

Severna Park Shows Unity Against Racism  
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JULY 2020



## Severna Park Celebrates Independence Day

Although the annual Severna Park Fourth of July parade is being moved to Labor Day due to the coronavirus, several communities carried on the tradition. Round Bay, Colchester, Manhattan Beach and West Severna Park were among the neighborhoods that celebrated in style.  
**See more photos on page 11.**



## Nonprofits Keep Families Afloat

By Zach Sparks

After the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, one family sheltered another family that was homeless, and then the woman from the donor family lost her job and needed help. So she came to SPAN.

A social worker came to SPAN after she discovered that a student's family was living in a cheap hotel.

Across Severna Park, these stories are more common than some people might think, and during the COVID-19 pandemic, SPAN, ACAN and other nonprofits have stepped up in a big way to help those in need.

"Everybody is one or two paychecks from being in need when you think about it, because if you have a high-paying job and live in an expensive house and all of the sudden you're out of work, you're going to have more bills due than the next person," said SPAN's director of development, Ellen Kinsella. "So we get some of that sometimes. A lot of white-collar families are just down on their luck."

### SPAN

An independent nonprofit food pantry and emergency services provider, Serving People Across Neighborhoods (SPAN) has been helping local families with eviction prevention, utility turnoffs, medical/prescription bills and food since 1990.

The coronavirus has forced SPAN to adapt. Kinsella and SPAN's director of operations, Jennifer Pumphrey, sent

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## Community Reflects On The Loss Of Janet Pack

By Zach Sparks

"I don't have a lot of money, but what I do have is love." That was one of the guiding principles of Janet Pack, the executive director of Asbury Church Assistance

Network (ACAN), who died of a heart attack on May 25.

Throughout her 58 years on earth, Pack routinely gave whatever she could to feed the hungry, clothe the cold, and to give respect and love to anyone who felt hopeless, regardless of their status or their condition.

"She was very selfless as a mother, as a cousin, as an auntie, as a friend," said her youngest son, 38-year-old Wesley Pack, who had a close relationship with his mom and would often talk to her six times a day.

Janet's path forked in many directions. Over the years, she was a minister, a certified nursing assistant for the Department of Aging and Disabilities, and a

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Margueritte Mills  
Volunteer  
Of The Month

## Elfie Eberle Reflects On Longtime Service To OGT



By Elizabeth Harwood

Twenty-seven years after an unsuspecting trip to Russia, Severna Park resident Elfie Eberle is stepping down as branch manager of the Maryland branch of Orphan Grain Train (OGT) in Millersville.

She's also not going anywhere.

According to its website, OGT is a "Christian volunteer network that ships donated food, clothing, medical and other needed items to people in 69 different countries including the USA."

Eberle was first introduced to OGT in 1993 while visiting her daughter in Russia. Her daughter was teaching English as a second language. After learning more about the needs in St. Petersburg, Eberle returned to her home at the time, New York, determined to locate pediatric wheelchairs.

"I didn't find a single pediatric wheelchair," Eberle said, "but [I found] all kinds of other things."

Deeply inspired by the available resources where she lived and also knowing the spectrum of need in Russia, Eberle coordinated with OGT headquarters, gathered a board, and founded the New York branch of OGT, where she stayed rooted until 2003 when she relocated to the Annapolis area. Eberle had no ambition to start another branch of OGT; however, after a three-year evolution of repeating familiar cycles, Eberle founded the Maryland branch in 2006.

OGT facilitates the movement of life-changing supplies from those who desire to give (donors) to those who need (recipients). From medical, surgical and dental supplies to office furniture, bicycles, and shoes and

clothing, as well as supplies for school, sewing and hygiene, the most obvious need OGT has is space, a place to store the supplies until containers can be accessed, packed and shipped accordingly. Many businesses and organizations donated warehouse space for nine years until 2015 when the Maryland branch opened its own warehouse, now located on East West Boulevard in Millersville.

Year after year, Eberle has witnessed miracle after miracle, for which she gives repeated kudos to the people around her — and a lot of prayer.

"You meet the most wonderful people, giving people, caring people," Eberle explained, "people that will go the extra mile to help someone else. It's lovely to be around people like that, and it inspires you to do even more."

Ron Phipps, assistant branch manager, has been volunteering alongside Eberle since 2006 and describes her as a leader who leads by example, as well as relentless passion and enthusiasm.

"She just wants to do the right thing," Phipps said, "and that's serve the needy ... and of course they're overseas and they are also here in the United States."

Inheriting the reigns as branch manager is Jeff Piegols, whose role officially began June 1, 2020 after beginning the formal transition last fall.

"I've never had a transition before from one job to another that's been so smooth and so endearing as the one with Elfie," Piegols explained. "She just spends time with me and answers whatever questions I have. I can call her anytime and she helps me out with anything, and it's wonderful. It's as if she's never left."

In fact, because OGT is in Eberle's blood, retiring from the work entirely isn't possible for her. As long as she is able, she will continue to volunteer in some way. In the meantime, Eberle fondly reflects on the countless successes earmarked by this transition, as well as the many challenges.

"It has been a joy," Eberle shared. "It has been such a joy. It's hard work, I'm not denying that. And there are times where you say, 'Oh my goodness, how am I ever going to do this?' But the overriding emotion is joy because we have seen miracles."

To learn more about OGT, including how to volunteer, visit [www.ogt.org/branches/maryland](http://www.ogt.org/branches/maryland).

## Marsh Landing Overtaken

The Anne Arundel County Board of Appeals overturned the county's approval for the Marsh Landing subdivision in June after hearing testimony from the Magothy River Association, which worked with the Berrywood community, Greater Severna Park Council, Growth Action Network and Chesapeake Legal Alliance. The Berrywood community argued that the stormwater controls proposed by the developer would not protect the sensitive Cattail Creek wetlands and would undo the nearby \$1 million Cattail Creek restoration project.

Upon learning of the decision, County Executive Stuart Pittman issued a statement. The following is an excerpt from that statement:

"I was disappointed that the project was approved under the previous administration and that our staff was unable to overturn that decision, but I was appreciative that residents never gave up. They organized and they won at the Board of Appeals, but they should not have had to step in to correct the county's work.

Under new leadership at both Planning and Zoning and Inspections and Permits, those departments are now enforcing the laws that protect our environment and manage our growth. Like any government review process, it's long and complicated, but at least now it's consistent.

Developers became accustomed in this county to buying land in environmentally sensitive areas at low prices, using their political influence to get it upzoned and to win modifications to circumvent our laws, and then walking away with exorbitant profits.

Enclave at Crofton, Glebe Heights on the Mayo peninsula, and the Hogan Companies' development between Cabin Branch and Saltwater Creek are all recent projects that failed to meet the requirements of our laws, but would probably have been approved under previous administrations.

Now that we've repaired the tools we must use to prevent bad development in our county, it's time to move forward on Glen Burnie revitalization, transit-oriented development, and the smart growth that gets cars off the road and meets the needs of the hardworking people of this county.

Thank you to all residents who have stepped up to protect the natural resources of this county. We have more work to do, but let's celebrate this win."

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- Oliver Wendell Holmes**



Photos courtesy of Matthew English

*Hundreds of people supported racial equality by visiting Severna Park High School, masks over their faces, during a silent vigil for George Floyd on May 31. The Anne Arundel County government and the City of Annapolis have since introduced body camera legislation and discussed a civilian review board, respectively.*

## George Floyd Vigil Shows Unity Against Racism

*Where Do We Go From Here?*



By Zach Sparks

When two Severna Park moms organized a silent vigil in honor of George Floyd on May 31, they intentionally gave as little notice as possible.

They wanted to discourage counter-protestors from attending the vigil in the Severna Park High School parking lot and they wanted their message to be clear: America has an issue with racism and there is no room for hate.

A 46-year-old Black man, Floyd was killed in Minneapolis on May 25 when a white police officer placed a knee on Floyd's neck for nearly nine minutes, ignoring Floyd's pleas of "I can't breathe."

Floyd's death came about two months after Breonna Taylor was shot in her Kentucky apartment during a drug raid approved with a search warrant for someone who did not live at the residence.

With Black children of their own, the Severna Park moms planned the vigil to honor Floyd and to bring awareness to racism and police brutality in a way that also promoted unity.

"There was a lot more attention from rioting and looting than the peaceful protests," one of the organizers said, speaking anonymously to keep the focus on the cause instead of herself. "The vigil showed how long nine minutes is and how loud violence can be."

Roughly 200 to 300 people attended the silent vigil.

"I thought it was so incredibly respectful," one of the moms said. "People just walked.

We were in awe."

Among those in attendance was Matthew English, a white man who graduated from Severna Park High School in 2015.

"I wanted to show solidarity not just for the George Floyd family but also for the rest of the nation that is experiencing this," English said.

English was impressed with the turnout despite COVID-19. Everyone was wearing a mask, socially distanced, and together their silence made a powerful statement, he said.

"The vigil started at 4:00pm, and at 4:04pm, I looked down at my watch and it had only been four minutes," English recalled. "I thought, 'When George Floyd had a knee on his neck, he still had five minutes of that to go.'"

The silent vigil organizers said communications about race have been ongoing in their households prior to Floyd's death, but they hope this event sparks a conversation for other families.

"For my family, it was about activism, letting others know 'you're not alone,'" one of the moms said. "Our family was very touched by the number of families that showed up. It was an important moment for Severna Park, and it was a huge step forward."

Excessive police force and body cameras were two areas where they want reform.

Following the vigil, in June, the Anne Arundel County Council approved Anne Arundel County Executive Stuart Pittman's supplemental budget amendments to provide funding for body-worn cameras for the police department. The amendments will total approximately \$1.8 million for Fiscal Year 2021.

In a statement, Anne Arundel County Police Chief Tim Altomare said adding body

cameras is "the right thing to do."

"Your police department supports any technology that invests in public trust," Altomare said. "The addition of body-worn cameras is an opportunity to show the community and nation who we are as police officers entrusted with the safety of our residents, visitors and everyone in our community."

Body cameras alone are not enough to address the issue, Black leaders have said. That was one subject discussed when the City of Annapolis held a virtual town hall on June 24 to discuss race and equity, and to determine next steps.

Civil rights activist Carl Snowden called for a community civilian review board to ensure accountability and transparency. He also urged civilians to hold elected officials accountable by voting, and he encouraged citizens to exercise their constitutional right to videotape any activities that infringe on civil rights.

Annapolis Mayor Gavin Buckley and Annapolis Police Chief Edward Jackson announced on June 4 that the City of Annapolis would seek a group of citizens to work toward establishing a civilian review board to review allegations of misconduct by police officers in their interactions with the public.

Jacqueline Boone Allsup, president of the Anne Arundel County NAACP branch, agreed with the need for a civilian review board.

"Even if we don't know the means and strategies to stop the injustices, we must first start with arresting any individual that commits a crime, including police officers," she said. "All people who use their status to kill or mistreat people of color should have the same ramifications of any other person committing a crime despite their occupation.

Anne Arundel County Public Schools Superintendent George Arlotto said the school system is a contributor to systemic racism.

"As a school system, we need to and will embrace the Black Lives Matter movement openly," Arlotto said. "We need to understand how we contribute to the systemic racism that exists in our society and in our community. And we have to determine what needs to change to fully support all of our students, but in particular, our students of color."

Putting action behind those words, Arlotto and his executive staff read "White Fragility" by Robin DiAngelo, and as AACPS evaluates its curriculum, Arlotto said the school system will collaborate with community partners to ensure that the complete national and local history is told.

"We continue to enhance teacher and staff professional development. Implicit bias professional development is mandatory," Arlotto said.

Other speakers during the town hall included Alderwoman Sheila Finlayson, Aldermen DaJuan Gay and Marc Rodriguez, Annapolis Police Chief Ed Jackson, American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland legal program administrator Amy Cruise, Andre Dillard from Alpha Phi Alpha, and Dr. Charlestine Fairley from the Anne Arundel County Community Action Agency.

The full video can be viewed on the "City of Annapolis" Facebook and YouTube pages.

So, where do we go from here? Ideas have been championed. Elected officials have voiced their support. Now is the time for action.

"The vigil was just a moment of silence and a moment to know the community stands behind us," one of the Severna Park moms said. "It doesn't mean much if it's all we do."

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## SP Voice Donates \$3,000 To BWMC



The June edition of the Severna Park Voice was published in a magazine format with a focus on the work of local health care heroes during the COVID-19 pandemic. Taking revenue from the ad sales, the Voice donated \$3,000 to the University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Medical Center Foundation's COVID-19 Response Fund. The fund has been established to buy personal protection, masks and other needed supplies to protect medical professionals. The foundation's executive director, Kathy Burk, accepted the check from Voice publishers Dianna and Lonnie Lancione, and Voice account executive Larry Sells.

## Lauren's Law: Birthday Edition

**Lauren  
Burke Meyer**



Last week, we celebrated the second birthday of my daughter, Charlotte. And, while it was four days of festivities (that lucky toddler), I couldn't help reflecting upon how different it was from her first birthday.

Looking back on June 2019, those non-pandemic days were still crazy. I had a work conference and bachelorette party the week before Charlotte's birthday party, followed by my brother's wedding the weekend after. It was a jam-packed month of joy, but there were struggles too.

I'm sure many other moms of this generation can relate to the Pinterest pressure and a sea of DIY crafts and projects all claiming to be "easy." It was this platform that left my husband and I baking Mickey Mouse cookies until nearly midnight due to an assembly line of not only baking the cookies but also making, dying and painting the frosting. This was all before wrapping them up in baggies with ribbons on the day of the party and realizing the baggies had gone missing.

Flustered about my outfit being wrinkled and after multiple changes, I raced to Mi-

chael's. What I had hoped would be a quick errand left me aimlessly roaming the store. Finding myself in a long line, I cut in front of a woman, who wasn't paying attention, on her phone. This is a low point that I still cringe about and wish I could take back.

Moreover, I worried if my house was clean enough, or if there was ample food to feed all our relatives. We had leftovers for days. Food that Charlotte was too young to eat.

Fast forward to 2020 and while there were no hugs from our 14 relatives, there was no shortage of love during two socially distanced celebrations with both sides of mine and my husband Scott's families.

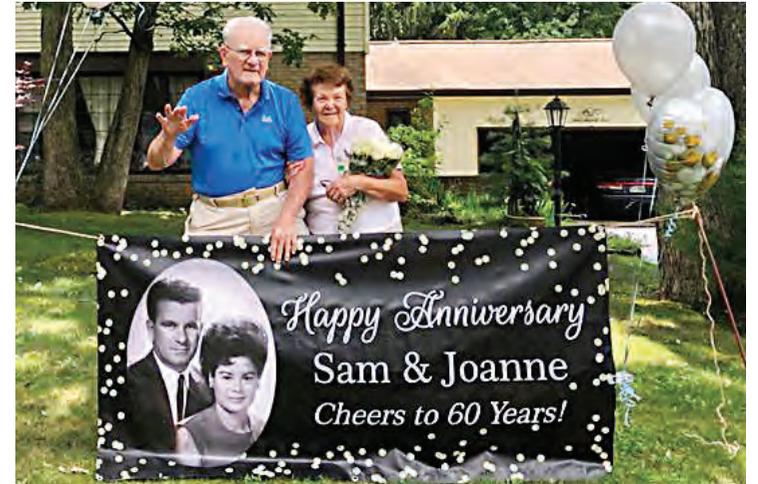
Charlotte was given so many wonderful gifts that she loves by her parents and extended relatives. And yet, out of all the thoughtful presents, there's an old baby doll of mine that she continues to obsess over.

While both birthday celebrations were so wonderful, one thing the pandemic has taught me is that simple is OK. It's more than OK, it's kind of wonderful. And, for all mothers out there stressing about making your child's birthday perfect, don't, because the only thing your child will remember is the love from his or her family.

Lauren Burke Meyer is a Severna Park native who was inspired to write Lauren's Law as a humorous play on the well-known Murphy's Law adage: "anything that can go wrong, will go wrong."

## Couple Celebrates Milestone Diamond Anniversary

According to Sam and Joanne Montgomery, communication, an easygoing disposition and common interests are essential for six decades of a great relationship. For example, Sam loved to play golf, and because of that, Joanne learned to play as well.



**By Desirae Martins**

Chartwell residents Sam and Joanne Montgomery celebrated their diamond anniversary and 60 years of happily ever after on July 2, 2020. The two married in 1960 in Drexel Hill, Pennsylvania, but have lived in the Chartwell neighborhood of Severna Park for the past 48 years. They moved there due to Sam's job at the time, and ended up raising their three children, Scott, Sally and Sharon, in their Chartwell home.

Sam and Joanne are originally from Pennsylvania, Springfield and Drexel Hill, respectively. They met one night at a Philadelphia ballroom where they were both enjoying live music and dancing. Sam had just finished his service in the U.S. Navy and was attending college using his GI Bill in nearby Chester. Shortly after meeting, the two got married and Sam's job with General Electric relocated them to Syracuse, New York.

They did not stop there, though. In just a few short years, Sam's job moved the family to many locations from Arizona, to Pennsylvania, to New Jersey, just to name a few. According to Joanne, neither of them minded moving. Sam was used to it from his time in the Navy and Joanne's father served in the military, so it never bothered her. They finally settled into their forever home in Severna Park in 1972.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, less than 5% of couples stay married for over 50 years, but Sam and Joanne make a lasting relationship look easy. "We have never had an argument," said Joanne, "and I can't tell you the secret to a happy marriage because I never had a reason to think about it. Sam is a good father and a good husband. Maybe that's the secret!"

According to the couple, communi-

cation, an easygoing disposition and common interests are essential for six decades of a great relationship. For example, since early in their marriage, Sam loved to play golf, and because of that, Joanne learned to play as well.

"My husband is a golfer," she said, "and I realized that if I wanted to see him, I had better learn to play golf, too."

They still share a passion for the sport and play together up to three times per week.

Another shared passion for Sam and Joanne is world travel. "Travel while you're young and able to enjoy it!" advised Joanne.

Over the years, the two have enjoyed traveling to Belize and Hawaii, and they speak fondly of their 40-year anniversary cruise to Alaska. This year, however, they celebrated their 60-year anniversary at home with friends and family. Because of coronavirus (COVID-19)-related restrictions at restaurants, the couple planned to mark the milestone anniversary with a catered dinner at home. "You have to be flexible!" Joanne said, "just another key to a long relationship."

A lot has changed over the years since Sam and Joanne tied the knot in 1960. One thing that has not changed in Joanne's eyes, however, is marriage.

"Young people are no less devoted to each other than Sam and I are, and divorces and separations happen at all ages," she said. "Young couples argue for the same reasons older generations did when they were young, and people get married for the same reasons [Sam and] I did: to share our lives, have a family and raise kids together."

This anniversary, like so many before, Sam and Joanne are happy to be together and celebrate with their family.

