

PAGE 12 DECORATED BIKE CONTEST

This year's contest featured three categories.

PAGE 16 HISTORY OF THE PARADE

A look back at the parade's humble beginnings.

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*Full coverage
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floats on page 4.*

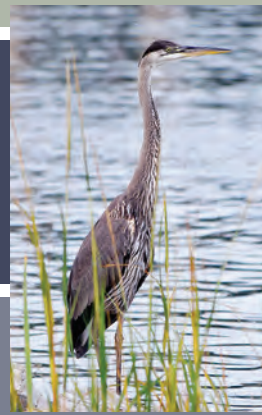


Severna Park Celebrates **50th** Parade!



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Severna Park Showcases Community Pride During 50th Annual Independence Day Parade

By Zach Sparks

zach@severnaparkvoice.com

More than 10 years have passed since the last sighting of Chessie, the serpent-like Chesapeake Bay monster. That is until this year's 50th annual Independence Day parade, organized by the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce.

The Linstead on the Severn neighborhood recreated Chessie in the form of a 65-foot parade float that won the categories of Best Overall and Best Community.

Fantastic Floats

Linstead resident and float coordinator Brian Donovan credited "overwhelming enthusiasm from the whole community" for the neighborhood's Chessie entry.

"We spent lots of evenings carting the extra mini trailers around the neighborhood with everyone spotting and figuring out how to make it all work right," he said. "There was a lot of failure and a lot of group learning, but it all paid off because it worked perfectly today!"

Trained artists worked on color and texture details, and the kids were a huge help in assembling and decorating pieces. As a final touch, they added "Paint the Park Pink" signs to support girls who alleged abuse.

"This community is truly special and very worth supporting," Donovan said. "It's a community worth winning for and so we built a massive winning float!"

Round Bay may not have won the title of Best Community, but its float impressed onlookers. Ashley King said her community wanted to honor the parade's 50th anniversary with a birthday theme that featured a cake and child bakers.

"We had some community members do the stripes, someone else did the strawberry filling,"

she said. "We had someone else donate aprons that the kids are wearing. Some of them have icing and flour on their faces. And then, of course, the bubbles are moving with (the float)."

Severna Park Voice publisher and parade judge Dianna Lancione marveled at the creativity of the neighborhoods.

"We'd love to have (more) communities participating, the Independence Day parade is as beloved as ever."



With its float Chessie the Sea Monster, Linstead on the Severn was the parade's big winner, bringing home awards for Best Overall and Best Community.

And The Winners Are!

BEST OVERALL

Linstead on the Severn

BEST THEME

Olde Severna Park Improvement Association

MOST PATRIOTIC

Airman First Class Nathaniel McDavitt Memorial Scholarship Fund

BEST COMMERCIAL

- 1 Homestead Gardens
- 1 The Greene Turtle/Wild Kid Acres
- 2 Pedal Pushers
- 3 Jing Ying Institute of Kung Fu & Tai Chi

BEST COMMUNITY

- 1 Linstead on the Severn
- 2 Round Bay
- 3 Olde Severna Park Improvement Association

BEST CLUB/NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

- 1 Magothy River Association with Maguire Marine Construction
- 2 Severna Park High School Marching Band
- 3 SPAN



Olde Severna Park won Best Theme and third place for Best Community.



The Greene Turtle collaborated with Wild Kid Acres to win Best Commercial entry.



With a beautiful floral display and a salute to American soldiers, Homestead Gardens was named co-winner for Best Commercial.

pate because they, hands-down, always do the best job and come up with something special," she said.

With the help of several sponsors, Magothy River Association (MRA) created a float called "The Mills that Built the Magothy." The design represented a sawmill, complete with a mill house and a working water wheel. With that combination, the MRA earned the Best Club/Nonprofit honor from the judges.

"The design illustrates how water was diverted to turn a wheel, which in turn powered a shaft connected to a saw blade," MRA President Paul Spadaro explained in an email. "Did you know that there were nine water mills around the Magothy, beginning with Beards Mill on Old Man Creek in 1698? These mills were critical

for the prosperity and survival of early settlers along the Magothy River."

A Strong Turnout

Severna Park residents since 1955, Terry and Darlene Thompson settled near the corner of Benfield and Evergreen roads to watch this year's event. For Terry, a Vietnam veteran, the parade is significant because servicemembers of his generation did not always receive support.

