



Nonprofit Opens
Inclusive Nightclub
In Millersville

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Falcons
Finding
Their Groove

» Page 37

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MAY 2025

Giving Back Without Reserve

*Volunteer Officers Aid Police In
Keeping Communities Safe*



(L-R) Reserve
officers Katie
Dold, Allen
Keller and Tom
Denn all joined
the program
within the last
two years.

By Zach Sparks

zach@severnaparkvoice.com

“Do a good turn daily.”

That Boy Scouts slogan has become a guiding principle for Arnold resident Tom Denn, who volunteers with the Anne Arundel County reserve officer program.

A retired Navy reservist, avionics technician and former scoutmaster for Troop 382 out of Asbury United Methodist Church, Denn was looking for another way to serve the community a few years ago. He learned about the reserve officer program from a friend — or a “blue shirt” as he calls career police officers — who was on the command staff at the Anne Arundel County Police Department’s Eastern District on Pasadena Road.

By December 2023, Denn was on the street in his tan reserve officer uniform, directing traffic.

“What surprised me is that the blue shirts, they really like us, really appreciate us, really take care of us,” said Denn, who works as a computer programmer by day and volunteers as a reserve officer at night. “We’re not rent-a-cops.”

Each of Anne Arundel County’s four police districts has a reserve officer program. Volunteers direct traffic, respond to callouts for weather and other emergencies, and support school crossing guard programs. They also ensure pedestrian safety at about 130 community events annually including the Blue Angels flyover, the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce tree lighting, and the Earleigh Heights Volunteer Fire Company’s summer carnival.

According to Reserve Major Alex Mahaffey, Anne Arundel County

reserve officers donated 14,977 hours of their time to the police department and their communities in Fiscal Year 2024. During the 2023-2024 school year, reserve officers covered 303 school crossings in Anne Arundel County.

The qualifications are simple: 21 years of age, U.S. citizenship, high school diploma and a valid driver’s license. To get started, interested civilians need to complete an application, pass a background check and participate in an in-person meeting.

Classroom training lasts seven to 10

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By The Numbers: Maryland’s 2025 Legislative Session

After 90 days of debate, the Maryland General Assembly adjourned in April, passing nearly 900 bills. Budgetary, tax and revenue bills are scheduled to take effect on July 1 while other laws go live on October 1.

The following topics dominated the discussion.

BUDGET, TAXES AND FEES

\$3.3 billion

Lawmakers started the session with this budget deficit. They attributed much of the gap to Medicaid costs and spending on education through the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future plan.

While many issues made headlines, the budget became the most complex and contentious one. As Democrats and Republicans squabbled over actions to balance the budget, finger-pointing reached the highest levels of state government.

Former Maryland Governor Larry Hogan noted that he left office with the state’s rainy day fund at \$3 billion and a structural surplus of \$2.5 billion. Current Maryland

» Continued on page 9

BEST OF SEVERNA PARK WINNERS RECEIVE AWARDS



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THE SEVERN**

Each year, the Severna Park Voice asks readers to select the Best Of Severna Park by voting for the top businesses and services, most beloved school and nonprofit, and all of the other entities that make the community a special place. The winners were announced in our April edition, and the Voice staff stopped by to congratulate many of them last month. See more photos of the winners on pages 12-21.

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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. **Affordable Outdoor Kitchens**
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Amanda Shields Helps Katherine's Light Shine On

By Meredith Winter

Amanda Shields met one of her best friends, Katherine Mueller, when they both attended Severna Park High School in the early 2000s. By senior year, they'd grown close, and they lived in adjacent buildings and hung out all the time while studying at Towson University.

When they got snowed in at college, they passed the time together. Along with Mueller's then-boyfriend, Matt, who would become her husband, the two girls would travel to the Eastern Shore every year for Punkin Chunkin, a bygone Delmarva tradition of firing pumpkins through cannons and catapults.

Mueller was diagnosed with a neuroendocrine tumor in 2018. She fought cancer valiantly, fundraising for the Neuroendocrine Tumor Research Foundation even as she underwent chemotherapy, radiation, a liver transplant and other treatments. At the age of 31, Mueller passed from the rare form of cancer in December 2021, two days after Christmas.

In 2023, her mother and stepfather, Robin and Larry Sells, co-founded a nonprofit in her memory: Katherine's Light Foundation (KLF). The foundation honors Mueller's legacy by generating funds for cancer research and for organizations that deal with education, awareness, treatments, and support that will lead to potential cures and assistance for individuals facing cancer diagnoses.

Shields joined the Sells' efforts immediately and continues to serve on KLF's all-volunteer board of directors today.

Noting that Mueller was a great



Photo by Meredith Winter

Amanda Shields is a volunteer board member of the Katherine's Light Foundation and gives generously of her time and talents to honor the memory of her longtime friend, Katherine Mueller.

person and gone much too soon, Shields shared that her close friendship with Mueller compelled her to join the cause of KLF.

"She was so involved with fundraising, and I just thought that was amazing, so I kind of wanted to follow in her footsteps," Shields said of her friend. "I just want to make a difference. I love contributing to something bigger than myself. I do have a lot of empathy and compassion, and seeing others in need — I want to be able to support them and help as many people as I can."

In her volunteerism with KLF, Shields manages the nonprofit's social

media posts — including promoting an annual music festival — and helps with event planning and promotion.

With the Katherine Mueller All-Day Music Festival coming up in June, Shields has been busy gathering and assembling raffle items and baskets, preparing for the silent and live auctions, designing T-shirts for the KLF event volunteers, and more.

"Amanda does a fantastic job of handling all of our social media and creative needs for our foundation, as well as wearing many hats helping with our fundraisers," Larry said.

Shields also recently created an in-depth 2024 impact report for KLF, detailing the nonprofit's gifts of over \$100,000 to the Neuroendocrine Tumor Research Foundation, Baltimore Washington Medical Center Foundation, Wellness House of Annapolis, Anne Arundel Community College Foundation, Luminis Health — Anne Arundel Medical Center Foundation, Mercy Medical Center, and SPAN (Serving People Across Neighborhoods).

Shields grew up in Severna Park and remains a resident today. She worked in human resources for 10 years and is mom to a 2-year-old dog, Nala. She enjoys traveling and spending time with her family members who live across Maryland and Delaware. And, Shields gives generously of her time and talents to support KLF, in as many ways as she can.

"As one of Katherine's closest friends, Amanda is committed to honoring Katherine's memory and is invaluable to our foundation with her skills, grace and youthful energy," Robin shared.

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.

Katherine Mueller All-Day Music Festival

Saturday, June 14, noon-8:00pm at Severna Park Taphouse

At this annual music festival and fundraiser, the Katherine's Light Foundation will honor the memory of Katherine Mueller with a full day of fun, music, raffles, and live and silent auctions — all to raise funds to further the mission of KLF. Funds raised will support organizations that promote education, awareness, research, support and wellness for cancer patients. Musicians scheduled to play at the event include The Crayfish, Lost & Found Trio Band, Miggs Rangel, DJ Brian Austin, George Evans, Honey Sol, and others. For more information, or to purchase tickets or sponsorships, go to www.katherineslight.org.

Shop Local Fun Festival Will Take Over Park Plaza May 3

Celebrate spring and support local businesses at the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce's annual Shop Local Fun Festival, coming up on Saturday, May 3. Held each year at the Park Plaza shopping center in the heart of Severna Park, this free event showcases why local businesses and nonprofits are

essential parts of the community.

Attendees can look forward to a fun day of live music, dancing, food, entertainment, and of course, shopping. New to Park Plaza, Nothing Bundt Cakes will be on hand with its unique desserts, Bruster's Real Ice Cream will bring its truck, and Ledo Pizza will return to the plaza for the day to offer food as well.

Shoppers can browse specialty items including jewelry, soaps, candles, art and more. Festivalgoers can also meet adoptable pets at the SPCA of Anne Arundel County's mobile pet truck, and kids can check out a fire truck onsite.

The Spring Shop Local Fun Festival will run from 11:00am-3:00pm. Learn more at web.gspacc.com/events.



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My specialty is Severna Park. Your advantage is my experience.

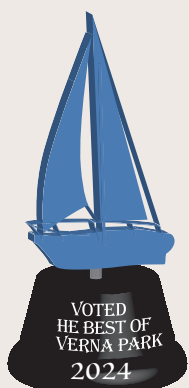
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Meet The Kids At Kinder Farm Park

April showers bring May flowers, but spring is also known to bring another form of new birth — baby animals. This month, the Friends of Kinder Farm Park, the park's livestock education program and the Kinder 4H program are collaborating to host an event for community members to meet many of the recently born baby animals at Kinder Farm Park.

Meet the Kids is an annual event that will take place this year on May 31 from 10:00am to 2:00pm in and around the park's farm complex.

Attendees can look forward to meeting lots of cute kids, including little lambs, goats, piglets and quail. In the span of two weeks in March, eight lambs were born to moms Blossom, Sweater, Muffin, Rain and Fiona, and another sheep, Dinky, is due to give birth later in May. The farm staff expects goat moms Dolly, Malibu, Astrid and Bacardi to give birth in May and June. Chester White swine Stella gave birth to piglets in January, and three of them remain on the farm. Beginning in early May, 25 baby quail will call Kinder Farm Park their home as well.

With a focus on animal education, Meet the Kids will include fun activities mixed in, along with a beekeeper and animal-related vendors offering items such as sheep milk soap and lip balm, and sheep wool products. Food vendors are also expected at the event.

Meet the Kids is free and open to the public, and no registration is required. Gate fees at Kinder Farm Park will apply. For more information, look for updates at www.kinderfarmpark.org.

Annual B&A Trail Planet Walk Slated For May 10

Passing through a 4.7-mile stretch of the B&A Trail between Glen Burnie and Severna Park, bikers, runners and walkers may notice monuments to the sun and each of the planets in our solar system, from Mercury to Pluto. These monuments are erected in proportional distance from the sun, with each mile of the "Planet Walk" that they form representing a distance of 781 million miles in space.

Each year, the Friends of Anne Arundel County Trails hosts a special educational event highlighting the planets at their respective stations; this year's Planet Walk is scheduled for May 10 and will run from 10:00am to 2:30pm.

Planetary scientists from NASA Goddard, area colleges and astronomy clubs will be on hand at all of the planet stations to provide information

and answer astronomical questions.

Following the Planet Walk, an evening program will be held at Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) at 7:00pm. There, Dr. Erwan Mazarico of

NASA will speak on "Europa Clipper: NASA's Mission to Jupiter's moon Europa." At

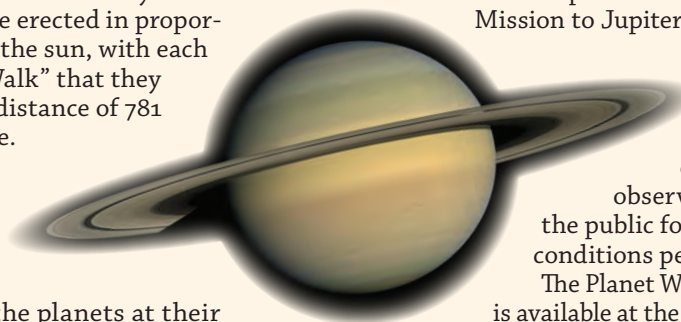
the conclusion of the free lecture, which will take place in the student union

dining hall, the AACC

observatory will be open to the public for stargazing, weather conditions permitting.

The Planet Walk is free, and parking is available at the lot beside the B&A Trail south of Aquahart Road. The walk continues south along the trail from Aquahart Road to Earleigh Heights Road in Severna Park.

Learn more about the Friends of Anne Arundel County Trails and the group's events on Facebook at www.facebook.com/friendsofannearundelcountytails.



Celebrate Flag Day

*Freestate Happy Wanderers Walking
In Kinder Farm Park June 14*

The Freestate Happy Wanderers, a walking/volksmarch club, is planning a volksmarch on June 14 at Kinder Farm Park. Volksmarch is non-competitive walking, and this event will have 5- and 10-kilometer routes. The trails are on natural surfaces, meadows, fields and sidewalks of surrounding residential areas.

Participants should expect to start between

9:00am-noon and finish by 3:00pm. There is plenty to see around Kinder Farm Park. The visitors center has displays of items from early farm life in Anne Arundel County. Visitors can check out the tobacco barn museum, antique tractors and a working sawmill. The 4-H livestock club is responsible for the farm animals. Free entrance to the park will be offered the day of the event. The walk fee is \$4, but kids walk for free.

The meetup spot is the River Birch Pavilion at Kinder Farm Park, located at 1001 Kinder Farm Park Road in Millersville. For more information, visit sites.google.com/svsvc.org/fhw/home or email lindahassell38@yahoo.com.

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OBI Launches Inclusive Nightclub, THE FUSE, For All To Enjoy

By Meredith Winter

A DJ mixing beats, packed dance floors, live bands, glow sticks, food and drink — THE FUSE may sound like a typical nightclub, but the new entertainment hub in Millersville is something distinctively special.

THE FUSE is an inclusive nightclub experience hosted on the first Saturday of each month by OBI, or Opportunity Builders Inc., where individuals with disabilities and those without can come together for a great time in a safe and thoughtfully curated environment.

OBI's mission is "to support youth and adults with disabilities to experience full inclusion in their communities as they learn, work and pursue their paths to personal success." The Millersville-based nonprofit carries out this mission by engaging individuals in new opportunities spanning sailing for the first time, to learning how to care for themselves, to obtaining employment — all toward the common goal of increased independence.

Marsha Legg, CEO of OBI, explained that THE FUSE was born out of a vision she had long held, stemming from her previous work with The League for People with Disabilities in Baltimore. A decade ago, The League launched a nightclub solely for people with disabilities, recognizing that those individuals did not have a lot of options when it came to nightlife entertainment. The program, Legg said, is "wildly successful to this day."

She shared of THE FUSE, "My vision involved building something that was for everyone and would be inclusive of those without disabilities and attractive to those without disabilities while also accommodating those who do have disabilities, but providing that real integration — which we call a fusion — of people, and that's where our name came from as THE FUSE."



On April 5, 350 individuals fused together to have a great time at the first monthly nightclub gathering. The club is for anyone age 21 and over, as it offers a bar, and patrons can look forward to enjoying fare from two food trucks every month. The OBI venue is wheelchair accessible, and the events are earlier in the evening, running from 6:00pm-10:00pm.

Dozens of volunteers, specially trained staff, a security team, a registered nurse and a behavior specialist made the night possible. Legg said the latter two professionals will be on hand monthly at THE FUSE to make the event accessible and safe for people with disabilities or health conditions

that might otherwise be a barrier for them to go to crowded places.

Fortunately, there wasn't a great demand for either on the first night.

"Our nurse had very little work to do opening night — we had two people that she tended to," Legg recalled of the April event. "They both — and I quote — 'danced too hard.'"

The behavior specialist was present for anyone who might need help with navigating the crowd or with self-regulating behaviors. The biggest job they had opening night was helping a parent with a young man who did not want to leave, Legg said, highlighting the event's popularity.

For attendees who need a break from

Top: Attendees danced to music performed by a live band at opening night of THE FUSE, a new inclusive nightclub experience hosted by Millersville-based nonprofit OBI.

Bottom: The sensory room at THE FUSE features bubble tubes and gives attendees a place to take a break if needed.

the crowd or loud music, THE FUSE offers a sensory lounge where they can enjoy a more relaxed vibe in an interactive space that includes bubble tubes, LED lights, an aromatherapy machine and more.

"Opening night was received better than I could have imagined in my wildest dreams," Legg said, sharing that many described the night as "electric" and that there was a palpable sense of unity.

Attendees shared in Google reviews and Facebook comments how much they enjoyed THE FUSE, with one individual stating that the night "showcased how much we are alike and just wanna have a good time with our friends, while meeting new people ... THE FUSE not only (offered) that experience but a great deal more."

