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Conclusion
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MARCH 2025

SPAN To Celebrate 35 Years Of Supporting Neighbors In Need



Community Invited To Birthday Fest On April 5

By Meredith Winter

One of the most widely recognized and supported nonprofits in Severna Park, SPAN has an origin story of humble beginnings dating back three and a half decades.

Six churches in the community — Woods Memorial Presbyterian Church, St. John the Evangelist, Our Shepherd Lutheran Church, St. Martin's-in-the-Field Episcopal Church, Severna Park United Methodist Church and Severna Park Baptist Church — came together to form SPAN after witnessing a common need.

"What they were seeing was people in need would go from church to church asking for help," explained Linda Moore, who served as executive director for SPAN from 2001-2006. "The pastors got together and decided to ... form an organization, and then it turned into a nonprofit, and it took off from there."

SPAN opened its doors on April 2, 1990, enabling people to find resources in one convenient location. Originally called Severna Park Assistance Network, SPAN changed its name in 2009 to Serving People Across Neighborhoods to reflect their broadening reach — it now serves clients across 15 zip codes in Anne Arundel County. However, its mission remains the same. More than a pantry, SPAN is a faith-based, nondenominational ministry that exists to provide "food and/or financial assistance to qualified individuals and families to help them through critical or emergency situations."

Through the generosity of countless community members and SPAN's partner churches, which now number 13 in total, the nonprofit's impact ranges from providing Christmas gifts to children who might otherwise not receive any, to Thanksgiving meals for families in need, to financial assistance to help avoid utility shutoffs or assist with medical expenses, to regular disbursements of food to those in need.

Michele Sabean, SPAN's director of development, estimates that over the last 35 years, SPAN has helped more than 100,000 individuals, and that in just the last decade, the nonprofit has distributed over \$2.4 million in emergency financial assistance and food to clients in need.

Located in a house behind Our Shepherd Lutheran Church, SPAN has grown over the years in both impact and community involvement. The nonprofit has been a steady presence in Severna Park with its annual 5K Turkey Trot and participation in the Independence Day parade, Shop Local events and more. But serving people in need has always been the primary focus for the nonprofit's staff and many volunteers.

"SPAN's not ever really kept track of milestones," said Nanci Hulting, who serves as vice president of the board and has been a SPAN volunteer since 2019. "It's like we're just a constant: We're here, we're doing it, we're taking care of everybody that

» Continued on page 6

Redevelopment Bill Up For Vote

County Executive Stuart Pittman's proposed bill to redevelop vacant commercial properties has been amended. The Anne Arundel County Council will vote on the final version of Bill 2-25 during its March 17 meeting. Severna Park advocacy groups expressed concerns over high-density units and traffic along Ritchie Highway. **For more information, read Councilwoman Amanda Fiedler's column on page 11.**

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Taking Down The Competition: Broadneck Wrestler Is A State Champion



Broadneck wrestler **Linx Lawless** claimed a Class 4A/3A state title with an 11-7 decision over Frederick's Ian Tumi in the 165-pound finals at The Show Place Arena in Upper Marlboro on March 8. Lawless reached the finals after three wins, including a major decision, 14-5, over Urbana's Carter Kuhar in the semifinals. The Broadneck athlete finished the season with a 40-3 record. Lawless' title marks the second consecutive Bruins win for 165 pounds following **Austin Combs'** championship in 2024.



Margueritte Mills - Volunteer Of The Month

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

The Margueritte Mills Volunteer of the Month is proudly sponsored by Affordable Outdoor Kitchens.



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Community Captain Steve Haris Helps Lead Winchester On The Severn To S(o)uper Bowl Victory



(L-R) Neighborhood captain Steve Haris and volunteers Samantha and Addison Johns helped their community, Winchester on the Severn, collect more items than any other neighborhood during the Good Neighbors Group's 2025 S(o)uper Bowl food drive.

By Meredith Winter

He may not have a Lombardi Trophy or a \$40,000 ring to commemorate helping lead his team to a S(o)uper Bowl victory, but Steve Haris can be proud of the great effort he and his neighbors put into collecting donations for the Good Neighbors Group's (GNG) annual food drive again this year.

The S(o)uper Bowl is a friendly competition between neighborhoods across Severna Park, Arnold, Annapolis, Pasadena and Glen Burnie to collect as much food as they can to help restock local pantries that often experience a lull in donations after the holidays.

In 2023 and 2024, Haris' neighborhood of Winchester on the Severn received recognition among the dozens of participating neighborhoods for collecting the most items per household — 10.10 and 15.64, respectively. But this year, they built on their successes and claimed the title of Most Items Overall, contributing 1,624 of the 18,500 total items collected across 55 neighborhoods.

"Our program is slowly building," Haris said with a laugh, noting that he's a big sports fan.

Each neighborhood that participates in the GNG's S(o)uper Bowl food drive, which culminates each year over Super Bowl weekend, has a captain who is responsible for publicizing the event and establishing neighborhood collection spots. Haris has served as captain for Winchester on the Severn for four years now, with the invaluable help of his teenage neighbors Addison and Samantha Johns.

"Addy's been great — she's got a great enthusiasm," Haris said of the elder sister, who is a high school senior, noting that they've teamed up for the S(o)uper Bowl for years. Haris shared that Addison writes communications to their neighborhood to get the word out, which he reviews and helps disseminate.

This year they set a lofty donation goal for Winchester on the Severn, which includes roughly 100 homes: 2,000 food items. Email blasts and flyers rallied neighbors to give generously, and Haris said he and his fellow volunteers set up collection bins throughout the neighborhood.

"People have definitely been coming out of the woodwork to help, and I think it does inspire some community involvement, which is always great," Haris said of S(o)uper Bowl participation in his community, noting that it takes place during the wintertime when neighbors aren't out and about seeing one another as much.

While Haris underscored Addison and Samantha's Herculean efforts in helping pull off the collection, their mom,

Jessica, shared her appreciation for Haris' influence.

"Steve is such a steady and focused volunteer who leads with joy and support," Jessica Johns said. "He has been such a wonderful addition to our community, and as an adult lead on our S(o)uper Bowl food drive, he has provided wonderful guidance to my daughters, youth members of the food drive team, on how to see a project through, lead from behind, and (has) always empowered them. I sure wish the world had more Steves!"

Haris is an information technology professional who grew up in Maryland and relocated to New Jersey for 20 years for work. He and his family returned to his home state in 2021 and have resided in Winchester on the Severn since then.

His reason for serving as neighborhood captain for the GNG S(o)uper Bowl is simple: "It's just the spirit of giving back, really," he said.

Haris gives back in other ways, too. He volunteers with a youth development organization called First Tee that not only instills a love of golf in kids but also teaches them life skills and helps them build character. A University of Maryland alum, Haris also volunteers with current students a couple times each year by helping them develop resumes and conduct mock interviews to prepare for internships and career opportunities.

His family members are also passionate about helping the communities around them. Haris shared that his wife works for CASA, or Court Appointed Special Advocates, helping train volunteers to serve as advocates for children and youth who have experienced abuse or neglect, many of whom are in foster care. Likewise, Haris' three grown children have selected career fields in which they can help others full time.

Noting that he tries to volunteer in some capacity monthly, Haris doesn't consider giving back to be optional; he's simply committed to helping others and helping strengthen the broader community.

Good Neighbors Group 2025 S(o)uper Bowl Results

FOOD DRIVE BY THE NUMBERS

55 neighborhoods participated across Severna Park, Arnold, Annapolis, Pasadena and Glen Burnie

18,500 total items collected

benefitting pantries: Anne Arundel County Food Bank, ACAN, SPAN, My Brother's Pantry, Open Hands of Maryland, St. Luke's Episcopal Church pantry, Rock Steward Ministry at Empowering Believers Church

5 neighborhoods collected more than 1,000 items

8 neighborhoods more than doubled their collections from 2024

WINNING NEIGHBORHOODS

MOST ITEMS PER HOUSE:

Schoolers Pond — 11.86

MOST IMPROVED:

Bay Hills — 300% increase over last collection

MOST ITEMS OVERALL:

Winchester on the Severn — 1,624 items



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Do you know of someone who resides in Severna Park, Arnold or Millersville who gives generously of their time and talents in a volunteer capacity in our community? You can nominate someone to be considered as a Volunteer of the Month by emailing their name and a brief description of their volunteerism to spvnews@severnaparkvoice.com.

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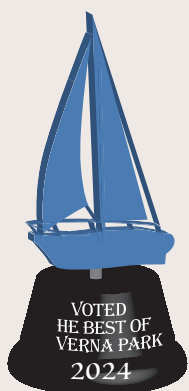
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Bello Machre Celebrates Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

Take The Pledge To Support This Year's Theme, "Creating Pathways To Independence"

While the U.S. is making strides in employing individuals with developmental disabilities, there's still a long way to go. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the employment-population ratio among those with a disability was 22.7% in 2024. In contrast, the employment-population ratio for those without a disability was 65.5% during that same span.

This March, Bello Machre is celebrating Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month (DDAM) with the theme "Creating Pathways to Independence." The Glen Burnie-based nonprofit believes independence covers a range of goals from learning new skills and landing a first job, to making choices about daily living and embracing opportunities for growth, empowerment and self-advocacy. Bello Machre, which provides services for people with developmental disabilities, is focusing its DDAM campaign on raising awareness, sharing stories, and encouraging inclusion, empowerment and opportunities for individuals.

"We invite everyone to take the Bello Machre pledge and join us in 'Creating Pathways to Independence,'" said Robert Ireland, president and CEO of Bello Machre. "This pledge is a commitment to building a community where every person feels supported to grow, thrive and succeed. Together, we can make a difference by spreading awareness, sharing stories on social media, and taking the time to truly learn about and celebrate the incredible individuals we support. Our goal is to show the world what's



A part of the Bello Machre family since August 2022, Kelly Hoover is the author of a children's book called "Kell Bell Made a Wish."

possible when we come together, uplift one another, and create opportunities for everyone to live more independent, fulfilling lives."

Employers have long excluded this segment of workers, often because of preconceived notions around their abilities. As awareness increases, these perceptions are starting to shift, and employers are finding employees with developmental disabilities are a distinct asset. Not only do they diversify the workplace and improve the culture; they also provide bottom-line benefits. According to an Accenture survey, companies that have disability inclusion criteria realized 1.6 times more revenue, 2.6 times more net income, and two times more economic profit than those that do not.

In addition to providing residential services, live-in care and community services, Bello Machre works with adults to help them find meaningful careers. This includes job coaching, job development, on-site training, and transportation assistance.

"Every person we support has a voice and plays a key role in shaping their own career path," Ireland said. "It starts with a conversation, learning about their goals, interests and what truly excites them. From there, we create a personalized job development plan and connect with local businesses to find the right opportunities with the right support. But our work doesn't stop there. We're with them every step of the way, providing guidance, coaching through challenges, and helping them explore new possibilities if their goals evolve. It's all about creating opportunities that lead to lasting success and fulfillment."

Kelly Hoover is one example of how individuals with developmental disabilities can thrive when given the tools, resources and support they need. A graduate of the Maryland School for the Blind, Hoover joined the Bello Machre family in August 2022 along with her mom, Denise. Hoover is a long-time employee at Texas Roadhouse and recently worked with community services director Todd Bonney and an employment specialist named Terry to write and publish a children's book called "Kell Bell Made a Wish."

"Because I love to write, Todd suggested I author a book. I thought of my niece and nephew and decided to write about my visual impairment journey in a way that children would understand," Hoover said. "I really enjoyed the process, and after talking it over with Todd and my support staff member, Terry, I decided I want to pursue being an author for enjoyment, not as a career. It's working out really well for me and I appreciate how the team supported me in making my decision."

To learn more about Bello Machre's services, including the Creating Pathways to Independence campaign, visit www.bellomachre.org.

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College Parkway Baptist Church Welcomes Dan Allen As New Senior Pastor



Dan Allen, second from right, pictured with his children (l-r) Bella, Peter, Caleb and Matt, and wife Christy, is the new senior pastor of College Parkway Baptist Church in Arnold.

By Meredith Winter

Stepping out in faith has been life-changing for Dan Allen many times over. Going on a mission trip to Haiti just after the turn of the century led not only to him falling in love with his future wife, but ultimately to them adopting two of their sons. Surrendering a successful career to follow a calling into vocational ministry resulted in Allen attending seminary and pastoring a church in Massachusetts for roughly two decades. And most recently, sensing that it was time to move on to a new season of life has brought Allen from his lifelong home of New England down south, to Arnold, Maryland.

A search for a new senior pastor at College Parkway Baptist Church (CPBC) in Arnold culminated in the congregation calling Allen to serve in the role in November. He and his wife of 22 years, Christy, moved to the area in mid-February and were warmly received by their new church family.

"We love the people here," Allen said during his first official week on CPBC's staff. "The people in this church are really nice, and they'd do anything for you, and they've been so welcoming and loving."

Allen's journey to central Anne Arundel County began when he was a child. He was raised in a Christian family in Braintree, Massachusetts, and credits his mom and dad for introducing him to the faith.

"They were just great Christian examples — they took us to church, they read the Bible with me, they

lived out their faith, and my dad led me to Christ when I was 8 years old," he recalled.

Allen's faith strengthened over time, and in his 20s he began attending a church where he met his future wife. They bonded during what would be the first of many mission trips they went on together to serve at an orphanage in Haiti, which culminated in them adopting their two oldest sons, Matt and Peter, years later when the boys were teens.

Dan and Christy also have a daughter, Bella, who is a junior studying mechanical engineering at Johns Hopkins University, and a son, Caleb, who is at a preparatory school and will attend Bentley University next year on a baseball scholarship.

Allen shared that as his faith deepened, he began to sense God's calling on his life. "I had a good job in the business world; everything was fine — on the outside, you would have said, 'Oh, he's got stuff figured out.' But I couldn't sleep," Allen recalled. "I ended up taking a trip, a vacation down south — I just drove to South Carolina from Massachusetts because I wanted to be warm ... and I just said to the lord, 'whatever you want me to do, I'll do.' And I was convinced he wanted me to become a pastor. When I came back, I applied to seminary."

A few years later, Allen graduated from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary with a Master of Divinity degree. He then pastored a church in Ashburnham, Massachusetts, for 20 years while his kids grew up, Matt got married, they became grand-

parents, and Allen cared for his own aging parents, who lived into their 90s. After Allen's parents passed away and his youngest graduated from high school, he and Christy felt the lord opening the door for them to step into a new chapter of life.

CPBC was among the churches Allen looked at to apply for a new pastoral role. He wasn't sure if God wanted his family to relocate to Maryland, but he felt an instant connection with the people of CPBC during early Zoom meetings. Allen was later invited to visit Arnold in November for a candidating weekend during which he met many people in the church and preached a sermon; after service that Sunday, the congregation voted to select him as their new pastor.

Allen is optimistic about the future of CPBC. He shared that he loves the church's emphasis on community involvement, from hosting a food pantry and a preschool, to operating a backpack program for school children who need food on the weekends.

"What we would like to do is get even more involved in the community," he said. "We want to express Jesus' love to people in our community, and people all over the world, for that matter."

As they settle into life in Maryland, the Allens are getting acclimated with their new home state. "We're getting used to crabcakes everywhere, the Maryland flag is everywhere," Allen said with a laugh, adding, "We like the idea that it's going to be a little warmer."

He admits he was tiring of winters living in the snowiest town in Massachusetts, noting that Ashburnham would often record more than 100 inches of snow annually. The more temperate Mid-Atlantic climate should bode well for Allen's hobbies: He enjoys hiking, biking and being outdoors.

"I'm probably a sports fanatic," he shared, before adding an appropriately pastoral clarification. "Maybe fanatic is not the right word. I don't want anyone in my church to be fanatical about anything but Jesus — so I'm a sports fan," he said, explaining that he likes to exercise, go running, play basketball and water ski.

His favorite sport is baseball, and he was made aware that CPBC has a softball team during his interview process by a member of the church's search team, who jokingly told Allen, "We're not looking for a pastor so much as a shortstop."

Time will determine whether Allen fills a spot between second and third base in addition to filling the pulpit at CPBC. For now, he is focused on getting to know his new congregation, learning their names and faces.

"My wife and I are thankful to be here. We're just trusting that God has a plan for us here," Allen said, expressing hope that God will do a great work in the town and surrounding area.

SPAN To Celebrate 35 Years Of Supporting Neighbors In Need

» Continued from page 1

we can who walks in, in some way, as much as possible."

That "we" includes Sabean, Director of Operations Maia Grabau, board members, and a host of dedicated volunteers over the years including Francie and Carl Seaman.

Francie began volunteering with SPAN in 2009, interviewing clients in the office. Hearing about the good work being done, Carl rolled up his sleeves and got to work with SPAN as well. The Seamans are longtime members of Severna Park United Methodist Church, and for a season, Francie served as the church's representative to SPAN. Over a long weekend years ago, Carl led fellow church members in a SPAN kitchen renovation project, during which they gutted the space, installed new flooring and cabinets, repaired walls, and added new light fixtures. The couple agreed that volunteering with SPAN was eye-opening, illustrating just how broad the need truly is in the greater Severna Park area.

Fellow longtime volunteer Joanne Petrik agreed that serving with SPAN really brought to light just how many neighbors who might appear to be doing fine could actually need assistance.

"When I started, I always thought SPAN was just a food pantry — I didn't realize how they help people monetarily with assistance for ... various things," said Petrik, who served with SPAN for over 20 years, echoing a common misconception among the community.