"We come here because it's very patriotic and I wear my hat," said Terry, who was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1967. "Sometimes I get recognition."

A 23-year Coast Guard veteran and Magothy Forest resident, Mike Moore watched the parade with his wife, Alice Moore, who retired from the

Navy, and other family members.

"We had three kids and they're all grown ... but they participated in numerous things: Boy Scouts, bicycles, dance stuff, Severna Park (High School) band, everything you see in the parade," Mike said. "So we come back to see it again and again and again."

Sitting next to Mike and Alice were Mike's sister and her husband, Kevin McGee, who served in the Marine Corps from 1973-1979.

"In today's world, you don't get a lot of chances to be with the community," McGee said. "I'm not really out here to be recognized as a veteran. I just want to share in the communal experience. Ball games, parades, concerts — what else is there?"

Continued on page 6

Severna Park Showcases Community Pride During 50th Annual Independence Day Parade

Maggy Cullman has lived in Severna Park for 45 years and has seen almost every parade.

"It's the way a Fourth of July parade should be — it's small town, it's the locals, everybody waves at their neighbor on the float," she said when asked what makes the parade special. "I'm on the Olde Severna Park Improvement Association and our float is outstanding every year, and we always win; sometimes Linstead wins."

David Opdycke enjoyed the parade with his three children — Holland, Elyn and Nicholas — and his friend Lori Repko. Opdycke stated it was their fourth year in a row watching the parade; he grew up in Magothy Forge and remembers the Severna Park parade being around when he was a kid.

"I just like all the different vendors, the people that are in the parade," he said. "It's got a good mix of different services and the scouts and the police — I just like all the different entries that are in the parade."

Repko added, "I teach right here at Severna Park Elementary, so I enjoy watching all my



Terry Thompson is glad to see the support veterans receive today. When he came home from Vietnam, service members did not receive a warm welcome.

students go by, and the Girl Scouts and the Boy Scouts and all the kids that are involved."

Jaspree Blevins attended the parade with her son, Joseph, and her parents, who came from

Georgia. Blevins had been to the Annapolis parade before but not Severna Park's event.

"This is monstrous. This is great," she said. "And then it's just beautiful to see the amount of people here. (Someone) was telling me that they stage the night before, and I'm in awe of that."

The judges also left in awe of the parade and its 50-year legacy. The route has changed, and the number of entries has grown, yet the small-town Americana feel has endured.

"It was great to see so many people from our community come out and celebrate how special our country and Severna Park are, and commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Fourth of July parade and our town," Lancione said. "I really appreciate the chamber of commerce, and all the communities and organizations that helped support the parade and are an integral part of making Severna Park great." ■

Meredith Winter contributed to this story.



Most Patriotic went to the Airman First Class Nathaniel McDavitt Memorial Scholarship Fund with its F16 Fighting Falcon design.



Magothy River Association and Maguire Marine Construction joined forces and were awarded Best Club/Nonprofit Organization.




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The Falcons marching band was voted second in Clubs/Nonprofits.



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Kids' Patriotic Decorated Bikes Pedaled Into The Parade

By Jaina Peveto

A little after 10:00am on July 4, over 30 children crowded together outside the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce to learn the winners of the 2025 decorated bike contest. Their bikes washed the street in a red, white and blue sea of streamers, pinwheels, handmade signs and other festive decorations.

Each year, the contest features three categories: Best Overall, Most Original and Most Patriotic. First place through third place prizes are awarded for each category, and when the contestants join the Severna Park Independence Day parade, the winners get to lead the charge.

Many of the contest's participants looked forward to joining the parade after the announcement. Best Overall winner Brynn Bond, who participated for the first time this year, was especially excited to

see her bike's pinwheels and flags blow in the wind.

When asked by a fellow contestant how she was going to get everything off her bike after the contest, Brynn said, "I'm going to keep it on!"

Second place in the category was awarded to another newcomer. Emily Klebaner's idea to zip-tie a patriotic rooster to her bike paid off. Though thrilled to have done so well, Emily was already looking forward to what would come next.

"I'm excited to ride in the parade and have fun," Emily said after learning of her placement. "I made a friend and I'm going to ride in the parade with her!"

