

# Emmitsburg NEWS-JOURNAL

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

JANUARY 2025

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## NEWS

### "Envision Emmitsburg" Moves Forward

Under the watchful eye of the Town Planner, Emmitsburg's 10-year plan is slowly taking shape. **Page 2**

### Carroll Valley Passes Budget Without Tax Increase

The Borough Council voted 5 to 2 to keep the current tax rate as is. **Page 3**

### Developer Seeks Annexation Of Simmer Property

For the second time, the developer of the Simmer farm has requested it be annexed into the Town limits. **Page 4**

### Taneytown To Hold Workshop On Main Street Program

Workshop will allow council to systematically work through the 21 recommendations to restart the Main Street Program. **Page 5**

## COMMENTARY

### Words From Winterbilt

Predictions for a new year. **Page 10**

### The Bulwark

Actually, Never Trumpers were right. **Page 10**

### The Liberal Patriot

Hating the other side doesn't work for Democrats. **Page 11**

## ARTICLES

### The Book Of Days

The history and traditions of "Twelfth Day." **Page 13**

### Ecology

A look at some of our local winter wonders. **Page 14**

### Science Matters

Meet the human family. **Page 16**

### Gardening

Creating structure in your garden. **Page 18**

### Humor

The Great Taneytown Mule Chase. **Page 22**

### Teacher Talk!

Making even more traditions. **Page 31**

### Cooking

Some great recipes to kick off the new year! **Page 32**

### Four Years At The Mount

Reflecting on interactions that had profound influence on one's life. **Page 34**

## Jean Cadle, Founder of the Emmitsburg Dispatch, dies

The paper that you hold in your hands at this moment would not exist had it not been for inspiration provided by Jean and Bo Cadle. Jean Douglas Cadle, founder and editor of the News-Journal's predecessor, the Emmitsburg Dispatch, died on December 1 in Creve Coeur, Missouri at the age of 90.

For those of you who knew Jean, she was warm and gracious and had an infectious laugh. Dianne Walbrecker, a writer for the Emmitsburg Dispatch, captured Jean beautifully when she said, "Jean had an amazing ability to see the glass half full, to look at a situation and see the positive aspects."

In Frederick High School she was known as "Jeannie with the light brown hair," her effervescent smile, which graced anyone who met her, shined brightest for her crush in high school, William "Bo" Cadle. As fate would have it, she married Bo 40 years later as a widow, and together they began the Emmitsburg Dispatch. Dianne said, "Both Bo and Jean were inspirations to me, illustrating community service in a small town and really making a difference in people's lives."

Jean also created welcome packages for new Emmitsburg residents, gave time and energy to the Emmitsburg Presbyterian Church, and volunteered wherever needed. One parishioner said that "Jean was probably the kindest, most grounded person I have ever known."

Jean Read Douglas was born on January 31, 1934, in Passaic, New Jersey to George and Corrie Douglas. They moved to Frederick where she and her family lived in a "great house on the hill," and generations of Douglas' spent so many wonderful hours together. After graduating high school, Jean attended Wilson College in Chambersburg, for one year, where she was voted class president.

She married Howard Streeter in 1953, and they lived in the Washington, DC area where her husband served as a television news correspondent and their 5 children were born. In 1962 they moved to St. Louis, Howard working as a TV news director and anchor, while Jean was an extraordinarily loving and involved mother to her five kids.

Howard died suddenly in 1975, and in the years following, Jean's incredible compassion and strength shone brightly as she raised the children alone and went back to school completing her bachelor's degree and then her master's degree, leading to her work as the curator of the Charles Lindbergh Collections at the Missouri Historical Society.

That role prepared her well for the years she and Bo would run the Emmitsburg Dispatch, getting to know the community they loved so well. Jean loved the readers and all of the volunteers who helped to make their vision a success. She loved collaborating with Bo out of their warm home by the creek, where their office was fitted with a special fold up table so they could lay out the newspaper each month in painstaking detail.

Jean tended the newspaper as she did people, with warmth, compas-



Jean Cadle 1934 - 2024

sion, and always, an open heart and mind. Jean and Bo were so touched by the way people came out to support them. It was the culmination of a dream to bring a community together, and what a dream it was, a dream still living on today in the writers and staff of the Emmitsburg News-Journal.

See page 25 for the story on the Cadles and the founding of the Dispatch

## 11th annual Gateway to the Cure raises \$20,250

Thurmont's Economic Director, Vickie Grinder, presented the final report for the 11th Annual Gateway to the Cure effort at the December 3rd Town Council meeting, announcing that the Town had raised \$20,250 for the Hurwitz Breast Cancer Fund.

Vickie lamented that, while the Town was unable to procure the popular pink light bulbs, other merchandise, such as t-shirts, sweatshirts, etc., was available for sale to support the cause. The Town also reintroduced mugs for \$10 that were sold out two years ago.

While the pink light bulbs have been the staple of fundraising efforts over the past years, Grinder said that their lighting of porches throughout the Town every evening during the month of October served as an important and visible reminder to all that the Gateway to the Cure goal of stamping out Breast Cancer.

Pumpkins for Pink, a pumpkin painting contest, also returned this year thanks to Commissioner Wayne Hooper. According to Grinder, the contest saw its biggest outcome in its three years with 14 pumpkins entered. "We're involving the businesses so much already and we're so appreciative of all the businesses, but this gives children a way to help," Hooper said.

Money was also raised through the Gateway for the Cure's golf tournament and 5k run, where active residents could show their support in the fight against breast cancer. Both had great turnouts, with the golf tournament selling out for teams one month before the event.

During the Check Presentation Event, Grinder thanked Town residents for their support, whether through a monetary donation or by participating in an event. "This is what a small town does," she said. "We are a small town and it never ceases to amaze me the successes that come out of the Town of Thurmont." Grinder also gave credit to the many local businesses who contributed to the success of the fundraising.

Mayor John Kinnaid presented the ceremonial check to Patty Hurwitz on behalf of the Hurwitz Breast Cancer Fund at the meeting. The Hurwitz Breast Cancer Fund began in 1999, after Hurwitz was diagnosed with Breast Cancer. The Fund, started by Patty and her husband Jeff, is used to support early cancer detection methods at the Stockman Cancer Institute in Frederick, which provides access to the diagnostics that County residents need without having to travel far from home.



Once again, members of the community open their hearts and wallets to help efforts in finding a cure for breast cancer.

Hurwitz spoke on the importance of furthering breast cancer research, while also mentioning how far it has come since the fund started 25 years ago. "Right now, Frederick Health is just about ready to launch a blood test for not only Breast Cancer, but a number of other cancers as well and that's all because of our fund," she said. She also mentioned new clinical trials and other developments happening in Frederick County.

Hurwitz also noted that other towns, like Emmitsburg and Brunswick, have taken notice

of Thurmont's efforts and have stated their own programs to raise awareness too, as well as funds for efforts to eliminate Breast Cancer during the month of October.

While the efforts of other towns to emulate the efforts of Thurmont to raise funds for Breast Cancer research was well received, everyone knows that Thurmont's Gateway to the Cure will always be leading the pack, charting new pathways to raise awareness and funds with a grand total of \$187,400 contributed to the Hurwitz Breast Cancer Fund since 2014.

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# EMMITSBURG NEWS

## "Envision Emmitsburg" 2.0

Town Planner Najila Ahsan introduced Chapters Eight and Nine for the 2025 Comprehensive Plan, titled "Envision Emmitsburg," in December. The goal of the 10-Year Plan is to encapsulate the residents' vision of what changes should be made to ensure a better Emmitsburg in the future. This has been a main project for the Planning Commission for months.

At previous meetings, the Commission discussed the first seven chapters, which include an introduction, a review of community input and vision, population and housing demographic trends, addressing affordable housing concerns, analyzing the local economy and fiscal health to generate ways to increase revenue in Town, focusing on the environment and natural resources to preserve waterways, vegetative buffers and unique landscapes, detailing land use and community design, and introduction of the growth boundary area (GBA) and the growth opportunity area (GOA).

Chapter Eight discusses community facilities by identifying the overall character of public and semipublic buildings, lands and facilities. More specifically, the chapter begins by addressing educational institutions, including primary and secondary schools, all the way to higher education institutions. It discusses the current conditions of the schools as well as the current and projected capacities.

Member Timothy O'Donnell commented on the need to improve the physical structure of all the Town's schools, but primarily Emmitsburg Elementary and Catoctin High Schools. "Our kids come away from their experience at the high school feeling like they are second class because the structure is not conducive to its goal," he said. The main reason for this feeling is the lack of windows in the classrooms. Member Dan Garnitz agreed, commenting on how he is a long-time Emmitsburg resident and how the schools have always been "shortchanged."

Chapter Eight also addresses the current condition of the Town's parks (Community, Memorial, Silo Hill playground and North Gate) as well as the Trail at Rainbow Lake. It discusses the Town's civic spaces, which include the Town Office, Community Center, library and the Seton Center. The Vigilant Hose Company, Police Station and emergency system communications are included under the public safety section of the chapter where healthcare options are also addressed.

Public assistance opportunities such as the food bank, the Catoctin Pregnancy Center and the Seton Center are also addressed in Chapter Eight. The last item discussed is the current and future state of the Town's water and sewer infrastructure systems.


The end of the chapter outlines the goals that have been discussed

at the Commission's various public workshops. These include implementing enough public safety and emergency services for the future, protecting green spaces, supporting the Town's vulnerable population by expanding community services and ensuring a sustainable and efficient water system to accommodate future growth.

Ahsan mentioned that the one goal that is still in discussion is strengthening the collaboration between the Town and the Mount for student employment and childcare opportunities.

Resident Diane Walbreaker, who has been active in the Comprehensive Plan's creation, introduced to the Commission a simple summary of the Plan's goals, objectives and strategies with the intention of simplifying the entire plan for the public. "These are the things that people can wrap their heads around," she said. The summary was well received by the Commission.

The Commission also discussed Chapter Nine of the Comprehensive Plan, which is the "Municipal Growth" chapter. It analyzes land use and the demands and potential effects on public facilities due to projected residential population growth. Ahsan said she used base data from the 2020 census to determine the projected population numbers. O'Donnell was concerned about using numbers that were gathered during COVID time. He questioned



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using a baseline that was impacted by COVID because "the students weren't here and that is a chunk of the population that is not represented."

Nevertheless, Ahsan said the population was expected to grow at a rate of 8.43% through 2040. With these numbers in mind, she

said the Town will need to increase its public facilities, primarily its water capacity. "The number of taps that the Town currently has isn't enough for the projected residential developments."

Since Chapter Nine is still being worked on, there are no goals listed at this time.

## News-Briefs...

### Design Bid For West Main St. Water Line Replacement Approved

The Planning Commission approved the design bid on the West Main St. and Waynesboro Pike waterline replacement project in December. The bid allows the winning company to begin designing the project that will replace 5,200 linear feet of deteriorating six-inch, four-inch, and two-inch unlined cast iron pipes from the intersection of Frailey

Rd. and West Main, up to where West Main and Waynesboro Pike meet.

This is the next project on the priority list after the Depaul St. and North Seton Ave. waterline replacements. According to Town Manager Cathy Willets, the section to be replaced suffers from low water pressure in the west end of town and has had 17 known leaks fixed in the last five years. "It's just awful," she said, when describing the condition of the pipes.

The scope of the project will eliminate undersized and aging infrastructure. The aged cast iron pipes suffer from a condition called "tuberculation," where bacteria found in the water reacts to the iron found in the pipeline's inner walls, resulting in buildup that forms on the inside of the pipe. The buildup causes reduced pipe diameter and brown water when it becomes dislodged during high force water flow.

Six bids came back for the project and were sent on to be reviewed by the Town's engineer, RK&K Civil Engineering. The engineers recommended using Fox and Associates, a firm that the Town has used before. "The Town has a longstanding working relationship with Fox and Associates," said Willets. "They are aware of the needs of the Town and the current waterline

system." Their bid came in at \$206,095 to design the project.

Willets said the Town has the funds to begin the project because they chose not to do the water meter replacement project; however, they will need to obtain State funding and additional grants for the work. The USDA does cover the engineering costs as part of grant funding. The design bid was approved by unanimous vote.

### Sewer Line Camera Project Approved

One of Mayor Frank Davis' specific projects addressed in the Fiscal Year 25 budget was to use cameras to delve into the sewer lines to determine which pipes would need relined. The intent of using cameras is to document root blockages, cracks, punctures, corrosion, uneven or unaligned

pipes, hidden leaks, and other damage to the sewer lines. Damaged pipes allow "Inflow and Infiltration" issues, where rainwater infiltrates the pipes and is then processed by the sewer treatment plant. Davis said, "After the project is completed, it will be saving us money every day because some reports show 60% of wild water is going through the sewer plant that doesn't need to be treated."

The project would be solely funded by the Town, with \$100,000 set aside for FY25 for the camera portion. An additional \$125,000 has been set aside for any relining needed in FY-24 and another \$75,000 in FY-25. The Council decided if more funding over \$100,000 is needed, the project must be revisited by the Council for approval.

The Town has two bids to begin the projects that are itemized per specific action. Town staff requested the bids be specific to show breakdown of costs between lateral connections, the main lines and any traffic control necessary while the work is being done. Reybold Construction Technologies had the lowest estimates per linear foot and was recommended by Town staff. The estimate from Reybold does lock them in for the camera operations, however each individual project will have a separate estimate. Reybold was approved by the Council unanimously.



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# FAIRFIELD/CARROLL VALLEY NEWS

## Carroll Valley avoids tax increase

Carroll Valley residents will ring in the new year knowing their borough tax rate will remain stagnant. The borough council voted 5-2 during their meeting in December to adopt the 2025 budget, which keeps the rates the same as 2024.

Before the vote, Councilman John Schubring said he opposed the budget based on last year's tax increase of one-quarter mill. Councilman David Lillard said the 2024 increase was about \$32 per resident. The council raised taxes in 2024 to add a fourth

full-time police officer to the borough's force. John Schubring then attempted to block the tax increase during final adoption after not making comments during preliminary approval in November. Council President Richard Mathews reminded Schubring that last year's tax increase was the first in 12 years.

Carroll Valley's 2025 tax rates are: real estate, 2.75 mills, fire/EMS, 0.25%, earned income, 0.50%, and admissions, 0.5%.

Mathews also pointed out that the

borough's tax rate is the lowest of three property taxes residents pay. Bills issued early in the year include the borough and County of Adams. In the summer, residents receive a bill for Fairfield Area School District property taxes.

"I think a lot of residents are confused and think that every time the school taxes go up, or the county taxes go up, that Carroll Valley is raising the taxes," he said.

Adams County commissioners voted in December to increase county property taxes 15.8%, according to

information posted on the county website.

Catherine Schubring also voted to oppose the budget. Before his comments on the budget, John Schubring denied his vote was in opposition to the police force.

"I strongly support our police department and the efforts Cliff (Weiker, chief) and others are making," he said.

About 30 minutes earlier, John Schubring called for an independent investigation into the Carroll Valley Police Department and Mayor Ron Harris. He said he believes an officer

followed a former council member's daughter in April because the former council member opposed the 2024 budget. Schubring did not name the former member, but Kari Buterbaugh was the only council member besides John Schubring to oppose the budget.

John Schubring believes the department's investigation into the alleged April incident was flawed.

"I believe possible misuse of police authority has been going on for years in Carroll Valley Borough," he said.

No one commented on John Schubring's remarks.

## Borough discusses traffic safety

Traffic safety was the focus of public comments during the December Carroll Valley Borough Council Meeting.

Steve Semiatin, a former member of the council, suggested council add reflectors to the borough's main roadways. He acknowledged adding street lights would be an expensive endeavor, but hopes the reflectors are a more budget-friendly alternative.

Semiatin also sparked discussion about a topic that has emerged several times in the past 20 years—the safety of the intersec-

tion of Routes 116 and 16.

Semiatin, as many others before him have, proposed a light or stop sign where the borough's two main highways meet. Council members agreed with him, however the road is controlled by the State of Pennsylvania. Borough Manager Dave Hazlett said PennDOT only pays attention when, not if, someone dies.

"Unless there is a fatality, those intersections don't become a priority," he said.

Hazlett said PennDOT may be more open to a conversation if the

borough agreed to fund the project. Hazlett estimated a traffic signal would cost \$250,000 but emphasized that number was only a guess.

Police Chief Clifford Weikert told the board that he and his officers will increase enforcement at the intersection of Routes 116 and 16. He will also place a borough-owned speed sign that shows drivers how fast they are traveling. Weikert confirmed Pennsylvania law prohibits the borough from installing electronic speed enforcement.

### Laird Resolution

The council unanimously supported a resolution supporting a state law named after one of their own. State Sen. Doug Mastriano recently introduced "Joshua's Law," which will extend first-responder death benefits to those who lived in Pennsylvania at the time of their death and perished in the line of duty in another state. The bill is named after the late Carroll Valley resident Joshua Lair, who lost his life from injuries sustained while battling a house fire Aug. 11, 2021 in Ijamsville, Md.

"This is the last place of all places that we should be split-

ting hairs when we have someone who dies of heroism, whether it is in Pennsylvania or Maryland," Councilman John Schubring said.

Hazlett noted the bill would extend to Carroll Valley residents who volunteer for Fairfield and Fountaindale volunteer fire companies. Since the borough is on the Pennsylvania/Maryland border, volunteers from those departments often respond to incidents when additional manpower is needed.

Mastriano first introduced the bill in October 2021. He plans to reintroduce it during the Pennsylvania General Assemblies 2024-25 legislative session.

## Liberty moves forward on police enhancements

Liberty Township Police Officer-in-Charge Terry DeWitt is continuing his pursuit to professionalize the department. During their December meeting, township supervisors unanimously approved DeWitt's request to purchase spike strips.

DeWitt has successfully solicited several donations for the department since he took charge in July, including rifles from Trip Wire South and car decals from Graphcom. DeWitt told the supervisors that he is aiming to modernize the department and asked for permission to purchase spike strips for a car. After much discussion, supervisors unanimously agreed to purchase the strips.

"It's not the fact of how many times we have a chase," DeWitt said. "It is when the chase occurs, how many people do we want to put in danger?"

Supervisor Bobby Keiholtz asked DeWitt about future requests. He responded that he wants automated external defibrillators and lockout kits for all vehicles. He did not provide an estimate for the items, but said he believes they are essential tools for a rural police department such as Liberty. DeWitt said he and his officers are often the first responders on the scene of a 9-1-1 call. The American Heart Association reports AEDs

can increase the chances of survival for people experiencing sudden cardiac arrest by up to 75% if used within the first few minutes.

"We are on the street; even though you have an ambulance crew sitting at the station, it still takes them two minutes to get out the door," DeWitt said.

Barlow said he believes the township can acquire state grant money to fund AEDs.

The officer-in-charge also

reported that Patrolman Kenneth Hassinger has completed his field training. Hassinger is a former Pennsylvania State Trooper and former head of the Cumberland County Prosecutor's Drug Unit.

### Tax Increase

The supervisors also unanimously approved its 2025 budget, which includes a half-mill tax increase. The supervisors cited the need to rebuild the township's reserves

while maintaining roads and keeping pace with increased costs.

The increase will cost Liberty Township residents about \$50 per \$100,000 of assessed property. The increase will allow the township to add \$84,173 to its reserve account.

The 2025 budget proposal totals about \$500,000. Barlow warned that \$250,000 is left in the allocated reserve account, or about six months of township operating expenses. The township's unallocated reserve account, which covers unexpected expenses, will be down to \$50,000.

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## THURMONT NEWS

# Downtown revitalization survey to be mailed to residents

With the Master Plan currently under review, one topic that has been a constant talking point is the revitalization of Thurmont's downtown area. After finalizing the goals for implementing the Town's Master Plan in August, the Commission held a public workshop in September to specifically discuss the revitalization of downtown. At this meeting, Chair Meredith Wivell posed three key questions to be discussed among the public and commission members. The answers will be used in the construction of a survey to be distributed to residents in December.

These questions included what the downtown revitalization would involve and how it should look, what regulatory barriers could be changed to make the downtown a better place to live, work or recreate in and what impresses residents the most about downtown Thurmont today.

Residents at September's workshop celebrated the historic charm of Thurmont's downtown area and the need for sustainable growth according to the Master Plan. The Town will be

looking into grants like the Strategic Demolition Fund, a program where rundown or derelict buildings can be rehabilitated into more useful properties or for more useful purposes, and the Maryland Facade Improvement Program, where funds are awarded to improve the exteriors of businesses located in Maryland Sustainable Communities. Some businesses have already been awarded funding by the facade program, including Studio 24E and the Catocin Medical Center.

The Town's Main Street Manager Vicki Grinder has been a driving force in the revitalization of the downtown area. One of her celebrated accomplishments is keeping the downtown buildings occupied instead of leaving them empty and abandoned. She, along with Town staff, is creating a survey to determine what changes the residents want to see in the downtown area.

One consideration Town staff suggested is allowing the first floor of a downtown building to be residential. Allowing residential units would decrease the amount of empty first

floors and increase foot traffic to the downtown area. For now, only a business may occupy the first floor, however many buildings remain empty because of this rule.

Another key aspect for improving visitation to the downtown area is the many events and activities that happen throughout the year. Suggestions by commission members included low-cost activities and events designed to draw people downtown without costing a lot of cash for the Town or businesses to implement and won't be too costly to stop people from attending. These suggestions included a scavenger hunt and "Where's Waldo" activity. One resident pointed out the lack of a place to socialize, such as a coffee shop or cafe, asking Town Staff for ways to create a more social aspect to the downtown area where visitors would want to stay and socialize, as well as shop.

The survey is expected to be a supplement in all residents' electric bills in December. The Commission also discussed handing out copies at the various winter events in the area.

### SHA to build a new bridge on RT 77

The Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration will be holding public open house on January 21st to present information about a project to replace the bridge on RT 77 (Rocky Ridge Rd.) over Beaver Branch, and under the Maryland Midland Railway in Rocky Ridge. The bridge was constructed in 1928, and is safe, but is nearing the end of a useful service life. Work will include replacing the bridge over beaver branch with a wider bridge and making drainage improvements.

To expedite the construction, the State Highway Administration will close Route 77 and a detour will be in place for approximately eight months. Giving the existence bridge now with and confined work area, closing route 77 will be deemed the best way to maximize safe, work zones, and ensure sufficient construction time. The detour will be directed eastbound

and westbound motorist to use Route 76 – Motter Station Rd., to Appolds Road, and then on Old Frederick Road. Trucks will be detoured to Route 550 (Woodsboro-Creagerstown Road) and Route 194 (Woodsboro Pike).

Construction is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2025 and completed by December 2026. The State Highway Administration will make every effort to complete this project as quickly as possible or minimizing impacts to residence, businesses and motorist.

The workshop will be held at the activities building of the Rocky Ridge Volunteer Fire Company. The public workshop will provide attendees and opportunity to view design details. Maps and displays will highlight the proposed improvements.

State Highway Administration representatives will be available to listen to your feedback and answer project related questions.

# Concept plan for Mountain Gate Business Park presented

A concept plan for the Mountain Gate Business Park was presented to the Planning Commission at their December meeting. The Plan included a proposed road east of the new Goodwill to be accessed via Thurmont Boulevard. The intention of the discussion was to give the applicant guidance on how the Commission wishes the project to proceed before submitting any final plans.

Two parcels make up the entirety of the Business Park property, one where the newly constructed Goodwill is located and another at an approximately 18-acre parcel beside it. The areas of concern are in the second parcel, which include a planned road connection to Thurmont Boulevard, a seven-acre forest retention area where no construction is allowed, a vacant lot zoned general business that borders the Sunoco,

and residential lot "Oak Forest," a 36-unit townhouse development accessed via East Moser Road, all of which have been proposed since 2022. Currently, there is a stone road through the middle for power company access.

According to Town Planner Kelly Duty, the applicant's intent of putting the 30-foot-wide roadway in is to create direct access to the vacant lot that borders the Sunoco, allowing for future development. The access road would also act as a second access to the Goodwill store and has the potential to be a truck entrance for the Sunoco, if they desire it to be.

When the roadway was originally drawn in the plans, it followed a much more direct route. However, as was discovered during the construction of the Goodwill, the initial path would destroy sensitive

wetlands. A decision was made to shift the path of the road to the north to minimize the impact on the wetlands, but unfortunately it will still cross over two streams on its new path that will be rerouted through large culvert pipes.

Brennan said that the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) suggested the road be moved to completely avoid the wetland area, but if that was done, then the intersection at Thurmont Boulevard would be offset. This option did not appeal to Town staff, as they wished for a square intersection. As a compromise, the roadway's path was edited.

When Duty asked if the developer would consider extending the road as far as Oak Forest, property owner Craig McCleaf explained that the Mountain

Gate Plaza Truck Stop was for sale and had two interested buyers. One was interested in buying the entire corner, to include the Goodwill, the Mountain Gate Shopping Center and the other parcels. The second buyer, who is a better fit for the Town according to McCleaf, is a smaller developer. The projected cost of the road is \$250,000, but even with McCleaf's offer to split the cost with the developer, "This developer is starting to teeter totter," he said.

This is not the first time the Commission has requested the road be extended to Oak Forest. Previous Commission Chair Randy Cabbage requested a second means of access to the development, specifically for emergency services. While the smaller developer is willing to make this happen, the financial implications may prove too difficult to overcome.

Another request by Town staff was to include a sidewalk on at least one side of the road to accommodate foot traffic associated with either the current or future retail shops. According to McCleaf, it's a possibility to extend Goodwill's sidewalk in the future.

After many attempts by Town staff to encourage the interested developer to look into extending the road, McCleaf said, "I'm basically telling you to not get your hopes up. This property will be sold no matter what. I could sell the property for the same amount to a different developer and not build the road at all."

With the Town staff's comments in hand, McCleaf and Brennan will be reviewing the Concept Plan before presenting a final plan to the Commission at a future meeting.

# Simmers Property annexation moves to P&Z Commission

The Board of Commissioners allowed a new annexation request titled "Albert Meadows" for the Simmers Property to move forward to the Planning and Zoning Commission for discussion and action after years of being denied.

The proposed annexation was first presented to the Town's Planning Commission in January 2021, which

found the potential annexation in conformance with Town Code. In September 2022, they voted to annex the 16.7 acres of farmland into town limits and rezone it as high-density residential development. Residents pushed for the decision to be put to a referendum after voicing concerns that the high-density residential development did not match the feel of Thurmont's small-town

atmosphere. The original plan for the Simmers property included at least 172 residential units, an assisted-living facility and a daycare center.

In November 2022, leaders of Evasion Thurmont, a group formed following the September vote, submitted a petition with 1,253 signatures to the Town Council, all opposed to the annexation. The petition was successful with the requisite number of signatures to trigger the requirement that the annexation be voted on in a referendum by the residents. In January 2023, residents of Thurmont voted on the Annexation Resolution 2022-03 and the annexation was overturned.

Daniel Cross of Cross & Company, returned to Thurmont on Dec. 12 to present the latest concept to the Board. The company held a non-governmental meeting this past summer to introduce two new concepts and capture residents' opinion. The newest plan took residents' feedback into consideration by decreasing the number of units, therefore potentially decreasing the amount of additional

traffic and preserving Thurmont's "small-town atmosphere."

The plan for a multi-generational development includes only 100 units, a significant decrease from previous plans. The development will provide a mix of single-family houses, 3-story townhouses with garages and two-story villa-style housing with garages. Cross intends for these dwellings to provide more affordable, entry-level family housing to help bring new students to the public schools. He also is passionate about providing affordable housing for community workers.

He believes these options will benefit not only first-time home buyers looking to move out of their parents' house but also seniors who are empty-nesters looking to downsize to a more accessible home, based on phone calls he received from Thurmont residents wanting to get out of the home where they had raised their children. "Both Lauren Potter, my assistant, and I remember the phone call from someone who said she hadn't been on the second floor of her house in years," Cross said.

The plan also includes a senior independent living and an assisted living facility, to make it easier for senior citizens to find affordable housing. Unlike other retirement communities, Cross & Company is proposing a retirement community that does not require funds up front, but rather works as a "straight" rental agreement. "I believe there's an underserved population in Maryland of senior citizens who are not going to be able to pay their way into continuing care retirement communities if they need 250,000 or \$350,000 or \$400,000 to walk in the door," Cross said, before clarifying that they will need to determine a rental term to ensure the "economics works."

The farmland property owned by Patricia Simmers is located southeast of Apples Church Road, Roddy Road and Eyer Road intersection. It consists of approximately 24.5 acres. Seven acres are located in town and currently zoned R-5, while the other 17 acres lie in the county and are agriculturally zoned. The newest plan, presented at the Dec. 12 meeting, will span over the entire 24 acres.

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## TANEYTOWN NEWS

# Main Street workshop scheduled for January

After the introduction of 21 recommendations regarding the future of the Main Street program to the City Council in November, the council agreed to hold a workshop dedicated completely to discussing the Main Street programs future for the third week of January.

Former Main Street Manager and Current Economics Director Jay Meashey and City Manager Jim Wieprecht created the list of recommendations. They used the suggested format by the Department of Housing and Community Developments (DHCD)

for Main Street programs as well as staff surveys, conversations with Main Street business owners and examples from other Main Street Towns.

The recommendations were designed with the assumption that Main Street Taneytown would potentially one day achieve stand-alone status as its own 501c3 with its own funding streams.

The recommendations range from adopting ordinances to specifically outlining the relationship between the Main Street Program and the City to how the program will be funded. They

cover the actual size of the Main Street area and the sub-committees under the Main Street advisory boards' control.

A big part of the program is the preservation of historic buildings in the downtown area with an emphasis on improving the appearance of the downtown area and promoting tourism as well as walkability of the City.

Previously a survey was sent to the Main Street businesses that was designed to understand where local businesses felt they were and where they wished to go under the program's guidance. Although not many businesses

replied to this survey Wieprecht pointed out that the Comprehensive Plan survey could also benefit the Main Street program by identifying what all the residents want to see from their City not just the Main Street business owners.

Councilman Christopher Tillman suggested the council consider looking at where the program is headed and what they really wanted to do before looking at each recommendation alone. "I think the first question is why do we want to be a Main Street Community," he asked. "What do we get out of this?"

He pointed out past comments where council members wondered if the City is even in a place to be in the Main Street program right now. "We have to create the vision and what the mission of the program is before we can start moving," he suggested.

This comment aligns with one of DHCD's main suggestions where they encourage all participants to have 80% of the Main Street framework in place before the City hands control over to the board. With this in mind, the council agreed to have a workshop in the third week of January to discuss, in fine detail, the Main Street program and its future in Taneytown.

# Mountain Brook Project makes slow progress

In November, Marty Hackett from Carroll Land Services, the Engineering and Land Planning Consulting Firm working on the Mountain Brook project, introduced revisions to the development's already approved concept plans.

Phase one (of four) will include the construction of 288 houses and half of the Antrim Boulevard expansion from the Francis Scott Key highway to the floodplain. Phase two will finish Antrim Blvd and add additional units. The last phases will add the rest of the homes, completing the project with a total of 454 townhomes and single-family homes.

The changes addressed com-

ments previously made by the Planning Commission regarding two specific intersections in the first phase of the development. The proposed changes will change the configuration of the intersections and reduce the overall length of the street by 2,000 feet. This is a beneficial change for the City because they will be maintaining the street per agreements with the development. "They build it once, we maintain it forever," explained City Manager Jim Wieprecht.

Although the presentation only involved approval of the intersection changes, Commission members brought up their old concerns regarding the long-awaited Ant-

rim Boulevard expansion and the lack of a second entrance/exit for the development while the first phase is being constructed. The bypass is proposed to run through the center of the property, serving as the principal entrance and exit to the development, as well as a bypass around town to help alleviate congestion in the square.

The biggest issue with the road connection is that it will need to cross Flowserve property to connect with Route 140, requiring a right of way easement which Wieprecht has been working on for over a year. When Member William Eisenberg questioned the increase of traffic until then, Wieprecht pointed out how

long Meadowbrook took to build and the similar issues it faced. Due to inadequate facilities, they were unable to finish the phases that would connect the development to Kenan Street, thus "We lived with that condition for many years," he said.

This brought up additional concerns about whether the schools had the capacity to accommodate a development the size of Mountain Brook. Questions arose whether the City's water, sewer and electric infrastructure could support the 454 homes. Hackett was adamant that the answer to both of these questions would be answered in the next phase of development; however with-

out the Commission's approval of the road changes, they wouldn't be able to get to the next phase to answer them. Hackett also claimed that the road completion would alleviate traffic issues, especially for tractor trailers, but there would be issues until then.

City Attorney Jay Gullo brought the Commission members back on track by pointing out the developers were trying to address the comments and concerns in a piecemeal way so they could move forward with steady progress. "They can't get to the next phase until they have something approved," he said.

With this in mind, the Commission approved the intersection changes with a three to one vote.

# Camera placement plagues police department

At the December City Council meeting, the topic of cameras in the police department sparked a heated discussion regarding liability among Council members. According to Town Attorney Jay Gullo, the City's IT specialist was updating the City's cameras with new technology and questions arose asking where the cameras should be placed and who is responsible in determining that location: the Council, the chief of police or the IT specialist.

The cameras in question were originally installed by the previous Chief Etzler, who worked for the Taneytown Police Department for 20 years. He became chief of police in 2019 after former Police Chief William Tyler was placed on leave after he and another officer took two machine guns from the evidence room and were using them for their own purposes. At the time, there were no cameras in the armory or evidence room, however the doors were covered. Etzler was replaced by Chief Adrian Baker in 2023.

During the recent upgrade, the positions of the cameras were supposed to be replaced "one-for-one," however two additional 360-degree cameras were placed directly on employee workspaces and over the administrative assistant's desk. This greatly concerned Chief Baker, who has been in law enforcement for almost 40 years. "I

have had multiple complaints from the officers," he said. "I run this department but also have to manage morale."

Gullo pointed out that the City's Code states that the placement of the cameras is up to City Manager Jim Wieprecht and when Baker asked Wieprecht why the cameras were being installed in this manner, he was directed to discuss it with the IT specialist. "I am responsible for this department," said Baker. "It's nonsense that we're even talking about this. Just let me do my job."

After talking with Sykesville's and Manchester's police chiefs, as well as the Carroll County Sheriff's Office, about their camera placement, Baker said they placed theirs in a similar fashion as Baker wished; all the doors, the evidence room and armory are covered, but

no personal spaces.

Mayor Christopher Miller also questioned why the Council needed to be involved in the arrangement of the cameras when it is Baker's department. He pointed out that the current position of cameras is not the same as it was during Etzler's time; it is better, as now the evidence room was covered.

Councilwoman Judith Fuller said she wanted to "have as much coverage as possible, especially in areas where you're dealing with cash being exchanged." She said entrances and where you are dealing with the public are extremely important for purposes of protection. After discussing it with the City's treasurer, Wieprecht said it would be a good idea to have cameras on cash drawers and it is something they are working on.

Gullo reiterated that the purpose of the discussion was to decide if there was a liability at hand or not. He said that, by enacting a policy, they would be protecting all of the employees because it is not their decision, but rather the Council's, on the general placement of cameras; points of ingress, egress, common areas, cash drawer, armory and evidence could be examples.

Wieprecht clarified that he would like to come to an agreeable resolution that affords the City the protections that the Council wants to see and allows the chief the ability to have input on what is best for his department. "I would appreciate the opportunity to work it out with the chief and with IT to make sure we are using the technology the best way that we can."

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## FROM THE DESK OF...

## Congressman David Trone

It's been my greatest honor serving you in Congress. Over the past six years, I've traveled across the district, met and listened to the stories of thousands of constituents, secured tens of millions of dollars in Community Project Funding, and worked across the aisle to pass legislation that has changed — and will continue to change — the lives of all Americans, all with your help and support.

I didn't do it alone. I am forever grateful to my wife June and my four children Michelle, Julie, Natalie, and Rob. During my time here, I've become a grandfather to two grandchildren — with a third on the way. Nothing reminds you how important our future is when you see it through the eyes of your children and grandchildren.

I've also been privileged to have an incredible team behind me — dedicating the last six years to delivering on our promises.

By working together — with county and city council members, mayors, county executives, and everyone in between — we were able

to make life-changing impacts on our communities.

Throughout my time in Congress, I've stood by the mission to lead with compassion, civility, and competence — to put people over politics. I led 30 bills that were signed into law, leveraging bipartisanship to pass common-sense solutions on the issues we can't afford to ignore. Bills like my State Opioid Response Grants, COPS Counseling Act, and Restoring Benefits to Defrauded Veterans Act have fought the opioid crisis, helped law enforcement access vital mental health resources, and safeguarded veterans' benefits. Those laws will continue to make a difference long after my term ends.

As a member of the powerful House Appropriations Committee, I secured over \$53 million in Community Project Funding: federal funding that goes directly to where it's needed most in our district. The Boys and Girls Club, hospitals, childcare centers, volunteer fire and EMS departments, affordable housing initiatives, crime prevention efforts, workforce development pro-

grams, and infrastructure projects across the district have benefited, proving that working together on the local, state, and federal levels can have a mighty impact on our communities.

Many of you know that I chose to run for Congress after I lost my 24-year-old nephew, Ian, to a fentanyl overdose in 2016. When I was sworn in, I knew I wanted to dedicate my service to ensuring no family has to go through what mine did and delivering vital resources to those in the shadows of life. In 2021, I co-founded the Bipartisan Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Task Force to bring Democrats and Republicans together to fight the mental health and opioid crises. I've gone door to door in the district collecting unused medications, attended Narcan trainings, and united hundreds of my colleagues annually during National Recovery Month for "Congress Goes Purple" — all while the Task Force has passed dozens of bills into law. This past year, the state and country saw the first decline in overdose deaths

in decades. I'd like to think our Task Force played a small part in that.