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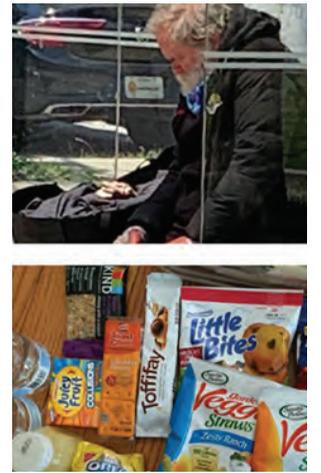
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(L-R) A \$2,500 donation from Severna Park Elks Club to SPAN has funded five weeks of tomatoes, bananas, green peppers, and other fresh foods. Audrey Tubbs, who is set to enter the second grade at Severna Park Elementary, sold 416 cookie boxes, with some of those proceeds going to SPAN. ACAN delivered 69 meals to the homeless on June 13.

## Nonprofits Keep Families Afloat: SPAN, ACAN And More

### » Continued from page 1

most of SPAN's volunteers home for their safety through June, but SPAN had help from Mike Monahan, Tia Johnson and Elle Johnson.

"It's five of us doing the work 50 people would do," Kinsella said in early June.

The group kept SPAN's front door locked and greeted visitors who displayed their Maryland IDs. Kinsella and Pumphrey have also been leaving boxes of food on the back porch for people to take as needed.

Clients in need have each received three bags with nonperishable foods like macaroni and cheese, pasta and soup.

SPAN went from 46 donations in March to 36 in April and 70 in May. Immense community support helped the nonprofit meet the rising need.

A \$2,500 donation from Severna Park Elks Club has funded five weeks of tomatoes, bananas, green peppers, and other fresh foods. Students have spearheaded neighborhood food drives.

Troop 1802 sold 1,502 boxes of cookies from September through December and split the proceeds from 288 boxes between SPAN and Anne Arundel Medical Center. Audrey Tubbs, who is set to enter the second grade at Severna Park Elementary, led the pack by selling 416 boxes.

"It feels really good to give people extra help," Audrey said.

Krystine Milewski, Katie McCord and Abbie Ellicott held a food and supply drive. The donations filled two cars full of bags and boxes of food, cleaning supplies, toiletries and masks, and even included \$265 in financial donations.

Numerous other neighborhoods, businesses, civic groups and individuals, along with SPAN's 14 member churches, have given the nonprofit a boost with monetary donations and food.

The recipients are grateful for the help. One woman, referred to as "Sarah" in this article to protect her privacy, recounted how she was fighting for disability compensation in 2012 when her godmother told her about SPAN.

"SPAN helped me with my BGE bill and also gave me food, hygiene products and baby items," Sarah said. "I felt very fortunate to have found them."

She has returned to SPAN several times over the years, most recently after the coronavirus began to spread in Maryland.

"When the coronavirus hit, SPAN had an outdoor pantry where I could get food and toiletries without coming into contact with anyone. SPAN has been a huge help to me. The people there are amazing, and they go out of their way to help people."

SPAN is currently paying late notices in utilities, not just turnoff notices, as long as its budget can support that effort. The nonprofit is also offering financial assistance with overdue rent, not just court-ordered evictions.

Call 410-647-0889 between 10:00am and 1:00pm Monday through Thursday to see if you qualify for food or financial assistance. Financial donations may be made through [www.spanhelps.org](http://www.spanhelps.org). Food donations may be dropped off anytime using the storage bin behind SPAN's building behind Our Shepherd Lutheran Church.

### ACAN

Asbury Church Assistance Network (ACAN) is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year after being formed in 2000 by pastor Ronald Ward and Air Force veteran Clinton Wallace to help people with emergency services like food assistance and utility turn-off notices. The 20th anniversary has come at a time when ACAN is more vital than ever.

The number of households served by ACAN spiked from 93 in February to 234 in March and 406 in April. To meet growing demand, ACAN started a delivery service.

"Before, we allowed people to come in and do their own personal shopping," said volunteer Rhonda Patrick, "but now everything had to move outside the building. Now we have to start with pre-packaged boxes and separate tables with other items."

ACAN assists people of all needs, ages and backgrounds. It serves meals to more than 80 homeless people every week; supplies diapers, milk, wipes and hygiene products for 30-plus babies on a monthly basis; provides services for more than 100 seniors; and food and school supplies to 17 college students each semester.

The nonprofit and its network of more than 20 volunteers are also raising funds to get its second delivery van on the road so volunteers can make simultaneous food trips. That is hardly the only need the nonprofit has.

"By us having to restructure, we need a lot more equipment," Patrick said. "We need tables, more racks so we can position everything outside, more tents to cover up when the weather is bad. And then we ran short on funding to help people with turn-off notices to pay utility bills."

ACAN volunteers have juggled all of their programs while grieving the loss of their beloved executive director, Janet Pack, to a heart attack on May 25.

The nonprofit is accepting new volunteers, as well as financial donations.

"I hate to be asking for things, but to support us financially will allow us to redirect that money where we need it," said acting director Margo Arnoux.

For more information or to donate, visit [www.acansevernepark.org](http://www.acansevernepark.org).

### Walk The Walk Foundation

Walk the Walk Foundation is helping Love Anne Arundel, a coalition of churches that are arranging pop-up pantries for those in need. A Millersville-based nonprofit, Walk the Walk also continues to support Anne Arundel pantries and is supplying diapers to the pop-up locations.

Rhonda Patrick of ACAN called Walk the Walk founders David and Kim Mitchell unknown heroes in the community. Walk the Walk has provided diapers, wipes and baby wash to ACAN for low-income families.

"I get a chance to see the joy it brings," Patrick said of Walk the Walk. "I see the gratefulness and the thanks when I give [supplies] out."

To learn more about Love Anne Arundel, visit [www.loveaaco.org](http://www.loveaaco.org).

### My Brother's Pantry

Broadneck-area families have looked to My Brothers Pantry for help. President Steve Myers has collected extra food for students while school is out and has revised distribution procedures to ensure everyone's safety. To learn more, call 410-757-5190.

### Being Grateful

As they continue to help families navigating their way through crisis, area nonprofits are thankful to be in a position to help, whether the beneficiary is a senior citizen or the woman who lost her job after giving shelter to a homeless family.

"We hear stories like this all the time," Kinsella said. "They don't know what to do, so they come to us for help. It hits home. It's very personal, and we've definitely run into people we know who come in for help and they're embarrassed. But it brings out the good in people."

# Severna Park Celebrates Independence Day



Round Bay families walked and biked from the community entrance to the beach. Olivia McGovern (top middle) was named Most Patriotic for her outfit while siblings Noah and Gretchen Keefer (top right) were selected as Judges' Choice, and Charlie Matthews' festive bike (top left) earned him the title of Most Original. Manhattan Beach (below, inset photos) held a parade with decorated cars and bikes. (Bottom Left) Cyclist friends of Pedal Pushers owner Rod Reddish met at St. Martin's-in-the-Field Episcopal School.





# MILITARY SPOTLIGHT

## SPHS Graduate Completes Army Police Officer Training

By Laura  
McElwain Colquhoun

Severna Park native and 2019 Severna Park High School graduate Cynthia "CC" Fowler recently completed one of the nation's most rigorous military police officer training academies in the United States, the Army's Military Police One Station Unit Training (OSUT). At 18 years of age, Fowler completed 20 weeks of training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. The first 10 weeks were the Army's Basic Combat Training Course (BCT), and the second 10 weeks were police training.

On May 27, Fowler became both a soldier and a federal police officer. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, her family was unable to attend her graduation. However, they were able to watch the ceremony on Facebook Live. Fowler

said her chain of command was gracious and provided pictures of training for her family.

"They did as much as they could, while still maintaining operational security," she said.

After graduation, Fowler began her first assignment at Fort Hood, Texas. Also due to COVID-19 restrictions, she was not allowed to return home to Severna Park before reporting to Fort Hood and was required to travel by secure military transport. "I have not had a day off since January 7," Fowler said, referring to the day she began basic training.

Most of her training at Fort Hood is preparing for base security and patrol in combat zones, as she is a police officer and not an infantryman. In wartime, her primary responsibility is troop



safety by patrolling bases and checking for enemy activity.

Fowler's new position is time-consuming, and she told her family recently, "We're always doing something, so if you don't hear from me, I am always busy being a soldier and police officer."

Fowler credits her extensive training in Brazilian jiu-jitsu for preparing her well for the demands of Army life. She trained with local jiu-jitsu master Danny Ives at Ivey League Mixed Martial

Arts in Severna Park for about six years. While in her freshman year of high school, Fowler fought her way to become the female North American Brazilian jiu-jitsu champion for the North American Grappling Association (NAGA), in the 14-and-under category in her weight class. Even the Army recruiter Fowler initially met, Sergeant First Class Esther Kutler, told her that her training would translate well to military service because the premise of jiu-jitsu is forcing the opponent to give up.

Fowler has already demonstrated her prowess using her jiu-jitsu background. While at Fort Leonard Wood, she won an OSUT company-level championship in a hand-to-hand combat competition in her weight class. She defeated both her female drill

sergeant as well as a former male college wrestler who is four years her senior.

Fowler has spent most of her life in Severna Park, having graduated from Folger McKinsey Elementary School, Severna Park Middle School and Severna Park High School. Her parents, Matthew and Eylene, still live in Severna Park. Her father was also a soldier, and Fowler was born in Japan while he was stationed there.

Though she struggled in high school knowing what career path she wanted to follow, Fowler is now confident her calling is in military service. She said, "I have found my thing."

Her future goals include transitioning to civilian law enforcement, potentially including the U.S. Marshall Service.

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## Coming In August!

The *Severna Park Voice* will publish a Health, Beauty & Fitness Guide with the August edition. This glossy special edition will feature insight from local experts on the latest in health, wellness, fitness and beauty.



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# Food Truck Tuesdays Returns To Earleigh Heights



Photos by Wornden Ly and Kyle Cleary

Earleigh Heights Volunteer Fire Company welcomed families to its parking lot in June to enjoy meals from food trucks from 4:00pm-8:00pm for the first time this season. Food Truck Tuesdays (also called Tasty Nights) will be held every Tuesday until October 27 and will be carryout-only as restrictions in Maryland began to ease up.



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## Phelps Celebrates 102nd Birthday



To celebrate the 102nd birthday of Charlie Phelps, his family and West Severna Park neighbors gathered for a parade on Saturday, June 28. Asked about his secret to a long life, Phelps said good nutrition, thinking positive thoughts, getting exercise, and being helpful to family members and the community.

## Downsizing: A Son's Story

By Marilyn Leek  
Owner, Chesapeake Transitions

Losing your parents is a rite of passage and fact of life. Yet, knowing this doesn't soften the emotional blow no matter what your age. John (not his real name) was raised locally in a beautiful home by two loving parents. By the age of 34, he had a career that had taken off and he was happy with his life. While John certainly knew he'd lose his parents someday, it was not something he really thought about.

Then, one day he got a call from home that his mother had been diagnosed with cancer and given only two months to live. As happens with many lifelong couples, John's dad was lost after his wife's death and he passed away soon after her.

Now suddenly alone, John was faced with what to do with the family home. It remained empty for a time as he processed his grief and current situation. Residing in another state and having a career that took him all over the world, keeping the house did not seem to be a viable option despite the wonderful memories. Although he didn't feel ready, John began the emotional journey of saying goodbye to the family home and contacted a realtor who advised him of what was required to put the home up for sale, including the need to empty the house. While not an older person himself, John was facing many of the same challenges that seniors do when downsizing.

Through his Realtor, John learned what a Senior Move Manager was and

how they assist people of all ages, not just seniors. John hired a local, reputable Senior Move Manager, and with her and her team's help, sorted through the contents of the family home determining what he would keep. The team packed up the items John wanted and coordinated shipping them to his out-of-state home. This still left a fairly full house of belongings that had to be dealt with.

At that point, the Senior Move Manager suggested an estate sale. Not only would the sale ensure his parents' beloved belongings would go on to be used and appreciated again, the sale would also help offset the cost of emptying the house. The Senior Move Manager orchestrated a successful estate sale and arranged for the remaining unsold items to be dropped off for donation as well as a cleaning service for the now-empty house. Throughout the process, the Senior Move Manager was in constant contact with the Realtor, ensuring a smooth sale of the house.

Only time will ease the grief John feels after the loss of his parents, but having the assistance of a Senior Move Manager made the sale of the family home easier. The steps necessary to do this were emotional for him but John is forever grateful to the team who assisted him throughout this process.

The owner of Chesapeake Transitions, Marilyn Leek is a certified Senior Move Manager who has been providing support and guidance for Maryland seniors and their families for over a decade.

## Loneliness And Seniors

Winsome Brown

Lean On Dee Senior  
Care Advocates



fill the gap left in a senior's social circle. The effects of loneliness become more prevalent, and these feelings can lead to depression and physical ailments.

### How To Help Alleviate Loneliness in Seniors

There are actions we can take to help our senior loved ones feel less lonely. Interaction with family members and people we care about helps everyone feel better about life. Think about the following:

#### Listening Goes A Long Way!

Listening has been shown to help build self-esteem and increase trust. It's an excellent place to start when you want to help your loved one feel less lonely. Encourage them to tell you what they're thinking about, and you'll learn more about how to meet their needs.

#### Consider Programs For Seniors

Most areas have day programs for seniors, where they can socialize and participate in group projects. Having a consistent plan, which means regular involvement on particular days. It also means that your loved one can look forward to events with expectation and enthusiasm! Check out your senior community center's offerings and see what you can get your loved one involved in.

#### Intergenerational Events

Include your senior loved one in family gatherings, birthdays, graduations, weddings, christenings and similar events. Socializing with other seniors is great, but mixing with other generations will nurture a strong family tie and help all your family members feel connected.

#### Group Living And Senior Check-Ins

Senior living communities allow seniors to interact and develop relationships with others who are their age and who may come from similar circumstances. If this is not possible, many senior care companies offer senior check-in services, where they will make regular visits to the home and make sure that your loved one is doing well and staying safe.

For more guidance and assistance alleviating loneliness for your loved ones, visit [www.leanondee.com](http://www.leanondee.com). Lean on Dee can help you through the journey of caring for your loved ones as they travel through their golden years.

We all look forward to retirement and the prospect of living our best lives in our "golden years." But for some seniors, the end of our working life brings the beginning of changes in our social circle, and we edge toward loneliness as we move through the other inevitable changes that come with aging.

### Changes With Retirement

It's a nice feeling to reach a point in your life where your focus can shift from your career and dedicating so much time to earning income. But what do you shift to? Whether it's travel, hobbies, volunteering, church or family, all of these things require social interaction.

Although we lose the boss and the schedule, we also lose our coworkers, our colleagues, our "work friends." For some, it might even be the person we refer to fondly as our "work spouse." It's common for people to lose their focus and feel they've lost their value. Trying to keep up these relationships may sound like a good idea, but it's not the same as seeing them daily, working on projects together, or engaging in office gossip. These relationships will fade, and they're supposed to.

### Making New Friends, Keeping Old Friends

Adding new projects to your retirement lifestyle may help introduce you to new friends you can spend time with while getting the benefit of social interaction. Many seniors maintain a church membership for spiritual reasons but reap the benefit of having a constant "church family" as well.

Signing up for classes, volunteering at your favorite charity, or becoming part of a regular exercise group all have their benefits, one of which is helping you to maintain a social circle.

### The Effects Of Loneliness On Seniors

We've talked about the period right after retirement. Let's turn our attention to those who are further on in the aging process. Time flies by, as it is known to do, and profound changes happen. We may lose our spouse or a life partner. Our bodies may begin to wear out on us, making exercise and general mobility difficult. Longtime friends may pass away or even move away. Busy family members may not sufficiently



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## North Severna Park Pool Opens



Photos courtesy of Kyle Cleary

*Due to the coronavirus, many communities opted to open their pools later than usual or with severe restrictions. North Severna Park, a 65-home neighborhood, reopened its pool to residents on June 27, the first of what they hope will be many safe gatherings.*



## County Council Passes FY2021 Budget

By Zach Sparks

As was the case last year, the Anne Arundel County Council passed the Fiscal Year 2021 budget along party lines, 4-3, on June 12 with Democrats in favor of the legislation and Republicans opposed.

County Executive Stuart Pittman commended the budget for keeping the income tax rate at 2.81% while slightly lowering the property tax rate from 93.5 cents per \$100 of assessed value to 93.4 cents.

"When I introduced this budget on May 1, I characterized it as a difficult path through an uncertain time," Pittman said in a statement. "I'd like to thank the county council, my budget team, and the auditor and her staff for taking that path and making it better. County residents need the support of their local government now more than ever, and thanks to this budget we will deliver."

The budget came with tough choices thanks to an estimated \$63 million revenue shortfall due to the COVID-19 crisis. The final budget includes \$1.8 million for body-worn cameras for the Anne Arundel County Police Department. In education, funding will support 57 positions to open Crofton High School, 84 new teaching positions to address enrollment growth, 12 new behavioral health positions, 76 new special

education positions and one salary step for educators, in addition to other investments.

The budget also creates the Office of Health Equity and Racial Justice within the county health department to identify health disparities along racial/ethnic, income and geographical lines.

While Severna Park and the Broadneck peninsula will benefit from several items in the budget, Councilwoman Amanda Fiedler voted against it because the council as a whole opted not to adopt several amendments that would have saved the county millions of dollars while still funding both the public schools budget and body cameras for police, she said.

Roughly \$2.5 million in additional cuts recommended by the county auditor, who is independent, were not made.

"The budget funds \$1,500 bonuses to employees while over 63,000 county residents have lost jobs or paychecks during a global pandemic and economic crisis," Fiedler said. "While there are many things in this budget I do support, like the Cape St. Claire fire station and the completion of the Broadneck Trail and the body cameras ... the unnecessary spending, especially during this unprecedented time, is not fiscally responsible."

Further debate ensued when Councilman Nathan Volke suggested the councilmembers

forgo a pay increase. Democratic members of the council rebuked the idea, noting that the Maryland constitution prevents public officials from passing laws to increase or decrease their pay during their term.

During its deliberations, the county council added \$1.5 million of funding for the Board of Education to support community ambassadors, 10 English Language Acquisition teachers and seven transportation positions. The county executive also added funding for a one-time pay package for Anne Arundel Community College employees, at the request of the council.

Although the council's Republicans did not believe compromise occurred, Council Chair Allison Pickard (District 2) said such negotiations made the budget better.

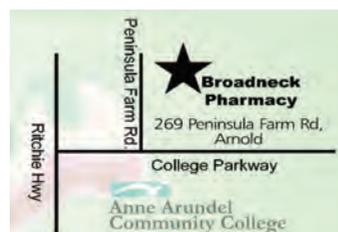
"I appreciate the compromise and hard work by everyone involved in the budget during these challenging times," Pickard said in a statement. "I am pleased to see continued investment in school construction, as many projects are long overdue. Police body-worn cameras will bring more transparency to our police operations, and I am hopeful that this is the first step toward reform as we continue discussions on racial equity issues. This budget will play a vital and positive role in our ability to respond to the economic recovery ahead."

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## Churches Adjust To COVID Restrictions

By Sharon Mager

Church doors opened wide for many congregations in the Severna Park area in June. After months of closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic, church members were excited to be reunited with their church families, even if they must worship six feet apart.

