

Emmitsburg NEWS-JOURNAL

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“EXALTING THE IMPORTANCE OF IDEAS AND INFORMATION” —EDWARD R. MURROW

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Finance workshop falls short in delivering solutions

The much-anticipated special workshops, instigated at the request of newly elected Mayor Frank Davis and designed to help him and the Town Council get their hands around the Town's finances, failed to deliver the results residents and commissioners had hoped for from the so-called “deep dive” into the Town's financial affairs.

Led by Town Council President Amy Boeham, the workshops were intended to discuss what funds the Town has on hand, the Town's various income and expense streams, how money has been historically allocated to what projects and services, and if those allocations still make sense in today's environment. The meeting, however, quickly pivoted to rehashing the state of the depleted funding of the Town's water system.

The depletion of the Water Fund, the Council has learned, was brought about by a host of issues, including the decision of the prior administration to shift the charging of office staff sala-

ries and benefits from the Town's General Fund to the Water Fund. The decision in May of 2023 for a series of 36% water rate increases to ‘rebuild’ the Water Fund has drawn the ire of residents.

The ire did not go unnoticed by Mayor Davis or the Town Council, who immediately began to seek other solutions to replenish the Water Fund with the hope of eventually scaling down, or rolling back, the planned rate increases.

Several commissioners have publicly stated that they will not support the ongoing increases previously recommended by the Town Manager and approved by the former Town Council under Mayor Briggs's tenure. Commissioner Jim Hoover went so far as to ask that action be taken to stop the water rate increases unless the Town Council approves them every year.

In an effort to jump-start the replenishment of the Water Fund, in December, the Town transferred \$300,000 of its American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds into the Water Fund. Davis said



A good chunk of the Sewer Fund will be spent in the replacement of the Creamery Road sewage pumping station, the source of two recent sewage spills into Flat Run.

that while the ARPA funds provided a little increase to the Water Fund's balance sheet, “the Town is still a long way off from reaching the necessary levels needed to handle the cost of unexpected breakdowns in the system.”

Davis told the Council that the Water Fund increased by almost \$60,000 in the first quarter of FY-24 alone as a result of the first 36% rate increase, which went into effect in July. “Of course, it's

not the whole year's picture, but that sure helped to get the Fund's balance up a little bit,” he stated.

But according to one commissioner, the Town had not gone far enough to address the “elephant in the room,” that being the charging of non-water plant staff hours to the Water Fund based upon something as simple as answering a phone call on a water question from a resident.

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Carroll Valley breaks ground for new wastewater plant

Carroll Valley Borough welcomed the groundbreaking state-of-the-art public wastewater treatment plant on February 2nd. Borough officials and local representatives alike dug shovels into the chilly ground of Sanders Road to begin the expansion of sewer coverage to the community.

Located at the current Wastewater Treatment Plant on Sanders Road, the new plant is prepared for the same plot of land just feet away from the current system.

The existing wastewater treatment plant was built in the early 1960s, predating the incorporation of Carroll Valley, which will soon be celebrating its 50th anniversary. The wastewater treatment plant was originally designed to treat wastewater from the old Liberty Mountain Resort facilities before becoming a public system.

Although the plant has not had any issues with compliance, the new system with state-of-the-art equipment will ensure everything is smooth sailing for future compliance.

“We are a vibrant, growing community and we want to be prepared,” Borough Manager David Hazlett said.

The current system has begun to age out of repairs. Maintenance items are limited, and replace-

ment parts are harder and harder to come by. The borough is selling some of the previous equipment online and all the income from the sales will be put toward funding for the new plant.

The Carroll Valley Borough Sewer Department serves over 500 residences, several businesses, and nearly 100 holding tank customers, according to the borough website.

Hazlett credited the immense dedication of Sewer Treatment Plant Operator Jed Fetter as the reason the plant has continually operated and functioned so well.

The bid for construction came in at approximately \$5.3 million and was awarded to Hickers Associates of Alexandria, Pa. in August 2023. State Representative Dan Moul, (who was among the groundbreaking attendees) helped secure a \$700,000 state water infrastructure grant to offset costs, Hazlett said.

The grant is designed to aid municipal sewer and water projects, including the construction of drinking water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer projects, as well as flood control projects and the rehabilitation of high-hazard unsafe dams.

The new plant will increase capacity and open amenities to areas not



Local dignitaries at the ground breaking of the new Carroll Valley Waste Water Treatment facility.

yet serviced, including an additional 350-400 residents, as well as continue servicing Ski Liberty.

The old line will be kept on through sequencing and will be carefully taken offline one part at a time to ensure sewer needs continue to flow smoothly to all residents, businesses, and holding tank customers without any interruptions, Hazlett assured.

By utilizing new, updated technology, the new sewer plant will also be reducing the Borough's carbon footprint instead of expanding it. For instance, the lagoon that surrounds the plant

is a wastewater treatment plant method dating back to the 1960s and will be replaced with more efficient UV lighting, he said.

The new plant also offers easy expandability allowing for borough growth, he said, noting the current plant doesn't even have availability for staff restrooms.

The first item of construction will be to install a temporary bypass line to a proposed manhole followed by demolition of the lagoon; this is scheduled to begin mid to end of February. Construction for the new plant is expected to take approximately 400 days.

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EMMITSBURG NEWS

Council asks for better minutes

At the February Town Council Meeting, the Council debated the need for a more comprehensive account of meeting minutes.

The need for more comprehensive meeting minutes came on the heels of the split decision by the Council to accept the January 8th and 22nd meeting minutes with a 3-2 vote. Council President Amy Boehman and Commissioner Valerie Turnquist voted against approving the minutes, citing the records did not reflect the actual meeting.

Turnquist previously refused to approve the November 6 meeting minutes because the minutes didn't reflect important changes to the Community Legacy Grant that were to be implemented by Town staff going forward.

Commissioner Hoover had previously motioned to table the December 5 and 12 minutes with similar concerns.

"As it stands, the Town Council minutes are not a full and accurate account of our meetings as required by our Town Code," Turnquist said. "To be transparent about the business that

we conduct, our minutes should reflect what we discussed."

According to Town Attorney Clark Adams, the three basic requirements for meeting minutes include: what was discussed, what the votes were and what the actual decision made was. Adams acknowledged that while additional information may be included, there is more likelihood of disagreement from members of Council about exactly how to characterize that information.

"You can see in the videos of our meetings that we often take some sidebars in our discussions and we always have and always will. To resolve the issue, I think it's a matter of coming together as a Council and figuring out what we want captured in our meeting minutes," Boehman said.

Turnquist noted that the minutes include a record of public comments and commissioner comments, but in terms of agenda items where a vote is recorded, only the staff's presentation and recommendation is included. Relevant questions, concerns, or requests from commissioners for additional

information are not part of the record. "This is our record of what transpired," she said, "and should be captured in the minutes so readers can put the information in perspective."

Commissioner O'Donnell stated with the staff that the Town had, what the Council was asking them to achieve could be a struggle, and that commissioners and residents could always access video recordings if they needed more information.

Turnquist however pointed out that other municipalities offer much more detailed meeting minutes and would like to see more detailed summary bullet points regarding discussions and how decisions were determined.

Mayor Davis acknowledged the difficulties Town staff faced when trying to please everyone and having to watch meeting videos fully to manually transcribe the meetings. In hopes of resolving the issue, Davis asked the Council to write down and send to him their thoughts on what each commissioner would like to see reflected in the minutes.

Eight ask Town to fund home repairs

Following months of give and take between the Town staff and the Town Council on establishing more robust criteria for determining what was the best use of State Legacy Grant funds, the Town's Sustainable Communities Work Group (SCWG) met to consider this year's applications.

The central issue the Town Council has struggled with was the failure of the SCWG to differentiate between requests to help fund actual facade improvements that will help restore the historical feel of the town, and requests to fund routine home maintenance items that all property owners are expected to carry out.

The Council questioned the appropri-

ateness of funding of such items as roof replacements, especially when the portions of the roof are on the back of homes, or to the painting of porch ceilings and floors, activities that would only benefit the homeowner, not the general public.

The Council requested that criteria to this end be documented in a new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). The Council rejected the initial draft of the SOP because it failed to address many of the Council's requests.

The revised SOP was 'conditionally' approved in late 2023 based upon the commitment by the Town staff to add in additional criteria – including the differentiating between facade 'upgrades' and 'routine maintenance.' The Council also requested that the SOP also

included a clause giving the Council veto authority over any grants approved by the SCWG.

The Council only agreed to the conditional approval based upon the staff's warning that unless the SOP was approved, the SCWG would be unable to review applications in time for this year's grant cycle and thereby put at risk this year's \$50,000 in State grant funds.

As currently written, the SOP now requires applicants to document how their projects enhancement economic sustainability and improve the visual appeal within the Town's designated sustainable community areas.

Funded through the Maryland Dept. of Housing and Community Development, the program provides 50% matching

grants for exterior facade improvements, with the property owner paying the other 50%. The SCWG is tasked with evaluating, prioritizing and recommendation of the awarding individual grants.

At its February meeting, the SCWG reviewed eight applications totaling \$67,161. A request from the Presbyterian Church for \$12,500 for roofing was deemed ineligible, as it is a religious organization.

Five applications totaling \$30,161 for roofing, siding, and window replacement were approved. However, one approved grant for \$1,650, for a flat roof behind a house, appears to violate

the approval criteria, as it cannot be seen by the general public.

The SCWG put on hold a request for \$12,000 to replace garage doors and gutters on a rental property, because the property does not look like the property it is being maintained at all right now. The SCWG suggested Town staff contact the owner of the property about the lack of current maintenance.

Another application, for \$12,500, for the replacement of gutters and downspouts was returned to the applicant after the SCWG expressing reservations that the project would not improve the facade of the house.

Finance workshop falls short in delivering solutions

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As a preliminary step to address the issue, Town staff proposed moving the cost of the benefits, i.e., health insurance, pension payments, and Social Security taxes, from the Water Fund to the General Fund for one office staffer. When asked why two other office staff members' benefits were being charged to the Sewer Fund when their work was not related to sewer system operations, Willets stated that the Sewer Fund had the largest cash reserve – and thus could afford it.

This left some commissioners scratching their heads. "All we are doing is setting ourselves up to deplete the Sewer Fund just like we did the Water Fund, which will set us up to have to raise the sewer rates down the road," said Bowman.

Turnquist also questioned the appropriateness of charging employees' benefits to the Sewer Fund "simply because we have the budget available. I think the funds that are charged staff members' benefits should reflect where the majority of their work is done," she said.

While the decision to no longer charge the benefits of the three staff members to the Water and Sewer Funds reduces yearly expenses of these two funds by \$96,600, the Town staff failed to address the principle concern of the Town Council over the charging of non-water plant office staff hours to the Water Fund. "If corrected," said one commissioner, "the potential savings to the Water Fund would be huge, dwarfing the income the Water Fund is getting from the rate increases, and possibly negating the need for it."

When pressed on the actual status of the Water Fund, Willets did not answer the question directly, but instead

pointed out that at the end of FY-23 (June 2023), the Water Fund had a balance of \$10,864. Pressing for a clarification, Turnquist noted that the FY-24 budget contained an entry projecting a deficit of -\$173,433 in the Water Fund for FY-23. "How do you reconcile a projected ending balance of -\$173K with an actual net ending income of \$11K?" Turnquist asked.

The lack of consistency in numbers had commissioners questioning what figures were used to come up with the recommended five years of 36% water rate increases.

Turnquist also stated that the Town needed to conduct a careful review of the water rate increase, as some users with connections to the water system

greater than the standard 3/4 inch connection saw their water rates increase as much as 217%, instead of the 36% that had been approved.

Picking up on a line of questioning firsts raised by former Commissioner Joe Ritz, Turnquist asked for a study to determine how many residents actually used 6,000 gallons per quarter. Unlike other Towns who charge residents based solely upon gallons used, Emmitsburg charges residents using a tiered system; residents are charged for using at least 6,000 gallons a quarter, whether they use that amount or not. If they go over 6,000 gallons, they are charged in 1,000-gallon increments, regardless if the overage is by one gallon or 999 gallons.

Davis suggested a study with the Maryland Municipal League to see where the Town would be if it didn't charge by tiers, but rather by actual numbers of gallons of water used, and to see if that approach would be feasible.

After digesting the results of the financial workshop, each commissioner put forth a wish list of actions they wanted to see the Town act on. The commissioners agreed to work together to prioritize the actions at the March Town meeting to create a master list of projects.

Emmitsburg
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FAIRFIELD/CARROLL VALLEY NEWS

Liberty tackles questions on opening of Township mail

Following recent conversation with the Township's bonding company, Liberty's elected auditors expressed concern to the Township's Board of Supervisors about "non-bonded" supervisors opening mail coming into the office.

A treasurer's bond is a policy with an insurance company put in place by the Board of Supervisors for faithful performance of the Township Treasurer of their duties and is equal to the highest amount of Township funds available to the Township Treasurer at any time during the year.

The supervisors are not bonded for any sort of action, Township Solicitor John Lisko said. The auditors noted that the Township had only

two bonded employees, the Treasurer and the Assistant Treasurer, whose role it is to handle Township finances and bookkeeping. The auditors expressed concern that if a supervisor opened a letter with a check in it, they could potentially invalidate the insurance bond by breaking the chain of custody between the letter sender, the post office, and the Township's Treasurer.

The Township Assistant Treasurer serves as an alternate to the Treasurer and is not involved with mail or processing checks in any way, according to Barlow. She is only bonded because she is in charge of reconciling bank statements once a month.

Lisko did not recommend any additional policies, such as putting one

person in charge of finances, citing it would only increase risk. As seen in municipalities, including Liberty with former Township Secretary Treasurer LeeEsha Shafer, he noted, when one individual has complete control over all treasury aspects of the Town, including opening the mail and writing checks, the less accountable the employee is made to be, as their performance is not scrutinized as much as it should be.

"An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. The more people involved, the less likelihood of getting ripped off," Lisko said.

Lisko noted supervisors are essentially in charge of the mail that comes addressed to the Township and imposing additional regulations

would be "basically telling them they can't open their mail."

"In small Townships like this, you need to have people involved reviewing records and credit card accounts," he said.

Elected Auditor Richard Swiat said the Board of Auditors was not accusing anyone of wrongdoing, but wanted to ensure the Township was not spending money they didn't have to.

To verify that the current practices of allowing Township supervisors to open Township mail does not break the Township's bond, supervisors will meet with the bonding company at its March meeting, along with the Townships auditors, for clarification, according to Barlow.

Unless directed otherwise, the Township will continue its operation of finances per Township code, including insuring three people sign off on "all checks that go out the door," Barlow said.

In other business, the Board of Supervisors approved the promotion of Liberty Township Police Officer Jim French to Lieutenant. "We appreciate you taking responsibility to step into that position," Barlow said.

Supervisor Vice Chairman Bobby Keilhotz noted French brings many distinctive qualities to the police department and the Township with his vast experience. The supervisors also accepted the resignations of two police officers.

Carroll Valley prepares to celebrate anniversary

Carroll Valley is celebrating its Golden jubilee and the borough council is eager to celebrate.

At their February meeting, council indicated its desire to form a committee that will be tasked with determining how the anniversary will be marked. Mayor Ron Harris said a group of citizens has been informally meeting and ideas are abundant.

Carroll Valley was formed in 1974 by citizens of the Charnita development who were deceived by a nefarious developer.

In the late 1960s, Liberty Township supervisors gave Charles Rist permission to buy and subdivide land. Rist divided hundreds of acres into thousands of lots.

A group comprised of citizens from Liberty and Hamiltonban townships and Fairfield Borough sued the supervisors for approving the plan. They claimed that improving the vacant lots would require sewage and road construction costs that the municipalities could not afford. Charnita agreed, and posted bonds that it claimed were sufficient to adequately

provide a sewer system and roads.

In March 1974, Judge Cliton Weidner ruled the bonds Charnita posted were inadequate. Also, the plans did not meet code requirements for sewage disposal or road construction. Charnita was to cease developing the lands.

Charnita was in ruins. It went bankrupt. The Carroll Valley Citizens Association successfully incorporated the Charnita land into Carroll Valley Borough. John Steeves was elected Carroll Valley's first mayor.

Borough Manager Dave Hazlett,

who will soon mark his 20th anniversary with Carroll Valley, credited the borough's founders for using their expertise to overcome a trying situation.

"I am sure our founding fathers and mothers would be tickled pink to know this little thing they started out back then has made it 50 years. It was touch or go for them at the time," Hazlett said.

Hazlett noted the borough has also experienced challenges during his tenure, but he is excited for the future.

The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Develop-

ment recently awarded the borough a \$212,000 Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program grant to construct a 4,750 trail. The council also appointed a nine-person committee to recommend plans for a 50-acre borough-owned lot along Route 16.

Next month, the council will formally appoint the celebration committee. Members indicated they will likely already appoint citizens who have been working with the mayor. He invited others to share their thoughts. "If you have ideas, that's great. But you also have to have an idea on how we get it done," Harris said.

Fairfield considers snow removal policy

The Fairfield Borough Council is considering changes to its snow removal policy following new equipment convenience.

Independent contractor George "Butch" Harbaugh of Harbaugh's Excavation, LLC, noted he recently acquired new V-Plow snow removal equipment which has been more effective in removing snow along borough curbs into adjacent alleys.

The borough's current snow and ice specification policy states that 12 inches of snow must accumulate before being removed from curbs and intersections.

Following the area's recent winter storm, Harbaugh performed a test run of the new V-Plow and found it to be much more efficient at snow removal than his previously utilized backhoe and dump truck equipment to haul the snow away, he said.

With the new equipment, Harbaugh stated that he can have the snow removed and tucked to alleyways in record time, freeing up parking more quickly.

As a state road, Main Street is plowed by PennDOT while Harbaugh clears the borough streets.

Completely plowing the borough twice takes about nine hours, he said.

The Council is considering a change to the current snow removal policy to allow Harbaugh to remove snow from curbs without waiting until it has accumulated the current required 12 inches.

If approved, the proposed changes would allow the removal to be performed on a regular basis and to push the snow away as needed.

It won't be necessary to perform snow tucking into alleys every snowfall, but it will be imperative during back-to-back snowstorms as experienced recently, Harbaugh said.

The Council is expected to officially adopt the changes at its February meeting but gave Harbaugh authorization to go-ahead with the removal if another winter weather advisory hits the area in the meantime.

Harbaugh and Borough Secretary Susan Wagle are also expected to sit

down for a comprehensive review of all plowable borough areas.

Residents are reminded to move cars off the streets during snow emergency proclamations and not to blow snow into the street.

In other Borough news, with the new year, Fairfield Borough Council appointed members to serve as liaison to various municipal com-

mittees and organizations.

Council President Patrica Smith was appointed delegate to the Adams County Tax Collection Committee, liaison to the Council of Governments, Municipal Authority liaison and delegate to the York Adams Tax Collection.

Camille Cline will serve as liaison to the Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB). This group

works to preserve borough historic architectural features and structures. Council Vice President Phyliss Gilbert will serve as the Fairfield Area Historical Society liaison. Pat Pileggi was appointed liaison to Hamiltonban Township and Fairfield Borough Joint Parks and Recreation Commission. Sally Thomas will serve as Pippinfest Committee liaison and Dennis Bucher will serve as liaison to the Planning Commission.

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THURMONT NEWS

Electric bills may increase 15%

At the Feb. 13 Town Council workshop, Chris Simms, a principal of Smart Utility Management, a consultant who researches energy management for the Town of Thurmont, briefed the Council about the anticipated increase in the price of electric power supply costs for Town residents when the current contract with Energy Harbor, the current supplier of electricity to the Town, ends May 31.

The Town's current contract with Energy Harbor to supply electricity to the Town was last amended in 2021, so, according to Simms, Thurmont was able

to "lock in" a lower price at that time for its residents. When the contract ends in May however, indicative pricing shows residents will likely be forced to pay the current, higher price for their electric bills.

"The current power supply contracts give us the benefit of stability in pricing to our customers because we know exactly how much that power supply cost is going to cost throughout the life of that contract," Simms said. This past stability allowed the town to accurately forecast future power costs.

Residents are currently paying 5.484 cents per kilowatt-hour for their elec-

tric. According to Simms, the average monthly electric bill now is about \$87 but could increase to \$100 after the Power Cost Adjustment is made, a 15% increase. He went on to say that every other town and municipality across the United States has likely already gone through the price increase, except for Hagerstown and Williamsport, who are on the same contract schedule as Thurmont. Even if the increases were to come to fruition, Thurmont's rates are still substantially lower than all others in the state, with the exception of Williamsport and Hagerstown.

Simms also explained to the Council that the suppliers' quotes are predictions. While the Town needs to present a price to the Maryland Public Service Commission, the commissioners and mayor do not need to make a decision on an electricity supplier until the contract ends May 31. During that time, the price could change. "I would think that as we get closer to the end of May, Energy Harbor is going to have to lower their price," Simms said. "Otherwise, towns aren't going to extend their contracts."

If Thurmont decides not to continue their contract, residents would be forced to pay the market price for electricity. While a long-term contract rate could

be higher, locking in prices now could prevent residents' bills from fluctuating wildly during peak demand periods – where rates could easily double overnight.

Commissioner Marty Burns suggested the Town "lock in" at the current rate and then "wait to see if the market drops in May." He pointed out that there was no risk to the Town, as Simms explained that a price increase is unlikely in the summer months. "There's always a possibility that some freak event could happen, but it hasn't happened in the last 14-15 months," Simms said. "I don't expect it to occur in the summer time, you just don't get peak prices in the summer anymore."

Council considers pausing Thurmont Boulevard work

At Commissioner Bob Lookingbill's request, the Town Council put the Thurmont Boulevard Project on hold to leave room in the budget to cover work needed for the PFAS treatment work.

[PFAS is the short name for a class of human-made chemicals known as Per- and Poly-Fluoroalkyl Substances. PFAS are often called "forever chemicals" because they do not easily degrade in the environment or in the body, so they accumulate in both over time.]

Previously, the Town Council agreed to put the Thurmont Boulevard Proj-

ect on hold at the March 21 meeting but did not take a formal vote. Because of this, Lookingbill requested a formal vote to protect the Town and its residents to ensure that someone on the Council can't restart the project without a vote to do so.

"I think it makes it cleaner," Commissioner Marty Burns said. He went on to explain that a commissioner or the mayor could bring the project back up next week.

While Mayor John Kinnaird agreed that the issue was important in terms of process, he still believed

that the Thurmont Boulevard project needed to be restarted at some point, even if not immediately. "It's a project that we need to discuss at some time," Kinnard said.

Town Manager Jim Humerick reminded the Council that no projects can be started or restarted without going before the Council for a vote of approval.

The then Council paused the Thurmont Boulevard Project to use the funds set aside for that project for the new water treatment facilities that need to be put in to bring PFAS contami-

nants in the Town's water down to undetectable levels. The work will take about a year and a half and will include new structures and new equipment for the filtration.

The Thurmont Boulevard Project was intended to relieve traffic on Thurmont Boulevard by extending the road by half a mile, connecting Moser Road and Frederick Road. The Town hopes it will ease traffic on Moser Rd. and Frederick Rd. by making it easier for residents in Thurmont and surrounding communities to get to Route 15. The project also

addressed aging water and sewage infrastructure while also potentially creating new wetlands.

The Council had previously voted 4 to 1 to move forward with the long-envisioned Thurmont Boulevard Project by approving the ability of the Town to sell up to \$6 million worth of Infrastructure Bonds for the Project. The discussion to put the project on hold prevents town staff and the commissioner from seeking bonds for the Thurmont Boulevard project until it is brought back to and approved by the Town Council.

Town accepts bid for Gateway subdivision streetlights

The Town Council accepted Catin Lighting's bid of \$59,415 to replace 85 streetlights in the Gateway Subdivision. Most of the funding for this project will come from a Smart Energies Community grant.

Replacing the streetlights was part of the updates started in 2016, according

to Town Manager Jim Humerick. The Town has already replaced half of the streetlights in the subdivision in 2023 and replacing the remaining 85 lamps will finish the project.

According to Humerick, residents have complained to the Town about the previously updated lights, cit-

ing the brighter illumination and LED lighting array as their concerns. While the Town requested exact replacements, providing product numbers, they did not function the same way.

Commissioner Marty Burns was the only one of the Council to vote against

the motion, citing the budget as his concern. While the Town will use a Smart Energies Community grant toward replacing the lights, it will only cover \$53,010 of the project, leaving Thurmont to cover the remaining \$6,405 of the expenses, which will come from the electric budget.

Other commissioners were concerned about potential price changes if they were to wait for the next fiscal year to buy the remaining lights. "I understand what you're saying here, and I can't say I disagree with you," Commissioner Bob Lookingbill said to Burns. "I just think, we've got a good price here, we better jump on it and take care of the whole development and be done with it."

Humerick stated that in conversations with Hubbard, they agreed to start with replacing one light to ensure there are no issues before installing the rest. If the new lights are still different from previous versions, the Town will make every effort to return them and continue their search. "I think we have to be 100% satisfied this time before moving on with the project," Humerick said.

Mayor John Kinnaird suggested purchasing only one lamp for now, but Humerick said it wouldn't be cost effective to do so.

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TANEYTOWN NEWS

Council rehires attorney despite Mayor's objections

According to the Taneytown City Council, the Mayor's termination of the city attorney in November was illegal. Attorney Jay Gullo is back and the council is moving forward as if the firing never occurred.

Mayor Chris Miller, who single-handedly fired Gullo on a Sunday in November, is unhappy but willing to move forward.

"I do not believe what has happened here tonight is in the best interest of the public," Miller said. "There needs to be a focus on serving our residents instead of individuals and power struggles."

The City Council's unanimous decision came after a 2.5-hour closed-door

executive session. Councilmen Chris Tillman reading the motion, Council members did not comment on the matter - a stark difference from the often heated debates that occurred during the past several meetings. Councilwoman Diane Foster was absent from the meeting.

The resolution stated the council believed Miller's actions "left the city in a precarious position," especially since he fired Gullo without a Plan B. City Manager James Wieprecht said after the meeting the city posted a request for proposals for a new attorney but did not receive any response. The posting has been removed in light of Wieprecht's rehiring.

"Based on the outcome of Monday's meeting, there's no intent to repost that or develop a new RFP for an attorney," Wieprecht wrote in an email.

The Council's decision was based on a recommendation from Attorney Kevin Best of Annapolis. Fuller said after the meeting that the council directed Wieprecht to seek an opinion from an impartial lawyer who was not located in Carroll County.

"I think his credentials are impeccable," Fuller said.

According to his website, Best focuses his practices primarily in the areas of municipal, homeowners association, business, real property, land-

lord-tenant, and land use law. He previously served on the staff of the Maryland Municipal League.

In a four-page letter dated Dec. 28, 2023, addressed to Miller and the City Council, Gullo stated he foreshadowed his firing on Sept. 16, 2023, when he wrote what he referred to as a "whistleblower memo" to the council reporting on the "questionable and undisclosed activities of the Mayor and City administration."

The Council also asked Gullo on Nov. 8 to investigate who leaked privileged information. In September, a citizen filed a Public Information Act request that included specific informa-

tion only available to Council members and the Mayor, Gullo said.

When asked, Fuller said she believes the Council will direct Gullo to continue his investigation. "I assume that is the plan. It absolutely is, in my mind," she said.

As for Miller, he urged members of the public to pay attention to city council meetings and become involved in the process. On the Facebook group "The Taneytown Community Group," Miller urged those who agree with him to run for office in 2025. His remarks echoed ones he made at the meeting. "This matter is not, by any means, over," Miller said.

\$7 million Public Works building proposed

City Manager Jim Wieprecht proposed the replacement of multiple aging Public Works buildings with one \$7 million building at the February Mayor and City Council Meeting. Most of the current buildings are in Memorial Park with a few garages throughout the City and a utility yard. "The goal is to get the equipment out of the parks and under one roof," said Wieprecht. "We've seen incidents of theft and vandalism because equipment is stored outside in multiple places."

The location of the proposed building is a five-acre parcel off Allendale Lane. The property was purchased for this project because the cost of the land parcel, which included water and sewer

access, was less expensive than running sewer and water to an existing City owned property. The building will have a training room, wash bays, and storage for the equipment.

Councilman James McCarron hesitated in supporting the project due to the high price. He asked if it was really needed in such a large fashion. Councilwoman Judith Fuller responded that the project has been on the Capital Improvement list for a while, as the current facility was built in the 1970s. "The current conditions are terrible. There is black mold, no hot water and when it rains the roof leaks," she said.

Councilman Christopher Tillman asked if the project could be broken into

parts, allowing the cost to be dispersed over time. Wieprecht said yes, the building is engineered to allow adding on in phases; however, that could end up costing more in the long run. "We want to future proof this building to be enough as the City grows."

Wieprecht said he has reviewed the City's finances with the City treasurer, and they think the City will need to use some of the current general fund balance, borrow money, and apply for grants to fund the project.

What is limiting for this project, Wieprecht said, is the total debt service limit, which is the total cash required to pay back all current debt obligations. "Our current general fund debt bal-

ance is \$755,924. Annual debt service on that balance is \$122,239. Based on 10% of the general fund operating revenue, the most debt service we could take on would be approximately \$587,000 per year, or \$465,000 above our current debt service." As the cost of the project far exceeds that number, it will require a loan to complete.

He said the City is exploring loan options through the Local Government Infrastructure Financing Program, a way of financing capital projects through the Department of Housing and Community Development. The advantage of Community Development loans is they come with significantly reduced interest rates.

"If this project was a utility project, we could fund it out of the water or sewer fund—which is a bigger pool to pull from. But because it's not, then we must fund it out of the general fund," said Wieprecht.

Wieprecht said the City may be able to split the cost between the general and utility funds because some employees do work in both the Water/Sewer departments and in the Street departments; however, doing so would create finance issues that would need to be worked out first.

Wieprecht cautioned the City Council that the plans are rough and in the beginning stage. Many changes and drafts are expected which may reduce the cost while at the same time provide what is needed now and in the future.

Planning Commission updates

The Planning Commission received a briefing on the following six active site plans and projects at their latest meeting.

Evapco presented a concept site plan for increasing the amount of parking at their facility. Along with an addition to their office space they are proposing a parking lot on Allendale Lane that would require the demolition of three dwellings that currently sit on the proposed lot location. Paul Cavanaugh of Development Design Consultants, Inc said, "They are trying to plan ahead. As the addition to the office space is added, the parking will be impacted."

He said the Allendale lot would be for office employees and would require them to cross Allendale Lane. Crosswalk striping would be put down to make

the crossing safer. "When the addition is fully staffed, we expect an additional 200 employees," said Cavanaugh. When the site and preliminary plans are presented, lighting, landscaping and other details will be available.

Town staff said that Storage Toda to meet with the Town's engineer, to discuss a sewer line that runs on their property that has inhibited their building of tier new public storage facility. The hurdle is one of the final big issues they must deal with in their building plan.

Recovery 180 was conditionally approved in 2023 contingent on CDM Smith approving the storm water management plan. They have now officially met the contingency and are fully approved to continue to the preliminary planning stage.

Taneytown Supply, the much-anticipated hardware store on Feeser Road, is still actively in the planning stages.

The Tannery Barn, a one-of-a-kind wedding venue, is waiting on the City's consultant engineer to review plans from the developer showing additional planting areas to meet storm water management requirements.

The Mountain Brook development is waiting on discussions with Floserve in regard to the easement allowing the 454 home development to have a second way of egress. This decision also impacts the proposed bypass which would hopefully continue through the Sewell property to Harney Road.

Meades's Crossing is working on road infrastructure before the City

takes over ownership of the developer's roads. Town Staff said that the developer will need to repair some curbs, concrete cracks, and address a substantial issue with their sewer system. During periods of heavy rain, the pumping station in Meades Crossing shows a spike of water inflow.

City Manager Jim Wieprecht advised the developer of Meades Cross-

ing that they would need to address this issue before the town would take over maintenance of the subdivision's roads. "We are spending millions of dollars on repairing the city's pipes to prevent groundwater from leaking into the sewer system, so we need to be sure that the issues Meades Crossing is having are resolved before we take over ownership."



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FROM THE DESK OF...

Congressman David Trone

If you ask any Marylander about their childhood, chances are they'll have a story or two about the water. Folks in Western Maryland often talk about their time floating down the Potomac or visiting the C&O Canal and its towpaths. Many on the Eastern Shore talk about fishing on the Choptank or going out boating on the Bay. And almost every Marylander can tell you a story about going 'down the ocean' and spending a few summer days in Ocean City. The same is true of my life.

I caught my first fish on the Choptank River. Funny enough, my Mom was even crowned Miss Choptank back in the day. To me, it was about more than just a fish. It was a memory created alongside my father, who often traveled for work as a salesman for TWA. It was a lesson in patience, determination, and a little bit of balance to stay in

the boat. Most importantly, it was an early reminder of just how much Maryland's waterways — and our environment as a whole — matter to our state.

Our waterways — the Chesapeake Bay, the Potomac River, and the countless other rivers and creeks that make up our beautiful state — are essential not just to our environmental health but to our economic health as well. Thousands of crabbers, fishermen, and longshoremen rely on the water to make a living and provide for their families. Thousands more visit our beautiful state parks and waterways to relax and make memories, just like I did with my Dad 60 years ago.

Year after year and generation after generation, Marylanders show that our commitment to the environment is not a political issue. It is a defining characteristic of what

it means to be a Marylander — a deep respect, admiration, and commitment to protecting our environment. This begs the question, then: if we acknowledge that we care so much about our environment, why haven't we done more to protect it?

When thinking about addressing the risks our environment faces, the simple debate over whether climate change is real is a waste of time. The science is settled: climate change is real, and it is one of the most urgent threats to our future that exists. While there are a handful of very vocal critics and skeptics, a vast majority — 85% — of Americans acknowledge the reality of climate change.

The more likely cause of our failure to act is the same as the reason for much of our gridlock and lack of progress. Our leaders simply aren't willing to think long-term. This is a

symptom of a fundamentally broken system. Some leaders are too focused on winning their next election to care about the next generation. Some are bankrolled by special interests like big oil in order to pay for their inaction. Unfortunately, for many leaders in Washington, both are true.

We need to elect leaders with the courage to put people over politics and put the interests of Marylanders over their own self-interest. 75% of Marylanders support government taking action to protect the environment. This means passing meaningful legislation to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, invest in new green technologies, and create good-paying jobs focused on sustainability and environmental clean-up.

But the responsibility doesn't fall solely on our government leaders. It's on all of us to make a change if we want to combat the deadly effects of climate change that loom ahead of

us. First and foremost, voters need to make this effort a priority and elect leaders who are willing to think long-term and bring new ideas to the table. We also need to all take part in reducing our own personal consumption and promoting responsibility with the way we use our natural resources and manage our waste.

Most importantly, we need to educate the next generation on just how much our environment matters in our state. We can teach our kids about the damage that has been caused throughout our lives and generations before us. We can teach them about sustainability and the role that they can play in the solution. And we can teach them how deeply ingrained our waterways are in our state's culture. If you ask me, the best way to learn this lesson is with a boat, a fishing pole, some bait, and a kid who desperately wants to catch his first fish.

County Council President Brad Young

The Frederick County Council meets regularly on Tuesday evenings at 5:30 at Winchester Hall.

Located at 12 East Church Street in Frederick. All meetings are open to the public.

On January 2, the Frederick County Council approved several Bills. Bill 23-22 establishes a Tax Credit for Daycare Providers, sponsored by Council Member Renee Knapp and myself. This Bill provides a tax credit to homeowners that designate a portion of their home to a daycare facility. If a homeowner increases the assessed value of their property as a result of additions or improvements in the creation of a designated daycare space, that homeowner is eligible for a property tax credit in the amount of the increased tax. Bills 23-23 and 23-24 Amend the Frederick County Employee and Uniformed Employee Retirement Plan. These Bills, sponsored by me, on behalf of the County Executive, reduces the full vesting period from ten years to five years of eligible service. Full text of these Bills can be found on our website.

On January 23, the Council approved Bill 23-25, Establishing a Residency Requirement for Planning Commission Members. This Bill, sponsored by Council Vice President Kavonté Duckett, requires Planning Commission

Members to be residents of Frederick County. Bill 23-26 is similar to Bill 23-26 and Establishes a Residency Requirement for Members of the Board of Appeals. This Bill, sponsored by Council Vice President Kavonté Duckett, requires Board of Appeals Members to be residents of Frederick County. Full text of this legislation can be found on our website.

Upcoming legislation includes Bill 24-01. This Bill, that I am sponsoring on behalf of the County Executive, makes Updates and Additions to the Historic Preservation Ordinance. A Public Hearing for this Bill was held on February 27. Documentation and text for this Bill is linked to our agenda for that evening. All documentation can be found on our website. It will come back to the council for a vote at a future meeting.

One of the most important responsibilities of the County Council is upon us. Under the County Charter, the County Executive must deliver the proposed Fiscal Year 2025 budget to the Council for review, public hearing, and action. This is the funding of all County operations for the

next fiscal year. This year's budget will be approaching \$1 billion.

The Council by the Charter only has until May 31, to review, amend, and act on this all-important financial plan. The Council will have a public hearing and we want and need to hear from you. The public hearing is set for Tuesday, April 23, at 7 p.m., at Winchester Hall. Please come out to the hearing, write, or call the Council with your opinion. I want to hear from you!

The Frederick County Council encourages public involvement at every stage of the legislative process. We welcome public comment at every Council meeting on Tuesday evenings. Members of the public are welcome to attend and give comment in person, leave a voicemail to be forwarded to each Council Member, or email us any time at councilmembers@frederickcountymd.gov. Please visit our website at www.frederickcountymd.gov/countycouncil to view our latest agendas, legislation, and upcoming calendar of events.