The April event sold out, and tickets are selling quickly for THE FUSE in May. They are \$10 in advance, or \$15 at the door, and checking availability in advance is strongly encouraged.

The performance lineup for May through July is set, with Pasadena-based father-son trio band Mach 3 and DJ Dru Dearney playing May 3; local band Oracle and DJ DiGilio slated for June 7; and another local band, Side Hustle, and DJ Mad Max set to bring the vibes on July 5.

To learn more about Millersville's newest nightclub, discover opportunities to volunteer at THE FUSE, or purchase tickets for an upcoming event, go to www.obiworke.org/the-fuse.

Giving Back: Reserve Officers Aid Police

» Continued from page 1

hours. On-the-job training takes roughly 40 hours and includes shadowing another reserve officer.

"Normally, if someone wants to become a reserve officer, it is a two- or three-month process," said Reserve Lieutenant Gordon Hankey. "If you want to go faster, we'll go as fast as you want to go. Slower is OK too."

Hankey joined the reserve officer program about five years ago after a career in the oil industry. The Severna Park resident now owns a consulting business.

Severna Park resident Allen Keller discovered the reserve officer program following a Navy career that ended in June 2019 when he retired with the rank of master chief petty officer.

"After being in the military, with the camaraderie and structure that the military offered, this seemed to be a good opportunity," Keller said.

By volunteering as a reserve officer, he can free up police personnel to handle urgent matters.

"The more reserve officers they have, the easier it is; we can give them time out of the heat," Keller said. "... It's an arduous duty, but I like going on what we call patrol. If there's a traffic accident, the (police) officers are able to help people at the scene while reserve officers help with the flow of traffic."

Katie Dold learned about the program while attending a Community Police Academy meeting in fall 2022.

"I have family in New York who are (with the New York Police Department), so it's always been close to my heart when things happen with police officers," Dold said.

She began her on-the-job training in December 2023. She works full-time as a paralegal, but the flexibility of the reserve officer program allowed her to finish training in six months.

During training, Dold stopped traffic and placed cones on a road. She shadowed Hankey as he brought mail to police headquarters. Her favorite part was observing 911 operators and dispatchers.

"You get to see the whole inner workings of the department, which is fascinating," said Dold, who lives in Arnold.

A mother of three children, Dold had volunteered at church and with her kids' school activities.

"The officers and the department were very encouraging, so I signed up," Dold said. "It was very out of the box for me, but my children are all adults and I volunteer at church. I never had something like this where I dug my heels in."

Eastern District currently has 11 reserve police officers. Volunteers from the four Anne Arundel County police districts — Northern, Southern, Eastern and Western — can support the other regions.

For Denn, volunteering as a reserve officer is an adrenaline rush.

"I like helping people," Denn said. "We don't get dispatched; we're not emergency (personnel). But I can be driving down Route 648 and find a car broken down in the roadway and help that person."

Denn, Keller and Dold are all somewhat new to the program, but they have found it to be a valuable experience so far.

"For veterans, being a reserve officer is great because of how it aligns with culture and environment," Keller said. "It gives them a strong sense of identity."

Reserve officers are asked to volunteer at least 16 hours per month, a commitment that includes two events. The program is flexible, though.

Anne Arundel County provides all the gear: uniforms, boots, flashlights, high-visible clothing or orange vests, ball caps and whistles. Each district has five reserve vehicles and can borrow from other districts.

"If you're looking for a purpose, if you like your police department, if you would like to be a part of something bigger than yourself, it's a great opportunity, and you get to work in interesting environments," Hankey said.

Volunteer applications are available at www.aacounty.org/police-department/volunteer-opportunities/reserve-officer. For more information on becoming a reserve officer with the Anne Arundel County Police Department, email joinaareserveofficers@aacounty.org.



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New Memorial To Be Unveiled During Day Of Remembrance

This Memorial Day, on May 26 at 10:00am, the Severna Park Heroes of the Vietnam War Memorial LLC will pay tribute to five U.S. Army soldiers from Severna Park who were killed in action during the Vietnam War. During a ceremony at Hatton-Regester Green, next to the B&A Trail, the group will commemorate a memorial to the men: Major Ronald Britz, First Lieutenant Charles “Art” Bedsole, Chief Warrant Officer Edward “Louie” Mortimer Jr., and two men with the specialist fourth class rank, Danny Quait

and Richard Nitsche Jr. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend. Parking for the event is available at Severn School near the gymnasium and at Woods Memorial Presbyterian Church. Two tents will be onsite to shield attendees in the event of inclement weather. The memorial is also made possible by the Anne Arundel County Department of Parks and Recreation, along with the Friends of Anne Arundel County Trails. Several veterans and elected officials are expected to attend the ceremony and share remarks.

By The Numbers: Maryland’s 2025 Legislative Session

» Continued from page 1 Governor Wes Moore argued that COVID money was a one-time gift and not a structural surplus.

\$1.6 billion

This is the projected amount in new taxes and fees the legislature adopted. Republicans in the House and Senate voted against both the budget and the tax package in the Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act. They said the budget is “balanced” on the backs of middle-class families. Some Democrats defended the fees as a necessary means for Maryland to keep offering high-level services and programs.

Single tax filers with incomes over \$500,001 and joint filers with incomes over \$600,000 will be part of new tax brackets. The following fees are just some of the ones passed to balance the budget:

- Sports wagering tax (15% increased to 20%)
- Cannabis tax (9% increased to 12%)
- Vending machine snack tax (6% sales tax applied)
- Sales tax on data and IT services (3%)
- A \$5 fee for every tire purchased

JOBS AND EMPLOYMENT

Over 28,000

The number of federal workers expected to be affected by President Donald Trump’s workforce cuts, according to Maryland’s revenues board. State legislators passed the Protect Our Federal Workers Act to aid eligible employees affected by mass layoffs and firings, giving them access to interest-free loans and unemployment assistance.

HEALTH CARE

\$25 million

A new grant program will provide the Maryland Department of Health with access to approximately \$25 million for reimbursing health care providers for abortion costs.

To Be Determined

Maryland’s Prescription Drug Affordability Board can now set upper price limits for prescription drugs.

While the board could already explore options for people on the state’s health care plan, board members can now look to reduce costs for individuals on private insurance plans.

ENERGY

Three

A trio of new bills are designed to lower electricity and gas bills. Advocates said the Next Generation Energy Act will spur energy development for nuclear and gas while relying less on grids from neighboring states. They believe the Renewable Energy Certainty Act will create standards for solar energy and the Energy Resource Adequacy and Planning Act will form an office to manage energy strategies and models.

Republicans representing Severna Park and Arnold believe the bills impose costly labor and construction mandates while doing nothing to provide long-term relief to ratepayers.

CRIME

20 Years

With the Second Look Act, some Marylanders who have served 20 years in prison will be able to go before a judge to petition for an appeal of their sentence under the Juvenile Restoration Act. The legislation was crafted to “open pathways to rehabilitation for Marylanders — while requiring judges to enforce conditions necessary to promote victim safety and peace of mind,” according to Governor Wes Moore’s administration.

REPARATIONS

Three Years

Senate Bill 587 will establish a state commission to recommend potential reparations for individuals whose ancestors were enslaved in Maryland or who were subjected to inequitable government policies. The study is expected to take three years.

To learn more about the 2025 session directly from Severna Park and Arnold representatives, flip to page 23.

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MPT Premieres "Maryland By Air" Documentary

Statewide Flyover Presents Aerial Views Of Landmarks, Shorelines, Mountains And Countryside

Maryland Public Television (MPT) will premiere its documentary "Maryland by Air" on May 1 at 8:00pm on MPT-HD and online at mpt.org/livestream.

Captured from a helicopter, drones and the cockpit of a 1940s-era biplane, the film's aerial footage highlights the natural wonders of the Free State, from its picturesque western hills and bustling metropolitan areas to its scenic shorelines and pastoral farmlands. The one-hour film includes an inspiring original musical score and is narrated by former Baltimore Orioles Hall of Fame infielder Cal Ripken Jr.

The four seasons are represented along with striking visits to landmarks such as the Antietam National Battlefield, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge, Fort McHenry and the Maryland State House. Viewers can take in a bird's-eye view of historic communities in Annapolis, Baltimore, Cumberland, Southern Maryland and the Eastern Shore, plus footage of Ocean City, Deep Creek Lake and the

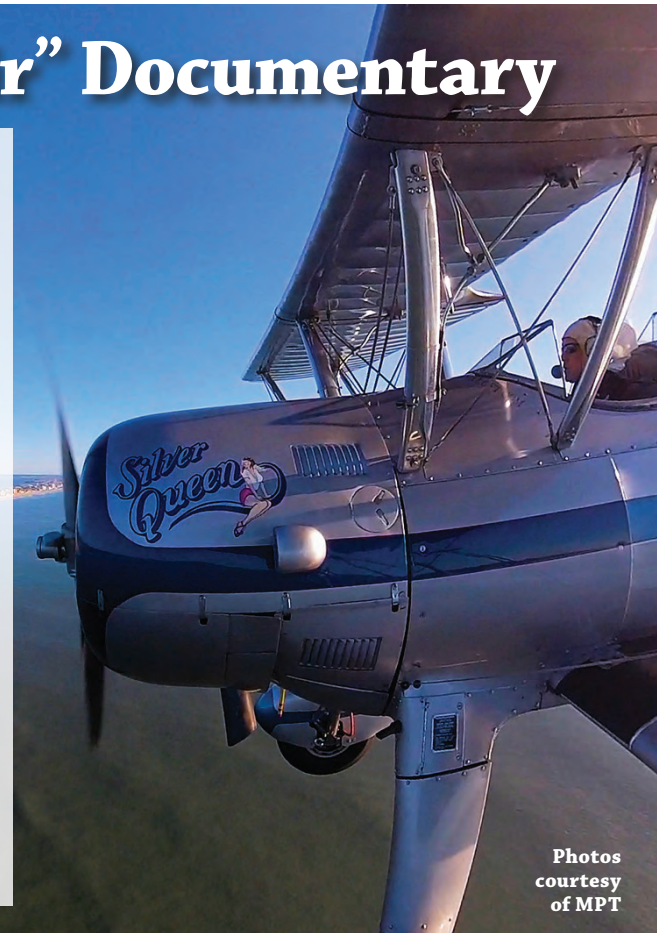
wild ponies of Assateague Island.

Following its May 1 premiere, "Maryland by Air" will have encore broadcasts on MPT-HD on May 3 at 3:30pm and May 4 at 6:30pm. MPT members with access to MPT Passport will also be able to stream the full program anytime following the May broadcast premiere.

By special arrangement, a 45-minute version of the film will be presented at the Maryland Science Center in Baltimore as an IMAX "resident film" over the next decade.

"Maryland by Air" complements earlier award-winning MPT aerial productions "Chesapeake Bay by Air" and "Potomac by Air: Our Nation's River." The film is produced by John Paulson Productions with MPT's Steven Schupak, executive vice president and station manager, and Eric Neumann, managing director of on-air fundraising and development productions, as executive producers.

The film is made possible in part by the MPT Foundation New Initiatives Fund established by Irene and Edward H. Kaplan, University of Maryland Global Campus, the Eric Stewart Group, and Frank Islam and Debbie Driesman.



Photos courtesy of MPT

The B&O Railroad Museum and Baltimore skyline



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Director of
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Over the course of celebrating SPAN's 35th anniversary, I have enjoyed looking at old pictures and newspaper articles and talking with former volunteers. It is fun to think of the group of six churches that started SPAN years ago. After spending a year and a half researching best practices, their members opened SPAN's doors with training for 40 volunteers. If they could only know then that what they started has already impacted more than 100,000 people. Reflecting on this is a nice reminder that we can't always anticipate the ripple effect of

our actions. Just do it! Many students help SPAN, often collecting food or volunteering at one of our community events. This past year, we have had several students help with multiple events throughout the year — the S(o)uper Bowl food drive, the Independence Day parade and SPAN's Turkey Trot. Then, those same students planned and organized a project themselves. Two friends put together birthday bags for our clients, and one did a soap drive. In April, SPAN received a donation of over 300 pounds of pancake mixes from a student at Severna Park High School. Izzy Maly did a fundraiser for SPAN through the Severna Park High School Key Club and then worked with a local company to create a pancake mix that only requires water. It is wonderful seeing kids have fun helping. We also had many students help with SPAN's Birthday Fest. It was wonderful

to witness multiple community groups and local churches coming together in a shared mission of service, fellowship and support for a common cause. The rain held off for a great afternoon of food, games and music from Blame Lee and Controlled Chaos. The games were run by our member churches. Also, thank you to Archbishop Spalding, Eco Adventures, the fire department, and Troop 993, Troop 804 and Pack 918 for their part in the event. The spirit of unity and compassion is at the heart of what SPAN stands for, and it was wonderful to see it brought to life in the form of SPAN's Birthday Fest! When we set out to mark this milestone, we set the stretch goal of raising \$35,000. Thanks to this generous community, we made it. Thank you to our sponsors: LaBarge Financial, Edward Jones: Alexis Lecouras, Blue Cedar Consulting, Severna Park Automotive, St. Martin's-

in-the-Field Episcopal Church, Bay Area Community Church, Kalas Funeral Home, Pasadena Animal Hospital and many families. Almost half of the funds raised were from families, which is representative of the amount of support SPAN receives from individuals. The funds raised will go a long way to helping around 150 additional households dealing with some of life's challenges, such as loss of a job, divorce, illness or death in the family. It was wonderful to celebrate SPAN's 35 years with many from our member churches, current and former volunteers and other members of the community. It reminded us how SPAN continues to serve people across neighborhoods and how deeply our community is connected through that service. SPAN (Serving People Across Neighborhoods) is a nonprofit food pantry and emergency services provider. For more information, call 410-647-0889, email spanhelps@yahoo.com or go to www.spanhelps.org.