Most Patriotic winner and 9-year-old Ben Matsumoto was also strategic with his bike design. Ben placed second in the category behind his sister Emma Matsumoto last year and was pleased about his improvement. He showed off an eagle placed in his bike's cupholder and explained that it was his favorite part. "The eagle made it a better chance of winning," Ben said.

Emma, 10, went for a different category this year. She put a flamingo on a pink bike in honor of a tropical theme and won second place in Most Original. Fittingly, she started work on her bike before going on vacation. "I did tropical because I really like pineapples and because flamingos are pretty and pink," she said.

This year, contestants were creative with costume design as well as bike decorating. Both second and third place winners for Most Patriotic dressed up with their bikes. Eight-year-old Oliver Bark, who placed second, decorated his helmet

Contest Winners!

BEST OVERALL

- 1 Brynn Bond
- 2 Emily Klebaner
- 3 Brady Roach

MOST PATRIOTIC

- 1 Ben Matsumoto
- 2 Oliver Bark
- 3 Ava Paisley

MOST ORIGINAL

- 1 Lola Rice
- 2 Emma Matsumoto
- 3 Zachary Bratten



**BEST
OVERALL**
Brynn Bond



**MOST
PATRIOTIC**
Ben Matsumoto



**MOST
ORIGINAL**
Lola Rice

with a mohawk that matched his explosively red, white and blue bike, which he named "Firework" in honor of the firecrackers and fireworks he decorated it with.

Third place for Most Patriotic went to 6-year-old Ava Paisley, who rode a two-person bike with her mom and dressed as a bald eagle. "I was like, 'Mom, I want a Fourth of July costume!'" Ava explained. She already has ideas for next year.

Another contestant who showed off an animal was 10-year-old Lola Rice, who achieved first place for Most Original this year after winning Best Overall last year. Her bike was adorned with a giant unicorn head, and she showed off a drawing

she had done of her bike's design.

This wasn't her unicorn bike's first visit to the contest, and Lola was excited to return with a bike design inspired by an idea from when she was younger. "I just wanted to make something that I wanted to do when I was little," Lola said.

There was fun to be had even for those who didn't win. Like many of her peers, 14-year-old Victoria Perez looked forward to riding in the parade after the contest. Victoria, a first-time competitor, was joined by three younger sisters: Ariesa, Erin and Lucy.

"I don't remember if I've ever been in a parade or not," Victoria said. "I kind of just like the idea of going, 'Wheeeee!'" ■



MOST PATRIOTIC
2nd Place Oliver Bark



MOST PATRIOTIC
3rd Place Ava Paisley



BEST OVERALL
2nd Place Emily Klebaner



Grant & Josephine Jurkiewicz



Ariesa, Erin, Lucy & Victoria Perez



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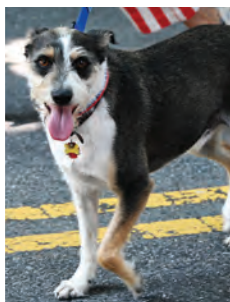
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CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF THE SEVERNA PARK INDEPENDENCE DAY PARADE

By Sarah Sternhagen

Calling the first Severna Park Fourth of July parade a parade at all might be a stretch. That 1975 parade served as a dry run of sorts for the 1976 parade, which honored the 200th anniversary of the United States. Cliff Dawson, owner of Dawson's General Store, served as the first grand marshal.

Peg Nelson, Sue and John Norris, Marguerite Mills, Skip Carr and Lou Heck have all been credited for their roles in bringing the parade to fruition.

"The first year we started it, it rained, and in those days the only thing we had to decorate with was crêpe paper. Well, crêpe paper, when it gets wet, gets pretty sad," parade committee member Sue Norris told the Voice prior to her death in 2014. "So basically, the first year was not much of anything. We had a few floats, and there were a few people walking, but it was messy."

That humble beginning is almost inconceivable 50 years later. Crowds pack Benfield Boulevard to Cypress Creek Road with lawn chairs and blankets to watch members of more than 100 organizations walk, bike or ride in floats. The event grew quickly, drawing more than 1,000 spectators by 1978.

But some things have stayed the same since the first parade in 1975. The Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce still sponsors the event. The decorated bike contest has existed since the parade's inception, vintage cars were quickly added to the lineup, and the Severna Park High School marching band is a staple musical lineup.

Over time, the parade route has shifted. With Benfield Road under construction, parade entries originally departed from Severna Park Middle School. The procession now starts on Benfield Road and winds down Evergreen, but for many years, the parade ended at the Park Plaza shopping center, before switching to an earlier stopping point on Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard.