And as always, if there is ever anything I can do for you, please feel free to reach out to me and my office. You can contact me via email at: BYoung@FrederickCountyMD.gov, or you can call my office at 301-600-1108.



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GOVERNMENT—SOUTH OF THE BORDER

County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

From the first signs of Spring to the start of Daylight Savings Time, March is full of new beginnings. As we transition from winter to spring this month, I look forward to celebrating Women's History Month with Frederick County Commission for Women's annual Raving About Women event and following the excitement of March Madness. (Go, Mount!)

During my State of the County address, I was excited to announce several developments underway to strengthen our local economy and essential industries. Those programs are now rolling out. In February, we announced our newly created Office of Agriculture, an apprenticeship program in county government, and our plans for sustainable transportation.

Office of Agriculture

I was thrilled to celebrate the launch of Frederick County's first-ever Office of Agriculture last month. We are strengthening support for our rich and essential agriculture industry by combining the County's agriculture land preservation and economic development functions.

Through the creation of the Office

of Agriculture, we are making services easier to access and creating more opportunities for collaboration with our farms and our farmers. We have more young producers than any other county in Maryland, and it is my goal to ensure farming remains an important part of Frederick County's bright future.

I am excited to share that the Office of Agriculture is being led by Katie Stevens, who provides tremendous support to the farming community and is deeply dedicated to its future. Katie leads a team of existing employees to manage our award-winning Agriculture Innovation Grants initiative, the agriculture land preservation programs, and the HomegrownFrederick.com website. One of the first tasks for the new office will be to update the County's Agricultural Strategic Plan, which was last published in 2008. To learn more about the Office of Agriculture, visit FrederickCountyMD.gov/Agriculture.

County Apprenticeship Program

Youth apprenticeships have been part of a national conversation because of the need to build talent pipelines. I am proud that

Frederick County Government has recognized the importance of bringing our youth into county government by creating opportunities with our County-wide youth apprenticeship program.

The program incorporates a diverse range of industries in multiple divisions, with opportunities for students in many of our career pathways. Apprenticeships are being utilized in customer assistance; trades such as carpentry, HVAC, and vehicle repair; and specialized County services. Participating divisions include Public Works, Transit, Animal Control, Procurement and Contracting, Economic Opportunity, Human Resources, Planning and Permitting, Family Services, Water and Sewer Utilities, and Parks and Recreation.

The County's apprenticeship program helps us to meet requirements of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future education reform plan, which emphasizes the importance of college and career readiness. Statewide, apprenticeship programs continue to receive praise for ushering new talent to the job market, affirming the opportunities ahead for Frederick County Government.

The county-wide apprenticeship

program presents Frederick County students the opportunity to serve their community and get paid while refining employment skills.

Sustainable Transportation

As our transportation infrastructure evolves, it is imperative that we accelerate our climate resiliency. During Mobilize Frederick County's Annual Climate Summit, I announced two new initiatives by the Division of Energy and Environment to speed up the use of electric vehicles by the County and the public. The Alternative Fuel Vehicle Fleet Transition Plan for County Government and the Community-wide Electric Vehicle Readiness Plan will guide the County as we transition toward sustainable transportation.

Our goal is to ensure a resilient future for Frederick County's businesses and residents. Transportation accounts for about 48% of all greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change, according to data from across Frederick County. We heard from our Transition Team and from the broader community as part of the Livable Frederick Master Plan that residents want to create more sustainable ways of moving people and goods. These new plans will guide us as we shape our future transportation system.

The need for action was accentuated when Governor Wes Moore announced that car manufacturers would be required to increase the share of electric vehicles they sell, reaching 100% of passenger car and light truck sales by 2035. By preparing now for a shift to EVs, Frederick County will be well-positioned to leverage federal and state funding to invest in infrastructure and resilience projects.

This work has already begun within Frederick County Government's operations. Staff from across our divisions assessed which county vehicles were suitable for replacement with EVs or adoption of biodiesel. The process examined existing vehicle technology, the kinds of tasks each vehicle performs, and the total cost of vehicle ownership. The resulting Alternative Fuel Vehicle Fleet Transition Plan shows it is possible to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector while lowering long-term fleet costs. To learn more about the Division of Energy and Environment's diverse array of programs and their commitment to balancing social justice, economic growth, and environmental care, please follow their work on Facebook and Instagram @SustainableFCMD.

Thurmont Mayor John Kinnaird

Here we are in March already! Winter will soon be behind us and things will start getting green. My favorite flowers are daffodils, and this spring I think we will see daffodils popping up all around Thurmont thanks to the Thurmont Green Team. I hope everyone enjoys the amazing range of colors that bloom in early Spring.

The North Church Street project is coming along on schedule. As with every large public works project there are traffic delays and some inconveniences for residents, we appreciate everyone's patience! The work from Woodside Avenue

to Rte 15 is expected to be completed by late April while the work from Rte 15 to CHS will be completed during summer vacation at CHS. This project is one of the largest single infrastructure projects we have done in several years and will address several issues. Most residents are unaware of the infrastructure buried beneath our street and sidewalks.

These systems, as like all others have a working lifespan, and the water and waste water lines are reaching their useful ends. Over the past several years we have been addressing I&I (inflow and infiltration) issues in our waste water

system. Much of the pipes on a north Church Street are terracotta and over the years the joints have separated. These pipes can let a lot of wild water into the system and every gallon of that has to be treated. The new waste water lines will help eliminate much of that water. The water lines also need replaced with new pipe with less changes in pipe size and the elimination of a few bottlenecks. This project is being funded with American Rescue Act Funds. Once this work is completed the SHA will be repaving the entire roadway.

Work has been ongoing on

the new softball field at East End Park. This project is funded through Program Open Space grants. The field features lights for night games and should be ready for regular play early this fall.

The tennis court at the Community Park is being removed and replaced with a new court, lights and fencing. The court will feature tennis and pickleball markings. Work has commenced on renovation on the playground at the entrance to Eyer Road Park. The new equipment will feature a Cougar theme! Both of these projects will be completed before Memorial Day. I want to thank our Parks Department for the amazing work they do maintaining our parks and getting them

ready for Spring!

Good weather will bring out lots of kids and adults walking, running, and riding bikes or skate boards on our sidewalks and trails. Please drive responsibly and be aware of everyone sharing the road and using our trails and walkways.

On a personal note, I recently spent some time at Frederick Health Hospital. I want to thank all the doctors, nurses and support staff I had the privilege of meeting while there. We are very fortunate to have such an outstanding medical facility at our doorstep.

As always I can be reached at jkinnaird@thurmont.com or by phone at 301-606-9458. I hope every one has a wonderful March!

Emmitsburg Mayor Frank Davis

As the winter months are flying by, we are starting to plan for warmer weather. We are in the planning stage for an improved Farmers Market. We are still looking for new vendors and are excited about the return of last year's participants.

Softball and baseball will again all our parks, with regular league play, as well as several large weekend tournaments. This is not only good for our youths who participate but is a bonus for our local businesses. On any given weekend hundreds

of fans can be found walking our streets and patronizing local shops and eateries.

Thank you to the Thurmont Little League for bringing baseball back to Emmitsburg.

Plans are shaping up for our Community Garden, which is

located beside the Community Center on Cedar Avenue. Local resident Jack Deathridge again will take the lead with his crew willing to expand the footprint of last year's garden to accommodate new gardeners of all ages.

Springs sports is in full swing at Mt St Mary's University, and it is worth the trip to check them out. Both men's and women's teams are going to be extremely competitive so check out the Mounts webpage for schedules.

Town staff is working hard on updating our Comprehensive Plan. Workshops have been held over the winter months, with the final gathering on March 25, at the Town Office. The workshop will begin at 7 p.m..

We have openings on several committees, and we need you to

become part of our team. Please visit the Town webpage page for more information or contact the once at 301-600-6300.

Beginning March 11th, the Town Office will extend office hours. The office will be open from 7 in the morning to 5 in the afternoon, Monday through Friday for your convenience.

Finally, as I approach the end of my first six months in my new position, I want to thank you for your support. While we may have had different opinions and ideas on how to govern our town, everyone has been polite and respectful. Many of you have stepped forward to serve on committees and continue to be an important part of the success of the town. Please give me a call or visit me in the office to share your ideas or just for a chat.

MELISSA M. WETZEL
CPA, PC
Certified Public Accountant



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FROM THE DESK OF...

Carroll Valley Mayor Ron Harris

The "Dancing Hearts" – Daddy Daughter Dance was held on February 10th at the Liberty Mountain Resort Overlook Ballroom and was a tremendous success. There were 240 in attendance. The following individuals were involved: the Kraft Family (Jessica, Jesse, Jacoby, Caroline), Sarah Ginn, Emma Ginn, Amanda Bell, Jayden Bell, Charlee Marthers, Cali Paulus, Kylae Partilla, Jeni Jarrell, and Jim Jarrell. Special thanks to the following donors: Doug Laptook's family, Kathy Megyeri's family, Jim Jarrell, and the Charles Dalton family. Go to the Carroll Valley website or visit ronspictures.net to see the pictures.

At the Blood Drive held on February 16th, Red Cross phlebotomists collected 16 units of blood from 19 donors, which will save 48 local lives. Thank you!

The official first day of Spring is March 19th. Punxsutawney Phil

saw his shadow, which means an early Spring. This implies that March will experience a string of days in the 40s. We will soon find out. On Wednesday, March 6th, from 4 to 6, the Adams County Coalition for Overdose Awareness and Recovery will be on Lincoln Square in Gettysburg to honor those lost to overdose. They will be distributing free naloxone. This medication is designed to reverse opioid overdose. For more information, please call Lyric Gallagher at 717-338-0300.

Here we go again. It's that time of year to fool around with the clocks. At my age, I really can't afford to spring forward. Yes, Daylight Saving Time starts on March 10th at 2 a.m. Move the clock one hour forward to 3 a.m. And there goes that hour!

Easter Bunny is visiting our area on Saturday, March 30th to host the

Carroll Valley Easter Egg Hunt. The start time is 11 am. Be sure to show up earlier. Digital portraits with the Easter Bunny will be taken by Jarrell Studios free of charge. Over 5,000 eggs have been filled and hidden for our young participants. My advice is to show up earlier than 11 so you can have a picture taken and time to figure out where your child group area is. Also, I would appreciate if you would please tell your youngsters not to run over the old guy with the camera when the starting horn is blown.

Neighbors Help Neighbors (NHN) asks you to mark your calendars that on April 13th a Clothing Giveaway will be held at the Liberty Worship Center. NHN will start sign-ups in March. Robin Dicken (dickenrobin@gmail.com) will email those interested in helping with a craft for Easter for the nursing homes/Meals on Wheels

at the beginning of March. If you are interested and haven't messaged Robin yet, email her. The next NHN meeting is on March 12th at 1 at St. John.

The new Adams County Glass Recycling Initiative has been well publicized. Through the collaboration of Adams County and several community volunteer groups and individuals, clean glass can be dropped off to volunteers at the county complex beside the 911 Center (230 Greenmyer Lane) on designated Saturdays. It will be the 1st Saturday of the month in winter from 9 to noon. Drop-off opportunities are expected to be expanded to two in the Spring.

The Adams County Planting Partnership is a joint initiative of the Adams County Conservation District, the Watershed Alliance of Adams County, and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. The Adams County Planting Partnership's mission is to get as many native trees and shrubs as possible into the

hands of Adams County residents to plant along streams, ponds, and waterways to stabilize the soils, take up excess nutrients, shade and cool the water, and provide food and shelter to fish and wildlife. Trees can also lessen the impacts of storm-water runoff and provide community and environmental benefits in urban areas as well.

The Adams County Planting Partnership's Spring native tree and shrub seedling distribution is coming up in April! More than 8,000 trees and shrubs have been requested. The seedling request form will open at 9 on Saturday, March 2, and close at 5 on Sunday, March 17. A link to the form will be posted on Adams County Planting Partnership's website. Seedlings will be available for pickup at the Adams County Agricultural and Natural Resources Center. Pick up dates are tentatively scheduled for April 11-13. Keep well. Watch your speed in the Borough. Questions call me at 301-606-2021.

Liberty Township Supervisor Walter Barlow

Please consider joining us for our next Board of Supervisors public meeting on March 5, at 6. The Liberty Township Planning Commission met on February 20, to reorganize and accept three sets of plans for review. We have received notice that several more sets of plans are on the way. It looks like a very busy year for the Planning Commission. Daylight Saving Time begins on Sunday, March 10. Winter will be coming to an end shortly, and the busy season for property improvement is here. Please contact the Township Office before starting any projects to obtain the

required permits. Adams County and Liberty Township real estate tax bills were mailed on March 1. Take advantage of the 2% discount by making your payment by April 30.

The Liberty Township Tax Collector will take payment in person on April 17, 18, 23, 24, 25, and 30 from noon to 3 at the municipal building. Payment can also be submitted by mail or drop box. If you did not receive your tax bill, please contact the tax collector for a copy. Tax payments are accepted at face value from May 1 through June 30. Any payments made after June 30 will incur a

10% penalty. Your school taxes are now in penalty phase and will go to collections if not paid by March 31. On May 4th, from 8 to 11 there will be an electronic recycling event open to Parks Garbage customers in the Southwest Group of Carroll Valley Borough, Fairfield Borough, Freedom Township, Hamiltonban Township, Highland Township, and Liberty Township. Contact your respective municipality for more information.

The region had some severe flooding last month that was considered a 100-year event. The flooding caused damage to Lib-

erty Hall Road and Bullfrog Road. The precipitation combined with fluctuating temperatures this season produced freezing and thawing that caused potholes to develop throughout the township. We were able to patch those when severe weather conditions subsided. In mid-February a very heavy snow fell which created a challenge for the Road Department. The heavy, wet, snow brought down seven trees in the township. However, the Road Crew worked tirelessly to clean it up as quickly as possible despite a few equipment failures. Girl Scout Road showed signs of substantial deterioration this winter from weather related damage and years of continuous heavy truck traffic. This road was moved up in priority for 2024.

Recently I met with our state representative from PennDOT to inspect the roads and to estimate costs for our road projects. I also have an upcoming meeting with LTAP to discuss further costs. We are proposing full-depth reclamation work for Girl Scout Road, and for a portion of Bullfrog Road from Stoops Road to the Hamiltonban Township line. We also plan to continue the work on Old Waynesboro Road Bridge if costs allow. This is a multi-year project which we hope will be completed soon. This year we will be focus-

ing on the scaling. We expect to see a progress report after our next bridge inspection in June.

On President's Day I attended an 8-hour training for recertification in pesticide application and I will be attending a PennDOT and PSATS Roadmasters Roundtable in April. Also on the 19th, I attended a Fairfield Regional Emergency Management Association (FREMA) meeting. FREMA is our board of local municipalities in Fairfield that work with FEMA for emergencies. At the meeting, FREMA elected new Board Members and discussed required emergency management certifications. Congratulations to those who were elected to these positions. We have a planned for in April for emergency operation planning to set forth a plan of action in case of a local emergency.

The Fairfield Fire Department Hall and Fairfield Area School District are sites designated as local Red Cross emergency shelters to provide heat, shelter, water, and food in the event of a local emergency. FREMA is always looking for community volunteers. If you are interested in helping, please send an email to borofairfieldpa@comcast.net for more information. This is a great way to be involved in your local community. There are many great local events happening in March.



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 MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

GOVERNMENT—NORTH OF THE BORDER

County Commissioner Jim Martin

The loss of businesses within Adams County does nothing to strengthen the tax base or to strengthen the economy, especially when vacant property is left behind. One of the worst examples is the vacant and deteriorating former Blocker Appliance building in Biglerville. Speedily repurposing vacated property relieves a community of blight and devaluation of the municipal and county tax base. Just a few properties north of the Blocker building was the blighted and vacated O. C. Rice building. Fortunately, it found its way into the ownership of a church through an absolute auction. The blight has now been removed by the new ownership through complete renovation. Keeping blight from advancing is of great benefit to the community but can be most difficult and costly to remediate.

Adams County has benefited from repurposing numerous vacated buildings and their businesses. Repurposing is a great opportunity to bring a vacated building back to life and avoid considerable costs over new construction. Sometimes repurposing can be the only means by which a business or a project can be financially possible; especially given the inflated cost of building materials. Those are not just empty words. I have personally been involved in two projects that would not have been possible without the savings of repurposing. I invite future entrepreneurs and businesses to inventory what is available for repurposing in Adams County. Presently one of the largest repurposing projects ever attempted in Adams County is under way; it involves the former Boyd's Bear attraction south of Gettysburg.

One of the newest businesses to be launched in Adams County took advantage of repurposing. A new Dunkin business has come into being just east of New Oxford as a result of repurposing a vacated bank building. Also, this Dunkin will benefit from a great business location on Lincoln Way East. It should be noted that the Grand Opening and ribbon cutting was attended by hundreds; one of the best ribbon cuttings I ever attended. The United Fire Company of New Oxford took advantage of the popular event promoting recruitment of firemen and fire safety. I would like to

give kudos to United for their efforts to coordinate with the ribbon cutting and to Dunkin for making United partners in the Grand Opening.

One of the keys to making repurposing affordable is staying within the original footprint of the building. Using a different footprint could easily require a new stormwater management plan. This will introduce multiple additional costs, including permitting fees, engineering fees, additional excavation, and material expenses. Also, a change in use can trigger the need for a fire suppression system which is quite expensive. These costs have often ended projects before they start. Repurposing should initially involve the wisdom of an experienced builder and architect to achieve the cost-effective design.

The sleeping demon that can and has derailed projects is insurance. Being aware of implications that could increase the cost of insurance is essential to the success of a project. These could include the type of roof, utilities, type of doors, wiring, and materials. Also, being in a known flood zone will likely increase insurance premiums. I do not profess to be an expert in the realm of repurposing, but I wanted to share what I gleaned over time.

Since we touched the subject of insurance, Adams County Government has researched health insurance from two fronts, cost and quality of program design. The cost to taxpayers has been addressed by moving to a self-insured program that has significantly reduced the county's cost. Being self-insured also allows us to continually work with our consultants to provide our employees with steady and quality benefits that exceed the industry average. It is also gratifying to know that our research and due diligence has provided our employees

with minimal program increases and has kept us highly competitive with larger surrounding counties.

A recent county risk pool board meeting brought to light some new trends. Since Covid, there has been a steady increase in vehicular accidents nationwide. Studies of the situation revealed that 80% of this increase is preventable. This increase does not include wildlife accidents. To address the situation, our county risk pool will be introducing a newly designed driver training course. The objective is to dramatically reduce "on the job accidents" and their severity. The success of this will be to protect our employees and control insurance premium increases.

Another trend introduced into the insurance industry is using ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) scores to determine insurability. Under this system an entity seeking to renew or write a new policy is being denied insurance if their ESG score is not strong enough. ESG scores are political in nature to control who will receive insurance coverage. Certain businesses would no longer be permitted to operate without insurance coverage. ESG scores bypass the fundamental principles and guiding practices of insurance coverage. So, not only have ESG promoters been controlling the existence of selected businesses, but they provide a barrier to maximum pension fund returns.

State legislatures are coming to the rescue of Americans by protecting them from the intrusion of ESG politics. Most recently the South Carolina legislature and its Governor passed H. 3690, ESG Pension Protection Act. This bill requires state pension fund decisions to be based upon maximizing returns and

Community Foundation's 2024 Investment Briefing to Focus on Endowment's Long-term Strategy

Join the Adams County Community Foundation on Wednesday morning, March 5 at eight in the morning for our 2024 Investment Briefing at Adams County Historical Society's Event Center.

Members of our Investment Committee will share details on our endowment investment objectives and strategy. The briefing, led by volunteer Investment Committee Chair James Kampstra of Kampstra Wealth Management, features the Community Foundation's investment manager James Stierhoff from Brown Advisory.

The Community Foundation is home to a growing endowment, which benefits all of Adams County. With scores of charitable funds created by individuals, families and businesses to carry out their philanthropy, the Community Foundation manages more than 250 endowments, which benefit specific nonprofits across Adams County, as well as funds that support education, the arts, children and youth. Pooling these individual funds for investment purposes provides economies of scale. That pooled endowment is invested with

two goals in mind: returns to serve Adams County today and growth to continue that service for generations to come.

Doors open and continental breakfast at 8 AM. One-hour program begins at 8:15 AM. The Community Foundation's Investment Briefing is free and open to the public, but registration is required. Call 717-337-0060 to register or RSVP to rspv@adamscountycf.org.

About the Adams County Community Foundation.

The Adams County Community Foundation was created to promote and facilitate charitable giving and to build a permanent charitable endowment for Adams County. While the Community Foundation's Adams County Grants are focused locally, the Community Foundation also provides a home for charitable funds created by donors which may make distributions anywhere in Pennsylvania or across the country. The Community Foundation's mission is to inspire people and communities to build and distribute charitable funds for good, for Adams County, for ever.

not on ESG scores that can reduce those returns. Also, the bill safeguards the interests of retirees from the ESG agenda. In similar fashion, the North Carolina Assembly overrode Governor Roy Cooper's veto of House Bill 750. The provisions of this bill removed ESG considerations from state pension plan investment decisions. Hopefully, the Pennsylvania Legislature will provide its residents and busi-

nesses similar protection from the ESG politics.

I am sure we are all looking forward to the coming of spring. I, for one, especially look forward to preparing my garden. I have found gardening to be a great source of fresh and nutritious vegetables along with the benefits of exercise, stress relief, and learning.

Wishing everyone good health and strength as you actively enjoy life in Adams County.



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COMMENTARY

Words from Winterbilt

The strategy of the delay defense

Shannon Bohrer

Our former President is facing numerous criminal charges and civil cases while also running for President — again. One might think that the civil cases against him, which could cost him hundreds of millions of dollars, could be disastrous, especially for his reputation as a billionaire businessman. However, the criminal cases could result in his incarceration. The charges against him include ninety-one felony charges from four different cases. There are forty-four federal charges and forty-seven state charges that all total carry possible incarceration of 641 years. Obviously, if he is found guilty in just a few cases, he could be incarcerated for the remainder of his life. I do not know of anyone in our county's history who ran for the presidency or any other office while facing such a volume of civil and criminal charges. Even more extraordinarily incredible is the support he still enjoys.

There has been broad reporting on the topic of why the former President is running again for the office of President. Most of the thoughts are that if he were to be successful in winning the office, once sworn in, he could then pardon himself. Also reported is the potential argument against this strategy. The President can only pardon federal crimes, not state crimes. So, if

he were to be successful and win the presidency, what would happen if he were convicted in state courts for state crimes? Would he be immune from incarceration while in the office? If so, could he be incarcerated after leaving the office? That raises another question: if elected, would he try to remain in office — again?

The civil cases against him are well known, with two already resolved — not in his favor. The numbers are not good. In a recent case he was ordered to pay 454 million dollars in fines and interest. He already owes E. Jean Carroll 83 million and it was reported that he owes “400 thousand to the New York Times.” He sued them and was unsuccessful and has been ordered to pay their legal fees. These numbers do not include his own legal fees.

In the civil case, where he overvalued his properties, he could lose business and properties in New York. In this case his defense was that he and his family relied on accountants for evaluations of the properties. However, testimony demonstrated that the accounts used the numbers given to them by the Trump organization. Testimony also included “I don't remember” and “I don't recall.” Placing the blame on others when they use the information that you provide does not sound like a good strategy.

While the civil cases have the potential to break the bank and dissolve the Trump organization, it is the criminal charges that could take his freedom.

Of course, when someone is charged with a crime, there is a presumption of innocence. The former President himself has repeatedly described the charges as “witch hunts” as if there are no foundations for the charges. He has also accused the current administration of collusion with the justice department in bringing the charges. His principal reasoning is that he is running for President, and since he is the presumptive nominee of his party, the charges are, therefore, “political.”

The former President and his lawyers have been busy responding to the criminal courts on a variety of issues related to the charges, like potential witnesses, the discovery of evidence, pleadings, and appeals. Strangely, the defenses that he has offered do not include “witch hunts” or “political motives,” but they do offer some peculiar arguments.

The documents case, where the former President has been charged with possessing classified documents, was considered by many experts to be a slam-dunk for the prosecution. Documents found in his Florida home while executing a search warrant were clearly marked as classified. His first defense was that he declassified all the documents. When that did not work, his lawyers requested an assessment of any damage to national security, as if damage to national security must be demonstrated. It does not.

Since then, the lawyers have requested information on why and how the documents are related to national security, which is a requirement of the Espionage Act. Con-

tinuing to request more information about the charges and documents is a right of any defendant, but the argument that is offered is that since there was no damage to national security, the charges should be dropped.

If an individual is charged with an attempted crime and the crime was not successful, that does not constitute a defense. Saying I committed the acts that I was charged with, but no harm was found, is not a defense. It does offer other insights. What it does say is that he is admitting to the actions that he took and concealed the documents. So, in essence, he is admitting guilt. So, why go in this direction?

In Washington, D.C., the former President has been charged with election subversion or trying to overthrow the government. During a hearing by the court of appeals, Trump's lawyers argued that “he can't be prosecuted for trying to overturn the 2020 election, raising the potentially extreme implications of absolute Presidential immunity.” Accordingly, his lawyers believe any charges should be dismissed because he should be afforded total immunity. When proffered, the Trump lawyers were questioned if the total immunity included “... selling [of] pardons or even assassinating political opponents.”

The prosecution countered that if a President has total immunity for any acts committed, any sitting President could do anything they deemed necessary to remain in office, not unlike having an insurrection. As stated above, one Judge on the panel expressed the idea that unlimited

immunity would allow Presidents to kill their opponents.

While that position did appear extreme, to help his cause, Donald Trump posted (in all caps) on his Truth Social post, “A president of the United States must have full immunity, without which it would be impossible for him/her to properly function,” ... “Any mistake, even if well intended, would be me with almost certain indictment by the opposing party at term end. Even events that 'cross the line.' Must fall under total immunity, or it will be years for trauma trying to determine good from bad. There must be certainty.”

Again, Trump was not offering a defense for the criminal acts he is charged with; instead he in essence is saying yes, that if he committed the acts, he should not be charged. According to Trump's position, President Biden, while in office, could order the assassination of Trump. Again, his pleading does not offer a defense, and they never mentioned “witch hunts,” or “political motives.”

Because “witch hunts” and “political motives” have never been offered in the courts, are they only being used to sway public opinion? Maybe the obvious tactic is the use of motions and appeals, whenever possible, to delay the trials until after the election.

Distractions are often used when you want to prevent someone from looking behind the curtain.

To read prior editions of Words From Winterbilt, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net

The Bulwark

How Biden can defuse the age problem

Jonathan Last

My title probably oversells it: Biden can't defuse the political problems his age creates for him. But he can mitigate them. We'll talk about morality and justice and all of that in a minute—and also about whether or not Biden should pull out of the race.

But first I want to lay out the strategy Biden's team should be using. It has three components:

- Hang a lantern on his age.
- Make it relatable.
- Put it in context.

Contra the conventional wisdom, I think Biden's hasty press conference last Thursday was a good idea that was executed fairly well. It's important that Biden takes ownership of “elderly.”

In fact, I'd have him go further. He ought to mention it every time he speaks in public. He ought to joke about it. He should have a handful of stock lines ready at all times: People talk about life before the internet? I remember what it was like before we had electricity!

The cornier the better.

Biden should set the expectation that he's going to have senior moments in every appearance. Hell—he should flub things on

purpose sometimes and then wink at the audience and razz them if they don't catch it.

If we've learned anything from the Trump years, it's that one problem is a tragedy, but a thousand problems are just white noise. So don't be defensive about the age and don't complain about the media fixating on it.¹ Lean all the way in. Make it a part of the candidate's identity.

Next: Make it relatable.

Nick Grossman mentioned this today and it ought to be said constantly: We all get mixed up. I call my kids by the wrong names probably a dozen times a day. When I go to the pharmacy to pick up a prescription for one of them and have to give their birthdate, I always get the month and day right. But the year? I have to stop and think about that every damn time.

Sitting here typing I could not even tell you without looking it up what year we started The Bulwark. I think it was 2018, but it could have been 2019.

Our brains are set up to have amazing recall and processing speed that generally peaks in our 20s and declines every year after. It is not an accident that Einstein did his most important work at age 26.

Finally, there's the context: We don't choose our leaders based on recall and processing speed.

What does it mean to grow old?

It means that you're not as quick on your feet as you used to be. Old people, in general, don't want to get dragged into real-time debates with 45-year-olds. The synapses don't fire as quickly; the gift of gab wanes. You very rarely look at an old guy and think, “That dude is slick.”

But slick isn't what we want in our leaders. We want wisdom.

There is a reason that we have a minimum age for voting in this country and not a maximum age—it's because we don't trust young people, with all of their rapid recall memory and synaptic lightning, to be wise enough to vote.

By the same token, we don't have a maximum voting age, because we recognize that the losses elderly people experience in the ability to rapidly process are over-balanced by the accumulated wisdom of years and experience.

Especially in a president, we value wisdom over speed.

And Joe Biden has demonstrated the power of wisdom throughout his term. It allowed him to reach deals with Republicans in Congress. It led him to focus like a laser on the economy and get America back on its feet.

It was wisdom that let Biden understand the stakes in Ukraine and wisdom that helped him navigate the maintenance of our alliance against Vladimir Putin. It is wisdom that allows Biden to see the incalculable benefits America receives from leading the global order.

Just as it was wisdom that made

Biden cooperate with the special counsel and respect the rule of law.

President Biden is the wisest guy to sit in the Oval Office since Reagan and that's not in spite of his age—it's because of it.

Meanwhile, the problem with Donald Trump is NOT that he, too, is old. The problem with Trump is NOT that he sometimes forgets what day it is, or who he's running against.

The problem with Trump is that he's a madman who wants dangerous things.

He is on Putin's side. He sees NATO as a threat to American prosperity. He thinks laws must not apply to him. He believes that democracy is only useful to the extent that it provides him advantage. He thinks that dictatorship would be preferable—so long as he gets to be the tyrant.

If I were Biden's speechwriter, I might put it like this:

Am I elderly? You betcha. Don't move like I used to. And I have the occasional senior moment. I'll probably have one during this speech, just so folks from the New York Times have something to write about.

But I know what the hell I'm doing.

Let me tell you about getting older. You aren't as fast on your feet. You have to think a moment before you remember stuff.

But also: As you get older, you're able to see what really matters. You're able to let go of your ego and focus on what's important. That's why I was able to work with

the Republicans in Congress even while they said nasty things about me in public: Because I didn't care what they said—I'm too old for that. What I did care about was passing gun reform laws that both parties knew we needed.

I cared about lowering the costs of medicine for seniors and capping the price of insulin. I cared about infrastructure—getting roads and bridges fixed and new semi-conductor factories built so that young people could get good jobs and provide for their families.

And let me tell you what else age has done for me: It made me realize that I'm the president of all Americans. Not just the people who voted for me. Because I'm old, I understand that it's my duty to make sure that even the people who run around saying that I'm part of a crime family—God love 'em—are able to get good jobs, and have broadband internet, and have more and better police keeping their communities safe.

So am I old? You bet. I'm 87. No, wait, 78. I forget. Whatever—I'm old. Older than you. And that's why America is prospering, everyone who wants a job has one, crime is coming down, more people have health insurance, and the Russians and the Chinese understand that there's a united West, led by America, opposing them and holding them to account.

To read other articles from the Bulwark, visit www.thebulwark.com.

The Triad

American credibility is on the line in Ukraine

Will Selber

Muhammad took one last pull off his cigarette before putting it out next to the other three he'd smoked in our hour-long meeting. He was a middle-aged Sons of Iraq commander from Diyala, the governate between Baghdad and the Iranian border, and he was responsible for security in a few critical towns near Forward Operating Base Warhorse.

"What will happen to us when you leave?" Muhammad asked. He had good reason to worry. Iraq's prime minister, a Shia, had the security apparatus under his thumb and was using them to target Sunni leaders like Muhammad.

"We're not going anywhere, sir," I responded.

Muhammad laughed dismissively. "In 1991, you told the Kurds to rise up against Hussein. And they were slaughtered when they did. But where were you?"

I did not have a good response.

"Captain, this has been a good conversation. I know you have reports to write. You Americans are always writing reports. Please write this down: If you leave us to fend for ourselves, we will remember it," he warned.

The next year, as American troops left Iraq, Muhammad's Sons of Iraq were targeted not only by Shia henchmen, but also eventually by a new group, the Islamic State.

Two years later, I had an eerily similar conversation in Kanda-

har—one of the most remote, rural, and conservative spots in the entire country. I lived in a village stability platform—a tiny outpost about the size of a football field with a few buildings and a fuel tank—with a group of Green Berets conducting village stability operations (VSO). VSOs were part of an effort to replicate the Sunni Awakening in Afghanistan, with the Afghan Local Police playing the role of the Sons of Iraq.

My main job was advising a district governor—the Afghan analogue of a county commissioner. Over thousands of cups of tea and Pine cigarettes, we tried to devise ways to extend the reach of the Afghan government into regions that were lukewarm—to say the least—about the United States and the Afghan government. Most of the village elders kept their distance from us, correctly deducing that we wouldn't stay for long and it wasn't worth risking their lives for us.

I remained undeterred and tried to convince the district governor to press the elders to change their minds. Finally, after growing tired of my American persistence, he grabbed a dried apricot and, tossing it into his mouth, said, "Brother, I'm going to let you know the truth.

"These elders, they aren't dumb," he told me. "They know what happened to a lot of the Sons of Iraq. They see that Obama's surge has dipped, and you're closing bases. They've heard from other elders that you make a lot of promises but don't always keep them."

His response stopped me dead cold. How was I supposed to reply to that?

"Fair enough, brother," was all I

could say. "Fair enough."

Nine years later, I was suited up as a military diplomat at the U.S. embassy in Kabul for my final year in country. I routinely met with some of the most senior Afghan government officials.

After President Biden announced his decision to withdraw in April 2021, the mood among my contacts grew dark. I tried my best to reassure them. Many asked for visas to get their families out. They were willing to stay and fight—but they wanted their families protected. I assured them they wouldn't need it.

Then an Afghan pilot, whose family had been in hiding because of a ruthless Taliban assassination campaign, looked at me with tears in his eyes and pleaded, "Don't forget about me, brother. I don't want to be left behind like all of those South Vietnamese."

That pilot made it to America and is thriving. Most were not so lucky.

We Americans like to think of ourselves as reliable allies. The World War II narrative remains our dominant story. We freed Europe and punished the Japanese for their sneak attack. But that's not the story our allies remember about us.

Ask the South Vietnamese how they feel about our reliability. Or ask the Kurds.

American untrustworthiness has been a bipartisan affair. Ask the Afghans what they think about former President Trump's Doha Agreement—the surrender we signed behind their backs after forcing them to release 5,000 Taliban fighters who immediately re-armed and slaughtered our allies. There are plenty of voices strongly supportive of Ukraine today who waved



away our retreat from Afghanistan because it "was always going to be messy."

Let's be honest with ourselves. Our record isn't great. Our diplomats advocating for our interests and values around the world, and our service members training our allies so they can fight our shared enemies without us directly intervening have to contend with this record daily.

But despite all the past missteps, the United States has a fleeting chance to resume its leadership and restore its reputation. Ukraine is infinitely more strategically important than those previous alliances.

We abandoned the South Vietnamese, the Iraqis, and the Afghans because we decided they were peripheral to our core interests. Europe is not. The post-World War II liberal international order started with the aim of keeping Europe whole, free, and at peace. For an indication of how important European stability is for global security, just look at how seriously Pacific countries like South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and Australia are taking Russia's war against Ukraine.

If we abandon Ukraine, we would be signaling that it doesn't even take the shedding of American blood for us to retreat and betray our allies. Sure, Ukraine wouldn't vanish overnight, and NATO would survive in the short term. But it would embolden Putin to try his luck in other areas.

An American betrayal of Ukraine would also embolden China. And not just against Taiwan. The Chinese would use this narrative to press their interests in Africa, the Middle East, and South America.

Gen. Philip Breedlove, a former Supreme Allied Commander Europe, put it succinctly: We hold the future of Ukraine in our hands. We can renew our support, arming the Ukrainians and help them to defeat a geopolitical rival without the loss of a single American soldier's life. Or we can cede the battleground.

We can reassure the world that America can be trusted. Or we can confirm for the world that we can't.

To read other articles from the Triad, visit www.thebulwark.com

Good Day, Neighbor

Taxation with representation

Dorothea Mordan

It happened at rehab. A daughter-in-law checking on our mutual mother-in-law at the rehab facility found, to everyone's astonishment, that Medicaid had been cancelled for our beloved ninety-two year old matriarch. This past year the Medicaid system required recipients of Medicaid to reapply for their benefits. Our social safety net expanded during the pandemic to provide resources to people struggling with little or no income, while we as a society figured out how to move forward. Forward came. Government assistance needed to reduce back to more or less normal amounts. The misstep was how to get the word out. The answer was to have everyone reapply for Medicaid.

Would you expect a ninety-two year old person with spotty cell phone service, no affordable hi-speed internet service, little or no understanding of the internet and no computer, to be able to renew a vital government service online? Like it or not, the internet is how many mandatory tasks are com-

pleted. Hi-speed internet is a necessity, not a luxury.

This happened to my mother-in-law, Marge. Ninety-two years young, she didn't have a lazy day in her life, never ran up a debt, credit card or otherwise. She and her first husband built their own house when they were nineteen and twenty. Not with contractors, with a hammer and saw. As you might expect, there were a few rough spots and maintenance snafus over the years. But at seventy three the house still stands.