Ian, like so many Americans, also struggled with the long-term impacts of the criminal justice system. Too often, people with nonviolent offenses are locked out of our communities after release with little access to employment, health care, housing, and even a valid government ID. I firmly believe that if you've paid your debts to society, you deserve to return to it. So I founded the Bipartisan Second Chance Task Force, a coalition determined to widen the path of opportunity for returning citizens, allowing them to fully contribute to their communities. We put together roundtables with Fortune 500 companies to develop a blueprint for second-chance hiring on a national scale, spearheaded legislation to expunge nonviolent criminal records for thousands of Americans, and passed legislation to repeal the ban on Pell Grants for incarcerated individuals so they leave more able to work.

I leave Congress aware that our work is not done, but knowing that countless lives have been and will be improved as a result of what we've accomplished.

I've served during a time in which

Congress — like our nation — has grown increasingly divided, and many Americans have fears for the future. We must all remember that what unites us is greater than what divides us. Despite our differences, I've developed productive, meaningful relationships with many of my colleagues across the aisle. The sheer number of chili cheese dogs I've eaten in the Republican cloakroom to get bipartisan support on my bills is a number I'll take to my grave. Through it all, I remain certain that the path toward progress lies in our common ground.

In the next Congress, my friend, Congresswoman-elect April McClain Delaney, will build on all the progress we've made for Maryland's 6th District, continuing to deliver on the issues that matter to you. After she's sworn in on January 3rd, you can contact her office at (301)-926-0300 and I encourage you to sign up for her newsletter to stay updated.

I plan to continue my work outside of Congress to engage in the fight for recovery resources, mental health, criminal justice reform, and medical research.

Thank you for the privilege of representing you in Congress. Have a safe, warm, and restful holiday season.

## Emmitsburg Mayor Frank Davis

Again, the holiday season seemed to have flown by, and now we must remember to date all our "stuff" 2025. Good luck with that, it usually takes me until March to get it right.

I am anticipating this new year to be full of great opportunities for our community. Several new businesses have shown an interest in locating in town,

as well as two housing projects that are moving forward. While some might cringe at the thought of growth, this is an imperative ingredient for the future of our town. I will keep you posted on the progress.

I am sure that some of you are aware of the bleak outlook for the State of Maryland upcoming budget. It is not

a pretty picture. It appears there is a shortfall of 2.75 billion dollars. (yes, with a B). Unfortunately, when the State struggles with funding, it also affects the counties and municipalities. After attending a meeting in Annapolis last month, I have instructed our staff to begin to plan for a shortcoming of State assisted funding. On a pos-

itive note, we are fortunate to have the support of State Senator Paul Cordeman and Delegates William Valentine and William Wivell. They have already begun to assist us with applying for funding for our much-needed infrastructure projects.

The winter months are full of opportunities to enjoy both high school and college sports. Catocin High Basketball is in full swing, and as always, we anticipate a successful season for both

the girls' and boys' teams. Mount Saint Basketball is off to an amazing start and is exceeding pre-season expectations. The women's and men's teams are starting conference play and will guarantee a season of exciting high-level entertainment for the whole family.

As always, we continue to explore new opportunities and projects to improve our community. Please reach out with your ideas and suggestions as we continue to improve and grow.

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## Thurmont Mayor John Kinnard

Wow, here we are in 2025, it seems time goes by faster every year! Karen and I hope everyone had an amazing Christmas. Spending time with friends and family makes for very special time and memories. We also want to wish everyone a year Happy New Year! We both hope the new year brings you and your family good health and happiness.

I want to remind our residents that the Winter months are the most demanding for the volunteers at Thurmont Food Bank and Thurmont Clothes Closet. Both organizations see an increase in the need for their assistance, and they need more donations to keep up with the demand. The food bank needs donations of non perishable foods, cereals, pasta, cans of vegetables, soups, sauces, crackers, cookies, etc. Donations can be dropped off in person on Tuesdays and Fridays, or you can place your donations in the donation bin located at the front corner of the Food Bank building.

The Clothes Closet needs warm clothing in children's and adult sizes. Due to seasonal layoffs or work shortages many families have trouble buying the clothing they need for Winter. Children are especially vulnerable to the cold when going to and returning from school. Warm coats, gloves, hats and caps, scarves,

shoes and boots are some of the items needed. Donations to the Clothes Closet can be dropped off at the donation box at the rear of the Thurmont Methodist Church on Long Road, Your donations will be greatly appreciated by our friends, neighbors, and family members who are in need of some assistance. Both organizations provided help at no cost. I want to thank the Thurmont Food Bank and Thurmont Clothes Closet for supporting those in need in our community.

The New Year will be bringing several new infrastructure projects and hopefully the completion of at least two projects. The North Church Street project is awaiting the SHA milling and blacktopping to complete the work. State budgetary shortfalls have prevented the work this year and we have been assured the project is scheduled for Spring. The tennis court work in Community Park has ground to a halt and will be re-bidding the remaining work ASAP in hopes of a spring completion date. New projects include the rebuilding of the sewer line thru the wooded area from McDonalds to the Waste Water Plant. This work will include the replacement of all the manhole structures and the lining of the sewer pipes. This line serves many businesses and residences, but the

work will not interrupt service. I hope we can break ground on the new Radio Lane water interconnection pump between the high and low pressure water systems. This will help insure against system shortages should we need to take any wells off line for service to pumps, etc.

Most importantly this year I want to make sure all our residents are aware of the Annexation Proposal being brought forward by Cross and Company. This proposal relates to the Simmers property along Apples Church and Graceham Roads. The proposal has been submitted to the Board of Commissioners who in turn have passed it on to the Planning & Zoning Commission for review. As you may be aware this is the second proposal by Cross & Company LLC for the annexation and development of the Simmers property. As with the first instance this request will follow the process as required by the State of Maryland and Thurmont's Zoning Code. I encourage each and every resident to pay attention as this process moves forward and to attend P&Z meetings where this will be discussed and the public hearings to gather input from our residents. I can assure you that as in the past, public input will be sought at each step of this process.

# GOVERNMENT—SOUTH OF THE BORDER

## County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

Happy New Year! As we begin 2025, I want to take a moment to express my gratitude for the opportunity to serve Frederick County. The start of the new year is a time for renewal and recommitment to the goals and values that make our community such a special place to live, work, and visit.

I am inspired by the energy and dedication of our residents, businesses, and community partners who work tirelessly to keep our neighborhoods vibrant, inclusive, and full of opportunity. This year, I look forward to building on our progress and seizing new opportunities to ensure our County thrives.

In the coming year and beyond, I will continue to advance the values of inclusion, sustainability, and accountability as we work together to fulfill our vision of a unique and vibrant community where everyone can live, work, and thrive while feeling a strong sense of place and belonging.

Partnerships are critical to our County's success, and our most important partnership is with the residents of Frederick County. You have a voice in shaping decisions that impact your community, and I hope to hear from you throughout the year. Whether it's maintaining our roads, supporting our schools, or protecting the natural beauty of our County, every decision should start with input from the people who live here.

That's why I want to take this opportunity to remind you that you are invited to share your priorities for the Fiscal Year 2026 budget at a series of upcoming town hall meetings.

Thanks to everyone who came to the public budget hearing I hosted in December. If you couldn't attend that meeting, there are still opportunities for you to have your voice heard. I will hold five town hall meetings (one in each of the County Council Districts) in the coming weeks where you can share your budget

priorities and concerns.

The schedule is as follows:

- January 13 at 7 PM (District 2): Twin Ridge Elementary School
- January 22 at 7 PM (District 4): Oakdale Middle School
- January 25 at 1 PM (District 5): Walkersville Middle School
- January 27 at 7 PM (District 3): Waverley Elementary School
- January 30 at 7 PM (District 1): Middletown Library

All meetings are open to the public. Those interested in attending are welcome to join whichever meeting is most convenient. Those who cannot attend in person may submit comments online at [www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/BudgetPublicHearing](http://www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/BudgetPublicHearing).

I look forward to hosting these events with the County Council, and I hope to see you at one of the upcoming meetings to help shape our budget priorities for the upcoming year.

I am excited to share that people who live along the Route 40 corridor on the west side of the City of Frederick will also soon have new ways to help shape the future of their neighborhoods.

Frederick County is working with the City, Frederick County Public Schools, and local organizations to develop a Neighborhood Action Plan. The goal of the plan will be to reduce childhood poverty by increasing investments in the area and improving economic mobility. Part of the plan will develop a Community Voice Committee to identify what specific resources residents need.

The effort is being funded by a \$300,000 grant from the State's ENOUGH program. ENOUGH stands for Engaging Neighborhoods, Organizations, Unions, Governments, and Households.

The ENOUGH program was launched by Governor Wes Moore as a first-of-its-kind, community-based strategy to address concentrated child poverty in

Maryland. The program is part of a \$20 million historic investment to support communities as they develop solutions to deeply rooted challenges. The County's Division of Family Services and Local Management Board received one of the program's inaugural grants last month.

By giving us better tools to fight concentrated poverty, the ENOUGH initiative will take us one step closer to making our vision a reality for all residents. To learn more about this initiative, contact the Division of Family Services at 301-600-1200 or visit [www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/ENOUGH](http://www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/ENOUGH).

I am grateful to Governor Moore for helping us reach people where they are. I also appreciate the Governor's support for other initiatives happening in Frederick County that are helping residents, businesses, and visitors.

Last month, along with the City of Frederick and state and local officials, Frederick County hosted Governor Moore at a groundbreaking ceremony for the future hotel and conference center in downtown Frederick.

While this project is primarily being funded privately, a portion of the funding will come from the State, Frederick County, and the City of Frederick.

The long-planned Downtown Frederick Hotel and Conference

Center is an economic development project of the City and County to bring needed lodging, meeting space and jobs to our community. The economic impact of the project is estimated to be over \$61 million in new spending annually and over \$4 million in state and local tax revenue.

This project has been a long-standing economic development priority for our local businesses and Chamber of Commerce, and this investment shows that the Governor understands and values the essential role Frederick

County plays in Maryland's economy.

I look forward to seeing the progress on this project and other initiatives in 2025. Throughout the year, there will be more opportunities for you to get involved and stay connected. From town halls to public meetings to community events, there will be plenty of ways to make your voice heard and contribute to our County's shared progress.

Thank you for your engagement and partnership. Let's make 2025 a year of growth, collaboration, and success for everyone.

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## FROM THE DESK OF...

### Carroll Valley Mayor Ron Harris

At the December Borough Council meeting, the Council passed the Tax Levy Ordinance, which fixed the Tax Rate at 2.75 mills or 27.5 cents on each one hundred dollars of assessed valuation. There is no tax increase for the residents of Carroll Valley Borough. Also, the council passed the fixed tax of .25 mills appropriated for fire and emergency services operations for 2025 without an increase.

Our community ended 2024 with a theme of happiness and caring for others. Had the opportunity to attend two-holiday events where Santa appeared to the delight of the children in attendance. Two-holiday events were Cookies with Santa at the Liberty Worship Center and Breakfast with Santa at the Fairfield Fire & EMS. Over 300 images were taken. Watching the special moment when the child looks at Santa and expresses a personal wish for a gift because they tried to be good is a personal moment

of intimacy, I have attempted to capture through pictures. To see the images, go to [www.ronspictures.net](http://www.ronspictures.net). You can copy/download the photo(s) free from the site.

More than 250 Santa letters were deposited in the special Santa Mailbox located in the Carroll Valley lobby. These letters were personally responded to by 24 Santa helpers called Christmas elves. These elves are said to live with Santa and Mrs. Claus at the North Pole. Through our residents' generosity, the Carroll Valley Borough provided 40 Christmas Holiday meal kits to local families. These Holiday meal kits provide all the items for a traditional Turkey dinner, such as turkey or roasting chicken, instant mashed potatoes, canned yams or sweet potatoes, canned vegetables (corn, green beans, peas), canned cranberry sauce, stuffing mix, turkey or chicken gravy, and desserts.

Robin Dicken of Fairfield Neighbors Helping Neighbors (NHN) said they had another successful

year helping our neighbors. Thanks to those who supported the gift bags for the nursing homes, Meals on Wheels, and students in our community. Whether it was a donation of an item(s) or your time to help pack, you are a blessing to this community. There were 32 people that donated items and 13 people who showed up to help pack the 56 bags. Special thank you to Doug Lichty for delivering the bags to Comfort Care and Susan Strahler for delivering the bags for Meals on Wheels. Robin asks you to follow them on Facebook for future activities and meeting dates at Fairfield Neighbors Helping Neighbors. Thanks to Robin and the NHN members for their investment in helping us all.

January, and you all know what I am about to share – my resolutions. Well, not all of them. Some are personal. However, here is one. I am going to try to do my best to help others. To let those around me know how important they are in the lives of others. And be sure to thank those who

assist others. Remember, "Give out what you most want to come back." With January comes snow. It would be best if you made sure that you winterized your car. If you haven't, you need to get it done. Check the car's tires, tire pressure, heat/defroster, and wipers. Please slow down. Those anti-lock brakes will not help you reach a smooth stop if you drive too fast. Remember to leave more space between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you when driving behind another car. Some experts tell us this distance is four car lengths for every ten mph you travel. If the Borough declares a snow emergency, it is unlawful to park a motor vehicle or to allow that vehicle to remain parked on any Borough road or in any Borough right-of-way in such a manner as to impede or obstruct the snow and ice removal efforts of the Borough or to create a hazardous condition.

Also, driving any motor vehicle on the Borough's snow emergency route is unlawful unless that vehicle is equipped with snow tires

or chains. If you are trying to figure out if your residence is on the emergency route, launch the Carroll Valley website at [carrollvalley.org](http://carrollvalley.org). Type snow emergency in the search text box and click on Road Classification Map for Snow Plowing. Whether you are on the emergency route or not, please help our maintenance crew clear our trails after a snowstorm by parking your vehicle so as not to impede the snow-clearing process. Looking for a fun evening? Attend the "Dancing with the Local Stars" event at Gettysburg's Historic Majestic Theater on Friday evening, January 10, at 7. Be sure to mark your calendar on Saturday evening, February 8th at 7 to attend the Daddy-Daughter Dance at the Ski Liberty Mountain Resort.

Please reduce your speed to ensure your safety and that of your loved ones, friends, and neighbors. Don't Drink and Drive. If you have any questions, call me at 301-606-2021 or [MayorRonHarris@comcast.net](mailto:MayorRonHarris@comcast.net). Happy New Year! I wish you Good Health in 2025.

### Liberty Township Supervisor Walter Barlow

Wishing you a safe, healthy, and prosperous new year! Our reorganization meeting will take place at 5 PM on January 6. This is one hour earlier than previously advertised. At the December Board of Supervisors meeting the Township welcomed a presentation from Adams County Office for Aging Director Lynne Deardorf. Director Deardorf gave a thorough presentation regarding the need to provide continued services to the elderly. She expressed statistics that show a lack of adequate funding from state and federal governments and commented that the organization has come to rely more on fundraising and private donations. After careful consideration of the situation and the funds available in the Liberty Township budget, the Board of Supervisors unanimously agreed to donate funds to the agency. It was clear that the Office for Aging provided much needed support directly to Liberty Township residents. We thank the entire staff of The Office for Aging for what they do for Adams County senior citizens as a whole.

At the December 17, 2024, Planning Commission meeting, I was able to personally thank Judie Hogan for her decades of service to Liberty Township in different capacities to include serving on the Zoning Hearing Board and Planning Commission. Additionally, we thank Horst Stehmer for his service on the Planning Commission over the past years. Both members will be retiring in January. Thank you to everyone who makes an effort to be involved in the governance of their local community. Many of these positions are voluntary, and if any compensation is given, it is minimal. If anyone is interested in serving on the Planning Commission, please send a letter of interest to the Liberty Township Board of Supervisors.

If you have driven by our township building recently, you may have noticed some changes. We have been working to reconfigure our current buildings and storage to make better use of the limited space of the one acre owned by the township. The construction is in progress and the hoop roof structure installation is expected to be complete before

spring. The plan includes moving the fuel tanks and demolishing the original block building we currently use for storage. The propane tank has been moved, and the concrete slab for the gasoline and diesel fuel tanks has been poured and set. The tanks will be moved as soon as the fuel level is low enough to transport them.

We had some severe weather in the township during the month of December. Eight trees came down due to high winds within a two-day period that had to be removed and cleared from the roadways. On December 15, 2024, we had about four inches of unexpected snow. We had all the roads cleared by 6 AM for morning travel. Please be cautious this winter while driving and remember to maintain a safe speed especially in hazardous conditions. Your patience is appreciated during snowfalls, as we will have a maximum of two trucks on the roads at any given time. Thank you to the road crew for their hard work and for maintaining our roadways.

Liberty Township has an ordinance

requiring a permit for solicitation in the township. The permit is issued through the Liberty Township Police Department. The details of the ordinance and the application form are both available on the township website. The application must be submitted with a photo and a \$25 application fee. Residents experiencing door-to-door sales should request to see the Liberty Township Photo issued permit with photo ID. All residents are encouraged to check the township website for a list of people who are authorized to perform door-to-door sales within the township. The Police Department also provides courtesy house checks to residents in Liberty, Freedom, and Highland Township. If you plan to go out of town for an extended period, please fill out a House Check request form and submit it to the police department. We thank the Highland and Freedom Board of Supervisors for their continued support and the service hours they have contracted with the Liberty Township Police Department. The praise coming back from the residents and Supervisors speaks volumes

about what our small Police Department accomplishes.

A message from the Liberty Township Police Department: Please don't drink or drug and drive. Extra patrols are out for the holiday season to ensure safe roadways. Please remove all snow and ice from your vehicle before traveling. It is safer and it is the law. Please obey the "move over laws." Details are listed in PA title 75 3327 Duty of driver in emergency response areas and in relation to disabled vehicles. Have a safe new year.

The Tax Collector has closed collection on 2024 per capita and real estate taxes, if you are delinquent you will need to pay your bill through the collection agencies. School taxes are now in the penalty phase and must be paid by March 31.

We thank the Emmitsburg Journal for publishing our letter to the public every month. This opportunity allows our residents to stay informed of what is happening in the township. We also encourage the residents to reach out to the Board of Supervisors with their comments, questions, or concerns during public comment at our monthly meetings.





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# GOVERNMENT—NORTH OF THE BORDER

## County Commissioner Randy Phiel

The Adams County Court of Common Pleas of the 51st Judicial District has four Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas Judges. Adams County President Judge Michael George will be retiring at the end of this year. After serving as District Attorney in 1996, Judge George was elected to serve as Judge in 2001, embarking on a 23-year distinguished tenure on the bench. In 2013, Judge George succeeded President Judge John Kuhn for the 51st Judicial District. Judge George received many awards and honors during his time on the bench, including the Golden Crowbar Award by the Pennsylvania Conference of Trial Judges for his significant contributions to advancing the goals of the judicial system. He was also a candidate for the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. Until the position is filled next year via the May primary and November General Election, Senior Judges George & Kuhn will hear most of the vacated docket, supplemented by other Senior Judges. Judge Thomas Campbell will be the new President Judge.

At the Commissioners December 18th public meeting, Judge George was recognized by the Commissioners, other Judges, and staff. The portrait of Judge George that will hang with the other Adams County President Judges was unveiled. Judge Michael George's leadership, wisdom, firmness, detailed preparedness, and compassion has had a profound and lasting impact on the Adams County Community. Judge George, we thank you and wish you well in retirement!

On Friday November 15, at the Maring Tri-Centennial Farm in Cumberland Twp., I had the distinct pleasure of participating in Adams County's milestone of preserving 25,000 acres of farmland in Adams County. Preserving 25,000 acres doesn't just happen. I want to recognize all the Adams County staff that played a part. It takes a village! I especially want to recognize Adams County Ag Land Preservation & Rural Resources Manager Ellen Dayhoff for her tireless and passionate advocacy for the past 32 years. Also, thank you to the members of the County Ag Preservation Board, both past and present, for their service to our community. For those that have been around awhile, they know that our current Board members walk in the footsteps of some giant preservation visionaries before you!

I can recall when this Board of Commissioners took office 13-years ago, and there just may have been some nervousness about these New Guys commitment to Agriculture and Preservation. I am proud to look back and report Agricultural Land Preservation has always been a priority of this Board since Jim, Marty and I took office. When we first took office, I was often asked, what one of the most difficult parts of our job was? The answer was easy – and the answer wasn't raising taxes! It was balancing Adams County's rich history, agrarian culture and panoramic viewscapes, with the need for appropriate housing and economic development at appropriate locations.

One of the first projects we embarked on was prioritizing with the Planning Department the development of the Preservation Priority Areas Map as well as Economic Development Areas which helps us identify the areas most suitable for preservation and economic devel-

opment. During our tenure, I am pleased to say that together we have preserved more than 6,000 acres and allocated \$5,285,080 in county funds to the Ag Preservation Program. Without other partners like Cumberland Township, we would never have achieved this milestone, and the preservation of the Maring Farm.

As Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Russel Redding pointed out in remarks at the event, although we need to celebrate a significant and notable milestone in Adams County farmland preservation, loss of farmland in PA is outpacing farmland preservation by almost a 3/1 margin. It rests upon the shoulders of our generation, and future generations, to support farmland preservation for the sustenance, economic, environmental, cultural, and spiritual necessities that it provides - and that we too often take for granted!

We were asked many times why we had to spend 2-days re-counting the ballots for the Casey/McCormick race. Pennsylvania re-count law requires automatic re-counts under certain guidelines. No matter how one personally feels about the outcome, the value, or the cost of the re-count, Pennsylvania state law requires when the margin for a statewide office is less or equal to 0.5% of the total votes, a re-count is mandated!

After conducting an exhausting and flawless Presidential election in Adams County, none of us looked forward to the 2-day McCormick/Casey re-count. Poll watchers from both candidates were in attendance taking notes from start to finish. The process was also live-streamed and took us about 14-hours. Naturally, about 2-hours after we completed the re-count on Thursday, November 21, Senator Casey conceded. I can

report that in Adams County the few allowed provisional and the allowable post-election arriving military ballots did not move the needle for the outcome in Adams County.

This Presidential election resulted in Adams County voters turning out in record numbers. Of our approximately 76,000 registered voters, 81% either submitted an absentee or mail-in ballot or cast their vote at the polls on election day. Of the approximately 19,000 mail-in applications, 18,488 ballots were returned. Thus, approximately 23% of our registered voters chose to vote by mail-in.

Again, a big shout out to our Elections office staff, and our Administrative Staff, that rolled up their sleeves per usual to assure this fundamental plank of democracy is carried out efficiently and effectively in Adams County!

The 2024 Fall County Commissioners of Pennsylvania Conference in Hershey marked the end of my 12-year tenure as the Region 3 Representative on the CCAP Board of Directors. Region 3 is Adams County and 9 counties to our west. To be elected and then re-elected after my 1st year in office for 12 consecutive years by my Region 3 peers, was certainly an honor and privilege. It was also a very gratifying professional and personal life-time experience. It made me a better Commissioner by garnering a wealth of additional knowledge and establishing a state-wide network of resources and contacts. I announced to Region 3 colleagues last Spring that I was considering stepping down if anyone was interested in stepping up. I was happy to receive feedback that 2 newer commissioners expressed an interest in the position if I was not seeking re-election. I wish Blair County Commissioner, Amy Webster, the best in her

new role as CCAP Region 3 Board Representative beginning in 2025. She is also an attorney, real estate agent, and a graduate of the CCAP Academy of Excellence. I am sure she will do a fine job of representing Region 3!

Do you lie in bed at night wondering what the total value of all Taxable Real Estate in Adams County is? Well, stay awake no more. The Adams County Board of Commissioners, sitting as the Board of Assessment Appeals, and with the recommendation from Daryl Crum, Director, pursuant to the Pennsylvania Consolidated Assessment Law, (53 Pa. C.S. § 8844(f), certify the assessed value of real property, value of occupations and the number of persons subject to personal taxes as follows:

- Assessed Value of Real Property = \$10,167,554,600 (Yes -That's Billion)
- Value of Occupations = \$17,582,000
- Number of persons subject to personal taxes (per capita) = 77,997.

That's from a total population of approximately 106,000.

At the October 30 Commissioners Public Meeting, the Board of Commissioners re-appointed Michelle Kirk as Farmer Director to the Adams County Conservation District Board for another four (4) year term effective January 1 through December 31, of 2028. Commissioner Jim Martin was also re-appointed as the Commissioner Representative for another one (1) year term, effective January 1 thru December 31 of 2025. The Adams County Conservation District is vital to benefiting and maintaining our agrarian heritage, economy, and stewardship of our environment. We are very appreciative of all our Adams County residents who engage in important community service by volunteering to serve on these Boards!

No matter what you do, get out there and experience all the Historical, Recreational, Agricultural, Natural, and Cultural opportunities that beautiful Adams County has to offer!

## Public Meeting Notice

The Liberty Township Board of Supervisors Adams County, PA will hold the Annual Organization meeting on Monday, January 6 at 5 p.m.

The regular monthly Board of Supervisors meeting will be held immediately following the organization meeting.

The Annual Auditors Organization meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 7 at 6 p.m.

The Board of Supervisors monthly meetings for 2025 will be held on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m., with the exception of the November meeting which will be held on Wednesday, November 5 at 6 p.m.

The Planning Commission meetings will be held as needed on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

All meetings will be held in the Township Building at 39 Topper Road, Fairfield, PA.

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# BINGO

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**Every Month**  
**Jan. 3**

**Thurs. Night**  
**Bingo!**  
**Jan. 16**

**Operating under new bingo committee!**  
**106 Steelman St., Fairfield**  
**Bring your friends for a fun filled night!**  
**\* Food Available**

**Doors open @ 5:30**  
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**Kitchen opens at 5:30**  
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# COMMENTARY

## Words from Winterbilt

### Predictions for a new year

Shannon Bohrer

Every year, I attempt to predict the future, and sometimes, I am successful. While we have the standard predictions from the self-proclaimed experts, I am not one of them. That does not prevent me from predicting politics, weather, or other topics. My predictions are based on intuition, recent news accounts, history, and how much coffee I consumed that day. In formulating my predictions for 2025, this year feels different, as it did in the last several years. I question myself: How can each year seem different when discussing the same topics? I sometimes feel like the country is driving down a highway, going in the wrong direction, but speeding because we do not want to be late. That is not a prediction; it's just my thoughts.

Confusion is a common word often used to describe our current political and environmental issues and our individual feelings. The last election was supposed to settle our differences but seems to have increased our divisiveness. Hopefully, predictions for the new year can help alleviate our differences and stress levels. After all, predictions are made yearly by self-pro-

claimed experts and are something that many people look forward to. Just about every news source will make their predictions. Nevertheless, do we ever remember them?

*"It's tough to make predictions, especially about the future."*

—Yogi Berra

I will start with the weather since it is a common prediction and maybe the easiest to address. Last year, I stated that 2023 would be the hottest year ever recorded, at least until the end of 2024. The initial reports confirm that the 2024 numbers will surpass the 2023 numbers. Correctly making that prediction was neither complex nor problematic; it was easy and straightforward. Quoting as best I can from a Mississippi hydrologist, our future weather will be too hot, too cold, too wet, or too dry. I wonder if the hydrologist was making a prediction or an observation. Universally, climate scientists predict not just higher temperatures but also extremes in weather patterns. Predicting a pattern that continues is not difficult.

Last year I predicted that armed conflict in the middle east would continue and possibly expand. It did. Isreal entered Lebanon, however, as I write this there is a proposed cease fire between Isreal and Hezbollah. The conflict and fight-

ing between Hamas in Palestine and Isreal still exist, and Hamas still has hostages. How this will end is unknown. The future president appointed Mike Huckabee to be the ambassador of Israel. Huckabee said his first priority is the release of the hostages. He also said, "Basically, there really is no such thing as — I need to be careful about saying this, because people will really get upset — there's really no such thing as a Palestinian." Yet, it is reported that over 44,000 Palestinian deaths have occurred during this war, with over half being women and children.

Another prediction from last year was the continued war in Ukraine. That war has heated up, with both sides moving - Russia into Ukraine and Ukraine into Russia. Coincidentally, both sides ramped up after the election, probably because the president-elect said he would stop the war and negotiate peace, and only he could do this since Putin is a friend of his. If a peace deal is made, will Ukraine have a seat at the table?

Although there have been many experts offering opinions on how the war will end or expand, no one knows how or when this will happen. Even if peace is achieved, this war might continue in the participants' minds for a long time. Wars in Eastern Europe have a long history. The assignation of Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1914 was the spark for World War I. At that time, Sarajevo was a city in Bosnia-Herzegovina, part of Austria-Hungary.

Sarajevo had been part of the Ottoman Empire until 1878, and after the war, it became part of Yugoslavia. In 1991 Bosnia-Herzegovina declared independence.

Eastern European history, including Ukraine's, has a history of new borders resulting from hostilities and wars. Historically, the new borders and memories of the old borders have resulted in old hostilities reemerging. That is why Ukraine will have long memories.

My political predictions are problematic. With so many changes in our federal government and so many appointees that require Senate approval, along with the promises made during the election, I do not think anyone could accurately predict our political future for the next several years. Of course, that has not stopped the Experts from predicting that our future is promising or terrifying. The differences are exposed in our daily news. Half the country predicts stability and prosperity, while the other half predicts darkness and despair.

While experts and others like me make predictions for the coming year, I never see any reporting on their successes or failures. It's almost as if the projections are made for entertainment. As a new year approaches, we hear what happened during the past year before we hear the predictions for the new year. When the news people report what occurred during the past year, it would be nice if they critiqued the expert's predictions for the previous year.

Adam Grant, the author of Think

Again, an excellent book, recently had an Op-Ed in the New York Times. The first line, "Humans may be the only species that can imagine an unknown future." But that does not mean we're good at it." In the op-ed, he references a study of predictions by psychologist Philip Tetlock. In evaluating decades of predictions on politics and economics, he reported that "the average expert was roughly as accurate as a dart-throwing chimpanzee." So, if the projections are so poor, why do we make them? Then again, there are some intelligent chimpanzees.

Maybe if we are optimists, our predictions reflect a positive view of what we would like to see. Conversely, if we are pessimists, predictions may portend gloom and doom. I am not saying that we should not make predictions since we need to plan for tomorrow. If we fail to look forward, what will our future be like?

*"As the Olympic torch neared Lake Placid, N.Y., in 1980, signaling the opening of that year's Winter Olympics, newspapers and magazines throughout the world offered predictions on who would win medals in the major sports. Not a single publication gave the American men's hockey team a chance against the world powers."*

—Don Yaeger

To read prior editions of Words From Winterbilt, visit the Authors section of [Emmitsburg.net](http://Emmitsburg.net).

## The Bulwark

### Never Trumpers were right, actually

Jonathan Last

Bret Stephens wrote a column in which he renounces his Never Trump patrimony and castigates Trump critics for being overheated and wrong about so many things.

You should read his piece to get the full breadth of his argument. But I'll give you a taste:

Never Trumpers also overstated our case and, in doing so, defeated our purpose.

We warned that Trump would be a reckless president who might stumble into World War III. If anything, his foreign policy in his first term was, in practice, often cautious to a fault. We hyperventilated about his odd chumminess with Vladimir Putin. But the collusion allegations were a smear, and Trump's Russia policy — whether it was his opposition to the Nord Stream 2 pipeline or his covert aid to Ukraine — was much tougher than either Barack Obama's or (at least until Russia invaded Ukraine) President Biden's.

We predicted that Trump's rhetoric would wreck the Republican Party's chances to win over the constituencies the party had identified, after 2012, as key to its future. But we missed that his working-class appeal would also reach working-class minorities — like the 48 percent of Latino male voters who cast their ballots for him last month. And we were alarmed by Trump's protection-

ism and big-spending ways. But the economy mostly thrived under him, at least until the pandemic.

With respect: This is silly.

First, Stephens uses arbitrary temporal windows to make his argument. For instance: Biden was softer on Russia until Russia invaded Ukraine.

Maybe? But Russia did invade Ukraine in February 2022. Three-quarters of Biden's presidency has taken place since then and during that period Biden inflicted more pain on Russia than any American president, ever.

Then Stephens says that Trump's economy was great right up until the pandemic hit. But the pandemic did hit. That is a real thing that happened and it took up a quarter of Trump's presidency and was the last thing Trump did on his way out the door.

So on Russia, we are supposed to judge Biden by the policies of his first year while on the economy we are supposed to ignore the outcomes during Trump's final year. Cool, cool.

But I want to take Stephens's larger point: That Trump's critics were wrong about the dangers Trump posed in 2016, 2020, and 2024.

It's impossible to enumerate all of the warnings made about Trump and different people focused on different aspects of the danger he presented. But I think we can reasonably summarize the general concerns as:

Trump is dangerously ignorant of basic reality.

He is easy to manipulate.

In a time of crisis, he can not be trusted to make sound judgments.

His commitments to democracy and the rule of law are weak and his attraction to authoritarianism is strong.

In a second term, he would surround himself with dangerous button men and be focused on retribution against perceived domestic enemies.

Now what did the reality of Trump deliver?

He attempted to blackmail the president of Ukraine into lying about his likely 2020 election opponent.

His handling of COVID represented the single greatest failure of the federal government in American history.

He disbanded the government's pandemic response team in 2018.

He coddled the Chinese dictator at the outset of the outbreak.

He failed to push forward aggressively on the production of testing kits and PPE during the opening months.

He muddled public health messaging coming from the government.

His one COVID success was the creation of Operation Warp Speed, to accelerate the development of a vaccine. That project worked. But Trump then botched the rollout of the vaccine.

And in the wake of the creation of the vaccine, Trump created a political atmosphere in which his supporters turned against first the COVID vaccine and then all vaccines.

He surrendered Afghanistan to the Taliban and committed America to a hard deadline for withdrawal without securing any meaningful concessions from the Islamists.

He refused to accept the results of

the 2020 election and plunged the country into a crisis by lying about it.

He summoned a mob to Washington on January 6th. He knew that this mob was armed. He directed the mob to march on the Capitol so as to prevent Mike Pence from certifying the electoral vote count. When this mob turned violent, he declined to send the National Guard to break it up.

He allegedly stole classified government documents and then allegedly lied about it.

I've written this before, but the reality of Trump's first term came pretty close to the worst-case scenarios. It is simply not true that Trump's critics oversold the danger he represented. If anything, they underestimated it.<sup>3</sup>

We don't yet know what Trump's second term will look like, but we have some data points. On the one hand, his State and Treasury appointments are reassuringly normal. On the other hand:

He nominated a weekend cable-TV host with no management experience to run the Department of Defense.

He forced out FBI Director Christopher Wray by nominating a man who says that Wray should be sent to prison.

He filed a lawsuit against Ann Selzer and the Des Moines Register for publishing a poll he did not like.

These are not encouraging.

And the reality is that the sternest warnings about Trump's second term came not from Never Trumpers, but from the men and women who worked directly for Trump in his

first term.

You think Never Trumpers were alarmed about a second Trump term? Go listen to what John Bolton, Mark Milley, Richard V. Spencer, H.R. McMaster, and Jim Mattis had to say.

Hell: Mike Pence—Trump's own vice president—recognized Trump as a danger to the country and the Constitution.

One other thing Stephens is wrong about: His argument is framed as concern that the mistakes of Never Trumpers undercut their arguments and helped Trump's cause.

This is narcissism.

Do you think that low-information, low-propensity swing voters in Arizona and Michigan chose Trump because they read Brett Stephens, Bill Kristol, Tom Nichols, and David Frum and then, after careful consideration, decided that the Never Trumpers had overstated their cases, leaving them no option but to vote for Big Orange?

Me neither.

One thing on which Stephens is correct: He closes his column by saying that we should all "wish the administration well" and "hope for the best." I agree completely. I do wish the incoming administration well. I hope that Trump governs wisely. No kayfabe: I keep the guy in my prayers. And we should all—always—hope for the best.

What's the alternative? Hoping for the worst?

But hoping and analyzing are different things.

To read other articles from the Bulwark, visit [www.thebulwark.com](http://www.thebulwark.com).

# The Liberal Patriot

Hating the other side doesn't work for Democrats

John Halpin

The Democrats' rush to put the 2024 election aside and move into the next phase of "resistance" is understandable. No party likes to dwell too much on how they blew an election. It's easier to just stew in partisan anger and desire for retribution than to confront your own weaknesses with nearly every segment of voters.

But this approach is misguided and won't work for Democrats. They are a different party than the Trump-dominated GOP. Democrats cannot mimic what Trump did after his loss in 2020 and expect to win the allegiance of more voters in the future.

Trump's version of resistance last time around was to deny that he had in fact lost. It worked for him. Trump knew that his voters truly hated members of the other party and "the threat from within" more than they adhered to any specific governing principle or agenda—with promises to restrict immigration, erect tariffs, purge the bureaucracy, and "Make America Great Again" filling in the policy gaps. Trump could easily make his people smile and fight for his re-election by relentlessly ridiculing and attacking Democrats and cultural elites as the internal enemy with a supportive conservative media infrastructure to back him up.

