compassion fatigue and burnout. In this session, attendees will learn how to develop a healing presence, master heart-centered communication and actively take care of themselves.

This annual lecture was created in 2005 through a gift to the Schindler family from the Saint Agnes Cancer Center. Emily Schindler was an 18-year-old freshman at Frostburg State University and a member of the SPY swim team in Severna Park when she was tragically killed in a car accident in 2004.

Registration begins at 9:00am and a light breakfast will be provided. Maryland board social workers can earn three Category 1 continuing education credits. The cost is \$20. Preregistration is required and can be completed at www.education.hospice-chesapeake.org.

For details, call 888-501-7077 or email griefinfo@chesapeakelifecenter.org.



Delia Chiaramonte

About The Presenter

Delia Chiaramonte is an integrative palliative medicine physician who is passionate about physician education. She spent a decade as the associate director and director of education for the Center for Integrative Medicine at the University of Maryland medical school, and she is board certified in palliative medicine. Most recently, she ran an integrative palliative medicine program, serving mostly cancer patients. Seeing the power of this unique model, Chiaramonte started The Institute for Integrative Palliative Medicine with the goal of training 1,000 physicians to provide "whole person care for people with serious illness using all the tools that work."

Vascular Health Awareness

» Continued from page 40

vein to contract down and seal off. The patient's blood-flow will then be diverted by the body into normal, functioning veins. This diversion of blood decreases the pressure in one's varicose veins.

When the pressure is lower in the veins, they will cause less symptoms and shrink in size. If the varicose veins are still symptomatic or cosmetically unacceptable after closing the source veins, the varicose veins can be removed through a series of tiny incisions, or injected with a type of fluid that causes the veins to shrink and close off, which is called sclerotherapy.

What else can be found?

Lastly, most patients with venous insufficiency present with symptoms and physical findings in their legs, but patients can also have venous insufficiency in their pelvis, known as "pelvic congestion syndrome." Based on the patient's presenting signs and symptoms, there may be concerns for narrowing or reflux in the veins

of the pelvic area, resulting in a buildup of pressure. Initial work-up of this diagnosis typically involves a CT scan of the abdomen and pelvis to evaluate for any compression of the veins as well as an ultrasound of the legs. If the diagnosis is suggested, a venogram, a procedure where a small catheter is placed in the veins of the pelvis, is used to assess whether there is normal appearance and function of the veins. When there is significant compression or narrowing of these veins, a stent may be placed to open the veins and treat any narrowing, allowing the blood to drain out of the pelvis more efficiently.

What should you remember?

Do not discount Vascular Disease Awareness Month. Take the time to discuss with your primary care provider or other specialist if there are any concerns. It may even be a worthwhile consultation to have with a vascular surgery provider to help further determine if you are at risk of vascular disease.

September Fairs And Festivals

School is back in session and holidays will soon be on the horizon, but there is no shortage of local events to enjoy in September. Save the date and check out all that these Anne Arundel County based fairs and festivals will have to offer.

Anne Arundel County Fair September 11-15

County Fairgrounds, Crownsville

Celebrating its 72nd year, the Anne Arundel County Fair invites community members young and old to enjoy daily entertainment, contests, shows, demonstrations, displays, food and vendor goods. Maryland-based Jolly Shows will provide amusement rides and games. The fair will feature concerts including a September 14 performance by the Amish Outlaws, as well as a livestock auction and indoor exhibits showcasing agricultural, horticultural, culinary and creative entries.

The iconic family event will run during the evening Wednesday through Friday, and all day on Saturday and Sunday. Admission is \$10 for attendees ages 10 and older, and free for kids ages 9 and under. Admission does not include the cost of carnival rides or games. To learn more or purchase tickets, go to www.aacountyfair.org.

Annapolis Songwriters Festival

September 12-15

Annapolis Venues

Presented by Rams Head, the third annual Annapolis Songwriters Festival will span four days and many stages across town. The festival is modeled after the Key West Songwriters Festival, the largest of its kind in the world, and will provide opportunities for music lovers to become acquainted with the faces, voices and stories behind some of their favorite songs. This year's lineup includes over 130 artists including Lee Brice, Citizen Cope, JJ Grey & Mofro and many others. For more information or to purchase tickets, go to www.annapolisongwritersfestival.com.

Kunta Kinte Heritage Festival

September 14

Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium

The 34th-annual Kunta Kinte Heritage Festival will again

» Continued on page 50

Art In The Park Will Showcase Local Bands And Artists, Support Partners In Care

By Meredith Winter

On Sunday, September 29, Cafe Mezzanotte and the Severna Park Voice will again come together to host the fourth-annual Art in the Park live music and arts festival. The event will run from 1:00pm-5:00pm at Cafe Mezzanotte's courtyard. Featuring musical performances, an enticing selection of food and beverages, live artist demonstrations and more, this year's festival will benefit Partners In Care (PIC).

Founded in Anne Arundel County in 1993, PIC is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping older adults live and thrive independently. PIC's large network of volunteers provides seniors with transportation to health care appointments and grocery stores, makes small home repairs, and serves PIC members in many other ways.

Mandy Arnold, PIC's CEO and president, shared that the nonprofit has expanded to serve five Maryland counties. Each year, hundreds of volunteers serve between 750-850 members.

"I feel like I have my independence back," said one PIC member who is blind in one eye and has low vision in the other, and relies on PIC for transportation to doctors' appointments.

Another member shared, "There



Like last year's Art in the Park festival, the upcoming event will showcase a variety of music genres.

are no family members nearby to help me. I have been facing multiple medical challenges as well as problems with my house. Partners In Care have been invaluable in providing me transportation with a wheelchair lift ... Their maintenance staff have come

to my house many times to help with household issues ... Partners In Care has exceptional staff who go out of their way to consistently and reliably assist me."

Arnold expressed that PIC is honored to have been selected as this year's Art in the Park nonprofit beneficiary. "It's very difficult to find funding for seniors, so when we get chosen for opportunities like this, it's such a blessing," she said.

"We get so much done with so little," Arnold added.