These reopenings have not happened without changes, however. Many churches have been forced to think creatively as they have tailored their services and ministries to avoid spreading the virus and keep the parishioners safe.

Here are a few ways that local churches are staying connected during a pandemic.

**Severna Park United Methodist Church** has formed a task force to help prepare for safe and gradual re-entry. The church is holding a mid-week service limited to 50 people or less, and some of its small group Bible studies (including a group studying the relationship between race and religion) will begin meeting soon. For more information on any services and the church's COVID-19 precautions, visit [www.severna-parkumc.org](http://www.severna-parkumc.org).

**Severna Park Baptist Church** is hosting a three-day Family Fun Fest from July 20-22 (rain or shine) with COVID restrictions. The event will be held outdoors and offers fun for the entire family, including crafts, stories, music and more. The church will require masks of all attendees (except young children) as well as six-foot distances between all attendees. Church members will sanitize restrooms between every use and provide hand-sanitizing stations.

"This is a time and season when everyone is struggling," said senior pastor Dave Brown. "We are trying to provide hope and encouragement but also a sense of safety by following CDC guidelines."

Like most others in the area, SPBC began using livestreams and YouTube to broadcast Sunday services, and Zoom for discipleship, such as Bible studies, and fellowship opportunities. For more information on the services and ministries, visit [www.spbcmd.com](http://www.spbcmd.com).

**Woods Memorial Presbyterian Church** will host a virtual Vacation Bible School and virtual kids' camp this summer. The church will provide children with physical materials that are "screen-free, encourage outdoor activities, and minimize demand on parents." Access to the church's online program will accompany the materials.

Additionally, Woods is offering an email-based 21-day racial justice challenge. Those who sign up will receive an email with the 21 days of challenges designed to "raise awareness about the perniciousness of racism and encourage action in response to that awareness." There are adult- and teen-themed challenges.

For more information on services and

ministries at Woods Memorial Church, visit [www.woodschurch.org](http://www.woodschurch.org).

**Severna Park Evangelical Presbyterian Church** is hosting an online "adventure week" for kids from July 6-10. Families who register online will receive a supply kit full of family science projects and access to the online daily devotionals. SPEPC is also meeting at 50% capacity in church services and using Centers for Disease Control-recommended safety measures to avoid spreading germs. Along with in-person services, the church uses livestreams and Zoom meetings to keep the church's family members connected with one another.

**Lighthouse Baptist Church** is carefully following all of the CDC guidelines (including masks and temperature checks) and taking reservations online for seating at each service. The church is also opening its activity rooms with large screens to use as overflow seating. The Rev. Paul Arcand stresses, however, that when guests without reservations show up at the church, they are still welcome as long as they sign off on a written list of COVID procedures that the church is taking. Arcand said he is trying to keep his flock and community healthy and, more than anything, that "Jesus is still lighting the way through all of this!" For more information on Lighthouse Baptist Church, go to [www.LBC4me.org](http://www.LBC4me.org).

**Silas First Baptist Church** is still not meeting in person yet, but the church has online and Zoom services on Sundays and Wednesdays. Those without computer access can listen to the service over the phone by calling 1-605-313-5480 and entering code 213982.

**Trinity Bible Church** switched to virtual services during the shutdown, but with the first in-person service happening on June 7, the Rev. Stephen Mitchell is proud to see new members embracing their faith.

"It was a hard adjustment going from preaching to a crowd to preaching to an empty sanctuary," Mitchell said, "but we adjusted, and in some ways, I think the shutdown brought us closer together as a church, family and community. We look out for each other more, we've gotten to know each other more, and it was a surreal experience as many would tune in to watch our services who would probably consider themselves far from what we believe. There has been an openness to the gospel."

As for safety protocols, TBC has roped off some pews to ensure social distancing, required masks, and added more hand sanitizer. Currently the children's ministries are closed, but Mitchell hopes to see that change soon.

TBC meets Sundays at 10:00am for Sunday school and 11:00am for service. Learn more at [www.trinitysevernapark.org](http://www.trinitysevernapark.org).

## The Loss Of Janet Pack

» Continued from page 1

licensed caterer at her own business. She also provided addiction counseling.

She joined ACAN five years ago, but her impact transcended the scope of the food pantry.

"Through her leadership, we were able to help people struggling to meet a food need, a personal hygiene need, a school supply need," said Rhonda Jackson, an ACAN volunteer. "We had people come and ask for different things like diapers and baby items, so with her flexibility and her outreach, there was no limit on what we could do to help a person."

When providing meals to hungry families, Janet insisted on them having nutritious options and not scraps. She also wanted to offer those meals and hygiene items without passing judgement.

"She didn't want people to have to jump through hoops and give all their personal information to get just a loaf of bread, for instance," said Margo Arnoux, ACAN's acting director, who worked closely with Janet. "We provided the food they needed, but we also gave them hope and inspiration that it wasn't always going to be that way."

Janet's nephew Andre called her a mentor who helped ACAN raise funds for a new van, serve meals to roughly 120 families every Thanksgiving, and bring items to the homeless population at BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport.

"She was keen on not having people feel belittled because they needed help," Andre said.

Family members and friends closest to Janet — whom they affectionately called "Big Momma" — all have stories demonstrating her fun-loving nature and her compassion.

As friendly as she was, she could also be stern when needed.

Two years ago, ACAN was selling fish dinners to help cover funeral costs for Janet's other son, who did not have life insurance. A man arrived, drunk, and started causing a scene. Wesley remembers Janet seating the man, giving him free food and water, and telling him, "You need to get yourself together. I don't ever want to see you in this condition again."

"He later came back and thanked her for that," Wesley said. "My mom didn't know him from Adam or Eve, but she knew he was someone's child. She was always willing to go into the deepest, darkest hole to help somebody. Even when we lived in a bad neighborhood, she would help strangers. She was fearless."

Janet's motivation, in part, stemmed from her own childhood. When she was 16, her mom, Dorothy, died. Andre said Dorothy had a nurturing and loving spirit similar to Janet's.

"She would constantly affirm you to make you feel comfortable, to feel safe," Andre said of Dorothy. "That type of love was a motivator, and when Janet didn't see that in other people's lives, she took that on as a responsibility."

Janet's sister, Barbara, worked to support the family, which was homeless in Waldorf, Maryland.

That experience helped her to relate to people and put them in positions to reach their full potential, especially ACAN volunteers. As Arnoux explained, Janet was never intimidated by someone having a higher position than her or doing something she had not achieved. And when someone was down on their luck, Janet was usually the person to pick them up.

"She was there to meet an immediate physical need, but she looked way beyond that and saw the potential that they had," Arnoux said. "She would say, 'I see something in you. This is just a moment in time for you. This is not always going to be this way. There is something in you that needs to be birthed.' And she would just bring positivity into people's lives. Food was just the vehicle to which she was able to reach them."

Arnoux has taken over as ACAN's acting director. She and Jackson worked closely with Janet and plan to continue or fine-tune many of the projects the trio already had in place.

"We had many things that are in progress — many programs, ideas, plans, grants that are in the works, and my goal is to see that come to fruition," Arnoux said.

Janet had a sister, three brothers, three sons (Wesley, Marcus and William Jr.) and a daughter (Tynisha) and half-siblings she never met. She was married to William Pack Sr., her partner of 42 years.

Even though Janet is gone, her biological family and ACAN family both feel her with them daily.

"Even in the absence of her physical body, I still feel her presence, because she provided so much with her spirit," Wesley said. "She didn't deal with you in the physical, she dealt with you in the spiritual."

According to Wesley, his mom's faith had prepared her for death, a sentiment she shared as recently as Mother's Day 2020.

"My mom lived her life to the fullest and gave everything she could, even when she had nothing," he said. "She wanted you to feel that you were somebody and that somebody loved you, no matter what condition you were in. She didn't have a lot of money. She did this all from her heart and with her relationships."

# Thank you

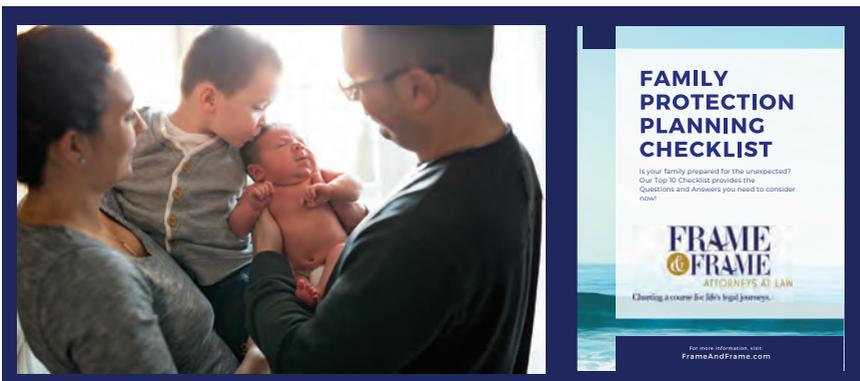


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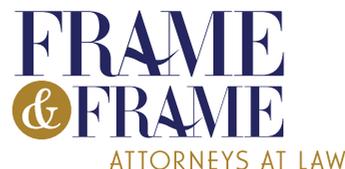
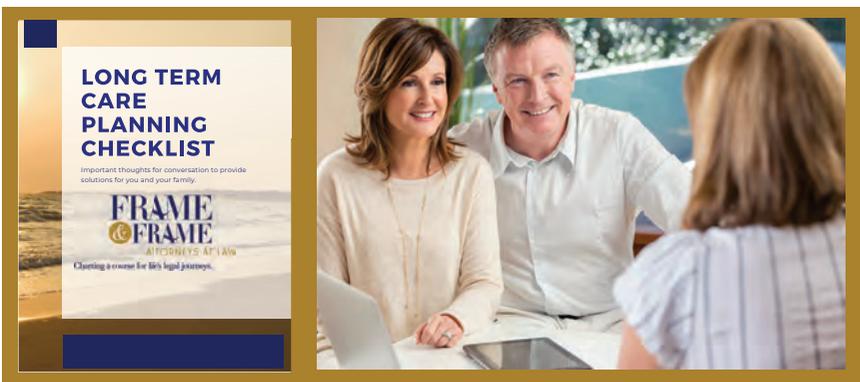
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# What A Long, Strange Trip It's Been

**Ellen Kinsella**  
Director of Development  
SPAN Inc.



With apologies to the Grateful Dead, this headline just seemed to sum up the experience that 2020 has been so far. These are unprecedented times, and we have all been forced to adapt to a new way of life. For those of you fortunate enough to have hung onto your income, to have kept food on the table, and to have remained COVID-free, you are still dealing with the inconvenience of business closings, social-distance restrictions, home-schooling, or most of all, fear of catching the virus or passing it on to vulnerable loved ones.

We all seem to have a degree of anxiety, but if you can manage it through laughter, prayer, volunteer work, or another constructive outlet, then you have discovered a valuable coping tool that will help you stay resilient throughout the future of the pandemic.

At SPAN, we know that for some of our neighbors, the worst is yet to come. Up

until recently, there has been a moratorium on evictions and utility shutoffs, but now many families are faced with bills they cannot pay. Because of the severity of the situation, we have relaxed some of our requirements, and as long as our budget holds out, we will be paying late notices on utilities, not just turnoff notices. Likewise, we will be giving financial assistance with overdue rent, not just court-ordered evictions. In some cases, we have even increased our benefits. Please call us at 410-647-0889 between 10:00am and 1:00pm Monday through Thursday to see if you qualify for food or financial assistance. We have revamped our operating procedure so that we have a no-contact system.

SPAN has remained open throughout the pandemic, even creating a temporary, free outdoor pantry to help our neighbors access food easily and safely. We could not have done any of this without the help of Mike Monahan, Tia Johnson and Elle Johnson. We also owe a huge thanks to Nancy

Stow and her brother, Bob, for renovating our storage room upstairs. Thanks to the ASP Team from Severna Park United Methodist Church, who, despite having their mission trip canceled, conducted a gigantic food drive for SPAN in lieu of their traditional ASP auction. Thanks also to the Severna Park Elks Club, who secured a \$2,500 grant, and used the entire amount to purchase food for SPAN over the course of five weeks. Thanks also

to numerous neighborhoods, businesses, civic groups and individuals for an unprecedented level of generosity with donations, both financial and in goods. And thank you to the Severna Park Voice for helping us get our word out!

We would be remiss if we didn't give a shout-out to our SPAN board and member churches, who are the foundation of our existence. Our member churches are Asbury United Methodist, Baldwin United Methodist, Bay Area

Community, Broadneck Baptist, Brooklyn Community United Methodist, Hope Springs Community, Our Lady of the Fields Catholic, Our Shepherd Lutheran, St. Andrew by the Bay Roman Catholic, St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic, St. Martins-in-the-Field Episcopal, Severna Park Baptist, Severna Park United Methodist, Trinity Bible, and Woods Memorial Presbyterian churches.

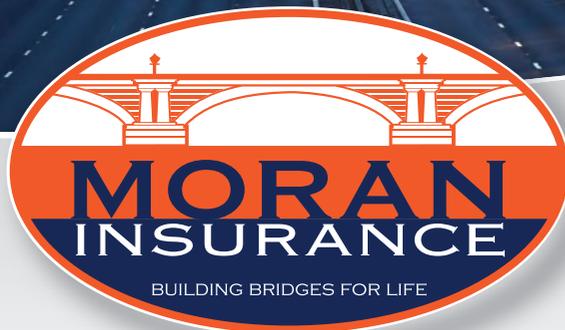
Please stay well, try to accept the situations you cannot control, find the humor in situations, and for goodness sakes, wear your mask!

SPAN (*Serving People Across Neighborhoods*) is an independent nonprofit food pantry and emergency services provider that has been helping local families with eviction prevention, utility turnoffs, medical/prescription bills and food since 1990. SPAN serves 14 zip codes in Anne Arundel County. SPAN is located behind Our Shepherd Lutheran Church at 400 Benfield Road in Severna Park. Hours are Monday through Thursday from 10:00am-1:30pm. For more information, call 410-647-0889, email [spanhelps@yahoo.com](mailto:spanhelps@yahoo.com) or visit [www.spanhelps.org](http://www.spanhelps.org). Financial donations may be made through the website. Food donations may be dropped off 24/7 using the storage bin behind SPAN's building. Please "like" SPAN on Facebook!

“We all seem to have a degree of anxiety, but if you can manage it through laughter, prayer, volunteer work, or another constructive outlet, then you have discovered a valuable coping tool that will help you stay resilient throughout the future of the pandemic.”

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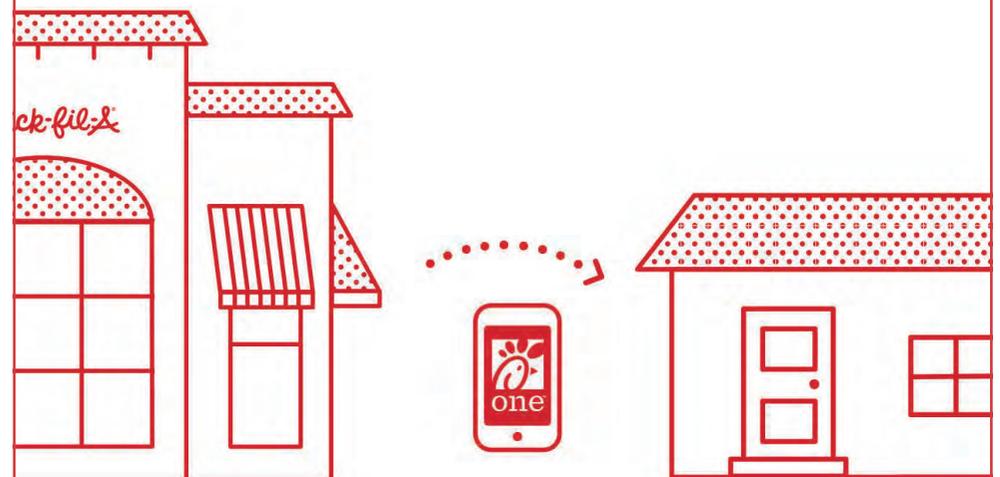


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## Comptroller Honors Burgers & Bands For Suicide Prevention

*Schaefer Award Recognizes Organization For Saving Lives, Raising Awareness*



Comptroller Peter Franchot has virtually presented the annual William Donald Schaefer Helping People Award for Anne Arundel County to Anne and Ethan Brennan, founders of Burgers and Bands For Suicide Prevention, a nonprofit organization raising awareness to prevent suicide and promote mental wellness.

In 2017, after years of participating in 24-hour fundraising walks for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), Ethan Brennan, a student at Severna Park High School, and his mother, Anne, brought together part-

ners Kevin and Jennifer Bonk and many volunteers to host a 27-band fundraiser to remind those suffering from depression that they are not alone. The upbeat, eight-hour fundraiser is now an annual event that brings in tens of thousands of dollars each year. The money raised helps local schools and organizations establish and maintain mental health programs to prevent suicide. The impetus for the program was Ethan's own struggle with depression and self-harm, the high suicide rate at Severna Park High School and the lack of available mental health resources to help people.

Since 2012, Franchot has annually traveled to each of Maryland's 24 jurisdictions to honor an individual or organization serving their community. This year, all Schaefer Award presentations will be held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Welcome To Round Bay Sailing Association

**Submitted by the Round Bay Sailing Association**

We are the sailing club that races regularly on the Severn River. Our fleet consists of boats that range in size from 20 to 40 feet. Our boats race every Wednesday on Round Bay from April to September starting at 6:00pm and ending before sunset. Our group is always looking for avid sailors who wish to crew on a boat or race their own vessel. No racing experience is needed to participate, and annual membership dues are only \$45.

In fact, we have volunteers who will happily help you sail your boat and provide instruction on the course and racing rules. Sailing (and racing) is a great way to enjoy the water, have fun with friends/family, and meet new people in the local community.

The *Severna Park Voice* has invited us to

share some of the highlights of our sailing with you, the readership. Included in this issue are a few photos of some of our member sailboats. Expect that we'll also begin sharing some race results, a profile of some of our boat skippers and more pictures in upcoming issues.

For more information on our organization, visit [www.roundbaysailing.com](http://www.roundbaysailing.com) or call Commodore Don Snelgrove at 410-697-3173. See you on the water!



## MRA Works With SPHS Students To Create Board Game

By Haley Weisgerber

The Magothy River Association teamed up with Severna Park High School students to create a water-resistant, educational Magothy River Water Trail trivia game.

“Originally, the game was part of a Chesapeake Bay Trust grant for the Water Trail project, and with these grants you have to have an educational component,” said Magothy River Association (MRA) President Paul Spadaro. “So, we proposed the game as that education component. We realized the game was too clunky the way we had it originally designed. So, we revisited it this year and we worked with the high school kids to revamp it and make it playable.”

In the fall, Heather Barnstead, who teaches Interactive Media Production (IMP) at Severna Park, met Spadaro through the Severna Park Historical Society. When he told her about his grant, she encouraged him to let her students work on the game, rather than paying someone.