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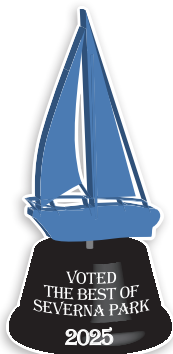
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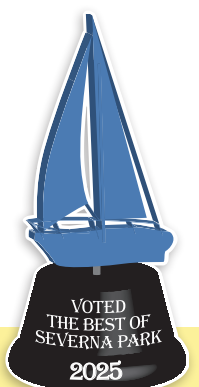
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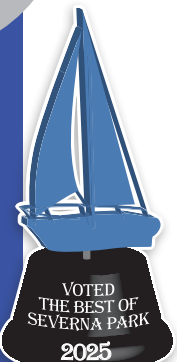
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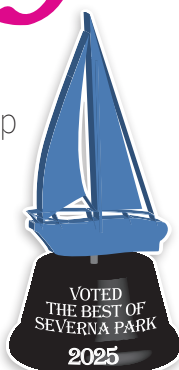
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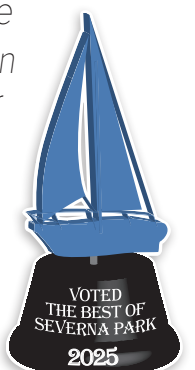
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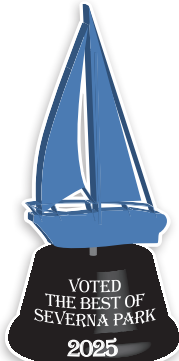


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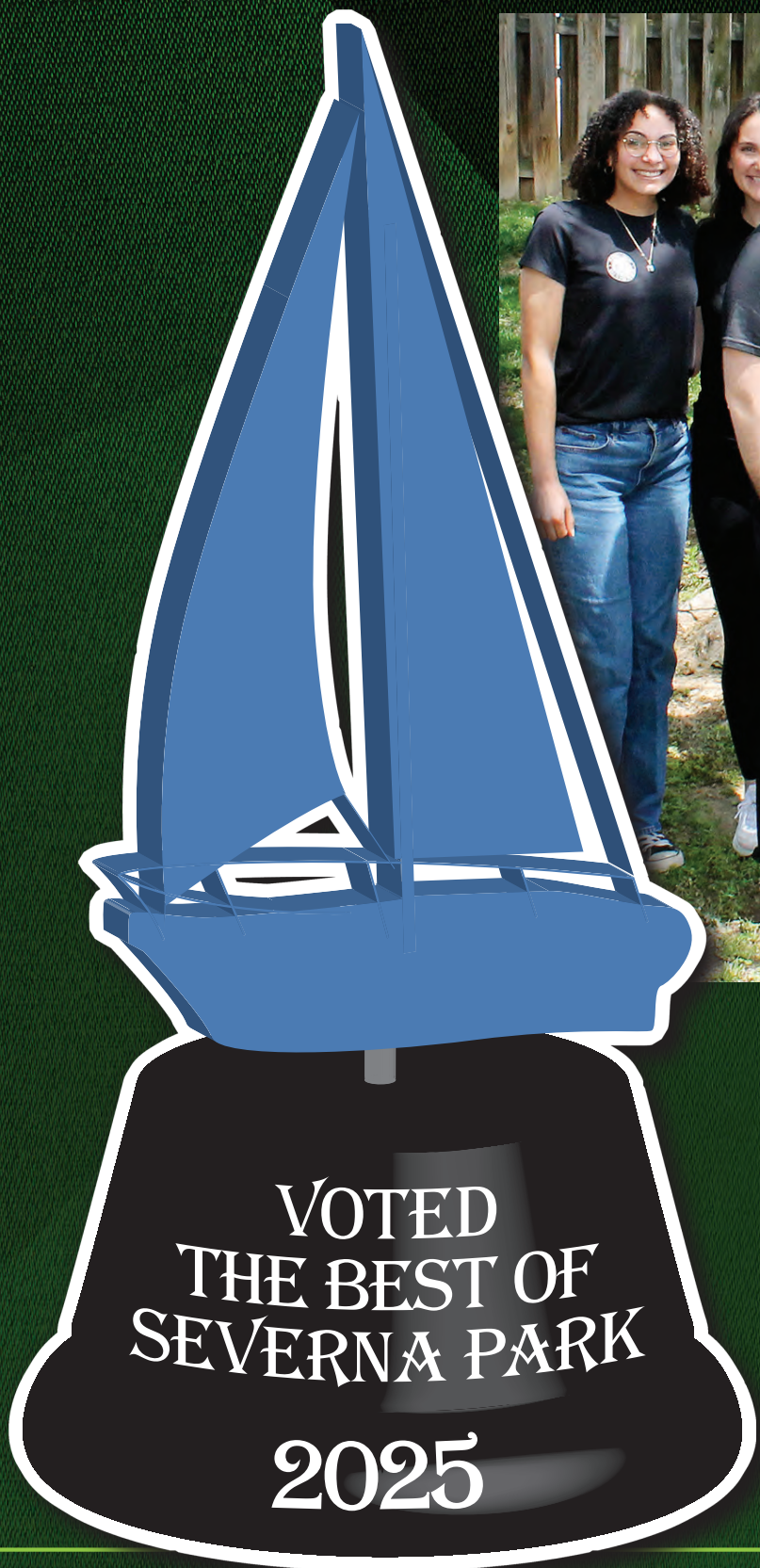
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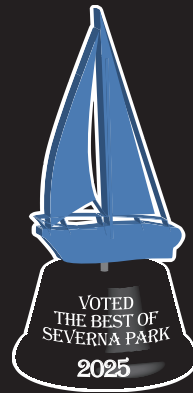
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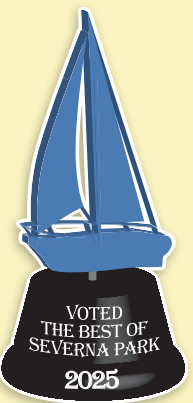
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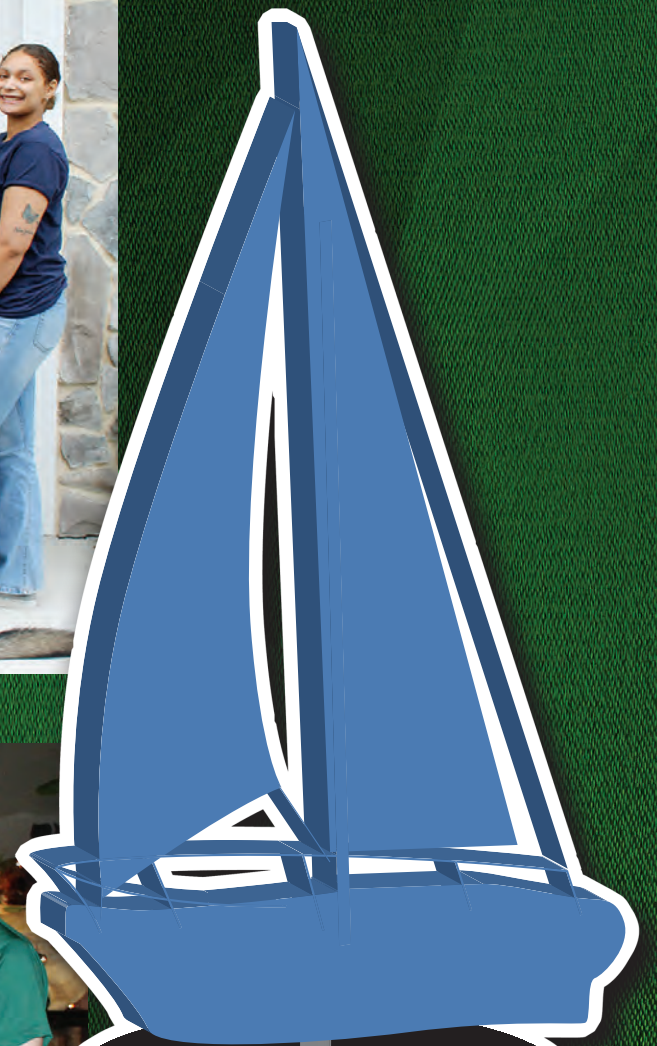
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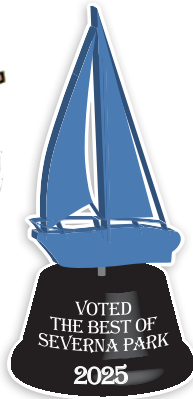
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Your Voice in Annapolis: 2025 Session Recap

Dawn Gile

Senator, District 33



The 447th legislative session of the Maryland General Assembly came to a close on April 7, wrapping up one of the most challenging — and consequential — sessions in recent memory. Through it all, my guiding principle never wavered: to protect the people I represent and make sure Maryland families aren't asked to carry more than they can afford.

Even with continued uncertainty at the federal level, we remained focused on the work Marylanders sent us here to do. We strengthened worker protections, safeguarded access to health care, advanced long-term solutions to make our energy system more affordable and reliable, and defended reproductive rights.

This session wasn't easy, but it was important. And as always, it was an honor to represent District 33 through it all. Serving you in the Maryland Senate is about the difference we can make together — and this year, I'm proud to report real results.

One of the toughest challenges we faced was closing a major budget shortfall. Maryland, like many states, had benefited from strong revenues during the COVID-19 pandemic thanks to one-time federal relief funds and temporary economic stimulus. But those supports masked an underlying structural deficit and a slowdown in economic growth. Once the federal aid dried up and tax revenues leveled off, the shortfall became impossible to ignore.

To close the gap, the General Assembly made over \$2 billion in spending cuts. However, I voted against the Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act (BRFA) because it included tax and fee increases that I believe placed too much burden on working families. That said, it's important to note that under the changes passed, 94% of Maryland taxpayers will see no increase — or will actually pay less in income taxes. Still, I felt the bill asked too much of residents during a time when many are already feeling stretched. I did vote for the operating and capital budgets, which protect core investments in our schools, public safety, health care and infrastructure.

As part of the capital budget, I secured nearly \$1 million in direct

support for local nonprofits, including \$170,000 for the Earleigh Heights Volunteer Fire Company to support the construction of a new firehouse and purchase of a new fire truck, and \$120,000 for the Severna Park Elks Lodge to renovate its Americans with Disabilities Act-accessible bathroom and improve wheelchair access.

I sponsored and passed 20 bipartisan bills this session — 16 of them individually — reflecting priorities I've heard directly from constituents: improving affordability, protecting consumers, strengthening public health, and enhancing safety in our communities. As chair of the Anne Arundel County Senate delegation, I also led the charge on four additional local bills focused on addressing needs right here at home.

Here are just a few highlights:

- **Senate Bill 0357** empowers Maryland's Prescription Drug Affordability Board to set upper payment limits on high-cost prescription medications, helping lower costs for all Marylanders, not just those on state health plans.
- **Senate Bill 0049** installs key consumer protections for auto-renewing subscriptions, like streamlining services and gyms, requiring

companies to clearly disclose terms and make cancellation as easy as sign-up.

- **Senate Bill 0689**, brought to me by a Severna Park constituent, allows divorcing spouses who meet credit and income criteria to assume a mortgage, avoiding the need for costly refinancing at higher interest rates.
- **Senate Bill 0569 (House Bill 0226)** creates a two-year pilot program for Anne Arundel County Public Schools, allowing the system to meet state instructional hour requirements without also meeting the minimum number of school days, reducing nearly half of existing early dismissal days and easing scheduling burdens for families.

I'm deeply grateful for the trust you continue to place in me. But I also know that effective representation only works when it's a two-way conversation.

I will host community events and town halls throughout the interim and would be honored to join you at an upcoming homeowners association, PTA or neighborhood gathering. If you'd like to receive my full end-of-session letter, invite me to an event, get help with a state issue, or share a concern or idea, please don't hesitate to reach out by calling 410-841-3568 or emailing dawn.gile@senate.state.md.us.

Republicans Reflect On End Of Session

District 31 representatives shared these notes about the bills they worked on during the 2025 session in Annapolis.



Senator Bryan Simonaire

I passed the most bills of any legislator, with 31 bills passed (the next closest legislator passed 16 bills). Topics included education, environment, crime, tax breaks, youth suicide, disabilities and agriculture, but focused most on helping

our service members, veterans and their families.

Lastly, one focus was helping communities concerned about a controversial confined aquatic disposal (CAD) dredge pilot program in the Patapsco River off the shores of our district. There was a lot of collaboration, and I am appreciative of all the teamwork from the stakeholders and District 31 legislators.

vance in the senate chamber. **HB 229/Senate Bill (SB) 32** reinforces Maryland's commitment to supporting its active-duty service members and their families by streamlining the legal process of active-duty service members and their spouses as landlords dealing with holdover tenants. While the House Bill did not move, its cross-file is headed to the governor's desk.

HB 1451, The Climate Solutions Affordability Act Bill of 2025, would have injected common sense and reality into these overly ambitious regulations to the Climate Solutions Act Now Bill of 2022 by simply adding "to the extent economically practical" to all of these regulations. An amendment was offered to repeal the EmPOWER program altogether, which would have immediately reduced costs on Marylanders' utility bills. Unfortunately, this bill did not even earn a vote in committee.



Delegate Nic Kipke

HB 571 allows all nonprofits that have a club in Anne Arundel County to operate their bar for events in which they are renting their venue. The people or groups renting the club still have to get a one-day liquor license. The nonprofit can operate the bar under the safeguards of alcohol

awareness training, which currently does not occur under the one-day liquor license process.

HB 1281 originally allowed for permit holders to have cultural dancing during holidays such as Irish dancers the week of St. Patrick's Day

or Spanish dancers the week of Cinco de Mayo. However, at the request of the liquor board, we have broadened the scope to include common sense instances like music, dancing and entertainment at the board's discretion.

Update to Hospice Regulations: A constituent brought forward concerns about a recent experience her family had at an assisted living facility. HB 828 was introduced to address those concerns. Thoughtful discussions with members of the Health and Government Operations Committee, senior care lobbyist Danna Kauffman, and the Maryland Department of Health Office of Health Care Quality, resulted in changes to the Maryland assisted living regulations.

The change adds a new Section H, which clarifies that hospice regulations apply when an assisted living resident is under the care of a licensed general hospice program but is physically located in their assisted living facility. Specifically, this change allows for use of things such as bed rails, geri chairs, and sleep aids intended for aided comfort for hospice patients when in an assisted living facility. We believe many Marylanders will benefit from these changes.



Delegate Latoya Nkongolo

HB 0469: This bill passed both chambers unanimously and altered references to the Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Conference and Visitors Bureau to be Visit Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Inc., ensuring consistency.

HB 1187: The committee has approved funding. » Continued on page 24



Delegate Brian Chisholm

House Bill (HB) 188 was a reintroduction that would have prohibited adversary countries from participating in the state procurement system. This bill once again passed the House chamber unanimously but did not ad-

County Executive To Deliver Budget Address



Stuart Pittman

Anne Arundel County Executive Stuart Pittman will deliver his Fiscal Year 2026 budget address to the county council in Annapolis on May 1 at 11:00am. The address will present the county's proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year, centered around the theme "Protecting Our People."

According to Pittman, this year's budget will highlight key investments that safeguard the essential services and infrastructure resi-

dents depend on while addressing ongoing economic uncertainty and shifts in state and federal funding.

The address will also be streamed live on Pittman's Facebook page, Arundel TV Live, Channel 38 on Verizon and Channel 98 on Comcast/Broadstripe.

Republicans Reflect On End Of Session

» Continued from page 23

ing for a Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC) study to assess the impact of the bill on health insurance coverage. This bill would require health insurance to cover scalp cooling systems for cancer patients. The study is a standard step for health insurance mandates and brings us closer to our goal. This will be reintroduced in the 2026 session, and the prospects for its passage are looking very promising.

HB 1185: This bill has received strong support from the homeschool community. This legislation would ensure that homeschool students have the right to participate in extracurricular activities at their local public schools. While the bill didn't make it out of committee this session, your continued support has been instrumental, and continued advocacy for

homeschool students' rights is appreciated. This will be reintroduced in the 2026 session, and its passage looks optimistic.

Anne Arundel County Bond Bills

The lawmakers had four projects in District 31 and the surrounding Severna Park area. The following were funded through legislative bond initiatives in either the Senate, the House or both:

- **Severna Park Elks** — \$120,000
- **Stoney Beach living shoreline** — \$120,000
- **Chesapeake High School** — \$100,000
- **Earleigh Heights Volunteer Fire Company** — \$50,000

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Evan Washburn's Career Has Deep Ties To Severn School

CBS Sideline Reporter Covers NFL And NCAA Basketball

By Kevin Murnane

Severn School graduate **Evan Washburn** has continuously utilized his friendships and relationships formed at Severn School to achieve his lifetime goal of staying involved with sports.

Washburn transferred to Severn School in the ninth grade from Key School in Annapolis so he could compete at a higher level athletically. Washburn played football, soccer, basketball and lacrosse at the Evergreen Road campus.

"I was athletically focused, and Severn offered me more opportunities to compete against bigger schools in the Baltimore and Anne Arundel County area," Washburn said. "Also, many of my friends from the Key School came to Severn in the sixth grade, so I had many friends at Severn already."

Washburn grew up in downtown Annapolis where St. John's College and the Naval Academy were his playgrounds. He quickly adopted Severna Park as his "home away from home" by recounting memories of going to Jenos Steaks and the 7-Eleven on Ritchie Highway.

"My after-school snack was Slim Jims, Red Bull and an Oreo cookie sandwich from 7-Eleven," Wash-

burn said. "We always went to Squisito's for our team dinner as well."

During Washburn's early days at Severn, he concentrated on basketball, but by speaking with the coaches, he realized that he would have a better chance of playing Division I lacrosse than basketball.

Through the help of a Severn School connection, **Drew Larkin**, father of teammates **Nick and Tyler Larkin**, Washburn sent his lacrosse highlight tape to the University of Delaware's men's lacrosse coach, **Bob Shillinglaw**, a Severna Park High School graduate.