As businesses, Scout troops, school groups, families and individuals have become more involved in making the mission of SPAN possible, that perception has shifted for the good. Sabean shared that while the 13 churches provide the foundation of SPAN's funding, the community provides the bulk of its food and financial donations.

The outpouring of generosity from the community has enabled SPAN to help more people year by year. Hulting shared that in 2019, the nonprofit helped roughly 25 monthly food cli-

ents. Today, that number has doubled, and in January 2025 it spiked to 65. SPAN also disburses about \$100,000 annually in emergency financial assistance, not including pandemic-related fluctuations, Sabean shared.

Many of SPAN's clients are working individuals who are living paycheck to paycheck. Any change in employment status or an unexpected expense such as a medical bill or car repair can snowball into a financial crisis. In recognition of 35 years of serving the community, and with a desire to help provide more financial assistance, SPAN has a current goal to raise \$35,000 leading up to events celebrating its big anniversary next month.

On April 1 at 4:00pm, the public is invited to celebrate SPAN's history and milestones at a service at Our Shepherd Lutheran Church, followed by a reception and tour of SPAN's facility and a ribbon-cutting ceremony hosted by the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce.

On Saturday, April 5, the commu-

nity is also invited to come out and celebrate with SPAN at Birthday Fest, which is slated to run from noon to 4:00pm at Severna Park United Methodist Church. The party is free, and will include carnival games, live music, booths sponsored by churches and community groups, and more. Food will be available for purchase from three food trucks: Chevy's Fresh Mex, Green Valley Marketplace, and Always Ice Cream Company.

The Birthday Fest will also include a little friendly competition as an opportunity to donate food items: Two trucks will be onsite, one labeled for the Baltimore Orioles and the other for the Washington Nationals. Attendees can "vote" for their favorite local Major League Baseball team with their canned goods as they collectively race to "stuff the truck."

To discover more about SPAN, to make a financial or food contribution, or to learn more about upcoming celebratory events, go to www.spanhelps.org.



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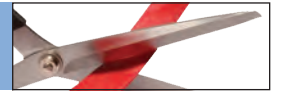
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COMMUNITY RIBBON CUTTINGS



Wayman Good Hope Honors History With Rosenwald Sign

Wayman Good Hope African Methodist Episcopal Church unveiled its new Rosenwald sign during a ribbon-cutting ceremony on February 23. The Rosenwald School project built more than 5,000 U.S. schools, shops and teacher homes, primarily for the education of Black children in the south during the early 20th century. The project was the product of the partnership of Julius Rosenwald — a Jewish-American clothier who became part owner and president of Sears, Roebuck and Company — and Black leader, educator and philanthropist Booker T. Washington, who was president of the Tuskegee Institute. Following the ribbon-cutting, attendees viewed the “Jones” documentary about the area where the Rosenwald School was located and where Jones Elementary School is currently located.



American Legion Post 175 Reopens Newly Renovated Lounge



On March 1, American Legion Post 175 in Severna Park celebrated the recent renovations of its lounge with a ribbon-cutting ceremony hosted by the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce to mark the space's grand reopening. During the ceremony and open house, the group also unveiled its new “Little Free Pantry.” American Legion Post 175 serves veterans, their families and the community. Learn more at www.legionpost175.org.

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Bay Bridge Boat Show Begins New Chapter This April

Spring Tradition Continues At New Venue

For 42 years, Maryland spring boat shows have had many names and undergone several relocations. This year marks another change. After 26 years at the Bay Bridge Marina, Annapolis Boat Show's spring powerboat event will move east to Kent Narrows, becoming the Bay Bridge Boat Show at Safe Harbor Narrows Point.

Located in Grasonville, the marina will host the show from April 11-13. The subsequent Annapolis Spring Sailboat Show will return to City Dock in Annapolis from April 25-27.

The new venue at Safe Harbor Narrows Point promises to retain much of what attendees love about the Bay Bridge Boat Show while offering more amenities and better parking. Attendees can explore boats, walk the docks, hang out with fellow boaters, and grab a drink at the pool bar. It's a rare opportunity to try being a boater for a day. And, if they get a taste for it, guests can buy a boat at the show and have it on the water that weekend.

"Whether you're here for the boats, the education, or the food and entertainment, it's always a ton of fun," said Annapolis Boat Shows President Mary Ewenson. "And the beautiful new venue means visitors may board even more exciting new powerboats and shop everything from gear and accessories to electronics, communication equipment, education, clubs and more."

Attendees can climb aboard a wide array of powerboats of every style and size — from fishing boats and trawlers to pontoon boats and luxury cruisers.

Annapolis Boat Shows General Manager Sheila Jones is particularly excited about the expanded demo dock.

"There's more room to offer hands-on experiences with the latest boating technologies, as well as added



Seasoned boaters and first-timers can enjoy the activities at the Bay Bridge Boat Show at Safe Harbor Narrows Point, set for April 11-13.

space for entertainment and educational programming," Jones said. "If you're a seasoned boater or a first-timer, the show will offer something new for everyone to explore."

New Amenities

- Eight restaurants, four hotels and a nature park within walking distance

- Over 800 parking spots within a mile of the show
- Access to the Cross Island Trail

Back By Popular Demand

- **Boats:** Climb aboard over 250 powerboats (new and preowned)
- **Exhibitors:** Find boating gear, lifestyle apparel, home decor, local artisanal products, and more
- **PropTalk Demo Dock:** Choose from a selection of boats to take for test rides
- **Food Trucks:** The food trucks are back
- **Poolside Bar:** Enjoy live music, drinks and snacks by the pool courtesy of the Lazy Mermaid Pool Bar
- **FishTalk Fishing Pavilion:** Expert angling advice, kids' activities and cooking demos
- **Free Seminars:** Take your boating skills to the next level with free educational boating seminars
- **BoatUS On-Water Training:** Sign up for an on-the-water boating course courtesy of BoatUS

For more information about the Bay Bridge Boat Show at Safe Harbor Narrows Point, or to order tickets, visit www.annapolisboatshows.com/bay-bridge-boat-show.



Don't Forget To Cast Your Vote For The Best Of Severna Park By March 25

There's still time to vote for your favorite businesses, services and organizations in Severna Park, Arnold and Millersville. To participate, fill out the February print ballot or complete the online version at www.severna-parkvoice.com/bestofsevernapark. The survey will close March 25 so that the Voice staff can count every category in time for the next print edition, which will be delivered to addresses around town on April 10. Thank you for helping us recognize the best of everything that the area has to offer.

Million Dollar Baby



David Orso
Berkshire Hathaway
Home Services/
PenFed Realty

Before, \$1 million was a substantial amount of money to pay for a home in Severna Park and Arnold. For the five-year period of 2015-2019, homes sold above \$1 million represented 3% of the total home sales in Arnold and Severna Park, so it was rare to see a home sale above the million-dollar mark. Of the 156 homes that sold above \$1 million during that period, 71% were waterfront. Simply stated, the million-dollar category was dominated by waterfront sales for the first half of the last decade.

The data shows an incredible uptick in the five-year period of 2020-2024. Sales above \$1 million exploded by 137% and waterfront was less than half of the sales above \$1 million in Severna Park and Arnold. Water-privileged communities became destination communities and prices have soared.

It does not require a discerning consumer to notice the dramatic increase, but the explanation is far less obvious. In my professional opinion, there are five core reasons:

Reason 4: Urban Migration

COVID forced the closure of office work, and working from home became an option for much of the workforce. Urban dwellers from Baltimore and Washington, D.C. flooded our market as homebuyers, and they brought an increased buying power. They have been in pursuit of an outdoor lifestyle with easy access to major metropolitan markets and great public schooling. Severna Park and Arnold check all of those boxes.

Reason 5: Scarcity of New Homes

There simply are not many new homes being built in Severna Park and Arnold. The demand for housing in our area has been outpacing the supply, and general economic forces would tell us prices therefore rise.

The data is very encouraging for our local market. Older homes continue to be renovated, and I would like to make a bold prediction that teardowns will become the norm and residents will build new homes on desirable lots in desirable communities.

Severna Park And Arnold	Years 2015-2019	Years 2020-2024	Percentage Change
Homes sold above \$1 million	156	369	+137%
Million-dollar homes sold as percentage of total homes sold	3%	10%	+233%
Percent of homes sold over \$1 million which were waterfront	71%	48%	-32%

*Data Source: Bright MLS

**David Orso has represented the buyer or seller in 25% of the transactions (133 of 525) above \$1 million in Severna Park and Arnold in the last decade (2015-2024).

David Orso was born and raised in this community and is a proud graduate of Severna Park High School. He is a local market expert whose office is based in Severna Park at the corner of Evergreen Road and Riggs Avenue. Orso 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 at Chartwell Golf and Country Club or boating on the Chesapeake Bay.

This branded content is brought to you by an expert in his or her respective field.

Reason 1: Stock Market Growth

The stock market experienced over 10% average growth for the 10-year period between 2015-2024, with only two years of pullback. That means investors doubled their equities (almost twice) during this period. Translated, it has been extremely pleasurable to open monthly statements for the last decade.

Reason 2: Home Values

Home values have risen by nearly 40% so buyers are able to sell their homes and move up. The large equity positions led to significant down payments, and the low inventory pushed their home values to unforeseen values. The idea of selling may not have been planned, but the opportunity to move up was tempting.

Reason 3: Renovated Homes

Our area experienced a renovation boom after the foreclosure crisis (2005-2009) and many of those high-quality homes became available for sale in the last five years. Residents enjoyed their renovations from 2010-2020. Many of the sellers were retiring and the timing was perfect to exit the market, coupled with the reality that buyers favor homes that do not require renovations.

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Phase II Comprehensive Redistricting Has Begun

Dana Schallheim

*Board of Education
District 5*



Phase II of our system-wide redistricting kicked off January 27, when the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County was briefed on the redistricting policy and procedures timeline, fol-

lowed by the release of the interactive web tool and survey on February 1.

Current enrollment — as well as long-range and annual planning documents that provide an inventory and evaluation of school facilities and projected enrollment — guide the need for periodic redistricting. By 2033, total Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) enrollment is projected to be over 91,000 students with the total available seats decreasing 37% over the next eight years.

Redistricting occurs for a limited set of reasons including the creation of boundaries for new schools, to alleviate overcrowding or underutilization of school facilities, or to meet programmatic changes such as the establishment of a magnet program. State funding for additions or renovations in areas where growth is high may be jeopardized if the school system doesn't first balance enrollment, utilizing as many existing seats as possible. In general, school facilities must be at least 60% utilized for the school system to continue to receive state funding for capital projects.

Board policy and regulation JAA/JAA-RA-Redistricting & Attendance Areas establishes an equitable process for the determination of geographic school attendance areas. The criteria, considered during the development of various scenarios, includes efficient use of space, maximization of walkable access to school, impact on bus transportation and traffic, and grandfathering considerations.

The second phase will include the Annapolis, Arundel, Broadneck, Crofton, Severna Park, South River and Southern clusters, and will complete system-wide redistricting that began in 2023 with the redistricting of Chesapeake, Glen Burnie, Meade, North County, Northeast, Old Mill and Severn Run clusters. Similar to phase II redistricting, consultants WXY Studio were hired to process current data and develop various scenarios as well as the interactive web tool.

» Continued on page 12

A Time And Place For Redevelopment

Amanda Fiedler
*Councilwoman
District 5*



An empty shopping center, the exterior paint chipping away with the rain of every storm. The once vibrant exterior fading to a pale color of what it once was with the bleaching

sun of every passing summer. Patches of grass break through the broken asphalt, reminding us of the Earth below. A thriving commercial area is a distant memory as the surrounding area has changed and the retailers closed up shop and their doors.

What now? Is this an opportunity for housing supply, where stormwater management can be implemented on this now vacant parking lot? A development that may otherwise be built on undeveloped land? Redevelopment is a great tool, a tool that I support to make meaningful use of lots that stand abandoned with little to no commercial activity.

Bill 2-25 aims to do just that, and I believe it is a well-intentioned bill. As is the case with any bill that comes before the council, I have to take a very close look and consider the potential impacts to our district. The bill is small in scope. This is a good thing, in my opinion. The Anne Arundel

County Council has passed several large-scale land use and housing bills in recent months, some of which have not yet become effective. I think it is important to see the impacts of large-scale changes before we continue to make them. Bill 2-25 limits the opportunity of redevelopment with incentives to a handful of identified areas in Plan 2040, the comprehensive rezoning bill that was passed in 2021.

If you have read my columns over the years, you may remember that Plan 2040 was the precursor to comprehensive rezoning, and it set out broad, long-term land use plans and goals for every area of the county. In that plan, the Route 2 commercial area of Severna Park (Severna Park Marketplace, Park Plaza and commercial buildings to the north) were identified as a "critical corridor." This designation is one that is identified in Bill 2-25 as areas where the provisions of the bill could be utilized for redevelopment.

Critical corridors are located in the northern and western parts of the county, along Route 3 in the Crofton area and in the center of our district. As the council has worked through the bill, it has been described as a tool to redevelop vacant and blighted properties, while meeting the needs of our housing demands. It adds financial incentives, a 50% reduced connection fee to county utilities (water/sewer), and a shortened process for

development applications and review.

Time is money, and redevelopment can be more expensive than standard development. The bill also removes the requirement for any redevelopment of commercial property to have any commercial space at all. This adds flexibility for design plans, and most certainly incentivizes more residential units over commercial space.

As I have reviewed the bill, I have thought of the thriving and robust commercial areas of Severna Park, captured in a bill intended for abandoned properties. I heard overwhelming feedback from surrounding residents about their desire to retain the characteristics that made them move to 21146 and raise their family. These are the same sentiments I heard when knocking on doors seven years ago, and they are words I have not forgotten.

I reflect on the ongoing and numerous challenges that Route 2 faces in this area, not just from a volume of traffic standpoint, but from a design standpoint. The Maryland State Highway Administration has already closed left-hand turn lanes due to the number of accidents and has reviewed the intersection light timing numerous times due to complaints of long cycles or turn lanes that are stacked into the passing travel lanes. But behind those regular traffic and infrastructure frustrations is the

» Continued on page 12

Keeping Families In Their Homes: Why Mortgage Assumption Matters

Dawn Gile
*Senator
District 33*



Divorce is already an emotionally and financially challenging process. For parents, that difficulty is compounded by the need to maintain stability for their children. One

of the biggest factors in that stability? Keeping them in their home.

Unfortunately, outdated mortgage policies often make that harder than it needs to be. That's why I introduced Senate Bill 0689 — to ensure that Maryland families are not unnecessarily uprooted during one of the most difficult transitions of their lives.

This issue was first brought to my attention by Kelly Seely, a constituent from District 33 who found herself in an impossible situation while going through a divorce. As part of her settlement, she retained ownership of the home she and her former spouse had purchased together — a home where her children had grown up,

built friendships and attended school. Determined to maintain that stability, she sought to assume the existing mortgage in her name.

Mortgage assumptions allow a new borrower to take over an existing loan without altering its interest rate or repayment terms. For instance, if a homeowner has been paying a 15-year mortgage for three years, the assuming borrower would step into the remaining 12 years under the same terms. It's a straightforward, practical solution — one that should have been available to Kelly without issue.

Despite meeting all credit and income qualifications, Kelly was initially told she could not assume the loan. The servicer simply denied her request, even though the assumption process was legally possible. Undeterred, Kelly fought for her rights, advocating not just for herself but for her children.

After relentless persistence and a little outside intervention, she was finally informed that she could, in fact, assume the mortgage. Though the process is still ongoing, this victory means that Kelly's children will be able to remain in their home, school

and community, avoiding unnecessary upheaval.

But here's the bigger issue: Kelly's experience is far from unique. Many lenders themselves are unaware that mortgage assumptions are allowed, leading to misinformation and unnecessary denials. While some federally backed loans explicitly allow assumptions, conventional loans are often treated as though they cannot be assumed — even when Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac guidelines say otherwise. This lack of awareness creates major financial barriers for divorcing homeowners.

Had Kelly been forced to refinance instead of assuming the mortgage, the financial consequences would have been severe. Like many homeowners who secured their mortgages at lower interest rates, she would have been forced to refinance at today's much higher rates, driving up her monthly payments by hundreds of dollars and costing tens of thousands more over the life of the loan. That kind of financial strain could have pushed her to sell the home entirely, displacing her and her children through no fault of her own.

» Continued on page 12

Women's History Month

Heather Bagnall

*Delegate
District 33C*



a wide range of issues, and I think the word of the session is "balance."

How do we balance a budget with a looming structural deficit while ensuring we don't experience gaps in essential services on which our Maryland constituents count? How do we balance protecting our investments in advancing mental health care and developmental disabilities with the uncertainty on future federal match funding? How do we balance our investments in education and green energy with the day-to-day realities of inflation and rising cost of living? And how do we balance protecting our rights at the state level as they are under attack at the federal level?

As we enter Women's History Month, that last question is front of mind in my daily work. While I've been in office, we've seen the end of a nearly 50-year precedent on privacy and bodily autonomy. We've also seen state legislatures further restricting women's hard-earned rights such as financial autonomy, pay equity, voting, child custody, access to contraception, and even the right to travel freely without a guardian.

It's easy to forget how recently many of the rights that were "won" were already law and were repealed. For instance, did you know that women had the vote in the early days of the American Revolution? Until the creation of our new nation, we were governed by English Common Law, which determined voting rights by property rights, which meant that women lost the right to vote when they married and any rights and property they owned transferred to their spouse.

