

Emmitsburg NEWS-JOURNAL

VOLUME 17, NO. 7

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

JULY 2025

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Emmitsburg Community Heritage Day

If the word “family” was defined as fellowshiping together while enjoying backyard games, barbecue, and fireworks, then the Emmitsburg Community Heritage Day Festival on June 28 was a family reunion.

The Emmitsburg Community Heritage Day Festival is a multi-organization event that is not only funded by the community, but also provides an intimate environment for residents to get to know their neighbors.

As Jared Suit, the Chair of the Community Heritage Day Committee and member of the Lions Club, has grown up in Emmitsburg, he has watched the event grow alongside him. “Instead of just being the immediate family, now it is an extended family too,” Suit said. “The event has made the Town ‘one big family.’”

The Community Heritage Day Committee, Lions Club, and the Knights of Columbus are just a few of the organizations that take part in fostering such a family-oriented event.

Dianne Walbrecker, the President of the Emmitsburg Lions Club, stated one does not have

to look far to see the beauty in the day. “Seeing the joy on kids’ faces while they are in the three-legged race with their older sister and sharing experiences with each other, that’s what Heritage Day is all about,” Walbrecker said.

One way that the Committee hopes to involve more residents with the community is through the inclusion of local non-profit organizations and civic service vendors that were featured at the festival.

Attendee pockets are always grateful on Community Day as the barbecue chicken, provided by the Lions Club, is the only aspect of the event that costs money.

Attendee, and resident, Ethel Sayles expressed that the free entry is what pulled her family to the event, but the atmosphere keeps them coming back. “It’s special because our kids remembered it from last year,” Sayles said. “We come to this park all the time and it’s nice to see the whole community using it.”

The committee is not in the money-making business. They are in the memory-making business.

Suit expressed that many of the



Horseshoe players come from far and wide to test their skills at Emmitsburg's Community Day, and none was better than Emmitsburg's own Donnie Kaas.

yard games provide an outlet for children to participate in outdoor social activities. “Some kids may not be able to join their hometown baseball team, but hey, I’ve got an award for whoever wins the egg toss,” Suit said. “It doesn’t cost money to win that award.”

Members of the Committee expressed that one of the most important aspects of this event is the small business and organizations that surround Emmitsburg. Over 20 organizations act as financial pillars that support the event each year.

Community Day features events for all ages. Some of the residents’ favorite activities through-

out the day are field games, a car show, craft vendors, a beer garden and a cornhole tournament! The day ended with a parade through Town, live music and a fireworks show.

Jennifer Joy stated that all the activities culminate into a small-town-American atmosphere. “It’s just so hometown. It’s nostalgic almost,” Joy said. “The feeling of warmth that comes with the hometown connectedness. I think that’s what keeps Community Day going.”

Further information on the organizations that put Community Heritage Day together will be provided in the August issue.

Get ready for the 103rd annual South Mountain Fair

The best part of the summer season is right around the corner, fair season. Are you ready for the return of throttling of tractors, the smell of corn dogs and kids screaming gleefully on the Tilt-A-Whirl? Well, buckle up, because the Annual South Mountain Fair promises to exceed high expectations. The fair opens this year on July 22 and runs through July 26. It is open from 4 -10 Tuesday through Friday and from 1-10 on Saturday.

“I don’t think most people realize how much work and how many hours goes into preparing for the Fair and the work doesn’t end on the last day of the Fair either. We work at it all year. There is always something that needs to be repaired or painted or mowed or cleaned. The average person doesn’t see all of those things, but they all need to be taken care of throughout the year and not just Fair week. In 2020 when the Fair and all of our other rentals were cancelled, those things still had to be done. The grounds had to be mowed. We still had to pay the electric and phone bills even without any income,” Irvin said.

The South Mountain Fair is known far and wide for its

involvement with agriculture students and this year is no exception. There will be ample opportunities for children to be acknowledged for their personal efforts ranging from hobby interests to animal husbandry, for local and national merchants to show off their wares, and for community members from far and wide to come together for an evening full of great food, entertainment, and fun.

The fair began in 1922 and continued each year until 1930, when it was cancelled that year because of a drought. The annual event picked up again in 1931 and continued until 1941, when it was again cancelled, this time due to a polio epidemic, then World War II, according to the South Mountain Fair Association. The fair was resumed in 1948 and has been held every year since then until 2020 when it was again cancelled because of the Covid19 pandemic. It was held the next year, 2021, and has continued since then.

One of the highlights of the fair is 4-H livestock judging, which will take place all week long. Other activities include laser tag, pony rides, a draft and miniature horse pull on July 23, a fireworks display on July 24,



While the South Mountain Fair has the greatest rides of any carnival or fair around, the heart and soul of the fair is the kids and their animals.

a pedal tractor pull for the kids and an antique tractor parade on July 26. Exhibit buildings will be open every evening for the public. Exhibits include: a photography exhibit; baked goods, wine, vegetables, floral and fruit exhibits; crafts and art pieces of all kinds and loads of needlework, as well as 4H projects.

There will be musical entertainment in the auditorium which is

included in the price of admission. On Thursday evening Austin Rife will be entertaining us, on Friday Chris Woodward and Shindiggin will take the stage and on Saturday from 7 -9 Country Line Dancing will be happening in the auditorium.