In turn, Kamala Harris's past leftism and Joe Biden's lackluster presidency—particularly on the key issues of inflation and immigration—made the choice easier for those who weren't regular Trump voters. Independent and less engaged working-class voters wanted their own "return to normalcy" that Biden and Harris promised but

did not deliver after 2020.

So, the "anti-MAGA majority" strategy of Democrats failed and instead fueled a decisive "pro-MAGA" popular vote win and a GOP sweep of all the battlegrounds despite some close results.

Democrats now appear ready to pull their own version of Trump, sidestepping electoral reality and hoping that negative partisanship and hatred of the other side will galvanize new Democratic majorities across the country. With the House of Representatives so narrowly divided, any "thermostatic" reaction to the next two years of a Trump administration could be enough for Democrats to regain control of at least one branch of the legislature. But the outlook in the Senate and in many states remains incredibly grim. Democrats will need much more than a technocratic repair job to fix their national brand and create plausible electoral paths for governing majorities nationally and in the states.

Looking ahead to 2028, the Democratic Party will need wholesale party rebuilding based on what successful Democrats throughout the party's history have done best—defending basic American values of liberty and equality for all, fighting for the rights and opportunities of working people, and offering a hopeful vision for America built on economic growth and shared prosperity in all parts of the country.

The hard path of building a successful and sustained majoritarian party is worth the additional time and effort. This will require three major structural changes:

(1) The Democratic Party must create institutions fully committed to core American values. In the aftermath of Citizens United, Democratic politics is now like the "Wild West" of nuttiness with unlimited private money fuel-

ing radical politics, ineffective Super PACs, and a non-profit, "shadow party" infrastructure that is completely out of touch with the lives and values of working-class Americans. Think "anti-racist" racism, far-left gender ideology, "climate justice" extremism, police defunding and decriminalization, pro-Hamas activism, open asylum policies, and non-stop identity politics. This infrastructure must be upended and replaced with groups and institutions dedicated to core American values.

(2) The Democratic Party elite needs to be replaced with normal Americans and more working-class leadership. You can't build a majoritarian party in touch with working people if your current party is entirely run and represented by out-of-the-mainstream cultural elites and college-educated weirdos. The Democratic Party is controlled by rich people, lawyers, and "social justice" activists. They make the decisions, set the priorities, and devise the election strategies. Unlike in the glory days of the FDR coalition, their focus is not on working-class economic advancement but rather on promoting cultural ideas that are wildly unpopular with mainstream voters who are concerned about their finances and stability in life.

Instead of plowing more money into losing strategies devised by out-of-touch party elites, Democrats should take some of the billions of dollars spent every cycle on national elections to fund efforts to recruit, train, support, and publicize more candidates with good old American jobs and regular backgrounds. Rather than spending huge sums of party money on research and messaging projects that treat blue-collar and non-college voters like an endangered species, Democrats should make working-class Americans the central actors in party decision-making and policy development.

Democrats are obsessed with diversity so perhaps they should apply these



same principles to recruit more Americans who do the hard work of keeping the country running—more small business owners; more military members and veterans; and more Americans who grow the nation's food, maintain the roads, run the offices, stock the stores, build the houses, develop key energy sources, deliver goods to people, care for our kids, and provide for the sick and elderly. No more rich people or lawyers.

(3) The Democratic Party needs to remake itself into a more democratic and participatory membership organization. "The Democracy" as a political entity is essentially outsourced to a few high-profile leaders, campaign committees, elite party organizations given national status, private consultants, and unaccountable outside infrastructure groups controlled by monied interests. It's not particularly democratic. Regular party members vote in primaries and participate in general elections. They get hit up constantly for "small dollar" donations and other hysterical spam emails about impending doom if they don't contribute. Various interest groups and coalition members get a seat at the table. But there is almost zero input from—or even outreach to—regular party members at the state and local level on everything that really matters for building a cohesive party: shared values, policy priorities, agenda

setting, local and regional electoral strategies, candidate recruitment, volunteer duties, election spending, and voter communication.

Rather than continuing to maintain a patchwork quilt of various interests held together loosely for elections every two years, Democrats should become the party they imagine themselves to be—a party of regular working people with political agency joining together to build better lives for themselves and their families.

Democrats are surely down in the dumps by their electoral flop this year. But rather than ignoring the facts about why they lost and retreating into a defensive crouch of "anti-MAGA" hatred, lay party members and elected officials should take the time before the 2028 primaries to make their party worthy of future support and increased participation by new voters.

Democrats need to build a party grounded in core American values, dedicated to the rights and opportunities of all working people, and committed to an optimistic and hopeful vision for American economic growth and success.

They've done it before and—with genuine effort and commitment—can do it once again.

To read other articles from the Liberal Patriot, visit [www.liberalpatriot.com](http://www.liberalpatriot.com).

# Good Day Neighbor

The Golden Rule

Dorothea Mordan

We've all heard the Parable of the Good Samaritan, a story told by Jesus in the Gospel of Luke. While traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho, a Jewish man is attacked by robbers, beaten, robbed of his possessions, and left for dead on the side of the road. Several people pass him by as he lay helpless on the ground. A Jewish priest traveling along the road sees the injured man and passes by on the other side. A Levite also sees the man, and avoids him.

A Samaritan, whose people were considered enemies of the Jews, comes upon the injured man. The Samaritan ignores any social rules for shunning "those people", and takes pity on the injured man. He cleans and bandages his wounds, sets him on his own donkey, and takes him to an inn. The Samaritan brings his mission full circle by paying for the Jewish man's care.

I heard this story many times as I grew up. So often that it slowly became a simple listening to a story of the good guy who was kind to strang-

ers, but not always actively thinking through the deeper meaning, that the Golden Rule applies to all we meet in life. Treat others as you would want to be treated. Not simply, conveniently, the ones we like, or perceive to be "like us", but also people with whom we disagree. Start with your neighbors, sure. The lesson from the gospels is to share our humanity with everyone. The lesson is not to collect a selective list of good deeds.

The lesson from the good Samaritan is about being a good neighbor to all people. It bears repeating how this story is told as a foundation for faith. As one has faith in God, one has to have faith in their fellow man.

From the King James Bible:

And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

And he said unto him, Thou

hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

And he said, He that shewed mercy on

him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

There are people all around who are just mad about everything all the time. There are plenty of people too, who still see the value in being a good neighbor, a good Samaritan. From small interactions everyday to large organizations trying to shine a light on helping others, we have opportunities every day to be that good neighbor. Being patient, welcoming new people into our communities, taking a breath before blaming our problems on someone else.

Institutions have opportunities too, and many creative programs are based on these foundational concepts. Frederick Health (formerly Frederick Memorial Hospital) has a Good Samaritan of the Year Award presented to a person who meets one of the following criteria listed on their website in 2018.

Actions or achievements that substantially advance Frederick Memorial Hospital toward fulfillment of its goals, or

Long term involvement in eleemosynary community service activities, or

Actions or achievements that substantially advance patient care, the economic health of Frederick Memorial Hospital, or the physical safety of its personnel or patients, or Performance of a distinguished act in the

interest of humanity and that epitomizes excellence and leadership.

There is so much talk of Christianity, Nationalism, Patriotism, Constitutional Originalism. All blended together in varying combinations as suited to the speaker. Each with a curated list of who to blame for all that is bad. Blaming one's woes on another person is a trap of distraction. Putting your name on a bible and selling it as "yours" is a blasphemy of the temple. Another distraction from doing things that actually help us and our neighbors.

Think about family separation as a border policy. Would you tolerate being forcibly separated from your child for any reason? So why would we tolerate doing it to someone else? We Americans already have more than any other country on Earth. When the new Administration is sworn in on January 20 look for opportunities to build on our assets, not dismantle them.

New Year Resolutions are a tradition of fleeting effectiveness. This year, let's reboot with a fresh installation of the Golden Rule.

To read prior editions of Good Day Neighbor, visit the Authors section of [Emmitsburg.net](http://Emmitsburg.net), or visit her website: [ChandlerDesignsLimited.com](http://ChandlerDesignsLimited.com)

# THE PASTOR'S DESK

## Planted

**Pastor John Talcott**  
**Christ Community Church**

As I look forward to the New Year at Christ's Community Church, I'm focusing on the theme of being "planted" because we want to start this year with strong faith. This idea of being planted comes from Psalm 1:3, which tells us that those who are rooted in God's Word and strong in their faith are like trees planted by streams of water. These trees grow well and produce fruit in every season, standing firm through life's challenges.

Being planted in our spiritual lives is very important. At Christ's Community Church, we want to create a nurturing community where everyone can deepen their faith and grow because we know we are stronger together. Like a willow tree that gets its nourishment from streams of water, we must stay connected to the source of our faith.

Jesus talks about this connection in the Gospel, saying, "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given to you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples" (John 15:7-8). This connection to Jesus is essential because God values healthy believers and thriving churches.

For the past twenty years, I have been lucky to be deeply involved in discipleship within the faith community. It has been amazing to see the incredible changes that happen when we are rooted in the local church. Being part of a congregation of believers is what God wants for every Christian, helping

us grow both spiritually and physically while contributing to His kingdom. Those who serve and give their time, money, and talents to the church family experience great spiritual growth and a strong sense of belonging, engagement, and fulfillment.

I love seeing people grow in their faith, build meaningful friendships, and use their unique talents in the Church. But I know many struggle with their faith because they don't trust the Church. It's important to remember that the Church isn't just a building or organization; it's a living community of people. When trust in the Church is lost, it can lead to isolation and make it hard to grow spiritually.

In today's fast-paced, media-filled world, we often see a fake picture of success and happiness, leaving many people feeling discouraged and disconnected. Even those who join online church services might think they are growing in their faith but still long for the meaningful connections that come from being part of a community of believers. These relationships are important for experiencing the blessings mentioned in Psalm 1, where true happiness is found through fellowship centered on God's word and always thinking about it.

In Luke chapter 13, Jesus tells a story about a fig tree that doesn't bear fruit. The landowner wants to cut it down, but the vineyard's steward sees its potential and asks for more time to care for it. This story highlights the importance of discipleship and supporting each other on our faith journey. By regularly coming together and engaging with each other around God's Word, we draw strength from one another and grow in



Artist's rendition of Christ Community Church's proposed church in Emmitsburg.



God willing, someday ...

our faith. That's why I want to strongly encourage you to be part of a vibrant faith community, so you can grow and thrive like a tree planted by streams of water.

As believers in today's world, we have the opportunity to seek God's guidance instead of listening to the temporal voices of society. Being part of our church family is more than just attending services; it's about making meaningful connections and enjoying lasting relationships. By immersing ourselves in this supportive environment, we can develop a strong faith that positively affects our lives and the lives of those around us.

Imagine yourself as a tree, planted by streams of water, growing in faith with the support of a community of believers. This is where we truly thrive, experiencing a kind of blessedness that goes beyond worldly success. When we root ourselves in God's

Word and let our faith guide us, our understanding of contentment and happiness changes dramatically.

This amazing journey encourages us to truly seek God, showing us the great rewards of having a real relationship with our Creator. As the Bible says, "Without faith, it is impossible to please God" (Hebrews 11:6). And so, to keep our faith community strong, we need to stay committed to each other by building friendships that help us grow spiritually. We benefit by participating in small groups, attending Bible studies, and volunteering for church activities that bring us closer together. Every chance we have to connect is important for our personal growth and the growth of our church family.

At Christ's Community Church this New Year, we believe God is guiding us into a new chapter with deeper faith and exciting opportu-

nities to connect with Him and our community. With eight acres of land at the corner of Main Street and Creamery Road, we are excited to be planted and start a season of growth together. To support our vision, we are getting ready to build a 10,500-square-foot facility for worship, prayer, and Bible teaching, to meet the spiritual needs of our community.

We invite you to join us on this journey because your prayers and support are vital as we work to build our new church in Emmitsburg. Together, we can greatly advance God's vision for our community and beyond. To learn more about this project in Northern Frederick County and how you can partner with us, please visit our site at [www.justgiving.com/campaign/cccaog](http://www.justgiving.com/campaign/cccaog).

We offer several easy ways for you to support us. You can visit [cccaog.org/give/](http://cccaog.org/give/) to make a one-time gift or set up regular donations. You can also mail your gift or join us in person during our Sunday or Wednesday worship services at 303 W. Lincoln Avenue, Emmitsburg, Maryland 21727. Your generous contributions are crucial for advancing God's kingdom. Every act of generosity—big or small—helps us share the message of Jesus' love and grace both locally and globally. Thank you for being a part of this journey with us!

*To learn more about Emmitsburg's Christ Community Church visit them online at [www.cccaog.org](http://www.cccaog.org), or better yet, join them for Sunday service!*

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# THE BOOK OF DAYS

## Twelfth-Day



### January 6th

This day, called Twelfth-Day, as being in that number after Christmas, and Epiphany is a festival of the Church, in commemoration of the Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles; more expressly to the three Magi, or Wise Men of the East, who came, led by a star, to worship him immediately after his birth.

The Epiphany appears to have been first 'observed as a separate feast in the year 813. Pope Julius I is, however, reputed to have taught the Church to distinguish the Feasts of the Nativity and Epiphany, so early as about the middle of the fourth century.

The primitive Christians celebrated the Feast of the Nativity for twelve days, observing the first and last with great solemnity; and both of these days were denominated Epiphany, the first the greater Epiphany, from our Lord having on that day become Incarnate, or made his appearance in "the flesh;" the latter, the lesser Epiphany, from the three-fold manifestation of His Godhead—the first, by the appearance of the blazing star which conducted Melchior, Jasper, and Balthuzar, the three Magi, or wise men, commonly styled the three Kings of Cologne, out of the East, to worship the Messiah, and to offer him presents of "Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh"—Melchior the Gold, in testimony of his royalty as the promised King of the Jews; Jasper the Frankincense, in token of his Divinity; and Balthuzar the Myrrh, in allusion to the sorrows which, in the humiliating condition of a man, our Redeemer vouchsafed to take upon him: the second, of the descent of the Holy Ghost in the form of a Dove, at the Baptism: and the third, of the first miracle of our Lord turning water into wine at the marriage in Cana. All of which three manifestations of the Divine nature happened on the same day, though not in the same year.

'To render due honour to the memory of the ancient Magi,

who are supposed to have been kings, the monarch of this country himself, either personally or through his chamberlain, offers annually at the altar on this day, Gold, Frank-incense, and Myrrh; and the kings of Spain, where the Feast of Epiphany is likewise called the "Feast of the Kings," were accustomed to make the like offerings.'—Brady.

In the middle ages, the worship by the Magi was celebrated by a little drama, called the Feast of the Star:

'Three priests, clothed as kings, with their servants carrying offerings, met from different directions before the altar. The middle one, who came from the east, pointed with his staff to a star. A dialogue then ensued; and, after kissing each other, they began to sing, "Let us go and inquire;" after which the precentor began a responsory, "Let the Magi come." A procession then commenced; and as soon as it began to enter the nave, a crown, with a star resembling a cross, was lighted up, and pointed out to the Magi, with, "Behold the Star in the East." This being concluded, two priests standing at each side

of the altar, answered meekly, "We are those whom you seek;" and, drawing a curtain, shewed them a child, whom, falling down, they worshipped. Then the servants made the offerings of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, which were divided among the priests.

The Magi, meanwhile, continued praying till they dropped asleep; when a boy, clothed in an alb, like an angel, addressed them with, "All things which the prophets said are fulfilled." The festival concluded with chanting services, &c. At Soissons, a rope was let down from the roof of the church, to which was annexed an iron circle having seven tapers, intended to represent Lucifer, or the morning star; but this was not confined to the Feast of the Star.'—Fosbroke's Antiquities, ii. 700.

In its character as a popular festival, Twelfth-Day stands only inferior to Christmas. The leading object held in view is to do honour to the three wise men, or, as they are more generally denominated, the three kings. It is a Christian custom, ancient past memory, and probably suggested by a pagan custom, to indulge in a pleasantry called the Election of Kings by Beans.

In England, in later times, a large cake was formed, with a bean inserted, and this was called Twelfth-Cake. The family and friends being assembled, the cake was divided by lot, and who-ever got the piece containing the bean was accepted as king for the day, and called King of the Bean. The importance of this ceremony in France, where the mock sovereign is named Le Roi de la Fève, is indicated by the proverbial phrase for good luck, 'Il a trouvé la fève au gâteau,' "He has found the bean in the cake."

In England, it appears there was always a queen as well as a king on Twelfth-Night. A writer, speaking of the celebra-

tion in the south of England in 1774, says:

'After tea, a cake is produced, with two bowls containing the fortunate chances for the different sexes. The host fills up the tickets, and the whole company, except the king and queen, are to be ministers of state, maids of honour, or ladies of the bed-chamber. Often the host and hostess, more by design, than accident, become king and queen. According to Twelfth-Day law, each party is to support his character till midnight.'

In the sixteenth century, it would appear that some peculiar ceremonies followed the election of the king and queen. In one tradition, the king, on being elected, was raised up with great cries to the ceiling, where, with chalk, he inscribed crosses on the rafters to protect the house against evil spirits.

On Twelfth-Day, 1563, Mary Queen of Scots celebrated the French pastime of the King of the Bean at Holyrood, but with a queen instead of a king,

as more appropriate, in consideration of herself being a female sovereign. The lot fell to the real queen's attendant, Mary Fleming, and the mistress good-naturedly arrayed the servant in her own robes and jewels, that she might duly sustain the mimic dignity in the festivities of the night.

Down to the time of the Civil Wars, the feast was observed with great splendour, not only at Court, but at the Inns of Court, and the Universities. The celebration of Twelfth-Day with the costly and elegant Twelfth-cake has much declined within the last half-century. Formerly, in London, the confectioners' shops on this day were entirely filled with Twelfth-cakes, ranging in price from several guineas to a few shillings; the shops were tastefully illuminated, and decorated with artistic models, transparencies, &c.

To read other selections from Robert Chamber's 1864 *The Book of Days*, visit [thebookofdays.com](http://thebookofdays.com).

## Emmitsburg Presbyterian



### "Come Home to Church"

Recently, a visitor to the Emmitsburg Presbyterian Church remarked: "Coming here is like coming home to church".

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Becky Jones

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## ECOLOGY

# Winter wonders

Anne Gageby  
Director of Environmental Education  
Strawberry Hill Foundation

As a Naturalist at Strawberry Hill, I frequently get questions about nature from family and friends. Questions such as “are the trees in my backyard pines or spruces?” and “have you seen any lantern flies at your work?”. Recently, a family member and I were chatting about winter weather and the impact it has on a stream’s ecosystem. This led to a discussion on fish and whether fish freeze during the winter. After all, frogs freeze during the winter and revive after thawing in the spring. So, if a creek or pond becomes crusted over with ice, the fish might freeze as well, right? Fortunately, the answer is no, they do not turn into popsicles for the duration of winter. The reasons why are as fascinating as you can imagine.

The first is fish antifreeze. Fish cells are full of omega-3s, those polyunsaturated fatty acids that doctors encourage humans to consume as part of a healthy diet. It turns out that they really are powerful nutrients for fish as well as people. Omega-3s contribute to cell elasticity and make cells resistant to freezing. This allows them to survive frigid waters. Fish have another neat adaptation that helps them survive even the harshest winters. They enter a state called torpor in which they’re able to slow their metabolisms to the

bare minimum. In doing so they ensure their bodies require little to no food.

The second reason fish don’t freeze is water density. General knowledge tells us that water, like air, becomes denser, and therefore heavier, as it cools. So, we can make the educated assumption that a pond’s surface water will always be warmer than the water below it as the warmer water has risen to the top and cold has sunk to the bottom. Unfortunately, this isn’t entirely accurate. Yes, water density changes as its temperature changes but water is no ordinary substance and likes to break its own rules. Water’s density hits a maximum around 39 degrees. As the temperature creeps below 39 degrees, water density doubles back and gets lighter as water reaches the freezing point. In other words, the colder water gets, the lighter it becomes, which is why ice floats.

What does this mean for our pond? It means the pond is warmer at the bottom since it’s being warmed by the earth and because the colder, freezing water has risen to the top. This creates a stable, albeit cold, environment for our aquatic friends. Most fish species will gather in schools at the deepest part of a pond or lake and take a winter rest during the coldest parts of the year. Others burrow under sediment the way some frogs and other amphibians do. Gobis, for example, will often burrow under a pond’s silt and go dormant.

It’s quite interesting to take a walk around Strawberry Hill’s pond this time of year and marvel at the seemingly-lifeless landscape. The water is dark and usually capped with an icy sheet. It’s hard to imagine the thousands of creatures that are nestled snug in their wintery beds, hearts barely beating or not beating at all. The days of flitting dragonflies and basking painted turtles are a distant memory.

And yet, life endures. There are signs of it everywhere even in the deepest parts of winter. Foxes are using their keen sense of smell to detect mice under heavy blankets of snow. They use their impressive jumping skills to dive-bomb their prey, leaving behind easily identifiable tracks and the occasional blood splatter from a successful hunt.

Great horned owls’ mating season runs from late fall to early winter, providing plenty of opportunities to hear the familiar hooting calls of mating pairs. Females will be sitting on eggs by February and early March though sometimes eggs are ready by late January. If you’re looking to go owling this winter, the best time to go is an hour before sunset though you’ll almost certainly be able to hear some calls any time at night.

Then there’s the ermine, one of the three weasel species native to Pennsylvania. Their winter routine is as fashionable as it is practical. They change colors to match the snow. From spring through fall their fur is brown with white underparts. As the days shorten their coats turn white, camouflaging them with their surroundings. Though obviously harder to spot without a keen eye for such things, they will often leave evidence of their adventures in the form of long tracks through the snow.

And we can find evidence of life in our aquatic environments though we may have to look a little closer. Trout may huddle in deeper pools but they’re still active. Lower numbers of stream invertebrates mean trout may shift to eating drifting insects rather than chasing down a meal. Letting food come to them allows them to conserve precious energy. When the temps rise trout may feast on midges and mayflies if they’ve hatched. As the ice melts and spring makes its debut, trout start to move upstream to feed during runoff.

Bass, on the other hand, are quite active this time of year. They must be to survive as a species. Much of the calories consumed this time of year go toward reproduction as female bass develop their eggs primarily in winter. When food is scarce, their bodies will use stored energy to fuel egg development, ensuring next season’s spawn will happen.

The winter solstice was only two weeks ago and while the days have slowly begun lengthening,



Strix - one of Strawberry Hill’s Animal Ambassadors.

we still have many weeks of long, dark nights ahead of us. And yet, neither the forest nor the pond is truly quiet this time of year. Fish might be huddled in their schools while insects are nestled under leaf litter and other for-

est debris. But life is still there, waiting patiently for the return of warmer temperatures

To read past editions of *Ecology*, visit the Authors section of [Emmitsburg.net](http://Emmitsburg.net).

## Our Animal Ambassadors are always on the ‘good list’

Help us make their New Year a little brighter!

The Animal Ambassadors of Strawberry Hill enrich our programs by giving our students an up-close encounter with some of the amazing creatures with whom we share our natural spaces. They remind us of why we need to take great care of the world around us.

This time of year, we love to express our gratitude for the animals we work with things like new bedding, upgraded toys and enrichment tools, and extra special treats.

You can help us spoil them by purchasing something from our Animal Ambassador Wishlist or by making a donation directly to Strawberry Hill. Thank you!

Sponsor an Animal Ambassador! Ollie is a striped skunk who loves insects, veggies, and snuggling up on a soft blanket. Most of all, he loves teaching kids about the important role skunks play in keeping wild rodent populations in check.

Strix, pictured above, is a barred owl who enjoys mice and “talking” to other owls behind our office. His favorite thing about being an Animal Ambassador is teaching kids about his eyesight. Strix has 3-D, or “binocular” vision, similar to humans!

Bob & Shelly - Bob and Shelly are best friends who know that what makes us different, makes us special! Bob is an eastern box turtle who was born with a partially miss-

ing front leg. Shelly is a spotted turtle whose family is becoming quite rare in the wild. These friends love seeing the joy on kids’ faces when they learn new turtle facts!

Why are Animal Ambassadors important?

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# IN THE COUNTRY

## The elusive recluse

Tim Iverson, Naturalist

The Brown Recluse Spider has been put onto a notorious pedestal in American mainstream culture. It has reached some sort of quasi urban legend status through slanderous word of mouth conversations and sensationalist media accounts. But what of its status in the greatest state in the union - that's Maryland in case you hadn't heard? Well, despite what you may have heard the Brown Recluse is not found in Maryland. You're probably saying, "But I know a guy who has fill in the blank (seen, been bitten by, killed) one at his fill in the blank (house, work, woods, romantic picnic date, park, etc.)!" Maybe even you yourself make this claim. I am here to tell you most emphatically and unequivocally that no, you did not.

Time and time again I've been drug into this argument in a professional sense as an employee of park and natural resource agencies, with friends, with acquaintances, with strangers, with family, and the list goes on ad infinitum. I don't make many friends when I rebuke them, but the honest truth is that there is no native population of Brown Recluse Spiders in Maryland. The natural distribution range for this species of spider is roughly the entire Midwest of the United States. They can be found from southern Ohio down to Texas, and from as far west as Nebraska and Iowa to as far east as Kentucky and Georgia. I guess the Appalachian and Rocky Mountains are too much of a hike for them to cross. Outside of this range there is no known established population anywhere else in the United States. If you live outside of this area (which you do if you're reading this newspaper) you're golden. This is great news to an arachnophobe like me! This fact flippantly flies in the face of self-reported accounts of citizens, media, and even medical diagnoses.

According to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, University of Maryland, and the US Department of Agriculture the Brown Recluse spider is not usually found outside of its native range. So despite many rumors and media reports to the contrary it has not established itself elsewhere out-

side of the Midwest. On rare occasions there have been confirmed cases of the spider outside of its native range. This is almost always attributable to "hitchhiking". The spider may be transported by luggage of people traveling from the Midwest or in packaging material originating from there. There have even been reports of single building infestations in places outside of the range where the spider has successfully made a colony, but a single incident like this does not count as successful colonization of a new area.

If you look, and not even very hard, you'll find reported medical diagnoses of Brown Recluse bites all over the nation. These are rarely, and I mean almost never ever, authentic Brown Recluse bites. 80% of reported bites nationwide are illegitimate, making only 20% authentic. This verifiable 20% is consolidated within the Midwest, the native range for the Brown Recluse. The necrotic style of wound has become an umbrella catch all for similar wounds, and is usually attributable to other types of illnesses. These can be, but certainly not limited to: Lyme disease, herpes, diabetic ulcers, syphilis, fungal infections, chemical burns, staph infection, vasculitis, and more. Even where the spider does live bites are rare.

In areas where they are found this spider is extremely common. Where you find one you can almost certainly find dozens or more. In 2002, the Journal of Medical Entomology reported one Kansas family living in a home from the 1850's who collected 2,055 Brown Recluse spiders in a period of six months. Not one member of this family of four had ever been bitten. An anecdotal story of an entomologist in Missouri collected 5 in a child's bedroom in one night. There's another anecdotal story of a person who found 6 living under his box spring. If you were to believe sensational media reports and the sheer numbers they're found in you'd think the entire Midwest ought to be in a constant state of unrest over these villainous violin-backed arachnids. The simple fact is that the name "recluse" is more than accurate. These spiders are very reclusive and are generally not seen. They are primarily nocturnal, and hide in small dark



The Brown Recluse Spider belongs to a group of spiders commonly known as the "fiddle-back" or "violin spider" because of the violin-shaped marking on the dorsal surface of the cephalothorax (fused head and thorax) with the neck of the violin pointing towards the abdomen. The shape and intensity of the fiddle design may vary. A more definitive diagnostic feature is their eye pattern: six eyes arranged in three pairs in a semicircle pattern with a space between each pair, while most other spiders have eight eyes.

places usually only emerging at night to hunt. They are not aggressive towards humans, and prefer flight to fight. When bites do occur it's generally a result of being caught between skin and clothing or bedding material.

In the highly unlikely event that you think you've found a Brown Recluse in your home or elsewhere there are a few key features that can help you to correctly identify whether or not it is in fact a recluse spider. The spider's legs are uniformly light brown in color covered only in very fine hairs. If you find a spider with stripes or spines on the legs it is NOT a Brown Recluse. The abdomen will be a light to dark color brown, with a darker brown shape of a violin on the back - the neck of the violin will begin just behind the eyes. The eyes are the most tell tale characteristic of the Brown Recluse. Most spiders have eight eyes arranged in two rows of four. The Brown Recluse has six eyes arranged in three sets of two. The eyes will be positioned with one set directly in front, with the other two positioned on the sides. Finally, the body of the Brown Recluse measures in at 3/8 inch long. If you find a spider that is larger than 1/2 inch in body length it is NOT a Brown Recluse. If you find a spider that does not meet these specific qualifications it is NOT nor ever will be a Brown Recluse.

Though bites from the Brown Recluse are rare, they ought to be taken seriously. The venom contains a hemotoxin which can cause necrosis of the skin in the affected area. According to the

University of Maryland Medical Center symptoms may include: itching, nausea, chills, fever, and a general feeling of discomfort and illness. They recommend washing the affected area with soap and water, applying ice, remaining calm, and most importantly - to seek emergency medical attention. Again, Brown Recluse spiders are not typically aggressive towards humans. These spiders prefer dark sheltered areas. They only bite when threatened. A bite can be easily avoided by just steering clear of the Midwest altogether. If you can't do that then don't put hands or feet into areas such as logs, underbrush, clothing that is rarely worn, or any area you can't

visually inspect without checking these areas first. Also, wear protective clothing when traveling through potential habitat.

I'll readily admit that I am one of the many who suffer self-diagnosed arachnophobia. This is why I've taken on the attitude of "know your enemy." Most people squish first and ask questions later, but it's not necessary. If you see a little brown spider while hiking, camping, or at home you can rest assured it is most emphatically NOT a Brown Recluse. Marylanders can now put those fears to bed, sleep tight.

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

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# SCIENCE MATTERS

## Meet the human family

Boyce Rensberger

With our questionable tradition of classifying people into categories that we call races, you could be forgiven for thinking that we human beings belong to a rather varied species. Actually, we're not all that diverse if you compare us to the different kinds of human beings we may actually have encountered in the prehistoric past.

At least eight other species of humans have lived on Earth during the time since our own species—Homo sapiens—appeared. That was roughly 250,000 years ago. The others are species that anthropologists consider to be enough like us that they belong to our genus—Homo (Greek for “man”)—but that were different enough that they qualify as separate species.

They all had bodies pretty much like ours. They all walked on two legs. They all had hands and made tools. But their brains and faces were different. Maybe we would call them “people,” but some of those human beings were so different that it's not clear we would have wanted to share a meal with them.

Neanderthals are one of the others. These people weren't so different from us—close enough, for example, that we did mate with them many times. More about that shortly.

Quite possibly, each species of human kept to itself. Most of the time. After all, the populations of some human groups are thought to have been quite small, rarely expanding beyond limited territories.

If we extend the time horizon to the last few million years, at least 20 different species of human

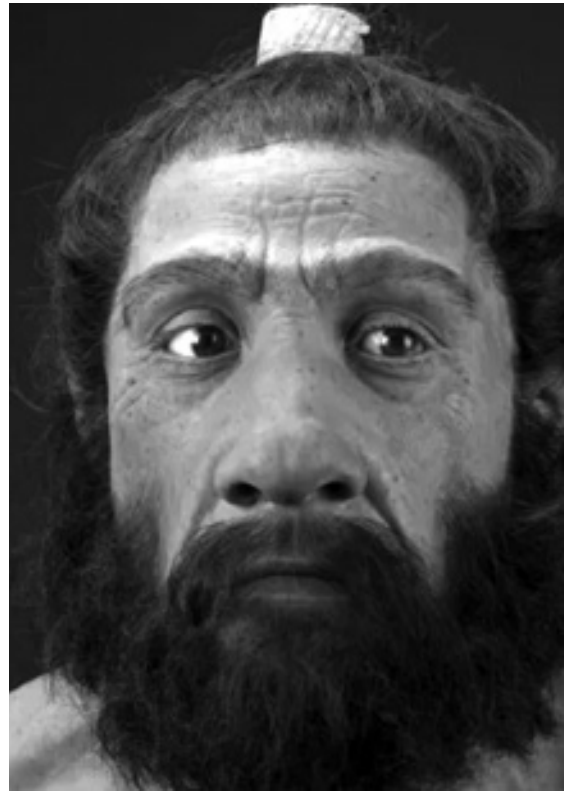
beings have lived on Earth. Each of them survived for a few hundred thousand or a few million years. Then, one by one, each died out. Except for one.

Here are just a few examples of our ancient relatives who lived during our 250,000 years and who we may have met.

Homo erectus—These folks were the most successful human species ever, judging by how long they survived. The earliest evidence of them is from two-million-year-old fossils, and the latest from a mere 110,000 years ago. That's ten times longer than we have been in existence. H. erectus arose in Africa and is the first kind of human to migrate out. They spread into southern Asia and went as far as modern China and the islands of Indonesia.

Homo floresiensis—These are the diminutive people nicknamed Hobbits who arose around 100,000 years ago and survived until a mere 18,000 years ago. Found so far only on the Indonesian island of Flores, they stood only three and a half feet tall and had very small brains. But they made and used stone tools, hunted dwarf elephants and may have used fire. It is not clear what their ancestor species was, but it does seem that they and the elephants shrank because of a known phenomenon called island dwarfism. We probably didn't meet them, but they are such a curiosity that I couldn't leave them out.

Homo heidelbergensis—These people, descendants of H. erectus but with larger brains, began around 700,000 years ago and were the first to move into Europe, learning to live in colder climates. They knew how to control fire. They built shelters of stone and wood. They had impres-



The reconstructed faces of our genetic relatives, Homo heidelbergensis (left) and Homo neanderthalensis (right). The Smithsonian's John Gurche created these by layering clay on casts of fossil skulls, with skin color being a conjectural choice.

sive brow ridges, which gave them a rather forbidding look. But we could have interacted because our species overlapped with theirs in Europe for 50,000 years. They died out around 200,000 years ago. They were the last common ancestor of today's people and the next two groups.

Homo neanderthalensis—You may think you know about these guys, the Neanderthals. But abandon any brutish stereotypes you may have. These folks had brains as big as ours, developed a variety of stone tools, hunted large game, made and wore clothing, buried their dead and, at least in one documented case, laid flowers in a grave. They probably could speak.

They were such close cousins that during the 200,000 years we both lived in Europe we interbred with them numerous times and produced healthy children. All of us who have ancestry from Europe or Asia are offspring of those matings. Between 1 and 3 percent

of our genes were inherited from Neanderthals. People of African ancestry share much fewer Neanderthal genes. Moreover, we do not all share the same set of those genes. My Neanderthal genes are probably not the same ones that you have. If you add up the different sets of genes found in living Europeans and Asians, it turns out that modern humans carry as much as one third of the total Neanderthal genome.

The ability of genome scientists to produce this knowledge has recently gone a step further. They have now pinpointed when interbreeding began—47,000 years ago. Also, they have found that this happened many times over a period of 6,000 to 7,000 years. This span begins at roughly the time modern humans, who evolved in Africa, migrated into Europe where they met the Neanderthals. It ended when the last Neanderthals died out.

Denisovans—These people were closely related to the Neanderthals but were genetically different enough to be considered a separate species. Named for the

site in Siberia where they were first found, these folks emerged about 370,000 years ago and continued until about 30,000 years ago, basically paralleling Neanderthal dates. It seems likely that both species evolved from Homo heidelbergensis but migrated in opposite directions, Denisovans to the east and Neanderthals to the west. Parts of the Denisovan genome survive in people from Melanesia such as New Guinea and the South Pacific islands.

You get the picture. People just like us could have met people who were quite different from us. Your guess is as good as mine as to how we would have treated them. If facial features are a guide, study the pictures above.

Boyce Rensberger retired to Frederick County after some 40 years as a science writer and editor, primarily at *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*. He welcomes feedback at [boycerensberger@gmail.com](mailto:boycerensberger@gmail.com).

To read other articles by Boyce Rensberger, visit the Authors section of [Emmitsburg.net](http://Emmitsburg.net).



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# THE VILLAGE IDIOT

## On death and Jean Cadle

Jack Deatherage

*Oh Death  
Oh Death oh Death,  
Please spare me over 'til  
another year!*

*What is this that I can't see  
With icy hands taking hold  
of me?*

*I am Death none can excel  
I open the door to Heaven or  
Hell,  
Oh Death someone would pray  
Could you call some other day?*

—Clifton Hicks

In September 1962, Reverend Louis Storms was appointed the new pastor of Saint Joseph's Catholic Church in this place. As best as I can recall Storms replaced Father John Sullivan who was the pastor when we moved to Ohio in 1959. I remember Mom getting a letter from some Emmitsburg family member informing her that Father Sullivan had died. She called me into the house, away from the friends I'd been playing with, and gave me the news. I would have been 7 or 8 years old.

Mom told me years later she thought I didn't understand what death was because I took the news of a person I liked without a show of emotion. At the time I was a budding Roman Catholic- believing everything Mom and the Sisters at Holy Spirit Elementary School were attempting to instill in me. I fully understood Father John was going into the ground and I'd never get to talk to him again this side of the veil. He'd gone on to be with God, why would I be upset over that? Wasn't that the goal?

Over the following decades my parents, grandparents, assorted aunts, uncles, cousins, friends, acquaintances and enemies crossed the veil. Some people I cared deeply about. Others not so much, though their passings were noted, stories shared and I moved on. How I felt about each death had a lot to do with where my head was at any given time. Dad's death hit me the hardest.