On March 31, 1776, Abigail Adams wrote to her husband John, "...in the new code of laws, which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make, I desire you would remember the ladies and be more generous and favourable to them than your ancestors." On July 2, 1776, the New Jersey Constitution passed. It contained the gender-neutral pronoun "they" and no racial categories in its election law.

Yet it would be another 150 years before the promise of women's suffrage would become reality and another 50 years before women of color who had fought shoulder to shoulder with their white sisters would be able to exercise that right.

Today, we are seeing a rash of laws at both the state and federal levels to restrict the rights of women and other marginalized groups, but this is nothing new. Laws that target individual rights to privacy, autonomy, access to voting, and access to health care

We are closing in on Crossover Day, the day on which every bill must have crossed to the other chamber to ensure it continues on the path to the governor's desk. We have been working diligently on

are daily making their way through legislatures across the country, often targeting the latest moral panic.

It is against this backdrop that I have introduced a resolution 350 years in the making. While Maryland was still a colony under British rule, we were also a religious sanctuary. During the 17th and 18th centuries, witch trials were a common occurrence across Europe and New England, and they often attacked women who were healers, midwives, unmarried property owners, undesirables or even just outspoken. The Witchcraft Act of 1604 was passed through a process much like that of today. It was considered, debated and passed by an all-male parliament, and though it was not used exclusively against women, they were the large majority of victims of the law, which provided for accusation, prosecution, and upon conviction, sentence — which was always death.

Three years after Maryland's founding, the Maryland General Assembly in 1635 adopted the Witchcraft Act of 1604. The Maryland judiciary, fearing violence due to false accusations, had a high standard and though there are a number of defamation cases in the court records, only seven people, six women and one man, were formally tried as witches.

So why bring this resolution now, to exonerate people long dead? Because 350 years ago in 1674, one person, John Cowman, the only man accused, tried, and sentenced to death for witchcraft, was given a reprieve by this same body, the Maryland General Assembly, which will be considering this legislation.

Rebecca Fowler, whose descendants still reside in Maryland, was not so lucky as the General Assembly was out of session and she was executed in 1685. It is believed that she suffered her fate because the courts had recently experienced an embarrassment and needed to be "tough on crime."

Tough on crime, laws targeting individuals who challenge the status quo, pronouns, equality. You can draw a line of demarcation from today all the way back to the founding of our state and our nation.

The 30th session of the Maryland General Assembly established the precedent but never extended it to the women who were wronged. This year, this Women's History Month, the 447th session, we can make good on that promise of a lifetime ago.

A Time And Place For Redevelopment

» Continued from page 11

heart of our small-town feel in Severna Park, with active and thriving commercial centers.

With your feedback, I decided to introduce an amendment to remove the Route 2 commercial corridor of Severna Park from Bill 2-25, and I did so at a recent council meeting. The amendment passed by a vote of 4-3.

This does not close the door on changes forever. These properties have a planned land use of mixed use. The zoning is commercial (C3). The administration wanted to change the zoning to mixed use during comprehensive rezoning. I was not comfortable with that, and neither were the majority of residents.

I amended the comprehensive zoning bill to say that mixed zoning could not be granted without a sector study being completed. A sector study includes an assessment of the existing site conditions to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges of the site area, including environmental features, access issues, etc. A sector study also includes stakeholders in a visioning exercise for review of what could be on the site, and it has community

involvement with outreach to nearby property owners.

I support redevelopment in the right place and at the right time. This was not the time for either of these commercial areas. I believe this bill may be very useful for areas of our county that have sat empty and unused. In fact, there is another critical corridor area in our district, located on Veterans Highway along Route 97, that may benefit from this legislation.

I do not have any intention of amending this area out of the bill, because I see the potential Bill 2-25 may give to some of these commercial lots. That is the careful evaluation that is done with every bill I review, especially one that has different impacts on different areas of our district. It is a balance.

The Anne Arundel County Council meets on the first and third Mondays of every month to consider legislation that may impact you. Be sure to visit the council website to stay up to date: www.aacounty.org/county-council.

As always, you can reach out to me with any county related questions or concerns by emailing me at amanda.fiedler@aacounty.org. It is an honor to serve you and your families.

Phase II Comprehensive Redistricting Has Begun

» Continued from page 11

The interactive web tool, found at www.aacps.org/redistricting, will collect public feedback through May 1 on each of the three scenarios. I ask anyone with an opinion about the existing scenarios to please make use of the survey and comment features within the interactive tool to submit their feedback in addition to reaching out to me and other members of the Board of Education. Only feedback submitted through the interactive tool will be considered by the superintendent and staff in the development of the superintendent's recommendation.

It should be noted that public feedback was effective during phase I and did result in a final redistricting plan that differed from the scenarios originally presented. The same is likely true for the second phase.

The superintendent will present his recommendation to the board during its July 2025 meeting. From there, the board will select one or more plans to bring to the public for both briefings and hearings before final adoption by the board in November 2025 for implementation during the 2026-2027 school year. The plan or plans moved forward for public briefings and hearings may include the superintendent's recommendation or a plan developed by the board.

Yes, redistricting is an emotional and stressful process. Please make use of the online survey and comment features on the interactive tool in addition to contacting me to ensure your voice is heard. As always, I can be reached at dschallheim@aacps.org, 443-535-2660, or via social media (Facebook and Instagram).

Keeping Families In Their Homes: Why Mortgage Assumption Matters

» Continued from page 11

This is exactly the kind of problem we need to fix. My bill, SB 0689, ensures that divorcing spouses in Maryland can assume an existing mortgage if they meet the necessary financial qualifications, preventing families from being forced into unnecessary and costly refinancing. Specifically, the bill:

Ensures that all home loans in Maryland, not already as-

sumable, become assumable in cases of divorce — provided the assuming spouse meets the loan's creditworthiness and income requirements.

Requires lenders to disclose assumption provisions in writing before a loan application is completed, ensuring borrowers know their rights upfront.

Mandates transparency and education among mortgage ser-

vicers to prevent misinformation and unnecessary roadblocks.

Like so many of the bills I've sponsored and passed, this one came directly from a constituent's experience. My job as a legislator is to listen, to bring these issues to Annapolis, and to fight for solutions that make a real difference in people's lives. I'm honored to be your voice and to champion policies that protect Maryland families.



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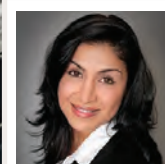
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Three-Peat: Spalding Ice Hockey Claims Another Crown



Archbishop Spalding edged Mount Saint Joseph, 4-2, in mid-February at the Gardens Ice House in Laurel to garner the Cavaliers' third consecutive MIAA A Conference ice hockey title.

By Tom Worgo

Archbishop Spalding's **Rob Trant** knows Maryland Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) ice hockey history.

Trantin, who is in his 11th year as coach, points out that it's difficult to win three championships in a row.

He rattled off Calvert Hall capturing three titles two decades ago and Mount Saint Joseph doing the same thing in the 1990s.

The 2025 season presented Archbishop Spalding with the same opportunity.

"There's pressure and it just builds and
» Continued on page 18

Bruin Girls Win Home Finale, Reach Region Semifinals

By David Bashore

As **London Best** and the rest of the Broadneck girls basketball team filed into the locker room after their 41-27 win over Bowie in the region playoffs on February 28, excited chatter gave way to a cacophony of loud yells and banging on lockers.

It was an outpouring after a roller-coaster season, in which they were determined to leave the home court for the last time as winners. That they did, behind a concerted collective defensive effort and Best's refusal to let them lose her career home finale.

"It meant everything. In the back of my head, I realized this was the last time playing at my home gym. I told everyone we were going to metaphorically die out there; whether we win or lose, we're going to leave it out on the floor, and I'm so happy we won," said Best, who at times wore the stress of the moment on her face but at other times displayed
» Continued on page 23



Photo by David Bashore

Broadneck's London Best fought through traffic during the Bruins' win over Bowie on February 28.

Back To Back: Severn Boys Basketball Wins Another Title



One year after breaking a 30-year championship drought, the Severn School boys basketball team won a second straight Maryland Interscholastic Athletic Association B Conference title, beating St. Paul's 51-42 at Chesapeake Employers Insurance Arena in Baltimore on February 22. Severna Park resident and senior Jacob Randall was named Player of the Game. "We had a terrible first half and we were still up one, so we knew we were going to be able to come up with a win today," Randall said in a post-game interview. "It was on us, and we really locked in as a team. It was a great second half for all of us."

Severna Park's Nguyen Signs With Wagner

By David Bashore

A football player with Asian heritage is something of a rarity. A quarterback, even more so.

In that sense, Severna Park senior **Vince Nguyen** realized he was unique. In late February, he became something of a hero.

That's because Nguyen has signed to continue his football career at Wagner College in Staten Island, New York. The Seahawks participate in the NCAA Division I Football Championship Subdivision, as part of the Northeast Conference.

Nguyen joins a short list of Division I quarterbacks with Asian heritage. What's more, he's believed to be one of the first Division I quarterbacks with Vietnamese heritage, if not the first.

"There's a lot of Asian guys, but not all of them are 100% Asian; there's a mix (of ethnicity)," said Nguyen, a first-generation American and the son of Vietnamese immigrants. "It didn't really hit me until about a year ago, when I knew I wanted to play in college. When I'd go to the camps and stuff for recruiting, there were never any Asian kids out there. It was like I was the only one, and I wanted to show that Asian kids can do this."

Nguyen's story went viral courtesy of AMAZN HQ, an Instagram account that features Asian American athletes across the United States. A February 28 post about Nguyen's commitment drew nearly 25,000 likes and earned a new following for Nguyen, who was



aware the post was coming but dramatically underestimated its reach.

"I didn't realize it was that big until they posted it, and I started getting messages from people I didn't even know. People were following me from around the world and in my DMs sending their support, and that really encouraged me to strive harder and keep a bigger chip on my shoulder," Nguyen said. "Wagner didn't really see me as Vietnamese or anything — if

Severna Park quarterback Vince Nguyen threw for 277 yards and two touchdowns against South River last fall.

you can ball, you can ball — but that's a big part of who I am."

That this story ever happened at all is largely a sequence of happenstances. Nguyen loved baseball as a child and initially wanted to continue that career into college. He's quick to credit his parents for their blessing on his sporting endeavors as a priority, which broke with Asian cultural norms emphasizing high academic marks with a goal of becoming a doctor, lawyer, or engineer rather than high athletic achievements (though, for the record, Nguyen has a 4.2 GPA and was also courted by Cornell).

That blessing then extended to football, which he played for the first time as an eighth-grader, and with which he soon fell in love.

"A lot of Asian parents wouldn't allow their kid to ever do that," he said. "They get all the praise for this."

He played defensive end that year, and he hoped to add wide receiver to his repertoire upon reaching Severna Park High.

There was one small problem, however: the JV team didn't have a quarterback. So, as Nguyen relates it, the coaching staff had various players throw the football just to see who showed potential or at least had a strong arm.

"I guess I stood out," Nguyen deadpanned.

His high school career was, for a quarterback, trial by fire. By the time he was a senior, the training wheels were largely off and he was making splash plays. One such play, against South River on September 13, 2024, flashed his potential.

On fourth-and-7 from the South River 11, Nguyen escaped heavy pressure and rolled to his right, waited an almost uncomfortable amount of time, and fired a dart to the corner of the end zone, where his receiver flashed open and caught it inches above the turf for a highlight-reel touchdown.

It's that poise and arm potential that has Wagner enamored. Nguyen's frame — 6-foot-2, 210 pounds — and play-extending mobility were also welcome additions. Nguyen's ceiling, they believe, can be nurtured and coached up as he gains more experience in the position.

Coming from a school that's not known for football, and a program that has only recently shifted to more of a passing attack, it might be easy to overlook Nguyen, as many people did.

That's OK, he said. He'll take all the fuel he can get, especially now that he's standing as a beacon to his heritage as a newfound hero.

"It's motivation, because a lot of people are looking up to me," Nguyen said. "Folks will message me in Instagram that live across the entire country and tell me that they want me to see and do well for the entire Asian community."

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Queen, Other Severna Park Wrestlers Show Off At States

By Tom Worgo

In his time as a Severna Park High wrestler, **Sam Ziff**, who coaches the team now, set a few school records. Those look to be a thing of the past thanks to junior **Michael Queen**, a wrestler who dominates because of his quickness and underrated strength.

"I like to rib him," Ziff explained. "He is probably going to break all of my records. I joke with him about it. He is in the running to win states and I tell him, 'If you win states, I am not going to recognize your records. I will make you sit out matches to make sure I keep my records.' But actually, I love to see them broken."

Queen tied Ziff's record for wins in a season (43) in 2023 as a freshman.

He came one win away from tying it again when he lost at 126 pounds in the Class 3A-4A championship at The Show Place Arena in Upper Marlboro on March 8.

Queen bettered his finish from last year at states. He took second at 126.

Queen's career record stands at 127-12 and he should surpass Ziff's mark of all-time wins with 132 — which Ziff set in 2013 — early next season. Ziff said Queen was wrestling at the highest level of his career entering the



state tournament.

"He is a rare wrestler and one that comes around once in a blue moon," Ziff said. "You just have to be happy about it and prove that you help them achieve the ultimate goal."

Looking back at this season, Queen feels he's getting closer to his lofty goal of a state title. He lost to Walt Whitman's **Solomon Randall**, the defending state champion at 113 pounds, 8-0, on that Saturday in March. Queen did

Michael Queen's career record stands at 127-12. He came one win away from winning the Class 3A-4A championship for 126 pounds at The Show Place Arena in Upper Marlboro on March 8.

beat defending 120-pound state champion **Brennan Considine** of Linganore, 13-2, in the quarterfinals.

"This year, I think I was able to wear down my opponents and dominate on my feet," Queen said of his improvements over last year. "I will take everything out of this year and learn. It was one step better than last season."

Severna Park junior **Aidan Holly** (138) also qualified for the tournament and was eliminated in the early rounds.

On the girls side, the Falcons made a statement at states. Twins **Alex Adams** (fourth, 145 pounds) and **Alanna Adams** (second, 140 pounds) both placed. Alana finished 14-4 and captured her second county championship and first regional title in February. Alex posted an 11-4 record and won a regional championship as well.

"I hope their success will kickstart interest in a girls team at Severna Park," Ziff said.



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After Playoff Win, Falcons Finish Season In Ice Hockey State Quarterfinals

Photo by Zach Sparks

Severna Park could not keep up with the top-seeded Walt Whitman team during a 5-0 loss on February 25, but the Falcons expressed pride for a 9-6 season and second consecutive trip to the state quarterfinals.

By Zach Sparks

The Severna Park ice hockey team could be forgiven for having a down season. After losing their already limited ice time due to Bowie rink renovations, the Falcons had to learn on the fly during games this winter.

But the team did not have a down year. They went 9-6 and won a playoff game against River Hill, 8-5, on February 18 before losing 5-0 on February 25 against the top-seeded Walt Whitman squad at The Gardens Ice House in Laurel, Maryland.

For the second straight year, the Falcons reached the second round of the Maryland Student Hockey League (MSHL) state tournament.

"We had three months of no practice, so given that, I thought they worked through that adversity and came together," said first-year head coach **Dave Petrick**. "The practices were unfortunately happening in the games, but overall, I am really happy."

The players were just as happy after their playoff success. **Pierce Brenner** propelled his team to a win in the first round of the Eastern conference



playoffs, recording three goals in a 5-4 overtime win over Dulaney on February 10. A team captain, **Pierce** also had a hat trick in the playoff win over River Hill. **Declan Laughlin** added two goals, and **Max Grotheer**, **Matthew "Matty" Butcher** and **Griffin Grotheer** had one apiece.

"That game, we ran three solid lines, and everyone showed up and played with 100% effort," coach Petrick said

about the game against River Hill.

"We went up against two of the best individual players in the state in that game, and we were able to figure out how to hold them to five goals."

Throughout the season, the Falcons got contributions up and down the lineup. Center **Will Petrick** led all scorers with 18 goals and 13 assists. Right wing **Pierce Brenner** had 15 goals and a team-high 14 assists. **Beckett**

Dickson led the defense with 14 goals and five assists.

"Those three combined for 80 points in 15 games," coach Petrick said. "All three recorded hat tricks, seven total between the three of them."

Dickson made the Eastern Conference second team.

"Beckett Dickson has explosive speed and a cannon for a shot," coach Petrick said. "He can shoot a puck 80-plus miles per hour."

Will Petrick and Pierce Brenner earned MSHL honorable mentions. The team also got solid goalie play from **Liam Bohlayer**, **Jake Beaver** and **Maya Brenner**.

The Falcons will lose four seniors, with eight or nine freshmen potentially joining next year's team. Not all of the players compete for club teams, so coach Petrick is asking them to spend time on the ice this offseason for Severna Park to take the next step.

"Half the team is on the ice seven nights a week; the other half, only when they're with us," he said. "So, practices will make a difference. The effort is there. The skill is there."

Along with Petrick as head coach, the team was led by assistant coaches **Matt Holben**, **Adam Brenner** and **Eric Haagen**.

Petrick coached many of the kids on his Junior Black Bears club team and enjoyed seeing their love of ice hockey grow in high school.

"It's an awesome group of kids," he said. "They are all high-class individuals, and I don't have to deal with any dumb stuff. We will miss the seniors, we have four really good seniors we are losing, but they will be replaced by the next generation."