This Independence Day tradition also used to include post-parade family activities, first at Park Plaza and in later years at Cypress Creek Park. Art Ebersberger, former president of the Severna Park Jaycees, recalled 1975's post-parade party consisted of a softball tournament between the communities



U.S. Congresswoman Marjorie Holt represented Maryland's fourth district for seven terms, from 1973-1987, and was honored as grand marshal of one of Severna Park's earliest Independence Day parades.



Sue Norris (left), one of the parade's founders, and Linda Zahn were announcers during the 1998 parade. Zahn served as CEO of the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce, and therefore organizer of the parade, for 27 years.



of Severna Park. Organized by Ebersberger, the tournament evolved into a festival a few years later when nearly all of the town's 50 neighborhoods hoped to join the competition and it outgrew its allotted time and space.

Sponsored by the Jaycees, the festival was instituted in 1977, and included speeches, entertainment, food and games. Over the years, it moved from Cypress Creek to Park Plaza back to the park, and included ice cream eating contests, balloon rides and more.

For five decades, the parade has celebrated the contributions of many area residents by having them ride in the parade as grand marshals. Norris was the grand marshal in 2014 for the second time; she was co-marshal with her husband, John, in 1987. Congresswoman Marjorie Holt, jewelry store owner George Mercado, Severna Park High School athletic director and coach Andy Borland, dance teacher Mary Carter and real estate agent Hammond "Skip" Carr were all bestowed with the honor, as was Mills, the founder and first publisher of the Severna Park Voice, who served as the grand marshal in 1985.

In 2017, the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce selected Betty Winkelmeyer Wells to be the grand marshal. As the daughter of Walter Winkelmeyer, the chamber's founding president, Betty knew the importance of small businesses and the community sharing mutual support.

"We didn't see a lot of flags flying (in the beginning)," she said of the parade's early years. "The enthusiasm of everyone at the parade is so on target. It's getting bigger and better."

Linda Zahn has seen that growth firsthand. She planned nearly 30 parades as CEO of the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce from 1990 to early 2018. In her first year organizing the parade in 1990, she wore the Falcon costume and marched with the Severna Park High School band.

"It was my first parade, and I'll never forget it," she previously told the Voice. "I thought there should be a mascot for the high school, but nobody would wear the costume."

Zahn donned the head-to-foot Falcon costume herself. "I was barefoot because I thought I would be riding on a fire truck, but the fire truck couldn't carry anyone who isn't authorized personnel," said Zahn, who walked the two-mile parade route in her bare feet while enduring the July heat.

As Zahn and other longtime observers can attest, current events also influenced the parade. In the wake of Operation Desert Storm in 1991, parades across Maryland honored veterans returning from the Gulf War, including Army Specialist Ann Lopez who rode in a tank during the Severna Park parade. Election years were no exception, with many candidates marching in the parade.

Severna Park saw record attendance in 1995 when the Annapolis Fourth of July parade was canceled because of road construction on its normal route.

Continued on page 18



Pat Troy became involved with the parade in the 1970s, was chair of the 25th annual parade, was honored as grand marshal in the mid-90s, and served as a parade judge for several years.

During the early years of the parade, the Syncopated Seniors performed in the Independence Day festivities. The "kitchen band" of entertainers was led by Severna Park Voice founder Margueritte Mills, who helped organize the parade for many years from its inception.



Severna Park's own Heather Davis, who was crowned Miss Maryland in 1998, rode in a convertible in the 1999 parade.

Below: Honored this year as the grand marshal of the golden anniversary parade, F. Scott Jay transformed his company truck into a float celebrating Maryland in a past parade.



Below: The Severna Park Magazine, a publication that preceded the Severna Park Voice newspaper, had a float in the 1981 parade.



Left: Lou Heck, one of the creative minds behind the earliest parades who built the chamber's eagle float, was grand marshal in 2001.

Continued from page 17

Spectators spilled into nearby communities for weekend festivities and that same year Jones Intercable started airing the parade on television.

The parade hit a milestone of 100 entries in 1998. Sports teams, charities, youth groups, churches, schools, local businesses, equestrian riders and even clowns would walk the parade.