After her husband died at the age of forty-two, Marge raised their five children. She earned a modest income through her working life. Because the house was long paid for, with no debts, she comfortably lived a long and interesting life. There was never much in savings, or other financial resources. After retiring, she lived on Social Security, with a monthly income of \$1400.00 at the time of her death.

Marge didn't slow down. She found time for every family member, and activities in her community. When she wasn't working, her time was spent on church activities, community events like working at the annual Bloomsburg Fair as a docent

in the garden building, or hitching a ride with any friend or family member taking a trip. We took her with us to Australia when she was in her eighties. It is quite impossible to write about Marge without using run-on sentences for their secret purpose—capturing a life story that flowed with grace from one friend and event to another.

The decision to require reapplying for Medicaid was a follow up to the funds sent through the Medicaid system during Covid. The Federal government stepping in to stabilize our economy and help many Americans ride out a storm of unknowns is what our country is good at. Reverting the system back to its original purpose with the burden of everyone reapplying was a bad idea. Does anyone really think that the finances of a ninety-two year old got better during the COVID years?

As luck would have it Marge died before the cost of end of life care went over the value of her modest house in the Pennsylvania hills.

Marge lived in Bloomsburg, PA all of her life. Bloomsburg is north of Harrisburg, along the Susquehanna River, a good bit farther from Frederick County Maryland than just over the state line. While state laws differ, and state uses of Federal funds differ, the day to day landscape for Pennsylvanian and Marylander Ameri-

cans is pretty similar. Generations of church going folk living side by side with people—their children—with changing, modern perspectives.

This is not good or bad, just a way of organizing our lifetime of energy. That is, until we start debating how to help those in need. There's a thing we do in church sometimes. The minister asks us to turn to our neighbor in the seat next to us, greet them and have a moment of connection. Connection we often miss, living in the whirlwind of daily responsibilities. If we can take a moment in our actual daily life to connect with someone and see their situation, we might start to see what we really need to ask of our leaders.

Any study of the history of European and in turn North American society shows an emphasis on personal responsibility as a cultural norm. Pulling yourself up by your bootstraps, take it on the chin, fend for yourself, are ways of saying "don't take handouts." Caring for yourself and your family is a source of pride for many of us. Then life happens and we can't be everything to everyone all of the time. Right now, there are many gaps in the work force for caregiving and other support for at-risk people. There are people living within their means on only the government support they are receiving. This part of the population is

almost by definition living on thin ice, but making it work. It is a failing of our system that anyone should lose their life sustaining support over a bureaucratic detail.

Our leaders shouldn't be slamming the doors of accessibility in our faces simply in service to a claim of saving money. Some doors left open don't cost a thing. We need leaders who can identify actual problems and find solutions that benefit the most people.

State Representative Lesley Lopez, running for Maryland's 6th District, and our current District 6 Representative David Trone, running for Senate in Maryland, are two candidates who have a record of legislation that meets the needs of constituents. In Rep. Trone's tenure he has cosponsored bi-partisan bills such as H.R. 4334 - Supporting Older Americans Act of 2020. This supports social services and activities for individuals aged 60 years and older, with additional focus on social isolation.

We the People sometimes need support. Choose wisely the Representatives who can and will respond to those needs.

2024 is the the year of the vote. Please make yours count.

To read past editions of *Good Day Neighbor*, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.

THE PASTOR'S DESK

On the third day

Pastor John Talcott
Christ Community Church

Every year about this time millions of people all over the world gather together singing songs and worshipping a man named Jesus who rose from the dead.

Now, the message of the kingdom of God spread like wildfire, but it seemed as if his words to his disciples about his suffering and the third day simply fell on deaf ears. They couldn't understand the meaning of what he was telling them and it became apparent that they wouldn't understand until they saw it happening with their very eyes. And so, after three years of ministry in and around Galilee, Jesus and his disciples entered Jerusalem on what we have come to know as Palm Sunday. Just days later, Jesus was betrayed by one of his own and arrested just as he had promised. "The Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law. They will condemn him

to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles" (Mark 10:33).

The Roman governor, a man named Pilate, appealed to the crowds for Jesus' release, but over and over and over they shouted, "Crucify him" (Luke 23:21). When he saw that he was getting nowhere and an uproar was starting, he yielded to public opinion against the advice of his wife, and had Jesus flogged before handing him over to be crucified (Matthew 27:26). The soldiers, taking charge of Jesus mocked him and beat him, forcing him to carry his cross to the place of execution. It was there on a hill just outside of Jerusalem that Jesus was lifted up on a cross, fulfilling the words that he had told his disciples, "They will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him" (Mark 10:34).

As he hung there on the cross, suspended between heaven and earth, suffering for the sins of the world, at that moment Jesus' lips began to move. Gasping for breath, he prayed, "Father, forgive

them, for they do not know what they are doing" fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah (Luke 23:34). It was 700 years before that the prophet said that Christ would bear the sins of many and make intercession for the transgressors (Isaiah 53:12). And now as Jesus was crucified, dying a criminal's death on a cross, God confounded the wisdom of this world. What seemed to be hell's greatest victory was eclipsed by the dawning of God's grace as the Son of God redeemed the children of God. Jesus became our substitute, the suffering servant became the Lamb of God, fulfilling ancient prophecy and freeing us from the curse of the Law.

Out of the ugliness and agony of this moment, the Lamb was slain for the sins of the world, so that those who trust his finished work could have a new beginning. What normally would have been the brightest part of the day was momentarily disrupted as the children of God were redeemed in the most spectacular way. "From the sixth hour until the ninth hour darkness came over all the land" (Matthew 27:45). In other words, it was not just in Jerusalem, but wherever the sun was shining around the globe. And then, about the ninth hour (or 3 o'clock in the afternoon), the Bible says, "With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last" (Mark 15:37). His victory cry was felt around the world as creation itself groaned and quaked with violent agony. Witnesses testified, "The earth shook and the rocks split. The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life" (Matthew 27:51-52). Those soldiers who were guarding Jesus saw those great signs and



felt the earth shake. They were terrified and exclaimed, "Surely he was the Son of God!" (Matthew 27:54).

Now, Jesus had completed the work that his father had sent him to do, the debt had been paid in full, but this was just day one and the second day was fast approaching. The Sabbath began that evening at 6 PM and so a wealthy man named Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate and asked for Jesus body. Discovering that Jesus was in fact dead, Pilate gave him permission, and so they took Jesus' body down off the cross, wrapped it in linens, and placed it in Joseph's tomb. Rolling a large stone across the entrance, the gospel confirms that both Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw where he was laid (Mark 15:42-47).

The next day, the Sabbath, the second day, was a silent day in Jerusalem.

But the Bible tells us on the third day, "On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus" (Luke 24:1-3). As they were pondering this unexpected dilemma, "Suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them" (Luke 24:4). One of the angels said, "He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again'" (Luke 24:6-7).

That is the central truth of Christianity, the good news that the church around the world celebrates on Easter, that Jesus rose from the dead. He was buried before sunset Friday, his body laid silently in the tomb on Saturday, and he rose again before sunrise on Sunday. Eye witnesses testify that after his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3).

The Lord Jesus did everything that the Father sent him to do, and so he declared unequivocally, "It is finished." But today there are many of you of whom he is not finished with yet, because you have not made the most important decision that you will ever make in life. And so, if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved, because God raised him from the dead, defeating death, hell, and the grave (Romans 10:9).

To learn more about Christ Community Church visit them on-line at www.cccaog.org, or better yet, join them for Sunday service.

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Senior Pastor
Dana Talcott
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May 11 - Down East Boys Concert on the Hill
Free Dinner - 5 p.m. Concert - 6 p.m.

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He humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!
-Philippians 2:8

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313 West Main St., Emmitsburg

Sunday Worship at 9 a.m.

Pastor Richard Baker

Holy Week Services

March 24 - Palm Sunday, 9 a.m., Distribution of Palms

March 31 - Easter Sunday Service of Joy and Celebration including Communion, 9 a.m.



www.TheTrinityUMC.org

THE BOOK OF DAYS

The Victoria Cross



March 1

The 1st of March 1857, is one among many days associated with the bestowal of the Victoria Cross upon heroic soldiers and sailors. The affair is in itself a trifle; yet it involves a principle of some importance. England cannot be said to be altogether happy in her modes of rewarding merit. The friendless and the unobtrusive are apt to be pushed aside, and to be supplanted by those who can call boldness and influence to their aid. Such at any rate has been the case in the army and navy; the humble soldiers and sailors have always received their full share of hard knocks, while the officers have carried off the honours and rewards.

The nation has often felt and said that this was wrong; and the authorities of the War Office have judiciously yielded to the public sentiment in this among many other matters. It was in the middle of the Crimean war that the War Office undertook to 'consider' the subject; but a period of many months passed before the 'consideration' led to any results. At length on the 8th of February 1856, the London Gazette announced that Her Majesty had under her Royal Sign Manual been pleased to institute a new naval and military decoration entitled the 'Victoria Cross.' Unlike any other decoration recognised in our army and navy, this

order is to be conferred for valour only—irrespective of rank or station; and the recipient becomes also entitled to a pension of £10 a year for life. The Victoria Cross is a simple affair as a work of art.

It consists of a bronze Maltese cross with the royal crest in the centre, and underneath it a scroll bearing the words 'FOR VALOUR;' it is suspended by a red ribbon if worn on the breast of a soldier, and by a blue ribbon if worn by a sailor. Trifling as it is, however, the men highly prize it, for hitherto it has been honestly bestowed. The reader will call to mind that remarkable ceremony in the summer of 1857, when the Queen bestowed the Victoria Cross, with her own hand, on sixty-one noble fellows in Hyde-park. Of those

thus honoured, twenty-five were commissioned officers, fifteen were warrant and non-commissioned officers, and the remaining twenty-one were private soldiers and common seamen.

In every instance there was a distinct recognition in the Official Gazette of the specific act of valour for which the cross was bestowed—whether arising out of the Crimean, the Chinese, or the Indian wars—in order to afford proof that merit, not favour, won the reward. Here we are told that Joseph Treweas, seaman, 'cut the hawsers of the floating-bridge in the Straits of Genitchi under a heavy fire of musketry;' on which occasion he was wounded. 'The late gallant Captain Sir William Peel,' we are told, 'took up alive shell that fell among some powder cases; the fuse was still burning, and the shell burst as he threw it over the parapet.'

Here is an incident which warms one's blood while we read it: 'In the charge of the Light Cavalry Brigade at Balaklava, Trumpet-Major Crawford's horse fell and dismounted him, and he lost his sword; he was attacked by two Cossacks, when private Samuel Parkes (whose horse had been shot) saved his life by placing himself between them and the Trumpet-Major, and drove them away by his sword. In the attempt to follow the Light Cavalry Brigade in the retreat, they were attacked by six Russians, whom Parkes kept at bay, and retired slowly fighting, and defending the Trumpet-Major for some time.'

In spite of the wretched official English of this description (in which 'he' and 'his,' 'they' and

'whose' are hopelessly wandering to find their proper verbs), we cannot fail to take a liking for the gallant trooper Parkes. Then there was Serjeant-Maj or Henry, of the Artillery, who at the terrible battle of Inkermann, 'defended the guns of his battery until he had received twelve bayonet wounds.' During the siege of Sebastopol, a rifle-pit was occupied by two Russians, who annoyed our troops by their fire, whereupon 'Private M'Gregor, of the Rifles, crossed the open space under fire, and taking cover under a rock, dislodged them, and occupied the pit.'

In India some of the Victo-

ria Crosses were given to the gallant fellows by their commanding officers, in the Queen's name; and when those officers were men of tact and good feeling, they contrived to enhance the value of the reward by a few well-chosen remarks. Thus, Brigadier Stidste, in giving Crosses to two men of the 52nd Foot, pointed out to them the difference between the Order of the Bath and the Order of Valour, adding, in reference to the latter, 'I only wish I had it myself.'

To read other selections from Robert Chamber's 1864 *The Book of Days*, visit thebookofdays.com.



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Noon - 6 p.m. (Cash/check only)
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at 5:30 to 7 p.m. All Welcome

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Egg-stravaganza!

Saturday, March 23
2 - 4 p.m.
 (Rain Date - March 24th)



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Photo With Mr. Bunny

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ECOLOGY

Celebrating spring & Women's History Month

Anne Gageby
Director of Environmental
Education

Daffodils are starting to pop up around the office and as I walk the paths and hiking trails, more and more signs of spring are making their debut. Winter is becoming a memory even though the daily temperatures can be a biting reminder. There's a sense of possibilities that comes with seeing green edging into the vast brown and white canvas of a winter backyard. The coming of spring makes me kind of nostalgic, especially at the beginning of March and Women's History Month.

I look back on my childhood here at Strawberry Hill and I'm amazed at the number of female influences and role models I had around me - from naturalist educators and volunteers to board members and directors. Strawberry Hill has never lacked female leadership and it made an impact on me as a small child attending programs and events here. Perhaps one day I could be a leader, too. That's a powerful message for a child to learn.

Strawberry Hill was founded by a woman, Dr. Francis Morton Froelicher. Francis was a social worker and housing advocate in Baltimore who fought for tenants' rights. She came to our area

of Pennsylvania seeking weekend refuge from busy city life and ended up creating a foundation that teaches and inspires thousands of visitors every year. A life-long environmentalist, Francis was never afraid to dream big and envisioned a cleaner, healthier world.

Francis and her husband, Hans, began purchasing property along Swamp Creek in the 1960s. Eventually, they purchased over 600 acres of land surrounding Swamp Creek and part of Middle Creek. They built Strawberry Hill's pond which is fed by Swamp Creek. After some time on the mountain, the Froelichers noticed neighbors were dumping trash such as paint cans, tires, and household garbage in the creeks. Francis was determined to clean up the streams. After all, Swamp Creek and Middle Creek are part of the greater Chesapeake Bay watershed, which had always held a special piece of Francis' and Hans' heart.

She accomplished this clean-up by working with Strawberry Hill's neighbors. Over the years, Francis built a community that prided itself on cleaning up and maintaining clean streams. Today, Swamp Creek and Middle Creek are designated Exceptional Value Streams by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. We've come a long way, for sure.

Throughout her time at Straw-



Strawberry Hill was founded by a woman, Dr. Francis Froelicher, pictured here with her husband Hans. A life-long environmentalist, Francis was never afraid to dream big and envisioned a cleaner, healthier world.

berry Hill, Francis won several awards including the impressive Take Pride in America Award, given to those who increased awareness for natural resources. She had a personal philosophy when it came to environmental education: "I believe environmental education should run from the cradle to the grave. The only way you can preserve open space like this is by having a spirit involved - a community spirit. Having people who really care. The community has to take an interest to

make something like this work."

Through that sense of community, Francis was able to build a program that thrives even today. Strawberry Hill provides education opportunities for public and private schools, homeschool groups, and adults alike. And we're continually growing our programs. This spring, for example, we're bringing back our popular WILDLife program. WILDLife is our first ever homeschool drop-off program and is built on the ideas of Wonder, Imagination Liberty, and Discovery. We also have several Homeschool Days on the calendar. Homeschool Days are full-day programs for homeschool families to come out and learn about a variety of environmental education topics from frogs and toads, citizen science and butterflies, to birds.

We've also revamped our adult programs for spring and summer. For the first time ever, Strawberry Hill is hosting a murder mystery. On Saturday, March 23rd from 7-9pm, we'll explore the clues and unravel the mystery behind a shocking tale of love, betrayal, and prejudice. Put on your best thinking cap and join us as we dig through the evidence and explore a slew of remarkable secondary suspects - animals of the night. The evening's story is inspired by real events and sure to be a hoot!

Our wild foraging series, the ever-popular Wild Edibles with Debbie Naha-Koretzky, sold out last year. Debbie, "The Wild Edibles Lady", has put together a three-part foraging adventure for 2024 to discover the edible plants of our area. The program will include a slide show followed by a foraging walk, and a taste of wild tea. Signed copies of her book, Foraging Pennsylvania and New Jersey (2021, Falcon Guides), will be available after each presentation. Debbie is a registered dietitian/nutritionist, Rutgers Master Gardener, Pennsylvania Master Naturalist, and a certified science teacher.

This spring we're also hosting a new series that connects mysticism and conservationism. This 3-part series is taught by Rev. Monika

Kojote. The first program, The Language of the Land, will explore how humans connect and communicate with the lands near us. The program will explore the data, both repeatable and observable (via omens, the behavior of flora and fauna, etc.). Discussion of the evolution of a land area will also be included, as well as the careful debate of what really is an "invasive" species. Monika is a Druid shaman serving the North American, Ireland, European Union, and United Kingdom. Monika received her master's degree in forensic psychology in 2005, and has over 20 years' experience working in the public domain of health & human services.

If your interests are gardening, check out our PA Master Gardener Presents series. Each program focuses on a different topic - Native Bees, Suburban Gardening, Pennsylvania Dutch Kitchen Gardens, and Ticks and Lyme Disease. Each program is taught by a different PA Master Gardener and will be about 45 minutes. Check out our web calendar at www.strawberryhill.org/new-events to learn more.

Sometimes I look around our campus and I'm left in awe of all we've been able to accomplish here at Strawberry Hill since our founding in 1986. I believe Francis would be proud to see her years of hard work culminating in what Strawberry Hill is today. Our creeks are clean and healthy, our community is strong and thriving. And we have incredible women leading our programs. I hope the kids and teens who come to our programs look around and see themselves represented in some way. After all, they are the next generation of environmental stewards. Just like the budding daffodils outside my window are reaching toward the sun, the upcoming generation will accomplish incredible things and I can't wait to see what the future brings.

To read past editions of Ecology, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.



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IN THE COUNTRY

How to prevent an alien invasion: the amateur's guide

Tim Iverson
Naturalist

Soon the seasons will begin to change, and the weather will become more favorable. Warmer weather and spring showers will cause the plants to bloom. For those of us with a green thumb this is the time of year when we start planning our gardens. Most of us choose what to put in our gardens based on popular trends, appearance, and ease of care. While these are important factors when choosing flowers or plants there are more important factors to consider when selecting what or what not to plant. Before purchasing and planting you should be asking yourself one thing before everything else: Is it native?

The importance of selecting native plants over non-native plants is paramount. Non-native, or exotic, plants often become invasive species. Now you might be getting confused by throwing all these terms around, so I'll attempt to clarify. Native species are plants, animals, or any organism found in an ecosystem that is supposed to be there. Exotic or non-native species are any plants, animals, or organisms that are found in a given ecosystem that are not supposed to be there. For instance, I'm sure by now you're familiar with those pesky little brown stink bugs that can be found literally everywhere in our area these days. Prior to about 20008 you couldn't find them in Maryland. They weren't even documented to be in the United States prior to 1998. With this example we can clearly identify that these Brown Marmorated Stink Bugs are exotic or non-native. They originally hail from Japan, and are most certainly not supposed to be here. As a result of their introduction and rapid expansion they are now considered invasive.

For a species to be invasive it must aggressively invade and establish

itself in an ecosystem at the expense of other species. Invasive species thrive while others suffer. Invasive aren't necessarily always exotic. Even natives can be considered invasive, certain kinds of weeds for example. The problem with invasive species is that they can cause ecological and/or economic damage on a large scale. When dealing with non-native species they can quickly become invasive because they have been pulled out of their natural ecosystem where natural checks and balances like predators or diseases can help keep population numbers in check. When those bars are removed damage caused by these species can be dramatic. In order to help curb this issue we can combat it before it even becomes a problem.

There are many natural advantages to planting native species over exotic ones. For starters because they are native they will generally be much easier to care for. They evolved to live right here for these exact conditions, and will require little attention. They've spent thousands of years figuring out how to best survive right here, and are uniquely capable of flourishing on their own. They can handle variable weather conditions, and outside of drought conditions should not need to be watered. Natives are heartier and can last for two to four seasons depending on the species allowing for longer enjoyment. Native plants usually don't require the use of pesticides or fertilizers either. Birds, bugs, and other wildlife have all developed a relationship and dependence on native plants.

Native flowers, trees, shrubs, and other plants all provide valuable food and habitat for our local wildlife. By planting things they recognize and depend on you can help cultivate a thriving habitat to observe nature up close and personal. You can even try to cater to the wildlife you wish to see. If you want to see specific birds or but-



At one time, Bradford Pear trees were embraced by towns and homeowners in search of fast growing, flowering trees. Unfortunately, while sold as non-self pollinating, they are now crowding out native pear trees. To see the extent of the invasion all you have to do is drive along any major road in the early spring and look for the white blossoms of the non-native pear tree.

terflies do a little research to find out the types of native plants they like best. If you can plant what they like you will be more likely to attract those species. For example, in the spring and fall many birds will seek out insects hiding in the leaves and bark of oak trees or poplars. Once the summer has set in they switch their diet to fruits and berries. Monarch Butterflies rely almost solely on Milkweed for nutrition during reproduction and migration times. It's all about catering to the needs of the animals or insects you would like most to see. Do a quick internet search to identify the types of habitat and food that a specific species will need.

Any experienced or novice gardener should know there are other important factors to consider ensuring you have a successful garden. Once you've selected the type

of flower, shrub, tree, or plant you wish to plant consider where and how you place it. Light conditions are very, very, very important. A shade loving plant will just not survive in the hot summer sun, so pay close attention to the location you place your plants for their specific needs. Also, consider the proximity the plant is with other surrounding plants. You want to ensure that when they all reach full growth maturity they will have plenty of room. While densely packed plants may help prevent the growth of weeds, it will also hinder the growth of some or all of your new plants too! Lastly, be sure to know when the best time to plant your new plant is. Generally, after the last frost of the spring season is likely to occur is a good time to begin that endeavor.

By planting only native species

you will be doing your part to significantly reduce the chances of and prevent the spread of exotic or invasive species. Many of the invasive plant species in the southern United States were originally introduced and used for gardening and landscaping purposes. Continuing to introduce exotic species into local areas will only further the spread of newer invasive species. Valuable habitat is lost daily to development. By planting only native plants you can provide wildlife an oasis with necessary food and shelter.

To learn more about local native plants visit the Maryland Native Plant Society at www.mdflora.org or the Pennsylvania Native Plant Society at www.panativeplantsociety.org.

To read other articles by Tim Iverson, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.

Maple Syrup Festival

MARCH 9-10 & 16-17 • 10AM-2PM
Cunningham Falls State Park—Houck Area

Welcome spring at Cunningham Falls State Park by learning how maple syrup is made from the sap of trees in the park. Enjoy a traditional pancake and sausage breakfast, stock up on maple syrup products, including syrup, maple cream, and candy. Syrup making demonstrations every hour. The event supports the Friends of Cunningham Falls.

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SCIENCE MATTERS

Forget two Amazon rainforest myths

Boyce Rensberger

The vast and forbidding Amazon rainforest holds not just exotic wildlife but two common myths. I'll tell you both right now and then go into the details.

One, it is wrong to call the forest "the lungs of the Earth." It is the opposite.

Two, the Amazon has not been a tropical wilderness since time immemorial. What we have today is only about 400 years old.

First, the "lungs" bit. This line misunderstands what lungs do. Lungs take in oxygen and give off carbon dioxide. The Amazon does the opposite. All green plants take in carbon dioxide and give off oxygen. That's during the daytime.

At night the process reverses as plants switch over to doing what animals do—consume oxygen and give off carbon dioxide. This is when plants do most of their growing. In the process the Amazon consumes almost all the oxygen it produces, leaving only 6 percent to 9 percent to go into the global atmosphere. So, the Amazon is not the lungs of anything and not even a significant contributor to the world's oxygen.

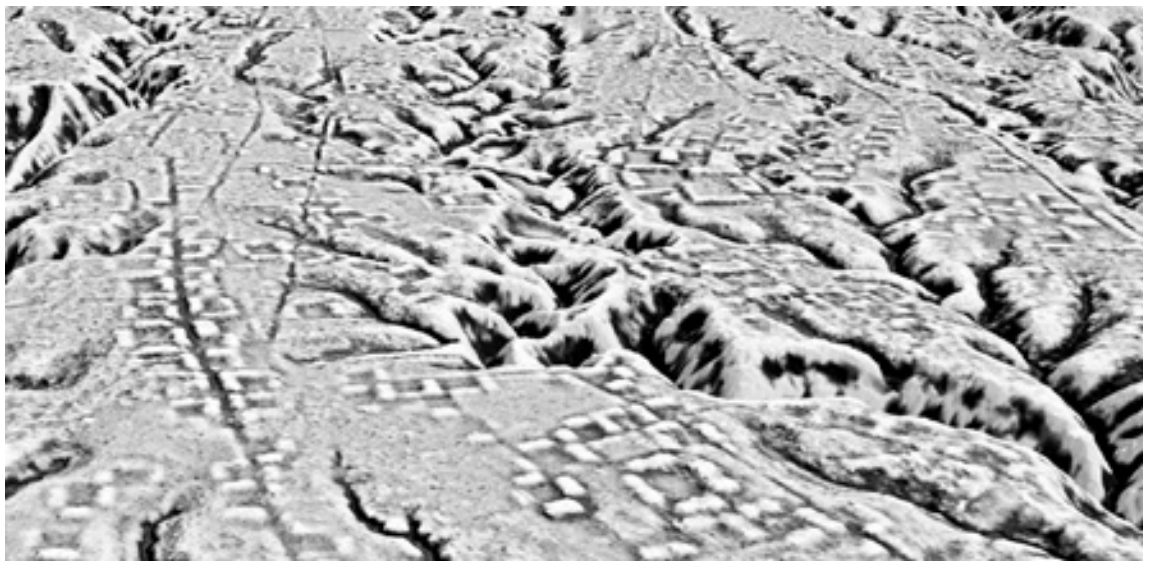
The much bigger source of "new" atmospheric oxygen is algae in the oceans, which produce about three-quarters of the oxygen released to the atmosphere. Amaz-

ingly, there is way more plant biomass in the world's oceans than in all land plants put together.

Let's step back and examine that daily reversal in how plants handle oxygen and carbon dioxide. In sunlight all green plants take in carbon dioxide and water to make a sugar called glucose. Solar energy drives the chemical reactions. Glucose stores the energy in its bonds between atoms.

Plants then use sugar's energy to carry out processes needed to grow. Also, some sugars are linked to make starch and, with still more linkage, cellulose. This process, called respiration, consumes oxygen and gives off carbon dioxide—just as we animals do.

Now for that second myth. The truth is that the Amazon forest has not been a "pristine" ecosystem since time immemorial. Studies in recent decades have found that centuries ago much of the region had a drier climate with a more open landscape, home to cities with ceremonial centers containing large pyramids. Around the cities were farms with canals for drainage or irrigation. In one small part of the forest two more such cities have recently been found, each linked to suburbs by raised causeways that run for miles. In the same region scientists found at least 79 smaller villages and hamlets.



Jungle-penetrating LiDAR reveals ruins of ancient towns now covered by vegetation

To be clear, the scientists are not referring to the small tribal bands that inhabit parts of the Amazon today such as the Yanomami or the Xingu. Today's rainforest tribes haven't built large earthworks or ceremonial centers, though they are probably descended from the ancient peoples.

Legends of "lost cities" in the Amazon have been around for a long time. The earliest evidence that some may exist began to emerge in the 1970s. In the decades since, more and more clues have emerged.

"The civic-ceremonial architecture of these large settlement sites includes stepped platforms, on top of which lie U-shaped structures, rectangular platform mounds and conical pyramids," a German-British team of archaeologists wrote in their report in a recent issue of the international journal *Nature*. The tallest pyramids are more than 70 feet high. The central plaza in one city was a tenth of a mile across.

The archaeologists who found these two cities searched only a tiny fraction of the forest. They believe many more wait to be found.

The discovery of these earthworks, now covered with tall trees and many other kinds of tropical vegetation, was made possible by an aerial survey using instruments that can see through the jungle. The instruments use LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging), which sends wavelengths of laser light that penetrate vegetation but bounce back from hard sur-

faces hundreds of thousands of times per second. The timing of the returned light pulses is a measure of the distance below the aircraft as it flies back and forth in a pattern called "mowing the lawn." A computer assembles the data points into an image. (The picture above is one example.)

Archaeologists will now try to visit the newly discovered sites. A few have already yielded pottery containing residues of corn, beans, manioc, and sweet potatoes.

LiDAR studies in the Ecuadorian part of the forest have found the ruins of cities that once were home to tens of thousands of people, beginning around 2,500 years ago.

After studying another part of the Amazon, an American and Brazilian team wrote in *Nature*: "Evidence of large, well-engineered public works (such as plazas, roads, moats, and bridges) in and between pre-Columbian settlements suggests a highly elaborate built environment, rivaling that of many contemporary complex societies of the Americas and elsewhere."

The researchers estimate that walled towns they found were each home to about 2,500 people with outlying settlements of 100 to 250. The people went to great lengths to build roads kept straight by cutting as much as 15 feet into a hillside when it would have been easier to go around the hill. The longest road found so far runs at least 15 miles.

Taken together, the evidence

shows that much of the Amazon forest is far younger than once believed. Over thousands of square miles, there were not only small cities but networks of reservoirs, canals, farms, and roads across raised causeways. Evidence shows that the cultures that built the cities existed for nearly a thousand years, dying out by the year 1600. That was before Europeans reached the area.

What we learn from this research is not only that such ancient cultures existed, perhaps rivaling the well-known Maya or Inca societies. In just 400 years the local climate can turn wetter, causing the rainforest to expand and hide the cities. That's a long time in human years, but of course a mere blip in nature's lifespan. The damage being done to the Amazon rainforest today by modern agriculture and mining may not cause a permanent erasure of the ecosystem. If Brazil and the eight other countries that share pieces of the forest can get their act together, nature should be able to reclaim lands that are now barren.

More questionable is what condition human society will be in 400 years from now.

Boyce Rensberger retired to New Midway after more than 40 years as a science writer and editor, mostly for The New York Times and The Washington Post. Write to him at boycerensberger@gmail.com.

To read past editions of Science Matters, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.com.

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THE VILLAGE IDIOT

Bread and circuses

Jack Deatherage

The DW ponders the label on the bag of bread I'm about to dump on the librarians -brave souls, volunteering to be critics of the bread I'm thinking of selling at the farmers market come June.

"You're starting a food business?" She points to the mandatory line Maryland Cottage Food Laws require be on every label of face stuffing goods sold at farmers markets or gifted to friends, neighbors, family, blah blah blah, made in a home kitchen.

I ponder the line- "Made by a cottage food business that is not subject to Maryland's food safety regulations."

"Eh-hem." I reread that line. "Okay. Umm... I'll just give the bread away."

"I knew it." I hear the DW, the Oklahoma Homesteader and the Mad One hiss in unison. The latter two are only present in spirit- I thank the gods for that small favor!

"I thought the plan was to sell bread and cookies at the farmers market to raise money for the community garden?" The DW sits down at her computer and pulls up some YouTube channel about British plumbers unclogging sewer lines. That seems to be one of her go-tos when I'm being more of myself than she can stand.

Deciding to adopt a senile old fool persona and dazedly wondering off to some other room, I begin contemplating circuses- in relation to the breads I build.

Wikipedia- "A circus [may] include clowns, acrobats, trained animals, trapeze acts, musicians, dancers, hoop-ers, tightrope walkers, jugglers, magicians, ventriloquists and unicyclists as well as other object manipulators and stunt-oriented artists."

Anyone unfortunate enough to see me create a loaf of bread might think I'm a one macaque circus as I bumble about the kitchen juggling bowls, measuring cups and spoons, spilling and cleaning, singing and cursing, yowling and dancing after burning myself on a 500 degree oven stone. Watching me nod off while waiting on a dough to proof isn't very entertaining unless I'm doing a series of stretches and folds- the dough gets that treatment, not me. The DW chuckles every time I manage to drift off to sleep just seconds before the timer "beep beep beeps" -if I remember to set it! I startle awake with a "Yes dear!" I go stumbling and cursing the heartless harpy someone sold

me- claiming it was a kitchen timer.

Between fits of giggling the DW asks, "How much does this latest batch of dough cost us?"

"Umm... uhh..."

"How much?" Balor lurks. I wonder if I can get her to channel that monster's heat into the oven- 'cause she isn't going to like my response and saving a few bucks on the electric bill...

"I'm working with a sourdough culture so nothing for yeast. Umm... A buck and a quarter for flour and (mumble mumble) for the cheese and bacon. The heavy whipping cream was (mumble mumble)."

"Jack!"

"Yes dear!" As I beat out the Balor flames consuming my beard. I don't dare even think of calling the DW a heartless harpy! "Five dollars for the cheese, ten for the bacon, and the cream was like four dollars. Not that all the bacon and cream went into one batch of bread." I hurriedly add. Not that it matters.

For a few seconds the DW stares at me, her "good" eye jittering madly. She sighs. "No wonder the librarians put up with you if you're giving them bread like that all the time."

"Not all the time." I attempt to defend myself. "Sometimes I give them cookie experiments." Crap! There goes the rest of the beard! Fortunately the beard grows back as quickly as weeds grow in the garden.

Yeah, the garden is also a circus.

Thanks to a December order for two metal garden beds getting lost in the ether I managed to acquire four beds to rebuild the large flowerbed paralleling the sidewalk along Cedar Avenue. The DW wanted to place two metal beds there and plant annual flowers in the ground between the metal beds. After we'd argued for a few days she finally agreed to a third metal bed and four it now is. We're both trying to figure out why I'm not a heap of ashes between the shipping boxes.

I wanted four round beds for the library's use, but two of those were what got lost in December. Since then, two 100-gallon stock tanks were gifted to the community garden. I figure we might as well empty the two 150-gallon tanks we have and move all four stock tanks to the library's section.

Brian wanted to get all fancy and design the library's section artistically. I hope he can come up with something using the metal beds and tanks. I'm thinking we can bolt wire cattle panels to the 150-gallon tanks to form arches the library

kidlets can grow vining flowers, small fruits and beans on. Should we ever acquire the round metals beds I originally wanted we can easily (ha ha ha) empty the stock tanks and move them to the old people's section of the garden where I wouldn't have to hurt myself tending to whatever we plant in them.

Water will be an issue as usual. First Sister is leaving the South after living there for well past a decade. She wants to garden and has offered to purchase two more 150-gallon stock tanks to collect roof run off. She also plans on helping in the garden, which is good 'cause I'm not sure the DW can handle a doubling of the garden footage with just my help. While I collected and carried waste water from home to garden, drove the T-posts, ran the wire and strings, placed and filled the compost bins, pushed the mower and played with the string trimmer, the DW did all the hard work- seeding and weeding. We split the watering.

I figure about a thousand square feet of garden was built last Spring. After Brian's hours of rototilling, the Emmitsburg Walking Group's hours of assembling and filling the raised beds, the hours the library's kidlets sowed and planted, the DW and I only averaged an hour a day tending the garden. We actually had to turn away offers of help last year because there really wasn't much to do besides water and weed. And beg visitors to help themselves to whatever we had ready for the tasting!

Two people have asked for garden plots this year and the librarians are planning an expansion of their use of the garden. Two people have purchased raised beds for the garden



No, this is not what Jack's bread looks like, but once again, for the life of us we couldn't find a suitable photo to go along with the article. We need to get DW to take us a few next time Jack is cooking.

which frees cash from our household budget to purchase soil out of pocket rather than asking the town to buy it for us, as we had to last year. Brian was correct when he told me people wanting to help would come to the garden if we built it.

As the Cedar Ave Community Garden moves toward self-sustainability, Brian and I are turning our minds,

more Brian's mind than mine, toward an even larger, grander project- years in the offing most likely. However, we're more confident about tackling a much larger project now that the community garden is a thing!

To read past editions of *The Village Idiot*, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.

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THE MASTER GARDENER

March gardening – it's not as boring as you think!

Mary Ann Ryan
Adams County Master Gardener

As we begin this month, I reflect on the winter happenings. Weather can be hard on plants, from the temperature fluctuation to the winter winds. How does all that affect our trees, shrubs, and perennials? And what about our houseplants? Do the outdoor temperatures affect our indoor environment?

February turned out to be a warm month. However, two snowstorms later created some interesting plant reactions.

When the temperatures fluctuate, it causes several things to happen. In trees and shrubs, it can cause early bud break. If that happens, then

flowers will open too early, as well as leaf buds. It can cause stress to the plant, as those flowers or buds will then freeze. In the case of flower break, the plant will not flower at the right time. In the case of the buds freezing, the plant then must push their secondary buds, causing added stress to the tree.

Unfortunately, nothing can be done about this. It's a case of nature doing its thing. What we can do is care for the trees and shrubs the best we can.

Prune at the right time. When we get those early warm days it the winter, we often want to get outside and do some gardening. Pruning seems to be one of our go-to chores. However, if pruned too early, we can encourage early buds

pushing, just in time to be frozen by the cold temperatures. The best time to prune is late winter – March. This is a great chore to do this month. Cut out any damaged branches from the snow and ice. Cut out any dead or diseased branches, then cut out any crossing branches. This will help to keep your tree or shrub healthy.

Evergreens, whether broadleaf or narrowleaf, can dry out in the winter. Not only does the dry air desiccate the leaves, but the winds will cause drying as well. Pruning the dead stems can be done late March on these plants as well. Cut back to where the branch originates on the plant to avoid "topping" the plant. This will help to keep its original shape.

When it comes to our perennials, the cold and warm temperatures can cause heaving. This means that the crowns of the plants will push upward out of the ground, sometimes exposing roots, and often exposing those crowns of the plants that want to be more protected by the freezing temperatures.