I'd lost faith in the Christian god. The only thing I believed in was having another beer. I was wallowing in self-inflicted depression. Suicide was on the table. Then word came from Florida- Dad had died of a

heart attack at age 56. For two weeks I maintained a stoic attitude, suppressing all emotion. When the grief finally descended on me it was horrifying. Wave upon wave of despair, self-reproach, regret, guilt, anger and the stunning revelation that I too, was mortal. (Seriously. I was and am that stupid - thinking, while contemplating suicide, I wouldn't die. Sheesh! What a maroon!)

Evidently I sobbed out as much grief as I'm capable of because no other death since Dad's has affected me that strongly. Or perhaps my having found something to replace the Christian god and alcohol makes the loss of family and friends easier to deal with? Whatever has changed in my thinking I am grateful for it. Now I might shed a few tears, but that tends to also cause the sinuses to clog and I deal with that too often without contemplating death. Better to quickly move on to memories- hopefully fond and entertaining, or at least educational.

Bill Steo, the philosopher down the hill, my editor at The Dispatch (under Ray Buckheister's ownership) attempted to educate my ignorant self with the same results high school English teachers Ruth Richards and Nancy Wenschhoff achieved- they gave up on teaching me grammar, punctuation, spelling, coherent writing and let me ramble. Both passed me with Ds, barely. Bill continued trying to educate me after I stopped sending him a monthly column. He took to discussing philosophy with me and critiquing the occasional mead I was making in those days.

The greatest influence Bill had on me came in the form of a question- as philosophers will.

"Jack, how are you fifty-five years old and haven't decided what you want to do with your life? What's wrong with you?"

I deadpanned, "Would you like to see the list?"

In spite of my flippant comeback, I took his first question to heart. More'n a decade later I decided to get serious about creating a community garden. Though Bill's since met his maker he's often in my thoughts as I struggle to build the community garden. Which brings me to the December town meeting of the Board of Commissioners.

Having recently stood at the podium and asked the Board for

more garden space, I was comfortably back in the peanut gallery at the last Town Council meeting contemplating the idiotic insanity that drives me, when Mike Hillman, the editor of this paper, sits down next to me and says, "Jean Cadle died today. I'm going to give her the front page of the paper next month. Can you write something about her? You and I are the last of the active writers of the ordinal Dispatch that Bo and Jean created." Or something along that line. I wasn't switching gears as quickly as I should have been.

Most of my Cadle stories involve Bo. He was the one I hand delivered my monthly column to. We'd spend a few minutes, or an hour, discussing town events, local people, or gardening. Bo was always surprised that I was related to probably a fourth of the town's population, but couldn't have identified more than twenty of them if I passed them on the street. That I generally cared not what was happening in town further puzzled him.

Twice the Cadles invited me to social functions at their home along Middle Creek. I don't recall making too much of a fool of myself- I didn't break their tea set at any rate. Talk about a fish out of water! Which reminds me. I'd sooner have stood on the bridge crossing the creek above their home with a fishing rod in hand and a bucket of worms than having to stand stupidly among people with college degrees and an

### Reader say, "Keep going..."

From time to time we will discuss our progress in setting the Dispatch into the community on a more permanent basis. We consider it to be one of the foundational building blocks of the much sought-after "small town quality of life." Churches, schools, libraries, government, and newspapers (communication) are required to build a solid community.

Simply, we believe that a local newspaper has its place, is important, and should be nurtured.

We are not alone. Over 300 respondents sent their best wishes and commitment to supporting the

Dispatch along with urges to keep it going.

Money and labor issues are critical to the operation of any profitable business. Our belief is that the profit from this community newspaper is its contribution to the idea of "quality of life."

At the present time we are not a non-profit organization—it only works out that way. We see ourselves as a socially responsible, community-involved business. Our aim is to produce an informative local newspaper and to donate a portion of any profit to projects that

Please see Dispatch on page 3

We would like to think that the staff of the Emmitsburg News-Journal still answer the call.

understanding of how to behave in polite society!

In spite of my social ineptness Jean did her best to make me feel welcome anytime I stopped by for a visit. I suppose her doing that eventually had me describing her to acquaintances as "a sweetheart". Bo, upon hearing one of my friends refer to Jean that way laughed and remarked, "Oh, she isn't as sweet as you think."

While Bo and Jean encouraged me to hone what little ability I had at storytelling, it was Jean who would call when I needed corrected. One correction still influences nearly every column I've written since.

I'd sent the editors a sarcastic critique of the then Board of Commissioners. I don't recall exactly what I wrote, but I do remember giving each commissioner praise for their intelligence and edu-

cation, both beyond my reach. Then I insulted them by mentioning their IQs falling exponentially as the number of them gathering together increased. I was in a foul mood when I wrote the piece.

Some weeks after the newspaper came out I happened to mention the critique to Jean who had called me concerning something else. I told her I had been surprised they'd printed my letter to the editor. The Cadles were known for publishing a thoughtful, less than "hostile" newspaper.

I could hear the smile on Jean's face as she said, "Well Jack, I argued we publish your letter to teach you a lesson."

Lesson learned Jean. Rest in peace.

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

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# THE MASTER GARDENER

## Structure in the garden

Mary Ann Ryan  
Adams County Master Gardener

Winter. The best time to see the structure in the landscape. There are no flowers to cover, camouflage, or distract from form in the garden.

What plants are creating that structure? Trees and shrubs play a huge role in this picture. Supporting roles are provided by the flower stems and seed heads of the perennials and grasses left after fall frost and freeze.

Our gardens, as they change through the seasons, can look just as wonderful through the winter as they do in the summer. Appreciating the browns, rusts and tans of the supporting plants and recognizing the stars of the show are our trees and shrubs can make our winter landscapes beautiful.

When we look in the forest, what do we see? Trees and shrubs, mostly deciduous, form the structure. But,

when finding an evergreen tree or shrub, the impact of that plant is great, and provides shelter and food for the critters that live there through the winter.

How can that be recreated in your landscape? Choosing native shrubs and trees will help to provide the needed food and shelter for the insects, birds and mammals that live here. Also, look towards some evergreens to help create spaces in the yard.

Although evergreens are not our main plant source in the forest, we do see some plants that hang on to their needles or leaves in the winter. Take, for example, the Eastern Red Cedar, *Juniperus virginiana*. This evergreen is native, grows to 30' or so, and can be found in abandoned fields, along wood's edges, and just about anywhere it can take root, if it has some sun. In the landscape, it can be used as a screen, or even an evergreen specimen. If you're lucky enough, this tree will be a female

plant and produce blue berries. Yes, there are male and female plants. The males will not produce the berries.

In the "wild" you may find an evergreen tree called Eastern White Pine, *Pinus strobus*. This tall evergreen can get as big as 100' high! Its needles are clustered in groups of 5, a true identification feature of this tree. It may be grown as a Christmas tree, as it does well when pruned as a young plant. It has been used as a screen, provided there's plenty of room for it to grow. The needles are soft to the touch, and bluish in color.

An American holly is a lovely evergreen native to PA. Its pointy leaves make it a prickly plant, but one of great texture. The female American holly produces berries, provided a male holly is close by. The red berries shine against the dull green leaves. Reaching 25', it is a slow growing plant. It does not like the north winds, which tend to dry out the leaves, causing brown edges or dropping of the leaves. It also prefers a more acid soil, so planting in the right location will allow it to prosper.

Another holly that is native to PA is the inkberry holly, *Ilex glabra*. It can be found in coastal states from Maine to Florida, and across the southern states. It prefers sandy, moist acidic soil, but tolerates many soils. Full to part sun is best, but this plant can be in some shade as well and do just fine.

The inkberry holly maintains a height of 4'-5', making it great in a foundation planting. There are many cultivars available, like 'Shamrock', 'Compacta', and 'Gem Box', all selected for their size, tolerance of soil types, and color. This plant, like most hollies, is dioicous, meaning there are male and female plants. The berries on this shrub are insignificant to our eyes, but to



The softness of this white pine's needles is accentuated by the snow and ice.

the birds, they are candy. A great plant to add to any landscape.

Other evergreens that we may see in our natural world include Rosebay rhododendron, rhododendron maximum, and mountain laurel, *Kalmia latifolia*. Both take shade, and like acid soils. A pH of 4.5 - 6 will do best for these plants. Well drained soils with rich organic matter will provide a nice home for the shallow roots.

Both flower in late spring and are a joy to see in the hemlock forests. At home, they must have organic soil, with a low pH, and semi-shade for their happiness. The mountain laurel has light pink to almost white clusters of flowers, while the rosebay rhododendron boasts a rose to pink flower color. Rosebay rhododendron will get up to 25' tall and the mountain laurel can reach 15' when happy. Both are broadleaf evergreens, which means they keep their leathery-like leaves through the winter.

Other, non-native evergreen plants that we may add to our landscapes include blue hollies, English hollies, and spruces.

White spruce, *Picea glauca*, although not found in PA, is native to New England. They prefer higher elevations, but can be grown here in PA. We have them happily growing on our property as a screen planting from the road and backdrop for our

meadow. Ours are almost 30 years old and have grown to 30+ feet. They need full sun and well-drained soil to persevere. They have a faint bluish cast to the needles. As with all spruce, the needles are held singly on the stem and prickly to the touch.

Blue hollies, *Ilex x meservaea*, do very well in our climate. In the 80's and 90's it seemed that every new planting had a few blue hollies along the foundation of the house, and for good reason.

These plants have a dark green leaf color, and produce big, red berries. They are a shrub, and probably will get to 6' tall, but can be maintained a bit smaller. They are a cross between two species, hence the "x" in its scientific name. Here are some common cultivars of blue hollies:

*Ilex x meservaea* 'Blue Princess' and 'Blue Prince'. These have great leaf color - dark green leaves and dark stems. The berries are bright red, a great contrast with the dark foliage. Great for foundation plants and hedges.

*Ilex x meservaea* 'China Girl' and 'China Boy'. These plants have lighter colored foliage, and in my experience, are a bit larger in size than the Blue Princess.

*Ilex x meservaea* 'Golden Girl'. This female holly has golden berries with dark green foliage, a nice change and contrast to the red berried plants. As

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- **Ballenger Creek Park** (2nd parking lot on left) 5420 Ballenger Creek Pike, Frederick
- **County Yard Waste Recycling Site** 9031 Reichs Ford Road, Frederick
- **Eyler Road Park** (fenced area on right) 30 Eyler Road, Thurmont
- **Kempton Park** (lower left parking lot) 3456B Kempton Church Road, Monrovia
- **Point of Rocks Ruritan** (left side parking lot) 1637 Ballenger Creek Pike, Point of Rocks
- **Remsburg Park** (first parking lot entrance on left) 7408 Holter Road, Middletown

\* Except for the Reichs Ford Road site, all locations are for residential use only, not businesses.

➡ **Remove all ornaments, lights, tinsel, garland, tree stands, etc, before bringing the tree to a collection site. No trees in plastic bags.**

To learn more about how, what and where to recycle, use the **Recycle Coach** app, follow **#FrederickRecycles** on Facebook or visit [www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/recycle](http://www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/recycle)

# THE MASTER GARDENER

## Master Gardeners January Seminars

**Fredrick County Master Gardener**  
 January 11 (10 to noon): “Pull This, Plant That: Invasive Plants & Native Plant Alternatives” Find out why and how to replace non-native plants—especially invasives—with natives that help our native birds, butterflies and other pollinators. You will learn to accurately identify and control invasive plants and discover native alternatives that are beneficial and beautiful.

January 18 (10 to noon): “Garden Pruning” Learn what to prune in the winter and early spring and how to prune to get the most out of your plants.

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.

*For more information call the extension office at 301-600-1595.*

**Adams County Master Gardener**  
 The Adams County Master Gardener Hotline is open Wednesdays, from 10 to 2. Please send an email (with pictures, if possible) to adamsmg@psu.edu with your gardening questions or stop by Penn State Extension, 670 Old Harrisburg Rd, Gettysburg.

with most blue hollies, this one will get about 5’ tall and rounded in habit. The male partner is ‘Blue Stallion’. ‘Blue Stallion’ can be used to pollinate most of the female blue hollies.

Ilex x meserveae ‘Dragon Lady’. This is one of my favorites of the blue hollies. Unlike the cultivars mentioned so far, this one is pyramidal, not rounded. It reaches easily 20’ and is relatively slender for the height of the plant. Like all blue hollies, it is relatively free of pests and disease, doesn’t need pruning, and is tolerant of most soils.

The English holly, Ilex aquifolium, is one of the more difficult hollies to grow. It doesn’t like it very hot, nor very cold. It likes well-drained soils, prefers loam or sandy soils, and is hardy to zone 6. It should grow well along the coast, but in the mountains, maybe not so well. It’s worth mentioning,

though, because during the holidays, you may have seen this shrub sold as a Christmas holly in variegated form. It’s often seen in bunches of cut greens or in wreaths as well, mostly because of its dark, glossy leaves, and the pretty white or yellow margins of the leaves. Most of the cultivars do get large. The straight species reaches 40’, so be sure if you pick one of these up at the garden center to read the label for the height.

Try these plants in your landscape. Whether native is your “jam”, like it is mine, or introducing a few non-natives to your landscape is your preference, evergreens can be the backbone of the landscape, providing structure and green color through the winter months.

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

## Small Town Gardener

### Seed starting: plan and organize now for a calm season later

Marianne Willburn

For gardeners who grow few plants from seed, or who only grow the seeds that they can scatter with a drink in their hands in spring (preferably from the deck), the process may feel complicated and time consuming.

Sure, time is money, but if you’ve been watching prices sharply increase for tiny tomato seedlings, and been frustrated by the loss of cheap 6-packs in nurseries and big boxes, you may be wondering if seed starting is the way forward.

Buying individual kale plants in 3-inch pots for \$3.29 when you can get a packet of 100 seeds for the same price is incredibly motivating. So is finding that your favorite tomato is not being carried by the nurseries this year and having to slice something inferior onto your BLT.

Relax. You’ve Got Time.

Unless you’re hard core and have relatively unusual seeds that need to start cold stratification in January, the good news is that this month is a time for planning, not planting. It’s time to browse the catalogs, check the seeds that you have, and give yourself an ordering cutoff date so you don’t wake up at the end of March empty handed.

For some of your cool season crops such as kale or broccoli, seeds ordered in January and planted in trays in February, will give you respectable seedlings to plant out in March. If you’re a fair-weather gardener, and tomatoes and peppers are your thing, you won’t need to start seeds until the beginning of March for our area.

Direct or Indirect?

Whatever you’re planting, get organized the moment the seeds hit your mailbox. Take some time to think about whether you are direct sowing (straight into the ground) or indirect sowing (into a pot for transplant later).

Most plants do well indirectly sown (with the exception perhaps of root vegetables). This is generally preferred for plants that need more protection, more warmth, or extra time to germinate. Direct sowing is often preferred when larger quantities of a vegetable are required (such as lettuce or chard). It might mean later vegetables, or seedlings lost to insects, weather, or birds; but it could save you some hassle.

#### Now, Get Organized

The following Grab & Sow method (I should totally trademark that) for getting your seed packets organized – and more importantly, keeping them organized – has really worked well for me over the years. My aim is to do almost all the thinking at one time and then allow myself to go on autopilot for the season – grabbing only the seeds I need on the date I need them.

First, you’ll need an airtight rectangular container to hold and organize your existing seed collection. If you’ve got old seeds, check the germination rate by sealing 10 seeds in a Ziploc bag with a damp paper towel. If only 4 germinate, you’ve got a 40% germination rate and may want to buy new seeds or sow double what you think you’ll need.

#### Divide Your Seeds for Easy Browsing

Make some 3x5” dividing cards out of an old manila folder (so they stand way up above the seeds) and on the top edge, categorize these dividers with a sharpie marker. Years ago, my labels consisted of three divisions: Vegetables, Flowers, Herbs. Now they are more specific: Tomatoes, Brassicas, Greens, Peppers, Perennials, Annuals etc. . .

“File” your seeds appropriately and keep your filing cabinet somewhere cool and dark and where you can access it the minute new seeds come in the door.

#### Create This Season’s Grab & Sow Organizer (patent pending)

Once all your seeds have arrived and been ‘filed,’ take an hour on the weekend to pull the packets you’re growing this year. Be honest with yourself.

Now to make your actual Grab & Sow Organizer. I use a rectangular plastic container and 3x5 cards which are reusable year after year, but if you’re not sowing many, you can use large paper envelopes to hold each week’s seeds.

Write a number on the top of each card or envelope that represents how many weeks before your last frost date it is. I usually go up to 12, but I’m indirectly sowing cool season vegetables and flowers.

On a separate piece of paper, write down the dates that the number corresponds to this year so you can clearly see (for instance) that if it is February 8th, you are 12 weeks before the first frost. February 15th would be 11, etc. etc.

#### Sort Your Seeds by Week Numbers

Read the info on the packet and keep a good seed book handy for extra information. I recommend Sibley’s Herbs and Vegetables from Seed, but your local extension office can give you more regional advice.

Decide if you are planting the seed directly or indirectly. Put a big “D” or “I” on the top of the packet with your marker and then figure out where to slot them, Week 12 or Week 4? Stick the seeds behind that divider and do the next packet. And the next.

For instance, peppers are usually started indoors (indirectly) eight weeks before first frost. Write “I” on the packet, find the divider that reads 8, and slot the seeds into place behind it.

#### Feel Exceptionally Organized

When you have finished, you’ll have something that instantly tells you what you’re planting this week and how you’re doing it. It’ll also tell you when, exactly, you need to get started so the season doesn’t get away from you.

Each weekend, grab the seeds that correspond to the date, plant them (that’s a column for another day) and refill the packet in the big container. If you’re sowing more in a couple weeks for succession planting, pop the packet behind a divider two weeks from now.

#### Think Once, Plant Efficiently

Seed starting doesn’t have to be chaotic or anxiety-inducing. Or complicated. Thinking ahead in January will pay rich rewards when the season picks up in a couple months.

*Marianne is a columnist for The American Gardener and GardenRant, and the author of Tropical Plants and How To Love Them and Big Dreams Small Garden. She writes from her home in Lovettsville, VA.*

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# PETS

## A time of potential, possibility, and opportunity

**Jennifer Vanderau**  
Cumberland Valley Animal Shelter

Ahh, the New Year. A time of potential and possibility and opportunity. The future is in front of us and it's a blank slate.

Is there something you've been meaning to do for a while, but you just never got around to it? Maybe 2025 is the year you can tackle that challenge.

We can say goodbye to 2024 and hello to a whole new moment in time. What could it bring?

It's all basically up to you.

I'm super proud to say we have seen a lot of great adoptions this past year. We found forever homes for almost 800 animals. That's amazing!

We've also seen a lot of generous donations. We have such amazing supporters and I will be forever grateful to every one of you.

It does my heart good to know that no matter what happens with the economy or in the world, we are still finding animals homes at CVAS and we will continue to do that no matter what 2025 brings.

With the start of each new year, I also like to remind everyone that now is a good time to consider taking inventory with the paperwork side of having animals in our lives. So let's talk vaccinations and licenses, shall we?

Every dog three months of age and older in the state of Pennsylvania must have a current, up-to-date dog license. Licenses go on sale as of January 1.

Dog licenses need to be purchased January 1 and expire December 31 each year. So even if you got a dog license, say, in March 2024, it will expire on December 31. If you have a canine, make sure a license is on your list to start the year.

Rabies vaccinations are also a law in Pa. Any dog over 3 months of age must have a current rabies vaccination. This also pertains to cats that are inside your home for any amount of time in a 24 hour day, according to Pennsylvania state law.

In Maryland, all cats, dogs, and ferrets be vaccinated against rabies by the time they are 4 months old and may require a license, depending on the county in which you live.

Failure to provide your pet with

a license or rabies vaccination could result in fines. It's the law in Pa. and Md., so it's a good idea to make sure your furry friends are up-to-date.

I also like to talk about microchips because we've had a lot of success with getting animals home because of microchips and beginning a new year seems as good a time as any to consider them.

Every time an animal comes into the shelter as a stray, we scan him or her for a microchip. Collars and tags seem to be one of the first things to go if a pet is running for a while, but a microchip is permanent identification, embedded just under the skin between the shoulder blades.

We have a scanner that reads the number and that number corresponds with the owner. A lot of veterinarian offices I know have the scanners, too. Believe me, it is a happy day at CVAS when a microchip leads back to a mom or a dad and a dog or a cat doesn't have to spend any time in a kennel at the shelter.

One of the best parts about having your animal microchipped is you

can qualify for a for a lifetime license in Pa., which means you no longer have to worry about getting a new one every year – it'll be good for the life of your dog. It's another way to make microchips more appealing for pet owners.

Maryland also offers lifetime license.

As we enter into a new year that we all are hoping has some good in store for us, making sure our animals are cared for should be one of our top priorities.

From all of us at CVAS, we wish you and your family (both two-legged and four-legged members) a fantastic 2025!

*Jennifer Vanderau is the Public Relations Coordinator for the Cumberland Valley Animal Shelter in Chambersburg, Pa., and can be reached at [cvas-comm@cvas-pets.org](mailto:cvas-comm@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](http://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.*



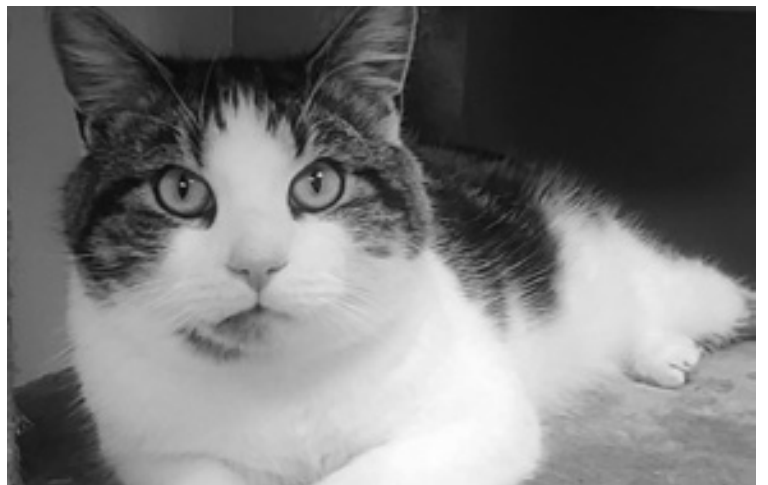
**Odin is a big guy who loves attention! He knows how to sit and shake. He enjoys going on walks and going to the play yard! Odin is dog-selective and will chase cats, so it would be best if Odin was the only pet in the home. Odin is a big baby who is 5 years old and loves getting scratched. He is content on the couch with you or going for a walk. Odin may be too much for small children so an age restriction for children in the home may apply. Odin would love to find his loving forever home soon! He did test positive for Lyme disease and, after showing symptoms, has been treated for it. Could you help this sweet-heart out of a kennel and into a loving home?**



**Olivia is a smart, fun-loving girl that will need a strong leader. She came into the shelter as a stray in September 2023 and is one of our long-term residents. Olivia is a lab/terrier mix who is about two years old. Olivia knows sit, shake, and (sometimes) down. She is an active, playful, and occasionally stubborn girl. She is treat motivated and is always looking to please but sometimes has her own agenda! Olivia loves to go to the play yard and run so a fenced in yard is highly recommended. Due to her energy, an age restriction for children in the home may apply—please discuss this with shelter staff. Olivia has 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 her.**



**Magic came into the shelter as a stray, so we don't know a lot about him, other than him being one sweet boy. He's about a year old and pretty much all black, with just a few white hairs here and there. He loves to play and get wet food as a treat. Could he be the new best friend you're looking for?**



**Mumble came into the shelter as a stray, so we don't know a lot about him, but he loves to play. He's about 10 pounds and 4 years old and really enjoys napping on cat trees at the shelter. Look at that face! What's not to love?**

For more information about Olivia, Odin, Magic, or Mumble, call the Cumberland Valley Animal Shelter at 717-263-5791, or visit them online at [www.cvaspets.org](http://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




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# The value of experience

Shawn Snyder

As the only animal shelter in Frederick County, the Frederick County Division of Animal Control and Pet Adoption Center sees its fair share of senior pets. There are many generalized positive reasons to adopt a senior pet. Senior pets are often less active than their younger counterparts. Senior pets often come with established manners and an understanding of rules and rewards. They also possess more established characteristics and don't possess that "I wonder what she'll be like when she grows up" quality that young pets do. Given all the benefits of an older pet, it always makes us wonder how so many end up at our shelter, especially after spending their life so far with a loving family. Khloe and Brooklyn are two of those pets.

Siamese mix sisters, Khloe and Brooklyn are both ten-years old. They are considered a bonded pair which means we are asking that they be adopted together. Both cats lived with the same person for most of their lives but were relinquished in 2023 because of their owner's health. The shelter adopted them out successfully; however, their new owner became homeless and was no longer about to care for them.

Khloe and Brooklyn are both calm, friendly and enjoy loung-



Khloe and Brooklyn

ing in a comfy bed, watching the world go by. Currently, they live in one of the shelter's free roam cat rooms and shelter visitors will find that neither cat demands

attention, but both appreciate a good ear or chin scratching. Khloe does have a hyperthyroid which requires daily medication, while Brooklyn has no known health issues. Their ideal home would be somewhat quiet and without a lot of commotion. Khloe will need a family that is committed to ensuring she receives her daily medication as well as any future health care needs for either cat.

Khloe and Brooklyn have many great qualities and are deserving of a home that will commit to them for the rest of their life. They are personable and have life skills that provides them much to contribute to a new family that understands the value of experience.

Are you interested in meeting Khloe and Brooklyn? Frederick County Animal Control and Adoption Center is open six days a week. A reservation to visit can be made at [www.visitfcac.as.me](http://www.visitfcac.as.me) or by calling 301-600-1546.



Zeniba is a girl who knows what she likes. She likes petting, playing, and any kind of neck or ear scratching. She does not like her paws touched, which makes nail trims challenging, or her belly touched. Zeniba has a beautiful tortoiseshell coat and is approximately 3 years old. She was found as a stray; however, Zeniba must have been someone's pet because she was already spayed, her coat is in good condition, and she is a bit overweight.



Long-hair cat lovers meet Spock! Spock is a friendly guy at five years old and has adapted to the shelter life with ease. He was found as a stray, but no owner came looking for him. He has been brought up to date on routine vaccinations, tested for FIV/FelV and treated for the fleas he had when he arrived. Spock is available for adoption from the shelter for a fee of \$77.50. Can you give him his 'fur-ever' home?



The cold weather does not have Huskee down; he loves it! Like so many Siberian Huskies, Huskee arrived at the shelter as a stray. The breed is hard-wired to run, so left unattended they just can't help themselves. At only one-year-old, Huskee is a handsome, friendly guy that loves to play. He is seeking a family that can keep him safely at home and offer him daily outdoor activities.



Gia is a familiar face at the shelter and has been waiting to meet her new family for over 180 days. A shelter staff and volunteer favorite, Gia is a spunky, friendly and adventurous girl! She recently went on an outing with a shelter volunteer and here is what she had to say: "Gia seems absolutely filled with joy. That sounds kind of corny, I realize, but she just has this cheerful exuberance and optimistic smile."

For more information about Brooklyn and Khloe, Zeniba, Spock, Huskee, or Gia, call the Frederick County Animal Shelter at 301-600-1319 or visit them online at [www.frederickcountymd.gov/fcac](http://www.frederickcountymd.gov/fcac) or better yet, visit them in person at the shelter!

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## HUMOR

## The Great Taneytown Mule Chase

Michael Hillman

My three horses clearly wanted to come in, but it was still too early. They were still in their summertime routine, which meant they came in during the day, and were put out at night. Even though we have a big run-in shed, with multiple fans in it, my horses were, well, spoiled rotten. But after years of competing as Event Horses, they earned it, so I didn't begrudge them wanting to be in their stalls, away from the flies that were beginning to gather around them.

"Sorry guys," I said to them, "I'm going to run into Taneytown and will be back in half an hour, then you can come in." A half hour more outside would make all the difference in how much work I would have to do later that afternoon in cleaning their stalls.

The drive to Taneytown along the back roads was uneventful. I dropped by the post office and refilled the paper's news box with more copies of the paper, dropped off two invoices, and then headed back to go to Harney where I had another paper box I had yet to fill with the October edition of the paper. No sooner had I turned onto the Harney Road, I saw a car with its four-way flashers on and a woman standing next to it. I slowed to ask if she was OK, and as I pulled up next to her car, she waved at me frantically.

"The police told me to stand here and not let anyone by. There are horses loose on the road ahead," she said.

Her car was parked just at a point where Harney Road makes a gradual decline down to the bridge over Piney Creek. Sure enough in

the distance, there were five horses meandering down the road, followed by a car which appeared to be herding the horses northward. As I looked further down the road, I saw two police cars on the northern side of the Piney Creek bridge. The police had positioned their cars in such a way as to block the passage of the horses over the bridge.

On paper, it was a good idea, but having dealt with horses for over 50 years, I knew the plan would fail; for on either side of the bridge were fields, it was only a matter of which directions the horses would take. I told the woman blocking traffic I was a horse person, and thanked her for blocking traffic, and then headed down towards the bridge in hopes of getting to the horses before they took another route. If I could get close to one of them, I was sure I could persuade it to come to me, and once I had one, I would have them all. — or so it works with good boys like mine.

## ... They're Mules

Unfortunately, as I got closer, I saw that the 'horses' were not 'horses', but 'mules', and intuitively knew we were in trouble. Mules don't have a reputation for being stubborn for no reason, and these mules were on a walkabout and clearly didn't have any intention of having their walkabout cut short. Sure enough, when the mules hit the police blockade, they simply turned around and headed back towards Taneytown, and me, at a leisurely pace.

Having had to corral a horse who didn't want to work more times than I care to admit, I knew this was going to be tricky, so I

cast about for a treat or a bucket of grain.

I shouted to one of the neighbors near the bridge — asking her if she had any apples or carrots. She disappeared in a flash, and in a flash was back with a whole bucket of apples.

"Good," I thought. Now all I needed was to get close enough to the stupid lead mule, who I found myself calling "Sampson", who the others were following, and get him to see what I had in my hand. I would then grab him and lead him and his crew back home... wherever home was.

Fortunately, Sampson had a halter on him. As I approached him, I simultaneously took off my belt, with the intent of using it as a lead rope, while I bit into the apple, making as much of a crunching sound as I could. A sound my horses found irresistible and always resulted in them coming to me — Sampson, however, was unimpressed, and simply trotted away. He was having way too much fun.

As I watched Sampson and his crew trot by me and up into an adjoining yard, I realized that simply approaching them was out of the question. Rounding them up was going to take some planning, so I hopped into my car and drove back in the direction of route 140, and turned right, headed towards Emmitsburg. An Amish family had recently purchased a farm along the road, and I suspected that the mules belonged to them. When I got to the farm, no one was around. When I knocked on the door, a woman, clearly not Amish, answered.

"Did your mules get lose?" I asked quickly.

"Yes, they did," she replied.

"OK, they are on Harney Road. Where are the owners?"

"The husband is at an auction, but the wife is out looking for them." She replied.

"Great" I thought. The one person who really knew these mules was gone. It was then and there that I realized I was probably the only knowledgeable horse person involved in the case, and as such, by default, I was in charge.

As I headed back towards Harney Road, I saw three people standing. I stopped and asked them if they were looking for the mules, to which they said yes. One was holding a 25-foot nylon rope, which made little sense to me as it couldn't be used as a lasso, not that he even knew how to lasso as I learned. I told him nevertheless to get into the car. I was going to need all the help I could get.

By the time I got back to the mules, traffic in both ways was backing up. As I passed down the line of cars to get to the mules, other cars not wishing to wait any longer attempted to follow me. I stop the car and told my 'lasso' welling passenger to get out and block the cars coming behind me. The drivers were pissed, but by



Sampson

this stage, I didn't really care.

By the time I got to the mules, Sampson had decided that he had had enough of the lawn he was munching on and began to move his herd. With the road by now full of cars, Sampson opted to use the unfenced back yards as his get-away.

## Outthinking A Mule

Knowing it was impossible to stop Sampson once he got moving with a purpose, I jumped back into my car and drove in reverse back to the last house in the line, which just so happened to be across the street from the entrance to Sewell's Christmas Tree Farm, and once again I positioned my car to block their path down the road. Sure enough Sampson appeared around the corner of the last yard, and when he saw the opening provided by the Christmas tree farm's driveway, he took it, and he and his buddies trotted down it, away from the road, followed by the dozen or so volunteers who had joined in on the effort to 'hurd' the mules.

"Good," I thought. They were off the road, but then I realized I had traded one problem for another. While along the road, they could have potentially been corralled, but once on the expansive farm, corraling was out of the question. The only way to get them now was to get Sampson to want to come to me.

When I got to the Sewell's farmhouse, I saw Mr. Sewell's daughter and asked her for a bucket and some cat food. She gave me an inquisitive look. Having been a long-time advertiser of this paper, I knew that Mr. Sewell was an

avid cat lover, and the sound that cat food would make in a bucket would sound like grain, the temptation of which I hoped even Sampson could not resist.

By the time I got the bucket and cat food, Sampson had already moved onto the back 40. I muttered a few choice profanities under my breath. I drove a farm lane down to one of the police cars, which had stopped at the lane's end. The policeman was clearly befuddled as to what to do next. As I got out of my car, he pointed in the direction the mules had went. By the time I got to the end of the field, Sampson had moved onto the next 'back 40'.

"Stupid mules," I muttered to myself.

As I walked through a field of soybeans, one of the 'herders' yelled to me that the Mules were in the field across Piney Creek. I looked. Had Sampson and his buddies in fact crossed the creek, we were in a whole new ball game. But he had not. "Those are cows," I said.

"Are you sure," she asked.

"Yes," I replied, probably too curtly, and continued on my way. I then spied Sampson and his team of runaways headed Southwest, and knew if they continued in that direction, they would soon reach Route 140. With three people behind them, one for some ungodly reason beating a metal bucket with a hammer, I returned to my car, determined to meet them when they emerged from the woods along Route 140.

I have a favorite expression when I'm dealing with a troublesome horse — "I'm a much better rider than you are horse."

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MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

I muttered that phrase, substituting 'mule' for 'horse', in the direction of Sampson. I knew he couldn't hear me, but it was my way of telling him I intended to beat him at his game.

As I got to my car, I came across the Amish wife and told her to join me, as Sampson would be coming out onto the road near her farm. I didn't have to ask her twice. Like me, she had been chasing Sampson and his buddies for close to an hour, and she was winded.

"Do you have any water," she asked.

"Sorry, no. But I will drop you off at your house and you can get some while I talk to the police about blocking Route 140".

### Taking Charge Of The Chase

By this time, it seemed every spare police officer in the area had joined in the effort. They clearly understood the gravity of the situation of Sampson appearing out of nowhere on a heavily traveled road.

I pulled up next to them and explained to them what I knew for sure was going to happen. One of the officers looked at me and simply said, "You're in charge, where do you want us to go."

"Head to the bottom of the hill, near Whippoorwill Drive – they will come out somewhere near there. When they do, drive them back up this way and hopefully when they see home, they will go back to their field" I said. Within seconds, two officers were on the move.

As I watched them go, it occurred to me that even though I had a cell phone on me, I hadn't taken the time to see if the three 'hurders' had a phone on them, had I done so, I could have called them to get an update on Sampson's movement. I kicked myself for being stupid. But still, I had a pretty good idea where he was headed. He hadn't crossed the stream in the back 40, so he wasn't going to cross where it crossed Route 140. All I needed to do was turn him East on Route 140, back in the direction of his home.

But just when I was sure I had the situation under control, a car stopped in front of me. "Are you looking for horses?" They asked.

"Yes," I replied. Normally I would have corrected them and told them they were mules, but opted not to – at least they had the decency to alert us.

"They just crossed 140 and are trotting down Whippoorwill Drive."

I sighed. "Damn this mule is good," I thought.

Sampson was always one step ahead of me and I was getting tired of it. "I'm a damn nuclear engineer; how am I being beaten by a stupid mule?" I muttered to no one in particular.

Before I jumped into my car, I grabbed a proper feed bucket, and some real grain, some nice woman had somehow procured.

By the time I got halfway down Whippoorwill Drive, which was a very long, single width driveway, I

came to the police contingent who now had a bemused look on their faces as they watched Sampson off in the distance, trotting down the drive. I stopped and handed one of the officers the bucket with the cat food in it and told him that if the mules came back this way, to shake the bucket, and if possible, to grab a hold of the mule with the halter.

I'm not sure if police are used to people telling them what to do, but these officers, God love them, simply nodded okay, and I headed on my way.

### Just Sampson And Me

Now nothing stood between me and Sampson with the exception of 4,000 acres of open land – and one farmhouse and its barn at the end of the drive. As I came up on the herd, my jaw dropped. Sampson was headed for the farm's barn!

He and his crew trotted past the entranceway of the barn area and then directly into an opening of the barn. I couldn't believe my luck. The entranceway had no gate, so I had no way to block them into its courtyard, so I headed to the barn's opening, hoping against hope that I could find something to pen them in there. I did. I spied an old gate leaning against the barn and positioned it in the entrance to the barn.

The chase was over.

Unfortunately, Sampson and his crew were in a room full of grain bags and were in the process of thoroughly trashing them to get at their contents. If that wasn't bad enough, the rightful owners of the barn, a heard of goats, decided to make their appearance.