Washburn was offered a scholarship to Delaware and studied journalism during his college career.

"I thoroughly enjoyed my time at Severn," Washburn said. "The teachers and coaches challenged me academically and athletically and prepared me very well for college."

Washburn had a successful lacrosse career with the Blue Hens. He was part of Delaware's NCAA tournament Final Four in 2007 and was elected team captain in 2008, as well as making the Colonial Athletic Association (CAA) first-team selection as a close defenseman.

» Continued on page 34



CBS sideline reporter and Severn School graduate Evan Washburn (left) interviewed Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson after a 2023 regular season game.

Broadneck Baseball Surging To Postseason

By David Bashore

Broadneck's baseball team had its blip: a one-run loss at home to Severna Park on April 7. But since then, they've ripped off eight straight wins to improve to 16-1 on the season. That run included four shutouts (10-0 over Annapolis, 5-0 over Parkside, 13-0 over Southern and 35-0 over Meade),

as well as hard-fought wins over South River (8-3) and La Plata (7-4). The Bruins also topped Montgomery Blair 14-1 and North County 9-3.

During the stretch, Broadneck has gotten contributions from up and down the lineup, and throughout the bullpen.

They employed six pitchers, led by **Noah Forman's** three-win, 20-inning effort, in which he struck out 19 batters and allowed a combined three earned runs. **Chase Hannon** started three games, going 1-1 and striking out 13 in 18 ⅓ innings. **Cooper Mengel** picked up three wins, fanning 18 and allowing one earned run in 13 innings.

At the plate, the Bruins had nine players drive in five or more runs, led by **Mike Swick**, who plated 15 — he tripled twice and knocked in seven against Blair alone. **Cade Schuetter** and **Nick Cicale** drove in 11 runs, while Forman and **Kobe Owen** each scored nine. Cicale had three hits and four RBIs in the win over North County.

Broadneck played Arundel at home on April 28 and has two games remaining in the regular season: at Chesapeake on April 30 and home to Glen Burnie on May 2. As of April 27, the Bruins were tied for first place in the county standings, so a three-game sweep would put them in the county championship on May 6 at Joe Cannon Stadium.

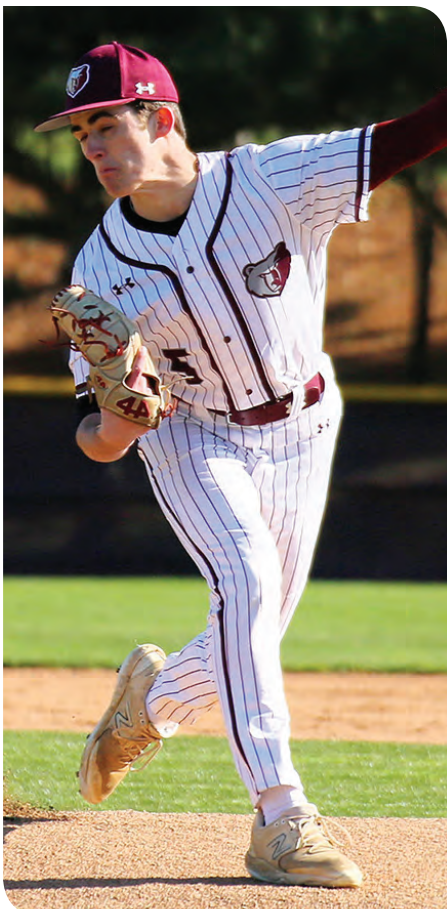
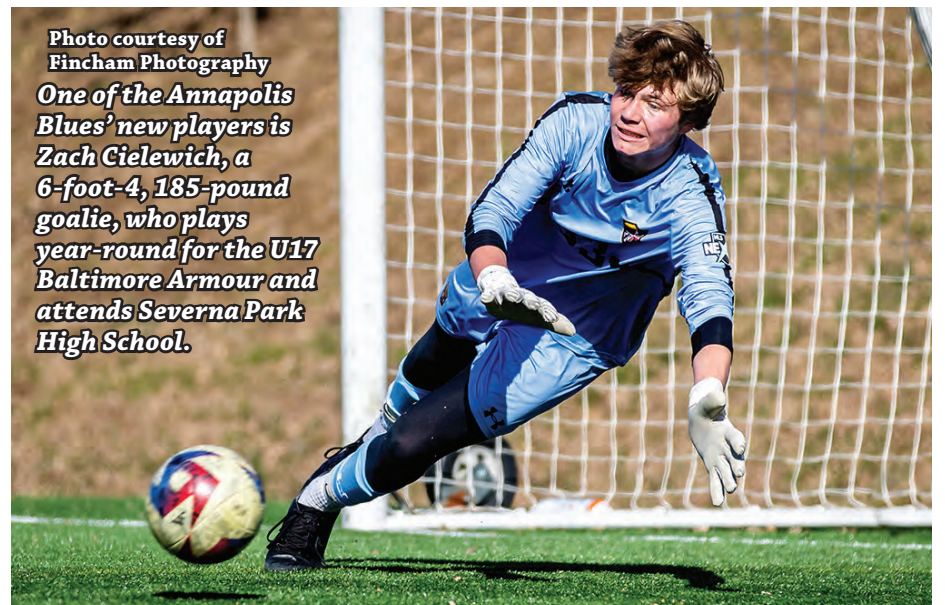


Photo by Dennis McGinley

Chase Hannon pitched during the Bruins' 2-1 defeat to Severna Park.

Area Soccer Players Prepare For Annapolis Blues Season

Photo courtesy of Fincham Photography
One of the Annapolis Blues' new players is Zach Cielewicz, a 6-foot-4, 185-pound goalie, who plays year-round for the U17 Baltimore Armour and attends Severna Park High School.



By Tom Worgo

Soccer consumes **Zach Cielewicz** and he's involved in the sport every day, whether it's games, practicing or watching video.

In recent months, the attention from colleges has overwhelmed Cielewicz at times. He's been recruited by about 40 colleges and hears from schools daily. He visited one top-25 Division I program in Georgetown, and two other ranked teams, Dayton and Virginia, have aggressively pursued him.

Cielewicz, a 6-foot-4, 185-pound goalie, plays year-round for the U17 Baltimore Armour in Major League Soccer. That involves traveling with the Armour around the country, including to Florida and California.

"It's the highest level of youth soccer in the country," explained Cielewicz, a Severna Park resident.

Baltimore Armour is a MLS Next club, which means Cielewicz is prohibited from playing high school ball.

He was allowed to earn a spot on a professional soccer team — the semi-pro Annapolis Blues — which play at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium.

It's an impressive accomplishment, considering Cielewicz is 16 and a Severna Park High School junior who carries a 4.2 weighted grade point average. The Blues play in the United States Soccer League, which is mostly made up of Division I players who are in their 20s.

"I am sure it's pretty uncommon," Blues

» Continued on page 40

STUDENT-ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

SIENNA MILLER

Broadneck High School
Girls Lacrosse

By Judy Tacyn

When your high school team has won four straight state lacrosse titles and you're one standout athlete on a team of phenomenal players, being seen as a standout player requires some extraordinary talent. But for **Sienna Miller**, individual recognition isn't something she seeks. Though she's played on Broadneck High School's girls varsity lacrosse team for four years as an attacker, Miller said she doesn't try to carry the team, but rather to put herself in a position to contribute to the team.

"I was proud to have scored the most total points last season, which isn't just about scoring goals but includes assists, too," Miller said. "That was meaningful to me because it wasn't about me scoring goals but about the team's scoring and me being able to help my team."

That team-first attitude has been her focus while a Bruin. As a freshman, she tried to soak up every word of advice or direction she received from her upperclassmen teammates and coaches. She appreciated their



mentorship, and now as a senior leader, she is enjoying her role as mentor.

"I make sure I encourage and motivate my teammates, especially the younger players, by talking throughout the game, either recognizing a good play or offering advice or positive correction," Miller added. "I think back to when I was a young player, and I remember how much it meant to me to hear that I was doing a good job or to receive a few constructive words on how to improve both during a game or at practice."

In addition to lacrosse, Miller has run track and played on the Bruins

"I make sure I encourage and motivate my teammates, especially the younger players, by talking throughout the game, either recognizing a good play or offering advice or positive correction."

— SIENNA MILLER

soccer team and unified bowling team. Following her junior lacrosse season, she was named to the Capital Gazette first-team all-county team and earned the Capital's Most Valuable Player honors.

In the classroom, Miller is a top scholar. She is a member of the National Honors Society, Math Honors Society and the Science National Honors Society. Additionally, she is a member of Rho Kappa for excellence in social studies, president of the National English Honors Society, Key Club vice president, and is part of the Broadneck Athletic Leadership Council. During her Bruins career, she has served as president and ambassador for Morgan's Message, a student-athlete community focused on the mental and physical health in athletics.

Miller will attend the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, Virginia, studying engineering and playing club lacrosse. She received offers to play lacrosse at several institutions, but she didn't feel the academics

were at the level she desired.

"While I do love playing lacrosse, it's always been my plan to forego athletics for academics," Miller said. "If I had found a challenging engineering program for both chemical and biomedical engineering, and an offer to play lacrosse, that would have been ideal. But athletics was always second to academics."

Miller said that she had many great teachers at Broadneck but singled out **John Schiller** and **Chris Shelby** for their teaching styles and willingness to always be available to students.

"I had Mr. Shelby for Advanced Placement Calculus. It was the hardest course I've ever taken," Miller shared. "He taught me a lot, and not just all about math, but also perseverance and hard work."

"Mr. Schiller was my physics teacher," she added. "He has a way of taking a hard subject and making the content fun."

Miller is an Arnold resident and the daughter of Chantal and Kevin Miller.

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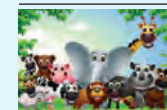
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County Title Within Reach For Bruins Girls Lacrosse



Photo by David Bashore

Katelyn Kearns anchored Broadneck's outside defense against Crofton, forcing turnovers and transitioning quickly to attack.

By David Bashore

When the ball rippled into Broadneck's goal to give Severna Park a triple-overtime victory on a rainy, cold April 11 evening, the Bruins girls lacrosse team could have taken any number of responses.

Instead of getting frustrated, they learned from it, and they put together four straight impressive wins to put themselves on the cusp of a return to the county championship and a potential rematch with those Falcons.

After rolling past Northern 15-3, the Bruins coasted over Huntingtown 9-4 and topped Southern 14-5. Then, on April 25, they cruised to a comfortable 14-3 win over Crofton on senior night, on the strength of five goals from senior **Sienna Miller**.

"Since the Severna Park game, we've been working hard trying to put those things together so that we can play as well as we know we can," Miller said. "It's just making the most of all the games left. How hard can we push for these last few weeks, because we only have so many games left?"

The answer to how many games, they hope, is eight. But for one day, the seniors took the focus, playing the full first and fourth quarters. It was an opportunity for a group that has played together for years to get one more extended run together before the playoffs arrive.

That means standard standouts like Miller and fellow senior attacker **Cayman Holmes**, as well as defender **Katelyn Kearns**, hold down their roles, but other players who are better known for other

sports or accomplishments were able to shine as well.

"I feel like I rely on my teammates a lot, and they help me in ways on the field. I try to do what I can to get a ground ball and help the team get into more of an attacking mindset," said senior midfielder **Faith Everett**, who like Kearns and teammate **Raleigh Kerst** is headed to college to play field hockey. "It's bittersweet, because we all love playing together and we have a tight-knit group of seniors. We don't get to be on the field all at the same time very much, so that was great to get to enjoy that."

It took until the third quarter before Broadneck really stepped on the gas against Crofton, partly because of the lack of on-field chemistry, partly because of emotions on the day, and partly because of the way the game unfolded. But once they sorted the issues out, the game got out of hand quickly.

"It's more of a mindset than a strategic thing. They have a lot of tools in their tool belt, and they're learning to be a little more patient and a little more connected," said Broadneck head coach **Katy Kelley**. "Don't chase instant gratification but wait for the better things to come. You want creativity within a framework, and sometimes you have too much framework, and others you have instant gratification. They're getting there."

At 9-3, the Bruins are in prime position to reach the May 5 county championship game. But to get there, they'll have to finish the job against Arundel on April 29 and Old Mill on May 2.

Battle-Tested Falcons Ready To Roll Into Girls Lax Postseason

By David Bashore

A trio of hard-fought victories over private schools, interspersed with two lengthy overtime victories over their nearest public-school rivals, has the Severna Park girls lacrosse team sitting pretty heading into the stretch run.

The Falcons beat rival Archbishop Spalding 10-6 on April 7, following that up with an 8-7 victory over Broadneck when senior **Payton Jeffers** netted in the third overtime period.

"It was cold, it was miserable, but I just remember telling the team that this is possibly our last game against Broadneck, and I really didn't want to lose it," Jeffers said. "I just saw some space and attacked the goal."

After that, Severna Park won 12-7 at Mount de Sales and then nipped St. Mary's 7-6 in a game that Falcons head coach **Annie Houghton** said the girls "really wanted."

At the end of that tough five-game stretch, Severna Park beat South River 5-4 in double overtime, on **Bella Van Gieson's** second goal of the game.

It was Severna Park's only goal after halftime, and South River only netted once after the break as well. Despite the game settling into a defensive struggle, highlighted by sophomore **Lucy Davis** saving a shot off the shaft of her stick and then onto the pipe, the players leaned on their experience in tight games and waited for the right opportunity.

"It's definitely stressful, but after each moment we're letting ourselves just breathe and go to the next play. We've been in so many close games and over-times that we know what to expect and it helps us stay calm," said Van Gieson, who also netted an overtime winner last year against Broadneck. "Offensively, it wasn't quite clicking for us, but we were working hard on our plays, and we managed to get one at the end."

The play in question unfolded when Van Gieson and **Maria Bragg** ran the lacrosse

equivalent of basketball's pick-and-roll. Van Gieson laid the ball off to Bragg as they crossed paths, Bragg stood poised and Van Gieson took the space Bragg had just vacated. No South River defender went with her, and she took two steps and fired past the goalie to end the game.

Bragg also scored and had two disallowed, while **Erin Hussey** netted the other two in the win.

The Falcons' only blemish came in a 15-5 setback against perennial 2A power Manchester Valley during spring break, a game which counts on the Falcons' season record but is exempted from playoff implications — Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association rules allow a team to schedule 12 "normal" games that count toward playoff seeding and one two-game "play-day" that doesn't.

But even in the loss, the team learned something that can be used going forward.

"We had lots of chances, and our defense is playing about as great as you can," Houghton said. "If you can hold opponents to around five or six like we've been doing, you've got a good chance to win. Offensively, we're disciplined, but we're still looking for a little more consistency — sometimes it's just a little off, but it's close."

The Falcons beat Severn Run 23-1 on April 25. At 11-1 (10-0 for seeding), Severna Park returned to action against Southern on April 29 and Annapolis on May 2. Then the focus moves to a likely berth in the county championship May 5, and the top seed for regionals starting May 7.



Photos by David Bashore

Right: Bella Van Gieson provided stability in the midfield against South River, scoring twice, including the game winner in double overtime. Below: The Falcons celebrated Van Gieson's walk-off goal, which gave the Falcons a 5-4 victory over the Seahawks on April 29.

Falcon Boys Remain On Track

After dropping their showdown with nationally ranked Landon 13-5 on April 8, Severna Park's boys lacrosse team is still on track, having reeled off five straight wins to improve to 10-1 on the season as of April 28.

Spring break wins over Virginia's West Potomac (16-6) and James Robinson (10-2) were sandwiched by a pair of 7-5 wins over county rivals Broadneck and South River. Those two victories took on similar themes: tight early, with the Falcons pulling ahead with

clear daylight in the second half.

The final game of the set came against Severn Run, which the Falcons won 27-0 in the first matchup between the two programs.