Extra Points

- Severna Park's goal of the year goes to Will Petrick, who had a highlight-reel play when he hit the "Michigan" goal against Dulaney High School in a 7-6 win on January 27.
- The comeback of the season occurred against Harford County, with Severna Park down 4-2 with five minutes to go on January 10. Will Petrick and Pierce Brenner combined for four goals in four minutes to lead the team to victory, 6-4.

- Goalie Maya Brenner recorded the only shutout of the season in a 7-0 win over Crofton on December 18.
- Pierce Brenner finished his high school hockey career with 42 goals and 23 assists.
- Liz Jones split time playing with Severna Park and also with the Eastern District girls team, totaling 50 goals and 41 assists in her four-year career.
- "Declan Laughlin is a scrappy and versatile player with high hockey IQ," coach Petrick said. "He put up five goals and four assists on the year and

- was asked to play all positions. Declan gave us hope in the Eastern semifinal game by tying up the game late in the third period on a breakaway goal after turning the defender inside out."
- Coach Petrick called Matty Butcher "a nuisance on the ice all season." Butcher led the team in drawing penalties.
- Freshman defenseman Owen Keefe played in 12 games and put up 10 points after coming off of an injury. "He is a dynamic player with a bright outlook playing for the Falcons," Petrick said.

Three-Peat: Spalding Ice Hockey Claims Another Crown

» Continued from page 15

builds," Trantin said. "It's very hard to do. It's one misstep, one poorly executed play, one mistake by the coach, or one bad matchup. And if any of those things happen, it's a loss."

None of those things happened to the Cavaliers. They joined the select company of their two heated rivals and edged Mount Saint Joseph, 4-2, in mid-February at the Gardens Ice House in Laurel to garner the MIAA A Conference crown. **Michael McGuire**, **Grant Christiansen**, **Zach Holley** and **Caleb Young** scored for the winners.

"The first emotion is relief," said Trantin, whose teams have won eight titles since 2012. "You must contemplate what you and the team have accomplished. You do not know if it will happen again. All the hard work we did from July all the way to mid-February

"This year, I think we were more connected in the locker room. It was just a more tight-knit group. It gave us an edge. It was one of our biggest strengths."

— **CARSON GLOMAN, JUNIOR ARCHBISHOP SPALDING**

— it validates everything we did."

Spalding pulled off the three-peat with a much younger team — about half the roster was underclassmen — than the 2023 and 2024 squads. Though, this year's Cavaliers were arguably as good as if not even better than those teams.

"This year, I think we were more connected in the locker room," said Spald-

ing junior **Carson Gloman**, a Severna Park resident. "It was just a more tight-knit group. It gave us an edge. It was one of our biggest strengths."

Trantin added, "We had more talent than we had seen in more than a decade. They showed that in the championship game."

The defense also helped the Cavaliers to the title. The proof? Spalding held Mount Saint Joseph to no goals in the final two periods of the championship. Brothers and Severna Park residents **Christian and Carson Gloman**, **Sawyer Fox** (Severna Park), **Patrick McGuire** (Annapolis), **Alec Moeglein** (Severn) and **Blake Barton** (Severna Park) comprise the unit.

"The strength of our team is the defense," Trantin said.

The offense can't be overlooked, though high-scoring wouldn't be a way

to describe it.

What the offense did: score clutch goal after clutch goal. Senior **Grant Wanner** (16 goals, 19 assists) led the Cavaliers in scoring. Also ranked among the team's scoring leaders are Millersville resident **Corey Burcham** (nine goals, seven assists), Michael McGuire (nine goals, six assists) and **James Jones** (nine goals, two assists).

Severna Park resident **Finn Pasko** and Arnold resident **Caleb Young** also contributed to the offense.

"We won a lot of games by a goal," Trantin explained. "The way we scored was timely and opportunistic."

The underclassmen had an impact, too. It gave the team great depth.

"Last year's team was older with a lot of seniors," said Pasko, who plays forward. "This year, we had younger talent, and they were fun to play with."



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STUDENT-ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

AMBERLYNN GONG

Severna Park High School
Swimming

By David Bashore

Wake up. Go to school. Head home. Do homework. Submit scholarship applications. Go to school team practice, then straight to club team practice. Get home at 9:00pm. Do more homework. Oh, and somewhere in there, eat and sleep.

Where most folks might get tired just looking at that to-do list, Severna Park senior Amberlynn Gong not only embraces it, but she excels at all of it.

In the pool, Gong is part of two swim teams — Severna Park High School and the Naval Academy Aquatic Club (NAAC). She helped the Falcons win the girls county championship, a meet at which she broke the school's 200 individual medley record and also won the 100-yard breaststroke. For NAAC, of six events where she qualified for finals, she won the 100 butterfly at the club state meet and finished second in the 200.

Outside of competition, she's the treasurer for Severna Park's Student Government Association (SGA) and the class of 2025, a member of three national honor societies (NHS, Spanish



National Honor Society, and Mu Alpha Theta), and owner of a pristine GPA (4.0 unweighted, 4.58 weighted) with an acceptance letter from MIT.

At her heart, she's a gifted swimmer with a knack for numbers who wants to use her experiences to help people, both in and out of the pool.

"To swim in college has been one of my main goals since freshman year," Gong said. "I started reaching out to a bunch of schools that I knew would challenge me in the pool and academically. I really like putting in the work, and beyond that, I like having the supportive environment around me.

Photo courtesy of Fincham Photography

"Everyone I know who's a swimmer is in the same boat. We all wake up early, go through the four-hour training days, and we're all going through it together. I love how everyone is just acknowledging each other's effort and supporting them."

Beyond being a standout swimmer, Gong has loved math, music and Spanish for as long as she can remember. Though her earnest piano playing days are perhaps done, she worked with Severna Park's SGA to take some musically inclined classmates to a local nursing home and play Christmas songs during the holiday season. In addition to tutoring in the Hispanic community locally, she also hopes to use her love of mathematics to get an economics degree at MIT to make the world a better place.

"I've always really liked math, so I took AP Economics at school, and I really enjoyed how it applies to a bunch of different aspects of life," Gong said. "I didn't think about it as a major until I did an internship with the Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation, and that really piqued my interest and made me want to pursue it further."

Gong will swim at MIT and is leaning toward majoring in developmental economics, which studies how low- and medium-income countries and loca-

tions can emerge and improve their economic state. It's a complex field with dozens of factors at play, which perhaps yields some familiarity for Gong. Her preferred swim event is the butterfly, generally considered the most physically demanding discipline in swimming on account of the myriad components associated with successful technique.

"It has a lot of moving parts, and it's also very difficult in terms of how tired it makes you. I actually wrote my college essay about that," she said. "I think it's made me very resilient and mentally tough, which is something all my coaches have emphasized. Being mentally tough has really helped me in overcoming challenges in life."

That experience both in Severna Park High School, in the community at large, and part of the supportive swimming community is something Gong will hold to as she applies her studies at MIT.

"One thing about MIT is that they really value their collaborative culture and their ability to balance things. And one thing about Severna Park High that's helped me a lot is the ability to balance all of my things: AP classes, school sports, and clubs," she said. "Being around a class of super talented people has taught me to collaborate with the best and become a great team player and overcome challenges together."

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Bruins Connect Dots To Reach Region Semifinal

By David Bashore

Much of Broadneck’s boys basketball season was about playing the long game: trial and error, a slew of close losses, and figuring out which pegs belong in which holes.

“As the season was going on, I think it was eight or nine losses, and five of them were by four points or less,” said Broadneck coach **Jeff Starr**. “Just being in those situations, I told them, will help us. We hit a nice run toward the end of the regular season, and I really think we were hitting our stride.

The Bruins’ penchant for problem solving over the course of the season helped them in the first round of regionals, when they hosted North Point and all those tight contests paid off as they turned the Eagles away, 42-40.

Already down senior forward **Joey Smargissi** due to an ankle injury,

Broadneck was outsized with freshman forward **Liam Sabo** as their leading man on the boards. Meanwhile, **Ashton Sellman** and **Kamari Williams** struggled to play the two-man guard game. The team’s outside shooting also drew a blank, hitting one 3-pointer all night, and that came in the first quarter.

It was no surprise, then, that the Bruins found themselves down big in the second quarter. But they found a solution: bring Sabo out as a third ball handler, which made the North Point defense extend further on the perimeter and allow Sabo, Sellman and Williams to cut to the basket or feed the waiting **Kemarri Collison** beneath the basket.

The changes were just effective enough for Broadneck to whittle their way back into the contest.

“We’ve been in it every game, no mat-

ter the record,” Sabo said. “It’s happened to us a lot, and sometimes we’ve come so close to coming back, and that gave us confidence to not be worried coming into the locker room.”

Though their run ended at eventual region champion Leonardtown, where they lost by 12, Broadneck closed the season playing some of the best team basketball they had all winter.

“We were trying to focus too far on the future, but when we were one game at a time, that’s when we got hot,” Williams said. “This is a family. I love my guys. I love my team.”

The Bruins will graduate five seniors: Smargissi, **Jacob Aponte**, **Drew Cahall**, **Garrett Miller** and **Tommy Anglim**.

“All the guys trust each other, that you’re going to do your job, and play your role,” Starr said. “They have each other’s back, and they really get along.”



Photo by David Bashore

BHS senior Jacob Aponte drove hard against the North Point defense during the Bruins’ 42-40 win on February 28.

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Falcon Boys Close Basketball Season In Region First Round



Photo by Alex Bardakh

Severna Park coach Pete Young talked to his players during the Falcons' 61-59 overtime loss to Arundel in the first round of the region playoffs on February 28.

By David Bashore

Severna Park's promising finish to the boys basketball season ended a couple of rounds earlier than hoped, but it wasn't for a lack of execution or effort.

The Falcons had their season come to a close with a 61-59 overtime loss to Arundel in the first round of the 3A East Region I playoffs on February 28 at Severna Park High School.

In a quality game where the Falcons played mostly crisp basketball, it was Arundel's athleticism and experience that ultimately proved to be the difference.

"We had a lot of kids who were on a good JV team, and they needed to learn what it takes to go up against a bigger, stronger, faster varsity team night in and night out," said Severna Park coach **Pete Young**. "As coaches, you're always looking for the things you did wrong that you can improve on, but you're hoping to get the team to a point where you're seeing more and more of the things you're doing right to help the team be successful. By the end of the season, we were pretty close to being a good, crisp, clean basketball team. The kids rose to that challenge."

Behind the growth of junior point

guard **Garrett Moden**, junior forward **Dash Havens**, sophomores **Xavier Marshall** and **John Batty**, and freshman **Blake Coard**, the Falcons (16-8) won three straight games heading into the playoffs. Each win came in such a narrow fashion as to give them valuable experience in closing out tight games.

They beat Arundel 55-53, then North County 55-52, then Northeast 57-52 to close out the regular season. The following playoff game against Arundel, though, proved to be one trip to the well too many.

Though Severna Park had a large sophomore and junior class on the roster, they'll bid farewell to three seniors: **Keaghan Gorski**, **Charlie Hartman** and **Charlie Gonzalez**, each of whom contributed to the program in his own way.

"It's hard to put into words what Charlie (Hartman) means — four-year varsity player, leader, locker room guy, just everything you want," Young said. "Keaghan really came into his own this season and stepped up, which was really important for us. And Charlie (Gonzalez), what he did for us is really undervalued, to help get the guys ready to play every single night."

Severna Park Girls Give Best Effort In Regionals

By David Bashore

Severna Park's girls basketball team had a maintenance mindset during the middle of an injury-riddled season.

The goal: develop the younger players. The cavalry is coming before the season ends.

That approach worked as well as they could hope for, as the Falcons were playing close to their best basketball of the season down the stretch, all the way to a regional semifinal showdown with 3A title contender South River.

Severna Park lost the game 53-33, but that says more about South River than anything else — the Seahawks failed to beat an Anne Arundel County team by fewer than 20 points only once this season. The opponent? Severna Park, on January 17.

That was a mark of growth that Severna Park would build on as they waited for multiple starters and rotation players to return from injury.

"We showed tremendous growth throughout the year. After game one, we basically were just trying to piece together different starting lineups throughout the entire season, really, until the last few games when we had our crew back from injuries," said Severna Park coach **Kristofer Dean**. "Our bench players did a great job and really developed well throughout the year to surround the starters when they got back."

That development allowed the Falcons to go eight or nine deep with floor experience when everyone was back from injury. In the playoff game, Severna Park was forced to go even deeper into the bench due to foul trouble, while South River's already deep rotation came at them in wave after wave.

"They're deep and they get after you. We didn't take care of the ball too well, but it's tough against them for an entire game," Dean said. "When you get down that much, you need to really sink your teeth in and get after it every possession. It's



Photo by David Bashore

Erin Hussey elevated for a layup during Severna Park's 3A East I region semifinal loss at South River on March 3.

just the name of the game, and you win some, you win some."

Severna Park's season closed with a record of 15-9, and Dean paid tribute to seven seniors who contributed heavily to the team's success over the last two seasons: **Erin Hussey**, **Payton Jeffers**, **Josie Crockett**, **Charley Coward**, **Lena Slade**, **Abby Cover** and **Kate Behe**.

"I think we did a pretty good job the last two weeks just getting prepared and getting the most we could out of it. I'm proud of the hard work from every single one of them," Dean said. "It was a next girl up mentality. They took the challenge, and they ran with it."

Bruin Girls Win Home Finale, Reach Region Semifinals

» Continued from page 15

a fearlessness that encapsulates her game. "I felt like it was survival instinct. When you take it for granted that you're going to get this next game, but today we didn't feel that. I had to leave it all on the floor, whether I messed up or not."

With an up-and-down regular season in the rearview mirror, the Bruins locked in and made sure they were on the same wavelength heading into the postseason. The result was a unified effort that got them over the hump in their last home game, with anything beyond that a bonus.

"They came together as a team for the first time Monday. I saw a shift in them coming together, and it was different," said Broadneck coach **Juan McKinney**. "We played 20 games, and I hadn't seen what I saw prior to tonight. I'm proud of them."

Broadneck started the season down junior

Makayla Kropfelder, and they finished it without seniors **Macie McNece** and **Summer Stroop**. That left the lion's share of the leadership to Best and fellow senior **Katelyn Kearns**, who makes her name as a field hockey player but gladly took on a supporting role on the basketball team.

"It's definitely different coming from field hockey, but I know my role on this team," Kearns said. "I'm here to support the team and get the hustle plays, and playing different sports helps me see the floor and help the team the best way possible."

"The season has its ups and downs, and it kind of humbles you a little bit and keeps you in check. But you have to give it all because you don't know when it's going to be done."

Two days later, the Bruins would lean heavily on their leaders one more time — they went to top-seeded Annapolis and tried to grind out

another victory. Unfortunately, there were no heroes in store as the Bruins ran out of steam down the stretch and the Panthers moved on with a 31-29 victory.

That loss meant the end of the road for the Bruins and their seniors: Best, Kearns, McNece, Stroop, **Chiara McIntosh** and **Natalie Pace**. While the younger crop of Bruins ooze talent and are ready to step into those roles on-court, the leadership will be particularly tough to replace.

"KK and London are two examples of what leaders should be, and I'm not just talking about basketball, I'm talking about everything," McK-inney said. "I wish I had them for another two years, but unfortunately we have to let them go."

"These girls are really resilient. I'm proud of all of them. They're in a lot mentally, so to help keep this team together, they went above and beyond whatever I could have imagined."

Green Team Caps Season With County Title



The Severna Park Green Hornets 12U (seventh grade) Green team capped off an undefeated 11-0 season by winning the Anne Arundel County 13U (eighth grade) B division with a win over the Annapolis All-Stars, 25-9, on March 1. The county championship represents their second championship in three years. Earlier in the season, the ladies also won the Potomac Valley Basketball League ALL 4 Love tournament the weekend of February 15-16, going 3-0 in the seventh/eighth grade division. The team included (l-r, top row) coach John Distler, Eva Jones, Lila Coard, Paige Majikas, Sia Duggal, coach Praveen Duggal and (bottom row) Grace Distler, Claire Church, Lea Trippett and Kolbie Phillips.

Dream Team Wins Scrub Championship



The Dream team, coached by Brandon Goodman and Brack Williams, won the 2024 Green Hornets girls scrub basketball championship with a 25-15 victory in a defensive battle. They finished the season with an 8-2 record. Players included (left to right) Rowan Laughon, Lacey Toth, Jessica Ricci, Carly Weeks, Charlotte Forthofer, Maya Kirshtein, Ryleigh Quill and Josephine Garrett. Kristen Wilson was also on the team but was not able to make the championship game. Seniors Toth, Ricci and Garrett especially put a lot of effort into the season.

Spring Sports Are Underway
Send Us Your Green Hornets Highlights
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Severn School Names Keegan Wilkinson Boys Lacrosse Coach

Former Marist University Coach Comes To Anne Arundel County

By Kevin Murnane

Citing the desire to be closer to his parents and family, as well as to make an impact on high school student-athletes, former Marist University men's lacrosse head coach **Keegan Wilkinson** is now Severn School's boys lacrosse head coach.

Wilkinson coached lacrosse at Marist for 17 years, 13 as their head coach. He was the winningest lacrosse coach in school history and was a three-time Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) Coach of the Year. The Poughkeepsie, New York, university won MAAC lacrosse championships in 2015, 2019 and 2023.

"It was insanely difficult to leave Marist," Wilkinson said. "I spent half my life there and we had great success over the years."