By a little extra care in the fall, we can protect those plants from heaving. And although nothing can be done for this problem now, preparations can be made for the fall.

In late fall, cover the base of perennials with a layer of mulch, compost or fallen leaves. This will provide more consistent temperatures for the plants, reducing the chance of heaving. And if the plants do heave, the cover of compost will protect those crowns and roots of the plants.

Start a compost pile now in preparation for this. Build a three-by-three enclosure made of wire, with an open front. Begin by collecting leaves that may be left from fall. Add kitchen scraps, sawdust, and straw. Once you begin mowing the grass this spring, add those clippings to the pile (if they weren't treated with herbicides!). Turn it every now and again. By fall, you should have some compost ready for covering the crowns of the perennials.



It's not boring as long as we don't get blasted with a major winter storm like we did 100 years ago.

Don't cut back the tops of the perennials just yet. Let them there until you see growth from the base of the plants. This does a few things: 1) The stems protect the crowns, collecting leaves and acting as an insulation for the plants, & 2) The stems can be homes for overwintering beneficial insects. Cutting them off too soon, before the overwintering insects hatch out, can cause death to those insects.

And what about indoor plants? Do the fluctuating outdoor temperatures affect what's happening inside? The use of fireplaces and wood stoves can affect our plants indoors as the air can be so much drier for the plants. Plants like moisture in the air. Therefore, when the air is drier, more watering and care needs to happen. Then, of course, when it's warmer outdoors, the heat isn't running as much, including wood burning stoves and fireplaces, and there's a chance of then overwatering.

Light can also become an issue. As it gets colder outside, the window coverings may be closed for longer periods of time, reducing the amount of light getting to the plants. Shorter days of the winter already has an affect on plants, and covered windows add to that stress. The fluctuations in temperatures outdoors can change how we manage our home environment inside.

Bulbs are another plant group that is affected by inconsistent weather. Small, early bulbs like snow drops aren't particularly

affected, however, daffodils and hyacinths can be. The warmer temperatures will cause those bulbs to peak through the ground. Then followed by a freeze, the tips of the leaves will turn yellow. The good news is that this typically will not cause those bulbs to suffer. They will still bloom and grow as they are supposed to. However, if the warm snap is long before a freeze and the flower buds are above ground and exposed, then those flower buds will die. The good news is that the bulbs won't die. There just won't be flowers on those particular plants this season.

Other than pruning, other March gardening chores can include:

Prepare for any new planting beds. Using newspaper or cardboard is a good way to get rid of grass and weeds. Newspaper will be easy enough to dig through when you are ready to plant. Cardboard may be a bit more difficult, but certainly an option. Cover the paper or cardboard with mulch or compost. The grass and weeds underneath will turn into organic matter, good for the plants.

Some annual flower and vegetable seeds can be started indoors. Having the right equipment, and a knowledge of germination time is important for successful seed starting.

The end of March is a good time to start potatoes. Directly plant them in the garden. It's also a good time to directly sow peas. Just be sure when planting seeds or potatoes outdoors, that the soil isn't too wet.

Cool season crops like pansies and violas can be planted outdoors. They are a great early season plant for containers. Other cool season crops like salad greens are good companions for the pansies. What a great double duty those containers will serve through the spring!

Visit the local garden centers for houseplants or plants for instant color indoors. Things like primroses, miniature roses, cyclamen, and kalanchoes are in full bloom to bring a bright, cheery spot to your indoor environment. Some of these plants can be planted outdoors after danger of frost, others are indoor plants.

March can be a weird gardening month. Put together a list, follow the weather, and you'll be prepared for whatever nature brings.

Frederick County Master Gardeners March Seminars

March 9: "Bee Habitats" A successful pollinator garden consists of more than pretty flowers. Shelter is a necessary element in supporting our critical insects. Join us in learning about native bee habitats, and learn how to make a bee hotel you can hang in your garden.

March 23: "Creating a Flower Cutting Garden & Flower Arrangements" Learn how to design, plant, and harvest flowers from your own cutting garden. Discover the best sun and shade annuals for cut-

ting and how to maintain the garden for maximum production. We will also demonstrate techniques for creating arrangements.

All seminars are free unless otherwise stated. Seminars are held at the University of Maryland Extension office at 330 Montevue Lane, (off Rosemont Avenue) in Frederick, from 10 to noon. For more information and sign-up links, visit the Events section of the Master Gardeners Frederick County Maryland Facebook page, or call the extension office at 301-600-1595.



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The Vegetable Patch

You might see a Penn State Master Gardener at the Adams County

THE MASTER GARDENER

Farmers Market. You may have seen many Master Gardeners at the recent PA Farm Show in Harrisburg. And you may hear a Master Gardener speak at one of your local community organizations.

Who are they? As a Penn State Master Gardener, volunteers commit their time and knowledge to assist Penn State Extension in educating groups as well as individuals on proper horticultural practices and environmental stewardship. They are trained in horticulture by Penn State Extension educators and other Master Gardeners from across the area.

As such, the Master Gardener finds opportunities to teach folks in many ways. One such way is through gardening series.

This time of year, many gardeners are shopping seed catalogs, visiting on-line seed companies, and checking out the seed supply at local garden centers and box stores – all in preparation for the spring vegetable garden. Trying to figure out what seeds to start at what time, should they be started indoors or outdoors, how does the crop grow, and when should it be harvested are all questions that may go through a gardener's mind as they decide what to purchase and grow for the season.

The Vegetable Patch is one of the gardening series our Master Gardeners will be teaching. This four-week series will focus specifically on growing vegetables. From the very general, to the very specific, Master Gardeners will walk you through the gardening season to help you be successful this year. Each class will focus on specific gardening practices, and after attending you will be prepared to garden for a great harvest. From beginners to intermediate gardeners, this series is a great way to prepare yourself for the gardening season.

The series runs every Thursday through March 14. Classes begin at 6:30 and end around 8 in the evening.

We will begin with a class on basic information that one needs to know when starting a vegetable garden or trying to fix problems that may have shown up in an existing garden. We

will have discussions on garden location, soil needs and types of gardens.

As the weeks progress, Master Gardeners will begin to “get down and dirty” as in-depth discussions on soil types, soil nutrition, compost, soil tests and cover crops occur. Learning about companion planting and crop rotation can and should become a part of your soil and plant health. Starting with the soil is the basis for any productive garden.

Our next step in the series will cover the types of vegetables: how they grow, when to grow them and where to grow them. We break the vegetables into two groups: spring and summer crops. You'll be taken through the needs of crop families, and some of the roadblocks that may occur.

We'll talk about how to start plants indoors, what those crops are, and why. Gardening can begin as early as March if the weather permits. Some crops are spring and fall crops, meaning they do best in cooler temperatures like leafy greens, peas, potatoes, and broccoli. You'll learn about the insects that find these crops and what can be done to control them. You'll learn about plant families and their significance.

Next, we will venture into our common summer crops, like tomatoes, peppers and beans. The vining plants like cucumbers and melons will be discussed. You'll learn about some of the common issues, including mildew and borers.

Warm season vegetables bring a different set of issues than any other season of veggies. Tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, and melons can be the most difficult plants to grow. The temperatures and moisture play a huge role in these crops and what diseases and insects attack them. This class focuses on best practices for growing these widely used and grown summer crops.

To register, go on-line: <https://extension.psu.edu/the-vegetable-patch>; Call toll-free: 1-877-345-0691, or stop by Penn State Extension at 670 Old Harrisburg Road, Suite 204, Gettysburg.

Classes will be held at the Agricul-

tural and Natural Resource Center, 670 Old Harrisburg Road, Gettysburg, PA 17325 from 6:30pm – 8pm on Thursday evenings beginning February 22 and ending March 14. Registration Fee: \$50 for all four classes. Come join us for a fun and informative class series!

Mary Ann Ryan is the Consumer

Horticulture Program Coordinator, from Adams County. Penn State Cooperative Extension of Adams County is located at 670 Old Harrisburg Road, Suite 204, Gettysburg, phone 334-6271.

Visit us on Facebook and Instagram at Penn State Master Gardeners in Adams County for our

Master Gardeners' Monthly Videos. Timely and relevant topics will be discussed on a regular basis keeping readers up to date on current horticultural issues.

To read other gardening articles, visit the Gardening section of Emmitsburg.net.

Small Town Gardener

A bridge between seasons: the Hellebore

Marianne Willburn

Rose colored glasses and a heavy coat are still standard issue for most fair-weather gardeners in the last weeks of March. As winter reluctantly gives up its hold on soil, root and sanity, there is as much to ignore as to celebrate, and there's never enough color – no matter how many bulbs were roughly planted by flashlight and drill auger in the closing moments of December.

The relative nakedness of daffodils, crocus and snowdrops against a still apocalyptic tundra is certainly cheering; but when glasses are removed, it becomes apparent that what's needed to tie them all together is a freshness and vigor that evergreen foundation shrubs can't provide.

Solving problems one garden at a time

For decades, the presence of a few hellebores in a garden signified either competence or inheritance. They were your gardening grandmother's secret – a deer resistant (not deer-proof!), shade-tolerant, evergreen perennial with solid hardiness in USDA Zones 4-8 (and a little wiggle room on both ends for some species). Those in the know, knew. Others grew hosta and wept when the deer showed up.

Even the most down-market of hellebore species with a penchant for promiscuity – *H. orientalis* – is a charming and versatile plant. Bitter winds

might burn the clumps of leathery, palmate foliage; but vibrant green leaves will unfurl in late winter to replace them, while copious flowers open in colors from white-green to plum-charcoal, depending on the subspecies.

A secret weapon in the early spring garden

I couldn't tell you the parentage of those that fill in the gaps under my winter berries and continue to proliferate without shame, but I know that I love them.

Their foliage fills the tragedy of empty, ravaged soil in part sun or shade, and provides a stunning backdrop to bulbs and emerging perennials. Later, the hellebore's shade tolerance and relative strength allows it to transition to groundcover as surrounding deciduous shrubs and trees put on leaves and spring turns into summer. Seedlings emerge in late winter as numerous as stars.

For those that have had a hillside of *H. x hybridus* for years, it becomes second nature to pull out drab seedlings (they can take three years to flower), and select for new and interesting colors and flower forms. But for the newbie with only a few plants, a hellebore seedling is a present to be unwrapped – a treasured and precious surprise. I'm still in the save-and-sift-seedlings stage of my gardening life.

But there is a caveat, as there often is with most things that seem too good to be true. Though the flowers of many hellebore species age slowly with the strength and grace of Paulina Porizkova, they don't share her posture, nodding towards the soil

and forcing the gardener to bend over to fully view them.

For this reason, gardeners often float the sturdy blossoms in bowls or trays to create exquisite winter tablescapes and establish instant horticultural credentials over dinner.

Enter the Cover Girls

Over the last decades, excellent breeding programs in the U.K, Europe and the United States have expanded the gardener's palette with delicate, beautiful flowers on strong plants that tickle the collector's spirit. Doubles, freckles, picotees, reverse picotees, suffusions of gold...the cultivars are astonishing, and captivating.

In 2010 the patent for a new kind of hellebore was filed by German breeder Josef Heuger – a plant that held its deep rose-pink blooms outward on strong, dark stems. Its name eventually became 'Pink Frost', and it was a game changer – particularly in the florist world. Many others followed, florists swooned; and consumers began to pay more attention to their grandmother's flower.

Don't Break the Bank

Do you have to grow the expensive hybrids to grow hellebores? Absolutely not. Thanks to the promiscuity of the afore mentioned *H. x hybridus* (*H. orientalis*) hellebores and the dissected leaf *H. foetidus* seedlings, I have a hillside of wonderful no named cultivars.

If you care what color/form is coming into your garden, it's important to always buy a plant with at least one bloom as seedlings are incredibly variable. If you don't care, you're liable to score some amazing tiny plants with great potential – and some free plants from friends that will still delight you.

It is a beautiful bridge between seasons that will be decorating my house and garden for the next five to six weeks, and I wouldn't be without them. Don't let another year go by in your garden without cultivating this kind of joy. -MW

Marianne is the author of *Big Dreams, Small Garden*. You can read more at www.smalltowngardener.com.

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PETS

Boomer and Bitzy

Jennifer Vanderau
Cumberland Valley
Animal Shelter

My name is Bitzy. I didn't get the name when I was made. I only got it once I came into the home where I live with my best friend, Boomer. He's a Golden Retriever and we are inseparable.

Yes, I'm a dog toy named Bitzy. It was tough for me to wrap my stuffed head around at first, too.

I was made to be a dog's best friend, but in the factory and then in the store, I had heard a lot of awful stories about how many dog toys don't make it or don't last. They maybe get played with for a little bit, but then they're forgotten, like the joy they brought didn't matter.

But see the thing I've learned about joy is that it's important, no matter how long you know it or where you find it.

I'm so grateful for Boomer. He carries me with him just about everywhere he goes.

We're kind of like a couple. People actually call us Bitzy and Boomer when they see us coming, especially on our nightly walks with Mom and Dad through the neighborhood. The lady next doors actually laughs out loud when she sees Boomer carrying me in his mouth.

I think we both get a kick out of it.

Boomer sleeps with me each night on the fluffy part of his dog bed.

I'm not sure how I got this lucky, but I've been with Boomer since he was a puppy. When Mom first found me in the store, I couldn't believe she picked me for the little Golden puppy at her feet. Some of the other toys kind of sneered at me when Mom put me in the cart.

I know they were just jealous.

Some of them even told me as we walked away that it wouldn't last. I'd be garbage in a week, something for mice and rats to shred.

That made me shiver a little bit because I wasn't sure. The toys that told those stories just seemed so certain. How could things be dif-

ferent for me?

But they were different. Boomer and I bonded that first night. Oh, how he would chase me around the house and toss me in the air and chew on my legs and his sharp little puppy teeth would dig into my stuffing and I knew I was helping keep them clean as they were developing in his mouth.

I know a lot of people think toys are just a joke, but we're really not. We do a lot to help the animals we are made for. There are probably some humans who get that, but a lot don't.

Boomer and I know what we are to each other and that's what matters.

I can't tell you how happy I was to be there for Boomer as he grew up and became the amazing dog he is today. See, that's a toy's job. We get made to provide companionship and activity for a four-legged friend, so to be able to supply that makes me feel complete.

Sometimes I wish I could go back to the store where Mom bought me just to tell the other toys that life can work out exactly the way you want it to. But then I wonder what became of those toys that were with me on the shelves and I stop thinking about that in favor of being dragged into the kitchen with Boomer for dinner.

Mom takes care of me. She washes me up and makes sure I'm as clean as I can be for Boomer. She reattaches my legs when Boomer gets a little too excited and pulls on my stuffing.

See, Golden Retrievers are good when hunting fowl. They don't grab all that hard onto the prey. Instead, they carry it in what's called a soft mouth, so it's not completely destroyed for the hunter. That's why Boomer loves to carry me in his mouth. He's doing what he was bred to do.

Goldens also make good guide dogs and I can totally see that in Boomer. He's always looking out for the people in his life: Mom, Dad, the kids, the neighbors.

He's really an amazing dog.

I've noticed recently, though, that Boomer seems to be slow-

ing down a bit. It's hard for me to remember how long we've been together, but I do know when I first got here, the kids were little and the oldest is going off to college next fall.

So we've been together a long while.

There's some grey hair around Boomer's muzzle now and our walks through the neighborhood are a lot slower than they once were. If I could talk, I'd probably tease Boomer a little about his advancing years.

It's the middle of the night a day or two later and it dawns on me, rather abruptly, that Boomer won't be around forever. Living beings age. I never fully understood the reasons behind it. It's just one of life's certainties. As I watch him sleep next to me on the dog bed, I wonder how much time we have left. I wonder what will become of me when he's gone.

A shiver runs along my legs and as though sensing something, Boomer snuffles and tosses a paw across my stomach.

I hope he somehow can remember what we are to each other, what we mean to each other. When he jams his cold doggie nose into my neck, I truly think he gets it.

In that moment, under the moonlight, next to Mom and Dad's bed, I decide to love this beautiful dog for exactly how long I get to and be grateful and happy and proud for what I've been given and what I've been able to give in return.

The Boomer and Bitzy story won't end just because we do. That's the thing about real love – it can never truly be destroyed.

And it's so very, very special – no matter where you find it.

Jennifer Vanderau is the Publications and Promotions Consultant for the Cumberland Valley Animal Shelter and can be reached at cvascomm@cvas-pets.org. The shelter accepts both monetary and pet supply donations. For more information, call the shelter at 717-263-5791 or visit the website www.cvas-pets.org. CVAS also operates a thrift store in Chambersburg. Help support the animals at the shelter by donating to or shopping at the store.



Cameron is a sweet dilute calico girl who arrived at the shelter as a stray. She is 4-year-old and would love to find her loving forever home soon! Cameron likes napping in a soft bed and getting treats. Could she be the one for you?



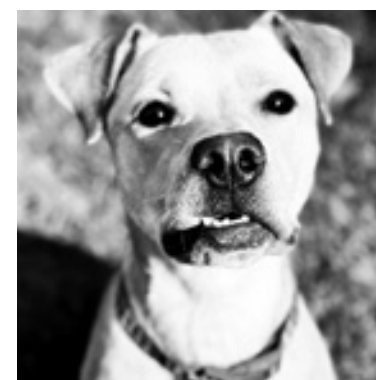
Goji Berry came into the shelter after being found abandoned in a house with 20 other cats. He was covered in fleas, skinny, and was missing a lot of fur. Since his arrival at the shelter over the summer, he's gotten in shape and is a good looking boy who actually likes to jump on shoulders! Goji Berry would love to find out what it means to have a loving forever home and have someone that would never leave him behind again. Could that be you?



Angel was surrendered to the shelter when her owner could no longer care for her. She is a 3-year-old labradoodle, or Lab/Poodle mix and will need someone who can make sure that she gets groomed regularly to prevent her fur from matting. She does jump up and can be too much for small children. Angel would do best in a home where she is the only pet. An active family would be best for her. Can you help Angel out? CVAS, 5051 Letterkenny Road West, Chambersburg, PA 17201, Kennel License# 2090.



Nino was surrendered to the shelter because someone in the home was allergic to him. He is an 8-month-old pug/beagle mix who will need someone to have patience with him. Nino is a sweet guy, but can be shy when he first meets you. He loves to play with toys and enjoys getting treats! He does know sit but does need some work on reinforcing the command. Nino would love to find his second chance at a loving forever home soon! CVAS, 5051 Letterkenny Road West, Chambersburg, PA 17201 Kennel License# 2090.



Olivia is a smart, fun-loving girl that will need a strong leader. Due to this an age restriction for children in the home may apply, please discuss this with shelter staff. Olivia does have a high chase drive and does not seem to care for the company of other dogs so being the only pet in the home may be best for Olivia. A fenced in yard is highly recommended for Olivia. Do you have the right place for this cute girl? CVAS, 5051 Letterkenny Road West, Chambersburg, PA 17201, Kennel License# 2090

For more information about Cameron, Goji, Angel, Nino, or Olivia call the Cumberland Valley Animal Shelter at 717-263-5791, or visit them online at www.cvaspets.org or better yet, visit them in person at the shelter.

Before humans die, they write their last Will & Testament, give their home & all they have, to those they leave behind. If, with my paws, I could do the same, this is what I'd ask...

To a poor and lonely stray I'd give:

- My happy home.
- My bowl & cozy bed, soft pillows and all my toys.
- The lap, which I loved so much.
- The hand that stroked my fur & the sweet voice which spoke my name.

I'd Will to the sad, scared shelter dog, the place I had in my human's loving heart, of which there seemed no bounds.

So, when I die, please do not say, "I will never have a pet again, for the loss and pain is more than I can stand."

Instead, go find an unloved dog, one whose life has held no joy or hope and give MY place to HIM.

This is the only thing I can give...
The love I left behind.

-- Author Unknown

petco foundation

PETS

Michelob

Shawn Snyder
Frederick County Animal Shelter

Frederick County Animal Control and Pet Adoption Center currently has approximately 100 animals in our care. All will make wonderful four-legged friends for the right families, well, all except for two. It's not because they aren't friendly animals with unique personalities. Nope. It's simply because they are three-legged. That's right, FCAC currently has two special tripod cats available for adoption.

The first is our senior tripod, Michelob. This handsome black and white domestic shorthair came to us as a stray after being found in a Michelob Ultra box at a local store. Shelter staff have estimated him to be about eight years old. He has quickly proven himself to be a laid back and affectionate guy with an affinity for

sitting on laps and purring. The fact that he's missing a portion of his right front leg doesn't keep him down one bit. Michelob moves around with ease and is quite playful when the mood strikes. While our shelter veterinarian states that he seems comfortable and that amputating the remainder of his leg is not necessary, she has recommended blood work and a dental for this senior.

Our second tripod cat is five-to-six-month-old Prada. Apart from her missing left hind foot, this gorgeous tortie and white girl is your typical kitten. She can be a little shy in new environments, but she quickly warms up. She is incredibly affectionate and playful. She's a champion biscuit maker and purrs nonstop. Prada moves around without issue but does use her stump to balance which can cause her to list to the left. Like Michelob, the shelter vet does not believe amputation of the remaining limb is necessary for

Prada at this time, but if it were to become painful or she uses it to the point that it causes her to fall over to the left frequently, it may be considered. As a bonus, Prada has an equally adorable four-legged sister named Dior. The pair are bonded and need to be adopted together.

Adopting a three-legged cat is pretty much the same as adopting their four-legged counterparts. Very few modifications need to be made for them because like Michelob and Prada, they adapt quickly. If needed some owners provide rugs or carpet as added traction for their furry family members. Ramps or landings can be helpful aids as cats move to and from higher surfaces as jumping can be more of a challenge. Minor adjustments to litter boxes may also need to be made and three-legged cats sometimes have issues entering boxes or need taller boxes to keep everything inside the litter box if they are unable to squat to go to the bathroom.



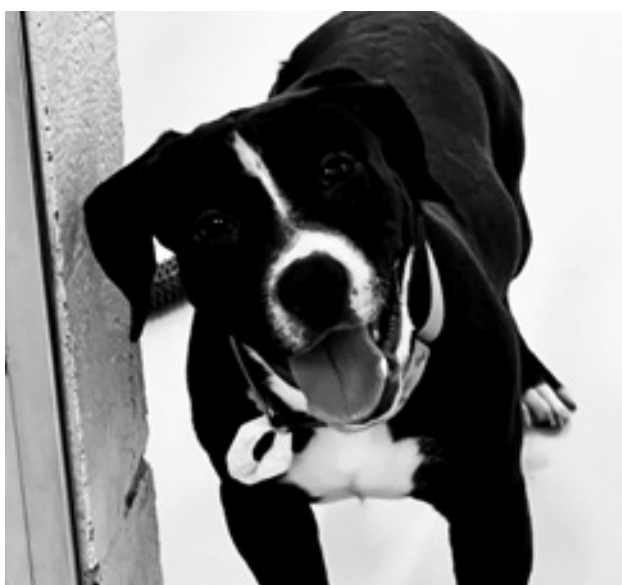
The most important thing to remember when adding a tripod cat to your home is to keep them at a healthy weight. While it's recommended that every pet maintain a healthy physique it is more important for those with three legs. Additional weight can increase the stress on the existing limbs causing arthritis and other mobility problems. Con-

sult your vet about proper nutrition and make sure your tripod gets plenty of exercise. Joint supplements may also be recommended.

Prada and Dior have been placed with one of the shelter's rescue partners. However, if you're interested in making Michelob the newest addition to your family, go to visitfcac.as.me to book your appointment to meet him.



Angel shares a common story with many shelter residents. Her family moved and their new home did not allow pets. Angel is seven years old and lived with the same family her entire life. She shared her previous home with a cat but prefers to be an only dog. Angel's adoption fee is \$72.50 and includes spaying, microchipping, routine vaccinations, a veterinarian wellness visit and Frederick County dog license.



Ms. Bellatrix is a little shy when meeting new people but warms up quickly with patience. At only eight months old, she is energetic and loves to play outside. She was part of an unplanned litter, however, her owner decided not to keep her. Bellatrix hopes to find a family that is willing provide her proper training and socialization. Do you have what it takes to commit to Bellatrix?



Michelob was given his name because he was found at a beer store in Urbana. Without a doubt, he was someone's beloved pet. Michelob is confident, laid-back, friendly and doesn't appear to have missed a meal. Also, he is missing part of his right front leg, which would make it difficult for him to survive outdoors. Michelob's easy-going personality will make him a great fit for almost any family.

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Shelter cat population decreases during the winter months and Andre is currently one of eight cats available for adoption. He willingly greets visitors who stop by his cage and does not object to being held. Andre is a big boy; he weighs almost fifteen pounds but is not overweight.

For more information about Julia, Angel, Ms. Bellatrix, Michelob, or Andre call the Frederick County Animal Shelter at 301-600-1319 or visit them online at www.frederickcountymd.gov/fcac.

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FIRE COMPANY AWARD BANQUETS

Rocky Ridge Volunteer Fire Company



Operational & Line Officers: front - Penny Stonesifer, Bernard Wivell, Dale Kline, Alan Brauer, and Jerry Free; back - Bonny Hurley, Rev. James Russell, Alan Hurley, Jim Rice, and Christina Hurley.



Auxiliary: front - Nancy Summers, Pat Haines Riggs, Linda Northrup, Nancy Baker; back - Joann Hurley, Helen Burrier, Brianna Kaas, and Jerry Free.



Top EMS responders - Christina Hurley and Bonny Hurley



Jim Rice was recognized as the company's top responder.



Auxiliary Vice President, Nancy Summers presenting a check for \$15,000 to Barry Burrier from the Auxiliary.



Robert Albaugh Award recipient Pat Haines Riggs with Linda Northrup.



Paige Riggs with Linda Northrup receiving the Outstanding Junior Award.



Jerry Free with outgoing President-Barry Burrier receiving the President's award.



Paulette Mathias outgoing Secretary with outgoing President Barry Burrier receiving a plaque for 28 years as Secretary.

Administrative Officers for 2024

President: Dale Kline
 Vice President: Alan Brauer
 Secretary: Penny Stonesifer
 Asst. Secretary: Christina Hurley
 Treasurer: Bernard Wivell
 Asst Treasurer: Bonny Hurley
 Chaplain: Jerry Free
 Asst. Chaplain: Rev. James Russell

Board of Directors for 2024

Barry Burrier
 Robert Eyler
 Kenneth Frushour
 Craig Hovermale
 Eric Martin
 Jamison Mathias
 Paulette Mathias

Line Officers for 2024

Chief: Alan Hurley
 1st Asst Chief: Jim Rice
 2nd Asst Chief: Larry Humerick
 Captain: Kevin Albaugh

Auxiliary Officers for 2024

President: Betty Ann Mumma
 Vice President: Nancy Summers
 Secretary: Pat Haines-Riggs
 Asst. Secretary: Brianna Kaas
 Treasurer: Linda Northrup
 Asst. Treasurer: Nancy Baker
 Chaplain: Bonnie Sanders
 Asst. Chaplain: JoAnn Hurley

FIRE COMPANY AWARD BANQUETS

Guardian Hose VFC



Administrative Officers: James Hamrick, Lori Brown, Tisha Miller, Eric Stackhouse, Terry Frushour, Donald Stitely and Wayne Stackhouse.



Trustees: Steve Strickhouser, Trish Hahn, Brian Smith, and Dave Fogle.



Terry Frushour presents James Hamrick with his 40 year membership certificate.



Terry Frushour presents Dave Fogle with his 45 year membership certificate.



Terry Frushour presents Randy Waesche with his 50 year membership certificate.



Terry Frushour presents Donald Stitely with his 65 year membership certificate.

Administrative Officers for 2024

President: Wayne Stackhouse
 President Emeritus: Donald Stitely
 Vice President: Terry Frushour
 Secretary: Eric Stackhouse
 Asst. Secretary: Tisha Miller
 Treasure: Lori Brown

Line Officers for 2024

Chief: Charlie Brown
 Asst. Chief: Chris Kinnaird
 Captain: Brian Donovan
 Sergeant: Logan Dinterman
 Sergeant: Christopher Kinnaird

Trustees for 2024

David Fogle, Brian Smith, Will Gue, Steve Stackhouse, and Trisha Hahn



Jennifer Frushour 25 years Life Membership



Operational Officers: Chief Charlie Brown and Assistant Chief Chris Kinnaird.

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\$25 Per Person 28 Games Total ~ 12 Games at \$100
14 GAMES OF COACH BAGS
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Tickets available at the door or text/call:
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 Cash Bar & Kitchen Non-profit event to benefit the Thurmont Ambulance Company

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Doors open @ 5 p.m. Bingo begins @ 7 p.m.

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 Both events will benefit the Thurmont Community Ambulance Service

HEALTH

Frederick Health earns patient excellence award

Joshua Faust

As Frederick County continues to grow, Frederick Health, the largest healthcare provider in the community, has continued to invest in expanding its life-saving infrastructure and services. As part of those expanded efforts, the healthcare system recently invested \$47 million in a new Critical Care Expansion at its hospital in downtown Frederick. Part of that expansion included a new, state-of-the-art Intensive Care Unit, also known as an ICU.

In most hospitals, the ICUs are a specific unit with specialized staff, equipment, and standards that care for severe, potentially life-threatening cases. People who are in a serious accident, undergo major surgery, or have a sudden decline in health may get treatment in an ICU. According to information available from the American Hospital Association, in 2022, there were roughly 6,120

hospitals in the United States, which leads the world in the amount of critical care beds per capita. That's important because roughly 5.7 million patients are hospitalized in ICU's each year in this country according to data available with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Needless to say, the work taking place at Frederick Health Hospital's ICU is vital to keeping the community healthy.

That's why Frederick Health is pleased to announce that the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN) has awarded the Intensive Care Unit at Frederick Health Hospital with a gold-level Beacon Award for Excellence. Founded in 1969, AACN is the largest specialty nursing organization in the world and represents the interests of more than half a million acute and critical care nurses and includes more than 2000 chapters in the United States. The organi-

zation's vision is to create a healthcare system driven by the needs of patients and their families in which acute and critical care nurses make their optimal contribution.

Frederick Health Hospital is only the second hospital in Maryland to earn this prestigious award.

The National Beacon Award for Excellence — a significant milestone on the path to exceptional patient care and healthy work environments — recognizes healthcare units that successfully improve patient outcomes and align practices with AACN's Healthy Work Environment Standards. Established in 20003, the Beacon Award for Excellence offers a road map to help guide exceptional care through improved outcomes and greater overall patient satisfaction. US and Canadian units where patients receive their principal nursing care after hospital admission qualify for this excellence award.

The gold-level Beacon Award

for Excellence earned by Frederick Health is a testament to its systematic approach to policies, procedures, and processes that include engagement of staff and key stakeholders; fact-based evaluation strategies for continuous process improvement; and performance measures that meet or exceed relevant benchmarks.

AACN President Terry Davis, PhD, RN, NE-BC, CHTP, FAAN, applauds the exemplary efforts of the caregivers of the ICU at Frederick Health Hospital for working together to meet and exceed the high standards set forth by the Beacon Award for Excellence.

"These dedicated healthcare professionals join other members of the exceptional community of nurses who set the standard for optimal patient care," Davis said.

"The Beacon Award for Excellence recognizes caregivers in stellar units whose consistent and systematic approach to evidence-based care opti-

mizes patient outcomes. Units that receive this national recognition serve as role models to others on their journey to excellent patient and family care."

By earning gold-level status, the Frederick Health Hospital ICU reinforces the notion of the healthcare system's unique and vital role in the community. Deb Jorae, the Director of Critical Care with Frederick Health was thrilled to earn this award.

"We are honored to have been recognized by the AACN for our efforts," said Jorae. "Our expert team provides not only the highest quality of care but also remains a trusted asset in our growing community."

At Frederick Health, the community can take comfort in knowing an expert team of healthcare professionals is on hand to help prevent and treat severe injuries or diseases. From routine screenings and prevention to advanced procedures and, expert care in the ICU, the Frederick Health team is committed to keeping you healthy and doing the things that you love.

"The ICU and Cardiovascular teams are committed to providing the best care in Frederick County and the surrounding area," said Kristin Deely, Director of Cardiac & Vascular Services with Frederick Health.

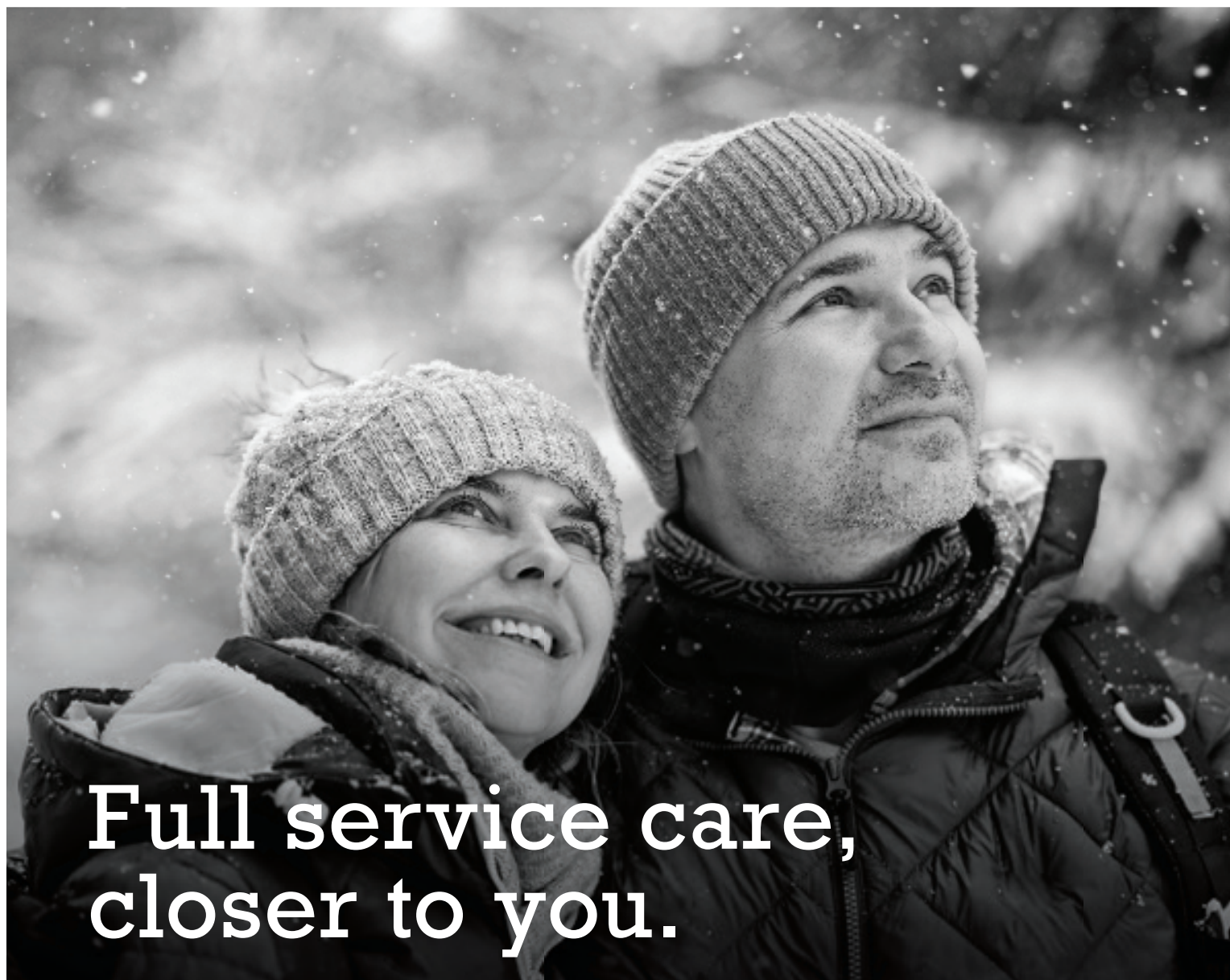
Deely oversees the Cardiovascular Services team. As heart attacks and heart disease are still the number one cause of death in Americans, Deely and her team work closely with the ICU. The unit above the ICU is the Cardiac Cath Lab, which handles those in need of heart attack or cardiac services. Following that work, and if needed, they can be easily moved to the ICU. Deely had nothing but positive things to say regarding the Frederick Health critical care team and the work they perform each day.

"Our amazing and expert team works every day to help treat you when it matters the most. When a patient requires critical care, they really are in the best hands at Frederick Health," added Deely.

The other Beacon Award designations are silver and bronze. Recipients who earn a silver-level award demonstrate an elevated approach to policies, procedures, and processes that include engagement of staff and key stakeholders, evaluation and improvement strategies, and reasonable performance measures when compared to relevant benchmarks. Recipients who earn a bronze-level award are beginning the journey to excellence, which includes developing systematic policies, processes, and procedures, identifying opportunities for staff participation, and recognizing the need to create cycles of evaluation and improvement.

Frederick Health has been recognized by the AACN several times over the last few years with a silver designation, but this marks the first time the healthcare system has earned a gold-level award.

"This incredible award really is a reflection of the amazing and high-level care the team offers," Jorae added.



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**Frederick
Health**

YOUR COMMUNITY OF CARE

Thurmont Little League seeks volunteers

Claire Doll
MSMU Class of 2024

Why is volunteering so important in small towns like Thurmont and Emmitsburg? How do volunteers impact their surrounding communities? How can you become a volunteer that not only serves your town, but also works with young, excited athletes?

Thurmont Little League seeks to foster the values of character, courage, and loyalty in their teams. Children aged from 4-12 can be selected for Tee Ball, Minor League Division teams, and Little League Division teams based on age. Once selected, the regular season begins in spring, with opening day in early April. By being part of a team, attending practices, and competing in games, young baseball players feel a sense of belonging, learning "life lessons" that are valuable beyond the playing field.