With three games left in the regular season, Severna Park has the inside track on both a county championship berth and the top seed for the regional playoffs, which start May 7. They returned to action against Southern on April 29, before hosting Huntingtown a day later and welcoming Annapolis on May 2.



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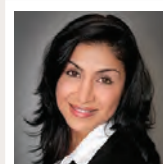
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Bruin Boys Lacrosse Dismantles Crofton On Senior Night

Photos by David Bashore

Top Right: Carter Marquardt rode a heavy Crofton challenge to keep possession, defending from the midfield. **Bottom Right:** Noah Yoder helped anchor a stingy defense against Crofton, including this solo breakout effort.

By David Bashore

It took the best part of 30 minutes for Broadneck's boys lacrosse team to sharpen their focus, but once they did, there was no denying them a senior night win.

Behind a couple of goals from senior **Blake Levicki**, steady and creative play from freshman **Wyatt Hicks**, and a relentless defense, the Bruins pulled away from Crofton to win 11-4 on April 25.

Broadneck logged 40 shots at the Crofton goal and carried play for significant stretches. But at halftime, it was 3-3, courtesy of a late Crofton run, and it briefly appeared as though another Severna Park- or South River-like battle was in store.

"It did kind of feel like that, and that's the type of team Crofton is: if you make mistakes, they're ready and willing to shoot fast and punish them, and they did that near halftime," said Broadneck coach **Jeff McGuire**. "We just needed to settle in and get back to doing what we do well. We dominated possession and created a lot of chances; it's just about finishing them."

Broadneck finished a glut of chances in the third period, pulling away for a three-goal lead early in the frame to create some breathing space. Hicks netted twice in quick succession to put the game away.

"It's just the team game. I find spots to get open, and we've got a great connection," said Hicks, part of the one-two freshmen tandem alongside **Braden Cornett** that has paced Broadneck's attack this season.

The victory was Broadneck's second straight, after



"We might not have the (polished) talent of recent teams, I'll be honest with that, but we're coming together and are starting to rise." — **BHS SENIOR BLAKE LEVICKI**

three losses against quality opposition. The first was the overtime loss to South River, followed by a 7-3 setback to Cape Henlopen (Delaware) and the 7-5 defeat by Severna Park in which they were close through halftime before the Falcons stretched the margin and kept Broadneck at bay. They followed that up by beating Southern 23-0 and topping Crofton to improve to 9-3 on the season.

After having graduated so many seniors, and so much talent, from previous years, the younger Bruins have had to adjust and gain chemistry on the fly.

"We might not have the (polished) talent of recent teams, I'll be honest with that, but we're coming together and are starting to rise," Levicki said.

With only a razor-thin chance of playing for the county championship, Broadneck is gearing up for a postseason run where they will likely be the two or three seed in regionals. They might not get another home game of any kind after their battle April 29 with Arundel. Their final regular season game is at Old Mill on May 2.

Even if they're to be road warriors the rest of the way, the Bruins are making themselves ready and feel they're equipped to emerge yet again from 4A's East Region II.

"We've spoken a lot about just playing Broadneck lacrosse, which is playing fast and shooting fast," McGuire said. "It's part of the growing process with this team to play faster, but it's coming. We're going to play a lot more teams like Crofton into regionals and tonight will help us in those games."

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Falcons Celebrate Youth And Community At Green Hornets Lacrosse Night



Photos courtesy of Emma Rogers

Severna Park's girls lacrosse team hosted their third annual Green Hornets Lacrosse Night on April 23 when the Falcons took on South River and defeated the Seahawks 5-4 in double overtime. As part of the evening's festivities, several Green Hornets players were announced with the varsity team during the starting lineups.

Severna Park High School's girls lacrosse team could not have scripted a better event for the program's third annual Green Hornets Lacrosse Night on April 23. About 50 Green Hornets players attended the game and cheered on the home team as the Falcons prevailed 5-4 in a thrilling double-overtime victory against the visiting Seahawks.

As part of the evening's festivities, several registered Green Hornets players were randomly selected to be announced with the varsity team during the starting lineups. Each player was introduced with their name, grade, current school and a fun fact — bringing smiles to the crowd and shining a spotlight on the future of the program.

During halftime, the excitement continued with a special locker room tour led by the JV team. The young players also received exclusive Falcon gear and a complimentary pretzel from the concession stand — small tokens of a big night.

The tradition was started three years ago by Severna Park varsity girls lacrosse head coach **Annie Houghton** and has since become an anticipated event for players, coaches and families alike.

"It's a great community event and fun for everyone," Houghton said. "We love seeing the players so excited. This is what it's all about."



Evan Washburn's Career Has Deep Ties To Severn School

» Continued from page 27

It was on senior day of Washburn's final season that he tore his anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) and curtailed his hopes of playing in the Major League Lacrosse (MLL) league that summer.

After surgery, Washburn went home to Annapolis to contemplate his future, driven to remain involved with sports in some capacity.

During his days at Delaware, Washburn had an internship at Channel 45 in Baltimore that piqued his interest in broadcasting. A Severn School teammate, **Kip Turner**, who played lacrosse at the University of Virginia, knew Comcast SportsNet announcer **Joe Beninati**. Washburn contacted Beninati and began an unpaid internship at Comcast SportsNet in Washington, D.C.

"I fully immersed myself in that internship," Washburn said. "I would go with the crew to the Orioles and Ravens games and carry the equipment, set up lighting, whatever they needed. This was my life for one and a half years."

During that internship, the Comcast crew was supportive enough to give Washburn experience in front of the camera so he could have demo tapes to send out for openings in the industry.

Then Washburn was contacted by another Severn connection, **Leif Elsmo**, who worked at ESPN and is the father of Severn grad **Nick Elsmo**. The elder Elsmo helped Washburn get an analyst position for a college lacrosse

game on ESPN. Washburn sent his highlight tape to CBS College Sports and in 2011, Washburn broadcasted his first lacrosse game for CBS College Sports.

"At halftime of that game between Cornell and Princeton, they asked me to do another game the following week," Washburn said. "It was very exciting to broadcast a game and the same feeling and intensity I received from playing sports was felt in the broadcast booth."

In 2012, CBS College Sports gave Washburn six games as a sideline reporter for college football, and in 2014, Washburn was promoted to the role of sideline reporter for NFL games on CBS.

Washburn has been fortunate to be on the sidelines for three Super Bowls and numerous March Madness college basketball games. He is also an analyst for college lacrosse as well as a sideline reporter for Ravens preseason games.

Washburn's schedule during the NFL season is mixed with hours of preparation and production meetings.

"Monday through Thursday, I spend many hours reading past articles of the two teams playing that weekend, watching video tapes of each team's last games as well as their press conferences the teams have on Mondays," Washburn said. "Friday, we fly to the home team's city, watch practice and begin our production meetings. On Saturday, we watch the visitors practice, and Saturday night we'll have the big production meeting. On Sunday, we arrive at the

stadium three hours or so before game time to go over any last-minute details.

"It's an incredible job," Washburn added. "Like many athletes, the challenge is to have a great game every week."

Many of Washburn's interviews are during and after games when coaches are intense and focused on what is or has transpired on the field.

"Having an athletic background helps me know what questions should be asked and read the emotions of that athlete or coach," Washburn said.

Having a great deal of pride in being from the Baltimore-Annapolis area and currently living in Baltimore, Washburn still goes back to Severn School to speak to students about broadcasting careers.

"Evan never hesitates when asked to serve as an alumni mentor to Severn's students," said **Carolyn Champion**, Severn School's director of alumni relations and alumni giving. "Evan was the first alum I brought back to campus to speak to our Admiral TV and Broadcasting Club and journalism seminar. This year, he spoke to one of our seniors, **Lawrence Jacobs**, about choosing a college that would have opportunities to get experience in front of the camera. Evan also gave Jacobs an opportunity to shadow him at a future NCAA lacrosse broadcast."

Washburn fondly reflects on his time in Severna Park and Severn School. His classmates and teammates from those years are still his close friends today.

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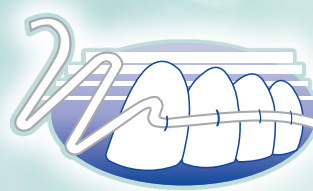


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Severna Park Baseball Building Character, Momentum



Photo by Dennis McGinley

Jacob Williams laid down a bunt during the Falcons' 2-1 win over Broadneck on April 7.

By David Bashore

The Severna Park baseball team has seen some bumps in the road, but the Falcons are starting to build momentum in the right direction.

Entering the last week of April, they went 6-3 in their last nine games, sandwiching narrow losses to Old Mill (4-1), Huntingtown (5-3) and Northeast (1-0) with a series of gritty victories.

Adam Clark's two-run double gave Severna Park all the offense they'd need in a 2-1 win at Broadneck on April 7, avenging their season-opening loss to the Bruins. Then **Evan Boucher** homered in the team's 7-0 win over Crofton, and he hit a grand slam and drove in five in a 24-1 win over Baltimore's City College. **Charlie Delobe** plated three in a 9-3 win over St. Mary's Ryken, and **Logan Clarke's** grounder in the eighth inning enabled them to escape with a 3-2 win over Severn Run.

Most recently, Severna Park topped Annapolis 8-2 on the strength of a three-RBI performance from Delobe and a six-inning, eight-strikeout effort from **Reese Davis**.

The Falcons had a 10-6 record going into a home game against South River on April 28. Following that game, they play at Southern on April 30 and home against Meade on May 2.

As Regionals Loom, Bruins Softball Is Rolling



Photos by Dennis McGinley

Left: Addie Cornelius drove in two runs in the Bruins' 5-4 win over Severna Park. Right: Isabella Herrera looked to throw out a baserunner during Broadneck's game versus the Falcons. The area rivals split their two matchups this season.

By David Bashore

As the stretch run hits for high school softball, the Broadneck Bruins are surging.

Broadneck hit the final week of the season on an eight-game win streak, which included avenging the season-opening loss at Severna Park. **Addie Cornelius** drove in two runs and **Rylan Crisafulli** struck out 15 as the Bruins held on for a 5-4 win over the Falcons.

Also included in the run was a 17-1 win over Annapolis and a 5-0 shutout win over South River, in which Crisafulli fanned 15 Seahawk batters. They ran the shutout string to four with wins

over Northern (2-0), Southern (17-0) and Meade (20-0). Cornelius homered and drove in five runs in the win over Southern. Against North County, **Isabella Herrera** drove in four runs in a 10-1 win.

In support of Crisafulli, **Keira Plumley** picked up two wins in the circle.

Broadneck had a 13-2 record prior to hosting Arundel on April 28, visiting Chesapeake on April 30 and traveling to Glen Burnie on March 2. Winning all three could put the Bruins in the county championship on May 6 at Bachman Sports Complex in Glen Burnie.

After Long Skid, Falcons Softball Rights Ship

By David Bashore

After a difficult midseason stretch, Severna Park's softball team appears to have righted the ship.

The Falcons lost 5-4 at Broadneck to start a five-game slide, after which they fell 2-1 to Crofton, 7-2 at Chopticon, and then in a home doubleheader against a pair of private schools, 7-5 to Notre Dame Prep and 9-4 to John Carroll. But they bounced back in a big way after that, surrounding a narrow 3-0 loss to undefeated Northeast with three lopsided shutouts, 24-0 over Annapolis, 17-0 over Severn Run and 15-0 over Old Mill.

In the win over Annapolis, **Abby Trust** drove in five runs and struck out 11 in a complete-game victory. Against Severn Run, **Morgan Rausch** hit a three-run homer and **Quinlyn Bary** drove in four runs. Rausch also homered, **Allie Moran** knocked in three runs, and Trust struck out 15 in the win over Old Mill.

Severna Park played South River at home on April 28 and will close the season at Southern on April 30 and home to Meade on May 2. The region playoffs start on May 8.



Photos by Dennis McGinley

Left: Quinlyn Bary, who drove in four runs in a lopsided win against Severn Run, sent a pitch toward the plate in a road contest versus Broadneck. The Falcons fell to the Bruins 5-4. Above: Addison Bianco fielded a ball in center field during the matchup with the Bruins.



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Green Hornets 10U Baseball Team Takes The Crown During Mutiny At The Park



The 10U Green Hornets went 4-0-1 over the weekend of April 4-6 during their tournament in Olney, Maryland.

The Green Hornets 10U White team traveled to Olney, Maryland, for the 21st annual Mutiny at the Park event during the

weekend of April 4-6 and brought home the championship, going 4-0-1 over the weekend. A late-inning tag on a runner at

home plate by catcher **Brayden Horrell** preserved a tie. **Christian Brown's** walk-off double capped an eight-run comeback and kept the

Hornets undefeated on Saturday. Steady pitching from **Eli Krisko**, **Cormac Murray** and **Brandt Irvine** paced the team throughout the tournament.

Entering bracket play as the fourth seed, the Hornets took advantage of timely hitting to win their first game, and they used an eight-run third inning to dispatch the top-seeded Calvert Cutters in the semifinal.

After some words of inspiration from teammate **Milo Bullough**, the Hornets squared off in the championship game against the rival Lake Shore BlueSox. Trailing 12-9 going to the bottom of the fifth, the Hornets got timely RBIs from **Wyatt Fellner** and **Everett Hall** to cut the deficit to one.

In the top of the sixth with the game on the line, **Dylan O'Dell** took the mound and struck out the side, setting the stage for a dramatic finish.

After **JP Kantowski** and **Mason Azevedo** reached base, **William Spring** stepped to the plate and launched a rocket into left-center field for a walk-off two-run triple, clinching the championship for the Green Hornets.

The team included (l-r, middle row) Wyatt Fellner, Brandt Irvine, Dylan O'Dell, Cormac Murray, William Spring, (l-r, front row) Brayden Horrell, Mason Azevedo, JP Kantowski, Everett Hall, Christian Brown, Eli Krisko and coaches (l-r, back row) **Brian Fellner**, **Dave Irvine**, **Mark O'Dell**, **Kortny Hall**, **Ricky Horrell** and **Jim Kantowski**. Milo Bullough (not pictured) was also on the team.





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Senior Softball League Rekindles Childhood Memories

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By Kevin Murnane

In the movie "Field of Dreams," James Earl Jones' character Terence Mann eloquently remarks that, "One constant through all the years has been baseball. It reminds us of all that was once good and could be again."

For 105 former baseball and now softball players who play on six over-60 teams, Bachman Sports Complex in Glen Burnie may be their "Field of Dreams."

Opening night for the 2025 season at Bachman Sports Complex in April was a cold and blustery evening, but that didn't dampen the players' excitement of being back on the diamond. The players still reflect with emotion on how baseball was a joyful part of their childhood.

"For two hours, I get to pretend I'm 10 years old again," said **Will Lloyd** of Glen Burnie. "I started playing baseball at 8 and I've played baseball and/or softball for 52 years, and I only missed two years because I was in the Navy."

Lloyd was this year's first draft choice in the league, which has a draft each year to fill out the rosters. League managers conduct a tryout every year to evaluate the players' skill level. Players are graded on a one to three ranking, so the league is fair and everyone gets playing time.

Lloyd, who had heart valve surgery in October, is one of many players who have undergone surgeries and rehabilitation so they can keep playing. Many other players have had joint replacement surgeries, but the smell of the freshly cut grass and the sound of the aluminum bat making contact with the ball are too hard to relinquish.

Six teams compete in this Tuesday night league, with 16 players on each roster. Players are from throughout

Anne Arundel County and Baltimore City. Two longtime sponsors are Severna Park Taphouse and Port Tack Ltd. Wine & Spirits in Arnold.

Severna Park Taphouse's team has won the league championship for the last five years, but league manager **Mike West** of Arnold sees this season being more competitive with the addition of "younger players."

"All the teams are better this year, and because of the influx of new players, every week will be competitive," West said.

The league runs for 10 weeks and has many unique rules for safety: double bases at first; two home plates that are separated by a few feet so there aren't any collisions on plays at the plate; pinch runners for anyone; and a five-run limit for the team batting except for the last inning.