However, it was a chance to come home to Maryland and be closer to his parents in Columbia, to raise his two young children, and to have a positive influence on high school student-athletes and help players reach their potential.

"Some of the best coaches in the history of sports have been high school coaches like **Morgan Wootten** and **Bob Hurley**," Wilkinson said.

Wootten was DeMatha Catholic High School's head basketball coach for 46 years and Hurley was the basketball coach at the now closed St. Anthony High School in New Jersey for 39 years. Both coaches are in the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

Wilkinson has inherited a team that went 7-11 last year, but he credits Severn's former lacrosse coach, **Joe Christie**, for discovering student-athletes who fit into Severn's culture.

"Joe did an amazing job recruiting the area for the type of lacrosse player who will be a great representa-

Photo by Kevin Murnane

Severn's new varsity boys lacrosse coach **Keegan Wilkinson** brings 17 years of college coaching experience to the Evergreen Road campus. Wilkinson won three Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC) league championships at Marist University, and he was named Coach of the Year three times for lacrosse.



tive of Severn School in the classroom and athletic field," Wilkinson said. "The strength of this year's squad will be the 14-member senior class. We have size and speed at every position."

At Marist, Wilkinson was used to smaller players, who would battle and grind the Red Foxes to victory. At Severn, he was pleasantly surprised by the size of his high school players.

"I have many players who are 6-foot-3 and 210 pounds," Wilkinson said. "They can run, pass and shoot, so I'm extremely excited how we can jell into a highly competitive team."

Severn School Assistant Athletic Director **Erin De Falco** knew Wilkinson through lacrosse networking and Wilkinson became intrigued by the Severn opportunity. After visiting Severn, and particularly Severna Park, Wilkinson knew he had to make a difficult choice.

"Severna Park is a great place to raise a family, as well as a cool community," Wilkinson said. "Every day, we visit the beach, and I get to walk to work. Also, my wife Jessica is working at Indian Creek School and is their new girls varsity lacrosse coach."

Wilkinson is also an athletic administrator and

teaches a leadership class at Severn School as well as physical education at Severn's middle school.

Part of his introduction to the Severna Park community is to become acquainted with the Green Hornets lacrosse program.

"I want to immerse myself in all the area's youth lacrosse programs, especially the Green Hornets," Wilkinson said. "Hopefully we can help them by having guest speakers, training seminars and summer camps."

Wilkinson attended Philadelphia's Saint Joseph's University, where he

was a four-year starter on attack and two-time captain. That college playing experience, plus 17 years of college coaching, should offer beneficial information to Severn student-athletes choosing colleges.

"I think some other aspects I bring to the table are my connections to college lacrosse programs," Wilkinson said. "Hopefully I can help navigate my players' college selection process and make sure their choice is a great fit."

Wilkinson remarked that his style of lacrosse is playing fast, playing with confidence, and letting his players have "creative freedom."

"Severn plays in the best high school lacrosse league in the country," Wilkinson said, referring to the Maryland Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) A Conference. "We compete against outstanding lacrosse teams throughout the spring, and we need to elevate our effort to that level and compete for championships."

Severn School Athletic Director **Julian Domech** said, "Keegan's college experience will be of tremendous value to our lacrosse program and we're looking forward to a great season."

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Practically Perfect: SPMS Brings “Mary Poppins” To Life



Photos courtesy of Mandala Wojnar

The Severna Park Middle School cast of “Mary Poppins Jr.” performed “Jolly Holiday.”

By Mandala Wojnar

Director and Choreographer Kylie Sjolie and Musical Director Arden Titus knew immediately from the auditions that “Mary Poppins Jr.” was going to be a special show for Severna Park Middle School.

The production ran from March 7-9. According to Titus, casting “Mary Poppins Jr.” was more complex than other shows she has been involved in. It was more than just casting each character. It was important to make sure that there was good charisma between Mary and Bert, as well as between the two children. Additionally, all four actors needed to work well as a group since the quartet are together onstage for most

of the show. She added that they were looking for a specific “vibe” from the core cast.

Despite the intricacy of the situation, Titus said, “This was one of the fastest castings we’ve ever done. Last year, it took us six hours to figure out our cast, but this year, it only took three.”

It was quickly evident that Isabella Duckett and Zack Main had good chemistry as Mary and Bert. Titus noted that it was obvious that they knew each other and that this connection really worked in their favor.

Titus added that Landon Latone and Cora Anderson, who were cast as the children, played off of each other well. “Landon was

» Continued on page 33

Broadneck Alumna Always Knew She’d Be Back

By Judy Tacyn

Sometimes you just know. When Arnold resident Stephanie Seidl was a student at Broadneck High School, she knew she wanted to go into education and could not imagine herself anywhere else but in Anne Arundel County Public Schools’ (AACPS) Broadneck cluster. After attending college in North Carolina, Seidl returned to Maryland and began her teaching career in Anne Arundel County.

For the last five years, she was the assistant principal at Glen Burnie Park Elementary School; this school year, she was promoted to her first principal assignment at Belvedere Elementary School, in Arnold, of course.

“Having my first principal job at Belvedere is a homecoming,” she said. “I have felt embraced and supported by the community as a whole, truly working as a partnership to ensure all our students succeed. The teachers and staff are fully committed to our school; some have been here their

entire careers, which says a lot.”

Seidl indicated that starting a new position can be equally challenging and joyful, even when you are right where you have always wanted to be.

“One of the hardest parts, but also one of the fun parts, has been starting all over getting to know a new community, staff and students,” she said. “I loved my time



Photo by Judy Tacyn

First-year Belvedere ES Principal Stephanie Seidl is right where she’s always wanted to be.

at Glen Burnie Park and thrived on the relationships I had built there. It’s hard to start all over, but it has also been a blast getting to know our students and their families, as well as all the amazing staff members at Belvedere.”

During the new AACPS principal selection process, communities and staff members were polled

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Five From Troop 993 Earned Eagle Scout Rank In March



Jake Allen

Allen’s scouting expedition kicked off as a Wolf Cub Scout with Pack 929, Coastal Georgia Council, in 2014, when his stepdad, Derrick, took him to his first meeting. The dual level pack and troop were small but welcomed Allen and often went to district events and camporees. Allen loved to play outdoor games, camping and shooting sports. His family moved to San Antonio, Texas, in June 2015 and Allen joined the

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Chase Bierdeman

Spencer “Chase” Bierdeman began his scouting journey in the Atlanta Area Council in 2013, as a Tiger Scout with Pack 405 in Powder Springs, Georgia. In 2014, his family relocated to Millersville, Maryland, where he quickly found a home in the Baltimore Area Council, joining Pack 688.

Over the many years since then, Bierdeman has participated in numerous pinewood derbies, rain gutter regattas,

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John Blank

John Blank’s scouting journey began after moving to Millersville, Maryland, at the age of 5 in 2014. He joined Cub Scout Pack 688 in first grade and advanced to Webelos before bridging to Troop 993 in February 2019. Since joining Troop 993, Blank has served in several leadership positions, including assistant senior patrol leader, quartermaster, troop guide and den chief for Pack 688. He is also a member of the

» Continued on page 31



Sean Monahan

Sean Monahan joined Cub Scout Pack 688 in 2014 as a member of Den 7. After earning his Arrow of Light rank in 2018 he bridged over to Severna Park Troop 993.

As a Scout, Monahan served as troop guide, den chief and assistant senior patrol leader. He attended many camping trips with Troop 993. His favorites were the games trip and the Indiana Jones trip. He recently completed Philmont along with

» Continued on page 31



Jack Reese

Jack Reese began his scouting journey at the age of 6 with Pack 855. During his time in Cub Scouts, he achieved the Arrow of Light before crossing over to Troop 993. In Troop 993, Reese took on several leadership roles, including scribe, troop guide, patrol leader and assistant senior patrol leader. Some of his favorite memories include attending summer camp each year, the biking campout, the game show campout,

» Continued on page 31

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SPHS Junior Raises Awareness, Funds For Leukemia And Lymphoma Society

By Judy Tacyn

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS) estimates there are over 1.6 million people in the United States living with or in remission from leukemia, lymphoma, myeloma or related syndromes or neoplasms. A new diagnosis happens every three minutes.

To raise funding for research, as well as to offer students an opportunity to gain business skills and leadership experience, LLS invites student leaders to participate in its annual Student Visionaries of the Year campaign, a seven-week philanthropic leadership development initiative for high school students.

Just a year after her mother was diagnosed with cancer, Severna Park High School (SPHS) junior Brooklyn LaBrier wanted to help other families faced with a similar startling challenge. A family friend told her about the LLS student campaign; LaBrier applied and was accepted as the first SPHS student to ever have participated.

"Funding for research is critical in the fight against cancer. Every breakthrough in treatment and every new therapy comes from years of research, much of which is made possible by organizations like LLS," LaBrier said. "The money raised by the Student Visionaries program goes directly toward funding cutting-edge research, supporting patients and their families, and advocating for policies that help improve access to care."

LaBrier is the leader for her team, Acting Against Cancer, a name chosen for LaBrier's love of acting and performing. She assembled a team of friends



Photo by Judy Tacyn

Brooklyn LaBrier (far right back row), along with her Acting Against Cancer team, is raising money for blood cancers research.

from SPHS and Archbishop Spalding High School to help her fundraise.

Unlike traditional fundraising, the Student Visionaries of the Year campaign is designed to teach students the importance of teamwork, strategic planning, and leadership while making a big impact in the fight against blood cancer.

Over the course of the campaign, which began February 1, LaBrier is leading the Acting Against Cancer team in using various fundraising methods, including a fundraiser at a local restaurant. The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society provides mentorship to assist students with mapping out a plan for success while empowering them to develop skills that will benefit them well beyond the campaign.

"This campaign is just as much about raising

awareness as it is about fundraising, which is one of the aspects that really drew me to it. Throughout the campaign, we have opportunities to share the mission of LLS, educate our community about blood cancers, and inspire others to take action," LaBrier said. "Our presentations focus on the impact of blood cancers, the advancements in research made possible by LLS, and how every dollar raised brings us closer to a cure. It's a chance to not only raise funds but also to spark meaningful conversations and create lasting change."

LaBrier said this experience has taught her invaluable lessons in leadership, teamwork and perseverance. She's learned how to motivate and inspire others, how to organize and execute a successful initiative, how to delegate, and most importantly, the power of coming together for a greater purpose.

"The experience has instilled values in me that I will carry for the rest of my life," LaBrier shared. "Above all, it has reinforced that when we work together toward a common mission — like beating cancer — we can make a real and lasting impact."

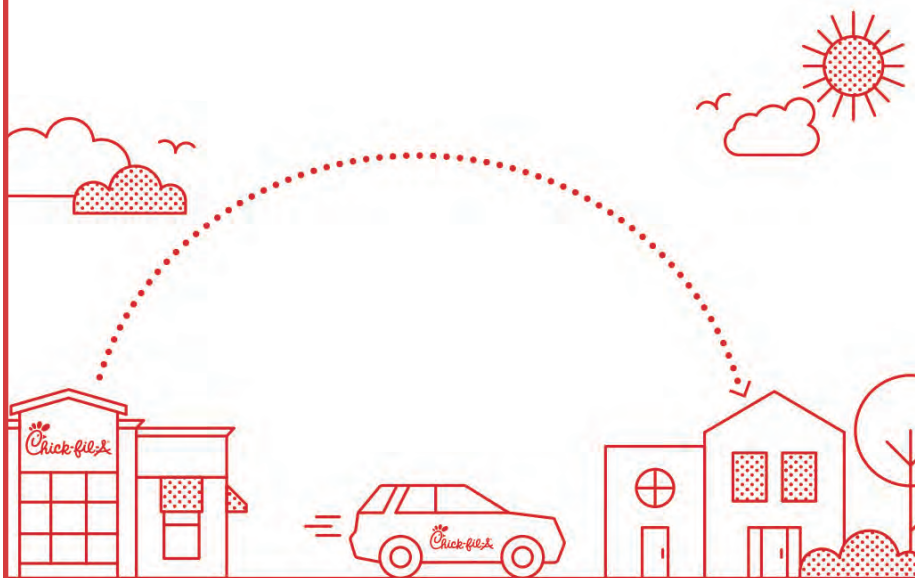
LaBrier's parents, Kim and Jeff LaBrier, as well as parents of the other student team members, have supported the Acting Against Cancer team by hosting meetings, assisting with outreach efforts, and bridging students to local businesses or potential donors.

"Brooklyn's decision to take fundraising to the next level through her candidacy for LLS has been incredibly meaningful to us. She has always been a born leader, driven by a deep desire to help others and make the world a better place," said Kim LaBrier. "Seeing her step into this role with such passion and determination, especially in a community where cancer has touched so many lives, has been truly inspiring. Her commitment to raising money for a cure is not just about fundraising — it's about hope, action and making a real difference."

LaBrier's team has a fundraising goal of \$200,000 for the Student Visionaries of the Year campaign, which ends March 22. To make a donation or to find out more about LLS or the campaign, visit events.lls.org/md/svoymd25/blabrier.

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Falcon Thon Fundraising Underway

Severna Park High School's Key Club is gearing up for the second annual Falcon Thon, a fundraiser to support Johns Hopkins Children's Center and Children's Miracle Network Hospitals. The event is set for April 4 from 3:30pm-6:30pm, and students have started to collect donations.

Key Club members Nora Devine and Samantha Lavallee started Falcon Thon last year. Their goal: to plan a night of dancing, music, free food and beverages, a prize raffle and games for a good cause.

A former pediatric cardiology patient at Johns Hopkins Children's Center, Samantha heard about the dance marathon program through the Baltimore hospital when she had a cardiology checkup in 2022.

"I immediately fell in love with the idea of it because it was a fun, healthy activity that my classmates and I could do, which also benefited kids who were in the hospital," Samantha told the Severna Park Voice in 2024. "I felt that I needed to bring it to Severna Park High School the following year! Children's Miracle Network helps to fund surgeries, research, families' stays at the hospital, and child life programs too."

So far, raffle prizes have been provided by Kendra Scott, Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers, Zachary's Jewelers, Park Books, Rise Up Coffee Roasters, Shipley Do-nuts, The Blended Essentials, The FroYo House, the Chesapeake Baysox, Nature Junction, and Great Wolf Lodge (water park and resort) in Perryville, Maryland.

Maryland-based companies Entertainment Excellence and Kolstad Audio Services are providing DJ services for free. Wawa, Chick-fil-A, Squisito Pizza and Pasta, and Raising Cane's are donating food and beverages.

Event sponsors include The FroYo House, Severna Park Tutoring & Educational Advocacy, Garry's Grill, Jennifer Yeatts (Realtor at Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices PenFed Realty), Landmark Roofing, Celebree School of Severna Park, Wright Orthodontics, Ballet Theatre of Maryland, Education Team Allies, Rolly Pollies of Maryland, the Jing Ying Institute of Kung Fu & Tai Chi, Kwon's Tae Kwon Do, and Melanie Wood of the Chesapeake Home Team of Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices PenFed Realty.

This year, the Severna Park High School Key Club is offering incentives for students who raise a certain amount of money on their participant pages. Students who raise \$100 can receive a free T-shirt from Johns Hopkins Children's Center, and students who raise \$300 can get a free tour of The Johns Hopkins Hospital.

As of March 7, the Key Club had raised \$2,000 of its \$10,000 goal.

To attend the event, students must register and raise \$50 on their participant page before the event in April.

Donations to Falcon Thon 2025 can be made online.

For more information, find the Falcon Thon event pages on Instagram and Facebook.

Love Over Hate

Board Of Education Honors Teen With Student Equity In Action Spotlight



The Board of Education of Anne Arundel County recognized Owen Cress for the Student Equity in Action Spotlight for February.

During a February meeting, the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County recognized "Dr. Love." The student behind the pseudonym is Owen Cress, a Severna Park High School senior and the February awardee of the board's Student Equity in Action Spotlight.

"Dr. Love" was born on Valentine's Day when Cress was a freshman. Unbe-

knownst to him, his plot to get a kick out of his friends by calling himself a "love doctor" would eventually lead him on a path of new interest and rising fame.

He took a pair of his sister's heart glasses and told his friends that he was Dr. Love. His friends then created Valentine's cards with his phone number on them. Cress, or Dr. Love, found that through this activity, he had a real passion for helping people and for goofy comedy.

Though he may not be a licensed doctor, he sure has the work ethic of one. Cress constantly posts and promotes kindness.

"To Dr. Love, everyone's heart is valuable," Cress said. "There is an air of lightheartedness and kindness that lets people talk as friends. This is what makes people excited to participate in charity events and to work with Dr. Love — the spirit of love, not of romance, but of love that's patient and kind, that doesn't envy or boast, that rejoices in the truth."

The charity projects that he led came to fruition after he envisioned a crowd wearing heart glasses and helping the community by sharing love. With the help of Severna Park High School Leadership Institute teacher Heather Barnstead, Cress researched local charities and fell in love with House of Ruth, a nonprofit organization that supports women, children and families impacted by domestic violence. He sold heart glasses and stickers that read "love over hate." His efforts raised over \$400 for House of Ruth in the first year and over \$600 for Sarah's House in the second year.

Dr. Love plans to organize more events and promises that all money earned will go to charity.

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Educator Of The Month

Kendyl Whiteley Folger McKinsey Elementary School

"It is important to have an open mind as an educator that one size does not fit all. Each student is unique and individual in their own ways."