However, Thurmont Little League needs volunteers to continue providing such experiences to its players.

"Lack of volunteerism is suffered in communities," says Blaine Young, Umpire-in-Chief of Thurmont Little League. Young has volunteered at TLL since 20004, and before that, played baseball at TLL from 1977-1983. Young feels strongly about volunteering with TLL, as he continues to support his hometown league and create meaningful experiences for young baseball players. "When the kids see an umpire in uniform stand up and make the calls, they say, 'Wow, we have a real umpire tonight!'" Young adds, noting how the baseball players are not accustomed to having real umpires due to lack of volunteerism.

Thurmont Little League needs volunteers to enhance the experience for children. "We have had to cancel games due to lack of umpires, and there are many times we are not able to open our concession stand due to lack of volunteers to work

it," says Alex Kline, President of Thurmont Little League. Kline has played baseball since he was 4 years old and continued through college. He reminisces on his best experiences and memories from Little League: "My dad, my brother, and I were all involved with Little League growing up, and I want my kids and other kids to have the same experiences I did."

The Board of Directors agrees that volunteers are essential for the Little League. "We seem to have more kids than ever, but fewer people willing to volunteer," says Justus Yocum, Treasurer of TLL for 7 years. "This can lead to less playing time because too many players are on a team... no umpires to cover games, no concessions, etc." Yocum also reflects on his own experience growing up in Thurmont and playing for TLL; his father, Jeff Yocum, along with Terry Folk, would ump all the games and ensure that all children would be able to play. "Seeing the commitment of my dad, Mr. Folk, and other volunteers putting so much time into the program—even some without kids in the program—made me think how we could return the favor," says Yocum. He says the best way to do this is to volunteer.

Why, however, are there less volunteers nowadays? Young says that because of more paid organizations and overall disinterest in volunteering, TLL suffers too. "It makes the cost of all these programs so much higher," says Young, who tries to put as much into the program to promote the kids' growth. Yocum agrees, adding that he feels not only obligated but also overjoyed to give back to the community that has supported him so much. TLL hopes for success reaching out to local businesses for volunteers, but the demand for volunteer positions is always rising and must be addressed.

Thurmont Little League offers several volunteer positions including



Volunteer coaches with their teams at the 2023 Maryland District 2 Tournament of Champions, hosted at Thurmont Little League in June 2023.

umpiring, coaching, working concessions, fundraising, etc. The league also offers one-time volunteer opportunities as well, including field day work, opening ceremonies, fundraising events, parking cars, etc. You do not need to have a child in TLL to volunteer; anyone is welcome and encouraged to sign up. Additionally, no athletic experience is required.

The biggest demand for volunteer positions is for umpires. On the program's website it states, "Thurmont Little League is committed to building and maintaining quality volunteer umpires." Volunteer adult and junior umpires (age 13+) can download an information form on TLL's website and apply.

"The commitment to something more than yourself is what we believe makes a town a community," says Yocum. "I can still remember all my coaches, all the umpires, and most of the people who were board members." One of Yocum's best memories with TLL was only two years ago when coaching his oldest in an

all-star game in Frederick American Little League. As he looked in the stands, he noticed his first Little League coach, Ellis Stevens. "I hadn't seen him in probably fifteen years, and he didn't know anyone on either team, but was just there to watch the game." This small interaction made Yocum's entire day and proved that community is built through Thurmont Little League. Yocum hopes to have an interaction like this in the future and "follow in the same footsteps of all the volunteers that helped make their childhoods great."

So, why volunteer?

On Thurmont Little League website is a countdown—by the time it's March, there will be 36 days until Opening Day. By the time it's spring, young, excited baseball players will dart to the fields, prepared to play their favorite game, their favorite sport. And by the time this begins, TLL will need volunteers. These players will hope for umpires to enforce rules and render decisions, and they will want to build con-

nections with those willing to serve alongside them. By participating in the lives of these passionate children, you might find yourself counting down to Opening Day as well.

If interested in volunteering, or to explore more about Thurmont Little League, please visit their website: www.thurmontlittleleague.com. Volunteer listings appear on the home page, and you can also meet the Board of Directors and learn more about their contributions. Volunteer registration can begin as early as January, and volunteers are required to be background checked every year. Please email Blaine Young at beyoungjr@comcast.net for more information.

"More volunteers will help us provide a better overall experience for the players and families of TLL," says Kline. "As a volunteer for the local Little League, you have the opportunity to impact a child's life in a positive way. Even if one person is impacted, the trickle effect downstream has a tremendous potential."

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HISTORY

The Contralto

Rev. Charles Maloy, C. M.
St. Joseph's Parish,
Emmitsburg, Md.

Chapter 1 Continued from last month

At the rectory the Pastor seemed to be waiting, for as soon as the hack arrived the Stranger was wrapped in welcoming arms, and the driver heard this much:

"Is it you, my boy? I am pleased to death to have you, what was it anyway?"

"I don't know; doctors said brain fever, overwork, every and any old thing in medical history; I would not like to tell you what some people said."

"Don't mind, I know; it doesn't go with me. Take those trunks up to the third floor," this to the driver, "and come down, Harry, and have some supper."

Pad way up the walk, as the hackman reported afterward on the Square, the Stranger halted and said with a laugh, "I say, Governor, why don't your educational institutions influence the town?"

"In what way?"

"I saw a sign on one of your Noah's arks at the depot: 'Free Buss.' Do they supply a kiss with every ride?"

"Hush, my boy, you are not in the city now," and the driver heard no more.

This was about the only authentic information concerning the newcomer that had thus far reached the inhabitants, though serious efforts were made to solve the mystery which enveloped him in the popular mind. From conversations, snatches of which Robert overheard while waiting on table, the inference was drawn that he was a teacher somewhere,

and those who met him on his walks, deeming it neighborly to salute, addressed him as "Professor." The name stuck as long as his destiny was linked with the village. Robert likewise reported sundry tilts between the Stranger and the "gents" from the College who happened to dine at the parsonage, in which, as the boy judged, the "gents" were sadly worsted.

His reserve was a sore trial to the young maidens, for men were decidedly scarce, and a flirtation was one of the few divertissements in their monotonous lives. Their eyes were apparently wasted on the armor of reserve with which he had clothed himself; failure to find out all about him finally giving rise to weird tales the repetition of which only whetted the appetite for the truth.

The first week of his sojourn he took long solitary walks on the mountain roads, ruminating on his exile, his banishment from all that made life worth living, his failure in the ways in which he had chosen to go. Soon, however, he learned the wisdom of Paul Bourget's declaration:

"There are certain corners of nature of a beauty so sweet that it is human, so delicate that it is affectionate, seeming to have been made expressly for the reception of great sorrows, and the enveloping of them in an atmosphere of calm."

The mountains in their colossal stillness, bearing on their backs without a murmur century old oaks and chestnuts, were reflected in him by a feeling of strength which found expression in a straightening of drooping shoulders, and a driving of resolute heels into the earth. Drink-



It's hard to imagine, but at one time, the square in the center of Emmitsburg was surrounded by trees, quiet and peaceful.

ing in unconsciously the vigor of nature that lay round about him, he came out of his "Tower of Ivory" in which the years of study had shut him, and learned that the world possessed something worth knowing which was not acquired from books. Later a beautiful bay saddle horse and a large collie dog arrived and the three became oft-seen figures on the mountain side.

At this several bold attempts were made to wrest his secret from him and horseback riding, revived amongst the young women. No success crowned their efforts, so Miss Lansinger, the church organist, goaded to desperation, declared before the assembly in Burket's store, that she would make his acquaintance within a week or confess herself a hopeless old maid. Mrs. Hopp, the village "Holy Terror," disgusted with the defeat of the younger element, took the burden of discovery heroically upon her aged shoulders. Meeting him, she halted with:

"Good morning, Mister."

"Good morning to you,

Madame," pleasantly. "Be those store teeth?" pointing to his smiling mouth.

"Store teeth," he mused, puzzled, then laughing aloud; "hardly, unless they were purchased in the Almighty's Painless Parlor."

"Well, I didn't know, all the boys and girls hereabouts wear store teeth."

"I cannot remove these," suiting the action to the word and continuing his walk. Mrs. Hopp voted him a little uppish but was sure he would thaw out.

There was one person in the village, to whom the presence of the Stranger was not a mere problem of idle curiosity, but a matter of the utmost seriousness foreboding direst possibilities. Mrs. Mary Neck was the Protagonist of morality in Emmitsburg, self constituted it is true, but zealous beyond measure. From the very first she frowned on the newcomer, exhorting all to beware of him. She had a brother who worked in New York and often had he told her of the ravages wrought by city young men thrown amongst country girls. The fact that this one was vouched for by his residence at the parsonage did not in the least affect her distrust. Every day she trundled her perambulator, carrying her baby daughter Elizabeth, past the rectory keeping solitary and vigilant watch. One count in her indictment was that he had passed

her baby a number of times without deigning to notice it, though she had observed him frequently fondling a fat two-year-old on a neighboring porch.

Such was the attitude of Emmitsburg toward the Professor when Bob Crittendon made announcement to the assembly that he had come to, hence it was small wonder the news passed quickly from mouth to mouth at the morning mail. It was received with varying comment, the younger element favoring Forman's proposition that he be requested to organize a team, and play the juniors at the college, the elders smiling cynically at the futility of the suggestion. While the discussion went on the Stranger rode up to receive his mail from the red-haired youngster, whom excitement had rendered forgetful of duty. As he opened and scanned a letter Bob spoke:

"Say, Professor, we all been talkin' about a baseball team; couldn't you all get one up?"

"It's too late in the season, Bob; wait until next spring."

"That's a long way off, Professor; we all could get a game with the college before cold weather; Doc here is willin' to be manager," pointing to the dentist.

"But would we have time to get sufficient practice?"

"Sure! we all know how to play; we only need a little coachin'!"



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HISTORY



At one time, Emmitsburg was a powerhouse in the local baseball league, with games attracting most of the town residents at the Old Fireman's baseball field - which today hosts the town's Little League fields.

"Very well then," smiling at the boy's earnestness which was reflected in the faces of the younger bystanders, "meet me at the rectory this afternoon at four and bring all the good-sized boys in town."

Bob pirouetted like a dervish as the Professor gathered up his reins and followed by the dog galloped towards the mountains.

That evening Peter Burket sent a long order to a sporting goods house in the city, and delivered a lengthy dissertation on the financial rating of the Stranger, assuring his auditors there was nothing cheap about him. "Why, sirs, do you know what he went and done? Made me add fifteen per cent to the catalogue price as my commission, and when I objected because there was something goin' to be did for the amusement of the village, he

only laughed and insisted. Yes, indeed!"

"Well, well!" exclaimed Uncle Bennett, after a pause during which the news of such astounding generosity sank into the minds of the assembly, "and to think that a baseball fetched him to!"

Chapter 2

During the next two weeks "Fireman's Field" was the busiest portion of Emmitsburg, the center of daily gravitation for young and old, not excluding the females.

The Professor had indeed "come to." He entered heart and soul into the practice, teaching the youngsters to bunt, work double-steals, and squeeze plays, until the onlookers declared there was more in the national game than the most enlightened of them had ever dreamed.

Uncle Bennett was enthusias-

tic, examining the mask, protector, and above all the wood and turning of the bats. The Deacon unable to resist the magnet, confined his participation to the occupying of a seat in a corner of the worm fence that enclosed the field. Peter, leaving the store in charge of his wife, sauntered down to regale the boys with stories of his batting prowess in the good old days when he played left-field on the Bridgeport nine.

His boasting one day led to the laying of a wager by Bob, who had qualified as catcher of the team, that the Professor could strike the Grocer out. The trial was on after much good natured chaffing amongst the spectators, and Crittendon dressed in mask, protector and mitt, stood almost over the plate.

"Look out I don't hit you, kid!" exclaimed Peter as he swung the bat. "Hit away," came back the

red-haired warrior. "Don't stand so close," yelled several of the on-lookers.

"I know what I'm adoin'," said Bob as he stooped over holding two fingers of his right hand on the palm of the big glove.

The Professor wound up, the ball shot straight for Peter's head, that worthy stepping back as it curved gracefully out landing squarely in Bob's mitt. "Strike one," shouted Forman, who had volunteered as umpire. The batter looked sheepish while the crowd laughed. Crittendon was again leaning over, this time his index finger jammed into the mitt; again the sphere was thrown, Peter aiming a vicious blow, only to hear the wind as the ball passed with speed between his hands and face. "Strike two," roared the Dentist doubling up with laughter. Peter gritted his teeth while Bob sank down on his knees and waited. Now the Professor assumed the contortions of an acrobat, the ball leaving his hand floated like a toy balloon on a summer breeze about a foot above the batter's head. He made one more drive as it slowly sank, but it snuggled in Crittendon's mitt, just behind the plate. There was a burst of applause from the crowd, while the Grocer walked to the pitcher, shook hands, then took his place amongst the onlookers, offering to bet five dollars that no man in the county could hit even a foul, with the Professor "serving 'em."

The Rector heartily approved of the younger man's athletic interests, even arguing when the latter sowed signs of retreating within his shell, which happened at times in their conversations. He was not sanguine in the matter of a game with the college boys, However. "You have a lot to learn about affairs here," he said one day at lunch.

"To what do you refer, Governor?"

"To the attitude of the institutions towards the people."

"Perhaps I have been learning something. I know that they hold the people much in the same light as our successful 'Captains of Industry' do their employees, a sort of rudum pecus socially, and a necessary evil economically."

"A common herd," translated the Parson, "with-out the protecting guidance of organization or leadership. Did anyone attempt to teach these people that they have rights other than to work for the merest pittance, to join the bucket-brigade to the kitchen doors of their taskmasters, he would bring upon himself the everlasting enmity of both institutions. Father Henry, my predecessor, tried it, and is now on the foreign mission. I fear if you play the game, and particularly if you chance to win you will make things miserable for yourself and the poor fellows who depend on them."

continued next month

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100 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

March 7

Leap Year Adds Extra Day's Pay

County residents on Friday enjoyed an extra 24 hours of life, a gift which is made them once every four years. Falling on a weekday, February 29th adds an extra day's pay to the envelope of those who work in the factories and industries of this county. Stores did an extra day's business for the year. On the other hand, three extra meals were prepared and served, requiring an expense on the part of the consumer, which he does not have in ordinary years of 365 days.

The extra day is not a free gift on the part of the almanac makers. In allowing us an additional 24 hours every four years they are only paying back the usury, so to speak, which they withhold in ordinary years. Our calendar is based on the solar year, or time it takes for the Earth to revolve about the sun, which is 365 days, five hours and approximately 49 minutes. The extra hours and minutes accumulate and are handed out in the shape of this extra day added to the month of February each fourth year.

The term 'leap' in connection with the year, and day, is derived from the fact that days following February 29 'leap' over a day more than a common year. Thus, in common years, if March 1 is on a Saturday, it will 'leap over' Saturday and fall on Sunday.

Celebrates Leap Year Birthday

On February 29th a very enjoyable evening was spent by many at the home of William Faisal, on the occasion of his wife's 18th official birthday - having been born on leap day in 1852, by all other measures, she is 72 years young. A number of handsome presents were given by her children and grandchildren. After listening to some excellent music and playing the various games of the season, all were invited to the dining room, where the table was found loaded with a bountiful supply of good things; consisting of chicken soup, the various salads, fruit, pickles, cake and ice cream. At a late hour, all said good night,

wishing the young 'aged' lady more 'official' birthdays

Union Bridge Electric Company

A case of considerable interest was heard by the Public Service Commission on February 25. We give the statement of the Commission because of the general interest involved, and because of its unusual character.

"The petition filed in this case asked that the Union Bridge Electric Manufacturing Co. be required to furnish electric service to the property of Charles Shriner, just outside the limits of Taneytown, this case is unique and its facts and the smallness of the amount involved.

Taneytown is lighted and electrically serviced by the Union Bridge Electric Manufacturing Co., which secures the current which it distributes, from the Potomac Edison Co.. In the year 1919 the Company expanded its lines from Union Bridge to Taneytown, and shortly after the insurgence of the new service in Taneytown proper, certain property owners of unimproved property on Baltimore Ave. outside the town limits sought to have the Company run a line and furnish a transformer for servicing the houses and other buildings on Baltimore Ave. in the suburbs of Taneytown.

The Company declined, stating that the cost of the line was prohibitive and that the business would not be sufficiently remunerated. The citizens on Baltimore Ave. called a meeting to which all residents of that section were invited. As a result of the negotiations between the Baltimore Ave. residents, who organized under the name of East End Improvement Association, and the electric company, a plan was finally agreed upon for the lighting of Baltimore Ave. for the distance of about half a mile beyond the town limits and the furnishing of electricity to such persons as cared to become customers.

In order that the revenue might be sufficient to justify the undertaking, members of the Association dug the holes and furnished and erected a number of polls for street lighting, and agreed to pay annually \$285 for



10 lights along the highway in consideration of which the Company agreed to serve the houses of such members of the Association who desired electricity at the same rate as the Company charges residents in Taneytown.

Last Education Meeting For Year

The last education meeting for the Fairfield High School school year will be held next Friday. Teachers of Hamiltonban, Highland, Liberty and Freedom Townships and the Fairfield Borough will discuss the teaching of geography. The discussion will be opened by a demonstration on the conduct of a class in geography. Dr. Frank Kramer, of Gettysburg College, will be the principal speaker at the evening session of the conference. An invitation to attend has been extended to the general public.

Three Men In A Wreck Pass Through

Three men, who refused to give their names, attracted considerable attention in the Emmitsburg's Square when they arrived on the Taneytown bus. From their general appearance it was apparent that they had been in an accident, for one had his head and the other had his chin in a bandage.

One of the trio said they were just driving around the country Thursday night when their machine skidded from the Emmitsburg-Taneytown Road and struck the covered one-way bridge on that road. All three men were thrown out of the car, one of them landing in the creek, 25 feet from where

the car hit. The machine is a total wreck, one of the men said.

They were picked up by a passing motorist and taken to Taneytown where they receive medical attention. 17 stitches were necessary to close the cut on the chin of one of the men and 13 stitches were needed to close the cut on the forehead. The man whose head was cut also seem to be suffering from an injury to his back for he wasn't able to stand and had to be supported by his two companions when walking.

March 14

Worst Blizzard In 15 Years

After being visited by a sever storms which struck this section on Monday night and Tuesday morning, Frederick and Adams County are slowly recovering from the effects of its fury, and power and telephone service was being restored gradually. Permanent repairs will not, however, be affected for days, if not weeks.

The blizzard, which reached the proportion of a cyclone, swept over the area on Monday night and increased in intensity during the hours which followed. Towards morning when it abated somewhat and the damage was ascertained it was seen at the telephone, telegraph, & power lines have been severely damaged by the force of nature.

Huge telephone poles were snapped in half like toothpicks. Many of them were raised completely out of the ground and buried under snow across the road. Arms and wires went hurling through the air and landed a nearby field or along the road. Wires snapped as it was no stronger than apiece of weak string and ends today dangle in mid air or are covered up under the snow along the highway.

When wire service will be resorted is in question. In many areas, entire new lines will be necessary, as very little of the wire can be used again, because of the number of brakes and poles to be replaced. Other poles, still standing, will have to be reset.

Nearly three quarters of a million dollars is the estimated total for repairing the telephone poles, cable and wires destroyed by the devastating storm according to the Chesapeake & Potomac Telephone Co.

Every available repairman in the state has been placed in service, and in addition, repairmen have been brought in from other states, making a total of about 10,000 men working to repair the lines. These

men have been working day and night in order that service may be restored as rapidly as possible.

A number of automobiles are reported to have been stranded along the roads and persons in these cars were forced to abandon them, several machines were almost covered with snow.

County roads in the vicinity of Foxville, Woodsboro, Sabillasville, Emmitsburg, Deerfield, Thurmont and Fairfield are reported to still be closed with snowdrifts. State road crews dispatched from Frederick have only been able to open the Emmitsburg Pike as far as Thurmont.

In many homes, lamps and lanterns are being used for lighting purposes; all electric motors are also out of commission. The average snowfall was 12 to 13 inches, but the drifting was limited due to the heavy wet character of the snow.

While Tuesday's snow and wind storm, is unusually severe for March, local records show that at least one storm in a past March had gone at one better, that being the blizzard of 1888, almost 36 years ago to the day, was of three days duration, beginning March 12th and not ending until the 14th.

While there was a heavy snowfall, it was mostly a windstorm as was this past one. The wind, according to the record books, blew incessantly for three days and three nights, toppling over trees. The actual damage done in the storm of '88, however, was not so great as during the late storm, for at that time they were but few telephone polls to be blown over and even fewer telephones to be put out of commission. Also, there were no automobiles to suffer mishaps, nor plants having to shut down for lack of electric current.


In reviewing his weather records, Mr. Quinn, our local weather sharp, grew reflective and said that: "winters of today cannot compare with those of his boyhood". He said that: "the winters today are, in reality, about six weeks in duration, beginning about February 1st and continuing until about the middle of March."

"When I was a boy," he continue, "when we all went out to gather chestnuts on Thanksgiving day, we thought something would happen if there wasn't snow on the ground and we didn't know what it was like to miss a white Christmas."

He added that they didn't need any ice machines in those days, because they had plenty of ice every winter. "Ice, from 8 to 12 inches thick in the creeks, was of the finest


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100 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

possible quality and that there was a lot of slaying, and skating all winter.” He added that, “where is the local creeks seldom freezes over these days, at that time boys and girls could be seen at any time of the winter skating on the creeks. The water was deeper in the creek then.”

Pen-Mar Hotel Proposal

A new hotel is reported to be planned for Pen-Mar, on the location of the former Blue Mountain House, which was destroyed by fire in 1913. Plans are said to be in process of completion providing for about 2000 rooms, the building is expected to cost \$500,000. The project has been under consideration for several years, the chief drawback being the high cost of building. It is pretty confidently stated that the building will be erected this year and be ready for the season of 1925.

The property includes about 400 acres of land adjoining PenMar Park. Mount Quiraok, with its observation tower, 2,500 feet above the sea, is also included in the track.

The Blue Mountain House was burned to the ground August 5, 1913. 202 guest and 125 employees in the building escaped, a majority in their nightclothes. Since the fire a number of plans have been formed to replace the hotel with a modern structure, but none of these were carried out. A corporation for the building of the proposed hotel and the operation of the property will be formed in the near future, it is said.

Annan-Horner Not Guilty

Edgar Annan and Annan Horner, members of the bankrupt Emmitsburg banking firm of Annan-Horner & Co., charged with embezzlement, were found not guilty add a trial in Frederick. The defense prove that a number of creditors have been paid in full, all the amount owed, several however, including Dr. Jamison, and Edward Zimmerman, had not been paid, because they owed the estate. It was shown that money was on deposit sufficient to pay all claims.

Last September Horner was acquitted on a charge of embezzlement, growing out of the bank's failure. Four other charges stood against them. After the joint acquittal, attorneys for the accused entered a plea of not guilty on the three

remaining charges. The pleas were accepted by the State's Attorney. The failure of the bank involved 400 to 500 depositors.

Adventurous End to Honeymoon

Mr. and Mrs. Roy Baumgardner returned home last Wednesday evening, and had quite an experience until they got to the journey's end. They were met at the Keymar train station by Joseph Clabaugh in his automobile, so they went on their way rejoicing, until they got as far as T. R. Angeli's, where Clabaugh's Henry skidded into the side drain. Through the kindness of Mr. Angeli, with his pair of mules, they were towed to the road again. They went on until they came to the mud road, when the Henry refused to go, so the called on Maurice Hahn, who came to the rescue with his pair of mules and towed them to the bride's home. Mr. and Mrs. Baumgardner will never forget the return of their wedding trip, as they had to be rescued by faithful horses and mules to get them home. We wish them a happy and prosperous life.

Overcome By Fumes

Rev. Leatherman of Thurmont, came near being asphyxiated by fumes from his automobile in his garage as he was preparing to meet a friend at the train depot. Leatherman had called to his wife to help him put on the chains and she arrived in time to see him fall over. He was carried into the house and if physician summoned. He no doubt owes his life to the promptness of his wife in responding to his call as any dutiful women should.

Postmaster Examinations

On April 3, examinations will be held by the Civil Service Commission for the postmasters at Emmitsburg. The salary is \$2,300 and the vacancies will open on June 4.

March 21

New Snow Storm Belies Spring

Heavy snow, following within a few hours after the advent of spring at 4:20 on Thursday afternoon, buried the County to nearly a foot. While the snow was not accompanied by

the heavy wind that marked the blizzard on Tuesday last week, it was the same damp variety, which clung to trees and wires in a heavy coating. It was due to the lack of wind and sleet, that preventive damage to the wire services.

By noon snow have been following continuously for 12 hours, and although it gave some sine of letting up by then, the promise was not consummated. Little progress has been made by employees in the towns in clearing the precipitation from street crossings, although most payments in towns were either completely shoveled or had paths made for pedestrians. Where pavements were not shoveled pedestrians trampled down paths.

Gumboots and galoshes were footwear for the day, although as the pavements began to be cleaned off the only places these articles of footwear were really necessary where at street crossings. In many places the slush at street corners was over the curb and requires skillful maneuvering to navigate these hazards.

The Western Union Telegraphs Co. reported that services was normal, the temporary lines, erected as a result of last week's storm, carried the burden of the present precipitation apparently without effort. Messages are being sent in all directions and received from all points.

Patterson Brothers Annual Horse Sale

Patterson Brothers will hold their annual horse sale at their stables next Friday. 40 horses and colts, 30 of those in the range from 3 to 8 years, will be sold. 15 head of mares, weighting from 1,2000 to 1,400 pounds, single line leaders, will also be sold. These mares were selected for farmers especially by the Patterson brothers. Those horses are all acclimated, none of them are shipped horses, and every horse must be as represented on the day of sale or money will be refunded. The balance of the horses are commission horses. All commission sales are on the recommendation of the owners. Rates charge for selling commission horses at the sale will be two dollars for offering horses and all selling over \$40, 5% will be charged.

Petition for Public Road in Creagerstown

The citizens of Creagerstown, will petition the County Commissioners for the opening of a public road at least 30 feet wide, in the Creagerstown District, beginning at or near the point where the lane or road leading from the building now occupied by Charles Kolb and owned by Isaac Hackney where it intersects the public road leading from Creagerstown to Rocky Ridge and running hence in a westerly direction through the lands of Isaac Hankey, Frank Graber, Louis Rockensmith, connecting with the old Woodsboro and Creagerstown Pike at a point a short distance north of the lane used as an outlet from the John Albert farm.

March 28

Arbor Day

Arbor Day has been observed in Maryland for tree planting since 1884. Lumber in the State is now being cut three times as fast as it is being grown, and we are using it four times as fast as we are cutting it. This means that we must import the bulk of our timber from other states. But if our waste spaces were utilized this would not be necessary. There are thousands of acres of land in the county now growing nothing, which should be growing timber. The watersheds of many towns should be planted, but if no more important places can be found, at least plant a tree on the street, or highway, school or home ground, for the beauty and shaded it affords. Be "Tree Growers" as well as "Tree Users."

Those who wish special information about Arbor Day and its observations may secure the particularities from the State Department of Forestry, as to suitable exercises for the occasion, trees adapted for planting, how they should be planted, where to plant them and their proper care. The state does not furnish trees free, but will give the names and addresses of nurseries from which they can be purchased.

First Recital At Fairfield Glee Club

Appearing before a crowded house in the Old Fellows Hall, Fairfield,

the Fairfield Girls' Glee Club had its premiere recital, scoring a big hit. The concert was given for the benefit of the Fairfield Fire Company and approximately \$100 was cleared.

The musical numbers, which were under the direction of Mrs. Rudolph Rosenstengel, were capably given and will received. Several readings by Miss Trevor Weikert also received abundant applause. After the concert, the wives of the members of the Fairfield Fire Company served refreshments to the glee club.

Couple Married For 50 Years

Surrounded by all their children, three grandchildren, and many friends, Mr. and Mrs. James Cunningham celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at their home in Fairfield. It was a gala occasion and none had a better time than Mr. and Mrs. Cunningham, who enjoyed themselves to the utmost.

50 years ago James Cunningham married Elizabeth Finley Blythe at the old Blythe homestead, still standing on Carroll's Track, near Fairfield. The couple, accompanied by other members of the wedding party, in three buggies, drove across the South Mountain to Mercersburg, where a reception was held in honor of the bride and groom. The trip to Mercersburg required an entire day.

For many years, Mr. Cunningham was a storekeeper in Fairfield, but for the last 12 years he has been connected with the Fairfield Bank, at which institution he is now assistant cashier, all though until recently, he was the cashier.

Child Scalded Buried Today

Frances Lemmon, the youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lemmon of Taneytown, was fatally scalded Monday around 7 o'clock, when the child backed against a bucket of hot water and toppled into the pale. The little girl who was three years, nine months and 14 days of age. She was so severely scalded that she died about six hours later. Besides her father and mother she is survived by five sisters and three brothers.

To read other articles related to 100 Years Ago this Month, visit the History section of Emmitsburg.net.

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PAULA SOCKS

FREDERICK COUNTY HISTORY

From John Ashbury's... And All Our Yesterdays: A Chronicle of Frederick County

March 7

Seldom is a simple school teacher as revered as was Esther Grinage. She devoted her life to the education of children and was honored in 1937 by friends Elizabeth Browne and Edna Dykes when they named the first kindergarten for African-American children after her.

For more than 35 years she was an elementary teacher and at the time of her death on March 7, 1947, at age 54, was teaching at the Lincoln School on Madison Street.

She was also the widow of William Grinage, who painted the portrait of Francis Scott Key, commissioned by The Kiwanis Club of Frederick, which hung in the lobby of The Francis Scott Key Hotel for many years and is now on permanent loan to Heritage Frederick, formerly known as The Historical Society of Frederick County. Mr. Grinage died on February 25, 1925.

Mrs. Grinage, who died at her home at 22 West All Saints Street, was a member of Asbury Methodist Episcopal Church and served as its Sunday School superintendent. She was survived by three sisters, Mary Wise and Mrs. Delia Saunders, of Frederick, and Mrs. Myrtle Supples, of Pittsburgh. Two nephews,

William Ross and Franklin Saunders, also survived.

Following services at her church, she was buried in Fairview Cemetery. Funeral directors M. R. Etchison, which displays paintings by Mrs. Grinage's husband, was in charge of arrangements.

March 14

Little did the residents in Emmitsburg know back in 1809 that within their midst was residing the person who would become America's first native-born saint of The Roman Catholic Church.

Elizabeth Seton was born in New York City on August 28, 1774, just two short years before The American Revolution. She was the second daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Richard Bayley.

Early in her life hardship struck for the first time when her mother died. Dr. Bayley remarried, and Betty's stepmother was much less than a fair replacement. She actually grew up with numerous aunts and uncles, despite her great love for her father.

On January 22, 1794, she married William Seton, the son of a well-known and prosperous merchant. In short order there were five children - Anna Marie, William, Richard, Catherine Joseph and Rebecca - all born within eight years of the marriage.

It became apparent in the months

that followed Rebecca's birth in August 1802 that Mr. Seton was not well. He had kept in touch with a business associate of his father in Italy - Filippo and Antonio Filicchi in Leghorn, so a working trip was planned.

All during these trying time, from the death of her father in 1798 to 1803 when they sailed for Italy, Betty's Episcopal faith ever increased, especially after the Reverend John Henry Hobart was appointed rector of Trinity Church, where all five children had been baptized.

On October 2, 1803, William and Betty Seton, with daughter Anna Marie, left New York for Leghorn. Mr. Seton health seemed to improve on the voyage. But upon arrival the family was quarantined because yellow fever had been reported in America. When they were released on December 19, Mr. Seton had to be carried to a carriage for the trip to the Filicchis. Just eight days later he died.

This particular tragedy set the final stage for Betty's conversion to Catholicism. While coping with her grief, Betty visited many cathedrals and was struck by the obvious faith of those she witnessed praying in them.

Perhaps the most profound influence on her was the Filicchis themselves. They provided her with a strength she had not realized before. Their reliance on their beliefs in Jesus as the Savior exerted a subtle but powerful spiritual pressure on her.

For weeks she daily battled religious conflict within her soul. She was devoted to her Episcopal faith, but the peace she observed in the Filicchis drove her to internal questions.

Her first scheduled voyage home in January was delayed. When it came time in February for the ship to leave, both Betty and Anna were ill with yellow fever. So not until April 8, 1804, did they depart Leghorn. Antonio Filicchi went with them to conduct some business in New York.

During the two-month voyage, Antonio and Betty spent many hours discussing their religious faiths. Over the next several months, family and friends became distant each time she mentioned she was thinking of converting to Catholicism. But she was as determined as was the young America to retain her

independence.

And so it was on March 14, 1805, that Seton took the first step that would eventually lead to her canonization. In the presence of Antonio Filicchi and Father Mathew O'Brien, in St. Peter's Church in New York City, she was accepted into the Roman Catholic Church.

March 21

One of Frederick's greatest contribution to the outside world was made by Jacob Byerly, who perfected the use of daguerreotypes in recording the history of his day.

Byerly was born on February 5, 1807, in Newville, Pennsylvania, the son of Henry and Rebecca Birely.

Notice that at some point Jacob changed the spelling of the last name. According to his great-granddaughter, Mrs. Howard Kelly, Byerly was a school teacher in the early part of his adulthood, and that probably had some effect on the spelling change.

In 1839 a Frenchman by the name of Louis Mande Daguerre invented his box for taking pictures, a crude camera created by modifying a portable camera obscura, a device artist had long used as an aide to their work. Daguerreotypes is a photographic process using silver-coated copper plates treated with iodine vapor.

In 1842, having become fascinated by this new instrument, Byerly opened a photographic studio at 27-29 North Market Street. For nearly 100 years, Byerly, his son, Davis Byerly, and his grandson, Charles Byerly, operated the business from the same location.

The work of Jacob Byerly was apparently the best of its kind in the photographic business. Because of a flood in New York in 1972, very few of his daguerreotypes remain.

Arnold Crane, who lectured nationally on the history of photography, and George Rinhart, borrowed the family's collection of Jacob Byerly's work to restore them. A year later, John Byerly wrote a letter to Rinhart asking about the restoration. The reply he received indicated that everything Crane and Rinhart had borrowed had been ruined not very long after they took the photos to New York by a flood.

John Byerly filed a suit against Crane

and Rinhart for the return of the materials "in any condition whatever," but had to settle out of court for \$2,500. One daguerreotype that was not destroyed is of Jacob Byerly himself. It shows him looking into the viewing screen of his camera, a plain box with a lens.

Byerly's personal life is somewhat of a mystery, as is that of his death. Various sources list his death date as March 31, 1883, March 20, 1883, and March 29, 1883. However, The Frederick Examiner of Wednesday, March 28, 1883, carried the following notice: "Death of Jacob Byerly. This gentleman died at his residence, West Second Street, this city, on Wednesday afternoon last, in the 77th year of his age."

March 28

With all the interest in the historical figures who make up a significant portion of Frederick County's illustrious history, it is almost inconceivable that one man who made a distinguished mark on our nation's history would be little known today.

But such is the fate that has befallen James Cooper. He was born in Frederick County in 1810 and received a rudimentary education in local schools. He attended Mount Saint Mary's for a time, but he graduated from Washington College in Pennsylvania.

He then studied law under the famous Thaddeus Stevens and became involved in Pennsylvania politics. In 1838 he was elected a congressman and served two terms. After a five-year absence from political wars, he was elected a U.S. senator and served one full term, after which he retired.

Cooper then formed a law partnership with Humphrey Marshall in Washington, but when The Civil War erupted, and Marshall sided with the Confederacy, he renounced that alliance and offered his services to the federal government in any capacity.

In 1860, he had returned to Frederick and purchased the home of Frederick A. Schley on Court Street. A year later when the Brengle Home Guard was formed, Cooper was named a second lieutenant. That was on April 24.

By May 17, just three short weeks later, Abraham Lincoln commissioned him a brigadier general and ordered him to take the responsibility of forming all the Maryland volunteer units into a regiment.

He was involved in some early battles of the war in Virginia, but in the winter of 1862-1863 he was assigned to Camp Chase near Columbus, Ohio. It was there that he contracted pneumonia and died on March 28, 1863.

His body was returned to Frederick, and after a 24-hour delay because of inclement weather, he was buried on April 1 at Mt. Olivet Cemetery with full military honors.

A final footnote to his life was made by an unknown sympathizer of the southern cause who waved a Confederate flag at the passing funeral procession from the South Market Street home of A. L. Eader. Newspaper accounts indicated that Eader was not at home at the time of the incident and gladly took the oath of allegiance when asked. The culprit was never identified.

To read past editions of Frederick County History, visit the History section of Emmitsburg.net.



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TANEYTOWN HISTORY

Exploring the historic railways of Taneytown

David Buie

On November 18, 1932, Ellen Crapster (1898-1967), mother of Taneytown historian Basil Crapster, reached out to the Pennsylvania Railroad in Philadelphia to inquire about the history of the railroad line that ran through Taneytown. Below is the response she received from G.B. Hurley, a Special Assistant at the railroad.

Dear Madam:

General W. W. Atterbury, President of our Company, has requested me to answer your letter of November 18, relative to the railroad line operated by the Pennsylvania Railroad through Taneytown, Md. This, as you know, is part of the line of the York, Hanover and Frederick Railway Company, which is one of the leased lines of the Pennsylvania Railroad System. I enclose a memorandum covering its history, and trust it will give you the information you desire.