The 2002 parade marked the first Independence Day after 9/11. The parade's theme, "United We Stand," was chosen to honor both the people who died that day and the several Severna Park natives who traveled to New York City in the aftermath to help with recovery.

Philanthropy became a large part of the parade in 2003 when SPAN started its staple food drive. Volunteers pushed shopping carts down the road, collecting non-perishable food during the parade to help subsidize the busy summer season when families in need couldn't rely on school meals. The plan was a rousing success, and

SPAN has continued its parade food drive to this day.

Despite the heat, Severna Park's centennial celebration in 2006 had the largest participation yet with over 140 parade entries. Lou Heck, who helped start the 1975 parade, brought his "American Eagle" float from 1990 back to life. Children sold snow cones for \$1 apiece on the parade line while veterans rode in convertibles.

The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic forced the chamber of commerce to cancel the parade, something even bad weather had never accomplished. But community pride could not be extinguished, and several neighborhoods held smaller gatherings to replicate the patriotism and camaraderie of the larger event. The hiatus also stoked the flames for the 2021 parade, for which more than 100 organizations and groups signed up.

The parade has come quite a way from one decorated pick-up truck and a few soggy floats. ■



Left: Soggy conditions did not stop kids from rolling down the parade route in July 1979.



Right: Parade participants dressed as clowns had to pause during the 1992 parade to clean up after animals that had relieved themselves along the route.



Above: Just before the turn of the century, West Severna Park won first place in the community float category for its western-themed entry in the 1999 parade.



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Fun Facts About The Fourth Of July

By Jaina Peveto

Independence Day is a time to celebrate our nation, its founding, and its traditions. With almost 250 years of Fourth of July celebrations to look back on (and 50 years of the Severna Park Independence Day parade), there are many unique traditions as well as interesting history linked to the holiday. Below is a list of interesting Fourth of July facts.



1 THE GROWTH OF THE NATION

Though the first census wasn't taken until a few years later, the U.S. Census Bureau estimates that only about 2.5 million people lived in the colonies in 1776. Now, over 340 million people live in the nation. Maryland alone has over 6.2 million residents.

THE SECOND OF JULY



John Adams predicted what Independence Day celebrations might look like, writing in a letter to his wife, Abigail, that the nation's anniversary "will be celebrated, by succeeding generations, as the great anniversary festival." However, he thought it would be celebrated on July 2, the day the Continental Congress voted for independence.



3 A DAY OF CELEBRATION AND MOURNING

John Adams died on July 4, 1826, on the 50th anniversary of the nation. His last words were, "Thomas Jefferson still survives." He was mistaken, as Jefferson had died that same day, only hours before. One of Jefferson's last recorded conversations was a discussion with his physicians the night before his passing about it being the Fourth of July. Fifth U.S. president James Monroe died exactly five years later, on July 4, 1831.

In 1850, another president's death might also have had to do with Independence Day.



4 LATE TO THE PARTY

While the United States declared independence from Britain in 1776, Independence Day wasn't made an official federal holiday until nearly 100 years later. Congress passed the first federal holiday law during Ulysses S. Grant's presidency in 1870, giving holiday benefits to federal workers in Washington, D.C. It took nearly 70 more years for Independence Day to become a paid holiday for federal workers across the United States.

JULY FOURTH CELEBRATIONS ABROAD

The United States isn't the only country to hold celebrations on July 4. Rwanda's Liberation Day and the Philippines' Republic Day, or Philippine-American Friendship Day, are on the same day. Celebrations of the United States' Independence Day take place elsewhere as well. The Rebild Festival in Denmark is one of the largest Independence Day celebrations outside of the United States.



6 HOT DOG HOLIDAY

Americans eat more hot dogs on the Fourth of July than any other day of the year, averaging over 150 million, which is enough to stretch from one end of the country to the other five times. Though only a small dent in the overall Fourth of July hot dog consumption, participants in Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest eat many hot dogs every July 4. After having to sit out the competition last year due to a conflicting sponsorship deal, hot dog eating record holder Joey Chestnut returned for this year's contest.

A PATRIOTIC BIRTHDAY



Only one president has had a July 4 birthday: Calvin Coolidge, the 30th president of the United States, was born on July 4, 1872. The 150th anniversary of the United States took place during Coolidge's presidency, on which he delivered a speech in Philadelphia about the Declaration of Independence.