Kosmas "Tommie" Koukoulis, owner of Cafe Mezzanotte, shared that supporting a local organization each year has been an important element of Art in the Park from the beginning. He and Severna Park Vice President of Development Jonathan Katz worked together to create the event with a focus on spotlighting local artists and musicians. Art in the Park has become a "celebration of all things artistic," Koukoulis said, noting that the event showcases visual, auditory and culinary arts.

The Grilled Lincolns featuring Andy Hall will headline the event following an opening act by The Betas, a local electric folk band. Influenced by hip-hop, rock, jazz and reggae, The

» Continued on page 50

Simone Biles, America's Other Best Gymnasts To Visit Baltimore During 30-City Tour

The Athleta Presents Gold Over America Tour (GOAT), starring Simone Biles and other top female and male competitors from the gymnastics world, will leap into Baltimore's CFG Bank Arena on October 8 at 7:30pm.

GOAT is a high-energy and high-flying gymnastics-meets-pop-concert spectacle. New cast additions include Asher Hong, Hezly Rivera, Shane Wiskus and Yul Moldauer. They will join Biles, Jordan Chiles, Jade Carey, Fred Richard, Brody Malone, Paul Juda, Joscelyn Robertson, Katelyn Ohashi, Peng-Peng Lee, Mélanie Johanna De Jesus Dos Santos and Casimir Schmidt, who are set to bring their talents from the world stage to the GOAT stage to entertain audiences around the country.

Produced by MagicSpace Entertainment and AEG Presents/Concerts West, GOAT showcases an exhilarating display of jaw-dropping athletic brilliance and high-energy choreography coupled with inspirational messages of hope, strength, resilience and determination. Every tumble, twist and gravity-defying trick is meant to have audience members on the edge of their seats at every performance. The tour kicks off September 16 in Oceanside, California, before vaulting, tumbling and swinging through the country and concluding in Detroit on November 3.

The creative team for the tour includes director Mark "Swany" Swanhart and associate director Louanne Madora, along with gymnastics coach Valorie "Miss Val" Kondos Field, who serves as supervising choreographer for the tour.

"I'm so honored and excited to welcome these incredible and courageous athletes to the tour for an amazing and unforgettable journey," Biles said. "This tour is not only



After raising her total to 11 Olympic medals all-time following the 2024 Summer Games in Paris, Simone Biles is performing with the Athleta Presents Gold Over America Tour (GOAT) this fall. She last performed with GOAT in 2021, a year that included a show in Tucson, Arizona.

about amazing performances but connecting with communities and building up the confidence of the next generation of athletes. We are so excited to be a part of the Athleta Presents Gold Over America Tour and can't wait to take a victory lap around the U.S. and celebrate with all the fans this fall. I can't wait to see you all out there."

Tickets are available at www.cfgbankarena.com/event/gold-over-america-tour-starr. Follow the tour @goldoveramericatour on Instagram and Facebook or by the hashtag #GoldOverAmericaTour.

Tacos & Tequila Fest Coming To Maryland



Get ready for throwback hip-hop and rap, savory food and tequila. A nationwide experience, Tacos & Tequila Fest is coming to Prince George's Stadium, home of the Bowie Baysox, on October 5 at 3:00pm.

Fans of '90s music can look forward to performances by Vanilla Ice, Treach of Naughty by Nature, Rob Base, Kid 'N Play, All-4-One, Tone Loc, Color Me Badd, and Young MC.

General admission tickets start at \$75. VIP (\$150 plus fees) and I Love the '90s (\$249 plus fees) packages are also available. For more information, visit www.tacosandtequilafestivals.com/bowie.

Ballet Theatre Of Maryland Opens Season With Ballet In The Garden

Before Ballet Theatre of Maryland (BTM) kicks off its performances in residence at Maryland Hall for the Arts, the company will open its season with Ballet in the Garden at the historic Hammond Harwood House (HHH) on September 14 at 5:00pm. This unique performance features smaller classical works in a charming garden setting and includes a complimentary glass of wine.

"Ballet in the Garden at Hammond Harwood House is an intimate performance that many audience members have come to look forward to each year," said Nicole Kelsch, BTM's artistic director. "The natural beauty of the gar-

dens heightens the elegance of classical dance while also bringing our patrons up close to the dancers. This year, it is our treat to present many familiar melodies from audience-favorite composers such as Gershwin, Mendelssohn and Tchaikovsky. We hope you'll join us for this hidden gem of a performance."

This year's Ballet in the Garden will include several works by Roman Mykyta, including pas de deux excerpts from "A Midsummer Night's Dream," "An American in Paris" and "Capriccio Espagnol." Also featured are works by company dancers Lindsey Bell and Isaac Martinez as well as sections from the classical ballets "La

Bayadere" and "Swan Lake."

In addition to this VIP event, audiences will find BTM throughout the community this fall: with excerpted works at the Professional Dance Collaborative of Maryland's fall mixer on September 17, Ballet on the Beach in Ocean City on September 21, and Art at the Park at Quiet Waters on October 13. Stay up to date on these local events by following Ballet Theatre of Maryland on Facebook and Instagram.

Ballet in the Garden tickets are \$80 for general audiences and \$60 for HHH members and BTM subscribers. To purchase tickets or to learn more, visit www.balletmaryland.org.

BTM Ticket Warning

Ballet Theatre of Maryland is cautioning audience members to avoid third-party ticket sellers when booking their next BTM show. Despite the many resellers prevalent online, the only places to purchase performance tickets are www.balletmaryland.org and www.eventbrite.com. So that BTM can best serve audience members, it asks that patrons purchase tickets for "Napoli," "The Nutcracker," "Momentum: A Mixed Bill" and "Swan Lake" through the official platforms.

Third-party websites often use BTM's logo, promotional materials, and press quotes without permission to present themselves as an official source for tickets. Several patrons have reported sites claiming that tickets are almost sold out, even when that is not the case. This false sense of urgency encourages audience members to pay inflated prices for what may be fraudulent tickets.