Kindly note certain peculiarities in the names of the various companies. The original company was known as the "Frederick and Pennsylvania line Rail Road Company". Kindly observe that in this name the word "line" begins with a small letter instead of a capital, and that "Rail Road" is two words. Later, please observe the distinction between the "York, Hanover and Frederick Railroad Company" and the York, Hanover and Frederick Railway Company".

Very truly yours,
G. B Hurley
Special Assistant

Mr. Hurley mentions General W. W. Atterbury in the letter, referencing William Wallace Atterbury (1866 - 1935). William Wallace Atterbury was a brigadier general in the United States Army during World War I. Before his military career, Atterbury joined the Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR) in 1886, steadily climbing the ranks until he became its tenth president from 1925 to 1935.

During the war, Atterbury played a pivotal role as director-general of transportation in France, where he orchestrated the reorganization of railroad operations to facilitate the efficient

movement of troops and supplies for the American Expeditionary Forces. Recognized for his contributions, he earned the moniker "The Railroad General."

Post-war, Atterbury spearheaded the Pennsylvania Railroad's ambitious \$250 million electrification project along its main line between New York City and Washington, D.C. He also played a vital role in developing the company's inaugural M1-class steam locomotive.

Atterbury's military service garnered accolades, including the U.S. Army's Distinguished Service Medal and honors from France, England, Serbia, and Romania. Additionally, he received honorary degrees from prestigious institutions such as Yale, the University of Pennsylvania, Villanova University, and Temple University.

In remembrance of his legacy, Camp Atterbury, a former U.S. Army training camp located west of Edinburg, Indiana, and Atterbury Army Airfield (later known as Bakalar Air Force Base and now the Columbus, Indiana, municipal airport) was named after him.

Mr. Hurley's response to Ms. Crapster continued in line with the contents referenced as the memorandum within the response letter.

The railroad from the Pennsylvania-Maryland state line near Kingsdale, Pa., to Frederick, Md., about 28 miles in length, was constructed by the "Frederick and Pennsylvania line Rail Road Company", a predecessor of the "York, Hanover and Frederick Railway Company." The Company was incorporated under a Special Act of the Legislature of Maryland of March 19, 1867. Construction was commenced about August, 1869, and completed in November, 1872.

The property, rights and franchises of the "Frederick and Pennsylvania line Rail Road Company" were sold in 1897, under court proceedings, to the "Frederick and Northern Railroad Company", organized under the General Laws of Maryland. Later in the same year, this company was consolidated with the "Hanover and York Railroad Company" to form the "York, Hanover and Frederick Railroad Company." The "Hanover and York Railroad Company" had in oper-

ation a line extending from a connection with the "Frederick and Northern Railroad", at Kingsdale, to York, Pa., a distance of about 28 miles.

The "York, Hanover and Frederick Railroad Company" continued in existence until 1914, when it was consolidated with the "Central Railroad of Maryland" to form the present-day "York, Hanover and Frederick Railway Company." The "Central Railroad of Maryland" commenced in October, 1913, construction of the line from Keymar to Union Bridge, Md., which was completed by the present-day Company in August, 1914.

Since January 1st, 1875, the line passing through Taneytown has been continuously operated by the Pennsylvania Railroad or one of its affiliated Companies under various operating arrangements, including the present lease. (Note: This ends the information provided by Mr. Hurley.)

In 1980, operations commenced along a section of the former Pennsylvania Railroad's Frederick Secondary line, extending from Taneytown to Walkersville, Maryland. In 1983, the company acquired the former Western Maryland Railway line from Emory Grove to Highfield from Chessie System and CSXT.

Over the years, the railroad saw significant expansion, from handling 2000 freight cars annually in the 1980s to managing 18,000 freight cars by 20006. By 20006, it operated a fleet of ten locomotives, including three GP9 low hoods and seven GP38-3, all produced by Electro-Motive Diesel (EMD). Additionally, its rolling stock comprised 410 freight cars, either owned or leased. Towards the end of 1993, the company proposed revitalizing the abandoned stretch of the Frederick Secondary from Taneytown to York, Pennsylvania, which had been dormant for the past decade. This endeavor aimed to broaden the company's market presence in Pennsylvania while establishing a link to Conrail's rail network.



Image of the Taneytown Train Station circa the early 1900s.

However, the plan faced obstacles due to excessively high demands from landowners along the intended rail reconstruction path, making construction impractical.

Presently, the railway operates from Highfield, Maryland (west) to Glyndon, Maryland (east), with a two-mile loop through Franklin County, Pennsyl-

vania, and from Woodsboro, Maryland (south) to Taneytown, Maryland (north). The line terminates north of the Ferrellgas propane dealer near Angell Road.

To read past editions of Taneytown History, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.



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COOKING

The incredible egg

Sonya Verlaque

My best friend from college just got chicks. She lives in Georgia and set up a ring camera in her home so I can watch them from Maryland. She also hates to cook and her daughter does not like eggs, so this article is dedicated to the new chickies: Dottie, Elizabeth, Matilda, Stella and Delilah and the hope for bountiful eggs in the spring. And hopefully her daughter will learn to love eggs someday.

Frittata Recipe

This easy Frittata Recipe is the perfect quick and healthy meal. It can be made vegetarian or, like this version with bacon.

Ingredients

4 slices bacon or 2 TBS olive oil for vegetarian version
 ½ cup onion diced
 1 tsp minced garlic
 4 cups vegetables of choice bell peppers, broccoli, zucchini, etc.
 10 eggs
 ¼ cup milk
 ½ tsp sea salt
 ¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper
 ¼ tsp paprika
 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese

Instructions : Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. In a large bowl, whisk together eggs and then add milk, sea salt, pepper, paprika and whisk until combined. Add cheese and stir to combine and then set aside. In a 10" cast iron skillet over medium heat, cook bacon, onion and garlic until

bacon just begins to brown. Add vegetables, cover and cook until vegetables are soft and bacon is browned, stirring occasionally. Turn heat down to medium, add egg mixture, and quickly stir it into the bacon/vegetables in the skillet until everything is evenly distributed. Cook on medium heat for about 4-5 minutes, until the edges are set. Transfer the frittata to the preheated oven. Bake for 7-10 minutes or until the top is lightly browned and set. Remove from oven, let cool for 10 minutes, serve. The frittata will be very puffy in the oven, but then deflates and is firm when it cools.

Eggs in Purgatory

Eggs in purgatory is a dish made up of eggs poached in tomato sauce. It only takes 20 minutes to make, and can be eaten any time. Get some crusty bread to go with it.

Ingredients

2 tbs extra virgin olive oil
 3 tbs chopped white onion cut into small pieces
 2 garlic cloves minced
 1 14 oz can peeled plum tomatoes
 ¼ tps chili flakes
 1 tbs torn basil
 4 eggs
 3 tbs grated parmesan cheese, divided
 salt and pepper to taste

Instructions : In a medium size skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Once the oil is shimmering, add the onion and sauté until soft but not fully cooked, about 1-2 minutes. Add

garlic and chili flakes and continue to sauté until garlic is cooked through, another 1 minute. While onion and garlic are sautéing, pour the tomatoes into a bowl and mash them up with a fork. Once onion and garlic are finished cooking, add canned tomatoes to the skillet. Also rinse out the can of tomatoes, and the bowl where you mashed the tomatoes. Add this tomato water to the sauce (about ½ cup). Season with salt and pepper to taste. Cook the tomato sauce until it has thickened, 10-15 minutes. Add torn basil to sauce and stir. Crack an egg into a small bowl. Form a small well in the sauce and pour the egg into the well. Do this 4 times. Sprinkle the eggs with 1 tbs of the parmesan cheese. Cook the eggs in the tomato sauce, partially covered, until the whites are set, but the yolks still runny, about 5 minutes. Top the eggs with remaining parmesan cheese, additional pepper and basil if desired. Serve with toasted bread and enjoy!

Easy Custard Pie Recipe

This is a creamy custard pie and any milk can be used to make it. It's best for the eggs and milk to be at room temperature, and if you want a richer, creamier pie to use heavy cream or evaporated milk.

Ingredients

1 unbaked pie crust
 1 cup sugar
 6 large eggs room temperature
 2 tps vanilla
 ¼ tps nutmeg
 3 cups whole milk room temperature
 ½ tps nutmeg, garnish

Instructions: Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly spray a 9½-inch pie pan with nonstick spray. Place unbaked pie

A Fave Dining Experience Awaits You

This is your invitation to treat your palate to a special treat. 2000 Monroe, Frederick Community College's (FCC) gourmet restaurant opens February 29. The Hospitality, Culinary and Tourism Institute (HCTI) students will once again showcase their impeccable skills in the three-course dinner service. Reservations are now available and open to the public for dine-in or takeout, from 5 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday evenings (except April 4, April 18, and April 25) through May 9.

As part of a unique course called Restaurant Production and Service, FCC HCTI students participate in the running of the restaurant as a capstone learning experience. Under the guidance of the executive chef and instructors, students will prepare food, as well as serve guests in the dining room, to accentuate a quality dining experience for the community.

The menu theme for spring 2024 is "A Taste of New Orleans." Customers choose from selections including a starter, entrée, dessert, and beverage, for an all-inclusive price between \$40 and \$46. Menu

items include smoked pork loin chop with stone ground cheddar grits, satsuma glazed chicken confit with whipped sweet potatoes, Chesapeake blue catfish with shrimp étouffée and rice, vegetarian jambalaya with grilled eggplant and creole tomato sauce, bananas foster, doberge cake, and more. All proceeds from the restaurant support student learning in the HCTI program and HCTI student scholarships.

"Each semester, I am both honored and delighted to oversee our students as they complete their capstone learning experience," said Elizabeth DeRose, HCTI manager. "Our students are excited to share the skills and passion they have worked so hard to develop, and our community is excited to support and enjoy the results of their culinary training through our program."

Advance reservations are required and only major credit cards are accepted for payment. The restaurant is located in the Monroe Center at 2000 Monroe Avenue in Frederick.

To view the full menu, make a reservation, or learn more about the HCTI visit frederick.augusoft.net

crust in pie pan, pressing dough against the sides of the pie pan. Whisk together sugar, eggs, ¼ tps nutmeg, and vanilla for 2 minutes. Add milk and whisk for another 3 minutes until smooth. Pour mixture into pie shell. Sprinkle the remaining ½ tps nutmeg lightly on top of the custard. Bake for 1 hour and 15 minutes or until set. You can tell when it is done by giving the pie a little jiggle or shake, and if the center only slightly jiggles, then it's

done. Chill and serve with whipped cream or berries, or all on its own.

Eggs En Cocotte

I love baked eggs for lunch, they are creamy and delicious and paired with a toasty piece of bread and a salad with a vinaigrette feels like a very fancy French lunch. This can easily be made for one person, or more. Typically one or two eggs is for each serving

Ingredients

1 tbs softened unsalted butter
 1-2 eggs
 2 tbs heavy cream
 2 tbs cheese (Boursin garlic & herbs cheese, goat cheese, blue cheese, Gruyere all can work)
 bundle of chives thinly sliced to serve
 Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
 crusty bread to serve

Instructions : Preheat your oven to 350 degrees, and bring a kettle to a boil. Take your softened butter, and spread around your ramekins to help with any sticking/and to add more flavor. Crack 1-2 eggs in a ramekin. Finish off with crumbled or shredded cheese of your choice and cream. Place your ramekins in a baking dish/oven safe proof dish that has slightly high sides. Make a bain-marie by pouring boiling water into the baking dish until it reaches halfway up the side of the ramekin. Cover with your ramekin tops or foil. This helps cook the eggs really gently, and it stays really creamy! Bake for 12-15 minutes, until the eggs are your desired doneness. If you want them completely firm, bake for 16-20 minutes. Remove from the oven; season with flakey salt, pepper and top with chopped chives and crusty bread for dipping.

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MOMS' TIME OUT

I've got this

Mary Angel

How many times as a mom do we think, "I've got this"? I have given birth, so I know what to expect. I was a teenager once, so I can handle that. Help the kids with homework, no problem! There are so many opportunities to be confident in your knowledge or experience, and many of those are warranted. Sometimes, however, life can throw you a curve ball.

I have given birth four times and all four were very different. Although I have never gone into labor, there are very few other similarities between the four deliveries. The first was long, and difficult. The second was my largest and easiest, but still long. My third pregnancy was so short, my husband almost left the hospital. After all, the first two took over twelve hours. So, when 2:00 rolled around he said he was going to grab some lunch (which is what the doctor always told him to do about that time).

The difference, when he told the doctor where he was going, she said, "I think I would stick around". My fourth pregnancy was, possibly, my most difficult. It was my longest delivery and most painful, partially because my nurse didn't believe in epidurals and turned mine off! Talk about things you couldn't predict or plan for. Although I did give birth in the same hospital, the labor and

delivery department had been remodeled between each delivery.

My husband and I are very different people, I am an introvert, and he is an extrovert in every sense of the words. He would have people over every night of the week, and I would curl up on the couch while he was doing that. He will talk to every stranger that walks by, while I wait in the car. The good news is that he reassured me that he was your "typical" teenager and would know if our kids were partying or doing drugs or other worrisome activities. Famous last words.

It was because of this reassurance that I kept having children, that and the fact that I loved babies. Then we entered the teenage years. This is when we found out that times had changed. There was so much more than drinking and drugs that we need to look out for in these modern times. Bullying, social media, and depression have topped the list of things to worry about with our teenagers. I know I have beaten this topic to death, but parents beware of social media for your kids.

If I haven't mentioned it, I didn't date in high school, where as my husband was prom king. This gave us diverse experiences when it came to dating and high school social life. So far, all of my kids except my youngest have dated in high school. What I didn't count on was how much my heart for my kids would break when they were hurting. Two were dumped for being "too nice", one

had a long-distance relationship, one was in an abusive relationship (which definitely brought out the mama bear in me), all three were heartbroken more than once. I was not prepared for that. When they were growing up I knew that I hurt for them, but as teenagers it was a more emotional hurt. This mom wants her children to fall in love, get married, and have a family. Every time they get their hearts broken, I know it shapes and molds them, but each time I hope it is the last and they will find a forever love.

Don't even get me started about school. Well, to begin with let's talk about homework. I was an excellent student, so my confidence in helping my kids with school was pretty high. Then I was introduced to Common Core Curriculum. The school boards secret plan to keep kids in public school and make parents feel inadequate and stupid. There are many other changes that proceeded to knock my confidence down a notch or two. Every year my kids were in high school they changed the graduation requirements. What standardized tests count for which graduating class, and which don't? It also turns out that when the administration changes at a school, so do the expectations and rules.

My latest example of thinking I knew what to expect was when my youngest was about to get her wisdom teeth out. My oldest had his out a few years back, so my confidence in this situation was even greater than it was concerning school. She would be a little nervous before, a little loopy after, and very sore for about 2 days, and by Monday she would

be ready for school. Once again, I misjudged the situation, maybe because she was younger than he was, maybe because she is the baby, or maybe it is once again the difference between my sons and daughters.

A few nights before the surgery, she was apprehensive and having trouble going to sleep. She was doing okay the morning of, but when we arrived at the doctor's office she couldn't stop talking. This was all expected, but then it was time to go back for the surgery. She got a little panicky, but went back, got in the seat, and then let them put the oxygen on her nose. The problem came when they said, "Mom, it's time to go to the waiting room." My daughter flipped out! She immediately started crying and begging me not to leave her. By the time I took the 10 steps to the lobby, I was in tears.

Never in my life, as a mother, have I been so heartbroken by the fear of one of my children. The surgery went just as fast as her brother's. When she was in recovery, she was silly and lovey. She kept telling me how much she loved me and how I was her favor-

ite, then she would immediately turn to the nurse in the room and say, "You're great, but she's my mommy". It was priceless.

On the way home she wanted to talk about Disney, but was very coherent, unlike her brother. His drive home involved a lengthy conversation about the J.F.K. assassination. Once home his recovery was a fairly basic textbook recovery. My baby girl ended up with swelling that wouldn't allow her jaw to open less than a half inch, and although the prescription pain medicine didn't relieve any of her pain, it did cause some very miserable side effects. Once she started feeling a little better, she admitted the recovery was still better than the flu or the stomach bug. So at least she could be a positive.

I keep telling myself not to be caught off guard, but then I am surprised all over again. "Expect the unexpected" is easy to say, but not so easy to do. I guess the best I can hope for is to roll with what ever comes along.

To read past editions of *Moms' Time Out*, visit the *Authors* section of Emmitsburg.net.

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FOUR YEARS AT THE MOUNT

This month, we asked our writers to reflect on the importance of local, ethical journalism as informed by Edward R. Murrow.

Freshman

Ethics in writing

Gracie Smith
MSMU Class of 2027

Ethical journalism is something that is treasured. Although, 40 years ago ethical journalism was far more common than it is now. Ethical journalism, according to the Society of Professional Journalism, can be summed up as the free exchange of information that is accurate, fair, and thorough. Reporters and writers have turned to writing about what is liked and favored rather than sharing the truth. They have turned to reporting drama and altering the news to get more people to read their work. As a result of this, the public cannot trust the news for anything. Edward R. Murrow is the perfect example of what it means to be a reporter. He not only models for us the honesty and integrity desired by all those who seek news, but he shows us what it means to have an unshakeable character with beliefs so firm that nothing can change them. In doing so,

Murrow captivates more people by sharing the much-needed truth.

Ethical journalism is essential in today's society where media is corrupt. People struggle every day to obtain news that is factual and accurate. Having to work to receive news that used to be easily provided is pitiful. The importance of keeping the truth alive is a necessity for a society dependent on the voice of the public. Our democracy cannot live off the lies the media feeds us. The truth is priceless, yet reporters still alter it so that they can get more views on their work. I ask, what is this doing to improve society? How can a reporter so easily feed lies to the public? It's immoral. This makes me wonder something deeper; why don't reporters so freely share the truth? What is stopping them? The truth is something that the public will always desire, and the lies that the media feeds us will never be enough to satisfy us until we know the truth.

Not only is the truth something that our society craves, but it is the basis of all our actions. When we hear something new, we act on it. If we are told something false, whether we are aware of it being false or not, we

still act on it. The more we keep reacting to the false information—fake news—the more apart we become as a society. Ethical journalism is crucial so that the right decisions, actions, and people can make a difference. Without the truth, we will never be able to prevent, protect, defend, and decide on the right things to better our towns, cities, states, and nation. Murrow understood this and acted on it when he put the betterment of society ahead of his career. Reporters and writers nationwide need to understand the importance of their jobs and their influence on the people who read and depend on their work.

Contrary to Murrow's grasp of influence, I fear that current reporters and writers who provide information to the public are unaware of how much influence they have not only on the people, but on their opinions. This idea is extremely important, if not the most important in journalism. Murrow was aware of the influence his words had on the public and he chose to provide the people with the truth rather than the lies others told him to write. Reporters are seen as credible sources from the public. By this, I mean that the public automatically depends on the reporters

to tell the truth. The amount of power a reporter has is underestimated. It is imperative that reporters do what is morally good and write the truth since the public already puts their faith in them to do so.

To finish, I wanted to talk about why ethical journalism is important to me as a developing writer. Ever since I was a little girl, I dreamed of being a reporter. I loved the idea of people reading my articles and receiving news from me. So much so, that I even had my own typewriter to practice. When writing my articles, I strive to be as accurate, clear, and fair as possible. The importance of unbiased writing goes hand in hand with truthful writing. The ability to write to inform is my job, not the ability to persuade. Reporters all around are writing for the wrong reasons and for that, I think it necessary for them to recall what it means to be a reporter. The importance of writing and reporting ethically is our job. What kind of reporters would we be if all we wrote were lies? How can I be proud of my work when I know that all of it is fake? Edward Murrow stands as a model to all journalists so that we can remember why we do what we do,

and to remind us of the importance our writing has on communities.

With that being said, it makes me proud that I am not one of the reporters Murrow was so highly against. It makes me appreciate the reporters who do tell the truth. They are bettering their communities whether they realize it or not. They are influencing their readers whether they realize it or not. The impact they have on their communities and the people who read their work is something that they will never understand since they cannot physically see it. However, we know it's there. Ethical reporters rest easy knowing that their writings are true, thorough, and fair. Ethical reporters are free from the guilt that other reporters may or may not feel when they write their articles of lies. Taking the opportunity to appreciate those who report the truth when faced with terrible consequences are the heroes of our communities. We never know what kind of backlash they may or may not receive for reporting the truth—as truth is the most powerful weapon. Ethical reporters are the pillars of our future, just as Edward Murrow said they would be.

To read other articles by Gracie Smith, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.

Sophomore

The crucial need for ethical journalism

Devin Owen
Mount St. Mary's Class of 2026

Whenever I go home and visit family, I always make a point to stop and see my grandmother. It has

become a sort of habit for us to sit in the living room and talk about everything under the sun. Her favorite topic, though, is what she's reading in the news articles on her phone. It's common for her to complain that journalists are writing about all of the bad things that are happening in the world, and she always asks, "Why can't they just talk about the good things?" It's simple: if we only focus on the good, we're creating a blindness to the bad around us, and while that

might be something that makes us feel better, it does us no good in the long run. Edward R. Murrow—every journalist's idol—was an American broadcast journalist and war correspondent who emphasized and advocated for the importance of revealing the facts and following a path of truthfulness in journalism. Yes, it might cause uneasiness, discomfort, and many other negative feelings, but being truthful in our articulation of facts and events is crucial to journalism as a whole. What good would it do us to sugar coat everything?

To start, let me brief you on a crucial definition: ethical journalism is the practice of reporting news and information in a manner that is truthful, accurate, fair, and respects the dignity, privacy, and rights of individuals. Without adhering to the basics of ethical journalism, writers could report fake news, spread lies, and let rumors circulate in a way that is neither fair nor accurate to any party involved—said parties being written about, the writers themselves, and especially those reading. To thoroughly report on a topic such as this, my boss recommended that I watch the film "Good Night, and Good Luck" which represented the fight Murrow fought for ethical journalism. The film depicted how Murrow challenges Senator Joseph McCarthy's anti-communist crusade—where McCarthy used his political platform to spread hearsay and abuse his power to create restlessness—using his television program "See It Now" to expose McCarthy's tactics and defend the rights of those accused of being communists during a period in which McCarthyism existed and created hysteria. This was a pivotal turning point for American journalism because we were shown just how important it is to tell the truth when reporting!

When asked why it's important to have ethical journalism my brain kind of word vomits: every thought about ethics kind of just spills out without any particular clear form. So, going point by

point of the mess in my head, I'd like to explain why ethical journalism is super important to society. First, the truth: granted I've already said a little bit on this topic but that's because it is absolutely the biggest part of the concept! Truthfulness goes hand in hand with facts, and as journalists we are asked to report the facts. For a journalist, telling the truth is a form of creating a bond: it is essentially the foundation of trust between the media and the public. Part of Murrow's advocacy for ethical journalism was built on telling the truth. His argument was that truthfulness is essential for maintaining the integrity of the press and ensuring that citizens are well-informed participants in democracy. By reporting the truth, journalists uphold their responsibility to serve the public interest and hold those in power accountable; we cater to the people because it is only right that they get all the facts in order to make well-informed choices, and they can't do that without the truth. Murrow had famously said, "To be persuasive we must be believable; to be believable we must be credible; to be credible we must be truthful." Another point of ethical journalism is respect. Not only is respect crucial for those and that which we're writing about, but it also applies to those who we are writing to. There is a certain dignity that comes from respect, and it solidifies that foundation of trust I mentioned earlier. Respect in journalism also serves to create credibility for the journalist! For me personally, I know when I'm reading something in the news, I want to be reading it from a credible source/writer. What's the point of reading the news if it isn't going to be accurate? Additionally, respect in journalism helps to ensure fairness and accuracy in reporting, because it encourages journalists to approach their subjects with empathy, understanding, and an open mind. We can't write the facts with bias, so keeping an open mind to new ideas is crucial.

Transitioning from the broader discussion of ethical journalism, let's delve

into why journalism holds particular importance in local areas. The significance of journalism in a local area is similar to that of what we've already discussed about the importance of ethical journalism: it provides the facts and creates a foundation of trust and respect. However, most importantly it creates a voice for those in the community. Local journalism homes in on the issues/events that directly affect those in the area; it is a much more specific form of journalism. Consider if we, as the Emmitsburg News Journal, were to write about the events in Ocean City, Maryland rather than those in Emmitsburg: how does that benefit us as a community, if we aren't hearing of the events of our community in the local newspaper? Journalism in local areas is essential for building informed, connected, and resilient communities. It plays a crucial role in promoting transparency, accountability, civic engagement, and economic vitality at the grassroots level. Without local journalism, communities are denied of crucial information about the current events that directly affect their lives.

Speaking of current events and ethical journalism, accuracy is crucial to the concept. It ties into the basics of ethical journalism: journalists have an ethical responsibility to report the truth as best they can because it creates the foundation of truth between media and audience. Accuracy is a fundamental principle of journalism, so adhering to this principle is essential for upholding professional integrity and serving the public interest. We want to be able to have all the facts and truthful information before we make choices that might be considered a leap in some situations. Ethics are crucial to journalism, the factors of the concept ties into every aspect of journalism we see and without these qualities, journalism would be nothing more than hearsay.

To read other articles by Devin Owen, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.

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GOOD NIGHT AND GOOD LUCK

Junior

Ethics in journalism

Dolores Hans
MSMU Class of 2025

For as long as I can remember, I've included some form of religion in most of my journals, speeches, creative writings, essays, etc. Because religion is so important in my life, it is a natural tendency to incorporate it in my writing. However, becoming a journalist for the Emmitsburg News-Journal has brought up concerns for me as a writer. I wondered if it was ethical to include religion in my articles. While I do believe that there is a truth to what is ethical and what isn't, I also know humans to see ethics relatively or subjectively. Even if we know that there is a moral and ethical truth, we still tend to think it should be for everyone what it is for us. When I asked if I could mention God or my faith in the articles I wrote, I was told that I could, and that statistically, most people reading the articles would also come from some sort of faith background. There are certain ethical questions one must ask themselves when writing, specifically when

that writing is supposed to inform the readers. Is what I'm saying accurate and true? This question is not as easy to answer as you may think, because "true" for me may not be "true" for you. For example, I know a person who wrote a song about a situation centered around someone else who caused them a great heartache. While the lyrics do contain many truths about the situation in general, the only truth we hear is that of the writer's. We don't know the heart or intent of the person he was writing about. We only have one perspective.

As writers, we are called to gain as many perspectives and truths as we can about a story, event, person, etc. To speak a truth is a challenge because people may not be receptive to it. Edward R. Murrow, the man whose quote is on the front page on the Emmitsburg News-Journal, felt that he had to be courageous and truthful, which helped expose McCarthyism. There are some people in this world who would say their opinions with no regard for sensitivity or empathy, and others who are not courageous enough to speak the truth that needs to be heard, out of fear of hurting someone. These extremes will isolate us from each other and only make

it harder for us to trust what we are being told. It is hard to find a balance, but if you remember the mission, good things can happen. Murrow was truthful and courageous—he spoke righteously without fear of causing discomfort. Notice that he didn't intend to hurt others with his words; he just had to be firm in his authority and know that the truth hurts sometimes. Murrow said, "To be persuasive we must be believable; to be believable we must be credible; credible we must be truthful".

Truth isn't guaranteed. All we can do is put ourselves in the right positions and get the right information to be factual, unbiased, and inspiring.

Another ethical question a writer must ask themselves: Does their writing show bias? When I write an article, I try to proofread it in someone else's shoes. For example, way back in September, I wrote an article, much like a creative writing story, about a boy and his single mother. After drafting my article, I put myself in the shoes of a single mother, and I read my article and tried to find spots in which there was a stereotype or any other way I could offend someone. I also based a lot of the story on real-life experiences from people and families I

know who have struggled financially. My family struggled for a while growing up, and I remember the days our neighbor would mow the lawn, or various families from my parish donated a hot meal for me and my family. These are experiences that I knew would be okay to use in the article.

Another thing to think about when giving information, or receiving it, is if there is an abuse of power. We rely on the newspapers and news channels to inform us of just about everything going on in the world. I don't typically watch the news anymore, and I never really did when I was younger, but at least then I had to go through it to get to the good channels. In the last five or so years, I have noticed that I don't know who to believe anymore. CNN? FOX? Not a clue. They all seem biased to me. These writers know that they have information we need, so they could twist the truths of it to sway our perspective of it to fit theirs, if they wanted to.

Think about your favorite writer. He or she could be a poet, a playwright, a song lyric writer, a novelist, etc. What about his or her style, message, personal qualities, etc. makes you like them? What are some qualities of his or her writing? Is he or she

truthful, reliable, unbiased, entertaining, deep, personable, etc.? Does he or she abuse their power to sway your perspectives to fit theirs? Does he or she inspire you to enrich your soul with goodness?

All this to say, we should be careful who we listen to or read from. That being said, we shouldn't expect perfection from writers either. Edward R. Murrow says, "It is not, I think, humanly possible for any reporter to be completely objective, for we are all to some degree prisoners of our education, travel, reading—the sum total of our experience."

I am grateful to write for such a beautiful and small, local paper. Being more certain of who I am writing to, and the ideals held in the area, has helped me feel connected to each reader, and has kept me in line. I can't abuse my power, because let's face it, I have none. All that matters is a potentially good read that might reach your hearts or make you think, and that's all I could ask for. So, I say with depth and truth, thank you.

To read other articles by Dolores Hans, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.

Senior

Typewriters and dreams

Claire Doll
MSMU Class of 2024

Before you read my article, take a moment to flip to the front of the News-Journal. Just between the title and the first headline is a quote in italics, small enough to be tucked into the paper, and large enough to resonate with you: "Exalting the importance of ideas and information"—Edward R. Murrow.

My first article for the Emmitsburg News-Journal was titled "The Power of Words" and established the truth-seeking, empowering ability of journalism. To write this article, I sought information about Edward R. Murrow and his work as a broadcast journalist. The risks he took to remain truthful no matter the cost. His prominence during the rise of communism, and his strides for journalism. Watching the film that tells his story—"Good Night and Good Luck"—encouraged me to cultivate my own identity as a writer and my consistent pursuit for the truth. In fact, writing for this News-Journal has ensured the validity of my craft and exposed me to a small corner in the world of journalism.

I'll take you through what inspired me to apply to the Emmitsburg News-Journal in the first place. It really traces back to me being around eight years old. All my life I have dreamed of being a writer, but the obsession with words and language began with Kit Kittredge, an American Girl Doll. Cropped, blonde hair parted into a bob and freckles scattered across her cheeks, Kit Kittredge was an aspiring journalist who wrote articles about the Great Depression for her town. She was only ten, and I was a bit younger than her, but I saw myself in this doll, how she carried a journal and ventured through her town and kept a typewriter in her attic bedroom. I wanted to have a typewriter because of her; to this

day, I search antique stores and consignment shops for one.

But as I grew through middle and high school, and as Kit Kittredge found her way to an old bin in my garage, my love for writing narrowed to a concrete, attractive focus: creative writing. I loved novels. I dreamed of being a published author, with bestsellers lined on my shelf and a writing desk overlooking the ocean (or a lake, or a river), and my name, in print, on a hardcover. In college, I began writing for literary magazines, editing my university's publication, and taking all the writing classes I could.

I then received the notification to apply for the Emmitsburg News-Journal, in a schoolwide email.

My curiosity to explore a new form of writing and return to my childhood love of American Girl Dolls ultimately inspired me to apply. I thought about Kit Kittredge in my garage, about my untouched dream of being a writer, about how amazing it might feel to see my name in print. Claire Doll. I realized then how important it was to apply, to branch out. To acknowledge my love for writing in a new field. To take a risk.

Since September of my sophomore year, I have written more than fifty articles for the Emmitsburg News-Journal and Woodsboro-Walkersville News-Journal. Through Four Years at the Mount, I have been asked to reflect on current events, or research lost parts of history, or tell stories from my past. I also began writing feature stories by venturing out into the community and introducing myself to prominent town members of Emmitsburg, Thurmont, Fairfield, Walkersville, and Union Bridge and telling the stories of others: the history of fire departments, cats living in small businesses, the accomplishments of local individuals. When I was asked to do feature assignments—something I had no experience in—I felt obligated and excited to try. I fell in love with the process and trained myself to report the news and document these stories in

authentic, respectable ways.

In my own small way, I have honored Edward R. Murrow's quote. After all, to write for the Emmitsburg and Woodsboro-Walkersville News-Journal means to focus on truth and information and ideas. Journalism—ethical, truth-seeking journalism—requires the heart of a writer, the fight for a story. The lit-up keyboard of a MacBook, or the tapping of a typewriter. The scrawls carved in a notebook, the ink stains on hand. Journalism is commitment. It's different from creative writing, but do not think that it's not as beautiful, as inspiring, as relevant.

Local journalism is especially important in that it fosters an informed, educated community and promises ethical writing. You might notice how our paper is not littered with advertisements, but rather filled with community contributors, astronomy columns, cooking recipes, creative writing, gardening advice—our paper encourages involvement and engagement. It's what I love about this News Journal, and why I handle each article with intention and attention to detail. I know who I am writing to. My professors who read this paper, or any local community members I've ever met (hi, everyone!). My parents, who lovingly read every article, or my roommate Emma, who listens carefully as I read my articles out loud for her. I know my audience; I live in the same wooded mountainside of Emmitsburg, the same backroads meeting Main Street. I feel not only obligated, but also honored to report the most truthful facts, to treat each feature story with the utmost respect. Because, after all, these stories go right from my fingertips to the entire town. There is no in between. No ads blocking my words, no filter. Local journalism protects authenticity and promotes identity.

Edward R. Murrow also said this: "To be persuasive we must be believable; to be believable we must be credible; to be credible we must be truthful." My journey through journalism has been informed completely by Edward Mur-

row, tracing back to my very first article. With every feature article, every Four Years at the Mount column, every interview, I find myself thanking the Emmitsburg News-Journal for truly a one-time opportunity. I still write creatively, and it's still my dream, but I've learned more about myself through journalism. I've learned how devoted I am to tell one's story, and I've learned how rewarding

this can be. I have a couple months left as a student at Mount St. Mary's, but I hope I've left my own legacy on this paper, hope I can continue to write like this any way I can.

And I hope I can one day find myself a typewriter.

To read other articles by Claire Doll, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.



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LIBRARY NEWS

Blue Ridge Summit Free Library

Mondays – Children’s Story Time 4 to 5. Children and parents can join us for a weekly story, craft or coloring sheet, or play time. We will be running two identical 30 to minute sessions in an attempt to accommodate busy schedules.

Wednesdays – Coffee Club from 3 to 4, mingle with the gang for coffee, tea, puzzles, board games, coloring books, &c.

Thursdays – Teen’s Night. The community room is reserved for teen use from 4:30 to 6 just hang out or play Wii, play board games, do puzzles, eat snacks, watch movies, make movies, etc.!

Saturdays to Join us at 10:30 for an hour of Story Time and all of its festivities! What could be better than a great book and a fun craft?

Local History Talk – March 11 at 6 p.m. Join us for a local history presentation from Genealogist Pam Anderson about the Reed family!

Scherenschnitte Night at the Library – March 12 at 6:30. Learn the German art of paper cutting design.

The Summit Stitchers Quilt Club meets at 5:30 on March 19. New members and new projects are always welcome! Any skill level may attend. If you have always wanted to learn how to quilt, now is the perfect time to start! The group is currently working on this year’s gorgeous raffle quilt.

The BRS Book Club will meet March 18 at 5.

For more information on the Blue Ridge Summit Free Library visit www.fclspa.org or call 717-792-2240.

Frederick County Libraries

The hint of spring is in the air. March is filled with so much to celebrate this year, including daylight savings, Easter, and the perennial favorite St. Patrick’s Day. Once again, we invite you to join us at our annual Celtic Concert, with “Enter the Haggis”, a Celtic group from Toronto. Combining bagpipes and fiddles with a rock rhythm section to create a distinctively eclectic sound, sing to along melodies and deep, meaningful lyrics which tell the stories of everyday hard to working people, our featured group “Enter the Haggis” will play at the MSM Knott Auditorium on Tuesday, March 12, 7 to 9.

Free tickets are available at Thurmont Regional Library and Emmitsburg Branch and are limited to 2 per person and are required to secure your seat. For all your information needs, contact us online at fcpl.org or call us at 301-600-72000.

With the promise of Spring, Emmitsburg Library invites the community to “The Learning Café: Coffee with a Community Gardener” on Saturday, March 2 at 10:30. Presenter Jack Deatherage describes how he established Emmitsburg’s newest community garden and how it will support the library and the surrounding community.

Mischief is afoot! Kids, follow the rainbow for a morning of colorful crafts, music, and fun at the “Little Leprechauns Bash” on Saturday, March 16 at 11.

March is filled with great programs at Thurmont Regional Library. On Saturday, March 9, meet with “Lawyer in the Library” providing free one to one legal advice from Maryland Legal Aid, from 10 to Noon. Families are invited to “Spanish Storytime” with the Spanish Speaking Community of MD at 11 Genealogist and historian, Mary Mannix presents “Researching the Women in Your Past” at 1 Discover untold stories of your matriarchal lineage as Mary delves into unique ideas and methodologies for uncovering the mysteries of your female ancestry.

Kids of all ages can “Build Your Own Leprechaun Traps” on Sunday, March 10 at 2 Teen programs fill Wednesday’s calendar for March. Check out the new, monthly “Teen Anime Club” on Wednesday, March 20 at 4 Ready for spring planting? Stop by for “Seed Swap and Drop” on Saturday, March 16 at 10.