— KENDYL WHITELEY



By Judy Tacyn

Severna Park resident Kendyl Whiteley is a product of her environment. She attended Jones Elementary School and Severna Park middle and high schools. As she approaches the end of her ninth year in education — all within Anne Arundel County Public Schools — Whiteley could not imagine teaching anywhere else but in Severna Park.

Whiteley was a substitute teacher at each of the Severna Park cluster elementary schools, among others in the county, before deciding that Folger McKinsey Elementary School was where she wanted to establish more permanent career roots. She loves teaching third grade because she feels students start to find their independence around age 9, and she's fortunate to watch their significant growth and progress from the start to the end of the school year.

To keep her students engaged and motivated, Whiteley pairs them together as classroom buddies to create small groups that change throughout

the school year. This gives students the opportunity to collaborate and work with classmates they may not necessarily choose on their own. She said that it also promotes a strong classroom community and a positive environment.

"We have flexible seating so students can choose to sit on yoga ball chairs, bean bags, carpet, and utilize trays. For math, students can choose to participate in various classroom math games once their independent work is completed," Whiteley said of the unique options students have in her class. "For science, there are many experiments occurring, so students are active in their learning processes. I think it is essential to involve students in their learning, as this really motivates and encourages them to reach their fullest potential."

In addition to her students, Whiteley said her colleagues keep her energy high. Working together on grade-level teams as well as vertical teams that focus on the six levels of learning (kindergarten through fifth grade), the entire faculty is supportive of each other and ready to share ideas on how to ensure student engagement, success and happiness.

"It is important to have an open mind as an educator that one size does not fit all," Whiteley added. "Each student is unique and individual in their own ways."

Whiteley appreciates the Folger staff, teachers and students and believes they are what make the school such an exceptional place to teach. She noted that she feels fortunate to work with wonderful people who challenge her to learn and grow in her career.



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Five Earned Eagle Scout Rank

Jake Allen continued

robust Pack 23, Alamo Area Council, and ranked up with the pack to Webelos. He transferred to Pack 745 in September 2017 when he earned the Arrow of Light and his Scout rank. Allen has enjoyed the countless campouts and events and believes his time with Troop 993 has been life-changing. He went to summer camp three times at Broad Creek Scout Reservation, to the Philmont Ranch High Adventure in 2024, and was inducted into the Order of the Arrow. In total, Allen camped in a tent for 139 nights, camped in a cabin for eight nights, hiked 372

miles, cycled for 44 miles, and completed 172.5 service hours. His Eagle project was a butterfly garden at Kinder Farm Park to support nature conservation, adding plants and flowers that attract pollinators. Allen carefully selected plants, worked with the park ranger to select a spot, and led his crew to cultivate the area and place a border around it. Allen is currently a senior at Severna Park High School and the vice president of the SkillsUSA chapter at CAT South. He wants to have a career in welding or join the Army as a mechanic, getting his hands dirty and serving his country.

Chase Bierdeman continued

klondike derbies and many memorable camping trips. He won the Shooting Sports, Best in Camp Award in 2017 at the Four Rivers Day Camp. In 2018, Bierdeman joined Troop 993, with which he has held multiple formal leadership positions including librarian, scribe, patrol leader and assistant senior patrol leader. Bierdeman was elected to the Order of the Arrow in 2024. He earned recognition at Broad Creek Scout Reservation in 2022 as the top shotgun qualifier. He has earned 42 merit badges as well as the Paul Bunyan Woodsman Award.

Bierdeman completed his Eagle Scout project in September 2024, successfully building a walk-in shed for the Anne Arundel County 4-H program. This project was the perfect culmination of his scouting journey, as it required all the craftsmanship, ingenuity, planning, friendship and leadership he had developed over the last 11 years. Bierdeman enjoys spending time in nature and his favorite scouting memories include camping in yurts during the annual games trip and whitewater rafting in Weatherly, Pennsylvania.

John Blank continued

Order of the Arrow Honor Society. In May 2024, Blank completed his Eagle Scout project at Kinder Farm Park. He transformed a rustic deer path into a public access trail to Cat-tail Pond, designing and building a 250-foot-long, 4-foot-wide trail using over 15 cubic yards of mulch. Blank led a team of 15 motivated Scouts from Troop 993 to clear the trail and spread the mulch. Additionally, Kinder Farm Park placed two picnic

tables along the path, so visitors have access to the pond for fishing and a place near the water to picnic. Outside of scouting, Blank competes in cross country, indoor track and outdoor track for Old Mill High School, where he is enrolled in the International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma program and will graduate in 2026. He plans to earn his private pilot license and attend college to pursue a career as a commercial airline pilot.

Sean Monahan continued

his father, his den leader, and four of his original Pack 688 members. For his Eagle project, Monahan led a group of Scouts to build, paint, and install a library box and reading table at SPAN. This project allows children to have a quiet place to sit and have activities to

do while they wait for their parents. Outside of scouting, Monahan enjoys swimming, playing the viola and piano, and spending time with friends and family. Monahan is a junior at Severna Park High School and is currently looking to study chemical engineering in college.

Jack Reese continued

and the Assateague campouts, which he attended four times. Reese earned 31 merit badges. Some of his favorite badges were chess, wilderness survival, cooking, fishing and climbing, which helped him overcome his fear of heights. For his Eagle Scout project in June, Reese led a 30-person team to construct a rock garden at the Whitney Landing community beach. The project involved removing weeds, tree stumps and trash. The group planted flowers

and placed rocks to prevent runoff water from entering the Severn River. In addition to scouting, Reese is currently a senior at Mount Saint Joseph High School. At school, he is a student-athlete who plays volleyball and has won two championships. Reese is still deciding where to attend college next year but plans to study finance. Before heading to college, he wants to continue helping the troop at meetings and campouts and looks forward to giving back as an adult leader.

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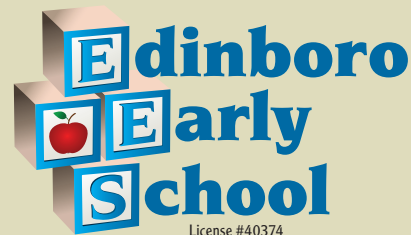
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Q.

Question of the month

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

Imagine you could see into the future. How would you use this special power?

I would use this power to see if something bad was going to happen, like if a bank was going to get robbed. Then I could warn people that this was going to happen.

Aidan A.

If I could see into the future, I would probably look to see which stock in the stock market is going to be the most successful, so that I could invest in that stock and receive a large profit.

Alex P.

I would use this superpower to see the outcome of Earth. If there are any issues like wars, or global warming, I would do what I can to help prevent it.

Andrew N.

I would look at my job, and if I had a low paying job, I could take a different course in college to find a higher paying job. Also, if there



was a catastrophic event, I could tell someone or do something to change what that event would bring.

Anthony A.
I would use it to see what we've done and tell people to fix it. It'll help what will happen and it'll be good.

Benjamin J.

I would live in my favorite year for the entirety of my life and have multiple lives in different times and places, which would be cool because if something bad happens in one timeline, you can just switch to another life.

Bode K.

If I could see into the future, I would see what I look like. I would also see what my job is going to be.

Brayden F.

I would use it to see the winning Power Ball numbers so I could become rich and famous. Another reason is that I could see the right answers to tests.

Caleb F.

I would see if robots actually take over the Earth. Also, I could see if I could get a flying car and the new

video games that come out.

Charlie M.
I would want to know if I would get in trouble to make the right choice. Also, if I get accepted in a school to be ready to cheer or not.

Chloe T.

If I could see into the future, I would see if I will have a good family and see if I am a good dad. I will only tell my family and use it for good.

Cole L.

If I could see the future, I would only tell my family. I would not want to tell the world because I do not just want to be all over the news being talked about, and I would not use it so I could show off my superpower. I would just use it for fun.

Dashel B.

I would use this power to help wonderful people, because if someone who was wonderful was going to pass away in the future, I could use this power to help them.

Ellie J.

I would use it to see what I look like if I wear different clothes, the

job I have, and what I do.

Evie S.
As of right now, I want to see what college I will get into. If I don't get into the school I want, I will try harder when I am young.

Hailey V.

I would look to see if anything bad is going to happen, for example, a meteor hitting Earth. I would then prove to scientists in some way that my powers are legit and warn them if anything bad will happen so they can prepare.

Isaac P.

I would use this superpower by seeing what I will look like in the future because I want to look at my future self when I grow up. I also want to see if there are new animals because I am interested in animals.

Jason R.

I would use it to see what I would do later in life, or I could use it to skip that point in time. I would see what I would act like later in life because I might need to change something.

Josephine A.

I would use this power to make sure global warming stops. All of the arctic animals are losing their homes and families.

Lila S.

I want to see what is happening in the future because I want to know what items everyone wants so I can make it before other people do.

Lillian H.

To make sure that I don't make any mistakes that I would regret later on in life, and also to help me with problems I don't know the answer to.

Luis L.

I would look into like 1,000 years from now, to see if we finally have flying cars, and really cool other stuff such as levitating buildings.

Matthew J.

I would see what my future looks like to see if I can change what I do now so my future is better than before.

Molly M.

I would be able to see my life in middle school, high school, college and as a grown up. I would see if I could change something so I wouldn't mess it up in the future and maybe choose a better choice than what I did.

Olivia A.

I would see in the future to see what football play they would do so I can read the play and stop them from doing it.

Raleigh E.

If I could see into the future, I would see my death and avoid the cause of my death. I could also see the mistakes that I made.

Trajan M.

First, I would see myself in school to see if I am smart. Second, I would look at math at middle school to see how I can solve it. I would do the same for literacy and science. Third, I would also use this to see if I grow up to be a good person or a bad person.

Zachary N.

Alumna Knew She'd Be Back

» Continued from page 26

about what they were looking for in their next principal, things the school does well, and any changes they hoped to see. Seidl said she has been working diligently since the summer to check items off the resulting list.

"I have the list hanging behind my desk and revisit it often. Both community members and staff asked for more fun, and that is something I am all about," she said. "I believe that school should be a fun place for learning, while still holding high academic standards and instruction for students.

"I have focused my energy on creating a fun and joyful environment, from bringing back the Halloween parade, to Friday morning dance parties at arrival, spirit days, and random games and fun each month for the students and staff," Seidl continued.

The Belvedere staff reported they wanted a more consistent system for school-wide behavior expectations and support. Seidl has focused on the school's Positive Behavioral Supports and Intervention systems, using "Bobcat Bucks" to recognize positive behaviors and enable students to access the

Bobcat Shop each month.

In addition, Seidl is looking forward to and "actively working toward being recognized as the five-star school we know we are. We are so close to a five-star school rating and our school staff is working so hard to get that last star," Seidl said. "We have been focusing on analyzing student-specific data to make informed instructional decisions that will help all our students grow and succeed, giving each what they need specifically. Seeing how hard our teachers work every day, I know we will get there."

Seidl describes her leadership style as transparent and collaborative. She is not afraid to walk through things together with teachers and staff, firmly believing that through collaboration and communication, anything can be accomplished.

As she approaches the end of her first year as a principal, she is already imagining the great things to come.

"What a whirlwind! The school year is flying by so fast. It has been a lot of hard work and long days and nights, but I am so happy to be here," Seidl said. "I truly feel like I was meant to serve here for a reason and am excited to see what is to come."

"Mary Poppins"

» Continued from page 26

just so precious, and the way Cora led him around made them fit the parts of Michael and Jane so effortlessly," Titus said.

Ollie Christesen and Audrey Hopkins, who play George and Winifred, respectively, completed the family. Getting the right actors to make up the core six characters was important to the directors because of the show's focus on family dynamics.

"It is a show about childhood wonder, but it also touches on the social issues of the day, like classism, and the lesson of challenging one's beliefs about certain people. It's about being less judgmental and finding help in the unlikely of places," Titus pointed out.

To bring the script from page to stage, Sjolie had to take many things into account. "We have 19 scenes, which is rare for a junior musical," she said. "It's a very fast-paced show. My main vision of the show was to try to create as much magic, and make the scenes as realistic as possible, but with the least amount of set pieces so that our scene changes weren't too overwhelming."

This was vital given that only eight members of the 20-student tech



As Mary and Bert, Isabella Duckett and Zack Main sang a rooftop duet.

crew were stagehands.

Sjolie added, "The magic of theater is truly in the scene changes. Going from one scene to the next and creating a whole new set in the same location as the last, but making it feel different, is a hard thing to do, but I think we have done an amazing job!"

The show's producer, Jamie Miller, who is no stranger to the rigors of a production, remarked, "That's why we have sleepless nights - we do it for the kids."

With whimsical costumes and plenty of heart, the production of "Mary Poppins Jr." proved that a middle school musical can be just as magical as the classic tale itself.

Cardiac Calcium Scoring: An Important Tool For Heart Health Screening



Abid Fakhri

Cardiologist
and Director of
Cardiac CT
UM BWMC



Early detection of risks is crucial for preventing serious conditions like heart attacks and strokes. One powerful tool for assessing heart disease risk is cardiac calcium scoring. Cardiac calcium scoring visualizes plaque buildup in the coronary arteries, which supply the heart with oxygen and nutrients. As people age, atherosclerosis (plaque buildup) can clog these arteries, reducing oxygen flow and leading to heart attacks or heart muscle weakness.

In the past, doctors used risk factors like blood pressure and cholesterol

to assess heart disease risk. Calcium scoring takes a different approach. It uses a CT scan to measure the amount of plaque present and provides specific data to help doctors and patients make informed decisions about heart health. This method is safe and noninvasive and offers direct insight into heart disease risk.

The scoring breakdown follows these metrics:

- Zero indicates no calcium and is ideal
- One to 100 is low
- 101 to 300 is intermediate
- Above 300 is high, signaling significant plaque buildup

One important consideration with this test is that cardiac calcium scoring is a valuable screening tool for assessing underlying risk. However, it's not ideal for diagnosing symptomatic heart disease. This is because it

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Severna Park Native Aims To “Dream Big” At The Boston Marathon

By Declan Keefe

Since its inception in 1897, the Boston Marathon has been one of the most internationally renowned road races, with runners from all over the world striving for spots to compete. Over 30,000 athletes will make their way to the Northeast on April 21 to embark on the 26.2-mile race that begins in the town of Hopkinton and ends in Boston's Copley Square.

The Boston Marathon also includes a charity component that enables select nonprofit organizations to recruit athletes who pledge to raise funds for their cause. This year, 176 nonprofits were selected, and Arnold resident and physical therapist Gabby Driscoll is gearing up to raise funds and run for the 2025 Dream Big! Boston Marathon team.

A 2012 graduate of Severna Park High School, Driscoll attended Rutgers University, where she played soccer and met her husband. Driscoll has had the desire to run in the Boston Marathon ever since she ran in the Rutgers half marathon during her senior year of college.

“One of my best friends and former teammates from Rutgers, Hayley Katkowski — we told ourselves after we ran the Rutgers half marathon that we would do the Boston Marathon one day,” Driscoll recalled. “My husband and I lived in Massachusetts for a short stint after college, and Hayley is from the greater Boston area. It is a well-loved and well-respected marathon. But it was this promise that we made almost 10 years ago that has fueled us to finally approach this goal now.”

Regarding running the Rutgers half



Arnold resident Gabby Driscoll, pictured with her son, Cameron, and her husband, Kyle, is gearing up to raise funds and run for the 2025 Dream Big! Boston Marathon team.

marathon, her longest race to date, Driscoll remembered, “That was an eye-opening experience (especially knowing what an appropriate training schedule is now), and my first real exposure to long-distance running.”

Dream Big! is a nonprofit headquartered in Needham, Massachusetts. As of the end of February, its 15-member marathon team had raised over \$125,000.

“Dream Big! is a wonderful organization that empowers young girls from under-resourced communities by providing scholarships, mentorship, and opportunities in sports and physical activity,” Driscoll explained. “Their mission is to help these girls achieve

» Continued on page 36

It's Showtime: Don't Let Fear Slow Down Your Fitness

Joe Bocek

Park Fitness



“Don't let fear hold you back.”

At the end of February, I attended a local elementary school talent show supporting the school and the participants. It's always fun to see the creativity and talent of these kids.

From dancing to singing or even telling jokes, it brings you back to being that age and how thrilling it could be to get onstage and perform in front of your family and friends.

And what's even more impressive is the confidence to get onstage and do your thing without fear and, in some cases, a care in the world of judgment.

It's refreshing to see these little humans doing things or trying something new so bravely. It really acts as a reminder and lesson in our own lives about

how to live.

At some point in life, we all started being a little scared of trying something new or a bit out of our comfort zone. It became slightly harder to try new things and do some things that maybe even scare us a little.

It makes you wonder how much more we would do or accomplish if we approached life and doing things with this same fearlessness. How much further ahead might we be, or how many more things might we have accomplished in our lives?

I see this every day in the health and fitness world: allowing fear, worry and stress to stop us from starting something, taking action or embarking on the first step. And it's perfectly common and natural to feel this way, so if you do, congratulations — you are normal.

But at the same time, I cannot count the number of times and people who, after getting started making themselves and their fitness a priority, have

said they wish they had started sooner or that they hadn't let fear hold them back.

The words “I don't know what I was afraid of” are often said.

The truth is that you never regret starting. But we need to take that first step. We need to do the thing we think we are afraid of. Because it's worth it. Your health is worth it. Your family and friends are worth it. And because, frankly, you are that important.

Maybe we need to get back in touch with the kid version of ourselves. The tiny version of us who might be a bit more adventurous, just for a moment. And just to get started. The one who was just a little bolder and would belt out a song without a care in the word if it was in the right key.