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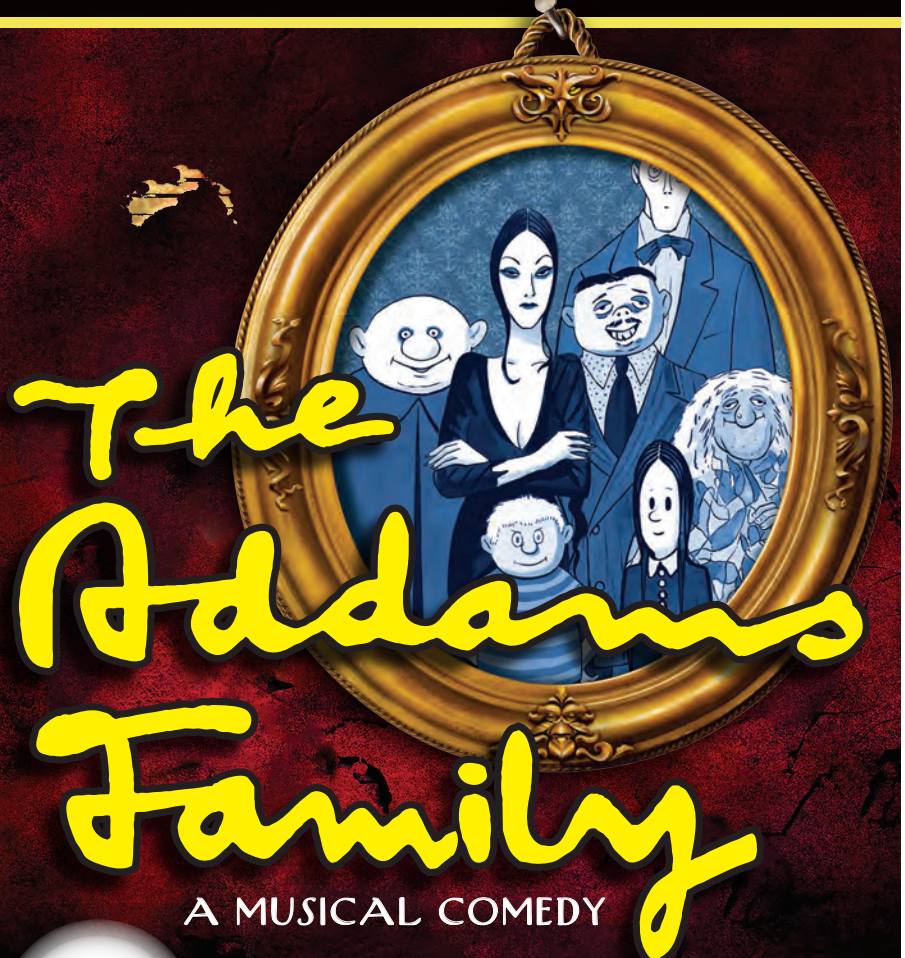
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Chesapeake Arts Center Presents 10th-Annual Arts In The Park



Arts in the Park offers entertainment, live music, food, art activities, art displays and giveaways.

Chesapeake Arts Center (CAC) will celebrate its 10th annual Arts in the Park free community festival on October 5 from 10:00am to 3:00pm. This milestone event will take place in front of CAC's main theater and is expected to bring together over 1,000 local residents, art enthusiasts and community organizations for a day of vibrant entertainment, live music, a community mural project, delicious food, interactive art activities, stunning art displays, and exciting giveaways.

This family-friendly outdoor festival not only showcases the community's creative spirit but also raises crucial funds to support CAC's mission: fostering creativity, building connections, and inspiring joy through high-quality, year-round arts programming.

The concept for Arts in the Park was developed in 2014 as a way to bring the arts to the local, creative community in a safe, accessible environment. Over the past decade, the festival has grown from a handful of community and arts vendors and a few hundred visitors to over 70 vendors and more than 1,000 attendees. With this growth, CAC has expanded the footprint of the festival into the Brooklyn Park Middle School parking lot, added its Food Truck Alley, incorporated more free arts activities for children and adults, and grown the size of its stage to accommodate multi-piece musicians and theatrical performances.

The full array of performers, artists, and community vendors are being finalized and will be announced by mid-September. For more information, go to www.chesapeakearts.org/artsinthepark.

A Cappella Group To Perform At Children's Theatre Of Annapolis

Under the direction of Jenny Harris, The Annapolis Blend will present its annual show "Unwritten:" on September 21 at 3:00pm at the Children's Theatre of Annapolis.

The Annapolis Blend is an intergenerational performing group and a proud chapter of Sweet Adelines International. Members sing four-part a cappella harmony in the barbershop style, and they welcome singers of all backgrounds, ages and experience levels to join in the pursuit of musical excellence.

"Unwritten:" reflects on the remarkable and occasionally unpredictable journey of a woman's life. Through music and movement, the show explores the importance of friendship and personal resilience as the characters navigate big milestones and everyday moments. Above all, "Unwritten:" serves as a poignant reminder that life has many chapters and there is always more story waiting to unfold.

The performance will also feature guest artist All Fired Up, the 2024 Sweet Adelines International 11th place quartet.

General admission tickets are \$25. The cost is \$20 for groups of 10 or more, \$15 for ages 17 and under, and free for lap-held children 4 and under.

The Children's Theatre of Annapolis is located at 1661 Bay Head Road in Annapolis. Tickets are only available online at the chorus website: www.theannapolisblend.org. Wine tickets are also available at \$5 per glass.

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Lucie Arnaz To Perform At Maryland Hall

Live Arts Maryland's 2024-2025 season will open on September 27 at 7:30pm with Lucie Arnaz's show "I Got The Job! Songs from My Musical Past." Arnaz will be at Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts to celebrate a life onstage. She will return to her theater roots, looking back at some of the roles she has had on

stages throughout the world, from her first role at 14 as the Cheshire Cat in "Alice In Wonderland" to a grandmother hanging upside down on a trapeze while singing about the preciousness of life in "Pippin." Arnaz and musical director Ron Abel are offering audiences this new concert, sharing stories and songs that Arnaz has long been known for.

For tickets or more information, visit www.liveartsmd.org and click on the header titled "Buy Tickets."



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Art In The Park Will Showcase Local Bands, Support Partners In Care

» Continued from page 45

Grilled Lincolns are a locally based band that offer a unique, high-energy style that appeals to lovers of multiple music genres.