“We had everybody in Interactive Media Production I and II play the game the way that it was originally set up and then also give them feedback about different things that they liked or disliked about it,” said Barnstead.

The first step was taking the existing game,

which was hand-drawn, and vectorizing the image. Once the image was on the computer, it could be changed at any time.

Originally, the game involved flipping a coin, and the questions were on the back on the board. The students proposed multiple choice game cards and a spinner.

Unfortunately, student involvement in the project was cut short. The IMP classes began work in January, and in April, schools were closed due to the pandemic. Spadaro and the MRA volunteers took the students’ feedback and continued to make the game.

Though students may not have seen the project through, Barnstead is glad they had some real-world experience.

“I think that sometimes things like learning can be disconnected,” said Barnstead. “Like, why am I doing this? And so, I, as much as I can, try to bring in practical experience and say, ‘OK, we have a client. You use the different skills and make it applicable to them.’”

The game was officially released in early June. The final design includes 50 game cards, an MRA Water Trail guide, a biodegradable bag, and a waterproof board and spinner. The game starts at Beachwood Park in Pasadena and ends at Spriggs Farm Park in Arnold. Players tour the entire Magothy River as they move along the board.



*Magothy River Association President Paul Spadaro worked closely with the Severna Park Interactive Media Production classes to improve the board game design.*

“It’s kind of like ‘Chutes and Ladders,’” explained Spadaro. “There were three old-fashioned ferry routes across the Magothy, and we incorporated those routes as the ‘chutes’ going from one side of the river to the other.”

Spadaro hopes that while families are playing the game, they learn about the ecology and history of the Magothy River and Chesapeake Bay.

The MRA plans to release a second deck

of game cards with 50 new questions this summer. In the meantime, families can purchase the game for a \$40 donation by calling Cindy Bateman at 540-222-4969. Only 50 games were made and 10 were sold in the first two weeks.

“I feel it could be a wonderful tool to teach people the ecology of the river and at the same time a family game, whether you play in your living room or on a boat,” said Spadaro.

## American Legion Post 175 Has A Productive Spring

By Darrell Mak

Severna Park’s American Legion Post 175 stayed busy this spring and took advantage of the recent pandemic shutdown by getting some important renovation, care package, and charity work accomplished.

“The Legion has gone through a tremendous remodeling and renovation project since March,” said Ann Marie Peterson, community liaison for American Legion Post 175.

The work was mostly done by volunteers, with all workers being conscious of everyone’s safety. Volunteers only worked a few members at a time, while keeping their appropriate distances from each other.

“What a magnificent makeover: new floors [and] ladies restroom, totally redone outdoors, refinished bar, and fresh paint top to bottom,” said Peterson, adding that an open house is tentatively being scheduled during the Legion’s next recruitment project.

“We replaced many of our older picnic tables,” added Chris Jensen, post commander. “Moving into 2020, we plan to upgrade the beer lines and taps and replace the flooring in the lounge.”

The American Legion was also busy with its charity work over the past few months.



*Sons of the American Legion historian and crab feast committee member Dave Peterson, along with treasurer Mike D'Ambrosio, presented a \$500 donation to Backpack Buddies president and founder Donna Wilson-Johnston.*

A collaboration of American Legionnaires, Sons of American Legion, and Auxiliary from Post 175 prepared and boxed up 17 care packages to ship to overseas troops. Over 40 youths from the Church of the Redeemer’s

choir in Baltimore worked with the Legion to collect and donate toiletries, snacks, and socks and make “thank you” cards for the servicemen and women. The boxes were sent in May to troops on the USS Nimitz and USS

Theodore Roosevelt and to Afghanistan.

“The church’s director of youth ministries learned about the Legion’s care package efforts from an article in the newspaper and contacted us directly to offer to help,” recalled Peterson. “The community has been so supportive.”

In addition, on June 16, officers of the Severna Park Sons of the American Legion presented a donation of \$500 to Services from the Heart’s Backpack Buddies program using funds the organization raised from its annual crab feast last fall through raffles, silent auctions, and door proceeds. Donna Wilson-Johnston, president of Services from the Heart, accepted the donation. Services from the Heart strives to address and reduce the impact of poverty on communities by providing weekly backpacks of food to children in need. Its Backpack Buddies program provides healthy, nutritional foods to underprivileged children who are nominated by their schools.

“The Sons of the American Legion wanted to give back and reach the disadvantaged children in our community,” said Peterson.

As prior teachers, Peterson and others at the Legion were familiar with the Backpack Buddies program. “It’s close to our hearts,” Peterson affirmed.

## What Could The Fall Look Like?

**Dana Schallheim**  
Board of Education  
District 5



**W**e've just finished a school year like no other in modern history. Instead of all the celebrations that accompany the usual end of a school year, I drove to my child's elementary school, held up a sign with her name on it, and collected the items she left behind when schools abruptly shuttered on March 13.

E-learning not only presented a learning curve for my child, but I had to navigate the new (to me) world of Google Classroom, Google Meet, Wixie, Discovery Education and other apps that became the mainstay of her education for 14 weeks. In the end, I believe my daughter and I made the best of a less than ideal situation. I have an immense amount of gratitude for her teachers and everyone who had a hand in developing the lessons she completed.

That was the end of the 2019-2020 academic year. Filled with uncertainty as we all waited with bated breath for the next

announcement about school operations, we did our best to educate from home. With it not meant to be a long-term solution, I know we all did our part to be as positive as possible to embrace e-learning.

That was then, but what about the fall? What will school look like for 85,000-plus children AACPS serves?

The final decision makers are the State Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Karen Salmón, in coordination with Governor Larry Hogan after substantial conversations with health experts. While school systems might be given some bandwidth to choose how best to implement whatever the state decides, AACPS and every other school system in the state of Maryland cannot scribble outside the lines of their decisions. Teachers, administrators and parents all need as much time as possible to plan, and I am hopeful that we will hear a definitive decision from the state soon.

To prepare for all possible scenarios we could face, Dr. George Arlotto has convened a reopening steering committee and 14 subcommittees to tackle every aspect of a student's educational experience. The role of the steering committee is to provide the charges to the working committees, gather and synthesize committee work, make

preliminary decisions and bring strongest workgroup options to the superintendent for a final decision.

The role of the working committees is to perform the work charged by the steering committee, and provide data-based information and recommendations to the steering committee. The working committees will focus on the whole student, infrastructure and community perspectives as overarching themes.

Working committee topics include:

- **Equity**
  - **Academics**
  - **Student Services**
  - **Special Education**
  - **Athletics, Performing Arts, & Co-Curriculars**
  - **Instructional Data & Instructional Technology**
  - **HR & Employee Relations**
  - **Safety & Security**
  - **Facilities**
  - **Technology**
  - **Food and Nutrition Services & Pupil Transportation**
  - **Communications**
  - **Child Care**
  - **Community Partnerships**
- » **Continued on page 31**

## Council Update

**Amanda Fiedler**  
Councilwoman  
District 5



**S**ince mid-March 2020, there has been much uncertainty surrounding COVID-19. Initially, our concern was the public health crisis overrunning our health care system. While we seem to have avoided that scenario, we are already experiencing the economic impacts and they will be multi-year.

In a statement last month, the Federal Reserve said "the ongoing public health crisis will weigh heavily on economic activity, employment and inflation," so the interest rate is going to be held at or near 0% through 2022.

In Maryland, the two-year outlook is similar. Predictions for revenue loss in Fiscal Year 2021 range from \$2 billion to \$2.6 billion, and in Fiscal Year 2022, the range is \$2.5 billion to \$3.9 billion. Near the end of June, Governor Larry Hogan proposed \$672 million in budget cuts to begin to balance the shortfall.

Many of you have experienced uncertainty in your family budgets since COVID-19 caused a state and countywide shutdown. You have made cuts to your household spending due to a reduction of income or loss of employment. Government should operate the same; after all, our county budget is made up of your tax dollars. During my campaign I promised to only support responsible, fiscally conservative budgets. I intend to keep my word.

In his May 1 budget presentation, the county executive outlined a \$1.7 billion budget. His proposed budget included a fund balance (surplus) from the current fiscal year. The use of those one-time funds creates a structural deficit of \$24 million. He employed a shell game tactic of using surplus from this year to balance next year's budget. In simple terms, this means next year we will start off \$24 million in the hole, when every indication is that we will still be in recovery.

Traditionally, the county budget is built based on the annual report by the Spending Affordability Committee (SAC). The SAC uses both art and science to predict personal income growth, so that the county executive and county council have

» **Continued on page 32**

## Absolute Power Corrupts Absolutely

**Michael Malone**  
Delegate  
District 33



**A**s you may know, the Maryland General Assembly session was just 71 days rather than 90 days. As part of the effort to contain COVID-19, Maryland's legislative session adjourned early on March 18. Given the emerging health crisis, which shortened session and limited public hearings in the last couple weeks, one would think that legislation passed in days before adjournment would have focused on urgent matters: passing a constitutionally mandated balanced budget and legislation needed to manage the crisis and to function for the next year.

That happened, to some extent. A balanced budget was passed. The following was passed: legislation to improve access to any COVID-19 vaccine if it becomes available; to prohibit price gouging; to

expand unemployment insurance for individuals if their employer temporarily closes; to place limitations on individuals under quarantine from losing their jobs; to improve access to telehealth services and needed medical care; and to reduce barriers to test screenings.

Unfortunately, with the public eye turned toward COVID-19, the Democrat machine in Annapolis took advantage of the crisis to muscle questionable legislation through. In the final hours of session, fellow Delegate Matt Morgan cynically quipped during floor debate that the majority party would "never let a crisis go to waste."

Maryland designed its unique budget process over a hundred years ago to correct rampant legislative overspending. Under Maryland's constitution, the budget must be balanced every year, with any deficit or surplus from the preceding year accounted for. The governor drafts a budget bill and submits it to the General Assembly. The General Assembly can cut, but not reallocate, funds from the governor's budget. This constraint on reallocating funds causes friction between

our Democrat-dominated legislature and Republican governor.

Governor Larry Hogan has taken a fair amount of heat for not "releasing" funds, most memorably to the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, that the legislature inappropriately reallocated. In any event, once the operating budget, which constitutionally must be balanced, is passed by both the House and the Senate, it is final.

Legislation that passed late in session, Senate Bill 1028 changes the process. A constitutional amendment will be on the ballot this November, and if approved by the voters, the General Assembly will be empowered to reallocate budget funds as it chooses, changing the balance of power, beginning in 2024.

Putting change before the voters doesn't sound bad, but how it was handled was wrong. The Senate passed SB 1028 on March 17. The next day, facing emergency session adjournment and during lockdown of the General Assembly, the House Appropriations Committee approved the bill without public hearing, and sent it to the House floor

» **Continued on page 32**



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## What We Do In This Moment Defines Who We Are

**Heather Bagnall**  
Delegate  
District 33



It's hard to believe it has been nearly four months since we adjourned the 2020 session, early for the first time since the Civil War. In that brief time, we've held our first mostly mail-in election, with lessons learned in preparation for November. We have seen more than 125,000 deaths nationwide due to COVID-19, more than 3,000 of which have occurred here in Maryland. We have seen a renewed call for equity and civil rights, a local surge of the Black Lives Matter movement, and a national reckoning of our nation's original sin of slavery.

We've seen our custodians and our health care workers, grocery clerks, and business owners all become heroes as they pivot and adapt to each new challenge posed by the ongoing dual crises of a pandemic and the collapse of the social safety nets established to provide us relief.

As your delegate, I have been counselor, advocate, therapist, protestor, educator, liaison, communicator, resource, sounding board, and even occasionally metaphoric punching bag to this district because as we say in the theater, "that's the gig."

Over the last two years, I've written numerous articles about advocacy, focused rage, intersectionality, amplifying young voices, leadership and the relentlessness of mourning, and a number of people have asked "why?" Why was I writing about lofty ideas rather than specific, local issues? I don't think any of us foresaw this moment, but what I did see, with crystal clarity four years ago, was that with the 2016 elections, many marginalized communities were in jeopardy, and what we do in this moment defines who we are and what we want our nation to be.

I know that we will often disagree on policy, and that the politically expedient choice would be to maintain the status quo, but two years ago, this district took a leap of faith on me, an artist educator, because we weren't happy with how we were growing as a county and as a district. I didn't like the complacency of our elected officials who didn't have to show up and do the hard

work of bridge-building, of listening, of compromise.

The reason I write about lofty ideals is because they're attainable but only when we build momentum, when we build consensus, when we build foundation, and when we build our army. What I've seen in the last few months has restored my faith in this community, when, despite the sacrifices we are making, we show up to protest inequality, we show up and support our local businesses, we show up for each other to support our neighbors of color or our LGBTQ+ children, we show up physically or virtually or metaphorically, we wade through the discomfort of our own comfort and give up a little so everyone can share.

We have so many challenges presented by the pandemic that it can feel overwhelming, impossible and hopeless, but what we've seen in this moment is far from hopeless. We've seen what we are when we build and show up for one another, when we build and show up to hold our representatives accountable, when we build and show up to speak truth to power, when we build and show up for our young people, who are taking up the mantle of leadership.

We are being asked to do what feels like the impossible, but remember, everything was impossible before it was possible.

As we approach the July 4 holiday, which looks quite different from years past, we can look to the wisdom of our founding fathers, even as we reconcile their humanity. In protest, in sacrifice, in generosity and in grace, we see our truest self, the rugged individuality stripped away for the greater good, which is the greatest demonstration of our patriotism.

My office continues to work to address every need of our district, from fixing the broken unemployment system to fixing the flooding on 450. It's all on the radar and it's all on the table, so keep asking, keep questioning everything, and keep holding us accountable.

I spent years hearing people tell me I couldn't do everything, and my answer was always the same: "If you believe that, clearly you don't know me that well." No one can do everything, but everyone can do something, so choose that something, keep building and showing up, mask on, and we'll discover we can do far more than we ever believed capable. Together we will make the impossible happen.

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# Dear Class Of 2020, You've Got This

**Ed Reilly**

Senator

District 33



To the class of 2020, I tip my “mortarboard cap” to you. You have weathered an extremely challenging second half of your senior year. So many things that a high school senior looks forward to were, one by

one, taken away from you. Events like Rock ‘N’ Roll Revival, spring plays, spring sports, prom and even your graduation ceremony.

My granddaughter, Gina, graduated from South River High School this year. She’s the first of my grandchildren to graduate. I wasn’t able to be there to see her “commencement” due to the restrictions placed on the appointed ceremony. I understand firsthand the changes to the graduation ceremonies. There was no “pomp and circumstance.”

You might not have known it at the time, but COVID-19 was actually building your

character as you dealt with every obstacle that was put in front of you. You are the true survivors of the past few months, and while these wounds are still fresh, one day you will talk about these days with wisdom gained from living through them.

History is remembered when big events happen. You are living through a big event. The world has changed, and history will be written as before the pandemic and after the pandemic. You, the class of 2020, will be entering the “after the pandemic world.” What this new world looks like is yet to be

seen. But I am sure that the class of 2020 will charge into this new world with the energy and strength gained by what you have experienced during the spring of your senior year.

I’ve watched what many of you have already done in your time in high school. You have organized and participated in marches for social justice. You’ve worked to end the stigma around mental illness after seeing it take your loved ones. The entire community is learning how to ask for help because of you, and because of you, the entire community is learning it is not alone. You are such strong individuals, and I know the world you enter into will be stronger because of your many and varied abilities.

When I graduated from high school, the peace-and-love generation of the ‘60s was going strong. Almost 50 years later, there is another movement, a civil movement to respect and to love Black lives. You are shouldering the movement that my generation started but just didn’t quite get right. I have so much faith that you will get it right this time.

If I could put a message on the top of a mortarboard cap, my message to you would say, “You’ve Got This!” Take the energy that has been cooped up for the past three months and hit your next stage of life with ambition to make a difference.

## What Could The Fall Look Like?

» Continued from page 28

The 14 working committees are composed of AACPS employees, students, parents, AACPS bargaining unit members, AACPS advisory group members, community organizations and community partners. The steering committee and chairs of each of the committees are AACPS senior staff members.

Additionally, all parents and guardians of AACPS students were just tasked to fill out a survey querying their reopening preferences. I hope each of you took the time

to fill out the survey as it will provide Dr. Arlotto and the Board of Education with helpful information that will guide implementation within the confines of what the state will allow.

While I know we all want school to return to normal, we must be prepared for any number of other scenarios. These scenarios could include partial days, partial weeks, and continued e-learning. It is unclear whether or how athletics, music programs, co-curricular clubs or afterschool enrichment programs will

occur. Pupil transportation and routing will be affected and will be subject to new health guidelines. Our students will need increased academic and mental health supports. Even lunchtime could look different in the fall than it was in the past. Regardless of the school schedule implemented in the fall, student and staff safety will be paramount.

I encourage each of you to continue to share your concerns and ideas with me and my colleagues. As always, I can be reached at [dschallheim@aacps.org](mailto:dschallheim@aacps.org).



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## Nicole T. Livingston, J.D. Partner and Senior Estate Planning Attorney

“I am pleased to announce that attorney Nicole T. Livingston is now a partner at Elville and Associates. Nicole has demonstrated her tremendous value to our law firm through her dynamic work ethic and representation of clients, advocacy for estate planning clients, and significant efforts in elder law and special needs planning matters. Nicole is an innovative and gifted lawyer who works timelessly and efficiently for our clients. She is an asset to our law firm, to professional organizations to which she belongs, and to the community.”

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## Council Update

» Continued from page 28

a realistic idea of what we can afford. This is important because 35% of our budget is from income tax. Using this method to predict the affordability of the FY2021 budget, personal income growth of 1% would mean this budget is \$26 million over affordability. Can we expect even 1% income growth from this year to next or is that overly optimistic?

As I reviewed the budget, I considered the following facts. Over 73,000 county residents have filed for unemployment. A local hospital has furloughed hundreds of employees. Many business owners have had to make the difficult decision to furlough, or permanently let employees go, and some have shuttered their doors forever.

Unnecessary spending on the backs of taxpayers was not an option for me. For that reason, I co-sponsored over 68 amendments with my GOP colleagues to cut money amounting to an \$8 million reduction in spending. In a budget of \$1.7 billion, the cuts amount to 0.4706%. As an example, one of the cuts was for \$2.5 million for employee bonuses, some of whom have a salary of \$100,000 or more. While I know that our county employees work hard and have helped to keep our county operating during this unprecedented time, how could we give bonuses when so many of our citizens are

out of work or struggling to put food on the table?

These small proposed reductions would have allowed the council to maximize our rainy-day fund and lower the structural deficit, giving us a better start on recovery. Every reduction made by myself and my Republican colleagues, except one for \$14,000, failed on a party-line vote.

I believe this budget will have compound effects on future budgets because it fails to acknowledge the fiscal realities of this economic crisis. We could be forced to deplete our rainy-day fund (\$81 million) followed by decisions to reduce staffing, increase taxes or both. While there are many things in the budget that I was pleased to see and support, the nearly \$10 million in unnecessary spending prevented me from voting in favor of the budget.