Join us at the Thurmont Senior Center on Thursday, March 14 from 10 to Noon for “Digital Learning” and on Monday, March 18 from 10 to Noon for a MD Legal Aid presentation on “Wills, Advance Directives, and Power of Attorney forms” – what they are, how they can be filled out, and what needs to be done once the paperwork is completed.

VITA Tax Preparation volunteers are accepting reservations for tax preparation of Federal and Maryland State income taxes for Northern Frederick County residents who earned less than \$64,000 in 2023. Please note that assistance is by appointment only, and appointments at the Thurmont library will be on Tuesdays from 10 to 5:30. Contact 301-471-5757 for more information.

Visit the library website to discover so much more. Any questions, call Emmitsburg Library at 301-600-6329 or Thurmont Regional Library at 301-600-7212.

Emmitsburg Branch Library:

Mar. 4, 11, 18, 25: Family Storytime (Birth to 5), 11 to 11:30.

Mar. 4, 11, 18, 25: Little Adventurers (Birth to 5), 11:30 to Noon.

Mar. 7, 14, 21, 28: STEAM Discovery (Elementary), 3:30 to 4:30.

Mar. 14: Read to a Therapy Dog with Wags for Hope (Birth to 5, Elementary), 6 to 7.

Mar. 16: Little Leprechauns Bash (Birth to 5, Elementary), 11 to Noon.

Mar. 14, 28: Tween Fiber Arts Workshop (Grades 4 to 7), 5:30 to 6:30.

Mar. 2: Edible Stained Glass (Teens), 1 to 3.

Mar. 5, 12, 26: RPG Game Night (Teens), 4:30 to 6:30.

Mar. 19: Fastest Puzzle Challenge (Teens), 4:30 to 6:30.

Mar. 10: The Learning Café: Coffee with a Community Gardener (Adult), 10:30 to 11:30.

Thurmont Regional Library

Mar. 9: Spanish Storytime (Birth to 5, Elementary, All Ages), 11 to 11:30.

Mar. 16, 23: Family Storytime (Birth to 5, Elementary, All Ages), 11 to 11:30.

11 to 11:30.

Mar. 4, 11, 18, 25: Preschool Storytime (Ages 3 to 5), 10:30 to 11

Mar. 4, 11, 18, 25: Let’s Get Ready for Kindergarten (Ages 3 to 5), 11:15 to 11:45.

Mar. 5, 12, 19, 26: Baby Storytime (Birth to 5), 10:30 to 11:30

Mar. 6, 13, 20, 27: Toddler Storytime (18 months to 3), 10:30 to 11

Mar. 7, 14, 21, 28: Musical Storytime (Birth to 5), 10:30 to 11.

Mar. 13: Movement and Action Play (Birth to 5), 11:15 to 11:45.

Mar. 10: Build Your Own Leprechaun Traps (Birth to 5, Elementary, All Ages), 2 to 3.

Mar. 12, 26: Elemental Program (Elementary), 4:30 to 5:15.

Mar. 14: Tween Evening: Pi Day! (Elementary), 6 to 6:45.

Mar. 28: Tween Evening: Self Portrait Workshop (Elementary), 6 to 6:45.

Mar. 6: Teens Create: Morse Code Bracelets (Teens), 4 to 5.

Mar. 13: Teens Create: Your Own Mini Library! (Teens), 4 to 5.

Mar. 20: Teen Anime Club (Teens), 4 to 5.

Mar. 27: LEGO Masters Challenge (Teens), 4 to 5.

Mar. 9: Lawyer in the Library (Adults), 10 to Noon.

Mar. 9: Researching the Women in Your Past (Adults), 1 to 3.

Mar. 14: Off to Site, Thurmont Senior Center: Digital Learning (Adults), 10 to Noon.

Mar. 18: Off to Site, Thurmont Senior Center: Wills, Advance Directives and Power of Attorney (Adults), 10 to Noon.

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SCHOOL NEWS

Frederick County Schools

Jason Johnson
Board of Education

We are excited to announce the Elementary and Secondary Science & Engineering Fair and the Elementary Social Studies Fair! These fairs will take place on Saturday, March 23 at Tuscarora High School.

Registration closes for the Elementary Science and Social Studies fairs on March 18 and on March 3 for the Secondary Science Fair.

The Elementary Science and Social Studies fairs will occur from 9:30 to 11:30 where students will be interviewed about their projects. The Secondary Science and Engineering fair judging will take place from 9 to noon and is open to visitors from 3 to 4, with an awards ceremony beginning right

after. A free STEM Showcase, with hands-on science, technology, engineering and math activities is also open to the public from 9 to 11:30. The STEM Showcase is open to students of all grade levels.

Elijah Steele, a junior at Thomas Johnson High School, has been elected as the next Student Member to the Board of Education (SMOB), his one-year term begins on July 1. Elijah intends to focus on mental health awareness and equitable opportunities for all students. The SMOB plays a crucial role in representing the student perspective on educational matters within the Board of Education. Elijah's responsibilities include respecting diverse student viewpoints, enhancing communication between the student body, staff, and Board members, and actively

engaging students in discussions about board policies and decisions.

We are excited to announce that applications for new members to join the Citizen's Advisory Council (CAC) will be opening soon. The CAC reports directly to the Board and serves as a channel for public concerns, advice and information as identified by the Board. Responsibilities of the CAC include: seeking ideas from the public to address topics related to the education of students; gauging public opinion on timely topics of concern; preparing information and research on issues as directed by the Board; conducting research within the community, including surveys to gauge public opinion on educational matters; and, presenting information, public opinion, and research to the Board as necessary.

Please be aware that Board of Education meetings will temporarily switch to a virtual format to accommodate needed construction inside the Board and Control Rooms. The Board will meet virtually, beginning February 28 through May 1. These meetings will still be open for public comment, and as always you may reach the Board via email at Board@FCPS.org.

As a closing note, I would like to extend a heartfelt invitation to the members of our esteemed agricultural community to make Fair Day a year-round experience for our students. Our local farms play an integral role in our lives, providing us with nutritious food, contributing to our economic growth, and preserving the natural beauty of our county. Together, we can create meaningful partnerships with local schools, offering educational

experiences that extend beyond the confines of a single day. From immersive field trips to engaging in-class demonstrations and heartwarming visits with farm animals, these experiences have the power to educate, inspire, and bring out the best in our students.

Frederick County has a rich legacy of collaboration between its education and business communities. I am optimistic that a greater connection to our valued agricultural businesses will only strengthen this bond. Your involvement will not only make a difference in the lives of our students but also inspire generations to come. Let's sow the seeds of knowledge, curiosity, and appreciation for our agricultural heritage, ensuring a brighter future for all. Thank you for considering this opportunity, and I look forward to witnessing the positive impact we can create together.

Fairfield Area School District

The Fairfield Area School Board threw a Hail Mary to the varsity football program during its Feb. 12 meeting. High School Principal Brian McDowell said the district's size has made it difficult to recruit new players. In 2009, 437 students attended Fairfield Area High School. Currently, 283 students are enrolled. Last year, The Knights ended their season with one win and nine losses.

McDowell said the board had two options - play only a junior varsity schedule or continue to compete at the varsity level.

Two other possibilities were not options for Fairfield, McDowell said.

Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) allows small to enter into a co-op agreement with a neighboring district so students can play on those teams. PIAA rules state a co-op agreement must be made with an adjacent district that competes in the same league.

Both districts adjacent to Fairfield, Gettysburg and Waynesboro, play in the Mid-Penn League. Fairfield is a member of

the York-Adams Interscholastic Athletic Association (YAIAA). McDowell said changing to Mid-Penn would affect every sport in the district.

YAIAA rules also prohibit Fairfield from creating an independent schedule. If one sport is a member of the YAIAA, they all must be.

Student Lincoln Kearchner said college coaches told him they would not consider a player who competed at the junior varsity level his senior year. "Every coach has told me 'Your football career

ends there,'" he said.

Kearchner acknowledged parents might fear younger students who compete at the varsity level could get hurt. "Are kids going to get hurt? Yes, it's football," he said. "I am trying my hardest to get to that next level."

Junior varsity games are held on Monday night per PIAA rules. Board member James Fisher expressed concern about the effect losing Friday night football games would have on community spirit.

Board Vice President Jack Liller added he believes switching to a junior varsity schedule

signals the eventual end for Fairfield football. "We are not putting bandaids on things anymore. We are fixing it and fixing it for the long haul," he said.

District Superintendent Thomas Haupt acknowledged the board's concerns but said he does not believe data shows enough students will register for football to allow the school to safely field a team. Haupt said the decision to cancel games based off of safety concerns is his, not the board's.

The board ended the meeting with members agreeing to keep the program as-is for two years.

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ARTS

Gettysburg Community Theatre presents *The Glass Menagerie*

The Tennessee Williams classic play, *The Glass Menagerie*, will perform weekends March 8-17 at 7 Fridays and Saturdays and also at 2 on Sundays.

A drama of great tenderness, charm, and beauty, *The Glass Menagerie* is the iconic American classic that launched the career of American playwright Tennessee Williams. This autobiographical “memory play” captures the fragility and stifled yearning of characters clinging to hope against the harsh realities of a rapidly changing world. Confined to a tiny St. Louis apartment on the eve of World War II, the Wingfield family struggles to find beauty amid the rough circumstances that surround them.

Cory Metcalf stars as Tom, the play’s narrator, now the breadwinner, who works at a dreary shoe factory warehouse during the day but slips away nightly to the movies. Erin DiNello plays Amanda, a faded Southern Belle who tries to be a caring mother, but whose meddling and nagging are difficult for her adult children to take. Jamie Elizabeth, Tom’s sister, Laura, a shy, frightened young woman with fragile nerves and a lame leg; she seldom leaves the apartment,

instead busying herself with her “glass menagerie” of miniature animals. Rounding out the cast is Joey Massara as Jim O’Connor, Tom’s co-worker from the warehouse, and Laura’s high school crush.

Williams’ autobiographical “memory play” captures the fragility and stifled yearning of characters clinging to hope against the harsh realities of a rapidly changing world. Based on his own family, Williams’ depiction of the tragic circumstances that ultimately led to a life fraught with alcoholism, anger and regret is a drama of great tenderness, charm and beauty that has never lost its truthfulness or its impact.

The play began life as a short story: “Portrait of a Girl in Glass” was completed by Williams in 1943. Then, while working as a screenwriter for MGM in Hollywood, he rewrote the story into the unsuccessful script, *The Gentleman Caller*.

Finally, in 1944 the work evolved into *The Glass Menagerie*. It premiered that year in Chicago, where it overcame a shaky start. Championed by critics whose enthusiasm helped build audiences, the producers moved the play to Broadway where it won the New York Drama

Critics Circle Award. The triumph launched Williams’ career — and what Williams later called “the catastrophe of success.” It has since received numerous Broadway revivals with actors such as Piper Laurie, Maureen Stapleton, Jessica Tandy, Julie Harris and Jessica Lange in the role of Amanda.

Directed by Karen Land of Gettysburg, the cast includes Erin DiNello of Westminster, Cory Metcalf of Gettysburg, Jamie Elizabeth of York, and Joey Massara of Shippensburg. Karen Land directed the highly acclaimed GCT productions of *The Diary Of Anne Frank*, *The Complete Works Of William Shakespeare (abridged)*, and last season’s epic *Angels In America (Parts One & Two)*. Karen is also the director of GCT’s Improv Troupe that performs four times a year at GCT with no script at all in improvisational comedy with an audience.

Seating is limited and tickets are selling fast online at www.gettysburgcommunitytheatre.org. Advance ticket sales \$20-\$25 each are highly encouraged to get the best available seats for this intimate venue. The GCT box office is open one hour before showtime.



Anthony Ross, Laurette Taylor, Eddie Dowling and Julie Haydon in the 1945 Broadway production of *The Glass Menagerie*

The public can subscribe free to the GCT email list to be kept up to date on all info. Upcoming auditions include 7pm March 5 & 6 for Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar* directed by Elizabeth Pellegrino, and 7 March 10 & 12 for the classic Cole Porter musical *Anything Goes* directed by Bruce Moore. More information is available at www.GettysburgCommunityTheatre.org

Gettysburg Community Theatre (GCT), the non-profit 501c3 organization located at 49 York Street within the first block of Lincoln Square in Gettysburg, PA, is now celebrating its 16th Season as the only year-round community theatre in Adams County. GCT Mission is to inspire creativity and confidence, provide cultural enrichment, and instill a love of the theatre arts in people of ALL ages and abilities through quality education and performance.

Way Off Broadway’s *Diana* – the crown jewel

The Way Off Broadway Dinner Theatre’s 30th Anniversary Season opened with a bang in January when Agatha Christie’s classic mystery *A Murder is Announced* began the year. The production played a nearly sold out run, breaking several records at the theatre. For the spring, Way Off Broadway’s anniversary continues with the “crown jewel” of the season – the regional theatre premiere of *Diana – The Musical*.

In the show, it’s 1981 and the world is hungry for a royal wedding — but is the 20-year-old bride prepared for what comes

after? Following her storybook union, Princess Diana faces a distant husband, an unmovable monarchy, and overwhelming media scrutiny. But her modern perspective and remarkable compassion galvanizes a nation, even as it threatens the royal family’s hold on England.

The life of Diana Spencer is quite possibly the most storied of modern times. One of a part-time kindergarten teacher who would become, arguably, the most famous woman in the world. A real life fairytale that ended with tragedy.

Though countless books have been written about the late princess and a number of film and television shows have been produced chronicling her life, *Diana* is the first Broadway musical to bring her rise from relative obscurity to worldwide fame to life on the stage. The musical premiered at the La Jolla Playhouse in California in February 2019 with an eye toward a Broadway run. After the limited West Coast run was extended twice, following additional workshopping, the show began previews at Broadway’s Longacre Theatre on March 2, 2020. Ten days later, the show was suspended due to the Covid pandemic.

One year after the show was supposed to open, on March 30, 2021, it was announced that the production would resume later that year in December. However, a filmed version of the production was released on Netflix before it returned to the stage. The Broadway production, directed by Christopher Ashley

and starring Jeanna de Waal as Diana and Judy Kaye as Queen Elizabeth, received four Drama Desk Award nominations including one for Outstanding Actress in a Musical for de Waal.

Way Off Broadway’s regional premiere production is led by Lizzie Bartlett in the title role. Bartlett returns to the WOB stage after first appearing at the theatre during the 2022 Season in another premiere production where she played Elly May Clampett in *The Beverly Hillbillies – The Musical*. Joining her as the British Royal family are Shane Lowry as Prince Charles and Anna Phillips-Brown as Queen Elizabeth. Both of whom are making their Way Off Broadway debuts.

Joining the trio on stage will be Katie Bellingham, MacKenzie Brannen, Bob Gudauskas, Austin Ianneo, Steve Steele, Jordan B. Stocksdale, Melissa Valdivia, and Laura Walling. The show will also feature Amy Cajigas as Sarah Spencer, Kyle Donovan as

James Hewitt, Jonah Milam as Andrew Morton, and Wil Speth as Andrew Parker-Bowles. Completing the well-known love triangle in which Diana and Charles found themselves will be Megan Elizabeth West as Camilla Parker-Bowles.

Diana has a book and lyrics by Joe DiPietro, with music and lyrics by David Bryan. Way Off Broadway’s production is under the direction of the theatre’s executive producer, Bill Kiska, with choreography by Dee Buchanan and music direction by Tina Marie Bruley.

Diana runs March 23rd through May 18th, with performances are every Friday and Saturday evening, and matinees on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sunday of each month. A special matinee has been added on Sunday, May 12th for Mother’s Day. Tickets on Friday evenings are \$56; Saturday evenings are \$60; and Sunday afternoons are \$59 per person. Tickets may be purchased by calling the theatre’s Box Office at (301) 662-6600. A specific Performance Calendar can be found on the theatre’s website at www.wayoffbroadway.com.

Opening night on Saturday, March 23rd will also serve as the official anniversary celebration of the theatre, during which Way Off Broadway’s thirty seasons of bringing live theatre to the mid-Maryland region will be commemorated.

To learn more about *Diana*, or any of the shows in Way Off Broadway’s 30th Anniversary Season including *Tootsie*, *Anastasia*, or *Christmas Chronicles*, visit www.wayoffbroadway.com.

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Mount Mainstage & Wind Ensemble's tribute performance

Ashley Walczyk
MSMU class of 2024

This month is full of lively events on campus, some of which you won't want to miss. The Wind Ensemble is performing a tribute to Ukrainian composer, Yuriy Kerpatenko. Mount Theatre is also performing their mainstage production, *An Iliad*.

About Yuriy Kerpatenko

Yuriy (with variations to the spelling) Kerpatenko was born on the 9th of September 1976 in the port city, Kherson. The port city lays along the Black Sea, making the city in South Ukraine. Much is not made public about his early childhood; however he was an avid musician. He graduated first in his class from State Secondary School, more specifically in the accordion class. He went on to attend and graduate from the Kherson School of Music between the years 1991 to 1995. He graduated in 2000 from the Kyiv Conservatory, where he went on to study folk instruments. He was also in the accordion class at the conservatory.

Kerpatenko was exceeded excellence in the Bayan, which is a Russian accordion similar to the western chromatic button accordions. Some differences between the Bayan and the Western accordion includes the reeds' shape and size and the keyboard placement. This instrument Kerpatenko specialized in was created by the Russian Empire in the twentieth century, which adds to the conflict later on. After his studies, in 2000, he went on to become the principal conductor of the Kherson Regional Philharmonic's chamber orchestra called "Gilea." Four years later, he became the principal conductor of the Mykola Kulish Music and Drama Theatre.

Recently, before his death, he was vocal about the Russian occupation of the Kherson Oblast until May of 2022, posting several messages to social media about his opposition to the Russian forces infiltrating Ukraine. In September 2022, members of the Kerpatenko family lost contact with the composer. It was later revealed by the Ukrainian Ministry of Culture and Information Policy that Kerpatenko declined to participate in a concert hosted by the Russians who occupied Kherson. The purpose of the concert would have been to demonstrate the improved peacefulness of life in Kherson. The Russian military killed him in his home for refusing to participate and cooperate with the Russian occupiers. His death was reported on the 13th of October 2022.

Since then, the regional prosecutor's office in Ukraine launched a formal investigation on the murder; however, not many updates had been given to the public. Many Ukrainian and international artists condemned Russia for Kerpatenko's death, going so far as to criticizing many other Russian artists and colleagues for their silence on the

matter. This is not the first time a Ukrainian artist has been killed by the Russian government, and it is not the last either, unfortunately.

Upcoming Performance

Dr. Mark Carlson is an Associate Professor of music here at the Mount. He teaches several instruments to the students as well as several classes on campus. His areas of expertise include instrumental ensemble, low brass performance, music history, and music theory. He participates in many of the ensemble groups on campus, including the Lab Band and the Wind Ensemble.

When talking to Dr. Carlson, I learned that his plan for this next program is to perform a dedicated concert to Yuriy Kerpatenko and his martyred life. The performance will occur in the middle of spring, with the date still unknown as of this time—stay tuned! There are four confirmed pieces for this program, including pieces "Mars" from *The Planets*, composed by English composer Gustav Holst, and concluding with "The Bogatry Gate (at Keiv, the Ancient Capital)," composed by Russian composer Mussorgsky, with a new setting called *Pictures at an Exhibition*, by Tohru Takahashi.

"Mars" was decided on partly because the piece focuses on each of the planets and their Greco-Roman forms. Mar, or Ares for Greek mythology, is the God of war and wrath, or the bringer of war. The reason for this picking is partly because it is one of those pieces that makes sense to include, however, there is another good reason, which is the composition of the piece. According to Dr. Carlson, this particular piece is in five, unlike the four which is found in classical, pop, and romantic music. Dr. Carlson is most excited because this will be a challenge for his students, which is his overall goal, to make the students perform pieces they might not encounter as often. To make a small preface, this is not to celebrate war, but moreso it seems like an appropriate time to perform this piece in the program.

The piece entitled "The Bogatry Gate (at Keiv, the Ancient Capital)" depicts a cultural landmark to Ukraine, and unfortunately there is a small risk that this landmark will be lost to the Russian-occupying government. With that said, this piece was selected to understand the true magnitude of the situation, and to celebrate a culture rich with culture and history.

There are also two pieces that will be included that are Ukrainian, which is the National Anthem of Ukraine, as well as an Orthodox Hymn, with the setting by Dr. Carlson himself. The melody will be attributed to Kiev, with Dr. Carlson using the word "kontakion" to describe the piece in full. Dr. Carlson admits that "this program will be dedicated to him and seeks to perform some pieces that I feel like are an appropriate tribute to his memory."



Yuriy Kerpatenko, depicted here, was a Ukrainian music director who refused to participate in a Russian-sponsored concert assuring peaceful life in Kherson.

Mount Mainstage

Mount Theatre presents *An Iliad*, a play adapted by Lisa Peterson and Denis O'Hare. This adapted performance tells the tale of Homer's Trojan tale, but in a solo performance. With this particular performance, there will be three actors: Laila Jefferson, Alexis Mobley, and Brooke Schneidreith. The characters of the play, who will be seen throughout this solo performance, are some familiar names, such as Agamemnon, Achilles, Paris, and Helen.

The mainstage will also take a new form this semester: reader's theater. Reader's theater is when actors go on stage with scripts and read the play out loud, using only vocal talents to convey the story being presented. There are no

props, no costumes, and very—if any—minimal lighting and scenery. With the construct of the play being a solo performance of a poet recounting this Epic story, performing a reader's theater will work with this piece and will be performed well.

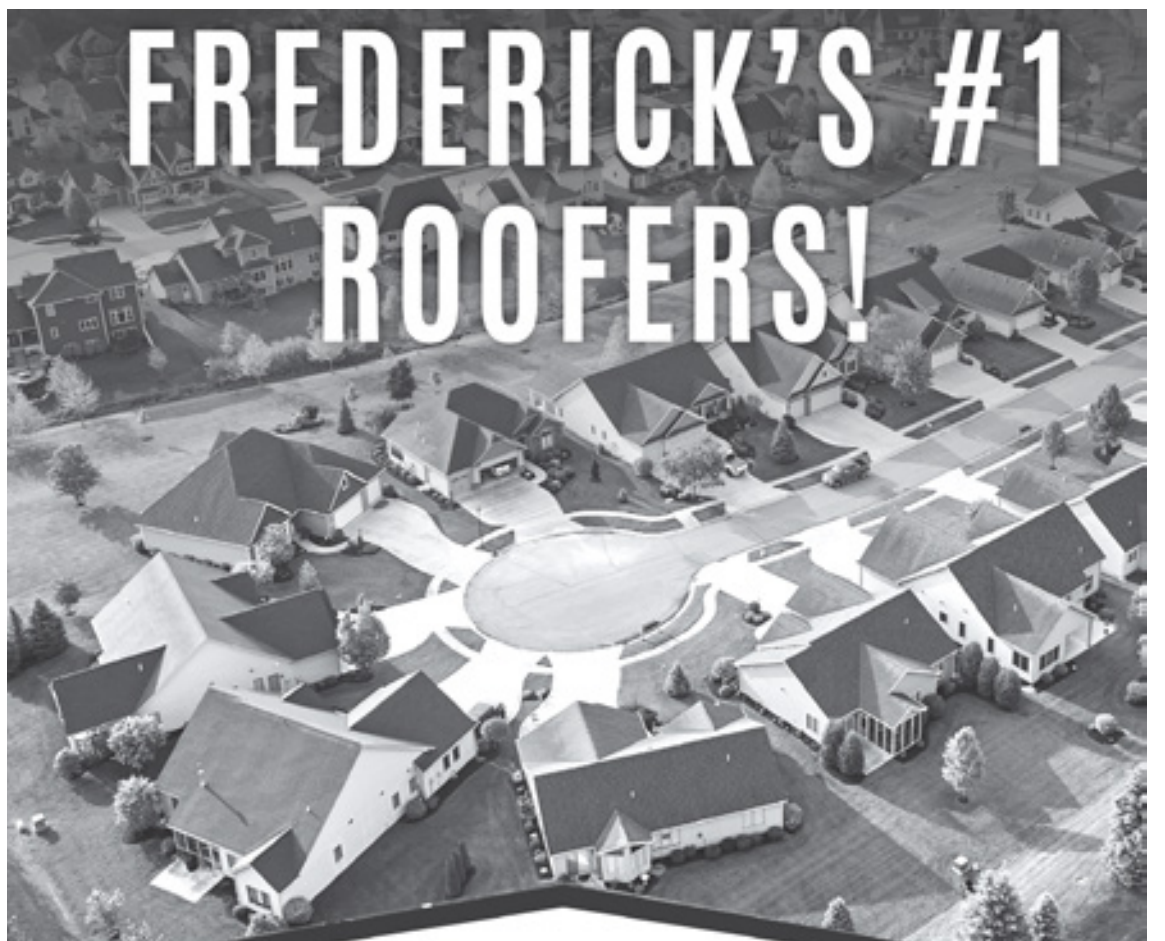
Tickets will be five dollars for entry, but it will be worthwhile. The play takes on an anti-war theme. One part of the play has our poet recounting the story, reflecting on previous wars in World History. For about five pages on the script, the poet lists all of the wars that occurred in human history, with Dr. Blaugher adding the additional wars with Ukraine and Israel. This performance is bound to make you think and reflect on the important things in life.

Upcoming Events

As mentioned before, the Mount Mainstage production will be from the 21st to the 23rd at 8:00 p.m. in Horning theater. The Wind Ensemble's performance will be on the 22nd at 7:00 p.m. in Knott Auditorium. In the Mount's Visual Arts Department, the Williams Gallery is currently holding senior Emma Edwards' Honors Show, "Your Motherhood Imprinted in Soul," featuring charcoal drawings, ceramic pieces, and natural elements inspired by her childhood, until March 7th. The Williams Gallery will go on to hold a Brute Show from the 21st until April 18th. The reception will be on the 21st at 5:00 p.m.. We hope to see you there!










To read past Mount Art articles visit the Current Events section of Emmitsburg.net.

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CATOCTIN SPORTS

A look into Catoctin's academic organizations

Richelle Zheng
Class of 2025

Not only does Catoctin have outstanding sports teams, they also have great academic clubs filled with intelligent and passionate students.

The 2024 mock trial season began in December with members preparing well before their first trial on January 3 against Frederick High School. This year's mock trial team consists of the lawyers: Lillian Holden, Cobalt Wivell, Amelia Phillips, and Kayla Delcid and the witnesses: Dale Gervase, Richelle Zheng, Savannah Cregger, Aliyah Mclain, Rigby Hendrickson and Shalini Weitzel. This year's civil case concerns the plaintiff, Parker Harper, and the defendant, Dakota Reese.

Parker Harper is suing Dakota Reese for \$75,000 due to negligence on their behalf. The incident that led to the case began when Vale Taylor, a neighbor of Dakota Reese, Parker Harper, and Whitney Jones asked Harper to clean out their gutters. Harper was offered \$100 to clean Taylor's gutters. Taylor had set up a ladder for Harper to use that night. However, Reese, who is a nurse working late night shifts and sleeps from 6am to 2pm was disturbed by the noisiness of Taylor's work. This instigates Reese to remove Taylor's ladder shoes, in an attempt to prevent Harper Taylor from using the ladder the next morning, not knowing it would be Harper who would be using the ladder the next day. After Reese took off the ladder shoes they went home and made a note warning Taylor about the absence of their ladder shoes that reads, "Good luck trying to get any work done

without your shoes. Don't worry you'll get them back on Tuesday. Nighty night." Then, the following day, May 27, Harper attempted to clean out Taylor's gutter but fell off the ladder sustaining numerous back injuries. In addition to Harper's injuries from the ladder fall, they also sustained further trauma to their body after being in a car accident four days later. The car accident occurred due to Jones rear ending Harper at a stop light. This worsened Harper's original injuries. Subsequently, Harper sought a chiropractor named Dr. Chris Morgan. Additionally, Dr. Dylan Avery comes into the scene because they think that Dr. Morgan had overcharged Harper for Harper's treatments, leading to the debate over the money owed by Reese.

The plaintiff consists of Parker Harper played by Cregger, Dr. Chris Morgan played by Hendrickson, and Vale Taylor played by Weitzel. The defense consists of Dakota Reese played by Mclain, Whitney Jones played by Gervase, and I played the role of Dr. Dylan Avery. During the first trial against Frederick High School, Catoctin played defense. We were all extremely nervous, due to this trial being our first for the season. Nonetheless, we pushed through our anxiety and competed with our well thought out crosses and come-backs. The trial ended in a tie between Catoctin and Frederick High School with Frederick obtaining the tie-breaking point. This did not discourage us as we used the loss as motivation to come up with greater strategies to counter the next team. At the next trial we were plaintiffs competing against Linganore High School on January 24. Since none of the plaintiff witnesses

had prior mock trial experience, they were testing the waters in this trial. They had practiced earnestly and memorized their roles. During the trial, our witnesses had great come-backs during the cross and impressed the opponent. Linganore won the neck-to-neck trial only by three points.

On January 31, the defense went against Middletown High School. Our team grew more comfortable after acquiring some experience. Our hard work had paid off and the match ended with Catoctin taking the victory 110-105! Then, on February 6, our team played as plaintiffs against Oakdale, a strong competitor. Ultimately, Oakdale secured the victory. Our last trial occurred on February 14, against Governor Thomas Johnson High School. We played plaintiff—our team did an outstanding job at the trial scoring a seasonal record of 119 points! My first year being on the team was an enjoyable one. Although it was a new and challenging experience, I had fun working with my team members to develop new strategies after each trial, to take on the next team. The advisor of the team, Mr. Cree, also made this an amazing experience because no matter our losses, he would continue to encourage us with feedback, helping us improve after each trial. I loved being a part of the team and seeing our progress throughout the season. Mock trial is definitely a challenging extracurricular, and one that requires time and commitment. Despite that, I would highly suggest for other students to try it out if they are interested in something exciting and thought-provoking. Ultimately, I am glad to have signed up for Mock trial this year and I can't wait for the next season!

At Catoctin High School there are numerous students who are passionate about protecting the envi-



Catoctin mock trial defense celebrates their first win.

ronment. Some of these students represent the Catoctin Conservation Club, which was founded in 2019. Since the club's establishment, they have been working diligently towards sustainability, with the goal of increasing environmental awareness at CHS and implementing various forms of sustainability practices. But, many of the club's efforts have been lost due to the pandemic, such as CHS's green school certification. However the members continue to work towards rebuilding and advancing further what the club has done in the past. CCC takes on many jobs such as reclaiming Catoctin's title as a Maryland Green School, where the members are working to meet the application deadline in March... Some accomplishments of the club in the past year include planting 60 Maryland native tree species. By working with the National Park Services, they made on campus tree planting possible! Additionally, students also spoke at staff professional development sessions, advocating for sustainability changes to be made.

This year the club members are working towards new goals and have made influential strides. The club has applied for the Maryland State Department of Education grant, School Waste Reduction and Composting Program. If selected, schoolshe grant will be provided \$500-\$8000 to cover for the cost

of composting and waste reduction programs lasting three months.

Furthermore, the club is hosting a student lead recycling challenge called the "Recycling Battle Royale" which started February 20. This challenge was created to encourage correct recycling in schools with the hope that those habits will follow the students outside of schools as well. To increase participation, the challenge comes with incentives, donuts for the winning teacher's classes! Members of CCC have helped with the challenge by creating recycling bin covers, making posters advertising the event, and educating students presenting to every student regarding recycling habits.

Some members of the club have also been attending budget hearings to advocate for increased sustainable practices. Natalie Hoyt, Keelyn Swaney, and Gina Lin attended a recent Frederick County District 5 Budget Hearing. These students bravely spoke out about the need for increased assistance and composting and waste reduction programs in schools. In addition, Lin not only advocated for the importance of sustainability practices in schools but the whole of Frederick County. Lin said, "In addition to organizing smaller grassroots movements, student leaders realize the importance of advocacy. Both components must work simultaneously to achieve our goals." Hoyt also spoke on sustainability in addition concerning teachers salaries.

The activism displayed by these students have definitely made an impact. Catoctin is proud to have both talented athletic and academic students!

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Taylor Swift is good for the National Football League

Steve Morano
MSMU Class of 2024

For as long as spectator sports have enamored the public, professional contests have attracted celebrity attention. Participants in the ancient Olympics became celebrities themselves whenever they did well during competitions in Greece; Roman Emperors were constantly seen and featured in gladiator matches and horse races; Henry VIII was himself a famous tennis player in Tudor England. Even in the modern day, celebrities have owned sports franchises, with a prime example being Sir Elton John's ownership of Watford Football Club in England. These are all great examples of celebrity involvement with sport, but one celebrity's relationship with a sport some would say has captivated the entire country in some way, shape, or form. This situation, of course, being Taylor Swift and the National Football League.

The four-time Grammy Album of the Year winner first gained the attention of the league and its fans in September of 2023 when she was rumored to have been dating the Kansas City Chiefs Tight End, Travis Kelce. At first, media speculation and rumors surrounding their relationship were the only known facts in the public arena, but when the singer showed up to the Chiefs game against the Chicago Bears on September 24, their relationship was all but confirmed. Ever since then, the couple has been seen everywhere, from Kelce attending one of her shows in Buenos Aires to Swift being on the field for the Chiefs AFC trophy presentation in Baltimore as well as the presentation of the Super Bowl trophy in Las Vegas. All these public appearances together show that they are clearly supportive of each other's career.

But with Swift's appearance at NFL games has come a lot of hate, particularly on social media and in the public discourse. It seems that now everyone has an opinion on the singer from Reading, Pennsylvania if they didn't have one already. But across the spectrum of opinion, there is one big winner with Swift's new involvement in the most popular sport in the United States: the NFL itself. Swift has added a new element for fans of the league to talk about and to get involved in. From the economics of the league to its societal perception in America, it is impossible to think that she has not had an impact on football's place in pop culture.

At its shallowest level, the only way that non-Taylor Swift, football fans have seen or interacted with her scope on the sport is seeing her on broadcasts of Chiefs games. The argument that "Taylor Swift is shown too much during football games" originates from this interaction. But it should be

noted that her screen time is a lot shorter than what her reputation is thought to be. According to the New York Times, across the Chiefs' five games from December 25th to January 28th, Swift was shown across all broadcasts a combined 20 times with a screentime of three minutes. Three minutes across an hour-long production would usually be chalked up to B-roll footage, but three minutes across a month's worth of NFL games would not even make up for the amount of time a commercial would be re-run during a single game.

Many of the opinions of sports fans are often shaped by those of pundits and commentators on channels such as CBS, ESPN, and Fox Sports. Most of these sporting influencers have cited the hatred of Swift's NFL presence as bad. Colin Cowherd, an NFL pundit said that people obsessed with her relationship with Kelce and therefore, the NFL are "weird, lonely men". Stephen A. Smith, a pundit for ESPN, spoke on her lack of trying to garner attention, "To show up at a football game and the cameras are on her, that ain't her fault!" And it isn't, if anything, if people want to be mad over her coverage, then they should be pointing the fingers at the networks instead of Swift, who does not have any input into her screentime.

The negative coverage, specifically on social media has, has garnered wild conspiracies from

fringe political movements talking about her possible influence then upcoming 2024 Presidential election. These claims, however, are unfounded, specifically around her political affiliation as neither her, Kelce, or anybody from her publicist group have commented on the election. But that has not slowed the conspiracy theories about an already hot and contentious American election.

Regardless of if a person thinks that Swift is good or bad for the league, it is an undeniable fact that she has made a big influence on the economics of the league itself. Besides her features in game, she has boosted the reputation of her boyfriend's career. Kelce was already a famous football player before dating Swift; the three-time Super Bowl champion has been named the All-Pro team four times and was selected to nine straight Pro-Bowls from 2015-2023. But the area of acclaim that Swift added to Kelce's career in was his pop-culture status. Public appearance with one another plus her renowned in the music industry have led to a near 400% sales spike in his jersey, making it the most sold Nike NFL product of this season. Outside of her boyfriend, she has been good for the leagues network ratings, as the NFL saw a 7% viewership increase since her first appearance in September.

Outside of the cultural phenomenon that is the National Football League, with its influence over, economics, media, and per-



ception, people should remember that no matter what, Swift is just another person's significant other supporting what her partner loves to do. It is no different than any other player's wife or girlfriend showing up to a game on Sunday afternoon. It should also be noted again that she is not in control of her screentime as the networks are just trying to find clickbait B-roll for the time in-between plays.

The 2023 NFL season ended in a good way for Swift's boyfriend's team, as the Chiefs defeated the San Francisco 49ers in overtime by a score of 25-22 in what already seemed to be a media frenzied event in Las Vegas. The team themselves might be another rea-

son why some people dislike Swift as she is, unfortunately, guilty by association to a team that will attempt to win their third Lombardi trophy in a row next season, something that no other franchise has ever done before. The end of the game produced images of Swift and Kelce together and as they embraced. These then circulated across all forms of media and most likely, social consciousness. They are a sign, whether you like it or not, that Taylor Swift is here to stay in the NFL for the duration of Travis Kelce's career.

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COMPLEMENTARY CORNER

The school of life

Jefferson Breland

If you are reading this, I am guessing you are alive. I am also guessing you were alive yesterday and the day before that and the day before that and so on and so forth. Most of you, I imagine, are wishing you will be alive tomorrow.

So what's it all about? This thing we call life; this being alive thing. This is the eternal question humans have been asking since the dawn of time, I am guessing.

I hope you didn't get your hopes up that I would have the answer here. I don't.