Artists giving live demonstrations of painting and other art forms will dot the event's landscape. Area galleries that will be represented include Side Street Framers & gift gallery, Benfield Gallery/McBride Gallery, Gallery 564, Local By Design, Sand & Silo Marketplace and others.

New this year and included in the price of admission, a picnic pavilion will offer attendees all-you-can-eat fare ranging from grilled and smoked meats and seafood to pastas, vegetables and other foods for which Cafe Mezzanotte is known. Art in the Park will also feature sweet treats from Always Ice Cream as well as a beer and wine garden.

Koukoulis shared that Art in the Park was born in 2021 following a successful run of ticketed music performances at Cafe Mezzanotte. Reflecting on collaborating with Katz to conceive the event, Koukoulis said, "We were like-minded that we wanted this to be a community

event; we wanted to try to focus on local artists."

"Each year, we pick a great local nonprofit that we partner with," he added, noting that last year's event benefitted Providence of Maryland.

"The goal was to promote local artists, raise some money for a local charity, and have some fun doing it," Katz echoed, explaining that each year they are mindful in selecting a nonprofit that directly serves the local community.

This year's Art in the Park sponsors include lead sponsor KMA Law Office, beer and wine garden sponsor Jody Buck of the Key Group of Cummings and Co. Realtors, picnic pavilion sponsor Alex Schwab of Allstate Insurance, and art gallery sponsor Face It! Spa and Wellness.

Tickets for Art in the Park are \$58 in advance and include unlimited access to the picnic pavilion. Those interested in attending this unique, community-based music and arts festival 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.

September Fairs And Festivals

» Continued from page 45

celebrate the "perseverance, education, and cultural heritage of Africans, African Americans, and Caribbean people of African descent." The all-day festival will feature a variety of live music, dance performances, lectures, kids' activities and vendors of African art, jewelry, handmade goods and more. To learn more, visit www.kuntakinte.org.

Maryland Seafood Festival

September 14-15

Sandy Point State Park

Headlined by seafood vendors, a crab soup cookoff, live music and kids' activities, the Maryland Seafood Festival returns next month for two days of culinary merriment. Established in 1966, the event is rain or shine and will run from 11:00am to 7:00pm both Saturday and Sunday.

Attendees with a competitive streak can participate in the crabcake eating or oyster shucking contests. Children can enjoy inflatables and activities just for them. Local artists and merchants will display their unique creations in the festival's Chesapeake Arts Village. Seafood lovers can also look forward to a selection of local craft beer, live music all day and more. Tickets and additional information can be found at www.abceventsinc.com/maryland-seafood-festival.

Annapolis Baygrass Music Festival

September 21-22

Sandy Point State Park

The Annapolis Baygrass Music Festival is a conservation- and community-focused event that supports the Chesapeake Bay. Baygrass will blend progressive bluegrass, jamgrass and Americana music over two days at a beachfront venue.

Saturday's lineup will include Oteil & Friends, Leftover Salmon and others, while Sunday will feature performances by The Infamous Stringdusters, Kitchen Dwellers and many other artists. This festival is family friendly and offers activities for kids including beach games, crafts, workshops and more. To learn more or purchase tickets, go to www.baygrassfestival.com.

Severna Park Community Center Fall Festival

September 29

Severna Park Community Center

As the leaves begin to turn, the Severna Park Community Center will welcome autumn with its annual fall festival presented by KMA Law Office. On Sunday, September 29 from 1:00pm-4:00pm, attendees can enjoy a fall marketplace, food and drink vendors, games, crafts, live entertainment, a fall photo booth, balloons and face painting. Look for more information at www.spcommunitycenter.org/events.



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Join us in Severna Park this fall, where we invite young gardeners and their families to celebrate our first annual **Blue Ribbon Fair**. This is the perfect opportunity for children to showcase their gardening talents, learn new skills, and make lasting memories!

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“It Ends With Us” Is Not Your Typical Romance Film

By Audrey Ruppert

It's a shame that “It Ends With Us” has taken the “Don't Worry Darling” route, with the drama and controversy surrounding the film taking up more space and discourse than the film itself, because the film is not only quite good but it also conveys an important message. In my view, “It Ends With Us” should be mandatory viewing for all teenage girls.

The film is an adaptation of the book of the same name by Colleen Hoover and follows Lily Blossom Bloom, a woman who runs a flower shop (yes, I am serious — at least the character acknowledges how absurd this is in the book). Lily's father was an abusive man, and as a child, she wrote diary entries to Ellen DeGeneres (again, I am serious) about her predicament — she swore to never become like her mother, a woman who refused to walk away from the abuse. Years later, Lily meets a rich and attractive neurosurgeon but also crosses paths with a boy from her past who witnessed her tumultuous childhood. Sadly, jealousy forms on the part of her neurosurgeon partner, Ryle, and he begins to abuse Lily.

Colleen Hoover, the author, has had her fair share of controversies and is considered by many book lovers to be a poor (although popular) writer of women's romance novels, in the same sort of category as Stephenie Meyer or E.L. James.

The film adapts the book well, with attractive, likable and relatable characters on-screen. It even cleans up some of the stilted dialogue. Don't get me wrong, it's still very stilted, but it's better than it



Photo courtesy of Sony Pictures Entertainment

Above: A rooftop encounter brings Lily (Blake Lively) and Ryle (Justin Baldoni) together in “It Ends With Us.”



Photo courtesy of Jojo Whilden/Sony Pictures Entertainment

Above: Allysa Kincaid (Jenny Slate) and Lily Bloom (Blake Lively) form a friendship while working at a flower shop.

was in the book. It tidies plot points and is overall quite a faithful adaptation, with some characters like Allysa, Lily's shop assistant and Ryle's sister, being even more likable than they were in the book.

Some book fans complained that they didn't feel movie Lily had quite the same energy as book Lily, given the way she dressed and her age, but this is a common complaint with adaptations, and I really didn't

see a problem with either. What makes this novel and film more elevated than your standard woman's smut fantasy is how it ends — in books like “Twilight,” the heroine lives happily ever after with her man and her baby (or babies). In real life? These types of relationships often become emotionally or physically abusive, because they have toxic dynamics — and that is exactly what happens with Lily.