The council now considers an amendment proposed and passed by the Board of Education to shift \$750,000 in funds from seven new transportation department positions, into additional mental health positions. The Board of Education may not amend its budget without approval from the county council.

During these unprecedented times, it is imperative that I take responsible actions with your money, no matter how difficult the decisions may be.

## Absolute Power Corrupts Absolutely

» Continued from page 28

for vote that afternoon. Delegate Geraldine Valentino-Smith, a Prince George's Democrat on the House Appropriations Committee, voiced concerns over the propriety of voting on a bill without public hearing in the House of Delegates. Several Republican delegates rose to raise objections to the bill, but the Speaker of the House, Adrienne Jones, refused to recognize some Republicans, myself included. As House rules preclude addressing the assembly without recognition from the speaker, Republicans were silenced by limiting our questions or expressing our misgivings before the vote.

Why, at the last minute and during a crisis, were we voting on a bill that doesn't take effect for four years? Why put it on the November ballot in the 2020 presidential election year when public attention focuses on national issues, instead of the 2020 gubernatorial election year, which will spotlight state policy? Would this change in the balance of power lead to higher spending and higher taxes? Why include confusing language suggesting a balanced budget requirement when Maryland already has one? Using confusing language in a voter referendum, after all, resulted in the 2012 passage of Question 5, which

Democratic gerrymanders use to justify Maryland's highly partisan congressional district maps.

At some level, we Republicans expect to be ignored by the Democratic majority in the legislature, but what happened next was chilling. Following the vote, Speaker Jones immediately appointed a new chairman of the Spending Affordability Committee. Who chaired that committee prior? Delegate Valentino-Smith, who spoke against SB 1028. The message was public, loud and very clear: do not question leadership's power, or we will take away yours.

It's the political equivalent of standing up and turning backs in a shunning ritual. Delegate Valentino-Smith called it retribution, and other Democrats rebuked her for speaking to the press. It has been said that when one person or group has too much power, that "absolute power corrupts absolutely." It felt that way to me right before Sine Die.

This November, please carefully review this budget ballot question and all ballot questions when you cast your vote for president and other candidates.

Delegate Michael Malone ([michael.malone@house.state.md.us](mailto:michael.malone@house.state.md.us)) is a Republican who represents Severna Park in the Maryland General Assembly.



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## Severna Park Student-Athletes Receive Top Awards



Photos by Colin Murphy

**Left to Right:** Ben Morgan is a George T. Roberts Athlete of the Year Award recipient, and a two-sport standout in football and lacrosse. Julia Putzi, who won the Paul Rusko-Jean Boyd Award, played for the varsity lacrosse program and was a key member of the school's unified tennis program. Lena McLaughlin, a George T. Roberts Athlete of the Year Award recipient, was a two-sport star in soccer and basketball. Pat Fenn, also a Paul Rusko-Jean Boyd Award winner, was a two-way standout at fullback and middle linebacker for the Falcons' varsity football team.

**By Colin Murphy**

Several Severna Park student-athletes were recognized this spring for their outstanding accomplishments and contributions to athletics

at Severna Park High School.

The George T. Roberts Athlete of the Year Award recipients are **Lena McLaughlin** and **Ben Morgan**.

McLaughlin was a two-sport star in

soccer and basketball and led the Falcons' varsity programs to deep playoff runs in both sports in both of the last two years, including an appearance in the 4A soccer state final last fall

and a basketball region championship this winter.

Morgan is a two-sport standout in football and lacrosse, a captain of  
» **Continued on page 34**

## Reopening Explosion: TNT Softball Girls Back In Action

**By Colin Murphy**

colin@severnaparkvoice.com

The girls are back on the field. The TNT Maryland 18U fast-pitch softball team began its season in June, emerging from a forced sports sabbatical caused by coronavirus to post successful weekends at its first two tournaments in Hagerstown and Spartansburg, South Carolina.

The team is made up of student-athletes from area schools, primarily Severna Park and Northeast, and the players were thrilled to get back to what they know and love.

"Considering all of the uncertainty about COVID-19 and summer sports, I am happy to finally be playing softball," said Severna Park rising senior **Mackenzie Rice**, an outfielder for TNT. "Having such a close group of girls helped us immensely, and thankfully our team chemistry hasn't faded over the past couple of months."

» **Continued on page 34**

“

Considering all of the uncertainty about COVID-19 and summer sports, I am happy to finally be playing softball. Having such a close group of girls helped us immensely, and thankfully our team chemistry hasn't faded over the past couple of months.”

— **MACKENZIE RICE, TNT OUTFIELDER AND SPHS RISING SENIOR**



Over the weekend of June 19-21 in Spartansburg, South Carolina, the TNT Maryland 18U fast-pitch softball team played four games, going 3-1 against teams from North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida.

## Reopening Explosion: TNT Softball Girls Back In Action

» Continued from page 33

The chemistry showed over the team's first two weekend tournaments together. Playing against A- and Gold-level softball teams in the 18U Open bracket of the USA Softball 18U Invitational in Hagerstown in mid-June, TNT made it to the tournament semifinal after a strong Saturday of pool play and a pair of wins in Sunday's knockout round. The team fell to the eventual tournament champion Lady Black Sox, 2-1, in eight innings in the semifinals, but nonetheless posted a 31-11 run differential for the weekend.

Over the weekend of June 19-21 in Spartansburg, South Carolina, the team navigated hail and thunderstorm delays but still managed to play four games, going 3-1 against teams from North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. TNT closed the week-

end with a 9-1 victory and outscored its opposition 20-9 in the tournament.

TNT Softball is the Maryland affiliate of a national TNT organization that supports teams along the East Coast. The flagship 18U team was formed this year in a partnership with Athletic Performance Inc (API) in Gambrills as central Maryland's elite softball organization geared to train female fast-pitch players to get recruited and play at an elite college level. The organization plans to expand to the 16U, 14U, 12U and 10U age groups this fall.

The team is coached by **Meredith McAlister**, **Kelly Burke** and **Roger Simonds**, who collectively have NCAA Division-I playing and coaching experience in addition to Gold-level travel softball playing and coaching experience. None of the coaches have daughters on the team,

and their coaching efforts are fully voluntary.

McAlister said this summer will present a new recruiting landscape with colleges pushing their recruiting periods back to July 31. Despite missing the May portion of their schedule, the TNT players stayed sharp with regular Zoom meetings and home workouts designed to build skills, remain connected and stay in peak shape.

"COVID kept us off the fields in May but we utilized Zoom calls, Google classroom training and individual skills workouts until we could get on the field for staggered small-group skills and eventually full practices," said McAlister. "Most showcases we play in are offering live-streaming options, and we are personally utilizing streaming services to try to bring the tournament games to the [college] coaches, where they can watch from the comfort of their home. Live-streaming tournaments and the latest development of live-streaming elite-level league games mid-week is the potential future of the softball recruiting world."

The team consists primarily of rising high school juniors and seniors and includes Rice, **Chelsea Coleman**

(Glen Burnie), **Sammi Sisolak** (Catonville), **Ashlynn Bishop** (Archbishop Spalding), **Jasmine Parks** (SPHS), **Madison Bonnett** (Northeast), **Makayla Blake** (Northeast), **Holly Taylor** (Northeast), **Peyton Sullivan** (SPHS), **Sophia Martinez** (McDonogh), **Abbie Iaquinta** (SPHS '20), **Kerri Kazmarek** (SPHS '20) **Livi Driver** (SPHS), **Ella Ryan** (SPHS) and **Ruth Williams** (Northeast). **Christina Ballagh** joined the team for its weekend in Hagerstown as an injury substitute.

The TNT 18U's have five more weekend tournaments throughout the mid-Atlantic region through early August. Sullivan, a rising senior at SPHS, said the team is even more focused after its long hiatus.

"I missed being on the field with my team. It was honestly pretty weird not seeing them; they're my softball family," said Sullivan. "We have already played two tournaments and came back even stronger than before. Now when we are together, we are even closer after being apart for so long."

TNT Maryland powered by API will hold tryouts for fall teams in all age groups in early and mid-July. For more information, visit [www.tnt-maryland.com](http://www.tnt-maryland.com).



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## Severna Park Student-Athletes Receive Top Awards

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the football team and a member of Severna Park's state-champion boys lacrosse teams in 2017, 2018 and 2019 and a defensive leader for the team in 2018 and 2019. In addition to multiple All-County recognitions, he was named First-Team All-State in lacrosse in 2019.

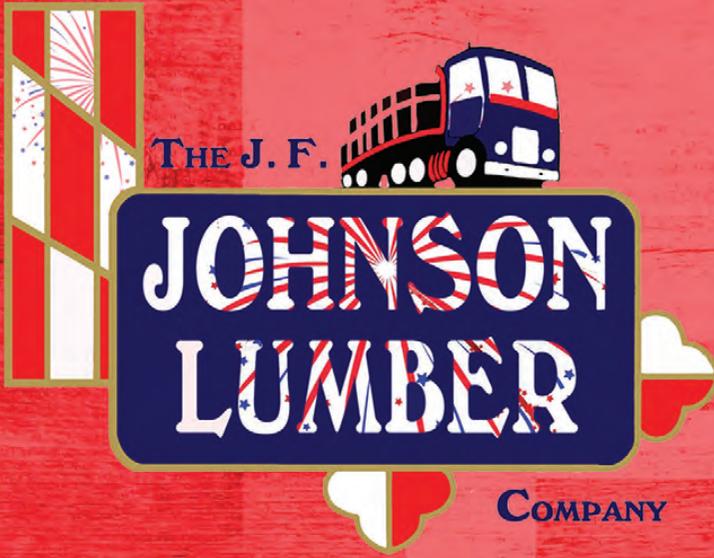
The Paul Rusko-Jean Boyd Awards are countywide awards given to one female and one male student-athlete at each county high school who best demonstrate athletic achievement, integrity and exemplary sportsmanship. At Severna Park, the recipients are **Julia Putzi** and **Pat Fenn**.

Putzi played for the varsity lacrosse program and was an integral member of the Falcons' 2019 state championship team, and she was also a key member of the school's unified tennis program that won its division at the state championships in the fall. She was the president of the One Love club at SPHS and an active volunteer, and she was a vice president of

the class of 2020. In addition, Putzi volunteered extensively with RISE for Autism at SPHS.

Fenn was a two-way standout at fullback and middle linebacker for the Falcons' varsity football team, and he was captain of the team in 2019. He also wrestled, played lacrosse, and was a member of the track and field program at Severna Park. Widely regarded as an exemplary competitor and leader, Fenn was a Baltimore Touchdown Club selection and BTC Scholar Athlete as a senior. He was involved in the Ro Kappa Honors Society and the National Honors Society as well as Economics Club and Teen Court, and he was a student member of the school board's advisory council as a junior.

The unified tennis team at Severna Park was the team recipient of the Craig T. White Service and Sportsmanship Award, given annually throughout Anne Arundel County to one team at every school that demonstrates exceptional on-field sportsmanship and off-field service.



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# STUDENT-ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

## Athlete And Scholar Shoots For Her Best Play At Life

### Sydney Nwuli

Severna Park Basketball And Soccer

By Diane Lewis

Sydney Nwuli is not your average Severna Park High School student-athlete. The determined and focused young woman finished high school in three years. She turned 17 years old just a few days before graduation.

Nwuli has a 4.7 GPA and played varsity basketball for three years of high school and varsity soccer for the first year. Her coaches, understandably, have nothing but praise for her performance, team leadership, determination and intellect.

Kris Dean, varsity head coach for girls basketball, emphasized that Nwuli is “great, wonderful and a very positive team player” and a “very smart young woman with strong ethics and strong leadership skills.”

These qualities enabled Nwuli, as a freshman, to immediately fit in with the



Photo by Colin Murphy

varsity team.

“She is very detailed-oriented and was able to learn much more information, faster and more complicated plays, and execute them at double the speed than the level junior varsity players are expected to play at,” Dean said.

Nwuli was an easy choice for team captain. “She was an excellent model of good

“

*It takes a village. I would like to thank Severna Park for helping me turn into the person I am. I want to make my mom proud.”*

— SYDNEY NWULI

ethics and motivator for the other girls and wanted the whole team to achieve success, not just herself,” Dean said.

The team was like a family, Dean said, and Nwuli was known for helping younger members with their drills and homework afterward in the locker room and providing rides home when needed.

Donny Williams, another one of Nwuli’s coaches, praised her athletic and intellectual abilities.

“She is an awesome kid who is exceptionally bright,” Williams said. “She is tough, especially for an undersized player, and there is a grittiness and defiance to her playing. She goes hard and gives 110%. She’s the type of player you put in when you need

a rebound.”

Another quality that Williams admires about Nwuli is that “she doesn’t dwell on mistakes. She learns from them and moves on.”

Experiences on and off the court made a lasting impact on Nwuli. “The Falcons basketball team was so close that it has reinforced my desire to play in college,” she said.

Nwuli has accepted a scholarship from Goucher College, where she will pursue a degree in political science and a minor in philosophy. Nwuli is considering becoming a civil rights attorney. She is biracial, and one reason she looks forward to attending Goucher is because the school has a large and active Black student union.

The Black Lives Matter movement has made a huge impact on a lot of young people, including Nwuli. It has made her realize how privileged a life she has been able to live in Severna Park.

“It takes a village. I would like to thank Severna Park for helping me turn into the person I am,” Nwuli said before adding, “I want to make my mom proud.”

In partnership with The Matt Wyble Team of Century 21, the Voice’s Student-Athlete of the Month series recognizes the many student-athletes in our area who make an impact not necessarily by way of statistics or stardom, but by their unique contributions. Contact **Zach Sparks** at zach@severnaparkvoice.com to nominate a young person in our community making a positive impact through sports.

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# Freshman Off To A Hot Start With The Towson Tigers

By Bob Hough

Severna Park native Jason Gibson had a solid high school career playing for Sidwell Friends in Washington, D.C. He played at a level certainly worthy of getting an offer to play at the next level, but it wasn't until late in his senior year that he solidified his plans to play Division I basketball.

After leading the Quakers to their first District of Columbia State Athletic Association Class AA championship, Gibson received an offer to play at Towson University. He recently completed a freshman season where he started the team's final 19 games and finished fourth on the team in scoring at 8.4 points a game.

"During the summer, Coach (Pat) Skerry made it obvious he wanted me to be ready to help right away," said Gibson, who lived in Severna Park before his family moved to Huntingtown prior to his senior year at Friends. "He really made it clear he wanted me to go in and help right away."

A point guard who also has the ability to score, Gibson was third on the team with 45 made 3-pointers as a freshman. He scored in double figures 10 times, including in his first three games against George Washington (11 points), Bryn Athyn (12) and Kent State (18). He scored a season-high 21 points at William and Mary on January 25 and was named the Colonial Athletic Association Rookie of the Week on January 27.

While getting named the conference's Rookie of the Week was nice for Gibson, what happened three weeks later gave him a completely different experience.

In the Tigers' game with Elon on February 20, Gibson saved a ball



Jason Gibson



Photo courtesy of ENP Photography

*Jason Gibson recently completed a freshman season where he started the team's final 19 games and finished fourth on the team in scoring at 8.4 points a game.*

from going out of bounds and sent a no-look, over-the-shoulder pass to Brian Fobbs, who finished the play with a dunk. As Gibson started to receive several text messages later that night, he realized

the play landed a spot on the ESPN SportsCenter Top 10 plays of the day, coming in at No. 4.

"It was crazy. My phone was blowing up," he said. "It was definitely always a dream of mine to get on ESPN."

Prior to Towson, Gibson finished his career at Sidwell Friends with 1,502 points. He was the DCSAA State Tournament Most Valuable Player and the Player of the Year his senior year. He averaged 18.9 points a game as a senior, scored the winning basket in the tournament quarterfinals, 28 points in an upset victory over St. John's in the semifinals and 24 points in another upset win in the championship game, this time against Wilson.

Gibson was able to excel at Sidwell Friends despite the fact his daily commute was around three to four hours roundtrip and he arrived home several nights past 10:00pm.

"The commute was tough," he said. "Definitely a lot of sacrifices."

Gibson, who will be joined at Towson this year by High Point transfer Curtis Holland (Southern), said he's been working out at home during the coronavirus pandemic as he prepares for his sophomore season. He has the trust of his head coach, who is comfortable with him running the offense as well as scoring.

"Jason is a pleasure to coach. He is talented, works hard and is a great teammate," Skerry said. "He was an excellent quarterback and we look forward to expanding his game this year with his ability to score and get more shots for us. He is a guy that, as a coach, you really trust."

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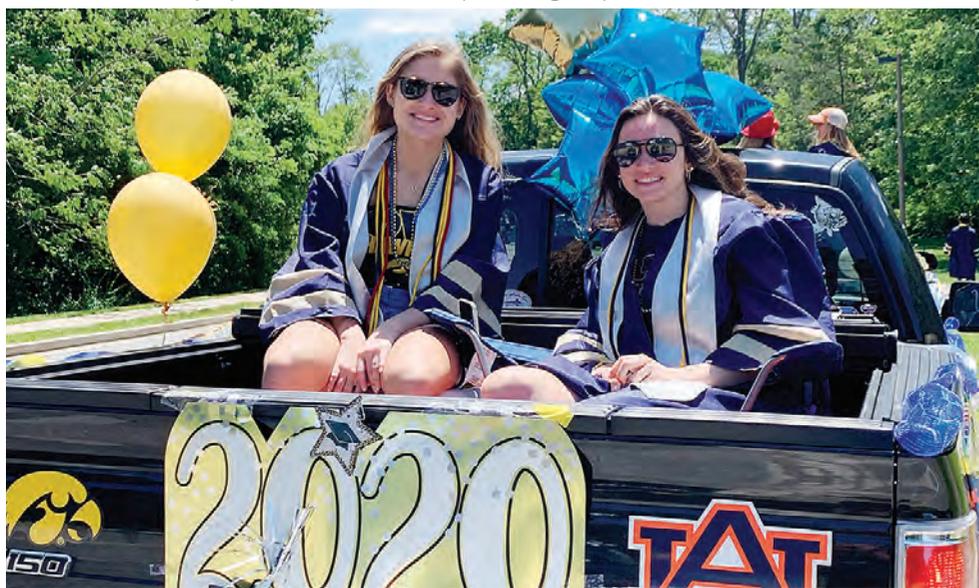
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## Communities Plan Celebrations For Local Graduates



The Shipley's Choice graduation parade was led by grand marshal Rocco Ferretti (above), the beloved former principal of Shipley's Choice Elementary. With over 50 students graduating from area schools, the cancellation of graduation ceremonies affected the Shipley's Choice community in a big way.



By Haley Weisgerber

When traditional graduation ceremonies were canceled in May, the community associations at Shipley's Choice and the neighborhoods surrounding Cypress Creek planned their own events to celebrate the class of 2020.