What I do know is when we pay attention to life we get clues about the meaning of our existence. We don't even have to work hard. If we begin to listen a little bit more closely, see a bit more clearly, feel the hand of a beloved in our hand a little bit more warmly, really taste and savor the food we give ourselves, if we stop and smell the roses so to speak (and literally), we will begin to sense the meaning of life a bit more deeply. We will know more than we did the day before. We may feel a bit more connected to the people and events in our life.

I also know when we begin to experience all that happens in our life more neutrally, life will be smoother, not necessarily easier, but smoother. By this I mean, in Nature, there are simply events. Even if they are frightening or

painful, we can observe them not as problems, but opportunities. We can begin to see a purpose to everything and we will be able to navigate life a bit easier.

I understand this is a radical concept. In our culture we are practiced at dramatizing life into operatic-scale stories in which it is often "Us versus Them." We want to be the heroes of our life overcoming adversity and winning everything.

If we truly examine our hopes and wishes, I wonder how many of us simply want a simple life, a good life. This will mean different things for each of us because we are different beings.

What if a good life were as simple as having more "Good" in our life?

How might we do this?

One way of having more "Good" in our life is to understand and apply the following "Life Rules": 1 - There are no accidents; 2 - Everything is happening for a reason; 3- Everything is happening for good; and, 4 - Can you see the good?

Everything? Yes, everything.

As you may know, I am a licensed healthcare provider. People usually come to me when they are experiencing physical symptoms with an accompanying medical diagnosis.

So yes, even with serious illness and painful symptoms I apply the "Life Rules."

Symptoms are the body's natu-

ral way of telling us to pay attention and do something different. It is in this way that symptoms are happening for the good, our good. Symptoms are our teacher. A teacher calling us to live better.

Symptoms offer us the opportunity to take action to help ourselves. Like the "check engine" light in our car, symptoms point to sometimes subtle and sometimes profound ways that something in our bodies or in our lives is out of balance and needs attention.

We can ignore the "check engine" light in our car, put tape over it so we can't see it. We can turn up the music in the car when the engine makes a funny noise so we can't hear it. As many of us know, if we ignore our cars' warning lights, rather than needing a simple oil change, we might need a new transmission or a new engine. Which would you rather pay for?

I grew up in a house where in the cabinet above the stove, there was a bottle of ibuprofen and a bottle of antacid tablets. In this way, I learned to ignore my body's "check engine" light of smaller symptoms like a headache or indigestion. It was my family's way of addressing these regular "check engine lights."

For years, I masked the symptoms of headaches and a sour stomach with these medicines. It never occurred to me I had a choice, much less the ability to make them go away without medicines; in other words, to heal myself. It never occurred to me to

look at these symptoms like a cut or a scratch.

I knew how to tend these injuries and let my body heal itself. I knew if I disinfected the cut, kept it clean and covered with a bandage, my body would heal itself. Simple, right?

I did not think to apply my body's innate, powerful healing ability to the rest of my body. Our healing ability is available to us for even more complicated issues if we see our symptoms as teachers offering the opportunity to pay attention and create the conditions to heal ourselves.

As for the headaches and indigestion symptoms, I was lucky. The worst my indigestion got was advancing to acid reflux with the stomach acid irritating my vocal cords. I was prescribed a strong stomach-acid reducer. At the same time I learned relaxation techniques which helped me address the root cause of my symptoms, stress. When I learned how to reduce and release the stress in my life and be more peaceful, my symptoms stopped returning.

In general, if we know these "lesser" symptoms are here to teach us and take the opportunity to make small, sustainable changes in lifestyle or diet, we might avoid more serious conditions.

Lifestyle modifications don't mean that we have to give up foods we love or activities that help us enjoy life. Modifications help us learn what helps and what does not help our body. It is a simple practice of trying new things and observing what changes or not.

Making small and sustainable changes affords us the opportunity to pay closer attention to what we eat and its effect on our body. Observing our emotions in different situations offers us the opportunity to respond dif-

ferently. A lifestyle change might be something as simple as getting into bed 30 minutes earlier. Another change might be as simple turning off our cell phones, computers or tablets an hour before bed. What about watching or reading less news? The key with all of these shifts is to be patient and pay attention. The benefits might not show up quickly, and they might. We never know.

Our symptoms offer us choices. If we are able to observe our symptoms and what actions increase or decrease their effect on our body, we learn we have more influence on our health than many of us know.

Please note I am not saying to ignore your symptoms. I am actually asking you to pay more attention to them. I am also asking you to examine how your life might be contributing to the situation without judgment. This is not a blame game.

If certain symptoms persist, I recommend scheduling an appointment with your primary care physician or your local acupuncturist to gain some insight about how you can help yourself.

Symptoms are not accidents. Symptoms are happening for a reason. The reason is for your good. Symptoms are an opportunity to wake up to your life and how you might help yourself. They teach us that we have choices.

Symptoms teach us the value of life. As the old story goes, I tell my doctor, "It hurts when I do this." And the doctor says, "Don't do that." There is simple truth in this.

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The following are some suggested herbs to plant that grow well in the Frederick area. The herbs listed all enjoy direct sunlight, with no special watering needs. Once established, watering is accomplished either by natural rainfall, or every 3-4 days. The herbs can be enjoyed fresh or dried.

Calendula (*Calendula officinalis*) flowers - bright yellow and orange flowers are constant bloomers and an exciting and useful addition to any garden. Calendula (also known as pot marigold) repels some insects in the garden so is useful to plant around other plants. Excellent for skin health and digestive support, Calendula has a slightly bitter and saffron-like taste.

Feverfew (*Tanacetum parthenium*) leaves and flowering aerial parts - known for its use as a headache remedy, feverfew has little daisy-like flowers, and is a pretty addition to an herb garden.

Holy Basil (*Ocimum sanctum*) leaves - not the garden type basil, Holy Basil is considered an adaptogen, which is a plant that helps balance the stress response. Holy Basil may lift the spirits while increasing clarity of thought. A nice tea to drink in a blend with other herbs or on its own.

Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*) aerial parts - a fun plant to grow because it kind of looks like horse tails (without the hair), growing through the earth in gentle spikes.

Horsetail is a nice herb to support connective tissue as it is a rich source of vegetal silica and is used to improve skin health, nail strength, and urinary tract health.

Hyssop (*Anise Hyssop*) aerial parts while in flower - a lovely purple spike of a flower, hyssop attracts butterflies, hummingbirds and honeybees for its pollen. Hyssop makes a nice tea useful for supporting digestion, soothing lower respiratory tract irritation, and helping with fever management.

Lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*) aerial parts - beautiful and fragrant, Lavender is highly aromatic and a useful support for the nervous system, especially where there is melancholy. Lavender is also used for pain relief and skin health.

Lemon Balm (*Melissa officinalis*) leaves - prolific growing plant in full sun - you may want to put Lemon Balm in a container or contain it somehow. The leaves are a vibrant green, and when pressed, smell divinely like lemon. Rich in essential oils, lemon balm makes a delightful tea, and is nice for uplifting one's mood. Lemon Balm also has anti-viral properties due to the aromatic oils and is used to strengthen the immune system.

Lemon Verbena (*Alysia triphylla*) leaves - very high in volatile oils, Lemon Verbena smells deliciously of lemon and is a delightful annual to grow in the garden and will reward you with teas through the summer. Lemon Verbena is used as a calming digestive and sleep herb, and would be great sipping while swinging in the hammock.

Motherwort (*Leonurus cardiaca*) aerial parts - with small whorls of lavender flowers from mid-to-late summer, Motherwort is a pleasant addition to the tea garden and tolerates both sun and shade. Motherwort can be harvested from spring through fall, and is used to support digestive and heart health. Motherwort is a calming herb.

Mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*) aerial parts - Mugwort or Cronewort has spikes of whitish green flowers with deep purple steps and green leaves with silvery undersides. Mugwort is used often for menopause symptoms and digestive support.

Passionflower (*Passiflora incar-*

nate) aerial parts - an incredibly beautiful, unusual vine, passionflower will reward you with her spectacular beauty and medicinal value. Passionflower is a useful nervine herb, with mild sedative effects, making it a useful tea to relax after a long day or before bedtime.

Skullcap (*Scutellaria lateriflora*) flowering aerial parts - the little blue flowers of Skullcap resemble little skulls wearing hats, thus the name of the herb. Skullcap prefers a well-drained moist soil and is quite a useful nervine herb used to soothe frayed nerves, irritability and anxiety.



Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) aerial parts - with lacy textured leaves and little white flowers, yarrow is an important medicinal plant, useful for respiratory conditions, gut health & muscle aches.

tea garden will spark a lifelong interest in growing your own herbs. Herbs are lovely to grow in the garden, not only for their beauty, but also for their value in supporting health. Happy growing and peaceful sipping.

Hopefully these ideas for an herbal

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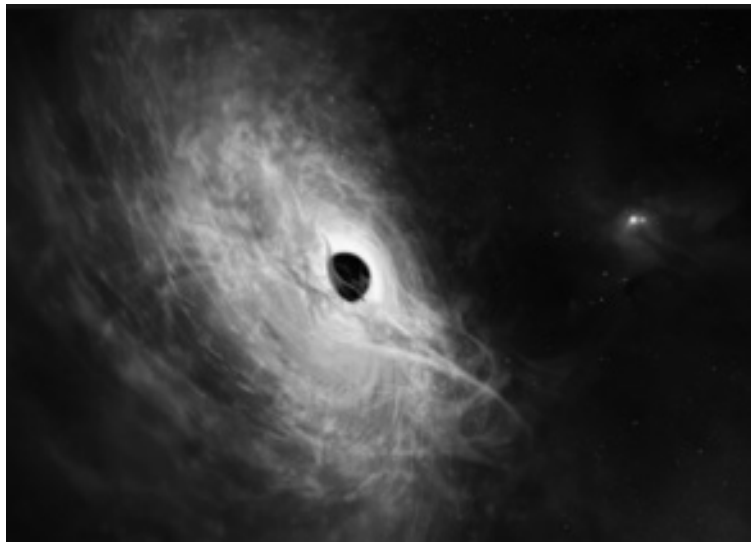
The night sky of March

Professor Wayne Wooten

For March 2024, the last quarter moon gives us a real treat on the morning of March 2, when it occults the bright star Antares in Scorpius. For observers, the red supergiant vanishes behind the center of the bright half moon at 12:58 AM, and will reappear at 2:58 a.m., coming out from behind the northwest limb of the dark side of the lunar disk. Long exposure shots showing the dark side lit by earthshine, with a video of the moon's reappearance should be awesome! Also note that Antares is a close binary star, and its fainter greenish companion may stand alone for a second of so before its primary reappears about 2:57 a.m..

The waning crescent makes a nice pairing to the right of bright Venus and much fainter Mars on the morning of March 7th. The new moon is on March 10th, and the next new moon is the total solar eclipse crossing the middle of America. March 10th also is the day we "spring forward". The moon Venus will disappear into the sun's glare in the next week, but Mars climbs higher in the dawn this month.

On the evening of March 11th, look for the waxing crescent moon above Mercury in the twilight. The Moon passes north of Jupiter on March 13th. It is high overhead as first quarter on March 16th. The vernal equinox occurs at 10:06 p.m. on March 19th to begin spring in the northern hemisphere. The full moon moves through our lighter penumbral shadow on the morning of March 25, with the slight darkening most noticeable about 3 a.m.. The waning gibbous moon returns to Antares on March 30th, mark-



The record-breaking quasar J059-4351 is the bright core of a distant galaxy. Powered by a supermassive black hole that has a mass 17 billion times that of the Sun and is growing in mass by the equivalent of another Sun per day, making it the fastest-growing black hole ever known.

ing the 27 day sidereal period as the moon revolves through the starry background.

We have a promising comet, named Pons-Brooks, in the western sky heading sunward now. It has already had several unexpected outbursts, once even developing "horns" telescopically, and may be visible with the naked eye near Jupiter at month's end.

As noted earlier, it is not a good month for seeing the planets. Mercury is in the western twilight, Venus headed behind the Sun, Mars low in the dawn, Jupiter in the SW to disappear behind the Sun next month, and Saturn on the other side of the Sun.

The constellation Cassiopeia makes a striking W in the NW. South of Cassiopeia is Andromeda's hero, Perseus. Between him and Cassiopeia is the fine Double Cluster, faintly visible with the naked eye and two fine binocular objects in the same field. Perseus contains the famed eclipsing binary star Algol, where the Arabs imagined the eye of the gor-

gon Medusa would lie. It fades to a third its normal brightness for six out of every 70 hours.

At Perseus' feet for the famed Pleiades cluster; they lie about 400 light years distant, and over 250 stars are members of this fine group. East of the seven sisters is the V of stars marking the face of Taurus the Bull, with bright orange Aldebaran as his eye. The V of stars is the Hyades cluster, older than the blue Pleiades, but about half their distance. Yellow Capella, a giant star the same temperature and color as our much smaller Sun, dominates the overhead sky in the northwest. It is part of the pentagon on stars making up Auriga, the Charioteer (think Ben Hur). Several nice binocular Messier open clusters are found in the winter milky way here. It also contains some faint but beautiful nebulae, and this one is just right for the coming of spring with frogs hopping and crocking. IC 410, nicknamed the Tadpoles, is a region of star birth.

East of Auriga, the twins, Castor and Pollux highlight the Gemini; it is directly above us as darkness falls in early March. Astronomers associated the pair with Jason and the Golden Fleece legend, for they were the first two Argonauts to sign up on his crew of adventurers.

South of Gemini, Orion is the most familiar winter constellation, dominating the southern sky at dusk. The reddish supergiant Betelgeuse marks his eastern shoulder, while blue-white supergiant Rigel stands opposite on his west knee. How bright does Betelgeuse appear to you tonight? In 2019-20, this famed supergiant had expanded and cooled, forming a dust envelope that has darkened much of its southern hemisphere to less than a quarter its normal brightness in visible light. Now the dust has dissipated, and it is back close to its normal brightness as the alpha star of Orion again.

Just south of the belt, hanging like a sword downward, is M-42, the Great Nebula of Orion, an outstanding binocular and telescopic stellar nursery. The bright diamond of four stars that light it up are the trapezium cluster, one of the finest sights in a telescope and among the youngest known stars.

In the east are the hunter's two faithful companions, Canis major and minor. Procyon is the bright star in the little dog, and rises minutes before Sirius, the brightest star in the sky. Sirius dominates the SE sky as darkness falls. At 8 light years distance, Sirius is the closest star we can easily see with the naked eye. When Sirius is highest, along our southern horizon look for the second brightest star, Canopus, getting just above the horizon and sparkling like an exquisite diamond as the turbulent winter air twists and turns this shaft of starlight, after a trip of about 2000 years!

To the northeast, look for the bowl of the Big Dipper rising, with the top two stars, the pointers, giving you a line to find Polaris, the Pole Star. It sits unmoving 30 degrees high in on our northern sky.

If you take the pointers of the Big Dipper's bowl to the south, you are guided instead to the head of Leo the Lion rising in the east, looking much like the profile of the famed Sphinx. The bright star at the Lion's heart is Regulus, the "regal star". The folk wisdom that "March comes in like

a Lion" probably refers to the head of Leo rising just after sunset in early March eastern twilight.

The constellation Cancer lies midway between the Gemini to the west and Regulus east of it. Almost directly overhead when darkness falls at month's end, look under dark skies for a faint blur of light in the middle of the four stars that make up the crab's body. This is the Praespe, or Beehive, cluster, M-44, familiar to the ancients. Its blurry appearance led Charles Messier to include it in his catalog of things that look at first like comets, but do not move and are far away among the stars and galaxies. Now check it out with binoculars, and resolve it into dozens of stars, hence the "Beehive"!

If you follow the handle of the Big Dipper to the south, by 9 PM you will be able to "arc to Arcturus", the brightest star of Spring and distinctly orange in color. Its color is an indication of its uniqueness. Its large speed and direction through the Milky Way suggests it was not formed with our Galaxy, but is a recent capture from the Sagittarius Dwarf Galaxy, a smaller satellite galaxy now being assimilated by our huge spiral galaxy. Many of its lost stars, like Arcturus, follow a band across the sky at about a 70 degree angle to our galactic plane.

Arcturus is at the tail of kite shaped Bootes, the celestial bear driver chasing the two bears from his flocks. Spike south then to Spica in Virgo. Here appearance to the Greeks marked the time to plant, for they associated Virgo with Persephone, daughter of Ceres of the Harvest, returning from six months underground with Pluto to now bless the growth and greening of the upperworld. So when Spica rises now at sunset in the SE, it is time to plant your peas! Likewise, when Persephone goes back down to Hades and disappears in the sun's glare in September SW skies, it is time to get your corn in the crib! This cycle goes back to the birth of agriculture.



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—Old Irish Blessing

Mid-Atlantic Weather Watch: Seasonable at first with a light wintry mix, then turning mild (1, 2, 3, 4, 5), becoming very warm with rain, then windy, cooler and more seasonable (6, 7, 8, 9, 10); seasonable and dry at first, then milder (11, 12, 13, 14, 15); wintry mix, followed by rain and then turning cooler and dry (16, 17, 18, 19, 20); rain at first, colder with light snow or flurries, then dry (21, 22, 23, 24, 25); turning wet with rain, followed by mild and dry weather

(26, 27, 28, 29).

Severe Weather Watch: No severe weather events are predicted by The Town and Country Almanack for the month of March.

The Garden: March is prime time for feeding shrubs and perennials that bloom in the Summer. Also, begin pruning early-flowering shrubs, roses, fruit trees, grapes, and raspberries. Start an all-purpose spray regimen. Be sure to feed well and use supplementary nitrogen in early Spring, in addition to yearly feeding.

Spray fruit trees with a dormant oil when temperatures exceed 40 degrees and before they leaf out. If you did not do so in February, apply a pre-emergent herbicide (that prevents crabgrass) to established lawns before March 15th. But if you plan to seed fescue lawns, do not apply a pre-emer-

gent. It will prevent the grass seed from germinating. It's also time to start tomatoes, lettuce, and many other vegetable seeds indoors. And do try to plant your peas on St. Patrick's Day!

The Farm: Best days for planting root crops (5, 6); weeding and stirring the soil (15, 16); planting above-ground crops (17, 18, 19); harvesting all crops (3, 4, 30, 31); setting hens and incubators (1, 2, 3, 17, 8, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31); slaughtering/butchering meat (10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15); transplanting (10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15); harvesting and storing grain (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9); the weaning of all small animals and livestock (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 30, 31).

J. Gruber's Thought For Today's Living

"Great things are not accomplished by idle dreams, but by many years of patient study"

COMPUTER Q&A

Spring clean-up for your PC!



Aysë Stenabaugh
Jester's Computer Repair

Most people won't go for an extended period of time without getting their vehicle maintained. While it may not be quite obvious to maintain your computer if you aren't the most tech-savvy and haven't had maintenance done you probably should. As you use technology, devices become bogged down and inundated with updates, pop-ups, and other annoyances that if fixed, would reduce stress and increase productivity! It's not that the physical devices are no longer working properly, it's more so like changing the oil in your car, it will continue to run when it's low or dirty but it won't run well and bigger problems could arise that may be avoidable with regular care. We've included information about a few of the things that we at Jester's Computer Services recommend you maintain and are included in our clean-up service.

Unwanted Programs whether installed intentionally or not are often set to run at startup which can hinder performance. If you allow children on your computer, you may not know what the programs are that they have installed or whether if that software could cause harm to your device. Sometimes you can just uninstall the program but other times it may take a skilled technician to locate and remove malicious software.

Updates are important to keep your device running smoothly. Updates help to ensure that any security risks that have been found and resolved are applied to your device. If your programs are out of date they may not function properly and sometimes they can even negatively affect the performance of your computer. Many dislike updates because the result can sometimes include change however, you have to weigh it out which is worse, a little change or keeping your device at risk?

Temporary files that can include files you opened but did not save, old update files that no longer have a use and temporary files created while browsing the web. None of the aforementioned include your personal data files and are simply taking up storage space on your hard drive. Data files won't slow your computer down but they do take up storage space and when a hard drive becomes too full the operating system will stop functioning properly.

Registry errors can be caused when you install and then uninstall a program or perform software updates. Since both are something that happens regularly, these errors are unavoidable. You may not even notice that there is a problem but once the errors are resolved, background operations are able to run more smoothly resulting in a better user experience.

Malicious software that is installed on your device may not be obvious to the average user. While viruses and potentially unwanted programs can appear unexpectedly on your computer, often users unknowingly allow them in. At Jester's Computer in addition to our technicians

Hardware, or your devices physical equipment, can wear out over time. Most commonly we see hard drives (where all your personal data is stored) fail after 5-7 years but they can certainly break down sooner. When you have your computer maintained, good technicians will check your hard drive to see if any corruption is found and if necessary, recommend a replacement before any data is lost.

removing any viruses or malicious software we provide educational materials to help you prevent common issues and, for those than need more one-on-one support, we offer individual classes as well.

Pop-ups, errors & conflicts that you encounter can often be resolved by regular maintenance as well. Often, we remember how simple computers used to be but we at the same time we forget just how much more we use our devices today. Since most of the things we use computers for also incorporate using

the internet, maintenance is more vital than ever.

If you haven't had your computer maintained in the last year Jester's Computers would love to support your technology needs! To reach us find us online at www.jesterscomputers.com on Facebook or by calling us at 717-642-6611. We are open 9 to 5 Monday through Friday with extended hours until 7 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays. No appointment is necessary and most services are completed within 24 business hours!

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FROM THE DESK OF CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES

Brenda Thiam (R)

We're a few weeks away from the primary election and our campaign is full speed ahead! Team Thiam is working to connect with voters, hear your concerns, and win this election to get to Congress to champion common sense policies. Though the journey to victory is paved with rocks, broken glass, and other debris, we're up for the work to claim victory as the Republican nominee after the primary election. Then, we're off to the general election in November to be elected as your representative in Congress for District 6. Will you join us to help get us across the finish line? We need many hands to get the work done.

Our current administration and the extreme policies they're

pushing have us in a chokehold with the border crisis, parental rights regarding education, wars in foreign lands, etc. Many have stated they can hardly believe this is where we are today. President Ronald Reagan asked a very important question during the debate of 1980. He asked, "Are you better off today than you were four years ago?" He also asked voters if they felt America was as safe as it was four years prior. We must ask ourselves these same questions today that President Reagan asked Americans to answer.

Many people must admit we were not in this place four years ago. As a special educator, I left the public school system in 2019 after nearly thirteen years. I spent time working alongside general

education teachers in the inclusive classroom to successfully educate students with autism and to ensure they were actively engaged during instruction. Parents trust their child's teacher and the school system to provide research-based instruction that focuses on reading, writing, math, science, and history. Before Covid, parents didn't worry about sensitive topics being addressed in the walls of their child's classroom. Since Covid and experiencing the lockdowns that were forced on us, education has turned upside down on its head and the far-left democrat agenda has taken the lead in classroom discussions, which catapulted education to a place we never imagined we'd be.

Parents must be partners with the teachers and the school system to properly educate students and

prepare them for life after k-12 education. Schools cannot leave parents in the wind when delicate and sensitive topics are presented in the classroom. Parents should be allowed to opt their child out of sensitive topics such as LGBTQ+ material and literature. In Montgomery County Public Schools, parents fought tooth and nail for their children to opt out of such content. A court issued a decision during the summer of 2023 that struck down a motion for families opting their child out of engaging in literature discussing LGBTQ+. I've been in the classroom and teachers often bring their own "flavor" to content that they're required to teach. This is when things can often go awry when personal beliefs are interjected into instruction.

Teachers must get back to the

basics of teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic and let parents deal with pronoun usage, gender-affirming discussions, and other sensitive topics that seem to have monopolized education. Most teachers simply want to teach and go home at the end of the day. They have a sincere desire to invest in a child's education and prepare them for post-secondary outcomes. Help me get to Congress to champion common-sense policies in education, such as protecting parental rights in education. With my experience in education and my doctorate in special education, I have a wealth of knowledge to lend as your next representative and I will work fervently on your behalf. I humbly ask for your vote on May 14th. Go to my website to learn more about me @ [brendathiam.com](https://www.brendathiam.com).

Lesley Lopes (D)

The opioid crisis has hit our state hard, but it has not hit the state evenly. Western Maryland has borne the brunt of this deadly emergency. From 2022 to 2023, Garrett County saw an increase in fatal overdoses of over 80%, higher than nearly any other jurisdiction across the state. This rise in fatalities is primarily driven by fentanyl, which is incredibly potent and was responsible for over 80% of fatal overdoses. Aside from fatalities, emergency visits have also increased in Western Maryland. Throughout our state, but especially in the 6th Congressional district, we need leadership on all levels of government to mitigate harm, reduce deaths, and hold those distributing these deadly drugs accountable.

As someone from a family with

a history of addiction and overdose, I know the pain of losing loved ones to overdose fatalities and experienced the long good-byes of slowly seeing a family member get lost in their addiction. That personal experience guides my work as a legislator, where I've prioritized treatment for substance users and gone after high level drug traffickers who have created the illegal pipeline for drugs in our communities.

This session in Annapolis, I've introduced several pieces of legislation intended to address the urgent crisis. The first is a change to our criminal law that will allow law enforcement to more easily target drug traffickers. Currently, our criminal penalties for money laundering requires evidence of proceeds of at least \$10,000 and illegal drugs. HB797, which I'm

proud to introduce with broad bipartisan support, would allow for easier prosecution of fentanyl dealers and criminal drug rings. It gives law enforcement and prosecutors special powers to charge drug dealers under that \$10,000 proceed limit with misdemeanor penalties if they are trafficking in fentanyl or similar products. It would also update Maryland's money laundering statute to allow for non-drug related crimes to be prosecuted if the proceeds exceed \$10,000 - not only stopping opioids but strengthening prosecution of other large scale criminal operations including human trafficking and financial crimes.

I am also proud to be leading on harm-reduction strategies. We know that addiction is a devastating disease, and we would like to help those suffering to get the support they need and reduce death. Our state has already led

on numerous harm reduction strategies, including making naloxone (also known as Narcan) more available. My bill HB1094 would continue this harm reduction work, allowing for testing strips to be available everywhere you can pick up Narcan. In this tough budget season, we can fund this program by using the money that big pharmaceutical companies were forced to pay our state in the Opioid Restitution Fund, which was created after a settlement by opioid manufacturers who peddled these addictive and deadly drugs. The opioid crisis continues to adapt as the landscape changes, and it is imperative that we continue to adapt with it. Funding new strategies to prevent death is a vital part of this effort.

The opioid crisis has been devastating to our state and our country. Our community health

workers and first responders have been faced with a crisis that continues to take away our friends and family, even as new strategies and response tools are developed. I've been working with lawmakers from every corner of Maryland who have seen the devastating consequences of fentanyl and opioids on our communities. However, to truly address the crisis, we need to do more, particularly for Western Maryland. We need continued cooperation on all levels of government to ensure that those on the ground have the support they need to eliminate opioid overdoses. I've been proud to work with my colleagues, and with advocates and law enforcement across the state, to find solutions to this challenge, but the work is far from over. We all must put in the work to tackle this crisis head on, to avoid losing any more lives.

April Delaney (D)

I am running for Congress because I carry a unique blend of life experiences that I believe will make me particularly effective for the people of the 6th District. With a background spanning both the public and private sectors, I am committed to addressing challenges through a "common sense, common ground" approach.

As a mother of four daughters, I understand the issues facing families. With over 30 years

of experience in media and tech, I have the expertise to assist small businesses in connecting and marketing globally. My 15-year leadership tenure at Common Sense Media has made me an expert on kids' online safety and the impact of media on children's health and well-being. In my recent role as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Communications in President Biden's Commerce Department, I spearheaded efforts to expand broad-

band access and digital equity, address online harassment and abuse, promote U.S. competitiveness through innovation, and bolster the security of our nation's networks.

I am deeply committed to Maryland's families and communities and want to ensure that the ongoing tech revolution strengthens community resilience. Through my experience, I understand that technology has both great potential and a need for trustworthiness and strong privacy protections in tech and AI tools. I know that there must be deliberate action and coalition-building to achieve these goals.

My vision extends to leveraging technology to drive economic growth in the 6th District. I understand the importance of strategic investments and capitalizing on the District's research and education assets. I will work to create job opportunities and prosperity across the region by

bringing economic development in line with climate legislation and tapping into local entrepreneurial spirit and private sector resources.

I am fully committed to restoring trust in our democracy, seeing it as essential to our nation's resilience. I pledge to foster open dialogue and prioritize the common good, drawing inspiration from America's historic role as a symbol of hope and potential.

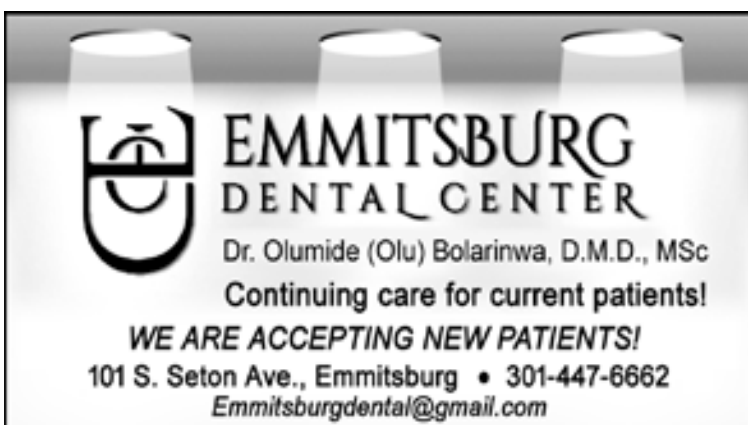
I cannot believe that my daughters are growing up in a world where they have fewer rights than I did. In Congress, I will work to restore reproductive rights for all.

Recognizing the divisive impact of past administrations, I will emphasize the importance of unity in addressing key challenges such as economic revitalization, technological advancement, reproductive rights, climate action, crime prevention, and education improvement. I will push

for pragmatic, consensus-driven solutions, and work to build coalitions to serve the families of the 6th District.

My advocacy for youth well-being led me to join Common Sense Media, where I work to ensure that young people thrive in the digital age. I spearheaded initiatives to bridge the digital divide, enhance digital literacy, and advocate for privacy protections. My tenure as Washington Director saw a strategic shift towards policies promoting K-12 digital literacy education.

My diverse life experiences equip me to be a hands-on, effective, and compassionate Member of Congress. With a foundation in both public and private sector experience, my approach revolves around practical problem-solving guided by common sense and a dedication to seeking consensus. I will use my skills and perspectives to address the needs and aspirations of Maryland's families and communities.



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FROM THE DESK OF SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES

Celia Reidler

With more than 25 years of public school teaching experience and having raised three children who attended Frederick County public schools, long-time county resident Cecelia Reidler wants to put her knowledge of the education system to work in support of the changing academic and social needs of Frederick County students.

"I am committed to closing the achievement gap among all our students," said Reidler, who recently launched her campaign to be elected to the Frederick County Public Schools Board of Education. "Closing the achievement gap means that all students demonstrate academic progress throughout their school career.

"Frederick County has an increas-

ingly diverse student population, and it is essential to foster a school culture where all students are served," Reidler explained. "The achievement gap is the difference between the academic performance of different social and economic student groups."

According to Reidler, the Maryland State Department of Education designed a School Report Card that measures every child's growth in math, reading, language arts, English Language proficiency and the sciences. These report cards help ensure that all children are being served and are making academic progress. "We want all of our children to be prepared to succeed in college and a career regardless of race and family income," said Reidler.

As both a classroom teacher and a

department head, she fostered equity, inclusion and excellence in teaching and as a department head challenged all educators she worked with to do the same. The Maryland Blueprint for Education, a world-class piece of legislation passed in 2021, serves as a master plan for administrators, teachers, staff and board members to ensure that all children have an excellent education. "I am excited to be part of this innovative initiative for Frederick County," said Reidler.

"I have taught for many years on the front lines of our public schools, working with both students, teachers, administrators and parents alike," said Reidler. She believes this first-hand experience will serve her well on the Board of Education as it navigates the many opportunities and decisions that lie ahead, especially with the imple-

mentation of the Maryland Blueprint for Education and all future Board decisions and issues.

"There is always room for improvement, but Frederick County Schools are doing well and will continue to improve with dedicated teachers, administrators, staff and board members," Reidler said. "I would love to be part of a premier school system and contribute in a different way from what I did as a teacher. I believe in public education, and I believe in the potential of all children to grow and achieve."

Reidler has been a teacher in Frederick, Howard and Montgomery Counties, giving her a wide range of experience with different school systems and diverse student and parent populations. "I understand that truth and transparency are critical to attaining the best outcomes and a working

relationship with all the stakeholders in a school system," said Reidler. "I would include more community listening sessions and also go to the schools to hear from school personnel. Parents, teachers, administrators and staff are all partners in our children's education."

Reidler has received numerous awards during her teaching career, including the U.S. Dept. of Education Green Ribbon award, a Montgomery County service award, and acclaim by having her students reach the Science Olympiad as State Finalist. She has a B.A. and M.S. and holds additional teaching and leadership certificates. Her volunteer activities include Be Smart For Kids, St. Katherine Drexel, the Frederick Police Department Chief's Community Advisory Board, and Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America.

Jaime Brennan

My name is Jaime Brennan, and I'm running as a common sense conservative for Board of Education. I'm a Certified Public Accountant with 22 years of experience and served on the Board of Directors of the Frederick Classical Charter School, the #1 charter elementary school in Maryland, according to US News and World Report and Niche.com.

FCPS has a total budget of almost \$1 billion per year, and I aim to use my experience to help get more money to teachers and into classrooms. If we're being honest, we need to acknowledge our schools are struggling. Despite nearly \$1 billion in spending, student achievement has declined for years.

Imagine a class of 20 tenth graders. One of them could be yours. Only one in twenty are proficient in both math and English. The other 19 will have limited opportunities with such limited skills. Even in lower grade levels, only roughly half our students or less are proficient.

Being asked to take on duties that fall far outside of teaching, educators are increasingly frustrated and overwhelmed and must respond to an epidemic of mental illness among students. These kids aren't statistics. They are our sons and daughters. We must ask the question: Is this the best our schools can do to equip our children for the future?

Imagine a school system with higher standards and a healthier envi-

ronment—a school system in which students were excited to attend and teachers were empowered to do what they do best. Imagine if Frederick County's public schools collaborated with parents, students, teachers, and the entire community to rally around a mission to make our schools truly world class. That's exactly what I want to accomplish if elected.

What does it mean to be world class? Take our best math students, those in the top 14%. If they went to school in Singapore, they'd be considered average there. Becoming world-class is possible. It has been done before. Singapore wasn't always world class. They worked for it. We can do the hard work, too, not just in math but in all subjects.

I'm proposing that FCPS adopt a simpler, more rigorous curriculum,

one that emphasizes the academic fundamentals of reading, writing, and mathematics. A simpler, more focused curriculum means students can achieve mastery and meet higher standards. We need to use proven programs in every subject, such as scientifically based reading instruction.

I believe our teacher salaries could be the highest in the state, but only if we pursue a fiscally responsible path that gets more money to teachers and classrooms. Less than half of our staff are teachers. Over the last four years, FCPS over-hired relative to enrollment, increasing central office by 37% at a time when enrollment only increased 7.7%. FCPS hired over 1,100 full time equivalent positions, yet class sizes have not decreased. This misallocated hir-

ing reduced the money available for raises, which I will prioritize.

In this short article, I can't cover all of my platform, but want to thank the Emmitsburg-Thurmont News-Journal and the Woodsboro-Walkersville News-Journal for giving me the opportunity to introduce myself to you through a series of articles starting now and continuing up until the primary election on May 14th.

For readers who would like more information or are interested in helping my campaign, please go to brennanforboard.com. If you are interested in working towards truly world-class schools for our children, I hope you'll vote for me on May 14th and send me an email at jaime@jb4boe.com. I look forward to hearing from you!

Join us for our 18th Annual SPRING CRAFT, VENDOR & YARD SALE EVENT!

Saturday, May 4th - 7 a.m. - 2 p.m.



Vendors Needed!

Vendors should contact Sheila Wantz at 410-751-1200



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“Our waterways — the Chesapeake Bay, the Potomac River, and the countless other rivers and creeks — are essential to a healthy environment and our economy.”

DAVID TRONE

DEMOCRAT FOR U.S. SENATE

If you ask any Marylander about their childhood, chances are they'll have a story or two about the water. Fishing, crabbing, sailing, or swimming - our state's environmental health and economy depend on our waterways.

Our Economy and Health Depend on Clean Water and Air

Marylanders know our commitment to the environment should not be a political issue. It is a defining characteristic of what it means to be a Marylander — a deep respect, admiration, and commitment to protecting our environment. This begs the question: if we acknowledge that we care so much about our environment, why haven't we done more to protect it?

We Must Take Action and Get the Job Done

I'm proud of my voting record to protect our environment. I don't take a penny in contributions from any PAC, Lobbyist, or Corporation - and that gives me the independence to crack down on corporate polluters and vote for measures to turn back climate change. In the U.S. Senate, I'll vote to encourage more electric vehicles, for a 50% reduction in greenhouse gases by 2030, to hold corporate polluters responsible, and to ban new drilling for fossil fuels on public lands.

Teaching Our Children That Our Environment Matters

Most importantly, we need to educate our children about how much our environment matters. We can teach our kids about the damage that has been caused throughout our lives and generations before us. We can teach them about sustainability and the role that they can play in the solution. And we can teach them how deeply ingrained our waterways are in our state's culture.

DAVID TRONE
U.S. SENATE

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Paid for by David Trone for Maryland.