Ryle becomes abusive, and Lily doesn't want to admit it at first. She wants to say this situation is different from her mother, that it was an accident, that she made him angry, that he can change. She falls into the same pattern as thousands of women before her before she even realizes what is happening.

This story is so, so important, because it starts the same way as any other romantic comedy — you want to love the hot, rich main character, you want it to work out, you want to ignore the red flags. But you realize by the end, you shouldn't, and I imagine many, many women will relate to Lily Bloom. I hope that many will choose to leave their abusers after watching the film.

So, we have to talk about Blake Lively and the press

for this film. It is unequivocally disgusting; I will not mince words. Blake, despite somehow giving an excellent and convincing performance, has made this film all about herself and her husband, Ryan Reynolds. The press has been about florals and having a good time with your girlfriends, like with the “Barbie” movie — even the poster is deceptive. It's being marketed as a rom-com, not as a drama, and this is a problem.

Justin Baldoni, the director and the actor who plays Ryle, has reportedly fallen out with both the author and Blake over this distinction, as he wanted to emphasize the domestic violence aspect while they wanted to emphasize the rom-com aspect. There have been claims that he was chauvinistic on set — if this is true, that's disappointing and worth condemning, but his point still stands.

What matters is that this film is important viewing and it's sad that this drama has become the focal point.

Despite all the jokes surrounding them, trigger warnings exist for a reason. Not to mention, all this focus on Blake — and her alcohol brand promoted off the back of this film (I am serious, she also named one of her cocktails after the abuser), and her haircare brand launched in tandem with the film, and her emphasis on florals, and her husband, and her hyping of “Deadpool & Wolverine” — is incredibly disrespectful to the film's weighty subject matter. Both she and Colleen should be ashamed.

Ignore the drama. See the movie.

Which Came First, The Chicken Or The Soup?

By Ben Schwalb

Humor Columnist

I've had several books published on Amazon, which sounds great until you learn that I've sold a grand total of three copies. To add injury to insult, I got a cease-and-desist letter from the law firm that represents the “Chicken Soup for the Soul” folks, in which they accused me of trademark infringement. Here was my reply:

Dear lawyers,

First I want to thank you for spending the time to write me such a well-thought-out letter. It is an honor to correspond with a group of highly educated mensches. I haven't felt this way since my bar-mitzvah.

You stated that your client objects to the sale of my book, “Soup for the Chicken's Soul,” because the title is likely to deceive customers into believing that it is part of the “Chicken Soup for the Soul” series. This is truly flattering. According to your letter, your client has sold 112 million books. The fact that such a powerful conglomerate would set their lawyers upon me is by far the biggest literary compliment I've ever

received, unless you count the time my mother told me that she laughed so hard she wet herself.

My paying homage to your client puts me in the same league as the folks who sell the books “Chicken Pies for the Soul,” “Chicken Soup for Little Souls” and “Veggie Soup for the Chicken's Soul.” I'm sure you have sent them the same heartwarming letter you sent me.

As a trademark parody, my book is protected against legal action for trademark infringement. However, if your client still feels threatened by it, feel free to send me another letter explaining what disqualifies it from using the parody defense. Lord knows that I do not want to get into a legal battle with a large corporation that has lots of money to spend on legal fees. I especially like how many of its books carry the subtitle “Stories to Open the Heart and Rekindle the Spirit,” because nothing opens my heart and rekindles my spirit like receiving an unsolicited letter threatening me with a lawsuit for committing the heinous crime of trying to entertain people.

Exactly one copy of “Soup for the Chicken's Soul” has been sold. The purchase price was \$4.99, and

since I keep 70% of the sales from my Kindle-formatted books, that means that I received \$3.49 from that sale. If your client feels that I have received this money under false pretenses, let me know and I will gladly send them a personal check for \$3.49. I'm sure it will compensate them for the \$500 an hour you are charging them to correspond with me.

Thank you for recognizing me as a true author, one who could possibly ruin your client's empire by damaging their sales. There is no doubt that the old lady from Nebraska who downloaded my book onto her Kindle is only the first of what will surely be millions of people forsaking “Chicken Soup for the Soul” books in order to read my tripe.

Congratulations on being such an effective group of litigators. Perhaps you could write the next book in your client's series and call it “Chicken Soup for the Lawyer's Soul.” That is, if you have souls.

Sincerely,
Benjamin L. Schwalb, author

P.S. If your client is looking for someone to write a humor book, please let them know that I am available for hire. But they'd better hurry because I hear that the “For Dummies” folks want me.

Maintaining Financial Stability Amid Uncertainty

Jason LaBarge
Financial Advisor
and President of
LaBarge Financial



Between an assassination attempt on a former president, the current president announcing he won't pursue a second term, and stock market volatility, there's a high level of economic uncertainty in the air. A

recent survey revealed that over 40% of Americans are experiencing feelings of anxiety and depression around the election, according to USA Today.

On top of that, people are also stressed about their personal finances. Regardless of who's elected, headwinds such as inflation, high cost of living and elevated interest rates will continue hovering over our nation's economy. That's why the key to maintaining healthy finances is focusing on what's within your control.

Understand Market Cycles

Remember that it's normal for markets to go through cycles, and the stock market can rebound just as quickly as it can crash. Market corrections occur and can seem alarming, but they are a natural part of economic cycles. As an investor, you might wonder what you are supposed to do, and the first thing I always tell people is not to panic. Rather than stress over the situation, stay focused on putting yourself in a position to take advantage of upward swings when they recover because it's not a matter of if recovery will occur but a matter of when.