### A Shipley's Choice Parade

With over 50 students graduating from Severna Park High School, Mount Saint Joseph High School, St. Mary's High School and Shipley's Choice Elementary School, the cancellation affected the Shipley's Choice community in a big way. Longtime resident Bill Mitchell knew that these students deserved to be recognized.

"Well, I got the idea one day that it was a shame these kids didn't get any recog-

niton," said Mitchell. "So, I put a thing in our Shipley's Choice Facebook, 'Would anybody be willing to come along and volunteer to help?' They put it together and we had a wonderful crew of seven ladies."

Together, Mitchell and the team of volunteers planned a parade for the graduates. The parade was split into two groups: high school and elementary school. Each group started in different locations but eventually met up to make one large parade through the main roads in Shipley's Choice.

Almost 50 cars lined the streets as "Pomp and Circumstance" played. The graduates waved to onlookers from their sunroofs or windows as they drove by.

The parade was led by grand marshal Rocco Ferretti, the beloved former  
» Continued on page 42

## SPHS Valedictorian, Salutatorian Thrived On Academics And Meaningful Extracurriculars

By Jane Seiss



Akshay Shah is a recipient of the 2019-2020 Anne Arundel County Council PTA Phoebe Apperson Hearts Award and the local Scholarship for Scholars Engineering Award. He is a Federal Water Quality Association Scholar and a National Merit Commended Student.

When Severna Park High School valedictorian Akshay Shah and salutatorian Allison Chang earned their respective honors, it was the bow on top of two impressive high school careers.

Shah is a recipient of the 2019-2020 Anne Arundel County Council PTA Phoebe Apperson Hearts Award and the local Scholarship for Scholars Engineering Award. He is a Federal Water Quality Association Scholar and a National Merit Commended Student. Accepted to Stanford University in Palo Alto, California, Shah has deferred enrolling until the fall of 2021.

"I've decided to take a gap year because of the coronavirus," he explained. Stanford plans to alter its in-person course schedule for the coming academic year. When he begins his studies in California, Shah will major in management science and engineer-  
» Continued on page 46

## Stick To Your Own Path: Advice From BHS' 2020 Valedictorian And Salutatorian

By Dave Topp

Elizabeth Zarrilli and Julia Barrow have some advice for the students of Broadneck High School. "Take the classes you enjoy," Zarrilli said.

That may come off as simple and straightforward advice, but the valedictorian of Broadneck's 2020 graduating class speaks from experience.

"This makes higher-level classes much more bearable and is definitely the best way to reduce stress while still taking highly weighted classes," Zarrilli said. "It doesn't feel like as much work when you're interested in the material."

Zarrilli, who finished at the top of her class with a 4.5877 GPA, was followed closely by Barrow, and her 4.5636 GPA.

"Just stick to your own path and make choices based on who you are, not what other people tell you," Barrow said. "There were plenty of times where people told me things would be too hard or that I had to follow a certain path in order to be successful, and that's just not true. I've seen



Julia Barrow (left) and Elizabeth Zarrilli shared top academic honors this year, along with a strong friendship that developed from their studies.

people get caught up in that, and it's just not necessary."

Along with sharing top academic honors this year, Zarrilli and Barrow also  
» Continued on page 42

# On Behalf Of BLM Movement, Young Activist Bakes Bread For “Bread”

By Aidann Bacolodan  
Broadneck High School Student

“In one America, people rage for the freedom to get a haircut and a tattoo. The other is raging just to be seen and heard,” said CNN television journalist Chris Cuomo, who deemed the United States as a tale of two cities.

During a time when individuals are divided between rioting for the freedom to leave their houses sans masks or protesting on behalf of a Black man whose freedom to breathe was infringed by an officer’s knee, it is apparent that action must be taken for a just America.

Activism among students has grown substantially since George Floyd was killed on May 25. Adolescents throughout the nation have joined in nonbelligerent marches, political protests and charity fundraisers to raise awareness for their beliefs.

Among these young activists is rising junior Ellie Bilderback. The contemporary oppression and discrimination had struck a chord with the Arnold resident. Ellie dedicated her quarantine to baking bread from scratch to sell statewide for the Black Visions Collective, a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring Black lives have autonomy, safety



*Ellie Bilderback dedicated her quarantine to baking bread to sell statewide for the Black Visions Collective, a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring Black lives have autonomy, safety and liberty. Though the ingredient list is minimal, the hearty loaves take roughly four hours to reach their wholesome taste.*

and liberty.

“The unnecessary killing of Black men and women must stop,” she said. “I stand with all protestors and think that major police reform is in our future.”

Six months ago, the empowered teen began baking bread, inspired by her love for Louisa May Allcott’s novel “Little

Women.” Headstrong leaders and determined characters within the novel prepared bread often as an avocation. With an abundance of natural ingredients, Ellie committed herself to selling pastries for a deserving cause.

“Making bread is simple,” she claimed. The homemade delicacy consists solely

of flour, yeast, water, oil and rosemary. Though the ingredient list is minimal, the hearty loaves roughly take four hours to reach their wholesome taste.

Friends of Ellie describe her vegan bread as soft with a crisp crust. Her satisfied customers span from various parts of the East Coast. Deliveries range from a five-minute drive to Severna Park to a road trip to Ashburn, Virginia. Distributing the baked goods is Ellie’s biggest challenge in executing her bread for “bread” exchange.

While she has no set goal, the optimistic scholar plans to raise money as long as she is able to. Her donations, provided by patrons, have exceeded \$300 toward aiding a community suffering from racial discrimination.

The young activist describes herself as “an ally for all people of color, now and always.”

Ellie constantly discovers more of the flawed sides of America through articles, photos and videos spread on social media. She encourages the public to educate themselves, sign petitions, protest safely, donate to nonprofit organizations and buy her bread!

To learn more, email her at [andnowelli-e@gmail.com](mailto:andnowelli-e@gmail.com).

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## Communities Plan Celebrations For Local Graduates

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principal who was at Shipley's Choice Elementary when many of the graduating seniors started elementary school.

"When the committee called, he jumped right on it," said Mitchell. "He was very happy to come out and it was good to see him. He remembered a lot of these kids. Of course, they all remembered him."

It was not the graduation that they were expecting, but the Shipley's Choice graduates will remember this experience for a lifetime.

"The seniors were very gracious, the people of the committee as well," said Mitchell. "They recognize that this really turned out to be something fun. It really brought Shipley's Choice together again."

### Cypress Creek Creates Socially Distant Celebration

All mothers of Severna Park graduates, Vaishali Shah of the Cypress Improvement Association, Susan DeRocco-Keller of Trinity Farms and Marlo Russell of Cypress Glen decided to plan a graduation celebration while they were on a socially distant walk.

"We were lamenting the fact that our kids are amazing young men and we were sad that we couldn't celebrate them," said Shah. "We thought, 'Let's do our own celebration.'"

The event took three weeks and countless neighbor contributions to put together.

Terri and Pat Bosak offered their deck as a stage, Doug and Brook Fowler donated chairs and put on a firework show, Mike Hornberger donated his audio and visual equipment for music, DeRocco-Keller etched "SPHS 2020" on glasses for each senior, Russell and Vaishali Shah customized chocolate wrappers and goodie bags, Vaishali Shah made a slideshow presentation, and Veeraj Shah and Joe Keller emceed the event.

On the day of the event, seniors stood in circles six feet apart. Though they were originally hesitant about attending, 10 of the 14 seniors came and stayed throughout the entire event. They even helped clean up afterward.

"One of the girls wrote a really sweet note and brought us flowers," said Vaishali Shah. "She said, 'It was the best graduation I could ever have and I'm so glad I came.' It brought tears to my eyes."

Vaishali Shah said that though she will miss the graduates as they move away, particularly her youngest son, she is excited to see where the future takes these remarkable students.

"I am so amazed at how these kids have grown up to incredibly engaged

young men and women," she said. "I am so proud to be a part of this community. Each child has done something special in their own way and I am so happy we were able to celebrate that."

The college graduates of Cypress Creek are looking to hold a similar celebration this summer.

"It was a magical night," said Vaishali Shah. "It was so much more personal and fun than sitting in a stuffy building and seeing your child onstage for a few seconds."

Both Shipley's Choice and Cypress Creek have had requests to make the community graduation ceremony a regular event.

"It really worked out wonderfully, to the point where after the parade, several kids who were juniors in Severna Park High School came to me and asked to do it again next year," said Mitchell. "The parade, to them, was more important because they could see all the friends that they've grown up with over the years."



Photos courtesy of Vaishali Shah

**Above and Right:** The communities around Cypress Creek partnered for a safe celebration that included a slideshow presentation, music and fireworks.



## Advice From BHS' 2020 Valedictorian And Salutatorian

» Continued from page 38

share a strong friendship that developed from their studies.

"By the end of last year, we figured out that we were at the top and we just had a lot of fun with it," Barrow said. "It's something really cool to be able to share with her."

Both Zarrilli and Barrow credit a challenging physics class that they took together, during their junior year, for pushing them academically and developing their friendship as well.

"Elizabeth, especially last year, helped me with a lot of my classes," Barrow said. "Not only are we friends, but there's always been a mutual respect, which has been really great."

By the end of their junior year, the two

shared the No. 1 spot for their class rank. That situation allowed for a unique opportunity when it came to applying for colleges.

"We applied to colleges as kind of like co-valedictorians, if you will, which was really, really cool because we were really good friends after the year," Zarrilli said.

In the fall, Zarrilli will attend Clemson University and plans to major in economics. She was also accepted into the Lyceum Scholars Program, which studies the political and economic foundations of the country.

"I've known that I wanted to go south for a while," Zarrilli said. "Then I got into the Lyceum program which was a big draw for me."

Barrow will attend the University of North Carolina next year, following in the footsteps of her father, who was a Tar-heel as well.

"It's always been on my list. I've grown up rooting for them at basketball games," Barrow said. "It made sense. It was the right fit."

As for now, she plans to study public policy in Chapel Hill but will keep her options open to follow her passion for mathematics.

While the 2020 school year may not have finished like anyone expected, Zarrilli and Barrow never wavered in their studies or in their friendship.

Zarrilli said, "I told her, 'If you're up there, I'll be happy no matter where I am,' because we are friends."

# St. Martin's Is Poised And Preparing To Return

## Jamey Hein

Head of School  
St. Martin's-in-the-Field Episcopal School



The recent statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics strongly advocating for the physical return to school is a poignant reminder for all families with school-age children of the value of face-to-face learning. As we speak, this value is currently being felt in our community as area fields and day camps repopulate with children quenching a degree of human interactivity and place-based learning after a screen-filled spring of distance learning.

The pandemic's forced closure of schools will lead to profound and rippling lessons to be applied within our K-12 educational community for years to come. Teachers, schedules and technology have been tested, not to mention parents who have shifted gears and managed learning from the kitchen table while juggling professional lives. Schools have experienced an unplanned shift never seen in the likes of modern education, and while the probability of more distance learning has loomed on the horizon, most schools were not hankering to jump on the bandwagon quite yet. Many of us would concur that kids benefit from having a physical school.

As area schools' reopening plans emerge this summer, small schools may be best positioned to succeed due to their manageable small class sizes and ability to safely and ef-

fectively social distance students and teachers on their campuses. Research continues to prove small class sizes are most optimal for student engagement and performance, and this fall, large schools may well be tested as they potentially reconfigure space and schedule to accommodate students and the learning they deserve.

Here in Severna Park, St. Martin's Episcopal School has been actively preparing for a full-time and full-week return that will keep all students and staff safe while promising an active and meaningful learning environment in and out of the physical classroom. Our 8-acre campus allows for multiple entryways and zones for the three distinct age groups whom we serve. Adaptations and protocols will be implemented to ensure a healthy and secure space while minimizing

and mitigating risks.

It may temporarily look a little different than the school our students left behind in mid-March, but as a small school and as our mission promotes, we will adjust and accommodate to best meet the needs of our students and their families. With flexibility in mind as well as information and wisdom from federal and local officials and the regional educational organizations with whom we collaborate, we are seeing a path back to site-based school come September 8, 2020.

*St. Martin's is an independently accredited preschool-through-grade-eight school committed to building students of confidence, character and compassion. For more information about enrollment, contact Kira Dickson, director of admissions, at kdickson@stmartinsmd.org or call 410-647-7055.*

## Severna Park High School Students Create A Socially Distanced Book Club

By Alyson Kay

Five Severna Park High School rising juniors have taken to Zoom to safely discuss their love of books.

Augustus Bachmann started the club in late March when schools were transitioning to online learning. He called three fellow SPHS students whom he thought would be interested in starting a book club: Henry Wright, Grady McConnell and Zach Canaday.

The fifth club member, Leslie Robinson, joined later after a call from Grady.

Nobody in the group felt confident that distance learning would provide the same challenge or interaction provided in a classroom.

"We wanted to just have a way to stimulate ourselves while being able to talk with friends," Grady said.

The club meets once a week, usually Friday afternoons. Members assign segments of the book they are reading to discuss during their sessions. They try to keep these sessions casual.

"We steered away from trying to do the school aspect of it, like an organized Socratic seminar," Augustus said. "It was more laid back, leisurely. Just a talk with friends."

The group decides democratically what to read.

"We all chose two or three that we thought would be interesting to read [and] we could talk about, and then we would vote on them," Zach said. "We all got a say."

The teens generally select classic literature that they have not read before or don't feel that they would enjoy as much in school.

They started by reading "The Odyssey," which they had never read in school. Next

was Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein."

"We try to switch it up so we aren't reading the same sort of stuff," Zach said.

Holding virtual club meetings had its challenges.

"When we started on Zoom, the calls were limited to an hour long," Grady said. "So we'd often find ourselves having to end the call, create a new one, and then all get back and somehow get back on the same train of thought."

Pandemic-related closures have also caused problems. Unable to get books from libraries and bookstores, the group has resorted to buying books online. Reading on tablets and phones proved to be neither convenient nor helpful for some.

"It's very hard to focus online," Grady said.

Despite the problems, the group feels like the experience is better than reading for school in some ways.

"Rather than having it feel like it's work, we can truly do it for pleasure, which helps us remember," Grady said.

With restrictions being lifted, group members have begun meeting outside in person.

"We found ourselves going to Annapolis a lot," Henry said. "It's a good way to get some exercise. We just bike on the trail. Meet at St. John's. Go down to downtown Annapolis."

The students look forward to meeting after the pandemic is over.

"When the pandemic ends, we're hoping to meet up at coffee shops or in the library where we can have a nice, cool environment, where we can be surrounded by a sense of calm, rather than being on a Zoom call and having all of our family members yelling in the background," Grady said.

## Chesterton Academy Grad Grateful For Classical Education



Grace O'Connor (second from right) plans to work with the Servants of the Lord and the Virgin of Matará, a Catholic religious community.

By John Singleton

If the secret of life is learning to say "thank you" better, the education of Grace O'Connor has been a lesson in gratitude.

"I've been to many different kinds of schools," O'Connor explained. "Private, public, all-girls, Catholic, homeschooling - the best school is the one that pursues the true, good and beautiful."

As a 2020 graduate of the Chesterton Academy in Annapolis, O'Connor developed an appreciation for the school's classical curriculum.

"Through the Great Books, we tackle problems that are in the world today, that other schools are afraid to talk about," said the 18-year-old Severna Park resident who lived in Virginia, California and Hawaii before moving to Maryland. "The Socratic method allows for civil conversation and personal growth. Everyone is treated like an adult. No

subject is off limits."

Much of her education has taken place outside the classroom. In the summer of 2019, she lived in Calcutta, India.

"It's called the City of Joy — one of the poorest cities in the world. A place of material poverty and spiritual prosperity," O'Connor said.

Working with the Missionaries of Charity founded by Saint Teresa of Calcutta, O'Connor became even more appreciative of what she has.

"I've been in rich places. And in the poorest of poor places," she said. "I've tried to find happiness in sports, self-image, the party scene, success. But an obsession with superficial things is making my generation isolated and fearful."

In the summer of 2018, O'Connor walked the Camino de Santiago, also known as the Way of St. James, leaving behind all electronic devices.

At the end of her 100-mile pilgrimage, she visited the tomb of St. James in Galicia, Spain, ending her journey with an epiphany.

"I found my authentic self in Christ," said O'Connor, who is a member of St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church. "Not in chasing self-improvement or self-promotion, or a virtual definition of success."

For the foreseeable future, she plans to work with the Servants of the Lord and the Virgin of Matará, a Catholic religious community. Her work will be hands-on as she serves the poor, the sick and the elderly. "I was headed down a bad, self-centered road — cynical, meaningless, destructive. I am so grateful to Chesterton Academy for creating an environment of growth, thought and joy!"

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## After Battling Anorexia, Teen Finds “A Path Towards Sunshine”

By Zach Sparks

“You’re fat.” Those were the words that shamed Lorelai Symmes into developing an eating disorder when she was 11 years old.

Now a rising junior at Severna Park High School, Symmes reflected on her disorder by releasing a poetry collection called “A Path Towards Sunshine.”

“My book is completely about my recovery from anorexia,” she said. “It began while I was in inpatient treatment and ended about five months after I was discharged. Throughout the book, the very non-linear path of recovery is shown, with many wins, as well as losses.”

As she explains in her 196-page book, the ups and downs were relentless.

*“What if instead of counting calories, I counted blessings? I could appreciate every wonder in the world that filled my brain instead of how many grams of fat are in low-fat butter.”*

*“What if instead of purging meals, I purged guilt? Everything would be OK, and maybe then I’d be allowed to use the bathroom after meals.”*  
*“Though now this is not the reality...”*

Symmes only dabbled with writing before her hospital stay. She then started journaling each day, stringing her words into poems.

“When I came back to school, I was enrolled in a creative writing class, which is where I became very invested in poetry, and began to use it to cope with all of the changes I was facing,” she said. “At this time, I was also introduced to spoken word poetry, which now holds a very large place in my heart.”

Symmes cited Morgan Harper Nichols as her biggest influence. Many of the poet’s quotes decorated the walls of Symmes’ hospital room even before the teen began producing her own poems. She now hopes that her writing can inspire others the way Harper Nichols’ inspired her.

“The overall message I want to share with readers is that recovery, whether it be physical or mental, is always possible,” she said. “You are so much stronger than you know, and so much more capable when you think. I went into the hospital accepting death, and a year later am embracing life. Change is a beautiful thing, but you must always, always let yourself grow.”

As for her own growth, Symmes has been an active member of the student-led Our Minds Matter (OMM) mental health advocacy group started at Severna Park



Lorelai Symmes wrote a 196-page poetry collection while she received inpatient treatment in the hospital.

High School.

One OMM founding member, Katrina Schultz, said Symmes is an ideal choice to continue leading the group after its seniors head to college.

“She is so passionate about mental health, and she is able to take what she’s gone through and her journey with anorexia and share it and use it to inspire others,” Schultz said. “She’s been to almost every one of the events we’ve had, even the smaller ones like walking in the Fourth of July parade with us, and she’s always there to help out no matter what. She helped me a lot last summer when we were planning the wellness festival that was a huge success last August. She reached out to food trucks on our behalf, came early to help us set up, made posters, and she even read her poetry (the festival was actually the first time that she ever read her poetry publicly, and now look at her).