Severna Park Taphouse's squad has the league's oldest player, 91-year-old **Dick Baker**. He has been playing softball since 1970 and was scouted by the major leagues in high school. His baseball dream was derailed as he spent three years serving his country in the Korean War. Baker has undergone two knee replacements and has relegated himself to a pastime player.

Baker and the other players still exchange baseball banter during the game and provide positive encouragement throughout the game. The camaraderie is a huge part of why the players keep playing every year, even though their physicality may not be what it once was.

On this year's opening night, Severna Park Taphouse swept a doubleheader over Fegan's Embroidery & Screen Printing. However, before the games, the league was presented a check for \$2,500 by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) of Maryland. This donation will offset some of the expenses for the league.

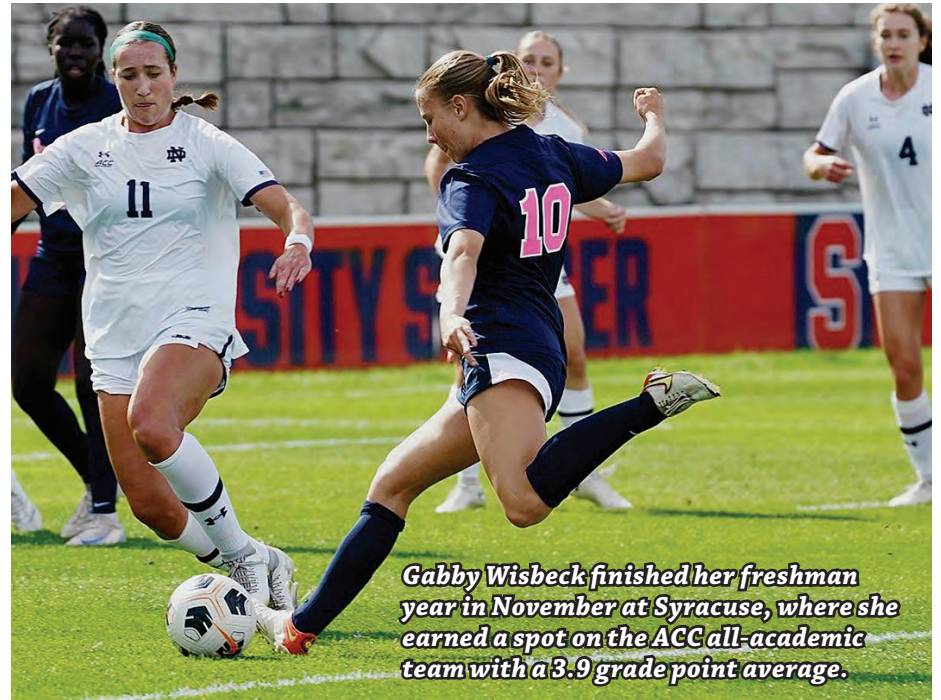
The league is always looking for additional players. If interested in playing, contact Mike West at 410-271-2446.



Photo by Kevin Murnane

Arnold's Mike West (far right) accepted a \$2,500 donation from AARP of Maryland's (l-r) Eleanor Nancarrow, David Conway and Hank Greenberg. The contribution will offset some of the league's expenditures.

Area Soccer Players Prepare For Annapolis Blues Season



Gabby Wisbeck finished her freshman year in November at Syracuse, where she earned a spot on the ACC all-academic team with a 3.9 grade point average.

» Continued from page 27

coach **Colin Herriot** said of high-school aged players competing in the league.

"We believe if you are good enough, you are old enough, you can play. We think he has so much potential and is going to have great success in college."

Cielewich will suit up for the Blues for nearly three weeks of practice in May before their first game on May 24 against the host Charlottesville Blues.

He should be focused, energized and full of confidence heading into the season. Cielewich has helped the Armour to a 19-5-4 record over the past six months or so by recording 16 shutouts and posting a .075 goals against average per game.

He also spent 10 days in April competing in the Generation Adidas Cup at the IMG Academy in Bradenton, Florida, representing the D.C. United Academy team.

Cielewich's squad faced teams from Brazil and England during their seven games.

He will play a few more games for the Armour before Blues' practices start.

"It's always been a dream of mine to play for the Blues," Cielewich said. "I've had season tickets the past two years. I saw 10,000 people in the stands. I loved the environment, and I wanted to be part of it."

Blues' General Manager **Fred Matthes** is excited to have Cielewich on his team.

"He has really built his skills up," Matthes said. "He has played a lot in Europe with his traveling teams that go over there and play. He has developed his technical skills, and he will do fine for us."

It's clear the Blues like having local players on the team. **Mikey Johnson**, a Broadneck graduate, will join Cielewich on the squad. Johnson plays men's soccer

at the University of Delaware. He is coming off a solid season with the Blue Hens, ranking third on the team in scoring with 14 points (five goals, four assists).

Severna Park resident **Gabby Wisbeck** thought a lot about preparing herself for the day her soccer career ends. She figured it would be her senior year at Syracuse University in 2027.

Then along came the opportunity to play for the first-year Annapolis Blues women's semi-pro soccer team, making her think she could continue the sport well into her 20s. The 18-year-old Wisbeck finished her freshman year in November at Syracuse, where she earned a spot on the ACC all-academic team with a 3.9 grade point average.

The Archbishop Spalding graduate can't wait for the Blues' season to start in mid-May. The 5-foot-6 Wisbeck plays midfield.

"I know what's out there for me with soccer after college," Wisbeck said. "I always knew I wanted to play soccer in college, but I never thought outside of that bubble. The Blues have opened another path for me to go down."

Wisbeck gets excited talking about playing at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium, which is about 10 miles from where she lives. Making the experience more enjoyable is the fact that her high school coach, **Ashly Kennedy**, is running the team.

On top of that, a bunch of her high school teammates will be on the roster.

"I am just so excited to play for this team," Wisbeck said. "It's surreal. To do it is just beyond words. It was always a dream, but as women, you are not really expecting to do these kinds of things. It has always been more like a men's thing. But times are changing."

And Wisbeck is loving it.

Other Anne Arundel Blues

Zach Cielewich, Mikey Johnson and Gabby Wisbeck are not the only Severna Park, Arnold and Millersville athletes taking their talents to the Annapolis Blues.

On the boys' side, Broadneck High School graduate **Tyler Gabarra** will join the team as a midfielder.

The girls team will have the talents of former Archbishop Spalding defender and Severna Park resident **Megan Garmey** (High Point University), former Severna Park High School defender **Ava Schultz** (the College of William and Mary) and Spalding defender **Olivia Nardone** (UMBC) from Millersville.

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CTA Creates An Underwater Adventure In “Finding Nemo Jr.”



Photo courtesy of Wendy Hickok Photography

Sarabelle Stephens (Dory), John Lyons (Marlin), Hannah Koloski (Nemo) and Asher Schropp (Professor Ray) posed in front of underwater props on the stage for “Finding Nemo Jr.”

By Alyson Kay

This month, Children’s Theatre of Annapolis will dive into the big blue for performances of “Finding Nemo Jr.,” a musical adaptation of the 2003 animated movie.

Nine-year-old Hannah Koloski, who plays Nemo in the show and dreams of acting on Broadway, was inspired to get into acting by a Disney classic.

“I was in first grade and my mom told me there were tryouts for the show ‘Aladdin,’” Hannah said. “I thought that sounded kind of fun because I had never been able to play before. After I did that show, I kind of thought that that’s just what I wanted to do, because I really had enjoyed it.”

Hannah has been in four plays, all small workshops and musicals. “Finding Nemo Jr.” will be the biggest production that she’s done to date.

John Lyons also aspires to act on Broadway or go into TV or film. The 12-year-old plays the other half of the clownfish duo, Marlin.

His inspiration to

act came from the “Harry Potter” movies.

“I was watching, I think it was a documentary about ‘Harry Potter,’” John said. “They were talking about how young these kids were that were playing the characters, and I said, ‘Hey, if they can do that, why can’t I?’”

John performed in six plays before “Finding Nemo.”

“I think this show has a lot more excitement and a lot more backstory than the other shows I have done,” he said. “It also has a lot more sad parts. There are a lot of, like, really deep, meaningful parts in the show, unlike any show I’ve done before.”

To prepare for their roles, the cast of kids goes to three rehearsals per week, two shorter ones on weekdays and one longer one on the weekend.

“It’s kind of hard, because I have to be non-stop practicing to get ready and I also have to come prepared with a lot of other things, like my script and a pencil,” Hannah said. “I kind of just need to be ready to get on the stage and be memorized and all that stuff, because we’re already past the memorizing lines.”

» Continued on page 46

Two Falcons Among National Merit Scholarship Finalists



National Merit Scholarship Program

In early April, four Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) students were named National Merit Scholarship finalists by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC).

The students are:

Abbie Heath

Severna Park High School

Peter Judge

Severna Park High School

Daniel Garrett

Arundel High School

Nikita Mehta

South River High School


The NMSC has operated the National Merit Scholarship Program since 1955 and does so without government assistance. Most of the NMSC’s scholarships are bestowed by 280 independent corporate organizations, higher education institutions, and individual donors.

Approximately 50,000 academically talented high school students are honored by the program each year, and about 16,000 of them are named semifinalists based on their performance on the Preliminary SAT/ National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. Finalists go on to compete for National Merit Scholarships, of which approximately 6,800 will be awarded this year.

To make more students eligible for National Merit Scholarships, AACPS administers the PSAT to all students in grades nine through 11 and the SAT to all juniors. Both exams are administered free of charge.


AACPS’ four finalists were honored by the Board of Education of Anne Arundel County (BOE) at its April 23 meeting. Judge, Garrett and Mehta were invited to meet and receive congratulations from AACPS Superintendent Mark Bedell and BOE President Robert Silkworth. Heath was unable to attend, but all four students were congratulated for their achievements by those in attendance.





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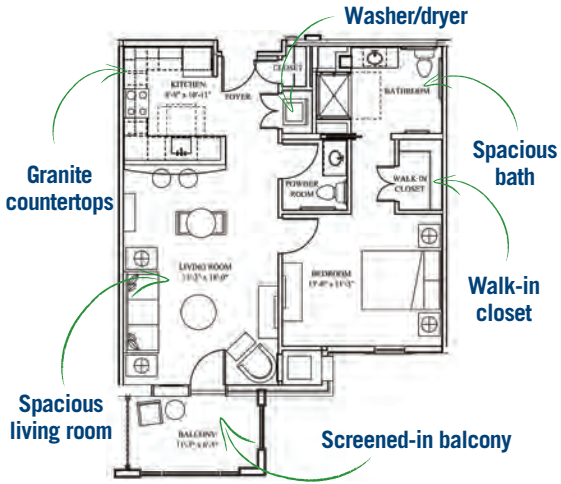
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Educator Of The Month

Pam Karr-Dawson *Shipley's Choice Elementary School*



By Judy Tacyn

Pam Karr-Dawson not only grew up in the Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) system, but she returned to build a career as a teacher. After attending kindergarten through grade 12 in the South River cluster, Karr-Dawson began her AACPS career at Tracey's Elementary in Lothian, where she spent the first 10 years of her career teaching kindergarten. For the last 22 years, she has taught first grade at Shipley's Choice Elementary in Millersville.

"First grade is truly my favorite grade to teach!" Karr-Dawson said. "At the beginning of the year, they come in as little ones who are just starting to understand what words, sentences and stories really mean. They often need help with the smallest daily tasks and a lot of encouragement to build their confidence. But by the end of the year, they've blossomed into independent and confident learners. Watching that transformation is honestly the

most rewarding part of my job."

This year, Karr-Dawson was the Shipley's nominee for Anne Arundel County Teacher of the Year (TOY), an honor she said brought her to tears.

"After 32 years of teaching, it was overwhelming to hear the kind things people said about me in the nomination," Karr-Dawson said. "At that moment, I felt like maybe I really did make a difference. It is one of the most meaningful honors of my career."

Karr-Dawson teaches under her mantra "cultivating compassion, achieving excellence." She said the phrase captures what teaching is all about: building positive relationships with students is at the heart of education.

"When the children feel safe and connected, they begin to show compassion for themselves and for each other," she added. "It is from that foundation of trust and kindness that learning and excellence can flourish."

She feels her teaching style is rooted in building positive relationships from day one. She shares a lot about herself with students, and in turn, they open up and do the same, and her class becomes a family.

"I always tell my class we are a family. I want each one of my students to feel confident, proud and supported because that is when they grow into their best selves," Karr-Dawson said. "We keep the mood light in my classroom, and we laugh a lot. Learning should be joyful!"

Though the TOY nomination is individual recognition, Karr-Dawson is quick to point out that she's one member of an entire team of exceptional professionals at Shipley's Choice, where everyone feels supported through challenges and celebrations. She counts her colleagues among her closest friends and feels fortunate to be part of the community for 22 years.

As for former students, she would love to hear from them. "I absolutely love when I see my students from the past," Karr-Dawson added. "It's so fun to hear what they are doing since elementary school and even as adults."



C A F E

M E Z Z A N O T T E

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

Arnold Dancer Competes Against World's Best In Ireland

Cara White, a 13-year-old Arnold resident, travelled to Dublin, Ireland, on April 14 to compete in the world championships of Irish dance. After qualifying at the regional Oireachtas in Florida (fourth place) and the national championships in Grapevine, Texas, (15th place), Cara traveled to Ireland to compete against the top 167 dancers in the world. Competitors came from many countries including the U.S., Canada, Scotland, England, Ireland, Australia, Mexico and more. Cara came in 24th place, placing in the top 10 of American dancers. She dances for the Hunt School of Irish Dance in Crofton and attends St. John the Evangelist School in Severna Park.



St. John Students Turn Bad Into Good With Disney's "Descendants"



With sold-out shows, St. John the Evangelist School students treated their families and friends to performances of Disney's "Descendants" from April 4-6. The musical revolves around a cast of villains and their children who are given a chance at redemption.

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St. John Students Earn Prestigious Knott Scholarships

By Judy Tacyn

The Knott Scholarship Funds recently announced recipients of the 2025 Knott Scholarship Competition winners. These scholarships, funded by the Marion Burk Knott Scholarship Fund and the Marion I. and Henry J. Knott Scholarship Fund, cover four-year, full tuition in the Catholic school of the scholar's choosing. Three of the 29 scholarships have been awarded to students from the St. John the Evangelist parish and school community.

The Knott Scholarship scholars are:

Elizabeth Locher

St. John School
(to attend Archbishop Spalding High School)

Amaya Ward

St. John School
(to attend The Catholic High School of Baltimore)

Colin Zaleski

St. John parish
(to attend Mount Saint Joseph High School)



Photo by Judy Tacyn

(L-R) The Rev. Erik Arnold, Elizabeth Locher, Colin Zaleski, Amaya Ward and Principal Glenna Blessing gathered for a photo to celebrate the three students' selection as winners of the 2025 Knott Scholarship Competition.

"As principal, I am very proud of this year's recipients of the Knott Scholarship. The Knott Foundation has recognized the outstanding academic skills, spiritual values, and leadership qualities of these students and the accomplishments they have achieved while attending our school," said Glenna Blessing, principal of St. John the Evangelist School. "We look forward to each of our students having a very successful career at their respective Catholic high schools in which they will continue to contribute to their school community. We are grateful to the Knott Foundation for their commitment to providing this opportunity for our students to continue to study at Catholic institutes through their high school years."

Elizabeth Locher called it an honor to be a part of a group of "such high-achieving individuals."

"The scholarship represents all of my hard work up until now; it's rewarding to have that work pay off," she said.

Locher will explore engineering through Spalding's Project Lead the Way STEM curriculum.

Her father, Chris, added that the scholarship was merit based and solely dependent on his

daughter's test scores, academic record and in-person interview.

"We are grateful to the Knott family for the financial component, but we are happier Elizabeth was recognized and rewarded for her hard work and dedication to her academic performance," he said.