8 THE BIRTH OF A RAILROAD

July 4 also marked other historic events in the United States, including the beginning of construction of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, the oldest railroad in the United States. Construction on the railroad began in Baltimore on July 4, 1828. Marylander Charles Carroll, who was the last living signer of the Declaration of Independence, laid the first stone.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE



Thomas Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence on a "laptop." Jefferson's laptop wasn't a modern laptop of today, but rather a writing desk that sat atop his lap. The Declaration of Independence went through about 86 changes between Jefferson's original draft and its adoption on July 4, 1776.



10 THE BIRTH OF A CELEBRATION

The first organized Independence Day celebration took place in Philadelphia in 1777. The celebration was the beginning of the fireworks tradition for Independence Day. The Sons of Liberty set off fireworks over Boston Common that same night. The first public White House Fourth of July event took place in 1801 during Thomas Jefferson's presidency, despite him being the second president to occupy the White House.



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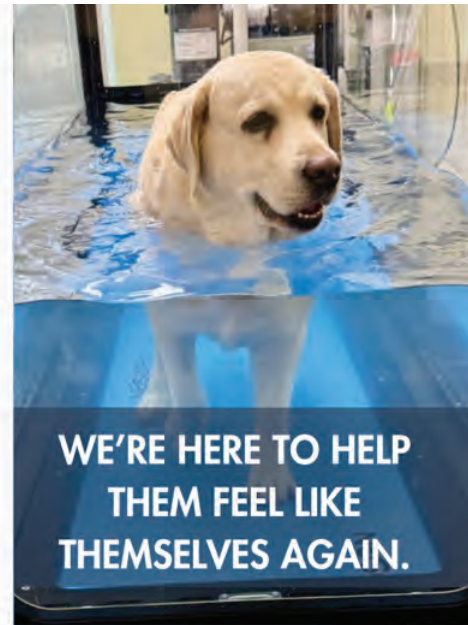
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Parade Sponsors And Volunteers

There's a lot to keep straight during the Independence Day parade, and few people know that better than Jeff Coomes and fellow members of the Maryland Mobileers Amateur Radio Club. A major part of his team's job is to relay information from the starting line down to the announcer at the judges' booth. The Mobileers also have a bicyclist who rides up and down the parade route to make sure no one's stopping or holding up the parade. One year, they even helped move an antique car out of the way.

Coomes was a volunteer firefighter for seven years before his health got in the way, and he saw amateur radio as the perfect opportunity to continue helping the community. He wasn't in charge the first time he volunteered with the parade, but when the Mobileers missed a parade, he reached out to the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce about helping the following year and has done it ever since.

Each year, the Mobileers volunteer at 10 to 15 community events, including races and runs, in addition to the parade. They also provide emergency support both locally and farther out. They run the Amateur Radio Emergency Service in Glen Burnie, and last year, members were sent out to help with hurricane recovery in Florida and Puerto Rico. When he meets amateur radio operators, Coomes tries to encourage them to get involved.

"There's a lot of public service events going on that people don't realize we're involved in," Coomes said.

Coomes and the Maryland Mobileers weren't the only community members to provide their support for this year's parade. **Below are lists of this year's sponsors and volunteers.**



The Maryland Mobileers Amateur Radio Club keeps the parade moving by relaying information from the starting locations down to the judges' booth each year.

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- Kitchen Tune-Up — *Most Patriotic*

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- Midas of Annapolis
- Park Books and Lit Co. Lab

VOLUNTEERS

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- Jason Jackson, Woods Memorial Presbyterian Church

Police Traffic Control

- Corporal Jamie Grover

Staging Areas

- Jim League, Parade Manager
- Phil Savard, Ace Handyman Services
- Jeanie Langelotto, Alzheimer's Association
- James Golden, Golden Consulting
- Denise Golden, Bello Machre
- Robert Mufareh and his daughter Juliana, My Commercial Capital
- Patrick Lee, Chesapeake Think Tank
- Theresa Connelly, Chesapeake Think Tank
- Robin Torrence, ATG Title
- Tanner Greenwalt, First Home Mortgage Corporation

- Mark Yarbrough, Shore United Bank

- Pam Negron, Farmers Insurance
- Caleb Reneau, Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce Intern

Decorated Bike Contest

- Colette Barnes
- Edinboro Early School staff
- The Goddard School of Millersville staff
- Rod Reddish, Pedal Pushers

Judges

- Jason LaBarge, LaBarge Financial
- Karen Authement, KMA Law Office
- Jessica Tinordi, Severna Park Taphouse
- Stacey Cassidy, Savvy Consignment
- Jonathan Katz, Severna Park Voice
- Dianna Lancione, Severna Park Voice

Announcer

- Earl Schaffer

OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

- Chamber CEO Liz League was the main parade organizer.
- Cassilly & Appel Group offered parking for the parade judges and food for the volunteers following the festivities.
- Elmore Law Group offered its parking lot.
- Negron Farmers Insurance Agency shared its restroom facilities.