“She is one of OMM’s biggest supporters and it is such an amazing feeling to know that Lorelai is always on our side,” she added. “I think I can definitely speak for all four of us co-founders that are going away to college in the fall when I say that leaving something like OMM, something that all of us are incredibly passionate about and extremely proud of, in the hands of other people can be very nerve-racking, but then I look at Lorelai and I am very confident that OMM will continue to thrive.”

“A Path Towards Sunshine” is available on Amazon in e-book and paperback formats, as well as Barnes and Noble.

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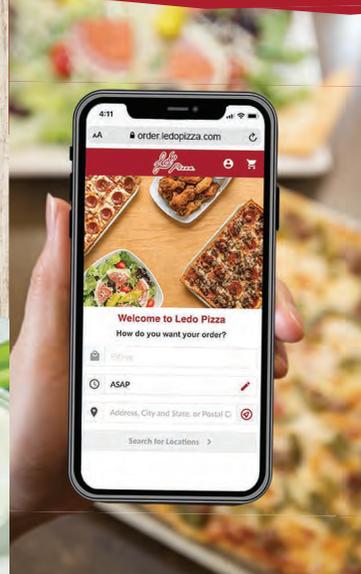
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## SPHS Val, Sal Thrived On Academics And Meaningful Extracurriculars

» Continued from page 38

ing, and he will minor in environmental systems engineering.

While at SPHS, Shah maximized academic opportunities. He took advantage of a variety of Advanced Placement (AP) courses, from Physics to Music Theory, earning 17 AP credits total during his sophomore, junior and senior years.

"I really enjoyed AP Economics because it was a new field for me," he said of the college-level classes he took. "It was a way I'd never thought of how the world works."

A member of the high school math team, Shah was captain during his senior year. He was an officer in the Technology Student Association and also served as a leader at the state level. Shah was a defender on the Severna Park High School state champion lacrosse team. The start-up business plan that his group wrote for DECA, a high school entrepreneurial and leadership club, won first place in the state competition. In 2019, Shah earned Eagle rank with the Boy Scouts. Through scouts, he founded Volunteer-A-Pier, an oyster gardening effort that involves outreach, education, and raising and placing oysters in the Magothy and Severn rivers. The organization has deposited



*Allison Chang is a National Merit Scholar and locally, a Scholar for Scholars recipient in the computer science category.*

more than 200,000 oysters in the Magothy to date.

Shah describes himself as passionate about conservation. Over the summer before his senior year, he interned with the Engineering Department at the U.S. Forest Service in Washington, D.C. He hopes that his college education will

help him in pursuit of the field.

"I would love to work at an environmental consulting firm in a management position or to take an entrepreneurial route," he said.

As he prepares for college, Shah is thankful for his brother's leadership and inspiration. His brother, Veeraj, was SPHS valedictorian in 2017.

Shah's parting advice for high school students: "Try everything you can and take any opportunity that's presented to you."

Chang is a National Merit Scholar and locally, a Scholar for Scholars recipient in the computer science category. She will study computer science at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh and plans to be on campus this fall. "I like how [computer science] is constantly evolving. There are a lot of interesting sub-fields that I'm excited to explore in college," Chang said.

While she was a student at SPHS, Chang earned two associate degrees from Anne Arundel Community College, one in math and one in computer science.

"I took a lot of AP classes at the high school, so I didn't have to take as many courses at AACC to earn the associate degree," she explained. "It required time

management. After I got used to it, the course load wasn't too bad."

Chang served as an officer with the high school's math and science honor societies during her junior and senior years. She was an editor with the SPHS community-service-dedicated Key Club. Chang was a committee chair for the school's Harvest for the Hungry program and its Prom Fashion Show.

Chang interned at NASA Goddard last summer, and during her senior year, she worked at the Johns Hopkins University's Applied Physics Lab (APL).

"I gained real-life experience programming that solidified my interest in going into the field," she said. "I'll probably go into software development, but I'm not sure of my end goal."

Like everyone else, Chang was disappointed by the school closure and cancellations brought about by COVID-19. She made the most of it. "It's been nice to prepare before college," she said.

"Good time management is important," Chang offered as advice to high school students. She also noted the value of time well-spent outside the classroom. "Develop extracurriculars or passions," she advised. "It is very rewarding to find something to focus on that you enjoy doing."

  
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## BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

# The Bank Of Glen Burnie Is Committed To Community Involvement, Customer Service

By Haley Weisgerber

The Bank of Glen Burnie may not be the area's largest bank, but its reputation for outstanding customer service and community involvement makes the bank a local favorite.

Founded in 1949, the Bank of Glen Burnie provides individualized banking for all its clients. The bank now has eight locations in Anne Arundel County, including one in Severna Park.

"I believe our commitment to provide outstanding customer service sets us apart. We answer the telephone when somebody calls versus calling an 800 number," said Assistant Vice President Dana

Eckert. "Everyone seems to enjoy that feature."

The staff is trained to reach out to customers personally, rather than through a computer system.

"For example, if a customer shows up on our overdraft report, we call them to give them a chance to make a deposit before that check returns," explained Eckert. "We may have customers that have written a check, but the signature doesn't look right. We would reach out to that customer. A lot of times we have caught things that could have been a fraudulent situation by doing our due diligence."

Most larger-scale banks operate outside of the community, but the Bank of Glen Burnie manages everything within Anne Arundel County. This allows the staff to make decisions quickly.

"When we have to have decisions made on lending or any other thing

» Continued on page 50



The Bank of Glen Burnie's Severna Park branch is located at 534 Ritchie Highway next to the Sherwin Williams paint store.

## Retirement Planning In 2020 Requires Understanding Current Events

Jason LaBarge  
Financial Advisor and  
Managing Partner  
Premier Planning Group



Yes, 2020 has been a year for the history books. Even that sentence feels like an understatement for all that we have experienced in just the first six months of this year: catastrophic natural disasters, a global pandemic, an ongoing revolution, and even a murder hornet invasion! With so much going on in the world, it can be easy to forget there is a presidential election coming in November. In less than five months, the U.S. will elect our next president and the election will be decided, in part, by American consumption.

The markets were great in June. In fact, the S&P was up 5% for much of

the last month alone! This is due, in part, to the reopening of the country. As this continues, it appears that more and more people are going out to restaurants and various other activities that are legal again under the current phase of each state. If that continues and expands in the states that haven't opened yet, the odds of Donald Trump winning the election increase since, historically, people vote based on their wallet.

The government has done a good job of inflating the market with stimulus packages the last few months and they hope that as the stimulus runs out, normal economic activity picks up. New York state recently voted to move forward with planning the US Open tennis tournament in August (albeit without fans present). In May, my home state of South Dakota voted to have the 80th annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally, both of which show

» Continued on page 50

## Chamber Update

Liz League  
CEO  
GSPACC



Please welcome our newest members to the chamber: **Ken Rimorin of PC Repair/Severna Park; Jackie Shea, Realtor at Team Shea and RE/MAX Executive; Brittany Billings of Consolidated Insurance + Risk Management; Jeff Kirby of Superior Softwash; and Joe Natoli of JPAR Maryland.**

Maryland continues to move further along in the second stage of the state's reopening plan as we see salons, martial arts and fitness studios, bowling allies and casinos carefully opening for business. We are overjoyed to see the local econo-

my picking up, albeit very slowly.

I can say that from the chamber perspective, not a single business that we know is taking a cavalier approach with the sanitation and safety protocols. Salons, massage professionals, spas, martial arts studios, and fitness clubs have always followed strict safety guidelines under health department mandates to prevent opportunistic viruses and infections. Now they are doubling down with shields, masks, atomizers, temperature taking, and more.

Some businesses even performed trial runs of their openings to practice their enhanced sanitation procedures. Others posted videos to take you inside their facilities to see exactly how they planned to keep clients safe from the virus. And while they were anxious to get their businesses up and running again,

» Continued on page 51

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**Bill Sansing, EA**

## Retirement Planning In 2020 Requires Understanding

### » Continued from page 48

evidence that the country is ready to open up.

The events industry came to a screeching halt in March. Whether you attend an industry conference once a year or go to an event like the Democratic National Convention, all are handled by the events industry, which account for \$325 billion in direct spending in the U.S. The events industry and companies that support it are big employers in Maryland and we can't emphasize enough the positive impact we will see when it gets back on its feet. It affects all of us. The fact that events like the US Open and Sturgis Rally are going to be held, even in a modified way, is a big step to getting back on our feet. All of this can influence the election, which in turn influences the market.

It reminds me of being in the hospital after my wife gave birth to our third son. I was ready to go home; we'd done this twice before and I didn't see the need to stay the extra day that the insurance allows. My wife said, "Why not stay the extra day? It'll only help me heal physically and mentally and be ready to go back to life and adjust to the new normal once we get home." The country has been in the hospital since March, and we've waited that "extra day" to reopen to help improve our chances of successfully adjusting to the new normal of living in this changed world.

As a result, it should make sense that the market has been responding well with each passing day. The economy is responding favorably, which in turn can bolster Trump's bid for re-election.

Economics has played a major role in every election this country has ever held and will be a key factor in this one as well. Unfortunately for Democrats, it appears that the economic outlook seems to favor Trump, but certainly the social issues that have dominated the press lately seem to favor Democrats. It's imperative that whoever wins in November addresses both sides of these issues and as they do, its effects will be reflected in our economy and market, for better or worse. Creating an income plan for retirement means you're planning for years, perhaps decades, in the future, and it's crucial that you consider how an election and current events will influence your plan.

*Jason LaBarge, Financial Advisor and Managing Partner at Premier Planning Group — 115 West Street, Suite 400 Annapolis, MD 21401 — 443-837-2520 www.JasonLaBarge.com*

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## The Bank Of Glen Burnie Is Committed To Community Involvement

### » Continued from page 48

that may come up, we are able to have that resolved without having to go out to another state," said Eckert. "Local decision-making is huge."

The Bank of Glen Burnie offers all standard banking deposit services such as checking and saving accounts, as well as mobile and online banking. Lending programs are also available for individuals and businesses. Though the pandemic forced the bank to close all lobbies, it continues to offer all its regular services.

"It's different, but we have not seen an interruption in any services that we provide or any type of customer service issues," said Eckert. "We have done everything that we could in or-

der to continue business as normal."

Eckert, who has been with the Bank of Glen Burnie for three years, has prior experience in larger-scale banking and community banking. She said that she has always preferred smaller organizations, but the Bank of Glen Burnie's commitment to the community makes it special.

"Honestly, the thing that I love is that I get to meet the people of the community and show that I am working to grow their business or help them with their normal banking needs," said Eckert.

The Bank of Glen Burnie is located at 534 Ritchie Highway. For more information, visit [www.thebankofglenburnie.com](http://www.thebankofglenburnie.com) or call 410-544-0270.



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# Donut Shack Partners With Oliver Brewing For New Beer Release

By Dave Topp

Frequent guests of Donut Shack may recall the Chop Suey apple fritter, a historical favorite amongst its visitors. The mixture of vanilla and cinnamon tastes from the pastry, along with apple cider, have combined to create a new blonde ale made by Oliver Brewing Company.

The collaborative beer, which shares its Chop Suey name with pastry, was released on Friday, June 19, with about 150 cases worth being spread across the Severna Park area. Park Tavern, Dawson's Liquors, Fishpaws Marketplace, Magothy Wine and Spirits, and other area locations will have the beer available for purchase.

"The reaction was awesome! It was exactly what we were hoping for," said Justin Dvorkin, a partner at Oliver Brewing. "People seem to be really enjoying it."

Dvorkin anticipates that about 90% of the Chop Suey supply will be consumed within a few miles' radius of Park Tavern and the Donut Shack.

Discussions for a collaboration began at the start of the year, but due to the COVID-19 crisis, were put on hold. When all parties were able to gather, the decision to base the project around the Chop Suey apple fritter was made quickly.

"Pretty quickly we settled on the Chop Suey, which is an apple fritter with some other stuff in it, as a natural flavor profile to use," said Ben Hilliard, a partner at Donut Shack.

With a rise in popularity for the pastry blonde style of beer, and with a partnership between businesses, the fit has been perfect.

"Everybody has had really great things to say," Hilliard said. "I think everybody likes to see local community organizations working together."

Park Tavern and the Donut Shack are located less than a mile apart from each other on opposite sides



*Left: Donut Shack partner Ben Hilliard (middle) worked together with Oliver Brewing Company partner Justin Dvorkin (left) and sales director Jason Williams to create a new blonde ale.*

*Above: The beer — brewed with apple cider, vanilla and cinnamon — is based on Donut Shack's Chop Suey apple fritter.*

of Ritchie Highway. The brewery for Oliver Brewing Company is located at 4216 Shannon Drive in Baltimore.

Both Dvorkin and Hilliard mentioned that the two companies already have plans to collaborate on a new beer later this year, with early discussions centering around a chocolate,

coffee-style beer.

"Any kind of sense of normalcy or nostalgia that we can impart seems to go a long way these days," Dvorkin said. "These positive memories of doughnuts and beer, Oliver Brewing Company, Donut Shack and Park Tavern hold a lot of positive association

between all these things."

Hilliard concurred, citing one of his favorite observations at Donut Shack.

"We see the kids' faces light up when they come in and they're looking through the lower glass case and see the doughnut holes," Hilliard said. "It's a special thing to be a part of."

## Chamber Of Commerce Update

» Continued from page 48

they would not cut corners that could lead to someone getting sick. As small business owners in the community who also live here, raise their kids here and are invested, they sincerely care about you.

It has been amazing to see businesses, even competitive ones, working together for the greater good of restarting the economy. They share ideas, promote each other, combine products and have formed wonderful partnerships. Ledo Pizza is splitting the cost of the large tent at Park Plaza with The Breakfast Shoppe and Sullivan's Cove so that people can eat outside. Absolute Party Rental supplied the

tent and it helped them because their entire book of business — graduations and weddings — vanished under the COVID crisis.

Businesses have worked hard in extraordinarily little time to create new ways to market their services. Lisa's Cakepops developed decorating kits for kids of all ages. The Blended Essentials made birthday packages. Fitness studios held online classes, and salons put together at-home hair care kits. Many businesses will keep their e-commerce platforms in place to add another dimension in serving you.

As a result of the shutdown, we have experienced what it is like to not have ready access to our small

businesses. To help them regain their momentum, we ask that you please **shop local, eat local, give local and support local.**

On another note, **we are planning to hold our Independence Day parade on Labor Day!** The new theme is "Back to Business," and if you would like to participate, you can find all the paperwork on our website. Let us get our community back to business and celebrate the reopening of our businesses and organizations, our country's independence, and our workforce. Please join our chamber! Go to [www.gspacc.com](http://www.gspacc.com) or contact us at 410-647-3900 or [info@gspacc.com](mailto:info@gspacc.com) for more information.

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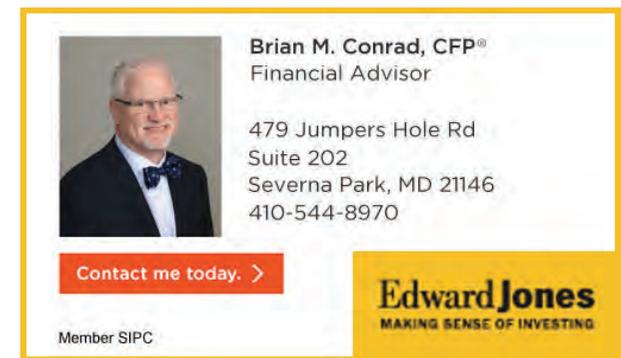
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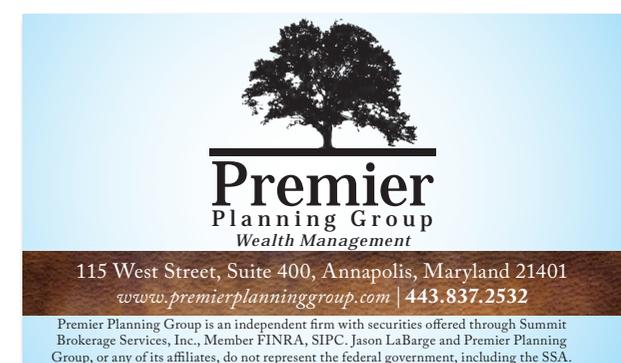
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## A New Normal: How Local Businesses Are Adapting



*The outdoor dining room at Garry's Grill is equipped with a bar, yard games and furniture rented from Absolute Party Rentals in Millersville.*

By Haley Weisgerber

When Maryland began to limit business operations as a result of the pandemic, many small businesses were forced to find creative ways to stay open. From curbside pickup to delivery services, businesses had to learn how to adapt.

As Maryland begins to reopen, many Severna Park businesses have returned to work, but it is not business as usual.

Eddie Conway, the owner of Garry's Grill & Catering, received word that outdoor seating would be opening before County Executive Stuart Pittman made an official announcement. Though he was eager to have customers back at the restaurant, Conway knew he had to make changes.

One of the first steps was contacting Holt Paper & Chemical Company to find a food-safe and eco-safe disinfectant to clean all the surfaces at the restaurant between customers. He also invested in hand sanitizer to keep around the restaurant.

"It sounds crazy, but the restaurant business is one of the cleanest places you can go to as long as they are doing the right thing," said Conway.

With the permission of his landlord, Conway transformed an empty pallet into an outdoor seating area. Absolute Party Rental supplied Garry's Grill with tables, chairs and umbrellas to make the space functional. Conway also purchased an outdoor bar from Savvy Consignment.

"Talk about businesses helping businesses," said Conway. "That is what it's all about at the end of the day. That is what is great about this community. Everyone helps the other out when they need it."

Soon, Conway has plans to build a more permanent outdoor dining room. He is

slowly replacing the rented furniture and buying yard games for customers to make the current space more permanent.

"The funny thing is I have been working on a patio for out there for about four years," said Conway. "The best thing about this whole thing is turning lemons into lemonade. It is a practice run for the staff to know what we need, where we need it. We are just using it now as a way to know what we'll have to do in four or five months when we are outside full-time."

With all nonessential businesses closed, Franklin's Toys co-owner Stephen Kaufmann was worried for his business, his employees and for his customers' health.

"We had no idea, of course, how long the shutdown was going to be," said Kaufmann. "But one thing was for certain: that this was bad. It wasn't going to end soon, so we needed to react."

Though the store was closed to the public, Franklin's offered curbside pickup, online shopping and Kaufmann logged over 2,000 miles on his car during deliveries. More recently, the toy store has been FaceTiming customers who want to walk around the store but are not ready to come in.

"One of the things that we learned through this whole nightmare is that we have to continue these things," said Kaufmann. "Curbside should always be an option for whatever reason. If somebody doesn't want to come into the store or can't come into the store, we can help them over the phone. We can get their purchase ready. We can wrap it if it is a gift and run it up to their car. Why not continue doing that?"