"Oh. No! No! No!" I said to the lead goat. I had no idea how Sampson and his crew were going to react to 50 goats descending upon them and I had no interest in finding out.

Thankfully, the lead goat didn't need a fourth 'No!' to turn around, and as he headed off, I blocked off their ability to get in the barn. Now all I had to do was move Sampson into the large goat pen next to the feed room pen and I could declare victory.

Having been around horses for 50+ years, I had no hesitation with entering the area where Sampson was, but Sampson clearly had a problem with me entering his space. He turned and looked directly at me ... and there we stood for what seemed like an eternity – but in reality, it was only a few minutes.

I could see the gears working in his mind: "I can run over this puny human who is standing in front of me shaking a grain bucket, eat the grain, make quick use of the broken-down gate, and be on my way again ..."

While I was thinking: "This mule is big, really big ... and he's not a horse. I know horses, but I don't know mules. He doesn't know me, and I don't know him. There is nothing stopping him from running over me then him not being sure I know what I'm doing ... damn he's big."

We stood there, looking into each other eyes, waiting to see which one would blink first.

And we waited, and waited, and waited.

Sampson blinked.

I cautiously closed the 10 feet between us. As I did, Sampson turned around, I retreated back, having no desire to discover firsthand how hard he could kick. When he turned to face me again, I approached again, and he turned around again, and once again I retreated.

When he turned back to me for the third time, he stood and allowed me to approach him and attached the led line to his halter. I reached up and gave Sampson's neck a pet and offered him an apple, which he took in one bite, and led him and his crew into the adjoining pen.

As I undid the lead shank, I petted him again. "You were a worthy opponent." I whispered to him. "But let's not do this again, ok?"

The great Taneytown Mule Chase was over.

As I left the barn, I was greeted by the phalanx of police cars all coming up the drive. "It's over." I told the first officer as he got out of his patrol car. A broad smile filled his face.

While I'm sure they would have rather been doing something else that day, I'm also sure that that evening they would be recounting the events of the chase to their friends and family. Much like I did and am doing now. I would love to be a fly on the wall to hear Sampson's recounting of the chase to a new member of his herd years from now. I'm sure he'll say I blinked!

### Epilogue

I don't know who the officers were that were involved in the two-hour chase, but I thank them. I'm sure they will tell the story from their perspective, but one thing will be consistent between the stories, because of their efforts, Sampson and his buddies made it home alive, and no one was injured. That is an accomplishment to be proud of. And that is all that matters.

Oh, least I forget, thanks to the owner of the barn I penned Sampson up in. The man was a gentleman when he came out of his home to discover what I had done. The world could use more like him.

And for the people who helped follow Sampson on his and his pals 'lark' about the country, thank you as well. I wish you could have been there at the end, but you were there at the beginning, and that was the most critical part. God bless you for caring about them.

By the time I got home, my thoroughly pissed off horses were not interested in hearing this tale. All they wanted was 'in' and away from the flies. Like the good boys they are, they all walked quickly into their stalls as they have done for years, and will continue to do for years.

And yes, they know how lucky they are.

*To read other articles by Michael Hillman, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.*

## 2nd Annual Roar Like a Lion



A child getting to know Leader Dog, Brody, at last year's Roar Like a Lion event.

This Saturday, February 1, the Emmitsburg Lions Club will hold its 2nd Annual Roar Like a Lion event at the Emmitsburg Public Library from 10 to 2. Roar Like a Lion is more formally known as a Day of Service, but that makes it sound stodgy, a duty to perform. Instead, it is a way to show kids, and kids of all ages, the fun of doing projects that have the side impact of doing good for the community.

Last year, the Emmitsburg Lions Club Roar Like a Lion was held on April 6, the day following Frederick County's Easter break. Many families were just traveling home from Spring vacations, so the club moved the event to February 1 this year to allow more Emmitsburg families to attend.

This year, the club will build on many of the events from last year. Coloring Blessing Bags was one of the events. White Paper Bags were colored with crayons, pencils and paint with happy thoughts and joyful pictures. Then the Lions Club stuffed each of the 100 bags with toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, shaving and hand cream, razors and other hygienic items for distribution at Frederick and Carroll County homeless shelters and food banks.

Rock painting was another favorite. The sign next to the rocks to be painted and the collection of brushes and paints explained the following about the meaning of the painting rock movement. "It's not about racing out to find the best rocks before anyone else can get there, or how many rocks you can collect at one time. It's about random acts of kindness. Sharing a little piece of art with a total stranger. Or exchanging with a friend. It's a positive energy that we send out in the smallest of things, without expecting anything in return." Several of those who painted rocks that afternoon planned to distribute them in various Emmitsburg parks for others to find and enjoy. Maybe you were lucky enough to be one

of those people.

Another group got to play in dirt. Local volunteer Jill Long had starter soil, seeds, and containers for plants. Fortunately, the Lions Club had plenty of newspapers to cover the library tables and a vacuum cleaner well equipped to clean the stray dirt that never made it into the containers. In fact, Amber Madigan, principal of the Emmitsburg Elementary School, pointed out that one of her teachers plans to begin an environmental club at the school this spring and would be likely to help with a Roar Like a Lion project this year.

Other projects last year involved inspecting donated eyeglasses and separating those that were damaged. The Lions Clubs in our district donated thousands of glasses for worldwide distribution to those in need. Thanks to those of you who dropped your old glasses in our local collection boxes around town.

Leader Dog Brody got more than his fair share of attention last year. Brody is Emmitsburg Lion Bill Bowers' 3rd Leader Dog over the years. Brody and Bill share their story as an example of helping the blind navigate their lives. He's always eager to be petted and scratched behind the ears, as long as he's not working at the time!

Lion Wendy Hahn used her medic skills to test people's blood sugar. While not a diagnostic test, the finger stick result can alert people to check further with their physicians. Diabetes awareness of one of the five Missions of Lions.

Lions Bill and Rachel Wivell set up their vision screening equipment and plan to do so again this year. The vision screenings have discovered many local children who have been referred to opticians to be checked further.

Come join us this year. Roar Like a Lion is free and fun for all, supported by Lions Club International Foundation. Bring the whole family!

## HEALTH

# Getting the right care

Josh Faust  
Frederick Health

Frederick County is the fastest-growing county in Maryland. As Frederick Health continues to expand with the community, the healthcare system understands that patient convenience and easy access to dedicated providers help improve health outcomes. That's why Frederick Health has 26 locations that provide a wide range of services and treatment options.

One of the most essential health services for a patient's wellness is having a primary care provider. A primary care provider is the first point of contact on health-related issues. Primary care covers prevention, routine checkups, care for chronic conditions, and treatment for various health concerns. They are medical experts who act as a key resource in staying healthy or getting healthy. Primary care providers also offer

referrals to specialists when additional medical expertise is needed.

With a heavy emphasis on treatment through prevention and having one team working together to provide expert, connected care, Frederick Health is working to increase both awareness and participation in its primary care services. A 2023 study by the Purchaser Business Group on Health stated that access to primary care translates into healthier, happier patients, reduces the odds of dying prematurely from an illness by 19%, and reduces healthcare costs for patients by 33%.

Frederick Health is working to increase access to expert, routine care, true to its mission of positively impacting the well-being of every individual in our community.

The Frederick Health Medical Group Primary Care team comprises expert providers committed to friendly care to the community with 10 Primary Care locations across the

county including a new state-of-the-art location, Frederick Health Emmitsburg. The Emmitsburg location offers services such as Primary Care, Urgent Care, Laboratory, Imaging, and Physical Therapy & Sports Rehab. Most importantly, these services are accepting new patients.

Natalie Lowrey, a Primary Care provider at Frederick Health Emmitsburg, was born and raised in Frederick County. Lowrey is passionate about keeping this community healthy.

"I've always wanted to work in this community, and, honestly, I've always wanted to work for Frederick Health," said Lowrey.

Knowing each patient's unique health situation allows Lowrey to offer customized recommendations, treatment plans, and guidance to her patients. That can only be established with a relationship and trust.

"I like to think of my work as the glue," Lowrey added. "Primary Care puts together the pieces and holds everything else together for the other specialty areas. I want to establish a



**Natalie Lowrey is a Certified Nurse Practitioner with the Frederick Health Medical Group**

relationship with patients and work on preventative care so that they could avoid being hospitalized or falling sick."

Additionally, Frederick Health has expanded online scheduling for some providers, including Lowrey. Patients can find a time that works for them and schedule a visit from their com-

puter or smartphone. Lowrey strongly believes that equity and access cannot be a barrier to good health, and increased access has shown results.

"Research points to the fact that more access to primary care leads to better overall health," Lowrey said. "Increasing access to core healthcare services through technology and innovation has shown a real impact."

That access extends beyond Primary Care. Knowing the right level of care is crucial to a patient, whether it's Primary Care, Urgent Care, or a visit to the emergency department. Each of these services treats different healthcare needs and knowing where to go can help save money and time and provide a better patient experience.

As cold and flu season illnesses are on the rise this time of year, knowing how to navigate and choose the right levels of care can help patients feel better faster.

While Primary Care offers routine checkups and healthcare referrals, for existing Frederick Health Primary Care patients, same-day and next-day sick appointments are available for medical care that can wait a day. Urgent Care is available to patients who need same-day medical care, but it's not necessary to visit an emergency room. Frederick Health offers Virtual Visits or walk-in visits at four convenient locations—no referral is needed. Within an hour, Virtual Visit patients are connected online with a trusted Frederick Health provider from the comfort of their own home.

If you need medical care now for a serious issue, such as chest pain, Fever over 103 F, pediatric emergencies, serious wounds, uncontrolled bleeding, or trouble breathing, call 911 or visit the nearest emergency room. When in doubt, call 911.

"Everyone deserves to be healthy and to work with someone that understands where they are," added Lowrey. "We have individuals, especially in northern Frederick County, that would benefit from the services we offer at Frederick Health, whether Primary Care, Urgent Care, or Virtual Visits."

Frederick Health is working to make it easier for patients to get care through innovation, a personal touch, and meeting people where they are on their healthcare journey.

*To learn more about Frederick Health's different levels of care and their treatment options, visit [www.frederickhealth.org/GetCare](http://www.frederickhealth.org/GetCare). To make an appointment with Natalie Lowrey, visit [www.frederickhealth.org/lowrey](http://www.frederickhealth.org/lowrey).*



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YOUR COMMUNITY OF CARE



## Bo and Jean Cadle – community above all else

Katelyn Phelan  
MSMU Class of 2011

*This article was first published in 2011 in recognition of the efforts made by the Cadles to re-establish a paper for Emmitsburg. Given the death of Jean last month, we thought it only fitting to republish it.*

The paper that you hold in your hands at this moment would not exist had it not been for Bo and Jean Cadle. The Cadles founded the “father” of the News-Journal, the Emmitsburg Dispatch, in December of 1993, forty years after they met and a year after they married.

Bo and Jean had known each other since their young days together at Frederick High School. However, after school each went in separate directions, marrying other people and creating separate families. Bo hit the road traveling. He journeyed from Chincoteague, Virginia, to Pennbrook, North Carolina, to Key West, Florida. As he traveled from place to place, he taught the sciences at the high school level and did service work.

While in North Carolina Bo became interested in Native Americans and their lifestyles, and subsequently became involved with the church and community center there. He became a reading specialist and helped teach a large illiterate population in the area how to read. He also traveled to other churches and community centers to teach volunteers the same techniques he was using. This experience of service and management had a deep impact on Bo. He says it was still in his heart when he returned to Emmitsburg to care for his aging parents.

Something else was in his heart, too. Bo went to his high school reunion and spoke about Jean to one of her friends. Bo discovered that she was living in St. Louis. So, he wrote Jean a letter and stopped to visit her on his way to see his daughter in Arizona. Despite the many years that had passed, the pair felt their personalities just “meshed.” They exchanged letters for two years until finally Jean left St. Louis for Emmitsburg to marry her new husband, Bo.

Bo was worried, though. Jean was used to a city, with action and excitement, and here she was coming to a tiny town. Bo thought, “She’s coming a long way from St. Louis, what the hell is she going to do in Emmitsburg?”

Bo laughed as he remembered sitting with Jean at the dining room table like the buzzards in The Jungle Book asking, “so, what do you want to do?” “I don’t know,” she said, “what do you want to do?” Bo says they did that for about five minutes before they decided to start a paper.

And a paper was certainly needed in the town. There were three small newsletters at the time, and they repeated the same news and information. Bo and Jean wanted to cre-



The masthead of the very first Emmitsburg Regional Dispatch

ate a paper that would both unify the town and provide information to all its citizens. This was a new project for the couple, as neither had any experience with the paper business. But they figured things out as they went.

They began by writing many of the articles themselves, but they were joined by three or four others right away. One of these instant recruits was Mike Hillman, the News-Journal’s current managing editor. Mike began his writing career with the Dispatch, contributing a column, “Over the Whiteboard Fence.” This was just one of the columns which Bo and Jean used regularly. They meshed these columns with town news and photographs, which they gathered by going to town meetings, fire hall banquets, and church events.

The Cadles recognized the importance of a local newspaper. They loved how it established communication and prompted the flow of ideas. The paper gave people in the town something common to talk about. Bo said the paper “helps keep the town from becoming stagnant.” With each month’s publication, the paper keeps ideas, events, and the town itself moving. Plus, people like reading about their friends and neighbors, people they know. Bo and Jean think a small local paper—the Dispatch at one time and the News-Journal today—unifies the town and its members; it’s a nice thing to have.

They started small—an eight-page, letter-sized publication—until Bo and Jean got a call from a man working for the Waynesboro newspaper. He encouraged the entrepreneurs to expand their little paper to a twenty-page tabloid. He promised to offer his assistance and free use of the Waynesboro facilities. The Cadles were hesitant at first, but finally agreed. To their surprise they succeeded on their first try!

Though the Dispatch was expanding, it was still a little mom-and-pop business. The paper was compiled manually, as a paste-up. Bo and Jean would physically cut out each article and lay them out on a page. Once the layout was finalized, they would paste the articles on a backing. Bo and Jean cut and pasted articles in their spare bedroom, on the dining room table, down in the cellar, on the porch, anywhere they could find space. On printing day Bo took the

paste-up to the Waynesboro facilities where each spread was photographed. The negatives were then used to transfer the text and pictures to newsprint.

The town was thrilled with the results. Jean recalls the words she heard most frequently were, “we read every word, even the ads!” Their little business could not have been more of a success. The pair didn’t wish to keep going forever, though. They turned the paper they had developed over six years to Ray Bucheister. This gave Bo and Jean time to enjoy their retirement and still young marriage.

But the two couldn’t rest. Jean noticed that there were many new families in town and she, along with Anetta Rapp, decided to help welcome them. They made up a booklet which included a history of the town, telephone numbers of local businesses and restaurants, and other things newcomers might find helpful. They put the booklets in cloth bags on which they printed Emmitsburg’s logo. When a new family moved to town, Jean and Anetta



Bo and Jean Cadle

knocked on the door and delivered their little welcome package.

Bo, on the other hand, revitalized the EBPA, the Emmitsburg Business and Professional Association. Activity and interested in the group had tapered out, but Bo used the organizational skills he had developed in North Carolina and used to create the Dispatch to breathe life into the association. Today the EBPA is flourishing and is important in the town.

Today Bo and Jean help out where they can. They are devoted to Emmitsburg and to each other. The pair attends “Great Discussions” at Mount St. Mary’s University, where students, faculty, and members of the community discuss current events and literature, among other topics. Bo and Jean are always on the lookout for things to do for Emmits-

burg; they believe in the importance of community.

Bo and Jean are just two of many people who dedicate their time, effort, and love to the town of Emmitsburg. Because the Cadles lead by example, they are great models for us all. They also believe that people are good at heart and have a lot of compassion, but that others sometimes need to organize or focus it. All one can do is to open doors and let people express who they are. Emmitsburg is such a small community that each person’s efforts benefit everyone. The residents of Emmitsburg, including Bo and Jean Cadle, are the ones that both give and receive goodwill to and from their neighbors.

*Editor’s Note: Bo Cadle passed away on January 21st, 2020 at the age of 88.*

## Discover Taneytown

Established in 1754, we are a community that is rich in preserving our heritage and take pride in our community partnerships in concert with organizations, residents, and businesses alike.

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Call 410-751-1100 Ext. 106 or visit [www.taneytownmd.gov](http://www.taneytownmd.gov) for more information.



# HISTORY

## The Contralto

Rev. Charles Maloy, C. M.  
St. Joseph's Parish, Emmitsburg  
Published in 1912

### Chapter 8

Uncle Bennett was busily engaged in constructing the stage, according to plans and specifications every line of which he had insisted on discussing with the Professor, though the latter had protested his ignorance in such matters and offered him *carte blanche* in the affair. One point to which the old fellow called particular attention was the stipulation for an eight-hour day and the union wage. He had worked, fifty odd years ago, for two dollars a week and found, rising at three in the morning and walking five miles to begin at daylight, but when he got a shop of his own and employed a dozen men, he adopted this schedule. Formerly he did all the work at the college and academy, but retired from business on a large scale rather than sacrifice what was to his mind a sacred principle.

Each morning the Professor looked on while the old fellow fashioned the timbers, and though no expert in joining and carpentry, could not but admire the perfection of the work. When quizzed about this and told that much of it would not show, Bennett reverentially asked, "Wasn't the Saviour a carpenter?" Harry delighted to draw him into conversation about his seventy years of life. Story after story was told, the narrator never for a moment desisting from his sawing, nailing, or dovetailing. He was toothless, an insistent tobacco-chewer, and slightly deaf. The point of his stories was nearly always lost in an expectoration or a stroke of the hammer. The employer did his best to have him repeat some of them or to cease work at the crucial moment in an account of some brilliant repartee

made by Mr. Berry, Bennett's predecessor in the village's theological arena, but to no purpose. His conscience would allow of not a minute wasted when he was being paid for his time.

One day, as he narrated a remarkably scintillating debate in which his Elijah had been victorious, the point was again lost in a hammer stroke.

Harry caught his arm with: "See here, Uncle, I am paying you for this work, I want you to stop when you come to the point of a story so that I may catch it."

"No sir, no sir," between strokes, "I had Tom Lansinger for partner for thirty years and lost thousands of dollars by his stories. Tom used to quit work when he was telling one, it would take him half an hour, and I'll be darned if there was ever any point to his stories at that."

The Professor was compelled to resign himself to the carpenter's view and did what he could to garner wisdom and history under grave difficulties. The rehearsals were going smoothly. The first call for volunteers brought out nearly all the young people in town, and caused a flurry of excitement.

Miss Lansinger attended only to announce she could take no part, as she would be absent on a tour of the eastern states. This declaration evoked a loud guffaw from Forman and various expressions of merriment from the other members. Halm was not in the least disconcerted, innocently asserting he would find several first-class sopranos amongst the young ladies assembled. This was sufficient to cause Miss Lansinger to withdraw and subsequently to predict the direst failure for the venture.

Vinny Seabold, who had been prevailed upon to attend by Miss Tyson, was immediately suggested for the soprano lead and accepted graciously. Her voice, while not

over strong, was a clear one which controlled the higher register with ease and grace, a voice that had in it a hint of spring with whistling robins and crocuses peeping above ground. Marion's was suggestive of full summer, rich, luxuriant, strong, it penetrated one's soul like the wealthy sunshine of a June day.

Halm was in an ecstasy of delight at the progress of the undertaking, dancing, singing, drumming on the piano with the agility of a boy. The chorus of young people at first inclined to make sport of the antics of the musician. This threw no damper on his ardor and soon he had all working with zeal for the success of the performance. Dr. Forman, when put to the test, demonstrated that he could sing for more than "sour pickles," while young Mallon's tenor was quite pleasant to hear. Everything foretold success.

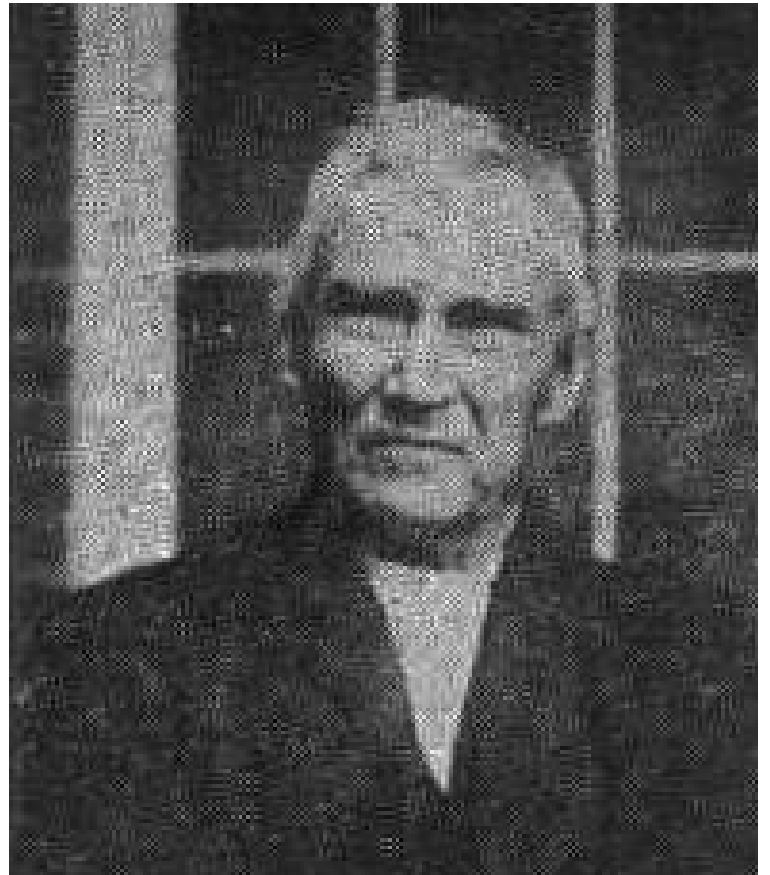
Two carriage painters were engaged to produce the scenery. Lack of permanent employment had caused these poor fellows to become more or less chronic alcoholics. The Professor took them from Elder's barroom to put them to work, guaranteeing a limited amount of stimulant, for thus only could he hope to retain them in his employ. The proscenium curtain was being painted in New York and the home artists awaited with impatience its arrival that they might institute comparison with their own productions.

Such activity could not but arouse interest in the town. Day by day Peter Burkett, Whitmore, Doc Reigle, the veterinarian, and all the members of the store assembly visited the hall, making comments on the doings. For a long time, Dr. Brawner restrained the cravings of curiosity, but one morning the Professor happening in earlier than usual caught him examining everything critically. The Deacon looked askance at it all for he had been taught that "theaters" were one of the devil's most powerful means for the ruin of souls. Having voiced his views to Bennett, he was overwhelmed by the old theologian's declaration that the devil was too busy with the carping tongues of Emmitsburg to bother about the young people singing and dancing.

The Chronicle contained fresh notices each week their daughters to appear in tights? Disgraceful! I am sure the college and academy shall step in and interfere, see if they don't!"

"My dear Mrs. Beck, the Professor don't give a snap of his finger for the people over there," pointing toward the institutions, "and they shall find out shortly that what he says in this town, goes."

With this parting shot, the dentist went whistling up the steps of the hall leaving the good woman transfixed by the terrifying news she had just heard. She looked both ways for someone to whom she might pour out her Jeremiad on the impending downfall of moral Emmitsburg; no



Bennett Tyson

one appearing, all unmindful of her resolution never to cross Mrs. Hopp's threshold, she pushed the baby carriage straight for that lady's door. Entering without the least apology, she began her plaint: "Do you know what your Professor fellow is doing now?"

"God Almighty! not murdering anybody, I hope."

"Murdering souls; going to put on what they call an opera and have the young girls dancing in tights."

"Mary Beck, you're a fool," taking a pinch of snuff, "who's been stuffing you now?"

"There's no stuffing, Doctor Forman, who has a part, just told me all about it."

"Dr. Forman's a good deal of a liar, when he's talking to sensible people, but Lord deliver us, when he has a simpleton like you to gabble to."

The custodian of morality seemed to realize from the Holy Terror's imperturbable calm that the calling attention to the preparations, lauding not only the members of the east, but giving full praise to Uncle Bennett, and "Professors" Stoner and Carrigan, the scenic artists.

Mrs. Beck's perambulator moved up and down the sidewalk in front of the hall all day long. The arms of the good woman pushed with a Sisyphus-like determination, her ears deafened to the occasional whimpers of the child, her brow furrowed with lines betokening a will that may die in a just fight but never surrender. The dentist in his trips between orders for teeth came in contact with the unhappy lady and never left without implanting more seeds of sorrow in her overwrought mind.

"Doctor," she addressed him one morning, "tell me just what that Professor and that old fool Halm are going to have?"

"An opera, Mrs. Beck, an opera," airily.

"What is that anyway, is it like a cantata at the academy or a Shakespeare play at the college?"

"Oh no, an opera is modern, all

singing and dancing, a ballet you know," attempting a high kick.

"A ballet," she screamed, "in tights and doing high kicks?"

"Yes, indeedy," he lied gravely, "it's going to be the greatest thing Emmitsburg ever saw. I would not be surprised if the whole troupe went on the road and ended up in New York or Chicago." "And are the mothers of this town going to allow dentist had been drawing the long bow, yet she was by no means ready to surrender. It was the whole matter of theatricals that aroused her indignation and particularly in connection with the Professor who had committed the unpardonable sin of ignoring herself and her baby, though by this time he had acquired a reputation for fondling other youngsters.' She could see no good in him.

"I think the town was better off before he came," she argued, "what do we want with theaters and such goings on? They're wrong and don't do the young people any good. Joe was telling me the laundry girls at the Academy are already giving trouble and talking about refusing to work for five dollars a month and board."

"More power to them! It's about time they found out how they are being treated. But as for the theater, I'm mighty glad they're going to have it. I am going to buy tickets as soon as they are out. I have a grand-daughter on the vaudeville stage and she's as respectable as any girl in this town."

"It may be all right for city young people, but I think it will only turn our girls' heads. I am sure the authorities will stop it."

"The authorities, pooh! Do you think they are going to scare that young fellow? Not a bit of it. He's here to give them a fight if I know anything, and when he's through with them they'll know something hit them. I am going to have him and Marion and Vinny Seabold here to tea tomorrow evening."

"Vinny Seabold? Why, Mrs. Hopp! and you know that her father is a—"

"Stop right there, Mary Beck, you don't know any more about

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# HISTORY

Jim Seabold than I do. Because he has been bright enough to keep his business to himself, to make money at his law, the people here put him down as a thief. What he is or what he does is none of my business, but his daughter is one of the sweetest girls in this town, and she is going to sit right there at that table and eat my fried chicken and enjoy my hospitality.”

With a sigh expressive of the weariness of one who fights for the right and fights alone, Mrs. Beck arose to go. The whole world, that is her world, wore a saffron aspect and the deep clouds of Emmitsburg’s moral break-up lowered upon her. She knew not whither to turn in her heavy mood of sorrow and her state of mind boded no happiness for the long-suffering spouse when he returned from his duties at the newborns of the academy. Desdemona’s little body was never more aware of this wicked world than the good lady’s soul as she pushed the perambulator up Main Street.

Dr. Forman, coming from the hall, crossed over to the parsonage to where Bob Crittendon was sweeping the steps.

“Where’s the Professor?” he demanded.

“Him and the dog and the hoss is gone out for a run,”

“That’s a deuce of a note.”

“Anything wrong in the hall?”

“Lots, Jimmy Carrigan’s off on a bender and Syl says he can’t work alone. The next thing you know that fellow will be gone too.”

“Well I’ll be jiggered! That darned rascal to go and play a trick like that on the Professor and him ‘lowin’ ‘em three drinks a day, too. Say, Doc, let’s me and you find him, choke him sober and get him back before the Professor knows anything about it. What do you say?”

“And while we are doing that Syl will get away and then we’ll have nobody, I’ve been holding line for him all morning, somebody’s got to watch him.”

There was a sound of hoofs, the dog rounded the corner followed by his master on horseback. Pulling up in front of the rectory, Harry remarked the look of anxiety

on both faces, inquiring the cause. The dentist and bay hesitated to tell, fearing a manifestation of that temper which showed itself on occasion of Mr. Annan’s strictures. At length they laid bare the facts.

“Poor devil!” was all he said, then giving Bob directions about the horse, telling Forman to watch Stoner, giving him a drink that would be found behind a radiator in the west corner, he walked towards the Spangler:

At the hotel he met the proprietor, who had come to like him and inquiring if Carrigan were inside said he wished to speak with him. Elder returned, saying the artist was in the bar, but in a very ugly mood. Harry smiled and entered where the painter stood with two companions.

“Have a drink with me, boys,” he invited. “Hello, Profesh! kinder give you shlip ‘s morning, didn’t I?”

“Have a drink, Jimmy,” he repeated.

All willingly joined, each taking his preference, the Professor, ginger ale. Carrigan, observing this, said:

“Helluva good fellow, Profesh is, don’t drink him-self but buys for others.”

The drinks consumed, he hooked his arm in that of the artist, who, much to the surprise of his companions, walked meekly out. Kellner provided a room and soon Carrigan was wrapped in slumber under the influence of the bromide and paraldehyde.

Leaving the hotel, he warned the proprietor that it was no one’s business why he had been there nor where the painter was. Jim winked at this and near the door said:

“I understand, Professor, and by God! I wish we only had more like you around here.”

At the hall he assured the dentist that Carrigan was in good hands giving no details, however, relieved him of his duty as Stoner’s assistant and went on with the work, making suggestions which brought out the scenes more fully. Syl talked about the cleverness of his children of whom he had a houseful, and Forman scoffed jealously at him, declaring youngsters



Remember this photo and think how good we’ve got it these days before you call out the Town or County to complain about snow on the road!

a nuisance—he had none. While standing off to catch the perspective of a wood scene, a voice behind exclaimed:

“God Almighty! that’s pretty,” it was Mrs. Hoppe. “That’s certainly grand,” she continued as Harry welcomed her to the improvised studio. “They look exactly like trees and bushes. You don’t mean to tell me, Syl Stoner, that you did that?”

“Yes, ma’am, I did.”

“Well, who’d think you had anything like that in your chuckle head. Professor, all I got to say is you’re miraculous, I believe you could kick blood out of a turnip. Where’s Jimmy Carrigan?” looking around.

“He’s down town for a few minutes,” answered Harry, and Stoner turned to his work.

“Doc Forman, you’re a devil,” giving attention to the dentist.

“I know I am several kinds,

Mrs. Hopp, but just what particular devilry have I been committing lately.

“Filling that poor Mary Beck’s head with a passel of lies about ballet dancers, tights, and high-kicking. Not that she don’t deserve it though, for meddling in other people’s business.”

The dentist blushed guiltily and shuffled nervously as he stole a hasty glance at the Professor, over whose countenance spread a shade of annoyance.

The Holy Terror had another and more important affair and hurried to it:

“Professor, I want you to take tea with me tomorrow evening.”

“Thank you, Mrs. Hopp, I shall be honored.

“You won’t have to hobnob with an old woman neither, I am going to have the two prettiest and sweetest girls in this town,” casting a look of defi-

ance at Forman.

“Am I included in your invitation?”

“Well, I guess not, stay home and tend to your own wife. Goodby, Professor, I shall be waiting for you at six o’clock.”

At lunch, Harry told the Rector of Mrs. Hopp’s invitation, both laughing heartily at her blunt social methods. Her religious methods were similar; she always attended the early service, getting in a little late and leaving before the others moved, lest she be observed. She rented the last pew, paying in advance, but when the plate was passed never deigned it a look. Every month she came to the rectory with a very generous contribution.

Next month - Chapter 9

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# 100 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

## January 2

### The Democratic Party Has Lost Public Confidence

Senator Bruce, of Maryland, created a decided sensation in the Senate, on Monday, by declaring the Democratic Party, a dead, putrid corpse. He said the people of the country have lost faith in the Democratic Party because of the sectional issues. The outburst was replied to by Senators Harrison and Ashton.

Harrison called Bruce, a "so-called Democrat", while Bruce called Harrison, a "narrow, contracted, small-bore partisan".

The crossfire lasted for about two hours. Republicans, of course, were satisfied to take no part of it.

### Family Gathers To Cut Firewood For Sick Family Member

On Friday afternoon, Harvey Rentzel and family were given a Christmas surprise by his father-in-law and brother-in-laws, who came and cut about six cords of wood, and hauling it on the wood pile for them. Mr. Rentzel has been in bad health for sometime and is not able to do things. The following were present; John Horner, Ivan Riley, Harry Rentzel, John and James Harner, and Will Martin. A neighbor, Prun Robert also came and assisted in cutting the wood.

### Eclipse Of Sun Due On January 24

For a few minutes on the morning of January 24, the moon will get between the Earth and the sun, and cut off all the light which we get from that body. The eclipse will be visible in the United States, and it doubtlessly will be seen by more millions of people than any such occurrence in the past, according to Professor Brown of Yale University.

The accuracy with which the time and position can be predicted the eclipse is high, Professor Brown went on to say. The staff of the United States Naval Observatory at Washington is always at work, calculating the positions of the heavenly bodies years in advance in order that the predictions may be useful. The northern and southern edges of the shadow band can be laid down within a mile. All this knowledge, however, is not a product of the present generation. It has been slowly accumulating through many centuries. Most of it is due to the proof of the law of gravity, which was given by Isaac Newton towards the end of the 17th century.

### Plan For New Road In Hamiltonban Township

A board of supervisors has been appointed; based upon the petition of residence of Hamiltonban Township, for the laying out of a road in that township, and the vacating of another, which becomes useless by reason of the new road.

In their petition, the residence of Hamiltonban Township declare they labor under greatest inconvenience for one of a public road in Hamiltonban. The petition was presented by Donald Swoop. A description of the proposed road is as follows:

"To begin at an iron pipe in the

public road, leading from the public road running from Virginia Mills to the Mount Hope schoolhouse to the road running from Fairfield via the Mavia Furnace to the Waynesboro Turnpike Said iron pipe being 6,831 feet in a northerly direction from the intersection of said road with the road leading from Fairfield the Mavia Furnace to the Waynesboro Turnpike, and ending at a driven iron pin at the end of the public road running from Virginia Mills to the Mount Hope schoolhouse, on the land of Mrs. John Kernan, said iron pin being 4,582 feet in the westerly direction from the intersection of the road from the public road running to the road leading from Fairfield via the Mavia Furnace to the Woodsboro Turnpike."

### Taneytown School Arrangement

An arrangement has been completed to carry on the various grades of the Taneytown school, in rented rooms. No part of the old brick building will be used on account of its presume, unsafe conditions. The arrangements are unsatisfactory, but are the best that could be secured, and at least, they will permit finishing out the school year, which is much better than no school. The following time schedules will be observed:

High school, all grades, in the Opera House, regular schedule nine in the morning to four in the afternoon. Fifth and sixth grades in the portable building on the school grounds from 12:30 to 4:30. Seventh grade in the portable building on the school ground from 8:30 to 12:30. First and second grades will be held on the second floor of the Lemmon building at the railroad station from 8:30 to 12:30. Third and fourth grades will also be held on 2nd floor of the Lemmon building, from 12:30 to 4:30.

According to the information we have, there is no plan, nor agreement, for new building for another year; but, there must be one, and it should be made during the next three months in order that Work may commence on the new building when spring opens. The present temporary arrangement for the school cannot be continued. It is highly objectionable in many ways, and is not to be thought of, at all.

There must be a way found for the conflict between authorities to be compromised. The demands of the one must be made to meet the ability of the other, and both sides must surrender to practical business sense. If there is either politics or personal antagonism in the situation, a way must be found to override both. The principle interest of all must be solving the present unbearable condition of the Taneytown schools.

## January 9

### Youth Shot Through Hand

Harry Leonard, age about 17 years, son, of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Leonard of Harney, was injured Friday at about noon by the accidental discharge of a revolver while camping

with a group of friends along the Monocracy. The revolver was in his own hands when it went off.

The charge passed through the palm of his left hand. The action occurred while the young men were at dinner. Young Leonard was handling the weapon at the time. Leonard was taken by Berner Jenkins, in the latter's automobile to the offices of Dr. Jenkins in Taneytown, who cauterized and dressed the injury. As the shot passed cleanly through the palm, no serious results or anticipated.

### Radio In The Family Circle

As an entertainment and education device, the radio is far surpassing motion picture theaters, dance halls, and any other forms of public amusement.

A new horizon has been opened up to two millions of families living in the country, the town, or the big city, a new means of culture. The world in its larger centers is offering programs of good entertainment and instruction to people in their homes, both day and night, the new marvel drawing families together.

Young and old, instead of wandering idly in search of diversion, can hear an orchestra, a band, a pipe, or organ, a religious service, or a good play in their own home, being in the city, on a farm, or miles away in mountains or deserts.

There are lectures for the serious minded all the way from literature to electricity and specialist give the latest ideas in dress, dancing, gardening, or the various fields of scientific progress. As broadcasting stations are engaged to giving better service over-water areas, radio will give still greater service to the nation.

We have lost track of those getting radio sets; the habit is becoming as common as buying automobiles, consequently, a purchase in no longer a important news item; and every now and then, someone tells us not to mention them as a purchaser.

### Snow Brings Out Sleighs

The great snow of last Thursday night and Friday blocked up roads, and in general cause many difficulties. Fortunately, there were no high winds to cause great drifts. The depth of the snow was from 10 to 12 inches, some more.

Old-time sleighing had its inning



from Saturday until Tuesday, but it is one of the methods of travel that cleaned off State Road interferes with – to the satisfaction of horses, at least.