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Severna Park Native Aims To “Dream Big” At The Boston Marathon

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their dreams through sport. Having played soccer most of my life, as well as being a female, this is the charity I resonated the most with.”

She added, “The way you run a marathon is one of two ways. You can either qualify for time, or you can get on a charity team. Because I didn’t qualify for time, I applied through Dream Big! to be on their Boston Marathon team. Both my friend Hayley and I were accepted. This comes with a mandatory goal of each individual raising \$10,000. So, there’s a lot to do between sticking with the running schedule and raising funds for this cause.”

Running the Boston Marathon comes with some benefits for Dream Big! team members. “By being on a charity team, we are set up with a marathon coach who hosts weekly Zoom calls and is available for any and all questions,” Driscoll said.

“It’s amazing with the amount of athletes he works with, that he gets back to me sometimes within a few hours with any questions I have. The charity group is called ‘The Marathon Coalition,’” Driscoll said of her coach, Rick Muhr.

Having suffered several injuries in the past — including a torn ACL, MCL and PCL, all ligaments in the knee — Driscoll said her goals for Boston

are simply to complete the race and to stay healthy. Charity participants have to be able to finish the marathon in less than six hours (roughly 13.5 minutes/mile).

After graduating from Rutgers in 2016, Driscoll pursued a graduate degree in physical therapy, which she received from Shenandoah University in 2019. Driscoll has a son, Cameron, with her husband, Kyle Driscoll, who is in his second year as a pitching coordinator for the Arizona Diamondbacks after spending five years in a variety of positions with the New York Mets.

Driscoll credits her family for helping her get to where she is today. “Now, I’m no longer a young athlete, but a working mother,” she said. “I’m having a great time challenging myself again, taking time for myself to get the training in, and knowing that my body is capable of doing hard things. One of the biggest things I want to highlight is ‘it takes a village.’”

“I have the most supportive family, from my husband, my parents and grandmother, to our nanny who helps me carve out the time to train,” she said. “I couldn’t do it without them.”

To learn more about or support Driscoll’s fundraising efforts for the Dream Big! team, go to www.givengain.com/project/gabby-raising-funds-for-dream-big-91602.

Cardiac Calcium Scoring: An Important Tool For Heart Health Screening

» Continued from page 34

doesn’t show whether plaque buildup is blocking blood flow, a factor that causes symptoms like chest pain or shortness of breath. In such cases, a CT angiogram, which uses intravenous dye to show blockage percentages, may be more informative.

Individuals who should consider a cardiac calcium scoring test are men over 38 and women over 45 with certain heart disease risk factors. These factors include:

- Diabetes
- Tobacco use
- High blood pressure
- Abnormal cholesterol levels
- Family history of heart disease

For many people, knowing a family member has had heart disease raises concerns about their own risk. Yet, blood tests alone cannot measure that risk. Cardiac calcium scoring can be an important screening tool for those with these risk factors in the specified age groups. It’s important to note that this test may not be covered by health insurance, Medicare or Medicaid. Check with your insurance provider to find out.

Alongside cardiac calcium scoring, individuals should focus on essential lifestyle measures to minimize their

risk for heart disease, including:

- Quitting smoking
- Eating a balanced diet with fruits, vegetables and whole grains
- Maintaining a regular exercise routine

A proactive partnership between advanced screening and healthy habits empowers individuals to reduce their risk of heart disease and live longer, healthier lives.

The University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Heart Associates offers calcium scoring, CT angiography, and other preventive services at its new location in the Outpatient Care Center at the University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Medical Center. Individuals who may be at risk for heart disease based on the above criteria can schedule an appointment for a calcium scoring test by calling the practice at 410-768-0919.

To learn more about heart care services available at University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Heart Associates, visit www.umbwmc.org/heart.

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Are You Listening To Your Heart? Recognizing Early Signs Of Heart Disease



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Your heart is more than a muscle — it's the engine that keeps you going, pumping oxygen-rich blood throughout your body. But what happens when this vital system starts to fail? Heart disease

can develop quietly, showing only subtle signs before becoming life-threatening. A new report from the American Heart Association confirmed that cardiovascular disease remains the leading cause of death in the U.S. The challenge? Early warning signs aren't always obvious and can vary based on age and gender. That's why it's essential to recognize symptoms early and take action to protect your heart health.

Types of Heart Disease

Heart disease includes several conditions affecting the heart's ability to function. The most common is **coronary artery disease (CAD)**, where narrowed arteries restrict blood flow, increasing heart attack risk. But heart disease isn't just about clogged arteries. **Heart valve disease** forces the heart to work harder, while **arrhythmias** (irregular heartbeats) can lead to blood clots, strokes or heart failure. Some people are also born with **congenital heart defects**, which affect heart structure from birth. Understanding these conditions is key, but recognizing symptoms early can be lifesaving.

Early Signs of Coronary Artery Disease (CAD)

CAD reduces blood flow to the heart. If severe, it can trigger a heart attack. Watch for:

- **Chest pain** (tightness, pressure or squeezing)
- **Pain in the jaw, neck, back, upper belly or arms**

- **Unusual fatigue or shortness of breath** (especially in women)
 - **Cold sweats, nausea or lightheadedness** (more common in women)
- Women often have "silent" heart disease, with symptoms mistaken for stress, flu or aging. While men typically feel chest pain during activity, women may experience discomfort at rest. Risk increases for women around **age 50** and for men in their **40s**.

Early Signs of Heart Rhythm Problems (Arrhythmia)

Arrhythmias cause the heart to beat too fast, too slow or irregularly. Symptoms include:

- **Fluttering or racing heartbeat**
- **Dizziness, lightheadedness or fainting**
- **Shortness of breath**
- **Chest pain** (not always the main symptom)

Early Signs of Heart Valve Problems

The heart's four valves regulate blood flow, but if they narrow, leak or don't close properly, symptoms can include:

- **Fatigue or low energy**
- **Shortness of breath**
- **Swollen ankles and feet**
- **Dizziness or fainting**
- **Chest pain** (less common as an early symptom)

Don't Ignore Symptoms

If you experience any of these signs, see your doctor immediately. A cardiologist may prescribe medications, recommend treatment, or refer you for specialized care.

To learn more or schedule an appointment, visit www.luminis.health/cardiology or call 443-481-6700.

Dr. Salvatore Lauria is a board-certified invasive cardiologist specializing in congestive heart failure and preventive medicine.

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SOL Shines At A Cappella Competition



SOL, a Severna Park High School a cappella group, won the Mid-Atlantic quarterfinals of the International Championship of High School A Cappella (ICHSA) competition at St. Charles High School in February. Brooklyn LaBrier and Syrenna McNutt won Best Student Choreography for their work on "Cry Me A River." They advanced to the semifinals to be held in Neptune Township, New Jersey, on March 29. Other standout performances included Teddy Swims' "Lose Control" (soloist Ben Cangelosi; choreographers Reagan Scott and Kayelin Bowerman), Reneé Rapp's "Snow Angel" (soloist Jenna Augustine; choreographers Bella Holmes and Alex Stavrevski) and Michael Bublé's "Cry Me A River" (soloist Drew Kessler; choreographers Brooklyn LaBrier and Syrenna McNutt).

Woods Church's "The Hunchback Of Notre Dame" Will Immerse Audiences In Sanctuary

By Jaina Peveto

Woods Memorial Presbyterian Church will bring church and community members together to perform "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" on the weekends of March 28-30 and April 4-6.

Woods' performance of "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" is based on the Disney classic, though it is darker and has more in common with Victor Hugo's original novel than the animated movie. The production is directed by Woods Church Music Director David Merrill, with Elysia Merrill and Matthew Walter as assistant directors.

The storyline follows Notre Dame's gentle bell ringer, Quasimodo, along his journey to find love and acceptance in a society that rejects him.

Due to the darker themes of the show, it is being advertised as PG-13, though younger children were welcomed into the cast with parental permission. The cast and crew have been working hard to make sure that they portray the show's themes with respect in a way that also represents the values of the church. When choosing a show, Merrill makes sure to tie it into the teachings of Woods Church.

"We've been talking a lot in the church world about accompanying others and finding your sanctuary," Merrill said. "And this show does a great job about outcasts and about ac-

companying outcasts and not judging people for who you think they are and accepting everyone."

Merrill is grateful to Woods Church for allowing the performances to take place in its space, and he thanked senior pastor J.C. Austin and associate pastor Nancy Lincoln-Reynolds.

"It speaks wonders of Woods Church to be able to have the courage to do this," Merrill said. "Not every church you see says, 'Yeah, let's open up our sanctuary to produce musical theater and to talk about themes that are hard to talk about.' They've been very supportive and very encouraging."

The 62-member cast is accompanied by a choir of approximately another 30 performers, plus a live orchestra, bringing the total number of performers to close to 100. Everyone who auditioned was welcomed into the production, and Merrill has made sure that every actor is able to be seen and participate in a way that contributes to the show.

Because of the number of performers, the choir will perform from above in the choir loft rather than onstage, which is one of the many ways that the show will utilize its unique performing space. The setting of a sanctuary is important to the show and its story, so Merrill is excited about performing "The Hunchback of Notre

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Mahjong Expert Aims To Popularize Tile Game

By Margaret Bates

"Got mahj?" might not be a ubiquitous phrase now as opposed to those '90s milk ads, but Danielle Dupcak aspires through her work teaching the game Mahjong locally to make it a catchphrase in Severna Park.

Dupcak is an avid board game player and Mahjong enthusiast, who learned the game playing with friends in Charleston, South Carolina. She decided to bring the pastime to Severna Park by starting first with a class in Chartwell, then branching out to classes at Park Books and the Severna Park Community Center. Since her first Mahjong clinic, she's expanded into providing private lessons as well as leading gaming sessions at community staples, like Sweet Bamboo Boba and Severna Park Taphouse.

When asked why she picked up Mahjong, Dupcak said that she'd gotten to a point in her life where her kids were older, and she was looking to socialize in a different way.

"I was over the typical scene of hanging out in kitchens with my friends," she said, adding, "I was look-

ing for more to do ... and I'd always been a board game girl growing up."

For the uninitiated, Mahjong is a tile-based game that became popular in China in the 1800s and was brought over to the U.S. by Joseph Babcock in the 1920s. By the 1930s, Jewish women in New York had formed a competitive league for it.

Unlike other board games, Mahjong can be complex. There are 14 tiles that create the correct combination for the winning hand as dictated each year by the competitive league's updated handbook. Between all the permutations and updates to winning combinations across 73 printed hands among the 14 tiles, that adds up to over 1,600 possible winning hands during a match. As a result, it takes multiple lessons to understand the nuances of Mahjong and become comfortable playing it without an instructor present.

To show an example, Dupcak pulled out one of the yearly winning hand combination cards, folding it out longways to demonstrate all the intricacies of a victorious hand.

"Usually, the hardest part for people

» Continued on page 43

Danielle Dupcak (center right) teaches the game of Mahjong around the Severna Park area through private lessons and group classes.





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Woods Church's "The Hunchback Of Notre Dame"

» Continued from page 38

Dame" in an actual sanctuary and using Woods Church's cross. The set designs, created by Peter Bishop and Mark Bohlman, also take the space into account.

"It's so important for you to be able to find your sanctuary," Merrill said. "And I think a lot of people were able to find that in this production."

Susan Bohlman, the costumer, has put together around 150 costumes. Because of the era in which the show is set, unique clothes were needed. Some costumes were bought or found at giveaways, but many were loaned to Woods by the Colonial Players in Annapolis.

Another unique aspect of Woods Church's production is the choreography. "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" is not traditionally a dance-heavy show, but choreographer Elysia Merrill has created her own choreography for some of the numbers.

After eight years of shows, the musicals at Woods Church have grown into huge productions. The cast and choir, the sanctuary, the costumes, and the choreography are only a few examples of the level of care that has gone into Woods Church's "The Hunchback of Notre Dame." The cast, crew, church and community have all come together to make the show what it is.

"We try to bring to life the messages we teach here at Woods," explained Merrill, "such as accom-



The cast and dance ensemble have been rehearsing the song "Hellfire," among others, for Woods' production of "The Hunchback of Notre Dame."

panying others; treating others with respect, kindness, love; guiding the outcasts; finding your sanctuary. Just being a family of faith and being kind and good. And that's why we do these shows."

To purchase tickets, go to www.woodstix.org.

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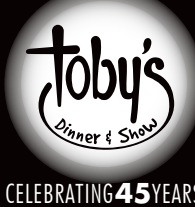
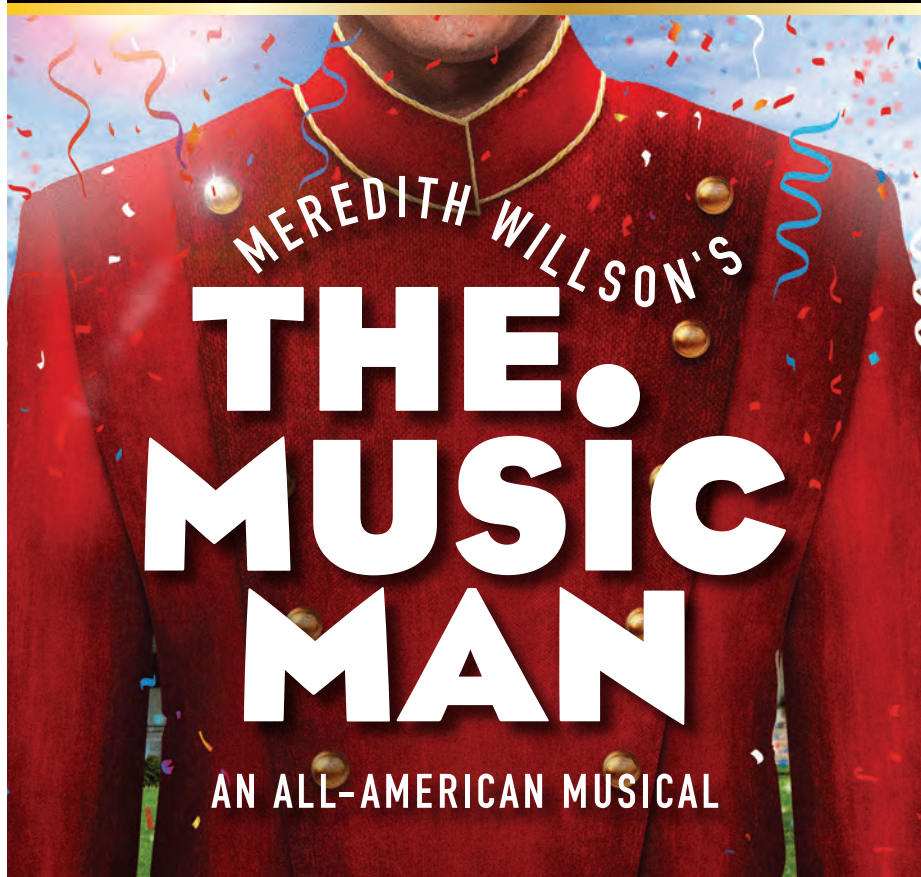


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Annapolis Film Festival Opens March 27

By Katie Melynn

Now in its 13th year, the Annapolis Film Festival will run March 27-30 with screenings at Maryland Hall and special events and panels hosted throughout Annapolis.

The festival is presented by the Brian and Patricia Giese Foundation and supported by the Annapolis Film Festival Endowment Fund.

The theme for the 2025 festival is “A New World,” highlighting the changing landscape not just in film but in the world. Selections focus on telling the stories of this new world through the camera lens.

“The theme reflects how things may not appear as they usually do — it’s a new world open for interpretation,” Annapolis Film Festival director and cofounder Patti White said in a statement.

Art Director Mallory Bielecki created this year’s poster. “The concept of ‘A New World’ presented many creative options, but we went with a retro ‘70s vibe reminiscent of the famous album ‘Endless Summer,’” Bielecki said.

As the showcase event of the filmmaking world in the Annapolis region, the festival brings talented cinema artists from all over the world to debut their work, work with other industry experts, and share their visions with audiences.

“The Ballad of Wallis Island” will open this year’s festival on March 27 at 7:15pm in Maryland Hall’s main theater. The film was produced by Rupert Majendie, and it stars Carey Mulligan, Tom Basden and Tim Key. James Griffiths served as



For its opening night, the Annapolis Film Festival is screening “The Ballad of Wallis Island,” starring three-time Academy Award nominee Carey Mulligan.



the film’s director.

In the film, eccentric lottery winner Charles dreams of getting his favorite musicians, McGwyer Mortimer, back together. The fantasy becomes real when the bandmates and former lovers agree to play a private show at his home on Wallis Island. Old tensions resurface as Charles tries desperately to salvage his dream gig.

In addition to more than 70 films, industry panels and “coffee talks with” events allow festival goers to meet the

directors, writers and other individuals involved in creating the work shown in a variety of ways. Parties and receptions create the community that is central to the vision of the Annapolis Film Festival.

“The Annapolis Film Festival isn’t merely about the films on the screen,” the festival website highlights. “It’s about the conversations in the lobby, the friendships forged in line, and the tears and laughter that resonate through the darkened theaters.”

Filmmakers were also invited to submit short film ideas to a public pitch project ahead of the festival and five finalists will be able to pitch their ideas during the event. The winner will receive filming and post-production packages to support bringing their concept to the screen.