Franklin's is now open to the public, but the child's play area has been temporarily closed. **» Continued on page 58**

## Dining Out



### O'Loughlin's Restaurant & Pub Offers Comfortable, Casual Dining

By Mary Cobbler

My dining companion and I arrived at O'Loughlin's Restaurant & Pub on an early Sunday evening. The restaurant is a local favorite, tucked in the corner of Bay Hills Shopping Center in Arnold.

Following requirements regarding COVID-19, the wait staff greeted us in masks, and directed us to either indoor or outdoor seating, with appropriate social distancing precautions. We chose to dine alfresco. The staff did a great job of creating a cozy space on their patio, with hanging flowerpots, fans, wrought iron tables, umbrellas and hanging lights.

After perusing our menus, we both began our meals with light, summertime raspberry tea, which was sweet but not syrupy. After considering the many appetizers offered, including the calamari, stuffed jalapenos and potato skins, we picked the stuffed mushroom caps and coconut shrimp.

» Continued on page 58

#### Where To Find O'Loughlin's Restaurant & Pub

1258 Bay Dale Road — Arnold  
410-349-0200



Photos by Mary Cobbler

*Above: Stuffed mushrooms arrived piping hot, filled with crab imperial.*

*Below: Lemon haddock was a special for the evening, served with homemade mashed potatoes.*



# The Movie Industry Has Changed For Good

*Who Thought “Trolls World Tour” Would Change The History Of Cinema Forever?*



By Audrey Ruppert

Cinemas were already facing stiff competition before the coronavirus struck. In the age of Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime and many other streaming services, many consumers found it hard to justify spending \$30 for a night out at the movies when \$8 could get them an entire month’s worth of entertainment.

I used to work at the cinema myself, and I was frequently asked why the popcorn was so expensive. The answer comes down to margins; cinemas hardly make any money at all on the tickets themselves and have to give much of the sale to the studio that produced the film. Theaters make their money off the exorbitantly priced popcorn and drinks, which cost only pennies to produce. Without people coming in to buy concessions, cinemas all over the world are in deep trouble.

What about the filmmakers? How did they respond to lockdown? Some film studios chose to delay their releases; the newest Bond film, “No Time to Die,” was moved

from March to November. Others chose a more daring path. In particular, Universal Studios released “Trolls: World Tour” direct to consumer via streaming. This was a bold and controversial move, which caused a complete uproar.

Universal had essentially broken the traditional release agreement that has existed between cinemas and movie studios for decades. In retaliation, the CEO of AMC wrote what can only be described as a temper tantrum of an open letter. In this letter, AMC declared it will no longer play any of Universal’s films in their cinemas. This could be a blow to Universal, which produces big blockbusters like “The Fast and the Furious” franchise — but frankly, AMC is shooting itself in the foot here. I think I must have sold 300 popcorns in an hour during the last “Fast and the Furious” release. No “Fast and the Furious” movies? No popcorn money for AMC.

Outside of the cinema/studio feud, coronavirus has had a devastating impact on the rest of the film industry. Film festivals are often used to debut films before they hit the silver screen, and nearly all have been canceled. Filming will be a challenge now — it takes a lot of people to put together a movie. Actors, camera crew, set staff, editors — there’s a reason the end credits are so long. Somehow studios will have to find a way to



Photo courtesy of DreamWorks Animation  
*Universal Studios released “Trolls: World Tour” direct to consumer via streaming. This was a bold and controversial move.*

a much cheaper method of releasing a film, and it’s a good way to reach audiences wary of spending two hours in a dark, enclosed room with strangers. However, in time, as more and more studios take this path, Amazon, Apple and the other services will likely jack up the price of releasing direct to streaming — thereby taking away the appeal of streaming services for the movie studios, and giving cinemas a prayer.

I suspect that people may no longer show up to theaters to watch Oscar bait. Who wants to watch a thought-provoking, emotionally moving film while some kid kicks the back of your chair, the guy next to you can’t stop crinkling his bag of crisps, and the teen couple in front of you won’t stop talking? Blockbusters, however, will continue to be social events, if I was making predictions. Geeks from all over will still turn up in costume to watch “Star Wars,” and the Marvel movies never fail to fill up seats.

Perhaps we will see a new hybrid world in which half the movies go direct to stream, and half continue to be shown in theaters. Undoubtedly, many cinemas will close as demand plummets, but for now, I don’t believe the traditional movie theater will die out entirely.

Maybe, if we’re lucky, the drive-in movies will make a comeback!

film while constantly issuing tests and while keeping all staff socially distanced. One has to wonder if that will be possible or affordable until we find a vaccine.

The prognosis isn’t all bad. In the short term, I suspect other studios will follow Universal’s lead and release directly to streaming services like Amazon. That is currently

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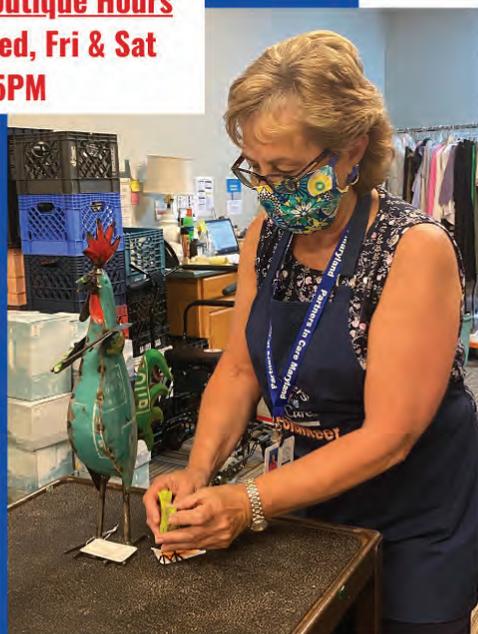


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# First-Time Author Regales Readers With “The Last Wizard”

By Zach Sparks

A volcanic plain in middle-Earth, basked in gray light, where fumes leak from fissures in the Earth. This doesn't sound like the safest place for a child, but there were few places John Bachkosky would rather be during his youth.

Bachkosky read day and night during his adolescence, using his imagination to transform his backyard into Mordor, Mars and Hogwarts. Inspired by epic fantasies like “Lord of the Rings,” “Harry Potter,” “The Last Airbender” and “Game of Thrones,” Bachkosky released his own story, “The Last Wizard,” on April 28.

Set in the world of Kyros, the story follows tyrannical ruler King Gjanion, who has convinced his subjects that he is the last wizard. While seeking to crush the rebellion that has risen against him, Gjanion encounters Mara — the true last wizard. Fearing the exposure of his lies, the king tries to silence Mara, who fights to protect those she loves. Her adoptive parents, Zhira and Gant, use alchemy to support her journey, to find the rebellion, and to help end the king's reign.

Bachkosky called his story character-driven, fast-paced, and relatable, paying homage to the genre's classic tales while still managing to find a unique voice.

“The influences I have are rampant, but the different elements turn them on their heads,” he said. “It's a new world.”

“I wanted to do something with a non-standard family dynamic. Not only is Mara adopted; her parents are brothers. It lends itself to a lot of unique interactions.”

Bachkosky developed his skills by writ-



John Bachkosky

ing short stories before he penned “The Last Wizard.”

“I had a basic idea of what I wanted to do,” he said. “I wanted to create character arcs, and the process was really organic.”

Bachkosky has ties to the area as the varsity swimming coach at Severna Park High School. Writing and swimming are not his only hobbies. He has completed multiple Ironman races, has been the lead singer of a band, and currently works as an aerospace engineer.

With “The Last Wizard,” he has fulfilled a lifelong dream, but he doesn't plan on stopping there. He's in the early stages of writing a sequel.

Readers can find “The Last Wizard” on Amazon. Follow John Bachkosky on Instagram @JBachBooks or on Facebook.

“I hope everyone enjoys the uniqueness of it, or that it inspires others to write,” Bachkosky said. “It's a new take on a well-written genre.”

## How Local Businesses Are Adapting

» Continued from page 54  
ly removed.

Kaufmann said that he is grateful to be a part of a community that values local businesses. While they do not have to shop small, Kaufmann believes that Severna Park will do anything for its small business community.

“I've always wanted to own a toy store, but what I've learned during this pandemic is that I didn't realize how connected I was going to become to the community and how much it was going to mean to me,” said Kaufmann.

When Cafe Mezzanotte owner Kosmas “Tommie” Koukoulis heard that businesses were being closed, he was terrified for his business.

“After the initial two-week shock, I realized that just as conventional marketing wasn't effective right now, my existing offerings were not entirely effective either,”

said Koukoulis.

Cafe Mezzanotte began offering delivery on GrubHub and curbside pickup. Koukoulis started focusing on platters and promotions, rather than single-serving meals. He also opened a seafood market, which expanded into an organic market to support the local farmers who provide Cafe Mezzanotte with its meats and produce.

“The Organic Market in particular was an emotional win as I love sharing these products with the community and I love supporting the small farmers who produce them,” said Koukoulis.

Koukoulis said that the support from the community was amazing and he is excited to serve customers in person once again.

“I have learned that nothing can stop us,” said Koukoulis. “I have learned that there are people within and around Mezzanotte who care about this place as much as I do.”

## O'Loughlin's Restaurant & Pub

» Continued from page 54

Our waitress was friendly and efficient, even while training a new employee. The pair delivered our appetizers quickly. The tender mushrooms were stuffed with bubbly, spicy crab imperial — nice little savory bites. There was plenty of coconut on the shrimp to provide a sweet contrast, and the raspberry sauce offered a nice bit of tartness. I preferred the shrimp; my companion favored the mushrooms.

Our perky waitress put my memory skills to shame as she rattled off the specials and the multiple side dishes available.

My companion chose one of the specials, lemon haddock, with mashed potatoes and broccoli, and I picked the chicken kabobs, served over a bed of wild rice, with a side “Loughlin salad.”

Beautifully presented, our food arrived just as we licked the last bit of appetizers from our fingers. We each took a taste of the fish, drawing a “yum” from me. Covered with lemon seasoning and pepper, the fish, tender and flaky, had a bite a little too intense for my companion, who claimed that the seasoning overshadowed the taste of the fish. I liked the peppery lemon zing, though she was correct, the spices did mask some of the haddock's flavor. We both gobbled up the mashed potatoes, true comfort food, made with the skins. The broccoli was steamed properly — crisp yet tender.

My grilled chicken kabobs were a hit — lightly seasoned, speared with grilled cherry tomatoes, onions, and peppers and served over wild rice. The rice was especially tasty. I've never been a huge fan of wild rice, but this was fluffy yet dense, with a light nutty taste. Altogether, it was very satisfying.

Sneaking a taste of my salad dressing, my companion wrinkled her nose and said, “You're not going to like that.” She was wrong. The unique caraway dressing was a mix of spicy and sweet, and perfectly paired with the light salad of greens topped with nuts, apples, blue cheese, red onions and tomatoes.

Since wings are one of the restaurant's favorites, according to our wait staff and online reviews, we split an order for the



Photo by Mary Cobbler

Coffee and chocolate ice cream topped with caramel and peanuts makes the homemade Mississippi mud pie a summertime pleaser.

sake of you, our readers. Though we flirted with the suicide wings, we deferred and chose the extra hot version. Both of us officially pronounce them extra meaty, spicy and hot (we are happy we didn't go with the jump-off-the-cliff version), with just the right amount of tasty sauce without making them sloppy.

We completed our meal with desserts and chose the two that are made in-house: Mississippi mud pie and a brownie sundae.

Topped with caramel embedded with peanuts, the rich mud pie was layered with solidly frozen coffee and chocolate ice cream, topped with whipped cream — luscious and cool for a hot summer night.

The brownie sundae was just as scrumptious. Let's face it, sometimes when you order a brownie sundae, the brownie tastes like it came out of a plastic wrapper at a convenience store. Moist, with full-mouthed cocoa flavor (I'm salivating as I write this), these brownies must have been baked fresh. You can't go wrong with this goodie, which is drizzled with chocolate sauce and with whipped cream.

With a less than \$100 bill for the large amount of food, we were pleasantly filled to the brim.

O'Loughlin's has a variety of weekday specials, including an Irish night on Wednesdays with corned beef and cabbage, shepherd's pie, or fish and chips. There is also a Sunday brunch, and live music on Thursdays from 5:30pm-8:30pm on the patio.

Check out the full menu and specials online at [www.oloughlinspub.com](http://www.oloughlinspub.com).

# Arnold Resident Pursues Dream Of Hollywood Acting

By Laura McElwain Colquhoun

Lifelong Arnold resident and artist Emet Mihajlo is pursuing a longtime dream of acting.

“As early as I can remember, I had a niche for film and writing,” Mihajlo shared. “It took what seemed like an eternity, but I finally started getting jobs.”

In 2016, Mihajlo was hired as an extra for one episode in the Maryland-filmed Netflix show “House of Cards” as a campaign donor. The following year, Mihajlo was in one episode as a national guardsman and likely would have been in more episodes had the series not been canceled soon thereafter.

Earlier this year, Mihajlo had a small role in the HBO limited series “The Plot Against America,” which was being filmed in Baltimore. Playing the part of a British commando, Mihajlo also made an appearance in the trailer for the show.

Mihajlo’s interest in movies began early in childhood. “My grandmother influenced me a lot and always pushed me creatively. She was a writer, actress and director for Lux Radio Theatre in the late 1940s. My parents only allowed us to watch films



Emet Mihajlo

from the 1920s to 1970s — Bette Davis being a household name,” he said.

He also recalls “Titanic” as the first movie he ever saw in the theater.

In fifth grade, Mihajlo was in a school play and forgot his lines during one production. Traumatized by the experience, Mihajlo decided to forget about acting. In-

stead he focused on other artistic pursuits, such as painting and photography, but always kept his love of cinema.

After graduating from Broadneck High School in 2011, Mihajlo decided to enter the health care industry to pursue a career as a registered nurse, but it did not work out for various reasons. Around that time, a friend had showed him the HBO series “Girls” and was reminded of his original dream of acting. It was a turning point in his acting career, as he thought to himself, “I can write and do this better.”

At that juncture, he decided to revisit acting, which he had abandoned years earlier. He began writing screenplays on his own and enrolled at Anne Arundel Community College, focusing primarily on acting. He credits acting instructor and local director Casey Kaleba for helping him develop his acting skills and also said, “Honestly, I just watched too many Bette Davis films and kind of got the hang of it by putting myself in situations where I wouldn’t know how to react.”

During his studies, Mihajlo became close friends with actress Amna Geko, who also lives in Anne Arundel County.

“She pretty much is the reason I got my first job,” Mihajlo said. “It’s really nearly impossible if you don’t know someone who knows someone, it seems.”

Mihajlo attributes Geko for him being hired on “House of Cards.” He further credits his acquaintances, designer Galib Najafov and actress Jemima Kirke, for playing critical roles in his development as an actor, writer and artist.

Currently, Mihajlo is writing for and working with a producer in New York City on a feature film. The film reflects his own experiences but is described as a “mystery thriller.” Due to non-disclosure agreements, he cannot share details about the project, but he said it will be relatable for those who grew up in the Annapolis area.

In the future, Mihajlo would also like to direct films. For now, though, he is focusing on writing. Laughing, he shared that he told himself recently, “Let’s just stick to one thing for now.”

In his spare time, Mihajlo does humanitarian work for a non-governmental organization that provides aid to those in need in the former Yugoslavia.

Mihajlo has an entry on IMDb.

# Author Goes On Virtual Tour From Shipley’s Choice Bedroom

By Haley Weisgerber

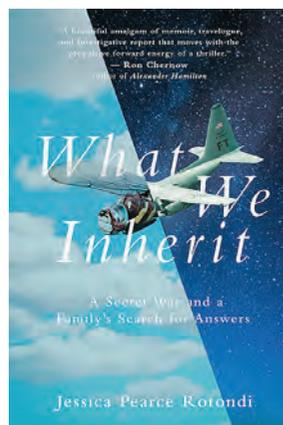
It was not the book tour that she imagined, but when her plans were canceled as a result of the pandemic, Jessica Pearce Rotondi was forced to get creative.

Determined to share her family’s story of hope during this uncertain time, the first-time author embarked on a virtual tour from her brother-in-law’s childhood bedroom in Shipley’s Choice.

“What We Inherit: A Secret War and a Family’s Search for Answers” tells the true story of Edwin Pearce, a former World War II prisoner in Stalag 17 and Rotondi’s grandfather, and his journey to find his son, Edwin “Jack,” who followed his father into the Air Force and disappeared during a plane crash in Laos during the Vietnam war. Edwin believed his son would find his way home, just as he had many years ago. Following the death of her mother, Rotondi discovered a box of declassified documents about the CIA-led “secret war” that claimed her uncle’s life in 1972. She picked up where her grandfather left off in hopes of solving her family’s mystery.

Though this is her first novel, Rotondi is no stranger to writing. She has worked for TIME, Vogue, Reader’s Digest, Refinery29, HuffPost and more recently, The History Channel.

Rotondi is a graduate of Brown University, where she received a grant to complete



an oral history project on World War II. Inspired by her grandfather’s story, she spent a summer traveling to nursing homes to meet with veterans and talk about their experiences. At

HuffPost, she worked on the Blog Section, a collection of personal stories about everyday people.

Rotondi said that working with these different voices and first-person accounts gave her the experience she needed to write her book.

“My book spans 36 years and goes from my grandfather in the 1970s to myself in the present day,” said Rotondi. “If I hadn’t talked to both veterans and young people and edited their work for so long, I don’t think I would have been able to tell so many diverse stories.”

Rotondi spent a decade interviewing CIA officers, veterans, refugees and even traveling to her uncle’s crash site in Laos. Though Laos is the most heavily bombed



Jessica Pearce Rotondi

country in the world, and the “secret war” left the nation in ruins, Rotondi was met with nothing but kindness during her visit.

“Going into the book, I wanted it to be this family mystery where I found all of the answers and knew what happened to my uncle,” said Rotondi. “What the book ended up becoming was not only my family’s story, but the stories of these people involved in this secret war.”

Rotondi’s book was released in the height of the coronavirus pandemic. A New York City resident, Rotondi was in Mill-

ersville visiting her in-laws when the city shut down. With enough clothes for a long weekend, Rotondi and her husband have been in Maryland since May.

Following the cancellation of her launch party and 12-city book tour, Rotondi embarked on a virtual tour from Shipley’s Choice. She was not able to visit Los Angeles or New York, but Rotondi’s virtual tour has allowed her to host events in Berlin and Australia. Rotondi said that seeing people’s faces and getting a glimpse into their homes has made the experience more personal.

“It’s less of a lecture style and more of a discussion,” said Rotondi. “The great equalizer on a Zoom call, especially on the grid view, is that we are all the same size and our faces are there. It’s a solution that we had to use, but it had a surprising connectivity.”

Over 10,000 viewers have tuned in from their homes to hear Rotondi’s story. Her novel has received praise from Salman Rushdie (Booker Prize-winning author of “Midnight’s Children”), Ron Chernow (Pulitzer Prize-winning author of “Alexander Hamilton”) and was picked for Oprah’s Summer Book Club.

“Having the last few months be the way they were, for a small-press book to go so far, was wilder than anything I’d ever imagined,” said Rotondi.

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