Amaya Ward, a student at St. John since third grade, is grateful for the Knott recognition and is excited to attend The Catholic High School because of the school's Franciscan values, biomedical program and Asian Student Union. Her father, William, said he has seen his daughter grow academically and spiritually while at St. John the Evangelist School.

"The St. John teachers are just relentless in challenging the children to fully understand the core subjects," he said. "The Knott Scholarship means an investment for Amaya's college future. The financial strains that a Catholic education places on many families, including ours, has now given way for the opportunity to look toward ensuring that her life after high school will have those opportunities of success while in college and beyond."

Colin Zaleski is the youngest of nine children,

all of whom have attended Catholic schools. He was homeschooled by his mother, Amy Zaleski, so he's excited to start high school where he will participate in clubs, play sports, and meet new people. He will be the seventh Zaleski brother to attend Mount Saint Joseph. Financial support in recognition of his hard work in academics is appreciated by his family.

"Catholic education is indeed a sacrifice of time and treasure, but it is one that we gladly and gratefully make. A Catholic liberal arts education gives all students a fantastic foundation in faith, compassion, wisdom and virtue that one just cannot get in a secular environment," Amy said. "The Knott Scholarship is a great blessing and honor for our family as it will give Colin the opportunity to flourish and become the person God created him to be. We are grateful for our wonderful parish community and the encouragement and spiritual support we receive from our pastor, Father Erik Arnold."

The Knott Scholarship Funds have provided support for more than 2,000 academically talented Catholic students who reside in parts of the Archdiocese of Baltimore to attend Catholic schools for the last 25 years. The newly designated scholars attended the Knott Scholarship Funds pinning ceremony on April 6, which included Mass at Cathedral of Mary Our Queen in Baltimore.

"We are so proud of our students who have been chosen as Knott Scholars and for all their hard work and achievement," Arnold said. "I share in the joy of their parents, families and teachers who have encouraged them, and I am grateful to the Knott Scholarship Fund for all they do to encourage our Catholic students to grow in their faith and develop the gifts God has given them. Congratulations to our newest class of Knott Scholars."

To learn more about the Knott Scholarship Fund, go to www.knottscholar.org.

CTA Creates An Underwater Adventure In "Finding Nemo Jr."

» Continued from page 42

Director Jordyne Hebron lets the kids have input into some aspects of what they're working on, such as backstories.

"I believe it helps inform what they do onstage, and it makes it 10 times more powerful," Hebron said. "As a director, I try to not say, 'This is what it should be.' I like to hear their ideas and sort of guide them in that process, because I want them to have ownership of their character."

John enjoys how he and the actors and staff can transform and add new dimensions to a familiar story.

"When you first watch 'Finding Nemo,' you say, 'OK, this is a good movie,'" he said. "Then when you get onstage, and then you perform it, it's two different things. It's a lot more powerful and meaningful than you

think it would be."

The backstage crew also helps the kids in their roles.

"When we direct our own crew, the cast can kind of look at what we're doing and see what they're supposed to be doing," said River Wyatt, a member of the tech crew.

This show will use puppets, which presents a unique set of challenges for the actors.

"You have to make them breathe and talk and sing and all that other crazy stuff," Hannah said.

Despite the challenges, the kids have handled the use of puppets well.

"As an adult, when I was first trained how to use puppets, I struggled, but they are handling it like champs," Hebron said.

The kids have been practicing all of the elements together from the beginning instead of working on mu-

sic first, followed by other elements including blocking and dancing.

Music director Jamie Levine explained that this style of rehearsal has helped them to be able to do full runs of the play a handful of times already, something that they'd usually only start a couple weeks before the play opens.

"They have been able to really get a lot of runs in and that helps them — especially because they're younger — just really build their characters, and kind of with the consistency of doing it again and again," Levine said.

To help with consistency, Levine also provides the kids with practice tracks so that children not yet able to read sheet music can still practice by listening and repeating what they hear. She also helps them remember when to breathe during the songs.

"If the choreographer tells you to do a turn on the fourth beat, it's the same thing with the breathing, and you want to know where you're breathing and breathe in the same places every time you sing the song," Levine said.

The staff also offers encouragement.

"They have a lot of friends on the crew, so often we're there for emotional support and we always cheer for them at the end of the shows and congratulate them at the end of their scenes," Wyatt said.

The play will run Fridays through Sundays starting on May 16 and ending on June 1. On Saturday, May 24, CTA will have a relaxed, sensory-friendly performance at 11:00am and an ASL interpreted show at 4:00pm. Learn more and find tickets at www.childrenstheatre-ofannapolis.org.

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If you've just found out you're pregnant, congratulations! This is such an exciting time. We hope you're savoring every precious moment... without stressing too much.

We're here with expert advice to help you maintain a healthy pregnancy and safeguard your baby before and after delivery. Here are some dos and don'ts:

Pregnancy dos

Every pregnancy is unique, so your doctor is your best resource. But in general, remember to:

- **Eat well.** A balanced diet supports your baby's growth. Include seafood rich in omega-3s.
- **Exercise regularly.** Even gentle movement like walking around your home or doing light bodyweight exercises can help keep you active and feeling your best.
- **Get plenty of sleep.** It's common to feel tired



when you're pregnant. Aim for seven to nine hours a night to support you and your baby.

- **Get your flu shot and other recommended vaccines.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend certain vaccinations during pregnancy to help mothers develop antibodies that can be passed on to their babies.
- **Limit stress and maintain your mental well-being.** When you're pregnant, your body goes through a lot of changes, all of which can affect your mental health. Reducing stress will go a long way toward ensuring a healthy pregnancy.

- **Take a prenatal vitamin.** Ask for your doctor's recommendations and look for a vitamin that includes folic acid and iron if needed.
- **Travel safely.** Your doctor will help you make informed decisions about traveling, including telling you when it's best to stop traveling (usually by 36 weeks).

Pregnancy don'ts

To protect your health and your growing baby, avoid:

- Dangerous chemicals, including some household cleaners, and refrain from cleaning cat litter boxes
- Foods that increase the risk of foodborne illness, including deli meats, raw or processed meats, and unpasteurized milk and cheese
- Excess caffeine (one cup of coffee a day is usually safe)
- Hot tubs and saunas
- Radiation, including X-rays, unless necessary
- Alcohol, tobacco and recreational drugs

These precautions can help you reduce risks and support a healthy pregnancy and delivery.

This summer marks 30 years of the Clatanoff Pavilion at Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center. Over the past decade, 1,616 Severna Park babies have been born in Clatanoff — a testament to the generations of families who have trusted us with their most important moments. We look forward to celebrating this milestone with our Severna Park community, and beyond, later this year.

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Unity Bands Donates Shoes To UM BWMC

The nonprofit Unity Bands donated comfortable, clinically appropriate shoes on April 21 to team members enrolled in a certified nursing assistant (CNA) course at the University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Medical Center (UM BWMC). The effort brings the total to 30 pairs of shoes donated by Unity Bands.

This class, made possible through a grant by the Maryland Department of Labor, provides entry-level team members working in various departments throughout the hospital with the necessary training to obtain their clinical

nursing assistant certification, enables their promotion to patient care tech positions, and puts them on a path toward nursing and more advanced clinical positions.

Running in partnership with Anne Arundel Community College, the program offered a fall and spring cohort, each with 12-15 students. The program consists of in-person classes, labs and hands-on experience in a real clinical setting. As part of the program, all students must obtain a uniform to wear in clinical settings for their safety, and to minimize the spread of infection. The uni-

form includes matching scrubs and clinically appropriate footwear that is closed-toed and water resistant. Unity Bands, through its new program Air Unity, collaborated with UM BWMC to donate appropriate shoes and show support for the health care workers during their CNA training.

Faces beamed as gift bags with shoes were handed out to students in Glen Burnie.

"We are very appreciative of our partnership," said Timeka Lawrence, development coordinator for UM BWMC, regarding Unity Bands.

At Unity Bands, the goal is

to support health care workers with families who may need additional resources. "We're here to remove barriers and common concerns such as how to pay bills so they can focus on other important things," founder John Schirrippa said.

Since its inception, Unity Bands has donated over \$17,000 in comfort care items and medical equipment to hospitals, supporting programs such as Feeding the Frontlines and health care worker resiliency efforts. Unity Bands is based out of Annapolis and supports communities in Maryland and New York.



Unity Bands, through its new program Air Unity, collaborated with UM BWMC to donate shoes and support health care workers during their certified nursing assistant training.

Musician Soars To Top Five Of Her Group In iHeartRadio Competition



Photo courtesy of Rob Boucek

Arnold resident and singer-songwriter Hayley Nicole advanced to the top five in her group in iHeartRadio's Next Music Star competition.

By Judy Tacyn

Arnold resident and singer-songwriter Hayley Nicole was casually scrolling on Instagram on March 31 when she saw an intriguing post offering musicians a chance to enter the national Next Music Star competition with iHeartRadio.

Nicole competed in "America's Got Talent" and "American Idol" in the past, but this competition is completed in a much shorter timeframe with all voting online. The winner receives \$10,000 and a spot to open for Doja Cat, Gwen Stefani and other musicians during Wango Tango in Huntington Beach, California, on May 10.

"I usually don't pay much attention to the pop-up ads, but something about this competition caught my attention, mainly because I like the idea of the live music festival,"

Nicole said. "To be accepted for the competition, I had to submit videos of me singing, and because I have had a YouTube channel for many years, I knew I had the content to send in quickly."

And by quickly, she meant immediately. By April 3, she learned that she had been accepted into the competition. By April 10, she learned she was in the top 10 of her group, and by April 17, she was in the top five. Nicole did not make it to the final rounds of voting, though the winner of the competition will be announced May 3.

The 22-year-old has been performing on the local music scene for the last three years. She started playing the piano and guitar while in elementary school, and considers her style as pop, indie and alternative.

For the iHeartRadio competition,
» Continued on page 56

May Concert Series Announced For Hatton Regester Green

By Meredith Winter

Each year, the Friends of Anne Arundel County Trails host a free spring outdoor concert series for all to enjoy at Hatton Regester Green in the heart of Severna Park. Local musicians spanning different styles and genres are slated to perform each Sunday afternoon this May at the park's gazebo, located along the B&A Trail near the intersection of Holly Avenue and Evergreen Road.

Park benches are limited, so attendees are encouraged to bring blankets and portable chairs. Treats will be available from Sweet P's food truck. Concerts will run from 4:00pm-6:00pm.

Check out this May's artist lineup:

Guava Jelly

Sunday, May 4



Annapolis-based trio Guava Jelly, comprising Bridgette Michaels, Dawn Madak and Mike Edillon, will kick off the May concert series with a Caribbean influenced and family-fun show. The band is known for infusing authentic rhythms and dynamic percussion into every performance. Lead singer/songwriter Michaels transforms familiar tunes into island-inspired celebrations that will have audiences of all ages up on their feet dancing.

"We absolutely love Hatton Regester Green," Madak said. "The audience is always so engaging and enthusiastic. Playing music in a wooded, outdoor setting like Hatton Regester Green lends itself to a special connection between us, the audience, and the open sky — music in its natural home. We look forward to playing all of your favorites!"

Prepare to be transported to a sun-soaked Caribbean paradise through the band's vibrant, feel-good music as they bring high energy that creates an infectious groove.

Dave Nolte

Sunday, May 11

A true hometown musician who lives near the B&A Trail and Hatton Regester Green, Dave Nolte frequently bikes



and walks his dogs along the trail. Nolte brings an eclectic blend of old and new music: He's as comfortable with classics like The Beatles, James Taylor, Van Morrison, Motown and Sinatra as he is with more recent artists including U2, REM, Counting Crows, Bruno Mars, John Mayer and current songs of today.

He has performed at dozens of venues in the greater Severna Park and Annapolis area, ranging from popular restaurants to clubs, parties and senior living communities.

Nolte performs both solo, as will be the case on May 11, and as a duo with Ginger Hildebrand. He has played in several classic rock bands, and in his distant past, played several shows with the Four Tops.

ilyAIMY

Sunday, May 18



Baltimore-based ilyAIMY (I Love You And I Miss You) will play the third Sunday in May, bringing acoustic grunge to Hatton Regester Green.

For over two decades, the group has played varied venues nationwide. With adventurous songwriters, the band features multiple lead singers, innovative acoustic guitar, and even beatboxing. Cello and lush harmonies soften rapid-fire lyricism for a "welcome jolt in folk," and the group is as likely to rock out as they are to break out into a barbershop quartet.

Singer/songwriter Vance Gilbert described, "Imagine, if you will, the rhythm section of Earth, Wind & Fire teamed up with the folk sensibilities of Steeleye Span, and you will have ilyAIMY."

Audiences can look forward to ilyAIMY performing as a quartet, bringing the "infectious energy, eclectic musicianship and hilarious stage banter" they're known for in their performances spanning festival stages to house concerts.

Expect to hear a few Led Zeppelin
» Continued on page 56



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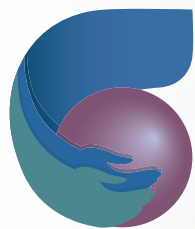
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Rams Head Presents Howie Mandel At Maryland Hall

By Zach Sparks

zach@severnaparkvoice.com

Howie Mandel has a deal for you. The comedian, game show host and “America’s Got Talent” judge is coming to Maryland Hall in Annapolis on May 17 at 8:00pm. He is promising a night of “entertainingly dangerous” standup comedy in return for the price of admission, which starts at \$70.

Audiences might know Mandel from his roles in TV, film or onstage. He was nominated for an Emmy Award for Outstanding Host for a Reality or Reality-Competition Program for “Deal or No Deal.” Before that, he portrayed Dr. Wayne Fiscus on the medical drama “St. Elsewhere” and created the animated series “Bobby’s World.”

Mandel spoke with Severna Park Voice editor Zach Sparks in April.

Howie Mandel’s Maryland Hall show is presented in partnership with Rams Head. For tickets, visit www.marylandhall.org/events.

Z: Thank you for doing this. It seems like you have a lot of shows coming up on the East Coast. You’re still doing 100-200 shows a year?

H: Yeah, standup comedy is my thing. Everything else is a little bit of a result of whatever standup comedy is. I never stopped doing standup. Standup is my favorite thing to do. But I should say that I do a lot of television, I’m on “America’s Got Talent” and “Deal or No Deal” and Saturday morning cartoons, but don’t bring the kids to my live shows. And the beauty of it is not that I purposely do anything that isn’t family friendly, but if it goes into that area, it does. It is very improvisational.

I look at it like a giant party and I’m just trying to be the center of attention. Anything can happen, and I want anything to happen. I want it loose and fun and free; that’s my primal scream. I don’t have to edit. I don’t have to throw to commercials. I don’t have to recite a line that somebody gave me. It’s just loose, fun, free and funny, and for me, laughter is the best medicine. And apparently, I’m hooked on the medicine.

Z: You’ve been doing this for over 30 years. Have you developed a sense of jokes that are universal versus ones that go best with certain crowds?

H: No. I think that humor is continuously a moving animal that is directly attached to our culture, so what was funny 20 years ago, 30 years ago, might not be funny or has no point of reference today. I like improvisational humor where it’s in the moment, so it’s about now.

We change. The things that we respond to are different than the things that we used to respond to and the things that we will be responding to in the future. If you’re going to be an entertainer and you want to continue entertaining, I think you have to be pliable. You have to adopt and adapt.

Z: You were working at a carpet store when you started this in the 1970s and by chance you performed at The Comedy Store?

H: Well, no. I always do everything in alphabetical order and that was the next thing in the Cs. Carpet to comedy (laughs). There was a method to my madness. No, I was in the carpet business, but it was in the mid ‘70s. I just went to a comedy club in Toronto as an audience member and then somebody dared me. They said, ‘On Monday nights up until midnight, they let amateurs up if you think you can do what you’ve just seen,’ and one thing led to another and now I’m talking to you. And yes, based on a dare.