Wall Street suffered its worst day in years on Monday, August 5, but just a week later, rebounded to see one of its best days of the year. While fluctuations in the stock market can cause your investment balances to fall, they can also

» **Continued on page 58**

Hold Fast To Your Long-Term Financial Plan

Nerve-racking news will continue to swirl, but getting caught up in fear won't do anything to serve you. I remind people all the time not to let emotions drive their financial decisions. Don't get hung up on what's happening on a national scale — focus on what's happening within your own household. While you can't control inflation or stop the cost of living

Joseph Powanda Achieves Certified Private Wealth Advisor Designation

Bay Point Wealth's Joseph Powanda has successfully passed the Certified Private Wealth Advisor (CPWA) exam, earning the prestigious CPWA designation. This globally recognized certification is tailored for advisors who serve high-net-worth clients, encompassing an advanced curriculum that covers investment management, tax planning, estate planning and retirement planning. The CPWA program specifically addresses the unique needs and expectations of wealthy individuals and families.

Achieving the CPWA designation signifies Powanda's comprehensive understanding of the complex financial needs of high-net-worth clients and his commitment to maintaining the highest standards of professional practice.

"We are immensely proud of Joe for achieving the CPWA designation," said Bill Hufnell, founder and principal of Bay Point Wealth. "Joe joined our team in May 2021 and has since made



Joseph Powanda

significant contributions. This recent accomplishment is a testament to his dedication to providing top-tier advice and guidance to our clients." As part of the certification process, Powanda enrolled in a Yale School of Management executive education program in advanced wealth management strategies; met experience requirements; and passed a comprehensive examination covering 11 core topics. To maintain certification, CPWA professionals must meet ongoing continuing education requirements and adhere to a code of professional responsibility.

For more information about Bay Point Wealth and its comprehensive range of services, visit www.baypointwealth.com.

Chamber Update

Liz League
CEO
GSPACC



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

Annette Walters, Realtor

annette@thewilliamshometeam.com

A great real estate agent combines knowledge of the market, legal and financial skills, listening skills, trustworthiness, integrity and more to help clients navigate the complexities of the real estate market with confidence and ease. These are all qualities that you will find in Annette Walters, who can help you find the home of your dreams.

Luminous Healing LLC

www.luminoushealingllc.com

With over 17 years of invaluable experience in the fields of social work and psychology, practitioner Christina Petito consistently delivers impactful solutions for many individuals seeking transformation, personal growth and lasting change. Her commitment to providing cutting-edge holistic wellness solutions is underscored by the innovative technology she employs.

Pasadena United Methodist Church

www.pasadenaumchurch.com

Pasadena UMC traces its roots to 1875 when the Piney Branch Methodist Church was formed near the intersection of Benfield and Jumpers Hole roads. The church leadership shares the UMC's Wesleyan focus on the activity of God through prevention, justifying and sanctifying grace, and are committed to lives defined by both works of piety and works of mercy. The pastor is the Rev. John Nupp.

Apex Outsourced Business Development

www.apexbizdev.com

APEX takes networking to a new level. The staff gets to know you and your business, and then helps you identify the networking and vendor events you would like them to attend as your company's representative. This service gives you the opportunity to promote your business and target your ideal client at more events.

Woofie's of Annapolis

www.woofies.com/annapolis

As a mobile pet care provider, Woofie's of Annapolis is setting tails wagging with its unique combination of services, including mobile grooming, pet sitting and dog walking, all designed to meet the diverse needs of every pet owner. Business owners Amy and Conrad Manlapaz bring a unique perspective to the pet services industry to ensure that every furry friend receives top-notch, personalized care at your doorstep. Woofie's is now offering 24/7 pet telehealth services.

Friends of Tom Casey

www.tomcasey4judge.com

Tom Casey is a seasoned legal pro-
» **Continued on page 56**

Liff, Walsh & Simmons Welcomes Richard Vartain

Liff, Walsh & Simmons has welcomed Richard Vartain to the firm as "of counsel." Vartain will lead the firm's government contracts practice area with specialties in contract negotiations and business ethics, government fraud investigations, cybersecurity, and national security matters.

Vartain brings to the firm more than 30 years of experience in complex federal government-related procurement matters. He can assist government contractors in winning, negotiating, performing and retaining U.S. Department of Defense, intelligence community, and civilian contracts. Vartain also has experience in managing government, whistleblower and internal investigations. He has first-chair False Claims Act trial experience, having served with the U.S. Department of Justice.

"We are excited to have Rich on board to lead the firm's new government contracts practice area," said Jay Walsh, founder and managing partner of Liff, Walsh & Simmons. "His broad knowledge in navigating



Richard Vartain

government contracts, including complex federal regulations, allows us to better serve an important industry, which is highly concentrated in our region.

His addition to the firm provides an immediate and significant expansion of our ability to serve our clients on government contract matters. We are fortunate to have someone with such caliber of experience as Rich."

Immediately prior to joining Liff, Walsh & Simmons, Vartain was the assistant vice president and senior counsel to AT&T's chief compliance office and AT&T's national security and defense public sector segment. Vartain maintains high-level security clearances and has provided legal support for classified programs with intelligence community agencies. He has regularly engaged with the intelligence community's general

» **Continued on page 58**

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Where you are now won't be where you stay. At Shore United Bank, we're here to support you on your next steps toward something you really want to do. Whatever that is, you can tell us. Because when you have a banking partner who cares about your needs and your success, getting there becomes a matter of when, not if. We make things happen - for our community and for you. So let's get you there.



Chamber Update

» Continued from page 54

fessional with over 25 years of experience in a variety of practice areas that will provide a solid foundation for his desire to serve as a judge on the circuit court for Anne Arundel County.

Bach to Rock

www.bachtorock.com/severnapark

Bach to Rock Severna Park is the music school for tomorrow's songwriters, artists and pop stars. Its approach is designed for all ages and skill levels, helping students build core musical skills and become confident performers! Whether you are looking for music lessons, music camps or a music-themed birthday party, this music school is the perfect place for any aspiring musician.

Brilliant Collaborations

www.brillnt.com

Founded in 2014, Brilliant Collaborations take a values-based approach

to developing brand strategies that deepen the connection between the humans who make the business and the humans who need your products and services. Owner Mel Charlton brings a decade of experience leading collaborative design teams.

Color UP Painting

www.coloruppainting.com

Color Up Painting is the most trusted woman-owned painting company in the region. Its Next Level services always deliver timely, quality and pleasing results at competitive prices. Owner Laura Michelle Schrader began her painting career in college in 1996, and eight years later, she had mastered the art of faux finish painting. Today, her company offers traditional painting, faux finish painting, dry-wall repair and more.