Festival awards include a juried selection of films from experienced filmmakers as well as new and upcoming talent. The Annapolis Film Festival also highlights audience awards in various categories, including for both feature films and documentaries as well as shorts.

Awards are presented for the Best Feature Film, Best Feature Documentary, Best Short Film, and Best Short Documentary in both the juried competition and audience competition. Special awards for ensemble cast and screenwriting were also presented during the 2024 festival.

Individual tickets went on sale March 7, allowing access to highlight films as well as general admission and special events.

In addition to the generous Annapolis Film Festival endowment, the Annapolis Film Society supports the festival and the cinema-loving community around the area. Members enjoy early and special access to festival screenings and information.

This year, over 70 films are expected to be included in the festival and festival passes, including a special student rate, are currently on sale.

For more information about attending the Annapolis Film Festival, including tickets and showtimes, visit www.annapolisfilmfestival.com.



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Maryland Hall To Host Celebration Of Women In The Arts

By Alyson Kay

This Women's History Month, Maryland Hall is hosting a new annual event to honor the achievements and impact of women in the arts.

The event will be held on the evening of March 24 and is expected to be a dynamic celebration seeking to bring together local artists, art lovers and the community while connecting and honoring influential women across the industry. It will feature several

experiences that attendees can step into and out of throughout the evening.

It all started in early 2023, when Maryland Hall Executive Director Jackie Coleman traveled to New York City for the annual Association of Performing Arts Professionals (APAP) conference to meet performers and work with agents to bring new talent to Maryland Hall, especially performance types outside of what Maryland Hall normally hosts.

While Coleman and the rest of the Maryland Hall team were vetting potential opportunities after the conference, one speaker came to the forefront: Me Rah Koh, Sony's first female photography ambassador and host of Disney Junior's "Capture Your Story." She is nationally recognized as "The Photo Mom."

Her work has also been featured on "Oprah," "Live with Kelly and Ryan," and in The New York Times. She also works as a motivational speaker, telling her stories about overcoming homelessness and abuse and how art and photography helped her on her journey.

After deciding to hold a speaking event with Koh, the Maryland Hall team realized they had an opening in March.

"We thought, well, that's a perfect month because that's Women's History Month," Coleman said. "And wouldn't it be interesting to celebrate women in the arts by bringing Me Rah Koh here?"

Adonia Akins, Maryland Hall's director of marketing and communications, had an idea to expand the event to include sessions and performances for all kinds of art forms.

"From there, we just started spit-balling and thinking of all the things we could do in the same evening that would generate an interesting and robust networking opportunity and celebration for women in the arts," Coleman said.

Starting at 6:00pm in the community room on the second floor, the March celebration will include an hour-long music showcase by the Songbird Collective, a movement created by four musicians from the Eastern Shore and Baltimore area that provides resources and support for women and nonbinary people in the music community. The collective puts on performances across the

state, including an annual outdoor concert called the Songbird Festival, held each April or May at Maryland Hall.

At 6:30pm in the Martino Gallery, artist in residence and curator Annika Marthinus will give a talk about art as healing and self-expression, which will be represented in the work that is hanging on the wall. Also at 6:30pm, right across the hall in the Earl Gallery, a book table will feature author Barbara Bernstein, who will sign and talk about her new book, *Salsa Dancing & Rueda de Casino Guidebook for Beginner to Advanced Dancers: Steps, Styling, Technique, Latin Rhythms, Humor & Anecdotes*, released in November 2024. A DJ will also play music in the Earl Gallery.

Koh will give her keynote speech in the main hall at 7:30pm. All attendees will be invited to listen.

A cash bar, snacks and appetizers will also be available.

Maryland Hall also filmed four social media interviews from local artists, including Bernstein, Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum Executive Director Chanel Johnson, Ant Farm leads Darin Gilliam and Alison Harbaugh, and Maryland Federation of Art Executive Director Patrice Drago. One interview a week is being released during March, and all of the artists featured in the interviews will be available for people to chat with at the event.

Coleman also wished to emphasize that the celebration is not a women-only event. Men and non-binary people are welcome too.

"Even though the event is very much celebrating women, attending it is for anyone who is a supporter of women's achievements," Coleman said. "It doesn't matter how you identify."

Tickets are available on the Maryland Hall website at www.marylandhall.org/events.

Mahjong Expert In Severna Park

» Continued from page 38

is just translating the tiles to the card and realizing that the card has a lot of flexibility," she said.

"It really does take you probably three, I would say, three lessons to really feel comfortable doing it by yourself," Dupcak explained of how long it takes for students to grasp the tile system.

The repetition of game play in teaching sessions helps new players learn the rules. Dupcak said that it was rewarding as a teacher to see her students connecting with the strategy and becoming more confident with the tiles and their hands.

Dupcak's passion for the game as a player is evident too. She shared about feeling productive while involved in a game, echoing her earlier sentiments that she started teaching Mahjong classes as an alternative social activity for those who wanted more than dinners or going out to bars.

For her, it's the strategy forming in her mind when she's playing a hand that can be the most addictive. "My favorite part is once I know what I'm going for, because then you can kind of settle in a little bit," she said.

This spring, Dupcak is expanding her Mahjong coaching to include more private sessions and group lessons at Cottonwood, the new quilting store in Severna Park.

Advising players who are considering getting started, Dupcak recommended finding a coach at first, like herself via her website or Instagram (@gotmahj), or other teachers in the area.

She also urged that even if newbies feel overwhelmed at first, to still come to sessions prepared to focus because "it really is a fun game ... once you learn it. I think it's a little, it's hard at first, but once you learn it, it's really fun."

So, pick up those tiles, and "got mahj" anyone?

Opera AACC Presents "Dead Man Walking"

A teenage couple is brutally attacked, and the convicted assailant receives the death penalty. From there, the man turns to a nun for help. This plot will come to life in Opera AACC's spring production of "Dead Man Walking," based on the book by the same name by Helen Prejean. The opera, written by Jake Heggie and Terrence McNally, premiered in 2000 in San Francisco.

Opera AACC is comprised of over 40 credit students working collaboratively with community performers and musicians, rising young artists, local professional artists and members of the college's adjunct faculty.

Showtimes are March 13 and March 16 at 7:00pm and on March 15 at 2:00pm in the Robert E. Kauffman Theater in the Pascal Center for Performing Arts. Tickets are available via Eventbrite.

DEAD MAN WALKING
JAKE HEGGIE & TERENCE MCNALLY
BASED ON THE BOOK BY SISTER HELEN PREJEAN, CSJ

What's Going On With Tariffs?

Jason LaBarge
Financial Advisor
and President
LaBarge Financial



Whatever side of the political aisle you favor, you have to admit that President Donald Trump is making waves. Since taking office on January 20, news outlets large and small have struggled

Tariffs tend to lower demand for imported goods because fewer people are willing to pay more money to acquire them. In some cases, that can boost domestic businesses, but in others, it simply costs us more or causes sales to decline. For example, a tariff on computer parts from China may not shift business to United States-based manufacturers because, for many computer parts, there are no factories within our borders capable of producing them.

Why Tariffs Are So Popular

The reason Trump is using tariffs so heavily depends on the political leanings of the person you ask! Trump supporters are convinced he is using them as bargaining chips. By threatening countries with policies that reduce demand for their exports, he hopes they will be more willing to negotiate with Trump on his international agenda.

If that interpretation is correct, it's one of the biggest games of economic "chicken" we've ever seen. Trump would be betting on the idea that these countries have to capitulate to his demands because they're so reliant on income from exports to our country, and the early responses from Canada and Mexico have shown that to be true.

On the other hand, those who do not support Trump generally believe he is imposing these tariffs because he doesn't understand how tariffs work. They often cite as evidence his frequent comments that the countries subject to the tariffs will have to pay for them, when it's the importer, not the exporter, who pays the tariff.

» Continued on page 46

to keep up with the flurry of executive orders and policy changes flying from the Resolute Desk. One large category of these changes is tariffs.

In just the first week of February, the president imposed a 10% tariff on China, a 25% tariff on Mexico and Canada, paused the Mexico and Canada tariffs, and then imposed a 25% tariff on all imports of steel and aluminum from any foreign country. It is inarguable that Trump is in favor of tariffs. But, many people ask, why?

How Tariffs Work

A tariff is a tax imposed on imports, paid by the importer. If you buy a smartphone made in China, the business you buy it from will pay a 10% tariff on the price it pays for the phone.

In many cases, that business will pass the cost of that tax to you, meaning the price you pay for the phone will be higher than it otherwise would have been without a tariff. This doesn't mean a \$1,000 smartphone will now cost \$1,100 — the tariff is paid on the declared value of the imported product before profit and other add-on expenses are applied.

Landmark Roofing Among James Hardie Service Award Winners



For outstanding service and unwavering commitment to quality, Landmark Roofing, owned by Rob Calhan and Artie Hendricks, was named a 2024 James Hardie Service Excellence Award winner. Based in Severna Park, Landmark Roofing is one of eight winners in the general remodeling category. Nine other businesses made the list for home services.

Chamber Update

Liz League
CEO
GSPACC



directory at www.gspacc.com.

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

seasoned creative with a background in advertising, interior design, business and graphic design. Ada Portillo (the business) is a full-service, bilingual creative agency with services ranging from logo design to copywriting, videography, photography and more. With a team of talented creatives working under the same brief, more can be achieved — and achieved better. The agency was founded on faith-based values and foundations. All work is meant to be creative, inspiring, helpful, uplifting, life-changing and unique.

Always Ice Cream Company LLC

www.alwaysicecreamcompany.com

Always Ice Cream Company was founded by brothers and the owners of Annapolis Ice Cream Company, Mark and Andy Cohen. The business has been voted Best of Annapolis since 2004 and Best of Central Maryland 2022 and 2023. After spending years serving up joy on Annapolis' lively Main Street, the business has grown to seven locations, an ice cream truck, and now offers franchise opportunities.

The team meticulously crafts a harmonious blend of ultra-premium, homemade ice cream with more than 200 unique flavors. The ice cream is also served at Adam's Taphouse, Cafe Mezzanotte, Donnelly's Dockside and more. The Cohens plan to open their Severna Park location in May. Stay tuned for the grand opening and ribbon-cutting celebration!

Shifting Colors

www.shiftingcolors.com

Shifting Colors offers leadership development programs designed to equip individuals and organizations with the skills and confidence to lead effectively in today's dynamic world. Whether you are seeking to foster a culture of innovation or guide your team through change, Shifting Colors provides the tools and insights needed for long-term success. The business tailors its programs to meet your organization's specific needs and challenges using the latest in behavioral science for proven results.

Sarah's House

www.cc-md.org/programs/sarahs-house

Sarah's House is a supportive housing program offering 24/7 emergency shelter and project-based supportive housing with an array of other services for families experiencing homelessness in Anne Arundel County. Serving up to 125 people daily, half of whom are children, Sarah's House aspires to affect positive changes in families by providing a range of services and support. Sarah's House offers critical services that help clients gain employment, increase their earning capacity, find stable housing and achieve long-term sustainability. Sarah's House is one of four shelters in the United States supported by the U.S. Army.

Ada Portillo Agency

www.adaportillo.com

Ada Portillo (the person) is a brand specialist, lover of life, explorer, and

Did you know that there are more than 60,000 businesses in Anne Arundel County? That is why there are six chambers of commerce to support them, help them grow and collaborate, keep them informed of legislation, and more. We work with the other chambers to create meaningful "multi-chamber" events where members of all the chambers can come together.

In February, we held a multi-chamber networking breakfast at the **Bonefish Grill** in Glen Burnie. It was a sold-out event. The next multi-chamber event will be hosted by our chamber and held at the newly renovated **Severna Park Elks Lodge** on April 3.

Our Successful Women in Business "First Cup Club" coffee was held at The Sheridan at Severna Park's beautiful facility. We were treated to breakfast, tours and a fashion show by House of Design. More than 60 women joined us for this wonderful networking and "friend making" opportunity.

We were invited to participate in a special ribbon-cutting ceremony in February for the unveiling of a historic Rosenwald sign at the Wayman Good Hope African Methodist Episcopal Church in Severna Park. The Rosenwald School project built more than 5,000 schools, shops and teacher homes in the United States primarily for the education of African American children in the south during the early 20th century.

The project was the product of the partnership of Julius Rosenwald, a Jewish American clothier who became part-owner and president of Sears, Roebuck and Company and African American leader, educator and philanthropist Booker T. Washington, who was president of the Tuskegee Institute. This was followed by the viewing of a documentary known as "Jones," based on an African American community where the Rosenwald School was located and where Jones Elementary School currently resides.

We celebrated the grand opening of The Shawn Martin Group of REAL Broker LLC. The team opened its business in the Mercado building in Severna Park and looks forward to working with you on your real estate needs.

Our last ribbon-cutting of February was in celebration of the 40th anniversary of Chesapeake Telephone Systems
» Continued on page 46

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Peak Potential Takes Comprehensive Approach To Healing

By Lauren Cowin

The influence of a strong female mentor in college put Dr. Patricia “Patti” Beall on the path to a career in chiropractic care that ultimately led to her owning Peak Potential Chiropractic and Physical Therapy in Severna Park.

Following her time at New York Chiropractic College, Beall decided to chart a new course from her home in upstate New York and headed south to the Washington, D.C. area. She landed at a job in Annapolis.

Beall was working predominantly with athletes when a patient and friend insisted there was a triathlete she needed to meet — another serendipitous nudge, as this setup led to a marriage and a move to Severna Park, her husband’s hometown.

“When we met, I told him I would never be a business owner,” Beall joked. “And here we are.”

Peak Potential Chiropractic and Physical Therapy launched with Beall at the helm in



Photo by Lauren Cowin

Dr. Patti Beall and the team at Peak Potential Chiropractic and Physical Therapy aim to help patients feel their best.


July 2024. Her ownership of the practice followed years of working alongside former owner Dr. Ross Kennard, who continues to see patients at Peak Potential.

The practice’s new name signifies Beall’s commitment to her clients’ well-being and helping them feel their best in

their body.

“If your pelvis is out of alignment, if you’re having headaches, if you’re having any sort of aches and pains, you should be in here,” Beall said, explaining that many people live with pain that doesn’t have to be shrugged off as normal.

Peak Potential tailors



treatments to meet a patient’s individual needs, with the goal of getting patients to a maintenance plan.

Beall’s approach is comprehensive treatment of the whole musculoskeletal system: joint adjustments combined with muscle work, followed with prescribed physical therapy exercises to promote stability.

“Our goal is to get you through to no pain, and then you’re able to understand when you need to come back here,” Beall said.

With Beall being a mother of two young children, her own pregnancies and childbirth experiences reignited her passion for helping women to achieve greater comfort while pregnant and postpartum.

“Birth is traumatic,” Beall

said. “Musculoskeletal health is important postpartum.”

Beall recognizes that between work and family obligations, it’s not always easy to squeeze in another appointment for yourself. In an effort to be more accessible to the community, Beall opens early twice a week and stays late twice a week. She also emphasized that mothers seeking support postpartum are welcome to bring their babies to their appointments.

“If somebody’s hurting, we’re doing what we can to get them in,” she said.

Though owning a business wasn’t part of her original plan, Beall looks forward to being part of the supportive network of local businesses in Severna Park and ensuring that Peak Potential becomes ingrained in the community.

Peak Potential Chiropractic and Physical Therapy is located at 650 Ritchie Highway, Suite 106, in Severna Park. For more information, call 410-421-5544 or visit www.peakpotentialchiropt.com.



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What's Going On With Tariffs?

» Continued from page 44

Regardless of the real reasoning behind the president's tariff kick, it's indisputable that, should tariffs be deployed on a significant scale, it's likely to drive up prices for much of what we buy, from groceries to electronics and even to cars.

It's therefore important to review your spending plan and make sure there's room in it to absorb the higher cost of living that could be on the horizon. Determine your budget and stick to it: If prices rise, find budget items you can cut, and be willing to make hard choices if necessary to keep your finances healthy. If prices don't increase, then you have found additional money to save, and that is always a great thing.

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Chamber Update

» Continued from page 44

in Millersville. Founder and owner Jeff Nolte has been connecting businesses and the public sector across the Mid-Atlantic for four incredible decades. Jeff's journey started in 1985, and today he is proud to offer comprehensive solutions that drive organizational success — from VoIP systems and cloud communications to secure infrastructure and 24/7 technical support.

Our Business Bites lunch was held at **The Social** in Severna Park, with the topic "Management Mastermind." Our presenter was Susan Mahaffee, owner of **People Rise LLC**. It was a highly informative and interactive meeting focusing on human resource issues.

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RIBBON CUTTINGS



The Shawn Martin Group Of REAL Broker LLC Opens For Business

In mid-February, The Shawn Martin Group of REAL Broker LLC celebrated the grand opening of a new Severna Park office with an open house and a ribbon-cutting sponsored by the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce. With decades of combined experience in the field, The Shawn Martin Group is a team of real estate professionals ready to help clients buy or sell homes in Maryland. The office is located at 504 Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard, Suite 1, in Severna Park. Learn more at www.mymarylandrealestate.com.



New Clothing Store Hosts Grand Opening

Located at 537 Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard, Unit G, Wish List Boutique marked its official opening in Severna Park with a chamber-hosted ribbon-cutting ceremony at the beginning of March. Owned by Lisa Dickstein, the new clothing boutique offers an array of both stylish and comfortable women's apparel, ranging from oversized sweaters to flowy dresses and tailored blazers. Discover the store's complete lineup of garments and accessories at wishlistboutiquemd.square.site.



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