Stars And Stripes Throughout The Years

Evolution Of The American Flag

By Hannah Bates

On July 4, citizens across the United States celebrate allegiance to the red, white and blue symbol of independence: the American flag. The flag's current design of 50 white stars and 13 alternating red and white stripes has existed for only 65 years. From 1775 to 1960, the flag changed designs to reflect the nation's growth. The flag of today is the product of centuries of challenge and triumph, and its often-forgotten past designs tell the story of America.

When the American Revolution began in 1775, the American flag did not exist. British colonists in America fought under regimental flags. One of these flags featured a green pine tree against a white background with the words "An Appeal to Heaven" printed over the tree. Another common flag featured an alternating red and white striped background with the picture of a snake and the words "Don't Tread on Me."

On June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress created a resolution that established an official flag for the new American nation. The resolution stated, "That the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation." This flag design was named the Stars *Continued on page 30*



On June 14, 1777, the Continental Congress created a resolution that established an official flag for the new American nation.

The resolution stated, "That the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation." This flag design was named the Stars and Stripes because each star and stripe on the flag represented one of the 13 original colonies.



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Stars And Stripes Throughout The Years

Evolution Of The American Flag



Continued from page 28

and Stripes because each star and stripe on the flag represented one of the 13 original colonies.

One version of this flag, the Cowpens Flag, had a ring of 13 stars with one in the center. This flag was used by the Third Maryland Regiment and was carried by the regiment at the Battle of Cowpens on January 17, 1781. That flag survived the battle and hangs today in the Maryland State House.

During the War of 1812, Francis Scott Key saw a 15-star, 15-stripe American flag tattered but flying after a 25-hour shelling of Baltimore's Fort McHenry in 1814. He was so moved at the sight of this flag that on September 14, 1814, he wrote the lyrics that would become "The Star-Spangled Banner." The piece officially became the national anthem of the United States in 1931. The flag that Key saw that night in 1814 is currently being preserved by the National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C.

In 1818, after the addition of seven new states, Congress passed a new flag resolution that required the flag to have 13 stripes and one star for each state. The flag design changed repeatedly over the next 142 years as new states formed.

In the 1860s, during the Civil War, American citizens began flying the flag on their properties as a personal choice. After the split between north and south, northerners started using the flag as a symbol of their cause. Since then, it has become commonplace for Americans to fly the flag at home and in public places.

In 1876, the Centennial Flag design became popular as Americans celebrated the 100th birthday of the U.S.

In 1892, inspired by the flag, American editor Francis Bellamy authored the original version of the Pledge of Allegiance. It was published in "The Youth's Companion," which was a family-centered magazine popular for over 100 years.

On August 3, 1949, President Harry S. Truman officially declared June 14 as Flag Day and stated that the American flag symbolizes freedom and protection from tyranny.

Ten years later, on August 21, 1959, Hawaii became the 50th U.S. state. Then, on July 4, 1960, the flag of 13 stripes and 50 stars that Americans know today became the new and official American Flag. ■

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He was so moved at the sight of this flag that on September 14, 1814, he wrote the lyrics that would become "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Citizens looking to fly the flag with honor and care can follow these steps:

- Display the flag from sunrise to sunset. When the flag is flown on a pole, raise it quickly and lower it slowly.
- When the flag is hung vertically, the stars should be displayed in the upper left corner.
- When the flag is lowered as part of a ceremony, everyone except those in military uniform should face the flag with their right hand over their heart.
- The flag should never be dipped toward a person or object, and it should never touch the ground or anything beneath it.
- If a flag is beyond repair and needs to be disposed of, it can be dropped off in a flag disposal box. Two nearby drop boxes are located at the Giant Food in Severna Park and the Severna Park Elks Lodge 2482.



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