On August 6, the chamber sponsored and attended the annual National Night Out event at **Kinder**

Farm Park. National Night Out is a nationwide initiative to bring the community together with police, fire and rescue personnel, the sheriff's office, and other law enforcement officials in a fun and interactive setting. Thousands of people attended this very successful event.

We held four ribbon-cutting celebrations over the last month. The first two were at **Giant Food** and **Safeway Severna Park** to recognize the two flag retirement units sponsored by the **Severna Park Elks**.

Next was the four-year anniversary of **Severna Park Kitchen and Bath**. Owners Clayton and Jennifer Chavis opened their business right before the pandemic and finally held a celebration with the recognition they deserve for their outstanding kitchen and bath design and renovation business.

Lastly, we held a grand opening ribbon-cutting celebration for **The**

Sugar Shoppe. Owners Jamie Denton and Eloise Patton are overwhelmed by the support of the community and are excited to provide wonderful candies, party supplies and more!

Many thanks to **Magnolia Wellness** for hosting our monthly Wellness Business Connections gathering. Magnolia Wellness is a holistic wellness center providing massage, yoga, reiki, integrative health, Thai bodywork and more.

Our delectable summer cookout was hosted by **Fair Winds Travel**, owned by David Bashore. Shoutout to Gary and Hillary Feldman, the owners of **Bruster's Real Ice Cream**, for providing delicious treats, and to Pam Negron of the **Negron Farmers Insurance Agency** for the wonderful popcorn.

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

How can I help?

- ✓ Looking to downsize?
- ✓ Looking to upgrade?
- ✓ Have a friend or family moving to the area?

Whatever your **REAL ESTATE** needs are I can help.



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BUSINESS SPOTLIGHTS

KMA Law Office Expands Services With New Attorney

By Meredith Winter

Located in the heart of Severna Park, KMA Law Office celebrated its 14th anniversary and welcomed a new attorney this past summer. Opened by Karen Authement in August of 2010, KMA Law Office offers clients “big firm services with small firm attention.” Practice areas include estate planning, probate and estate administration, personal injury and workers’ compensation.

“Bringing on another attorney in the personal injury department is about expanding our services and being able to help more clients in need,” Authement said of her decision to add attorney Kelly Arnold to her team. In addition to personal injury, Arnold specializes in auto accidents and workers’ compensation.

Authement shared that she was eager for Arnold to work with her not only because of her experience, but also because of their similar paths, having both worked as paralegals in the personal injury field for many years.

“Her background and experience just bring an incredible wealth of knowledge and a proper approach on how to evaluate these claims when they come, and how to help clients through the difficulties that they’re experiencing,” Authement said of Arnold.

Arnold joined KMA Law Office in June 2024. Together, she and Authement offer clients over 55 years of combined experience in the legal industry.



Kelly Arnold

Arnold discovered her passion for helping people through some of life’s most challenging times when she got her start in the legal industry working as a legal assistant for her mom, who was also an attorney in Anne Arundel County.

“It’s about caring and understanding that these people are in a new and very stressful time in their life,” Arnold said of working with clients, “and they sometimes just need that helping hand — and some clients need it more than others, but that’s why we’re here and that’s kind of our mission — to make sure that the people who need us have access to us.”

Following a divorce, Arnold worked as a paralegal while raising her two young children. As her kids grew older, she

determined to do even more for them by one day becoming an attorney. When Arnold’s kids reached middle school, her then fiancé — now husband — was the driving factor that helped Arnold take a leap of faith and pursue law school.

“Between him and my parents and even my ex-husband, everybody jumped in and helped with the kids, helped with whatever needed to be done so that I could work full time during the day and go to school at night,” Arnold shared of her journey to becoming an attorney. “So for four years, that’s what we did, and it really did take a village to get me through law school.”

Arnold obtained her Juris Doctor degree from the University of Baltimore School of Law in 2022 and worked as an associate attorney for the past two years. She was admitted to the Maryland Bar in 2022, and the District of Columbia Bar in 2024.

While in law school, Arnold was a student-attorney-mediator working with families in Baltimore City on child custody, access and support matters. She explained that in mediation, lawyers become facilitators who provide space and ideas to help people come to their own decisions about how they want to resolve a dispute. She hopes to do more mediation in the years ahead.

Though she spent her earliest years



in Virginia, Arnold considers herself a Marylander. She moved to Anne Arundel County as a young girl, graduated from the Key School in Annapolis in 1997, and attended University of Maryland University College to earn her undergraduate degree.

Today she resides in Arnold with her husband and their four children.

“I love to pick crabs, and I love my O’s and my Ravens,” she shared of her allegiances after living in Maryland for nearly 40 years.

Authement and Arnold are committed to serving their local community both as attorneys eager to help and as a firm that gives back. KMA Law Office has supported local nonprofits, and Authement serves on the Severna Park Community Center (SPCC) board of directors. This month, KMA Law Office is sponsoring the SPCC’s fall festival and is the lead sponsor for Art in the Park, both coming up on September 29.

“(Giving back) is super important for us as a firm because Karen and I both grew up in Anne Arundel County — this has always been home for us — so when we support the community, we are supporting *our* community,” Arnold said.

KMA Law Office is located at 540 Ritchie Highway, Suite 201, in Severna Park. To learn more about the services the firm offers, go to www.kma-law.org.

Associated Property Management Provides Full-Service Leasing Opportunities

By Meredith Winter

From office to warehouse, flex and retail spaces, Associated Property Management (APM) serves businesses across Anne Arundel County by offering well-maintained properties for them to operate and grow.

Headquartered in Severna Park, APM has provided leasing and management services of its own portfolio of properties for 35 years. Today, APM manages close to 750,000 square feet of commercial buildings across nine properties in Millersville, Severna Park, Pasadena, Annapolis, Glen Burnie and Hanover.

APM was established in 1989 by two business partners, George Stone and Charles Snyder, who had experience in residential construction and decided to invest in commercial properties. Together they built their own buildings and amassed a portfolio of nearly 500,000 square feet before parting ways to pursue independent business objectives. Stone passed away in 2006, and Snyder continues to serve as president of APM today.