## January 16

### Two Young Boys Die At 2 O'clock

Pneumonia claim two young victims, both age 2 years, at 2 o'clock, Friday afternoon, in Fairfield, after short illnesses.

James Sanders, son of Mr. and Mrs. Cletus Sanders, died at the home of his parents on Track Road, at 2 o'clock, Friday afternoon. The child had been ill a few days. He is survived by his parents, two brothers, Vincent and Alfred, and two sisters, Kathryn and Bernadine, all at home. Funeral services will be held Sunday afternoon at 2 o'clock at the Saint Mary's Catholic Church, in Fairfield, the Reverend Father Reardon officiating.

Lloyd Junior Kent, son of Myrtle Kent, died at the home of John Shindledcecker also of Fairfield, also died at a 2 o'clock on Friday, following a brief illness with pneumonia. He survived by his mother. Funeral services will be held Sunday morning at the Shindledcecker home with burial in Fairfield.

### Harney Residents Racked By Sickness

We are informed that Mrs. Clarence Naill is a very sick woman, at this writing. She has been sick for sometime. First, she was suffering from quinsy. About the time that her throat open, she was taken with Scarlet Fever, and we have just been informed that she has erysipelas. The three coming together, make her case very serious. Her niece, Miss Nelly Hess, a trained nurse from Baltimore, arrived on Wednesday evening to take charge of the case. It is hope that Miss Naill arrival will speed he aunt's recovery.

Meanwhile, we have been informed, Miss Pauline Fox, daughter, and Mr. and Mrs. Luther Fox, is also very sick with Scarlet fever, her temperature is running from 102 to 103. Miss Ethel Wantz who has been sick for several weeks with the same disease, is improving, and if nothing further develops will soon be around again.

All three families are under quarantine. James Ohler, who has been suffering with a bad case of neuritis, is able to be up and around, but at times, his suffering is intense. Last Friday, he was in Gettysburg and had his teeth extracted. The doctors all seem to think that bad teeth have been the probable cause of his trouble.



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# 100 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

## Charles Paulsen

Charles Paulsen, of Emmitsburg, aged 49, died after an illness of a few weeks from pneumonia. Shortly before the holidays, Mr. Paulsen suffered from a cold, which developed into pneumonia, and on last Saturday it was decided to remove him to the Frederick hospital. Due to his weak condition, he showed little signs of improvement and the end came early on Monday morning.

Mr. Paulsen was a native of Carroll County, coming to Emmitsburg 15 years ago to take a position as a fireman on the Emmitsburg Railroad, where he work for a number of years. Besides his wife, he is survived by four sons. Funeral services will be held at his house, conducted by Reverend Higbee, Pastor of the Reformed Church. Interment will be made in the Mountain View Cemetery.

## January 23

### The Home Newspaper

The local newspaper is the most valuable asset any community has. The daily papers furnish national and international news, but they do not, and cannot, act as a local town booster. The are in business to get all they can out of the towns and boost their own circulation.

We have said as much, in other words, at different times, and without particular prejudice against the dailies. They have the right to exercise, and to exploit their businesses, even when doing so, in some cases, it hits the little town newspapers hard. The dailies are reaching far out into county territory to get patronage that they do not have insufficient bulk in their home cities, and also to supply a natural demand for subscribers, so, from a business point of view, their course is well sustained as legitimate.

But, there is the other side of the question, and that is the hometown and community side, in which the daily is not seriously interested. Accepting the truth, that the hometown newspaper is the most valuable asset any community has, it naturally follows that said community should support it. There is a partnership existing between the home, and the home people that must be mutually exercised and operated.

So, when a subscriber decides to cut out his local paper for the sake of taking a daily paper, he abandons not only his home paper, but also the best interest of his hometown – not only buy so much less in revenue, but by example.

No person can afford to make businesses profitable for a stranger, at the expense of a friend, sooner or later, also injuring himself, directly or indirectly; and when a town and community lacks pulling together – one for all and offer one – it lacks the essential elements of good citizenship, and displays poor business judgment – as well as unfairness.

### \$450 Blaze In Liberty Township

Damage by fire to the home of Joseph Peffer, of Liberty Township, Wednesday afternoon, amounted to about \$450. The building was damaged to the extent of about \$300 and the loss of furnishings and other articles in the place will total at least \$150. An electric washing machine, which was damaged, was the largest item in the latter loss, which also included the meat of a recent butchering, which had been stored in the kitchen.

Some clothing, which had been placed in the kitchen, preparatory to washing, was also destroyed. The fire originated about 12:30 in the afternoon in the outer kitchen, a one story structure, built at the rear of the house. All the family was at dinner in an adjoining room. When Mrs. Peffer went to the outer kitchen to do some washing, she discovered the fire, which was then only smoking.

Within a short time however, before the aid of fireman could be secured, the frame structure was in flames. A number of men by their prompt action in shoveling snow from the roof probably prevented the main portion of the house from igniting. Only the weather boarding on the house was scorched, although the adjoining building was burnt.

While only one basket filled with clothes was all that was carried out of the room. All the bottles of hooch of thee local boozers association, which had been stored for safe keeping in the kitchen, was safely removed and relocated to the

new super secret location in the back room of the ice house on Mr. Crum's farm.

Mrs. Pfeiffer was not burned as was at first reported. Her collapse was due to fright which occurred when she first saw the fire smoldering. She rallied later in the afternoon.

The manner in which the electric wires burnt off at the point where they enter, the building, led to the belief that a short circuit was the cause of the fire. A fire was burning in the stove at the time, but it is not thought that the fire could have been started from it.

### Bridgeport Robbery

On Thursday evening, about 8:30, three men from Baltimore were stopped on the Bridgeport Bridge, and relieved of their possessions, which they said amounted to about \$100 in money and some jewelry.

A car went around them just before they got to the bridge and stopped in front of them on the bridge and the occupants got out and made the three men give what they had and drove away with the two cars, leaving the three men standing. Constable Adelsberger of Emmitsburg was summoned, and the stolen car was found abandoned near Allison Ridge about 2 miles away. No clue of the thieves has been secured.

### Saturday's Eclipse

Don't forget about tomorrow's eclipse of the sun, it will start about 7:41 in the morning and last until 12:06 in the afternoon. The darkness is promised to be sufficient to fool the chickens to go to roost, and to encourage deeds of evil – but just why these evilly incline items should wait for an eclipse, when there is a real night every 24 hours, is not explained.

Anyways, for 2 1/2 minutes, a total eclipse is promised at about 10:06, through the total eclipse belt and it will be an experience not many have here before had. Streetlights are to be kept burning, and banks will be closed and lamps and flashlight will be in demand. So, it will be well to provide plenty of light, and perhaps to rearrange every

day plans, to some extent.

## January 30

### Eclipse Of The Sun

The eclipse passed off uneventfully, strictly tending to its own business. Not a bank was robbed and not a chicken went to roost in this section so far as was heard from. The height of the eclipse, was about 9:10 and the darkness did not equal that of a summer electrical storm. All portions of the eclipse were directly visible to a very clear sky. The clearness of the sky, and the snow cover ground, prevent any very noticeable dominion of light. The eclipse seemed about 90% full in the section.

Hundreds of telescopic photos were taken and much scientific knowledge was gathered about such mysteries as the contents of the sun's corona, the composition of eclipse, Umbria, the explanation of the jumping jackrabbit on the moons, the deflection of light as related to the Einstein theory, the effect of eclipse's upon earth's climate and tide's and gravity, and it's effects upon radio activity, upon earth's magnetic centers, it thermometers, and its barometers.

Scientist however were unable to use the eclipse to discover and insights into the way women think or why politicians think men are better off without access to liquor.

### Counties Have Trouble Keeping Main Roads Open

Frederick County today was occupied trying to emerge from the effects of the snow and hail storm, which on Thursday, swept through the section of the country.

Despite the severity of the storm, it is considered fortunate that not more damage was caused.

The snow and hail, accompany by a northwest wind of no mean proportions, has resulted in numerous roads being blocked in spite of the activities of the fleet of snowplows operated by the State Road Commission.

Virtually every main road in Frederick, Carroll and Adams

Counties are blocked at some point as a result of the snowstorm. Almost all side roads are impassable. Reports from various sections indicate the storm hit with ferocity in all parts of the counties. It will take some time, it is estimated, to clear the roads to such a point that traffic will be permissible. Officials of the counties promised that that they were doing everything possible to get at least one lane shoveled to allow normal passage of vehicles.

The bus companies serving the area were held up on Friday on account of 5-foot snow drifts. The Emmitsburg to Gettysburg bus driver was forced to dig his way through several places because of the deep snow, which blocked the bus's passage. Fortunately, he had packed extra snow shovels prior to departing for Gettysburg, and unable to move forward, required all the passengers to assist in shoveling the road in front of them. The objections of several of the passengers to being put to manual labor was silenced when the driver 'discovered' a bottle of top quality 'mountain hooch' behind the stack of snow shovels, which was liberally shared by all those helping to clear the road. Once the bus return to Emmitsburg, the station master 'discovered' another bottle to help re-warm the driver and his helpers. All vowed that they would sign up to be passengers on the next big snow.

### Peaches Are Killed

It is authoritatively said that there will be no peaches this summer in the Adams County peach belt, due to the below zero weather of the past week. Apples are not affected, but the loss to peaches will be total, except perhaps, in a few sheltered locations.

The temperature in the mountain sections have registered as low as 20 to 24 below zero, recalling the year 1912 when 26 below was reach. The loss to fruit farmers will approximate several hundred thousand dollars.

To read past editions of 100 Years Ago This Month, visit the History section of Emmitsburg.net.

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## TANEYTOWN HISTORY

# The legacy of Annette “The Pasta Lady” Velleggia

David Buie

Taneytown, a small yet historically rich community, holds an unexpected connection to Baltimore’s vibrant Little Italy through Annette Elizabeth Velleggia, affectionately known as the “Pasta Lady.” Born in Baltimore and raised on Exeter Street, Annette was the daughter of Leonard Leonardi and Victoria “Rose” Cortezzi. Her father’s seafood restaurant in Taneytown bridged her family’s legacy between rural Taneytown and Baltimore’s urban Italian American enclave.

In the 1970s, Leonard’s restaurant operated first at 3 York Street and later reopened across the street at 1 York Street. With seat-

ing for 75 downstairs and 125 in the upstairs banquet room, Leonard’s served Italian and American seafood dishes alongside crabs. At the time, it was one of only two establishments in Taneytown, along with Fitzgerald’s Havilah, licensed to sell alcohol. The restaurant employed five staff members and was part of a network of restaurants Leonard owned across Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. This dual connection to the city and countryside laid the foundation for Annette’s remarkable culinary journey.

Annette’s education at St. Michael’s Commercial School equipped her with the business skills that would be instrumental in her career. She began her work-

ing life at the Slaysman machinist firm in East Baltimore before meeting her future husband, Frank M. Velleggia Sr. Their love story blossomed in the streets of Little Italy and culminated in their marriage in 1960.

The Velleggias’ culinary journey started when Annette began supporting her husband in the family’s High Street restaurant and tavern, founded by Frank’s father in 1937. Annette, a natural leader and multitasker, managed bookkeeping and operations while raising their children. In 1970, Annette and Frank joined forces with Leonard family members to launch Casa di Pasta, a fresh pasta manufacturing business. Based in a small plant on Albarle Street, the company supplied freshly made pasta to restaurants in Baltimore, Ocean City, and Washington, D.C.

Casa di Pasta quickly became renowned for its dedication to quality. A 1981 Baltimore Sun article highlighted how the factory could transform simple ingredients into steaming lasagna in under two hours. Annette, the driving force behind this operation, oversaw the production of 120 pounds of pasta daily. Each day had its rhythm: macaroni and ravioli on Monday, lasagna on Tuesday, and other weekly varieties.

Beyond her technical expertise, Annette’s kindness and generosity were the hallmarks of her character. Former employee Anna Brotto recalled, “She made working there a pleasant experience. She was generous and always had something ready to hand you.” These personal touches endeared her to employees and customers, making Casa di Pasta a cherished institution.

Annette’s nickname, the “Pasta



Rose D’Amico, Ronnie Leonardi, and Annette Velleggia (left to right) working in the kitchen of the family-owned Casa di Pasta, circa 1981.

Lady,” became synonymous with her unwavering dedication to her craft and community. Whether she was supplying pasta for festivals or offering hot meals to those in need, her contributions extended far beyond business. Her daughter, Maria Tilley of Reisterstown, described her as a figure of inspiration in the restaurant industry. Annette’s legacy continues through her family’s culinary traditions, as her recipes remain central to their lives today.

Annette’s vibrant personality and unfiltered honesty made her the heart of her family. Balancing tradition with modernity, she kept in touch with relatives via email and Facebook. Her grandson, Frank “Trey” Velleggia III, fondly remembered her thoughtfulness, sharing stories of offering gas money to anyone in need and always having a pot of her famous spaghetti sauce simmering on the stove. These personal qualities made her more than just a successful businesswoman; they made her a beloved figure in her community.

Her role as a matriarch extended beyond her immediate family to

her community, fostering a sense of familial warmth wherever she went. Annette’s support of her family’s activities was unwavering. From her son’s baseball games at the University of Alabama to her grandson’s minor league matches with the Aberdeen IronBirds, she was always in the stands, cheering them on. Summers at the family’s Ventnor City, N.J., home were filled with gatherings that blended relatives and friends with loyal past customers. These family gatherings reflected Annette’s values of community and togetherness.

Annette Velleggia’s story intertwines the rich traditions of Taneytown and Little Italy, demonstrating how one woman’s dedication to family, community, and craft can leave an enduring legacy. Her life as the “Pasta Lady” bridged two seemingly distant worlds, showing the power of heritage, hard work, and generosity. Annette’s memory inspires future generations to embrace their roots and share their gifts with the world.

To read past articles on Taneytown History, visit the History section of [Taneytown.net](http://Taneytown.net).

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# TEACHER TALK!

## Traditions

Claire Doll  
MSMU Class of 2024

As I write this, we are forty-eight hours away from the shortest day of the year. I can feel time reeling, the night creeping into day, the day growing inwards. There is both dread and relief in this: dread that the rest of winter is frigid and long and before us, yet relief that after December 21st, the daylight begins to inch our way again. And as a teacher in December, all I want is more daylight, more warmth. While I'm praying for snow days, I also can't wait to see 2025 into its sunny skies and springtime weather. I am (nearly) halfway done my first year of teaching.

December has proven to be a beautiful, chaotic month. First, I began a creative writing club at my school (so fitting, I know!) and I've met some really great kids throughout this. It's fun to watch middle school students plan out their poems on a whiteboard, or write for 45 minutes straight, or have energetic conversations with friends before scrawling words onto a page. I even provided these students with their own composition books, and every month they bring their journals to the library and write. It's an awesome club to lead.

In ELA class, my students and I read the drama version of A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens in its entirety, and they loved it. I typically read texts to my seventh graders, or I'll have them venture through the text independently, but for this play, I assigned my students roles. While some begged for the role of Tiny

Tim, and others longed to play The Ghost of Jacob Marley, no role was as highly coveted as that of Ebenezer Scrooge. For all the other characters I took volunteers, but for Scrooge, I held auditions.

My "Scrooge" candidates lined up at the front of the classroom and had to shout their loudest, darkest, most Christmas-raging "Ba Humbug!" while the rest of the students voted on which actor would play the lead part. While this ended in laughter and fun, I also found the perfect Scrooge for each class. Every day in ELA felt like a conversation, a shared experience of joy and discussion. My students were intrigued by Scrooge's past romance with Belle, and the joyous spirit of the Ghost of Christmas Present, and the dark, mystified Spirit of Christmas Yet to Come. We had made the play come to life, and each student played a role in this—whether big or small. We ended the play on a Thursday, and that Friday, we ventured out to watch a live performance of A Christmas Carol. Being able to take my students on a field trip as part of our curriculum—and showing them the beauty of theatre—was a first-year teaching highlight for sure.

I'm now writing this in my last week before Christmas break. My students have been busy creating 'One-Pagers' to demonstrate their knowledge of A Christmas Carol—this entails illustrations, color, symbols, and summary writing. I felt that this was the perfect way to assess their understanding of the text without assigning an essay the week before break. My students learn best when challenged in new forms of learning.

This month I have also realized just how grateful I am for my stu-



No role was more highly coveted for Claire's student's rendition of A Christmas Carol than the role of Ebenezer Scrooge.

dents. All week I have been given holiday presents, from gift cards to homemade cookies to candles and even earrings. There is truly something special about school in December. There have been mornings when it's snowing and my kids marvel at the window, and I let them, because when will they ever be 12 and 13 again, watching from their classroom as flurries fall? Sometimes I look around my classroom, at all the twinkling lights and posters, wondering if they'll remember these times.

As time turns to a new year, I can't help but be excited for what's to come in the rest of winter and spring. I'm starting off the year with poetry: students will read three different New Year's poems, and then they will be challenged to write their own! I am hoping to tie in the idea of "theme" in poetry to the "themes" in their lives, whether it be positive or negative. Anything I can do to engage my students in litera-

ture is a win. We'll then finish up with some more fiction, before we begin a rather long unit on nonfiction texts: informational, argumentative. While this isn't my go-to form of reading, I am looking forward to making this an experience that my students can (hopefully) enjoy. It unfortunately falls around the same time that my students begin state assessments, so my goal is to get through our content successfully before we land on more poetry and fiction in the late spring. These informational texts include articles on ads, social media, eating healthy topics that I hope will engage students. While I prefer fiction any day, I am looking forward to experimenting with nonfiction as well!

So, my resolutions for 2025 are as follows: I hope to teach my students, truly teach them, so that they will not only have definitions and terms memorized, but that they'll also be encouraged to read

and enlightened by anything that they choose to read. I hope that we will have more engaging, deep conversations, because this is where students learn, more than through rigorous notes or tests. This is where they think. And thinking is a lifelong skill, something that sticks with you, while memory of seemingly small things often fades. I hope to find more short stories that will resonate with my students, and I hope to bring awareness to certain issues as we read informational texts. I hope to give my students a voice as we learn how to write argumentatively. I hope to experiment with all forms of writing, creative and persuasive and everything in between. But most importantly, I hope to continue building relationships with my students so that they will always want to come to school and pick up a story and read.

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

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# COOKING

## Feeling lucky in the new year

Sonya Verlaque  
FCC Culinary Program

As Michael Scott would say, "I'm not superstitious, but I am a little stitious..." There are ways to ring in luck for the New Year in many cultures. Although I don't think any of these are guaranteed to bring you wealth, health and happiness, they are a delicious way to connect to past traditions and couldn't hurt to try.

### Black Eyed Peas

Black eyed peas have a long history in southern cooking for ringing in the new year. Rumor is you are supposed to eat 365 of them for wealth every day in the new year, and when cooking, they are pre-soaked and swell so hopefully your money grows as well. Black eyed peas are also high in protein and flavonoids so may contribute to your good health in 2025 also. Always remember to soak your beans, preferably overnight if you can, and add salt if needed near the end (the bacon and sausage can be salty enough). Also almost every recipe you find will have jalapeños in it, they can be optional depending on your family and friends spice tolerance.

#### Ingredients

- 1 pound black-eyed peas (453g)
- 4-5 slices chopped thick bacon
- 5 ounces diced smoked sausage or turkey (about 1 cup)
- 1 large diced onion
- 1 diced celery stalk
- 2 to 3 teaspoons minced garlic
- 1 optional minced jalapeño (or substitute with 1/4 teaspoon cayenne)
- 2 tsp. fresh minced thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 to 2 tsp. creole spice mix
- 7 to 8 cups chicken stock
- 2 or more cups of collard greens (or substitute with kale)
- Salt and pepper for seasoning

Preparation Directions: Start by rins-

ing the dry black-eyed pea beans thoroughly and pick through them. Place the beans into a large pot and cover them with 3-4 inches of cold water. Let the beans sit and soak for 2-3 hours, or if time permits, overnight for optimal texture. In a large, heavy sauté pan, cook chopped bacon over medium heat until it becomes brown and crispy, which should take about 4-5 minutes. Add sausage to the pan and continue to sauté for an additional 2-3 minutes. Once cooked, remove the bacon and sausage mixture from the pan and set it aside for later use.

Using the same pan, add chopped onions, celery, garlic, jalapenos, thyme, and a bay leaf. Sauté the mixture for 3-5 minutes until the onions become wilted and aromatic, then pour in chicken broth or water to deglaze the pan and incorporate flavors. Drain the soaked beans, rinse them thoroughly, and add them to the pot with the sautéed vegetables. Season the mixture generously with Creole seasoning and salt to taste. Stir everything together and bring the pot to a boil. Once boiling, reduce the heat to a simmer and cook uncovered for approximately 20 minutes.

After 20 minutes, add collard greens along with the set-aside bacon and sausage mixture back into the pot and continue cooking for another 10 minutes. This allows the beans to become tender and for the broth to thicken to your desired texture. Add additional stock or water if the mixture becomes too dry or thick. The resulting texture should be thick and somewhat creamy, not soupy. Remove the bay leaf, and taste the dish and adjust the seasonings as needed with additional salt, pepper, and Creole seasoning. Serve the dish over cooked rice and garnish with chopped green onions or combread.

### Pear and Pomegranate Spinach Salad with Maple-Lemon Mustard Dressing

Pomegranates are an auspicious symbol in many cultures. The story of Persephone tells us that she was bound to the under-

world because she ate a few pomegranate seeds and humans then experienced winter, which was cold and barren. But when she returned to the mortal world, spring followed and the pomegranate was associated with fertility, luck and abundance. And really, I'm ready to try anything to advance spring.

#### Ingredients Salad dressing

- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 3 tbs. Dijon mustard
- 3 tbs. maple syrup or honey
- 3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice

#### Salad ingredients

- 1 cup pecan halves toasted
- 1/2 cup pomegranate arils
- 1/3 cup dried cranberries
- 1 large pear
- 5 oz baby spinach
- 1/3 cup goat cheese crumbled

Preparation Directions: Make the Salad Dressing. Combine olive oil, Dijon mustard, maple syrup, and freshly squeezed lemon juice in a mason jar. Whisk with a fork for 1-2 minutes until smooth and emulsified. Toast the pecans in a preheated oven at 350°F for about 10 minutes, just until they turn a bit darker. Remove the red arils from a whole pomegranate by slicing it in half and using your hands to carefully detach the arils from the pith, discarding the peel and membranes. Soak dried cranberries in hot water for a few minutes to make them soft and juicy. Thinly slice pears just before serving to keep them fresh. In a large bowl, put your spinach in and mix with dressing to coat well. Then top with sliced pears, pecans, cranberries, pomegranate, and goat cheese to serve.

### Irish Soda Bread

I follow a Korean culinary team (crazy Korean cooking) faithfully because their parents are so adorable in their reactions to trying food. Their genuine delight



Black-Eyed Pea Soup

and enthusiasm with what is made for them is so endearing to watch. One of the daughters' husbands is Irish, and made mutton stew for them along with Irish soda bread and the father started tearing up on camera. He said that it reminded him of bread his mother baked for him when he was a boy in Korea, and I thought it was so remarkable that people across the world from each other were sharing the same bread thorough decades. Some traditions include leaving a piece of buttered bread out on new years, is said to banish hunger for the year. So, if you don't make combread for your black eyed peas, you can make this quickly instead.

#### Ingredients

- 4 cups of flour
- 1 and 1/4 cups buttermilk
- 4 tbs. sugar
- 1 tbs. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 cup softened butter (one stick) I use salted butter.
- 1 egg

#### Glaze

- 1/4 cup salted butter, melted
- 1/4 cup buttermilk

Preparation Directions: Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Mix together the dry ingredients: Flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Use a whisk to make sure it is well combined. Add in the wet ingredients: buttermilk, butter, egg and use a hand mixer to help combine everything. Turn out the dough on a floured surface and kneed it for about 10 minutes. Dust it with flour as needed. It's done when it is about the consistency of Playdough. Form dough into a loaf and put it on a cookie sheet with parchment paper. Score a large X in to the top of the dough. Bake.

While the bread is cooking, make the glaze by melting butter, then add the buttermilk and mix. When 15 minutes are done, take the bread out of the oven and brush the glaze over the top of it. You will bake for about an hour, but brushing the glaze every 15 minutes. Use a tooth pick and check the middle of your bread. If it comes out clean it is done. If it doesn't, glaze it again and put it back in for a final 10 minutes. When done, let the bread rest for 20 minutes. Then serve with butter, jam or your black eyed peas.

To read other Cooking articles, visit the Authors section of [Emmitsburg.net](http://Emmitsburg.net).



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# MOMS' TIME OUT

## What did you say!?

Mary Angel

A long time ago I brought a sweet, little angel home from the hospital. She smelled of sugar and spice and everything nice. Her skin was as soft as silk, and she brought such joy to our family. I am sure you all have a similar story about the joyous day your child was born. That is actually not what this story is about. This is a much scarier story than that.

A few years passed and she turned into a toddler who had a little bit of an anger issue. She was the baby after all, and her siblings did everything for her. Every so often she would get tired of not being able to walk on her own, or speak for herself, or make her own decisions, and that is when it would go wrong rather quickly. She would hit someone or even bite them, all the while turning beet red. No exaggeration, a couple times I thought there was steam coming out of her ears. Unfortunately, while I am trying to discipline her, her siblings would be laughing hysterically. Needless to say, this didn't help at all.

She outgrew her biting and most of her temper issues as she entered her late elementary school days. Every once in a while, she would lose her temper over something more emotional or when she was being misunderstood. Overall, she was the child who gave me the least trouble. She chose friends who were a positive influence, she made good decisions and was a pretty helpful little girl. When it came to school, she got good grades, was eager to learn, and didn't hide her schoolwork like one of the other kids did on an almost daily basis. It was a wonderful time to be a mom!

When we got to middle school, I noticed that she started to get a little sassy. Nothing remarkable, but those moments where I might ask her to clean her room, and she would let out a big sigh and mope off to her room. Or, if I asked that the kids pitch in and empty the dishwasher she might huff and exclaim, "Do I have too?". It was your basic early teen whining and complaining. I had seen something similar from each of them at that same age. This was totally workable, after all I had been through this three times before and survived. There was something a little different this time. I couldn't put my finger on it, but it was just different.

When she entered high school, she was a very nervous freshman. She had been homeschooled almost her entire life and she was extremely insecure about whether she would fit in, make friends, or be able to cut the mustard academically. She did great in all three areas, even if she didn't always see it that way. She had straight A's almost every semester since she started in public school and quickly figured out, she didn't care as much about fitting in if it meant being someone she wasn't (music to my ears). She met her best friend in her freshman year, but they were both so intro-

verted that they didn't speak to one another until their sophomore year. Her honey badger (as her siblings call her) side of her was all but non-existent.

As sophomore year ended, and junior year began the honey badger returned. Not in the same form but in a young adult form. I remember that day like it was yesterday. She was being, what I would call, curt. She was just short with everyone. I mentioned to her, in a kind way, that her attitude was a bit nasty. Out of no where I was told, "What the hell, mom! I am not in the mood for them!" I was left speechless for a solid minute. I could not believe what had just happened. I am pretty sure her entire, sweet, young life flashed before my eyes, as I could not believe that my little baby angel had spoken to me like that. As I came out of my fog and looked her in the eyes, I realized she couldn't believe what had come out of her mouth either.

I told her we needed to discuss what had just happened. With that she burst into tears and ran to her room. When I got to her room she immediately apologized and said she had no idea where that had come from, followed by some suggested punishments.

Needless to say, this was not the last time she slipped up and spoke to me like I was someone she went to school with. This always led to the "why would you speak to anyone like that" conversation. Unbeknownst to her I started tracking



these outbursts because I was sure there was a pattern to them when they were at their worst. What I discovered was exactly that, a pattern of a sort. Whenever she was at her most stressed, she would lash out much more than when things were going smoothly with no stressors. So, I knew when it was time for finals or a class she struggled with more than others she would have an episode and end up in trouble. It is also how we discovered she was being bullied. Oddly enough, if she wasn't verbally lashing out, we wouldn't have investigated the root cause and discovered that she was being bullied by a group of girls at the high school. This was when we realized what an amazing best friend she had made,

since she had no problem standing up for our daughter, even though she was one of the biggest introverts I have ever met.

There have been many more sassy teenage outbursts since that first one, but we have all survived. I think it is always shocking when we have these sweet little darlings and one day they turn into sassy little hormonal monsters. As a mom, you do not want to ever think your child will be sassy or nasty, but when they come as a package deal and directed at you, it is even harder to take. Inevitably, all children will behave in a way that

we, as parents, are hard pressed to believe, but they are still human. In addition, they are navigating those crazy emotions and hormones, and in a time when social media is bombarding them with all kinds of unsettling ideas. Personally, I am not sure I would have navigated my teenage years as well as my kids have if I had been raised in this wacky social media age. In conclusion...I am still in shock that my baby spoke to me like that. LOL!

To read past editions of Moms' Time Out, visit the Authors section of [Emmitsburg.net](http://Emmitsburg.net).

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# FOUR YEARS AT THE MOUNT

*This month we asked our students to write about someone in their life whose interaction with them had a profound influence on their lives today.*

## Freshman

**How you can change without knowing**

**Cameron Madden  
MSMU Class of 2028**

I think that whether we know it or not, there is always someone who has fundamentally assisted in changing something about ourselves, whether for better or worse. As the holiday season concludes and I am surrounded by family and friends, it makes me realize that the slightest change to my personality or character would have changed every interaction and infliction I have made on them, and furthermore what I know about them, the world and myself. It is kind of impossible to really know when I turned into the person I became today, but I think that besides being born there is one distinctive time in which I can say set me up for the future. This time corresponds with the introduction to one of the greatest people I know to this day, and for the sake of anonymity we shall call her Jules.

It was during sophomore year, a time where I was in the maximum pubescent experience, wondering

just how my world will turn out, while also ignoring the future and world to just enjoy the moment. I had somewhat complicated ideas of plans, but it all basically boiled down to keeping good grades, going to college, and ending up in law school to become some kind of lawyer. Because of this mock-up of a life goal, I was taking unique classes in my high school that would prepare me for office and legal assistant work. During the multiple years of going to this class, I know that the people who attended it with me did not care for me much, and honestly the feeling was mutual. That was except for one person who I met there, obviously being Jules since I built this background up to explain her! She was quite reserved, but personally extroverted and built with a good sense of humor and “outgoingness” (a.k.a. she was feisty.) We certainly clicked, but for the first months of knowing her I regret to say that we were just classroom friends, and it meant nothing more to me at the time than just knowing a person I could talk to.

You see, at this time I was really struggling with friendships due to me being truly separated from my best friend since young childhood, and the friends that I made at school were

all changing and I felt less and less included. Besides my mock-up plans I didn't know what I myself wanted to do, nor what I thought was fun or interesting. I was really just boring, at least in my own opinion, and I really wanted to find out what made me happy. All my friendships by this logic then were kept alive by convenience, and material interest rather than being interested by the person.

Yet as I got closer to Jules, I began to find more things to which brought me joy, but there are a couple of specific things that made me develop differently in terms of deciding who I was. Jules wasn't fine herself, and without giving away anything I had promised to keep secret, she was really struggling mentally with a lot of things. The first day I caught her crying really was a turn around for me specifically. For hours she spilled out feelings about things I had no idea about, and for the first time in so long I realized that she, my friend, was a real and amazing person; not just another classmate or seat next to me. I knew from that moment I had to step in and do everything I could to make her happy, and looking back this is what really helped my sentiment of commitment towards others. I really think a large part of my purpose is to be of help to oth-

ers, and to make the lives of people I care about easier, because more than anything else that is what makes me happy, and I know that because it sums up the whole dynamic I have had with her since then, and I couldn't be happier! My experience with her made me reproach my relationships with all my other friends, and grow closer and stronger with them, all because of her just existing.

Not only was her existence enough, but her perseverance taught me way more than I have given it credit for! She was smart for sure, but due to her own interests and also problems, school and its work were not priorities; especially when her attitude often made her feud with teachers! Yet every time, when the workload seemed impossible and the grade could have turned to disaster, she worked harder than I knew was possible and got it done. Everytime. It really inspires me to get things done, both professionally and personally. My work ethic and personal goals were all changed and inspired by her, but there is one more minor miracle that she has done (quite inadvertently) that has made me believe not only in the things I am now inspired to do, but in something beyond. I never was religious in my youth, and when going to Sun-

day school I just went for some cookies that were given to us. Yet during this time of feeling lost, I prayed on a specific night about some specific things, relating to friends and such, and one of the things I asked was to get the numbers of people I was friendly with. Wouldn't you believe that it was the night before Jules broke down as mentioned before, and right after that she definitely cemented not only our friendship but my faith, as she made me put my number in her phone.

I feel as though on that particular day, and the further experience of knowing her, my old and depreciated views of myself and the world were taken away and given new purpose, new meaning, and for that I realize just how much of my confidence, life, and faith I have gained from her. Thank you, Jules, you will never know how much you have meant to me, because even I am still inspired and am encouraged to be better by your example! I hope all you readers can find someone just like this, or at least one without the problems that hurt them, so they don't have to hurt at all!

*To read other articles by Cameron Madden, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.*

## Sophomore

**Making history**

**Gracie Smith  
MSMU Class of 2027**

“Middle school sucked”. It is a common phrase spoken by middle schoolers around the country. Nevertheless, it holds even to this day. During my middle school years, I always faced new challenges—mostly that of being alone. In 6th grade, I had one friend, my friend of nearly 10 years at that point. However, he and I never crossed paths since we had all different teachers and different “teams” as our school did. In my first year of middle school, I was left to fend for myself in a way I suppose I never had to before. I made new acquaintances, though nothing to brag about. Navigated my way around the new building and even survived gym class and my first encounter with locker rooms. As someone who was painfully shy and honestly preferred to be alone, I hated myself for being the way I was; so introverted.

7th grade came and went rather quickly. However, that year I reconnected with some friends I had made in preschool. These connections ultimately guided me to finish that year of school. It was also that year I became more and more confident in myself. I was asked to give a presentation to my entire class on Crohn's Disease, which I would say turned out pretty successfully.

It wasn't until 8th grade that I learned it was okay to like something other than science. This was all thanks to my history teacher, Mr. Robert Housch. I remember

the first day of class, and I thought immediately to myself “Oh my gosh, I'm going to hate this class.” I went home to my mother that day and shared with her everything about my first day and she told me, “Gracie, you're going to love that class.”

I thought about her words for the next few days, still not fully convinced. However, Mr. Housch was all about routine, as was I. Quickly, I recognized the routine and came overly prepared to class, ready to answer each question. So much so that I was competing with my best friend to see who could throw their hand up the fastest. My favorite memory of being in Mr. Housch's class was acting out the Battle of Bunker Hill. We went outside to the hill behind the middle school, and acted out the battle, running uphill and “loading” our bayonets. In addition to our fine acting skills, we were required to memorize the Preamble to the Constitution. Mr. Housch had played for us a song that, to this day, I can still recite. My favorite part of the course, however, was Gettysburg. Having always been fascinated by it since it's 20 minutes from my house, I took to this unit rather quickly. It was a cold January day when Mr. Housch gave me and my class a tour of the Gettysburg Battlefield since he is a Licensed Battlefield Guide himself. It was at this point that I realized what I wanted to study.

I left Middle School a very different person than the one I was when I entered. I was very disappointed I couldn't just have Mr. Housch teach me history in High School too. Nonetheless, I was moved by his passion for History. When my little brother Jack was in the 8th

grade, I was overjoyed to hear that he also would have Mr. Housch to teach him. I have to admit, I saw an opportunity and I took it. I emailed Mr. Housch as a junior in High School and asked to chaperone Jack's trip to Gettysburg. He wrote back and was more than willing to have me chaperone. I think I was more excited about the field trip than my brother. The trip this time was a bit different. I not only knew what to expect, but I was able to retain and appreciate more of what Mr. Housch was explaining about the battle. This led me to study it some more in my free time and visit Gettysburg with my father and my aunt - I wrote about those adventures in another article.

When it came time to graduate, I had a very important decision to make. Not where I wanted to go, but what I wanted to study. I was faced with the pressure of going into the medical field since A) that's where the money is, and B) my family “saw me working in a lab”. Both of those points are hard to dispute. However, I decided to put what I wanted and what would make me happy ahead of what would make others happy. Thus, I chose to major in History. Had Mr. Housch not fueled my interest and now passion for History, I would not be accomplishing the things I am today. Despite Mr. Housch encouraging me to study law, I decided that might not be the best field since I tend to cry during arguments.

Mr. Housch taught me in middle school, aided me in high school, and is still guiding me in college. Last summer he met with me and my father to help me train for the Licensed Battlefield Guide Exam that I just took in early December.

The exam contained 161 questions and 3 essays. After nearly 2 years of preparation, Mr. Housch supplied me with yet another tour of the battlefield, as well as suggested readings and practice questions for the exam. Never in my life have I encountered someone who wants so much to see people succeed in doing what they love best.

Mr. Housch, thank you for making history fun. Thank you for normalizing a passion for the past.

Thank you for your time, your effort, and your support to help me accomplish my dreams. You have made such a lasting impact on me and my future. I hope to influence and impact people in the same way you led me to study history. Knowledge is power, and our history is forever relevant.