And then, he asked me to come back the next night and I hung out at the comedy club in Toronto, called the Yuk Yuk’s, and then when I was on a vacation in Los Angeles, I dropped in on The Comedy Store. My buddy Mike Binder got me onstage and I got seen by a producer of a comedy game show called “Make Me Laugh,” and he hired me right there to go do “Make Me Laugh.” I did that and flew home. It aired in America, not Canada. I got called by “The Mike Douglas Show” and “The Merv Griffin Show,” and I just started getting work. I just happened into it, just like I’ve happened into almost everything I do.

Standup has always been something that I was doing, not even pursuing as a career, just doing, and I got a young comedian special and off of that, I went to a meeting and was on “St. Elsewhere.” I wasn’t pursuing being a dramatic actor, I wasn’t pursuing doing Saturday morning cartoons, I wasn’t pursuing being a game show host or a talent judge, but I always pursue a laugh.

Z: Now you’re giving hope to misfits everywhere.

H: I believe everybody is a misfit. Nobody fits. We’re all part of this puzzle called humanity. If you’re exactly like somebody else, you’re not living to your potential. I learned that now in my old age.

Z: You have talked about having attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). I find it fascinating that you willingly enter settings that make most people uncomfortable. You harness that fear or how would you describe that feeling?

H: Yeah, I am very uncomfortable. I am now at the point in my life, very comfortable with discomfort and not comfortable with comfort. I love that fear. It makes me feel alive. It keeps me in the moment. With my mental health, which I’ve been very open about, the key is, regardless of who you are or what issues you have in life, I think living in the moment is always the best. Some people are better at it than others.

I still like thrill rides, so it’s like a thrill ride, right? If you go on a roller coaster and you’re shot way up in the air and you’re flipped upside down and you’re being dived at, you think you’re coming that close to death, your adrenaline is going, and you’re just in the moment and it’s just pure joy and terror all at the same time, and if it does that to you and you like that feeling, you want to go on again. If it was just a little breeze blowing through your hair and you’re going 25 miles per hour, and it might be really comfortable, that would bore you.

That thrill of getting up on a stage live, and obviously after 40 years, I do have a repertoire to call on and I’m constantly writing, but the fact that I don’t know where it’s going to go and it becomes improvisational, it’s kind of scary. And I don’t mean that in a negative sense. That’s what’s fun. You don’t know what’s going to happen. You don’t know what’s happening in that moment in that room. You just know that it’s going to be entertainingly dangerous, you know? You could be totally humiliated or rise to the sound of a ha. Hopefully two of those — ha ha.

Z: People are going to see you everywhere. You’re going to be in Annapolis and have the other shows on the East Coast, “America’s Got Talent” is coming back and “Canada’s Got Talent” is airing. I saw the video with the contestant Tape Face. You seem to be a big fan of his.

H: He’s very funny. He’s very good. He turned the page for me as far as mimes go. I hate mime, but I love Tape Face.

Z: You even got to be part of the act.

H: Lucky me.

Z: The next season premieres May 27.

H: Yeah, come see me live and then watch me on TV and listen to my podcast, “Howie Mandel Does Stuff,” with a new one every Tuesday. Me and my daughter do that show. And then I do one every Thursday called “When A Stranger Callz.” I do that one with Harland Williams. Strangers just call in and we talk to them.

Z: You started “Howie Mandel Does Stuff” to bond with Jackelyn?

H: Yes, with my daughter during COVID. And then it’s turned into something. It’s four years and going strong and growing and growing and growing. It’s the highlight of my week. Sitting with my kid, having fun. It’s amazing.

Z: Does that make you proud you have been able to pass the love of comedy to one or all three of your kids?

H: I don’t know if they all love comedy. They all have their own interests. The girl I do the podcast with is a teacher, so she has a love of education. She has a really good sense of humor. They enjoy comedy.

My son who produces the show and produces many of the shows you see on the internet, he produces and built my studio, so he is a behind-the-scenes guy, Alex, who I’m proud of. And then I have another daughter who is a brilliant Ph.D. who has no interest in being anywhere in public. I had to talk her into being in her own wedding photos.

Z: I’m sure you had plenty of good advice for her.

H: She has good advice for me. My kids help me. They lead me.

Z: On “America’s Got Talent” last year, you had Richard Goodall, a 55-year-old school janitor, and that exemplifies that idea that you can find talent in all shapes and forms. I’m sure that continues to surprise you every year.

H: That’s the beauty of it: just when I think I’ve seen everything, this show proves you ain’t seen nothing yet. And this year is going to be bigger and better than any other year. This is our 20th anniversary.



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Partnership Brings The Arts Alive For Brightview Residents

By Judy Tacyn

Avila Home Care, serving Anne Arundel County and other parts of Maryland, started Avila Music & Arts Makers two years ago to bring the arts into senior living facilities, including Brightview Senior Living in Severna Park. Whether it's through entertainment by world-renowned musicians or exceptional artists, residents are enthralled with the opportunities to intimately engage with the arts.

Morgan Gray, associate executive director of hospitality services at Brightview Severna Park, feels the partnership between Brightview and Avila Home Care has been remarkable from the first meeting.

"From the Avila team to the musicians and artists, the programming has been a natural fit," Gray said. "Everyone interacts with our residents, asks for feedback and what they want to hear and see. Seeing the joy on our residents' faces are moments we all cherish."

After hosting a "senior" prom at Loyola Blakefield for residents of a Towson facility in 2023, Gretchen Maneval, director of external affairs for Avila, and her staff witnessed the power of music to trigger memories and create relationships that make new memories.

Starting with her personal connection to musicians at the Peabody Institute in Baltimore, Maneval developed Avila Music Makers programming. Professional musicians based in the area visit senior living facilities and perform for residents, family members and guests.



Renowned cellist Alicia Ward (center) performed at Brightview Severna Park in March with Andréa Picard Boecker (left) and Christian Tremblay (right).

Performances are scheduled during the musicians' "downtime" when they are not on tour and include vocalists and spoken-word artists.

"We have such vibrant jazz and classical music communities right here in our area, filled with performers wanting to give back to their community," Maneval said. "Performing in small, intimate settings, just 10–20 feet away from an audience, is a completely different experience for both performers and guests than, say, at the Kennedy Center or at Carnegie Hall. The interactions these performances bring are simply breathtaking."

Award-winning cellist Alicia Ward said performing for Brightview residents is a "special experience."

"It is wonderful to feel that, as a

performer, I can connect with those that I am playing for," Ward said. "It is a unique experience to see the individuals that I am playing for, which allows for a direct sense of communication when performing. I have great respect for the life experiences of the residents and enjoy speaking with them after the performance."

That experience is just as rewarding for Brightview residents, according to Gray.

"Our mission is to create relationships and to enrich our residents' lives every day," Gray said. "When the Avila Music Makers join us, the engagement they have with our residents is truly inspiring. There are a lot of toes tapping, hands clapping, and they are truly enamored with the musicians and enthralled in that

moment. It's very beautiful to witness."

Following the success of the Music Makers program, Avila created Avila Art Makers, a traveling art installation that beautifies the walls of the facilities. Some of the artwork is offered for sale to the public during the four-month viewing period. Then the artwork is taken down and taken to another facility, providing fresh pieces on rotation. Many times, the artists offer demonstrations or discussions with residents about their work.

"The artwork by Avila Art Makers displayed on the wall in the hallway holds a particular interest to me as an artist myself," said LaVerne Eberhardinger, a Brightview Severna Park resident. "The current installation by Carol Morgan, while abstract, reminds me of traditional art and water still life. The art of land and sea inspires onlookers and brings peace to my day."

Maneval said the Brightview residents are discerning connoisseurs of music and art, and all involved truly understand how special the Avila Music Makers and Avila Art Makers programming is.

"We all benefit from the synergy between Brightview and the arts," Maneval said. "This is everything we've ever hoped for when we brought music and arts into this community, and then some ... and more!"

For Gray, the feeling is mutual. "We hold our programming in the highest regard," Gray added. "The engagement with our residents is inspiring. It's a reminder to all of us to live in the moment every day."

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Burgers & Bands For Suicide Prevention Music Festival Slated For May 18

Since 2017, the team behind Burgers & Bands For Suicide Prevention has hosted a unique, all-day music festival to support mental health initiatives and raise awareness about suicide prevention.

This year's event will take place on Sunday, May 18, from 11:00am-7:00pm at Severna Park Taphouse. The family-friendly celebration will bring together gourmet burgers, live music and community spirit.

Burgers & Bands is an organization founded to bring awareness and raise funds for mental health initiatives in schools. The non-profit's mission is "to stop suicide by raising awareness, starting a conversation and funding suicide prevention efforts/programming." Its tagline, "You Are Not Alone," strives to help alleviate the loneliness experienced by people who suffer from depression and suicidal ideations.

To learn more about the upcoming Burgers & Bands music festival or purchase tickets, go to www.burgersandbands.org.

Concert Series

» Continued from page 50

covers in their lineup, too. Band member Rob Hinkal shared that ilyAIMY does a few of the English rock band's tunes, noting, "Even as an acoustic quartet, we do them justice!"

Sparks & McCoy

Sunday, May 25



Audiences who enjoy classic rock will not want to miss the finale of the May concert series to hear Sparks & McCoy. Edward Sparks and Steve McCoy are an acoustic duo who have performed together for 41 years at venues near and far. They cover favorites such as The Beatles, CSN&Y, America, The Eagles, James Taylor, Jim Croce, Cat Stevens, Peter Gabriel, Dr. Hook and many more.

Sparks & McCoy switch between six- and 12-string acoustic guitars, bass, harmonica and piano, all backing up rich harmonies.

For more information on the spring concert series at Hatton Regester Green, follow the Friends of Anne Arundel County Trails on Facebook.

Musician Soars In Competition

» Continued from page 50

she submitted two covers, "Teenage Dirtbag" by Wheatus and "Valerie," originally by The Zutons and performed by Amy Winehouse. She also submitted original music.

Voting was open to the public via the Next Music Star website. Nicole spent every day on her social media platforms promoting the contest and sharing the link to the voting page. She chose the videos to submit based on their popularity on YouTube, but she didn't expect to skyrocket to the top of voting among 30 groups of contestants.

"It was pretty crazy! There were so many talented musicians and singers in the contest," Nicole said. "I am really happy with how well I did nationally."

Though the \$10,000 would have been used to promote herself, she's thrilled she had an opportunity to share her music with a broader audience. The experience has further solidified her desire to be a professional artist. She has been studying music at Anne Arundel Community College and is even more motivated now to focus on music as a career. She is currently a music instructor at Garrett Park Music in Annapolis, and she hopes to one day be a full-time songwriter and performer.

"Songwriting for me is a way to express myself creatively," said Nicole, who considers Taylor Swift

a performer she most admires.

"Inspiration is everywhere, and I love creating scenarios in my head based on experiences, books I've read, movies I've seen, and places I've traveled. For me songwriting is storytelling ... merging poetry or short stories into lyrics."

Hayley Nicole's music and upcoming performances can be found on her social media channels: YouTube @HayleyNicoleOfficial, Instagram @hayleynicoleofficial, and at linktr.ee/hayleynicoleofficial.



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Is Social Security Under Attack? Yes, But It Always Has Been

Jason LaBarge
Financial Advisor
and President
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The year 2025 has seen increasing unease among retirees and working Americans. Already nervous about reports that the Social Security trust fund will be exhausted in about a decade, news reports today now frequently center around cuts in Social Security Administration staffing and other actions by the Department of Government Efficiency. People are increasingly worried that Social Security as an institution is under attack and may

not be available to them when they're ready to retire.

The reality is, it's been under attack for years! Understanding this issue requires a deep dive into how Social Security and Medicare are linked by a means-tested surcharge called IRMAA. For those fortunate enough to have saved for a comfortable retirement, the Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount dictates how much more you will pay for Medicare than everyone else, and the extra money you owe is deducted from your Social Security benefits.

If your modified adjusted gross income is higher than \$106,000 as a single filer, or \$212,000 if you're married and filing jointly, IRMAA kicks in, and you will have to pay more for Medicare Parts B and D. IRMAA uses a "two-year lookback," which means what you pay for Medicare in 2025 is based on your 2023 tax returns.

This can get particularly sticky for new retirees. If you leave a highly compensated position to enter

retirement, as far as Medicare is concerned, you are still making that generous salary and must pay extra. This means some people must pay as much as \$628.90 more per month than regular Medicare recipients. That's a significant percentage of your Social Security benefit!

The fascinating part about this setup is that the law authorizing it was passed in 2003, but the means-tested part wasn't set to be implemented until 2016. Many will wonder, why the delay? It's all about the boomers.

Boomers hold the largest concentration of wealth in human history — much of it in IRA and other tax-deferred accounts. Those accounts have required minimum distributions (RMDs) which, in 2016, kicked in once you turned 70-and-a-half, and those distributions count as income. In 2016, the first group of boomer retirees turned 70. To offset Social Security liabilities with taxes from retirement accounts, the government started with the accounts that have the highest balances.

One factor shows the bipartisan politicians who implemented IRMAA knew what they were doing: In 2010, they authorized a one-time program in which you could convert your IRA into a Roth IRA and, unusually, spread the tax liability that generated over three years. Those politicians joined regular Americans in converting their money into tax-free retirement accounts that carried no RMDs and therefore couldn't be used to juice your income and force you to lose Social Security benefits to IRMAA payments.

Clearly, IRMAA is a ticking time bomb waiting to drain your retirement savings, but it doesn't have to be that way. It's possible to prepare your retirement finances to reduce the impact of IRMAA, but for that, your financial advisor needs to be aware of the problem and plan for it.

Make sure your advisor is well versed in Social Security, Medicare and IRMAA so your Social Security checks go to you, rather than back to the government.

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thy, understanding and dedicated support. There, you will find a compassionate space to address your needs and embark on a path toward healing and growth. Additional areas of focus include mixed-orientation marriages, rekindling intimacy, and managing desire discrepancy.

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The Rumina Center for postpartum wellness is an inclusive practice located in Baltimore and Severna Park. The team has expertise in a wide array of infant feeding options and provides consultations and classes in lactation, bottle feeding and more. A nurse practitioner will consult with you in facilitating or preventing conception for family planning. The Rumina Center provides holistic mental health care and physical therapy services and is in network with many insurance companies.

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and solid leadership skills ensure that every client receives top-notch, personalized service from start to finish. More than just a real estate agent, she is your dedicated partner in achieving your property goals.

In April, we partnered with the **Maryland Plastic Surgery Center** and **PURE MedSpa at the Aesthetic Institute**, which shared its space with our wellness practitioners for our first Health, Wellness and Beauty Fair. Seventeen members in the field of beauty and wellness participated in the event, which was held inside of a three-story facility. Participants offered demos, free treatments, giveaways, discounts and more.

Our Successful Women in Business mixer was held at the incredible headquarters location of **Wildflower Stem and Sundry** in Baltimore. Not only is it a well-known florist with four locations, but it delivers food, wine, gifts and more. The Baltimore location carries apparel, stationery, jewelry and so many items in addition to fresh cut flowers.

Our Wellness Business Connections meeting was held at **Magnolia Wellness** in Severna Park. Magnolia Wellness is a center that includes a variety of healing practitioners such as Blue Sky Wellness, Invigorate Wellness, Wholly Light Therapeutic Massage, and other modalities.

Registration is open and sponsorships are available for the 50th golden anniversary celebration of our Independence Day parade. The parade will be held on Friday, July 4, from 10:00am to noon in Severna Park. We will also hold a decorated bike contest at the chamber with games and fun for our littlest community members.

RIBBON CUTTING



Spring Arbor Of Severna Park Celebrates New Leadership, Renovations

On April 22, community members and staff at Spring Arbor in Severna Park gathered to celebrate the senior living community's new executive leadership and recent facility renovations. The Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the occasion.

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