With a staff of 10, APM is a small, family-owned business committed to serving other small businesses. Most of its tenants are small businesses ranging from dance studios to attorneys to medical professionals.

“We’re all local,” Snyder said of the APM team. “We try to support the local businesses here — we actually try to do as much business amongst our tenants as possible.”

Considering what sets APM apart from other prop-



The team at Associated Property Management (APM) prides themselves on offering full-service property management and maintenance to tenants who lease space in APM’s nine locations across Anne Arundel County.

erty management companies, Snyder said, “Our service and our quality of work, and certainly our pricing — we are as competitive as it comes, and I think for the average person that’s probably their first consideration.”

The service and quality of work he referenced begin with the leasing process and continue throughout a tenant relationship as APM’s experienced maintenance department responds quickly and efficiently for service calls, repairs and build-out needs. Led by Mike Kelley, who has been with APM since its inception, the four-member maintenance team enables the company to pride themselves on service and keeping properties up to date. If there’s a problem, “we go right to it,” Snyder said, “and if we can’t handle it, we’ll bring somebody in that can — quickly.”

APM’s office staff, which includes two leasing agents, an accounting manager, an estimator and a reception-

satisfaction in leased spaces. And, unless a major repair requires a subcontractor, being equipped to handle almost all issues in-house elevates APM’s accountability and responsiveness.

“We’re all about good relationships and keeping you here,” Snyder emphasized.

APM’s portfolio of properties includes the Severna Park Business Center on Ritchie Highway; Elizabeth Station in Pasadena; Annapolis Commercial Center in Annapolis; Crain Professional Center in Glen Burnie; Baltimore Commons Business Center in Hanover; and Headquarters, Brightview Business Center, Veterans Plaza and Severn Professional in Millersville.

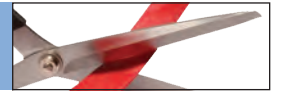
To learn more about the spaces and services Associated Property Management offers, or to inquire about leasing opportunities, call 410-421-5010 or visit the business’ website at www.associated-property.com.



ASSOCIATED PROPERTY
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ist, also strive to deliver prompt and courteous service. Kayla Korvin, a leasing agent who has been with the company for 10 years, underscored that APM’s staff is friendly and eager to help small businesses.

RIBBON CUTTINGS



Chamber Welcomes A Sweet New Business To Severna Park

On August 22, the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the official grand opening of The Sugar Shoppe. Owners Jamie Denton and Eloise Patton were on hand to celebrate with community members and show off their new candy store, which offers fresh sweet treats in bins as well as party supplies and small gift items. The Sugar Shoppe is located at 4A Riggs Avenue.



University Of Maryland Urgent Care Opens Two New County Locations

The University of Maryland Medical System (UMMS) held a ribbon-cutting ceremony on August 21 to celebrate the opening of a new urgent care center at 4125 Mountain Road in the Lake Shore Plaza shopping center in Pasadena. The new space offers over 3,000 square feet of clinical offices and examination rooms. UMMS also opened a Glen Burnie facility in July. That location occupies close to 3,000 square feet at 7954 Crain Highway. Both centers will operate seven days a week from 8:00am to 8:00pm for adult and pediatric patients over 12 months of age.

Music Together Chesapeake Gets New Owner

Mandy Stinchcomb, who previously taught students for Music Together Chesapeake, has become the business owner. Music Together is a family-friendly environment made for letting children 5 years old and younger play and learn through music while using instruments such as drums, bells and egg shakers, in addition to their own voices and bodies. Stinchcomb also teaches Rhythm Kids, a drumming and rhythm class for children who have aged out of Music Together (up to second grade).

Also, Music Together Chesapeake will now have evening classes in Severna Park, so that more people will be able to enjoy this experience with their children. Everyone is welcome at Music Together: moms, dads, nannies, grandparents and any other special grown-ups.

For more information and to sign up for a fall class, visit www.music-togetherchesapeake.com.

Maintaining Financial Stability Amid Uncertainty

» Continued from page 54
present opportunities. There are a variety of moves you might consider such as Roth conversions and tax-loss harvesting. But it all depends on your unique situation, which is why it's crucial to meet with a financial advisor who can help you determine what moves are best for you.

Lean Into The Power Of Education

Things will only feel more intense as we get closer to November, but don't let politics stress you out. Let

go of your anxiety around the election because it's out of your control. Instead, spend time researching policies because it's the policies that will have more of an impact on the economy than the candidates.

Don't get sucked in by scary headlines, but don't completely ignore them either. Find a healthy balance of staying up to date on current events while also allowing yourself to focus on your own life. There has never been a time in history where there wasn't uncertainty, and there never will be. Embrace this reality and tap into all the resources and

support systems around you to keep yourself healthy — physically, emotionally and financially.

Risk Disclosure: Please remember that converting an employer plan account to a Roth IRA is a taxable event. Increased taxable income from the Roth IRA conversion may have several consequences. Be sure to consult with a qualified tax advisor before making any decisions regarding your IRA.

Investing involves risk including the potential loss of principal. No investment strategy can guarantee a profit or protect against loss in periods of declining values. Past performance does not guarantee future results. This material is for information purposes only and is not intended as an offer or solicitation with respect to the purchase or sale of any security.

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Liff, Walsh & Simmons Welcomes Richard Vartain

» Continued from page 54
counsel and the U.S. Department of Justice's national security division. His depth of experience further extends to handling government legal demands from companies for information.

"Expanding Liff, Walsh & Simmons' client-centric services to support mid-tier companies with government contract requirements builds on my extensive experience in federal procurement, cybersecurity, and national security," Vartain said. "I look forward to contribut-

ing to the firm's continued success and growth by supporting new and existing clients."

Vartain earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Virginia College of Arts and Sciences, and subsequently, obtained his Juris Doctor from the University of Virginia Law School. He is licensed to practice law in Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia, and holds top secret/SCI (full scope polygraph) clearances. Vartain resides on the Broadneck peninsula with his spouse and family.

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