*To read other articles by Gracie Smith, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.*

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# RIPPLES IN A POND

## Junior

### Remembering my favorite 'Flounder'

Devin Owen  
MSMU Class of 2026

Can you think back to a moment when you threw a rock or a stick into a pond and the water would scatter into different ripples? They go on and on and on. Have you ever felt a ripple effect in your life though? That is, a person or event that changed or guided the trajectory of your life, leading you to where you are today. I myself can probably think of multiple, both good and bad events that occurred in my life, people who had positive or negative impacts, and people who I hold a special place for in my heart.

The new year of 2025 marks two years without my Uncle Charlie. He passed away in April of 2023 after a fifteen-year battle with cancer. He was one of the absolute strongest people that I knew. His kindness and loyalty shined bright even when he was facing his darkest of days. When Mike prompted us to write about somebody who made an effect on our lives I sat and

thought for a while. I feel like there are so many meaningful people in my life, all of which made numerous impacts on my life, shaping the way it has turned out so far. How could I possibly pick one person or event to write about when I've been alive for twenty years already? My uncle was very popular during his time on Earth, I was always hearing stories about him from everyone who found out I was his niece. It was always all good things; thinking of him brought smiles to a person's face and their eyes would light up as they laughed and talked about him and their experiences with him over the years. For someone who had such a positive, significant impact on others I found that he is the perfect person to talk about, especially when focusing on the ripple effect.

When I was younger, my childhood was filled with a lot of experiences that a child my age should not have had to endure. Even though I was surrounded by so much negativity, my uncle was always a guiding light that reminded me of all the good that awaited me in the world. I always referred to Uncle Charlie as 'Captain Flounder.' You see, I was absolutely *obsessed* with "The Little Mermaid" growing up

and anytime that I would swim at my grandma's pool I would make Uncle Charlie play mermaids with me, and I dubbed him Flounder, because I (of course) was Ariel and Flounder was Ariel's best friend. Up until he passed, we kept this name going. I even told his friends at the docks his nickname, although he wasn't too pleased with that part.

Charlie Helmer was a man of many talents, but the one that mattered most to me was his talent for putting other people first. I can name a plethora of times that Charlie would go to great lengths to make sure I had everything I ever wanted or needed, but the one time that meant the most was my graduation party. The two sides of my family don't always get along and frankly, I was worried that neither side would even show up due to the long-time 'feud.' Uncle Charlie went above and beyond that day. He was barely a year away from the date that he would pass, yet he made sure that he was there supporting me, making sure I knew that this was my day of celebration so I shouldn't have to worry whether or not my family would get along. He went and talked to my mom's side of the family and made conversation, he laughed with every-

one, he met all of my friends, and he took pictures with me that I now get to cherish forever.

I remember when I introduced Uncle Charlie to my boyfriend for the first time. I had never introduced my family to someone unless I knew it was serious, so this was his first time ever meeting someone who I had been dating, and boy was he ready! My aunt and uncle hadn't had children of their own but, he was fully prepared to play the role of over-protective dad for a moment. It didn't last very long though; Uncle Charlie was too sweet and personable to appear intimidating to anyone really, let alone a teenage boy who loved his niece. They talked about swimming, fishing, sushi, food, and water polo for the entire weekend that we were visiting. It was the first time in a while that I was able to see my uncle's eyes and face light up; it was as if the sickness that had its hold on him was non-existent for the time being and God did we revel in it. This was only a few months prior to his passing, and it warmed my heart to know that he got to have a few more normal moments and feelings to experience.

Grief is a funny thing. I feel like most people don't expect it to shape us and change the way we view life; I know I certainly didn't.

Losing my uncle completely hot-wired my brain and view of life in general. We take so many moments for granted and don't think twice about it. Looking back at the memories I have with Uncle Charlie makes my heart happy, but it also brings tears to my eyes because I miss him dearly. Life hasn't been the same without him here.

Charlie Helmer created a ripple effect in my life unlike any other. He taught me that our time is precious, and we shouldn't waste a second of it. His presence in my life always reminded me that I am never alone, and he supported and pushed me to pursue every dream I had. Without him, I wouldn't be where I am today: I wouldn't be as good at baking or talking to people, I wouldn't be as compassionate or empathetic as I have learned to be, and I certainly wouldn't understand the true power that love and time hold. I learned very quickly the impact that one person can have on your life, the ripples they create in the path of your life plans, it just all comes into view once you've lost them.

To read other articles by Devin Owen, visit the Authors section of [Emmitsburg.net](http://Emmitsburg.net).

## Senior

### Words I should've said

Dolores Hans  
MSMU Class of 2025

As I sit back in solitude and observe the blue-sky transition to various shades of pink and orange, I remember the one who taught me to stop and pay attention to the little details in the world around me. I used to sit on the back deck of my Great Pop-Pop's house with him and watch the sunset. Just the two of us. We would sit in absolute silence, unless he asked me a question or tried to tell me something important. To this day I can still remember the smells, sights, and feelings of his house. How the best feeling was stepping onto the ice-cold tile floor of the porch first thing in the morning. Or sitting on the rocks by the lagoon and watching the ducks float atop the water before venturing further out to sea. I remember the way it smelled when all of my uncles and cousins would bring an endless supply of meats and just barbecue for hours.

Great Pop-Pop was very protective of the flowers on his deck, and I remember them so vividly because everything else around his house was either rock or wood, there was no grass or line of trees where he lived in south Jersey. One time he told me that having his flowers there reminded him to keep an eye out for beautiful things. I was just a child when he said that so I don't remember the context of it but, I do remember looking at them for a solid five minutes after he said it, with who-knows-what kind of childlike

thoughts bouncing around in my head. I think what he said must've really stuck with me because I think one of my strongest qualities is my ability to see the incredibly subtle, yet beautiful parts of nature.

This quality has led me to find one of my biggest passions: photography. Through my lens I can clearly see every feather on a songbird, every vein of a leaf, and every detail of a flower like the ones on his porch. I can also observe the easily ignored qualities of people that make them beautiful. One of things I thought most beautiful about my Great Pop-Pop was that when he held you or hugged you, it always felt like home and intentional, like it was just as important for him as it was for us as children.

Somewhere down the line, I decided I didn't want to sit on the deck and watch the sunset with him for one night. I don't remember why, or if my little child brain even had a reason, I just remember telling my mom I didn't want to. I think maybe I just thought that it took a long time and that because of that, I would get bored, as children usually do with their short attention spans and wandering minds.

Great Pop-Pop died when I was still young. I don't remember him ever looking or behaving sickly, or even really noticing his old age. I remember my dad saying he was sick but to me that just meant he had a cold or something, I was too young to really understand the extent of it. And then all of a sudden, he was gone.

Those things I loved about his house just happened to become things I would come to miss. Being held by him would be something I would lay awake at night ach-

ing for. Looking at his face would only be done once more at his wake and from then on only in photos. I remember him not even looking like himself at the wake. He looked too dressed up, too clean, too young. It didn't look or feel real.

I never got to thank him for teaching me everything he did. I never got to say goodbye. I should have stayed with him that one night to watch the sunset. I should have said thank you when he gave me cheerios with syrup for breakfast, or when he would hide quarters in the rocks that we would search for, and when he would give me a container full of change, he saved up every time he went to the store.

Now all I can do is think of him every time I see those yellow landscape stones or feel cold tiles beneath my feet or when I sit outside for hours beneath the color changing sky and appreciate it. As the sun sets, I wonder if he is proud of me, I wonder if he still sees that little girl or if he knows me better as an adult than I even know myself. I wonder if he grabs God's attention and directs his gaze toward me. I wonder if God thanks Great Pop-Pop on my behalf every time I stop in my tracks to look at something beautiful. I wonder if he can still see the sunset.

Dear Great Pop-Pop,

I miss you. All the time. I hope I make you proud. Thank you for teaching me to appreciate the beautiful things around me. Thank you for saving up all of your change and giving it to me. Thank you for providing us with a home in your hugs. Thank you for leaving your wife's rings to me, I treasure them. I hope you smile when you see the love I have found. He reminds me a lot of you. His hugs make a home, he is

tall like you and likes golf, and he makes me laugh like you once did. We watch the sunset together like you and I once did, and I think of you every time. I try not to feel the empty space beside me as a place where you once were, but as a place

I have saved for you, if somehow, somehow you were able to be here, and I just didn't know it.

To read other articles by Dolores Hans, visit the Authors section of [Emmitsburg.net](http://Emmitsburg.net).



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# LIBRARY

## Blue Ridge Summit Free Library

**Mondays – Children’s Story Time** from 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 - 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?

**Blue Ridge Summit Book Club – January 25** from 5 to 6. This month, we are reading and discussing the horror short story, *The Grownup* by Gillian Flynn. Copies of the book will be available in the library for you to check out.

The Summit Stitchers Quilt Club meets at 5:30 on January 21. 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.

*For more information on the Blue Ridge Summit Free Library visit [www.fcslpa.org](http://www.fcslpa.org) or call 717-792-2240.*

## Frederick County Library

Celebrate all-things trains during “Trainuary” at the Library! A kick off party will be all day Saturday, Jan. 4 - Stop by to enjoy train themed games, puzzles and for more information about our special mystery train ticket event! A Trainuary Storytime is set for Monday, Jan. 6 at 10:30 a.m. and a Train Trivia afternoon for families will be on Saturday, Jan. 11 at 2 p.m – prizes for winners! We end the month with a Trainuary Intergenerational bingo on Monday, Jan. 27 at 11 a.m.

**NEW!!!** An evening storytime for families has been added on Thursdays from 6-6:30 p.m.! And!!! School is out Jan. 15 – plan to bring the kids to a DOGMAN Party at 2 p.m. that day!

Teens are invited to a 4-week Winter Fairy Garden Workshop on Tuesdays from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Each week, teens will learn about succulents, how to propagate plants,

techniques to build miniature items and more. All participants who come all 4 weeks will walk away with a Fairy Garden and a Terrarium to care for at home.

**Adults!!** Each month, starting Wednesday, Jan. 15 at 11 a.m., the library will host Mind Care & Games for Seniors, People Experiencing Memory Loss and their Caregivers. Games are among the many activities that can keep the human mind entertained and engaged. But more importantly, games can help stimulate our brains. We will have a guest speaker each month as well.

Visit the library website at [FCPL.org](http://FCPL.org) 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

**Mondays, Family Storytime, 10:30 a.m. & Little Adventurers at 11 a.m.**

**Thursdays, Pajama Storytime, 6 p.m. \*NEW\***

**Jan. 4: All Aboard! Trainuary Celebration, All Day!**

**Jan. 7: Winter Fairy Garden Workshop for Teens: Succulents, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.**

**Jan. 9: WAGS For Hope,**

**Read to a Dog, 6 p.m.**

**Jan. 11: Train Trivia! For Families, 2 – 3:30 p.m.**

**Jan. 14: Winter Fairy Garden Workshop for Teens: Building Accessories, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.**

**Jan. 15: Mind Care & Games for Seniors, People Experiencing Memory Loss and their Caregivers, 11 a.m.**

**Jan. 16: Dog Man Party!, 2 to 3 p.m.**

**Jan. 16: Maryland Writer’s Association Teen Writer Club, 5:30 to 7 p.m.**

**Jan. 18: Polar Bear Paint Party for Kids!, 2 to 3pm**

**Jan. 21: Winter Fairy Garden Workshop for Teens: Create Your Fairy Garden, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.**

**Jan. 25: Ribbon Roses for Teens, 2 to 3 p.m.**

**Jan. 27: Trainuary Intergenerational BINGO!, 11 to 11:45 a.m.**

**Jan. 28: Winter Fairy Garden Workshop for Teens: Build a Terrarium, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.**

## Thurmont Regional Library

**Mondays, Baby Storytime, 10:30 a.m.**

**Tuesdays, Preschool Storytime, 10:30 a.m.**

**Tuesdays, Let’s Get Ready for Kindergarten, 11:15 a.m.**

**Tuesdays, Night Owls, 6 p.m. Wednesdays, Toddler Story-**

**time, 10:30 a.m.**

**Thursdays, Musical Storytime, 10:30 a.m.**

**Thursdays. Elementary Explorers. 4 p.m.**

**Saturdays, Family Storytime, 11 a.m.**

**Jan. 4: First Saturday STEM Lab Drop-in, 2 p.m.**

**Jan. 6: Teen Vision Board Creation, 4 p.m.**

**Jan. 7: Open Chess Play, 2:30 p.m.**

**Jan. 8: A Conversation on International Affairs with Shaun Donnelly, 7 p.m.**

**Jan. 13: Teen Giant Brown Paper Bag Snowflake Creation, 4 p.m.**

**Jan. 14: Open Chess Play, 2:30 p.m.**

**Jan. 16: Onsite: Digital Learning, Thurmont Regional Library, 10 a.m.**

**Jan. 21: Open Chess Play, 2:30 p.m.**

**Jan. 25: Author Talk & Tea Tasting with Paulella Burchill, 11 a.m.**

**Jan. 26: The Library is SNOW Much Fun! Family Program, 2 p.m.**

**Jan. 27: Teen Winter Scene Paint Along, 4 p.m.**

**Jan. 28: Open Chess Play, 2:30 p.m.**

**Jan. 29: A Legacy of Memories: Creating Your Personal Legacy Projects, 6 p.m.**

# FASD examines budget & test scores

The Fairfield Area School District Board of Directors is several months away from discussing its 2025-26 budget, but it has already committed to not raising taxes more than what is allowed by the state.

During their December meeting, the board unanimously adopted the Act 1 Resolution, indicating that the Fairfield Area School District will not raise taxes by more than 4.8% for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. Each year, Pennsylvania school districts must choose between adoption of either a preliminary general fund budget or stating that taxes will not be raised above the school district’s Act 1 adjusted index. The Act 1 index represents the maximum tax increase a school district

can levy without Pennsylvania Department of Education or voter approval. The motion does not necessarily mean the board will increase taxes.

The board also learned from Elementary School Principal Colleen Rebert that its elementary school’s Future Ready Score is 73.6, placing it in the middle of Adams County school districts. The Future Ready PA Index is a collection of school progress measures related to school and student success. The Index includes a range of assessment, on-track, and readiness indicators. Conewago Valley’s New Oxford Elementary School sits at the highest of Adams County districts with a score of 84.1 and Littlestown’s Alloway Creek Elementary School

has the lowest with 64.2.

Rebert reported the district’s third graders scored a 65% proficiency rate in Reading as a result of the the 2023-24 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment. Fourth graders scored an 84% proficiency rate.

In Math, third graders scored a 74% proficiency rate and fourth graders scored 54%. Fourth graders were 93% proficiency in Science.

“We really need to address why our Math scores are an issue,” Aaron Taylor,

assistant to the superintendent for curriculum, special education and student services, said.

Rebert said the elementary school is implementing a school-wide framework that uses a team

approach to help all students grow and succeed. They are also using a What I Need (W.I.N.) block, which is time set aside for meeting individual needs. Teachers provide students with intervention, enrichment, and/or instruction during W.I.N. blocks, Rebert said.

Taylor reported 40.9% of Fairfield students are economically disadvantaged and 18.1% are in special education programs. The district educates 940 students, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics.

“Everyone of our students makes up a significant percentage because we are very small,” Taylor said.



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## LIBRARY & SCHOOL NEWS

# FASD supports football co-op agreement

**K**nights are on the path to becoming gridiron Warriors. During a special meeting in December, the Fairfield Area School District Board of Directors voted 7-2 to develop a cooperative football agreement with Gettysburg Area School District for three years.

The Gettysburg school board must now support a similar motion before it returns to Fairfield for final adoption.

Athletic Director Keith Bruck said in November that he and High School Principal Brian McDowell do

not believe the district has enough students to support football. Enrollment has decreased annually for 20 years, Bruck said. This fall, Superintendent Thomas Haupt canceled the varsity football season because the team did not have enough players to field a team safely.

The vote followed about 40 minutes of comments from citizens who, like Ferguson-Miller, were torn on the issue.

Student Wyatt Taylor said he would like to play for Fairfield, but mostly wants “the drama” to end. Taylor said players rarely dis-

cuss the next game but instead focus on whether the team can field enough players.

“The love is dying for all the football players,” he said.

John Holler, president of Fairfield Youth Football and Cheer, said he believes the cooperative agreement is best for next year’s seniors. Holler said a football roster should have 30 people on it and Fairfield has had challenges fielding the necessary 11.

Former Fairfield Football Coach Jake Johnson, who has been involved with the sport at

several levels for many years, supported the cooperative agreement. He told the board that it is challenging to hold athletes accountable when they know that the team needs them to field a roster.

“Football is the only game that you can play where you are dependent on the other 10 kids on the field to be prepared to defend you,” he said.

Johnson also expressed support for Gettysburg Area High School Football Coach Matt Heiser. Johnson said Heiser will give Fairfield players equal opportunity as

those who live in the Gettysburg Area School District.

“He believes in growing leaders and rewarding kids for effort,” Heiser said.

Before the vote, Superintendent Thomas Haupt told the board that it would cost \$59,300 to transport Fairfield football players to Gettysburg for practices and games. Gettysburg school district will charge, pending board approval, Fairfield \$872 per student. Although the coop was not a financial decision, the district will save money compared to the costs of running its own program.

## The path ahead

Janie Monier  
Frederick County School Board

**W**hen the venerable Michael Hillman asked me to write an article, the goal was for more than the standard introduction to the aspirations of a Member-Elect of Board of Education, but also to provide information for readers to understand the challenges we will be facing in the coming years and how our communities and families can advocate for and support our students, educators, and schools. As a former PTA President, this is the sort of information I wish I had to reference when working with parents on questions they had about an issue with the school or their teacher.

My goal in this first article is to present the outline for a series of articles which will provide information on the two biggest constraints on our public schools, the FCPS operating and capital budget and the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future, and the role of the FCPS Board of Education and how local, state and federal agencies affect what is possible from the dais. This series should provide a primer for you, the reader, to use for further exploration, to ask questions, and build your wealth of knowledge when advocating for you family and community.

In a perfect budgetary world, Special Education would be fully funded, there would be increased mental and behavioral health staff and support, CTC and CTE programs expanded to other parts of the county, a robust agricultural program emphasizing science and technology, develop our digital literacy to include artificial intelligence, see less rote testing and more time for critical thinking and problem solving. In a perfect world our class sizes would decrease because we have built, renovated, or replaced school buildings and filled them with amazing educators and staff making a living wage and ready for the next year of students. That would be a perfect world with a perfect budget. That is not what we have currently. It will take strong advocacy, careful deliberation of our needs, partnership with local and state stakehold-

ers, and time before we see our budget capable of meeting the demands of our ever-expanding enrollment. I will work to find resources, grants, and creative solutions to make progress on the goals of our schools and communities while being honest about the realities of our budget and resources.

Ever hear the expression of “putting the cart before the horse?” Remember the perfect world I presented above? That would be the cart. Let me introduce you to the two horses called, Capital and Operations. The budget for Frederick County Public Schools is divided into two main categories: the Capital budget and the Operations budget. Each serves a distinct purpose and is managed separately to meet the expansive needs of the school system and reflect the various sources of funding we rely upon to fill these budgets.

The capital budget is primarily concerned with school infrastructure, technology, portables at existing sites, maintenance, etc. Basically, anything that needs to be nailed down or connected to electric and water. The Capital budget for 2025 was just shy of \$73 million according to a FCPS webpage article on July 1, 2024. In order to deliver on the maintenance needs and capital improvements needed for the

future, FCPS maintains an Educational Facilities Master Plan for the next 10 years of renovations, replacements, and new buildings for our public school system. Interactive maps, the Executive Summary, and the master plan can be found on the FCPS website: <https://www.fcps.org/capital-program/efmp>. Capital improvement projects are funded by County and State capital budgets for education. FCPS processes requests for improvements and works with partners at the County and with the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) which manages requests for state funding.

On the other hand, the operations budget covers the day-to-day expenses of running the school system. This includes salaries for teachers and staff, utilities, supplies, and other recurring costs. This past June, FCPS Board of Education passed the FY2025 Operating budget of \$940 million, a 3.3% increase over FY 2024. The operating budget is funded by the County and State at 44% each and the remaining 12% are funds from the Federal budget and other income sources. The FY25 budget had to set aside 33% of the budget to cover inflationary costs. That left 67% for operations. After allocating funds for mandates, salaries, benefits, and utilities; there was roughly 28% left for discretionary spending.

It was this 28% and staff salaries and benefits that were available to cut during discussions over the budget \$53 million budget deficit in Spring 2024 that brought the proposed budget of \$988 million down to \$940 million. And the portion of the 12% that includes other sources of income to address the budget deficit? Part of that was the facilities fees which were increased to continue to provide funding for 4th grade music education.

Our second horse, Operations, suffers from food insecurity. Each year a new set of students changes the funding provided by the state to address their unique needs. Some students may cost the system \$10,000 per pupil and others will be closer to \$20,000 depending on the unique needs of the student. We can make projections for changes in enrollment based on development around the county, but it is much harder to predict which students will require academic interventions, IEP’s and 504’s, other supports, or transportation to CTC, FCC, or the IB program at Urbana High School.

Understanding the difference between the capital and operations budget, as well as the allocation of funds within the operations budget, is crucial for making informed decisions about school funding. It is a delicate balancing act to ensure that the needs are met for our pub-

lic schools and public charters, while staying within the budgetary constraints.

The other constraint to our budget goals is The Blueprint for Maryland’s Future. This legislation was passed by the Maryland General Assembly in 2021 before the state budget knew what would happen after Covid. It is aimed at increasing access to a high-quality education for all students, allocating resources to meet the needs of our students, and increase career pathways for every student. The Blueprint is based on the recommendations from the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education, commonly referred to as the Kirwan Commission. The Blueprint is structured around 5 Pillars, each designed to address specific areas of educational improvement as follows:

**Early Childhood Education:** This pillar focuses on expanding access to early childhood education programs. We are already seeing the implementation of this pillar in FCPS with the expansion of full day pre-kindergarten, pre-k centers in our high schools which allow our high school students to earn a Child Development Associates Certification, the Judy School model at several of our elementary schools, and public-private partnerships between FCPS and The Learning Bee.

continued next month



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# ARTS

## Way Off Broadway opens its 2025 season

Following its 30th Anniversary Season in 2024, The Way Off Broadway Dinner Theatre will open its new 2025 Season with one of the most iconic murder mysteries of all time, Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap*. The classic whodunnit will open at the Frederick theater on Friday evening, January 17th.

In the world's longest-running play, when a local woman is murdered, the guests and staff at Monkswell Manor find themselves stranded during a snowstorm. It soon becomes clear that the killer is among them, and the seven strangers grow increasingly suspicious

of one another. When a second murder takes place, tensions and fears only escalate. Brimming with intrigue, sophisticated humor, and surprising twists, *The Mousetrap* is one of Agatha Christie's most iconic murder mysteries.

The *Mousetrap* first opened at the Ambassadors Theatre in London's West end in the fall of 1952. The production included a young Richard Attenborough as Detective Sergeant Trotter and his wife, Shelia Sims, as Mollie Ralston.

On March 25, 1974 the production transferred to the St. Martin Theatre where it has been

performing since. In its over seventy year run, the only time the show has not been performed was when the West End was shut down during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The cast of Way Off Broadway's production includes Joseph Batz as Christopher Wren, Betsey Whitmore Brannen as Mrs. Boyle, Emily Flack as Mollie Ralston, Brian D. Kaider as Major Metcalf, Dominic Massimino as Mr. Paravicini, Wil Spaeth as Giles Ralston, Randy Stull as Detective Sergeant Trotter, and Megan Elizabeth West as Miss Casewell.

The production is directed by Justin M. Kiska, Way Off Broadway's Managing Director and the author of the award-nominated Parker City Mysteries book series.

The *Mousetrap* will run from January 17th through March 1st, with performances every Friday and Saturday evening, and matinees on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sunday of the month. Ticket prices vary by performance date and may be purchased by contacting the Box Office at 301-662-6600.

To learn more about *The Mousetrap*, or any of Way Off Broadway's productions or events, including

its upcoming 2025 Season which includes *A Second Help – The Church Basement Ladies Sequel*, Rodgers + Hammerstein's *Cinderella: The Broadway Musical*, Company, and *Once Upon a Christmas Night*, visit the theatre's website at [www.wayoffbroadway.com](http://www.wayoffbroadway.com).

The Way Off Broadway Dinner Theatre, under the direction of the Kiska family since 2002, celebrated its 30th anniversary of bringing live theater to the stage during the 2024 Season. Since it first opened in 1995, the theatre has been a leader in the area's theatre community, proudly bringing both classic musicals, as well as regional and area premieres to the Frederick stage.

## Winter Lecture series at Gettysburg National Park

Beginning January 4, the popular Winter Lecture series will begin at Gettysburg National Military Park (NMP). Featuring some of the best National Park Service rangers and historians from across the region, the 8-week Winter Lecture Series of hour-long talks will examine a wide array of subjects related to the American Civil War and Gettysburg history.

From A.P. Hill, Frederick Douglass & John Brown, to the Bat-

tle at Mine Creek and much more, these lectures illuminate the different events and personalities of this pivotal chapter in American history. "Winter is an excellent time to visit the Gettysburg National Military Park Museum of the American Civil War," notes Christopher Gwinn, Chief of Interpretation and Education at Gettysburg National Military Park. "Through this lecture series we hope to offer visitors a reason to visit the Museum and Visitor

Center and connect with the history of this special place and time in American history."

Of special note this year is a musical performance, inspired by Civil War poetry entitled "Marching On" by composer Ryan Mascilak and his ensemble. Additionally, visitors will be able to participate in a conversation featuring abolitionists Frederick Douglass and John Brown. Brought to life by living historians Nathan Richardson and

Doug Dobbs, this special theatrical performance is done in partnership with the Lincoln Cemetery Association Project.

The Winter Lecture Series is held at 1:30 p.m. every Saturday and Sunday from January 4 through February 23, in the Gettysburg NMP Museum and Visitor Center. Inclement weather dates for select presentations will be on March 2 & 3. Limited seating is available on a first come – first serve basis. Free

tickets will be available day of at the Gettysburg NMP Museum and Visitor Center.

For those unable to attend in person, each lecture will be filmed and made available via the Gettysburg Foundation YouTube channel: [www.youtube.com/@gettysburgfoundation](http://www.youtube.com/@gettysburgfoundation).

For more information, and a full listing of all programs and events, visit the park website at [www.nps.gov/gett](http://www.nps.gov/gett).

## Weinburg Center & New Spire Arts

It's the 5 O'clock Somewhere Tribute to Jimmy Buffett – January 19 at New Spire Arts. Come and experi-

ence the life and times of Jimmy Buffett as told through the back stories of his greatest hits, performed by musi-

cians who played the same stages Jimmy played in Key West. Join us for an unforgettable evening cele-

brating the life and music of Jimmy Buffett. Hear the stories behind his greatest hits, performed by musicians who played the same stages in Key West. Enjoy classics like *Come Monday*, *Changes in Latitudes*, *Changes in Attitudes*, *Cheeseburger in Paradise*, *A Pirate Looks at 40*, *Son of a Sailor*, *Margaritaville* and so many more. You'll leave with a newfound appreciation for Buffett's timeless songs.

**Gangstagrass – January 30.** A true example of the belief that we are better together, Gangstagrass combines great American traditions of bluegrass, hip-hop, and beyond to create a whole new musical genre that is more than the sum of its parts. Gangstagrass is a multi-racial collective of musicians who demolish every preconception you have about country music and hip-hop music. These string pickers and MCs create a shared cultural space for dialogue and connection between folks that usually never intersect. The boundaries are gone and Gangstagrass is out there doing things nobody thought would work but when you hear it you know, down in your soul, that it does work. Gangstagrass is here to help us party together with an irresistible blend of America's rural and urban music traditions.

**1964 The Tribute – February 7.** Experience a Beatles' Concert the way it was performed over 60 years ago... 1964 meticulously re-creates the magic of a live Beatles' performance with artful precision and unerring accuracy, and brings you as close as anyone could possibly get to feeling the magic of a Fab Four live performance. For over 30 years, 1964

has thrilled audiences with what is considered to be the most authentic tribute to The Beatles using period instruments, clothing, hairstyles and onstage banter with an accuracy that is unmatched. A perennial favorite on the Weinberg stage, you won't want to miss this one-of-a-kind salute to the boys from Liverpool.

**Admiral Radio – February 7 at New Spire Arts.** This husband-and-wife singer-songwriter duo weave a unique Americana sound blending traditional country, folk, and roots music. Inspired by the prior life of their 1941 wooden Admiral Radio, South-Carolina based duo Coty Hoover and Becca Smith create a unique Americana blend rooted in traditional styles that also touches the heartstrings of the modern-day listener. This husband-and-wife singer-songwriter team weaves threads of country, folk, and roots music together to create a nostalgic sonic tapestry evoking simpler times filled with homespun comfort.

**The Frederick Speaker Series – Dr. Robert Ballard – February 6.** Renowned Ocean Explorer & Scientist. On more than 120 deep-sea expeditions, Robert Ballard has made many major natural discoveries, such as the deep-sea vents. Oh, and he found the Titanic. The man who made some of the most startling undersea discoveries in recent years, Robert Ballard describes what it was like to locate the Titanic, among other sunken famous ships. In his talk, through the use of stunning high-quality images and personal accounts, Dr. Ballard will present his most recent work in deep water archaeology and the technology of tele-presence. He discusses motivat-

continued on next page

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# TOTEM 75 POLE

2025

 <p><b>May 30 - June 8</b> <b>Greater Tuna</b> A true Totem Pole audience favorite to kick off our 75th! Two actors play every colorful inhabitant of Tuna, the third smallest town in Texas.</p>	 <p><b>June 20 - July 6</b> <b>9 to 5</b> <b>The Musical</b> Based on the hit 1980 film, Dolly Parton herself provides the music and lyrics for this outrageous workplace revenge comedy set in the Rolodex era.</p>
 <p><b>July 18 - July 27</b> <b>The 39 Steps</b> Framed for murder and on the run, Richard Hannay faces plot twists galore in this parody of Alfred Hitchcock's classic film. Four actors! Fifty characters! One riotous farce!</p>	 <p><b>Aug 8 - Aug 24</b> <b>Beautiful: The Carole King Musical</b> Featuring her timeless music, this Broadway mega hit tells the inspiring tale of Carole King's journey from schoolgirl to superstar.</p>
 <p><b>Aug 27 - Aug 31</b> <b>Diamond</b> <b>The Neil Diamond Tribute</b> Scott Moreau rocks the look, sings the songs, and tells the stories that bring the legendary performer to life.</p>	<p><b>Tucked Away Tuesdays</b> Two performances each of rollicking great acts "tucked" into the Tuesdays between our regular season shows!</p> <p><b>June 10</b> <b>The Spouse Whisperer</b> Mark Cordes, a "One Man Laugh Factory," takes the audience from meet cute to matrimony with hilarious insights into the dos and don'ts of relationships.</p> <p><b>July 8</b> <b>Brady &amp; Caroline: Piano Bar Duo</b> An evening of song and celebration! These two Totem Pole veterans bring their globe-trotting, sing-along dueling piano show to our very own stage.</p> <p><b>July 29</b> <b>Boston Bachert</b> Get ready for an unforgettable experience as Boston's renowned family-friendly magic comes to Totem Pole! A dazzling variety show packed with magic, jaw-dropping juggling, and nonstop fun for audiences of all ages.</p>
<p><b>Plus Our Holiday Show</b></p> <p><b>Million Dollar Quartet Christmas</b> at Gettysburg's Majestic Theatre 'Nuff said!</p> 	

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# The non-native English major

**Emelie Beckman**  
MSMU Class of 2026

Since my first day in America, many have approached me wondering how my English is so good. I wasn't raised in the States after all. I then have had to explain repeatedly that I have had all my schooling in English since I was a little girl. I attended The International English School in my home suburb of Hässelby, an all-English-speaking middle and high school. This was a big part of my childhood and heavily affected my decision to come to the States. While many Swedish athletes do end up attending college in America, my childhood in particular sent me in this direction, since for the majority of my upbringing, the English language had been a heavy influence on my life. Not only did I learn everything from the age of ten to eighteen in English, but I also consumed English elsewhere. I sense that most Americans are unaware that Northern Europeans grow up consuming English media. That, along with the fact that nearly all popular influencers and YouTubers spoke in English, made a Swedish Gen Z upbringing closely connected to English.

When it then came time to leave for America, I had a sense of confidence in myself that many of my other friends, who were also moving to America, did not have. While they had learnt to understand English very well from school, they did not feel as confident speaking it. I, on the other hand, was not nervous about this. I thought it would be no different from my days in school. This idea was very naive of me. Upon arrival, I already had issues with the airport personnel. Was it my accent? Was it my ignorance of the American norms? I still don't know to this day. For some reason, various people did not understand me, and even the ones who did had a difficult time conversing with me. I didn't know that the set-in-stone rule was to answer "How are you?"

with "Good! How are you? Everyone reacted as if I completely lacked social competence.

Seeing how difficult I found the language and cultural barriers my freshman year made me hesitant about declaring myself as an English major. Not only due to fear of how others would perceive a non-native speaker heading into the world of English academia but also because I imagined that I was inadequately skilled for it. I didn't have the most broad vocabulary. I didn't know what the difference between "where" and "were" was. I kept asking myself how I was supposed to get a degree in a language I still struggled to adequately converse in. What persuaded me was that I had always wanted to study literature, and if I had stayed in my home country, that would have been what I would have pursued; no questions asked. I then saw no reason to change my academic ambitions and interests simply because I had chosen to follow the athletic ambitions that led me to a new country. But more important, perhaps, was that I had always been fascinated with English. All the people I had ever looked up to—writers, actors, and athletes—spoke English, and growing up, I constantly and willingly chose to consume English media because of this. I never read in Swedish. I only read English books. Mainly this was because I wanted to read in the original language of the work, but even at times when I read books that weren't written in English, I still did not pick up the Swedish copy. It still puzzles me why.

My first semester of English studies was difficult, as expected. I didn't have any issues with reading, understanding, or discussing any of the material; rather, it was my writing, ironically, that was my biggest weakness. During my first semester, I had professors go through my paper one-on-one with me to be able to discuss what felt like every single syllable of my essays. It was quite a humbling experience, and it kept me wondering if I was

being overly ambitious for taking on this major. But I kept thinking somewhere deep down that it was possible. After all, no professor discouraged me from continuing, and while my writing was on the weaker side, I still walked away from my freshman year with a report card that I wouldn't hide from my parents.

After having gradually developed throughout my first two years at The Mount, I have reached a point in my life where I genuinely enjoy writing in English. While I may still consider it difficult at times, I am now thinking about even pursuing a career in it. The change from my freshman year is drastic, and reflecting on it, I can only say that I have my stubbornness and lack of fear to thank. When I faced adversity, I only wanted to write more. I signed up for anything that would force me to write. I wrote for the school's newspaper, The Mountain Echo; I worked as a tutor, and now I work in The Mount's writing centre while also writing for this paper. While I still may struggle at times by continuously putting myself in situations that force me to practice, I have altered my life moving forward. I still have professors tell me I need to reword and rewrite things because I do not sound native enough, but at least now I can explain off the top of my head that "where" refers to a specific place whereas "were" is the past tense form of "be" and is used when describing plural subjects, which is something I couldn't have done 2 years ago.

As an experienced user of both languages, thinking about what the differentiating factors are between English and Swedish is difficult. Both are Germanic languages, meaning they both belong to the Germanic language family. They both use the same alphabet, except for a few extra letters in Swedish. Their cadences are different; English has a steady beat while Swedish can appear almost sing-songy with the constant change in tone and rhythm. English has heavy influences from

## Gettysburg Choral Society seeking singers



The Gettysburg Choral Society is actively seeking singers, including paid section leaders for the 2025 spring season. Auditions are being held by appointment only on Monday evening, January 13th from 6 to 8 and Saturday, January 25th from 11 to 1 in the afternoon.

The chorus seeks to utilize the finest choral techniques in an effort to continually improve the quality of performances. As such, persons who read music and have choral experience are encouraged to audition. Vocal accuracy, tone quality, blending ability, diction, and vocal range will be tested during the audition. All persons auditioning must be at least 18 years of age and bring a prepared piece to sing.

In addition to volunteer singers, the Chorus is seeking highly motivated and extremely tal-

ented, trained singers to serve as section leaders. The positions require singers to be prompt in attendance and fully prepared at all rehearsals and concerts. There will be a stipend paid to the section leader upon the successful completion of the semester's work.

Rehearsals, which are every Monday evening from 7 to 9, begin on March 3rd and continue each week through May 19th. Concerts are scheduled for May 23rd and 25th. There is also a small performance commitment on the evening of Memorial Day.

To schedule an audition, please contact our manager, Julie Strickland, at 717-515-3176 or email [mayfair25@gmail.com](mailto:mayfair25@gmail.com). Additional information is available at: [gettysburgchoralsociety.org](http://gettysburgchoralsociety.org)

Latin, while Swedish does not. This in many cases brings me to think that English sounds a lot more poetic. On the other hand, Swedish has a beautiful cadence that I feel English is missing. English also has more words than Swedish, 171,476 ones recorded in the English dictionary, while Swedish has around 126,000. Perhaps it does not make a drastic difference, but as someone who reads a lot, I sometimes notice in English and Swedish literature that there is a difference between how many words the writer typically changes between. All in all, both English and Swedish are beautiful lan-

guages, and I feel beyond blessed to possess the ability to speak both.

### Upcoming Events on Campus:

The students and faculty members of The Mount are, during the duration of December and early January, off on winter break! As we enter a new year, I look forward to seeing everyone back on campus and continuing to report on what goes on in The Mount's fine art scene.

To read other articles by Emelie Beckman, visit the Authors section of [Emmitsburg.net](http://Emmitsburg.net).

continued from previous page

ing people to think outside the box, learning how to deal with failure—that failure is just a step along the way to success, motivating children to choose careers in math, science, and engineering; and how to live your dream. Ballard is a dynamic speaker who will have you on the edge of your seat wanting to start a whole new career in exploration!

**Porter Carroll's The Evolution of Cabaret – February 8 at New Spire Arts.** This dynamic show reinvents traditional cabaret by blending R&B and pop songs with interactive, re-imagined arrangements, captivating audiences. Evolution of Cabaret is a dynamic show that redefines the traditional cabaret experience. Porter Carroll, Jr. founder of Atlantic Starr the R&B/Pop hit machine from the 70's, 80's and 90's is selling out shows in "The Evolution of Cabaret", an innovative cabaret/nightclub act that puts a new exciting spin on popular classics never before seen on the Jazz

club and cabaret circuit, featuring a tasty panoply that runs the gamut from R&B and improvisational jazz to soul, funk, blues, Rock & Roll and more.

**Scythian – February 15.** Rousing and raucous, Scythian (sith-ee-yin) plays roots music from Celtic, Eastern European and Appalachian traditions with thunderous energy, technical prowess, and storytelling

club and cabaret circuit, featuring a tasty panoply that runs the gamut from R&B and improvisational jazz to soul, funk, blues, Rock & Roll and more.

club and cabaret circuit, featuring a tasty panoply that runs the gamut from R&B and improvisational jazz to soul, funk, blues, Rock & Roll and more.



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# CATOCTIN SPORTS

## The fierce openings of winter sports

Richelle Zheng  
CHS Class of 2025

As the new year rolls around, the winter sports teams bring action to the courts. The Lady Cougar basketball and unified bocce teams are starting their season strong with numerous victories!

### Girls' Basketball

The Lady Cougars started their season on December 5 with a game against Liberty High School. In the first quarter, the girls trailed behind Liberty 8-7. Then, in the second quarter, the Lady Cougars hardened their defensive wall, leaving the Liberty Lions with zero points run as the Cougars scored 15 in a row. The score at the end of the second quarter was 22-9, with the Cougars taking the lead. During the third quarter, the Lions fought back by outsourcing the Cougars 18-14, converting numerous turnovers into effortless points. In the final quarter, the Cougars pumped up their game with their offense, making big shots, putting them back into the lead, and allowing the Cougars to end their first game of the season with a win! Junior Brooke Williams led the team with 19 points. On top of that, Williams made six assists, six rebounds, and three blocks. Junior Kelsey Troxell chimed in by adding 11 points, pulling down 13 rebounds, and making five steals, allowing the Cougars to win 47-35.

The junior varsity Cougars also had a decisive victory, 45-7, in their opening game against Liberty High School. Right off the bat, the Lady Cougars came into the game with a strong defensive wall, preventing the Lions from scoring any points in

the first quarter. In the second half, the Cougars worked together on the offense to score 18-3, and they continued to be selfless in the third quarter, allowing ten players to score. Ryleigh Hammond led the team with 14 points, and Sophomore Raquel Owens aided in defense, which allowed her to make six steals. Sophomore Josey Shaffer and freshman Caroline Hoyt also added five points to the total. Additionally, Hoyt helped with the offensive plays with four assists.

The Lady Cougars played against Oakdale High School on December 10, losing a hard-fought match to the Oakdale Bears 44-36. The first quarter started slow with some younger Lady Cougars, which caused the team to fall behind. Then, the girls stepped up their defense in the second quarter's first period, turning the game around and taking the lead 9-7. Again, in the second period of the second quarter, the girls showed great effort, putting them in a slight lead of 17-15 at halftime. However, the Lady Cougars began to give way to the Bears in the third quarter as they struggled, scoring only three points and putting them in the lead 28-20. The girls found themselves in deep trouble as they entered the fourth quarter down by eight points. The Lady Cougars could lessen the score difference to 38-34 as two of the starting Bears were fouled out. In the last 50 seconds of the game, the Bears came back to attack as they made their foul shots finishing off the game 44-36. The Lady Cougars wounded themselves with 29 turnovers this game.

The junior varsity girls took home the win against Oakdale on December 10, 40-23. The girls came out



Lady Cougars after their incredible opening game.

with an aggressive defense during the first quarter, taking the lead 5-0. In the second period of the first quarter, the Oakdale Bears brought out their claws and heated the game as they took the lead and ended the quarter 13-7. The Cougars lost their spark during the second quarter, which allowed the Bears to make some easy baskets. The girls went into halftime 19-15. The Lady Cougars then made a comeback in the third quarter and increased their lead throughout the remainder of the game, finishing off at 40-23. Leading the team were Hammond with 21 points and Maddy Whetzel with 14 points. Shaffer aided the team's win by adding five assists, and Whetzel with five assists. Hammond led in rebounds, making eight total rebounds. Shaffer and Whetzel held up the defense, each with seven steals.

The girls' next game was on December 13 against North Hagerstown High School. The Lady Cougars went head-on into the game and took the lead immediately in the first quarter, 15-7. Then, the girls slowly began to lose intensity in their game during the second quarter, decreasing their lead to 27-17. In the third quarter, the girls brought back more energy and improved their lead to 43-19. Finally, the girls continued to play hard defensively in the fourth quarter, leaving North Hagerstown with only four points and ending the game with a 56-23 victory! Wil-

liams led the team with 19 points, five rebounds, and eight steals. Troxell also contributed to the win by adding ten points, and Cassidy Kreitz chimed in with six rebounds. Moreover, Harley Fitzpatrick and Hoyt both made four steals. The Lady Cougars have shown incredible talents in their first few games, and Catoctin cannot wait to see what else they have in store for their upcoming games!

### Unified Bocce

On December 10, the Catoctin unified bocce team opened their season with a match against Urbana High School. Team one consisted of Lucas Bradley, James Grossnickle, Jayden Myers, Jonas Clausen, Chad Zimmerman, Vinney Perella, Faly Zimmerman, and Darrin Frey. The team went into the game with lots of energy as they had a decisive win for their first game, 7-1. Then, Urbana led for the first two frames during the second game. However, the Catoctin Cougars were determined to take home the win and took three points as the time was up. Catoctin finished with a score of three, and Urbana with four. High scorers for this team were Chad Zimmerman with two points, Clausen with two points, Faly Zimmerman with two points, Bradley with one point, and Myers with one point.

Team two consisted of: CJ Endlich, Maria Perella, Tyler McCallion, Ashton Merritt, Josh Ramos, Shay

Johnson, Jayden Worthington, and Josh Deyton. These members lit the courts as they landed two casinos, where each member rolled as close to the pallina as possible to score all four points in one frame! Senior Merritt skillfully rolled to prevent the opponents from scoring, allowing the first game to end in a shutout, with Catoctin scoring one and the Urbana Hawks having zero! In the second game, the Hawks and the Cougars were neck and neck with each other as the Hawks took the lead by three points. With only five minutes remaining, the Cougars scored three points, tying with the Hawks, resulting in a tie-breaking frame to break the tie. The Cougars showed excellent skills as they tossed the pallina to a 30 feet range. The opponents then rolled all of their bocces to the floor, but then Deyton took the victory for the Cougars by rolling his closest to the pallina. After that, the Cougars worked together to strategically roll to ensure a Cougar victory of 4-3. Leading the team in points were Merritt with three points, Deyton with three points, Endlich with two points, McCallion with two points, Worthington with two points, and Johnson with two points. What a great first showing for Catoctin's bocce teams!

To read past Catoctin Sports articles, visit the Current Events section of [Emmitsburg.net](http://Emmitsburg.net).



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10 - \$500	26 - \$500	42 - \$500	58 - \$500
11 - \$2000	27 - \$500	43 - \$500	59 - \$500
12 - \$500	28 - \$500	44 - \$500	60 - \$500
13 - \$500	29 - \$500	45 - \$500	61 - \$1000
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# MOUNT SPORTS

## Resurgent men's basketball finds success under Donny Lind

Steve Morano  
MSMU Class of 2024

After a first-round exit in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference tournament to Canisius on March 12, 2024, Mount St. Mary's Men's Basketball team found themselves in a crisis. Not only did Head Coach Dan Engelstad depart Emmitsburg to take an assistant coaching job at Syracuse, but star players Dakota Leffew and De'Shayne Montgomery entered the transfer portal, both eventually settling in Athens at the University of Georgia. With the departure of an experienced graduate student and the MAAC Rookie of the Year in Leffew and Montgomery respectively, many in Emmitsburg believed that there would be a downward trend to the future of Mountaineers men's basketball. But in fact, quite the opposite has happened.

Change first began at the Mount with the hiring of first-year Head Coach Donny Lind on April 20. In a packed-out university press conference at the ARCC concourse, Lind promised to return to the team's historical roots of full court defense that had become a staple under the highly successful teams of former Head Coach Jim Phelan. This "Mayhem" brand of basketball was first introduced to Lind by former Head Coach of men's basketball Jamion Christian when Lind was hired as an assistant coach at the Mount in 2013.

It was further refined after Lind left Emmitsburg in 2019 for Radford to work under Head Coach Mike Jones. Lind then followed Jones to the University of North Carolina-Greensboro in 2021 and together, the pair recorded an overall record of 153-103 and a conference record of 94-48 across both the Big South and the SOCON with a Big South title and first-round appearance against Villanova at the 2016 National Tournament in tow.

As a product of the Mike Jones coaching tree, Lind knew that he had to surround himself with a good corps of assistants in his coaching room. The first to join the team was Jeremy Freeman, who was retained from Engelstad's old staff and was promoted to Assistant Coach from his old position as Director of Operations. Dave Matturo and Keith Chesley were the next additions, with the pair originating from Belmont-Abbey and the Virginia Military Institute, respectively assuming further assistant coaching jobs. The final piece of Lind's coaching staff came in the form of Sidy Sall on May 31. Sall came to the Mount with a wealth of experience and knowledge as the Senegalese native served as Assistant Coach of the NBA Academy Africa as well as an Assistant Coach for the Senegalese Women's National Basketball team at the 2026 FIBA Women's World Cup Pre-Qualifiers in Rwanda this past summer. With the further retention of Graduate Assistant Andrew Winton from last year's staff, as well as the hiring of Demico Coleman as the second Graduate Assistant, Lind now had a staff that was uniquely his and yet, incorporated the best pieces of the

previous year's leadership corps.

With a new staff lined up, Lind had further work to do on the next issue, and arguably the most pressing, players. In modern collegiate athletics, player recruitment is often the most time consuming and difficult part of the job in a world governed by name, image, likeness deals and the transfer portal. This, combined with a lack of time to recruit, meant that Lind and the rest of his staff had little chance to get their guys in time for the season. But with less-than-ideal time, the staff recruited seven new players while retaining the majority of the players from the 2023-24 campaign.

Among the first to be added were freshman Elijah Espinoza and red-shirt freshman transfer Jaxon Hartman from West Virginia Wesleyan. Two more freshmen in Trey Wilson of Miramar, Florida and Abdou Khadre Kébé of Dakar, Senegal joined soon after. A further trio of transfers arrived in Emmitsburg over the summer, with junior transfer from Peninsula College Javon Ervin, junior transfer from Ellsworth Community College Arlandus Keyes, and sophomore UVA-Wise transfer Carmelo Pacheco joining the team in time for the start of the July training camp.

But with a flurry of new freshmen players and transfers, Lind and the rest of the staff had eight returns to the team in Jonathan Ogunfye, Dola Adebayo, Malcolm Dread, Dallas Hobbs, Patrick Haigh, Terrell Ard Jr., Jedy Cordilla, and Xavier Lipscomb to incorporate into the new gameplan along with the newcomers. They would play a key part in how the eventual product on the court would turn out and run smoothly.

To play into Lind's new system of defensive pressing, the experienced forwards Adebayo, Ard, and Cordilla were charged with being the



First-year Head Coach, Donny Lind, looks to evoke feeling of the Mount's past with high velocity defense and pressing.

backbone of their defense. Along with their natural job in the paint and snagging rebounds, the trio has been utilized in the full court press and has been vital to overwhelming teams in transition. With a much more expansive and forward-based defense, the new Mount system has allowed its 'bigs' to play with more freedom across the court in comparison to last year's defense.

Another way that Lind's system differs to that of previous years is in the way that Hobbs and Lipscomb are utilized as guards. Instead of being a traditional, deep-shooting point guard, Hobbs has been converted into more of a driving-guard, using his speed and transitional momentum from defense to weed his way into the paint for a layup or a jump shot. With an absence of Hobbs' threat from beyond the arc, the team has relied upon the likes of Pacheco and Keyes to shoot threes, especially from the wing and in the corner. Lipscomb, however, acts more of a play calling quarterback in football now than a traditional point getting guard, calling

out what to do on the floor regarding plays and feeding the ball off to the rest of the team to get baskets.

The start the team has been on is nothing more than historical, winning seven out of their first 11 games as of December 19. Their win against Howard on November 30 notched the team its fifth win, leading them to a record of 5-2 thus far, notably their best start in Division One. Further wins against Bucknell, Saint Francis, LIU and a 101-94 win against conference rivals Fairfield round out their historic start. And with their conference schedule fully starting soon, the Mountaineers will look to continue their defensive prowess to overwhelm their opponents.

No matter how well this start to his career looks, people need to remem-

ber that Lind is of course in his first year as a head coach. On top of everything else, he had little time to both recruit and fit his playstyle to the existing players who had to be weaned off of Engelstad's old system of playing. If the team starts to fall against their opponents in conference, then of course an inexperienced coaching staff would falter in this circumstance due to a lack of playing time. This goes for their players as well. But in all due time, Lind's system can be successful and does in fact invoke older memories to that of Jim Phelan and the long and storied history of basketball at Mount St. Mary's. Fans just have to be patient with the process.

To read past Mount Sports articles, visit the Author's section of [Emmitsburg.net](http://Emmitsburg.net).

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# COMPLEMENTARY CORNER

## 2025 – Year of the Snake

Jefferson Breland

It is that time of year again to check in with our old friend, the Chinese Lunar New Year.

As I mentioned last year, historically, Americans have usually seen Chinese astrology as only a placemat in Asian restaurants. The use of astrology in general, both Western and Eastern, has been very limited. That was not always the case. There was a time when Astrology and Astronomy were synonymous, just as Alchemy and Chemistry were synonymous.

Whether or not you truly believe in astrology, like many esoteric pursuits, astrology can be used to see ourselves and our lives from a different angle. And as they say in science, “When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.”

When we let go of any rigid idea, such as ‘astrology is a bunch of malarkey,’ we can begin to find wisdom in more and more places.

We need not go only to socially accepted “experts” as those we find on Instagram and TikTok to find new ways of thinking and doing to expand our possibilities and improve our lives. Wisdom is all around us. We just have to look for it.

We are about to enter the Year of the Snake (also called the Serpent). If you are like me, you may be a little uncomfortable being around snakes or even the idea of being in the presence of snakes or simple knowing snakes exist in the world watching us and waiting for the perfect time to crawl into our

sleeping bag to keep warm. I digress.

Some people love snakes. Some even keep them as pets inside their homes where they live and sleep. When I was a kid my best friend had a boa constrictor. It often escaped its cage and was fond of lying stretched out behind the cushions on the couch. Those were the occasions where I often heard my mother calling me home when no one else could hear her. Let’s just say it left a lasting impression on me.

If we are able to look at snakes from a completely neutral, non-judgmental, not-creeped-out-at-all point of view, we can begin to see that snakes offer us an example of how to look at life differently.

The Year of the Snake begins on January 29, 2025. Let us begin our understanding, by expanding our idea of what a “Snake” is and what means to be born a Snake person.

Let’s face it, snakes, the leg-less kind, are everywhere, almost. Curiously, there are no snakes on a few islands called Iceland, Ireland, Greenland, New Zealand, and the continent of Antarctica.

The snake, like the dragon, has a bad reputation in Western culture. The snake is almost always the bad guy. Eve comes to mind... Slytherin House in the Harry Potter novels, Kaa, the snake in the novel, Jungle Book by Rudyard Kipling. There are quite a few examples from various cultures where snakes are not appreciated. This may be because they don’t look like puppies.

As is often the case, Chinese culture sees things a wee-bit differently than

their Western counterparts. In Chinese culture, Snake people are considered the deepest thinkers and the enigma of the Chinese astrological cycle.

Their personalities, their graceful, soft-spoken natures can lead them to be philosophers, theologians, political wizards, or crafty financiers among other similar pursuits. They enjoy the finer things in life: fine clothes, jewelry, home furnishings, art collecting as well as good food, music, books, and the theater.

The Snake person exudes sex appeal with little effort. The original femme fatale or the brooding stranger whom you can’t look away from may very well be born in the year of the snake. The cool, serene, exotic beauty of this sign mesmerizes people.

Many feel that the most powerful and charismatic people tend to be born under this sign. Snakes are considered ambitious because they strive for control through power and authority.

Snake people are endowed with a particular inborn wisdom; they can be religious and mystical, trusting their own often reliable instincts rather than follow other people’s advice. This self-reliance can make them hard to read and not the best of communicators.

Typically, Snakes tend to be very careful about what they say, and they will write and rewrite correspondence until they feel it is fit for the historical record.

They treasure their privacy and will have many a dark secret locked up within. Elegant in speech, dress, and manners, the Snake person

dislikes indulging in useless small talk or other frivolities.

Some Snake persons may have a slow or lazy way of speaking, but this does not in any way reflect on their speed of deduction or action. It’s just that they like to ponder things, to assess and formulate their views properly.

Szake people are not likely to be bothered by money problems. They feel fortunate to have what they need. Should funds be low, they are extremely well-equipped to remedy the situation. Money is just a means to an end for them.

The Snake is one of the most tenacious signs of the Chinese zodiac. They can be possessive and very demanding in their relationships. At the same time, they may view their coworkers with a certain distrust. They will never forgive anyone who breaks a promise. Snakes may also prone to being neurotic, even paranoid, where their personal fears and suspicions are concerned. When the Snake’s anger is roused, their hatred can be limitless. Their antagonism is silent and deeply rooted. They will express their displeasure through icy hostility rather than a volley of hot words.

In another contrast to the nasty snake stereotype, all snake people have a sense of humor. Some may prefer a dry wit; others are sardonic, scintillating, or even diabolical. The best time to observe this is when the Snake is under duress. The Snake can crack a joke to lighten the atmosphere.

Now that we have a different idea of what the Snake represents, how do we use this information to help ourselves improve our lives.

I find it useful to think of the animals of Chinese astrology as archetypes for all potential human qualities. When you explore the qualities of the animals, do you identify with the one associated with your birth year? Are you drawn to the qualities of other animals?

When we look past our usual stories about animals like the Rat or the Snake, we can begin to see their positive qualities. If we stick with the standard stories of sewers, trash, plague, venomous, evil, and just plain gross, we will never see their virtues.

Another way to look at a snake’s (again, the leg-less kind) ability to shed its skin is that it represents rebirth and transformation. The snake also represents flexibility,



speed, and adaptability.

We can use the attributes of all twelve animals of Chinese astrology to see what capabilities we want to grow in ourselves.

I encourage each of you to explore your full potential through the lens of Chinese astrology. The animals simply represent a different angle of how to be in this world. Who knows, the snake may be your best teacher.

You are a Snake Person if you were born in one of the following years:

- February 10, 1929, to January 29, 1930; January 27, 1941, to February 14, 1942; February 14, 1953, to February 2, 1954; February 2, 1965, to January 20, 1966; February 18, 1977, to February 6, 1978; February 6, 1989, to January 26, 1990
- January 24, 2001, to February 11, 2002; February 10, 2013, to January 30, 2014; January 29, 2025, to February 16, 2026

The best Chinese zodiac animals for the Snake to befriend are the Ox and the Rooster. These three are part of the “Second Triangle of Affinity, a group comprised of people who are dutiful and dedicated to achieving great heights and succeeding through their constancy and unflinching determination.

People born in the years of the Pig (also called a Boar) are the polar opposites of the Snake in their ways of thinking and philosophical outlook.

Most of the information used for this article is from The Handbook of Chinese Horoscopes by Theodora and Laura Lau, 2007. I thank the internet for some of the other bits.

*Jefferson Breland is a board-certified acupuncturist licensed in Pennsylvania and Maryland with offices in Gettysburg. He can be reached at 410-336-5876.*



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# HEALTH AND FITNESS

## A new day, a new year, a new you!

**Linda Stultz**  
**Certified Fitness Trainer**

Here we are, it's hard to believe a whole year has flown by and we're starting a new one. This is the time of the year where we think about what changes we want to make for our family, our work, our health and our future. It's important to make reasonable, achievable goals so we can follow through and make them happen. Setting too high of a goal for ourselves just sets us up to have to try too hard and then give up before really giving it a fair shot. Setting an achievable goal is the sensible way to start.

Maybe this year you can pick one thing to do from your wishes for the year and start out with that. Of course I would advise picking health and exercise. Improving your health with exercise will help with whatever else you want to do. The better you feel and the more energy you have will make other tasks go easier. We all have many people and responsibilities to take care of each day. Taking care of yourself has to be the first priority so you can accomplish the other duties we have to do. I know we have been told this many times but it really is the truth. If you don't have the energy you can't get everything done and be there for the people that need you.

Each year my recommendation is to think about what you like to do, research it, decide what you would like to accomplish with it and then start an exercise program that will enable you to reach your goal. Starting out slowly with a guided program is the best way to strengthen your body without causing injury or burning yourself out quickly. Whether you work with a trainer or follow one of the many programs available through media, tak-

ing care to properly prepare is important.

New Years resolutions are fun to make and do help some people stick to them, at least for a few weeks, but I've found when some people put that kind of pressure on themselves it's too much and they get discouraged quickly. Don't think of it as a resolution you have to stick to, think of it as the right time to make a positive change in your routine. This change will improve your health, your attitude and hopefully every aspect of your life. Hopefully once your family and friends see your improvement they will also make changes to move forward to improve their health as well.

Starting a positive exercise program not only can improve your physical health but it gives you a good feeling of knowing that you are doing something for yourself. You are taking care of your health and setting a good example for your children, parents, neighbors, friends and anyone you are in contact with. When they see the difference in you, and they will see a new and confident you, they will be asking what you're doing. Setting an example is the best way to spark people's interest and get your message across. It's easy to give advice and people hear you but don't always get the message. When they see the difference in you they can see what your doing is working and they want to get the same results.

Look for my advertisement in the Journal this month. I have an Open House each year to let people know what I have to offer and what they can achieve if they start exercising and taking a little time for themselves. Even if this is not the right time for you to start a program, I am here all year. I am always hoping and willing to meet new people and help them with their journey to better health and well being.

My open house is Saturday, January 11 form 10 to 1 at my house located at 285 Boyle Rd. in Fairfield. If you can't make it then give me a call at 717-334-6009. My goal is to help people feel better, improve their health and have fun doing it. Anyone who knows me knows I always say "Keep Moving, You'll Be Glad You Did!!"





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# ASTRONOMY

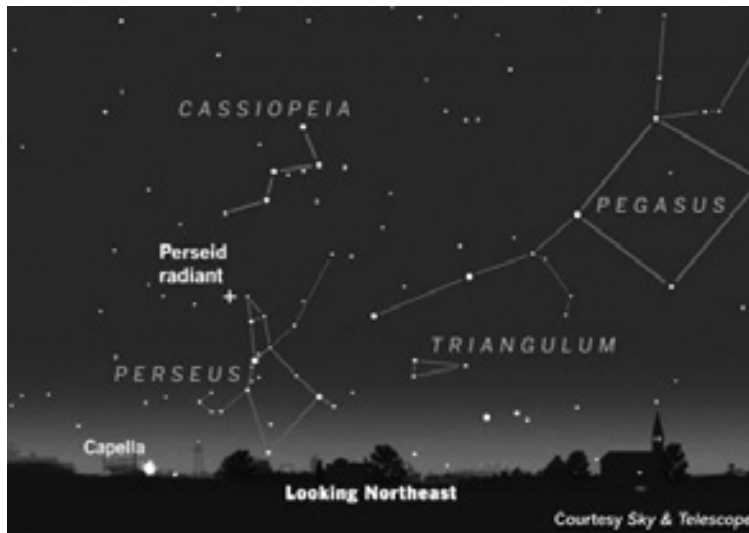
## The night sky of January

Professor Wayne Wooten

On New Year's evening, a very slender crescent moon can be seen right after sunset, well below Venus. By January 2, the Moon will move just below Venus, and by the 3rd, it will be above Venus. If the afternoon is clear, this would be an ideal time to catch Venus with your naked eyes in broad daylight, for it is near its brightest, and will be just below and to the right of the crescent moon before sunset. By the 4th, the moon now sits above the planet Saturn in the Southwest.

The Earth is closest to the Sun at perihelion on January 4, only 91.4 million miles from our home star. Doesn't feel like it? Our orbit is so close to a perfect circle that the small change between perihelion and aphelion in July is overshadowed by our 23.5 degree axial tilt. We just passed winter solstice in December, when our northern hemisphere is tilted away from the Sun, hence longer nights and the sun 47 degrees lower in the sky than in summer, and for our area, the days are four hours shorter now.

The first quarter moon on January 6th. The waxing gibbous moon passes just north of Jupiter in the NE. The big action is with the occultation of Mars by the Full Moon on the evening of January 13th. Stellarium indicates the Red Planet will disappear near the south pole of the Moon about 9:03 p.m., and as you see below, reappear on the NW limb about an hour later, at 10 p.m.. Note the moon moves



The Cassiopeia Constellation is one of the oldest known constellations. It ranks as the 25th largest of the original 48 Constellations listed by the Greek Astronomer Ptolemy in the 2nd century.

its own 1/2 degree diameter eastward every hour in its orbit of the earth, as this event shows nicely. The last quarter moon occurs on January 21st. The new moon is on January 29th.

Mercury is lost in the Sun's glare all month. By contrast, Venus dominates the SW evening sky, reaching greatest eastern elongation, 47 degrees up from the setting sun, on January 11th. It will then appear exactly half lit in small telescopes, but the bright disk of sulfuric acid clouds will reveal no detail except the phase. It moves much faster than distant Saturn, and will overtake the ringed planet on January 18th; note how thin the rings, almost edge on now, appear in your scopes. Venus will become a larger crescent in your scope after this, as it overtakes the Earth in the next three months.

By contrast, Mars will be at opposition on January 15th, two days after the moon occulted it. It will be largest in the sky as seen from Earth then, some 15" across, and brightest, magnitude -1.4. Contrast its bright red color to equally bright blue Sirius, the brightest star in the sky, rising in the Southeast at the same time. At the end of this month, the planet parade goes from Venus (overtaking Saturn on the 18th), then Jupiter almost overhead in Taurus, and Mars in Cancer on the Northeast horizon at sunset. Jupiter is well placed for observing high up in the East just below the V shaped Hyades cluster in Taurus. Note the four Galilean moons in a row around Jupiter's equator with small scopes, and how they change places night by night.

The constellation Cassiopeia makes a striking W in the Northwest. Her daughter, Andromeda, starts with the NE corner star of Pegasus' Square, and goes Northeast with two more bright stars in a row. From the middle star, beta

Andromeda, go about a quarter the way to the top of the W of Cassiopeia, and see a faint blur with the naked eye. M-31, the Andromeda Galaxy, is the most distant object visible with the naked eye, lying about 2.5 million light years distant.

Overhead is Andromeda's hero, Perseus, rises. 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 gorgon Medusa would lie. It fades to a third its normal brightness for six out of every 70 hours, as a larger but cooler orange giant covers about 80% of the smaller but hotter and thus brighter companion as seen from Earth.

Look 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. 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. East of Auriga, the twins, Castor and Pollux highlight the Gemini. UWF alumni can associate the pair with Jason and the Golden Fleece legend, for they were the first two Argonauts to sign up on his crew.

South of Gemini, Orion is the

most familiar winter constellation, dominating the eastern sky at dusk. The reddish supergiant Betelgeuse marks his eastern shoulder, while blue-white supergiant Rigel stands opposite on his west knee. 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. It is part of a huge spiral arm gas cloud, with active star birth all over the place. You should be able to glimpse this stellar birthplace as a faint blur with just your naked eyes, and the larger your binoculars or telescope, the better the view becomes.

To warm your winter nights, here is the "Flame Nebula", just east of the lower star in Orion's rising belt. Just south of it is the famed dark nebula, "the Horsehead", a dark cloud in front of the glowing hydrogen background here. While M-42 is an emission nebulae, shining reddish from the ionization of its hydrogen gas by hot young stars forming inside it, at Orion's right foot is brilliant Rigel, one of the most luminous blue super giants ion the Galaxy, about 50,000X more luminous than our Sun.

Last but certainly not least, in the east rise 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 by 7 PM, and as it rises, the turbulent winter air causes it to sparkle with shafts of spectral fire. Beautiful as the twinkling appears to the naked eye, for astronomers this means the image is blurry; only in space can we truly see "clearly now". At 8 light years distance, Sirius is the closest star we can easily see with the naked eye.



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## Farmers' Almanac

*"The next twelve months offers us a world of promise; it depends on each of us and how much we are willing to give of ourselves to help make it a better world"*  
—John Gruber (1768-1857)

**Mid-Atlantic Weather Watch:** Seasonably cold at first, then turning mild with a few rain showers followed by seasonably cold temperatures under clear skies (1, 2, 3, 4, 5); turning mild with a rain and snow mix, then dry with mild daytime temperatures and a chilly overnight (6, 7, 8, 9, 10); seasonably warm and dry at first, then rain with a brief period of snow on the storm's backside; becoming blustery and chilly with dry weather on the 15th (11, 12, 13, 14, 15); chilly at first, but becoming much milder with dry weather expected (16, 17, 18, 19, 20); rain followed by snow showers and turning much colder (21, 22, 23, 24, 25); period of light snow and rain, then breezy and staying on the cooler side of average (26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31).

**Severe Weather Watch:** The Town and Country Almanack warns of heavy snow and high winds (24, 25).

**Full Moon:** The first Full Moon of 2025 will occur on Monday, January 13th. It has often been referred to as Hunger Moon because of the extreme difficulty finding food in most regions at this time of year. And it has also been called Wolf Moon because of the increased presence of wolf packs that boldly wander close to tribal villages and encampments searching for any food.

**Holidays:** New Year's Day falls on Wednesday, January 1st and Epiphany follows on Monday, January 6th. The famed civil rights activist leader, Martin Luther King, Jr., was born on January 15th in 1929. His birthday has been celebrated as a federal holiday on the third Monday of the month since 1983 and a state holiday in all 50 states by 2000. In 2025, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is Monday, January 20th. MLK will be forever remembered for paying the ultimate sacrifice in

the pursuit of unity and racial harmony which still eludes us today.

**The Garden:** Now is the time to spoil those indoor plants! They not only brighten up the house but they also rid indoor air of nasty pollutants. Extra watering is required to keep them from drying out indoors. They also need to be rotated periodically to ensure they receive adequate sunlight all around during the winter months.

**The Farm:** Best for planting root crops (19, 20, 21); weeding and stirring the soil (10, 11); planting above-ground crops (12, 13, 31); harvesting all crops (24, 25, 26); the best days for setting hens and incubators (7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22); the slaughtering and butchering of meat (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 29, 30, 31); transplanting (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 29, 30, 31); the weaning of all small animals and livestock (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29); harvest and store grains (21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 7, 28).

**J. Gruber's Thought For Today's Living:**

*"Resolutions are only as good as the intent to keep them"*

# COMPUTER Q&A

## Get connected: the basics about internet and WI-FI

Aysë Stenabaugh

There are a few key aspects to understanding Internet access. First, there's the Internet service itself, provided by companies like Comcast or Brightspeed. Next, you have your network equipment, which includes at least a modem and may or may not be provided by your Internet Service Provider (ISP). Lastly, there are the devices you connect to the Internet, such as computers, cell phones, or tablets, which can be either wired or wireless. Knowing how all these components work together is helpful, especially if you encounter a problem and aren't sure where to start.

Without an Internet Service Provider (ISP), you can still connect your devices to one another, but you won't be able to access the World Wide Web, visit websites, or perform tasks that require Internet access, like checking your email. In our local area, Comcast and Brightspeed (formerly CenturyLink) are the most common home Internet providers, though they are not the only options. When choosing an Internet provider, first find out what is available in your area. Ask your local neighbors who their providers are and inquire about the quality of service and how often they experience outages to get a better understanding of your options. Once you know your options, compare the prices and Internet speeds of different plans. Some providers may require a contract or a commitment period to qualify for special pricing.

In most cases, once you choose an ISP, you can either rent their equipment or purchase your own. Renting typically involves a monthly fee, so it's important to decide which option is right for you. Purchasing your own equipment means higher upfront costs but long-term savings on monthly fees. This also gives you more options, especially if you need special features (though most users won't). Ensure any equipment you buy is compatible with your ISP and supports the speeds your plan offers.

In most cases, once you choose an ISP they give you the choice to either rent their equipment or purchase your own. There is typically a monthly rental fee for equipment through your Internet service provided, so it is important to decide ahead of time which option is right for you. If you decide to purchase and supply your own equipment, you will pay more in upfront costs and save more on monthly fees in the long term. Using your own equipment gives you more options available to you, which may be important to you if you are planning to utilize special features (this won't apply to most users). If you purchase your own equipment you will want to ensure that your device is compatible with your

service provider and supports the speeds that your plan provides.

Internet access doesn't always mean Wi-Fi. Most Internet modems include a built-in router for wireless connections, but some only offer wired access. Modems that don't support Wi-Fi can be configured with a router to provide wireless Internet access. If you already have wireless Internet but experience a spotty or weak signal, consider upgrading your equipment, using a wireless repeater, or installing a mesh Wi-Fi system to extend coverage.

Modern modems and routers can support multiple network bands like 2.4 GHz, 5 GHz, and Wi-Fi 6. Both your modem/router and your devices must support the same security type and network band for a connection. Older devices might not be compatible with newer networks like Wi-Fi 6 and may only connect to 2.4 GHz networks, which offer better range and wall penetration despite lower speeds. Some devices, like iPhones, may warn

users of weak security when the recommended security type is not being utilized. In these instances, upgrading your equipment would be required to resolve the issue.

Keep in mind that if you get a new modem or router, you may need to reconnect your devices to your network. Even if you don't change your network name (SSID) or password, other network information such as security type may change. If a network change occurs, remember to check and reconnect devices like wireless doorbells, thermostats, smart TVs, and cameras, as well as printers, computers, and mobile devices.

What can you do if you're experiencing network or Wi-Fi issues? First, remember that having network or Wi-Fi access doesn't necessarily mean you have Internet access. To troubleshoot, start by restarting your modem: disconnect the power, wait 30 seconds, and then reconnect. It can take up to 5 minutes for your modem to reboot.

If you still don't have Internet access, test other devices to see if it's an issue with one device

or all of them. If only one device is affected, it may have a hardware or software conflict. Be cautious when troubleshooting if you know your device works on other networks.

If you're unsure whether the problem is with the internet or your device, take it to a place with working internet, like a neighbor's house, a friend's place, or a local computer shop, to test further. If your device works elsewhere, your Internet service may be affected. This could indicate an ISP outage—check your provider's website for any reported outages. If there's no reported outage, ask your ISP to test your connection to determine if the issue is equipment related. You may need to replace your equipment, have your ISP check the outside lines to your home, or inspect the inside wiring for issues.

Understanding your Internet setup, choosing the right equip-

ment, and knowing how to troubleshoot common issues can make a huge difference in your online experience. By following these tips, you can ensure a more reliable and efficient connection, making it easier to stay connected and productive.

*If you find yourself struggling with technology or need support for your home network, don't hesitate to reach out to Jester's Computer Services in Fairfield for assistance. Our support staff is here to help you navigate any tech challenges you may face, from setting up your internet connection to troubleshooting devices and enhancing your Wi-Fi coverage. We provide the support you need to stay connected and make the most of your technology. Visit our website at [www.jesterscomputers.com](http://www.jesterscomputers.com) or text/call us today at 717-642-6611 for reliable and friendly service that you can count on.*



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The first thing that grabbed just about everyone's eye was the train display - fitting given the role the railroad had played in Rocky Ridge's history.



The highlight of the night, however, was the appearance of Santa Claus, and the opportunity for all good children to sit on his lap and whisper their Christmas wishes!



Of course no set of photos would be complete without a photo of Bun Wivell, and to capture Linda Northrup in the same photo only made the shot better!



For adults, it was all about the craft display staffed by RRVFC members - offering all sorts of Christmas knick-knacks for husbands in need of gifts for hard-to-please wives!



After visiting Santa, the next most popular things for the kids was the face painting, making the trip from Key-mar for Stephanie Brandt and her mother-in-law Sandra Brandt, Stephanie's children Liam and Savannah.



Linda Northrup, Wilma Stover, Pat Riggs and Helen Burrier made sure no one passed them without partaking in at least 4 cookies!



I honestly don't know what Carol Boller and Cindy Hart of the Lewistown 4-H were selling or doing, but they were having a lot of fun doing it!



Margret Fogle and her daughter Caroline. I'm not sure what Caroline was doing, but she was concentrating a lot on getting whatever it was just right!



In spite of his arrival, the Grinch was unable to ruin the night's festivities.



Christmas music was in the air all night long thanks to Catoclin High School Jazz Band - and man can they play!



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