For more information and a complete schedule of events, visit www.southmountainfair.com

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EMMITSBURG NEWS

Planned water rate increase cut

The Town Council voted to lower the upcoming planed water rate increase from 36% to 15%. The decision was the result of months of discussion, arguments and frustration by Commissioners and residents alike.

With a Water Fund that has been “in the red” for years, the hike in rates were initially started to “make up ground”. After years of covering the Water Fund’s deficiencies with cash reserves, those now depleted funds are no longer available to cover the day-to-day operational costs, carry out necessary improvements, or fix failures in the water treatment & distribution systems. This practice is not recommended as the Fund should be covering its day-to-day needs with revenues from utility charges and other sources. Not having the cash reserves also prevents the Town from applying for and being awarded vital USDA loans that could fund improvements to the Town’s water system.

In 2023, the Town Council voted to increase rates by 36% every year for five years and then transfer to an annual increase of 3% thereafter. With

2024 being the first year for the rate hikes, Commissioners questioned the increase’s impact on residents that are already strapped for funds to cover their costs.

With the approval of the FY26 budget looming, Town Manager Cathy Willets gave the Council an overview of what could happen with a 0% increase and the already established 36%. The 0% increase would bring in roughly \$840,000 in income from utility charges for the Water Fund. However, the Town’s proposed expenses are \$952,408, so the Town would begin the next Fiscal year \$112,408 “in the hole”, which it legally cannot do. If the Town continues with the 36% increase, then they should expect \$1.1 million in revenue resulting in an excess of \$434,000 in the black. Willets explained that these numbers would only cover the day-to-day operations and not any repairs such as line replacements, funding for other projects or provide an emergency fund.

With Mayor Frank Davis pushing for the Town to continue the 36%

increase and other Commissioners worried about the burden on the residents, a compromise was needed.

In May, the Council discussed what the “magic number” would be. They needed one that kept the Water Fund in the black, allowed cash reserves to build back up for emergency situations and gave residents a break financially. Numbers ranged from 5% which was found not to generate a positive net income, 15% which allowed a 4.83% positive balance, 18% which increased the Fund into the black even more and the original 36% increase.

The Council eventually agreed that a 15% increase, instead of 36%, would give the Town’s Water Fund what it needed and give residents a break. After 2028 the rate will decrease (unless voted otherwise) again to either 3% or the Consumer Price Index, whichever is greater at the annual review. The CPI measures the day-to-day costs of goods and services purchased by households. The final vote was 4-1 with Commissioner Cliff Sweeney the dissenting vote. The rate decrease will take effect in July 2025.

Emmitsburg
NEWS-JOURNAL

P.O. Box 543
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301-471-3306
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Senior Advisors:
Senior Advisors: Erik Glass & Greg Reaver

Executive Editor: Michael Hillman, editor@emmitsburg.com
Managing Editor: Devin Owen, MSMU Class of 2026
Assistant Editor: Gracie Smith, MSMU Class of 2027
'Does It Make Sense' Editor: Katie Wherley

News Reporters:
Emmitsburg & Taneytown - Jamie Kahl
Fairfield & Carroll Valley - Alex Hayes
Thurmont - Tara Hayes

Graphic Design and Layout: Brian Barth, pencilsketchnstudio.com
Advertising: Sharon Graham, advertising@emmitsburg.com

Council split on student housing rules

The Town Council has spent many hours debating the future of student rentals in the village zone (a section of housing primarily along Main Street, North and South Seton Avenues). June’s meeting finally saw a vote to approve student housing, however, concerns still confounded the Council, resulting in a 3-2 vote.

The original complaint was made by David Ott, owner of a rental property on West Main Street. Last October, Ott’s property received multiple complaints about excessive trash, parking concerns and noise issues. These complaints made the Town aware that he was renting his property to students, which is not allowed under the Town’s Code. Ott was not present at the June public hearing.

In response, the Town Council has been diligently working to create an amendment to the Code for allowing student rentals in the Village Zone. Staff presented two options:

one was to permit housing with specific parking requirements and the second would designate student housing as a special exception with conditions related to parking, trash removal, maximum occupancy and the International Building Code (IBC).

Town staff recommended the first option because it streamlines the approval process and reduces the uncertainty for property owners, as to whether they can have student renters or not. “This whole process started a while ago,” said Town Attorney Leslie Powell. “This was precipitated by a request for a text amendment for units within the Village Zone and those units had more than nine bedrooms which is why it did not fall into the definition [of a boarding house].”

Already written in the Code is the definition of a boarding house, which allows up to five renters meaning if a home is already being rented to five students or less it is legally allowed to

do so in the Village Zone. Ott’s two rentals can accommodate seven in one and four in the second.

Resident Gail Fowler asked the Council not to codify student housing. “Amending the Village Zone to include student housing would allow a higher volume of transient seasonal residents to occupy homes and buildings potentially hampering the Village’s sense of neighborhood and community, discouraging business growth and negatively impacting future grants,” she said. She asked the Council to consider who they want to attract to the downtown area. Another resident, Melinda Sweeney pointed out that the Mount had over 100 beds available for student use last year.

Mount Saint Mary’s President Jerry Joyce was present at the meeting and confirmed that there is no shortage of housing at the Mount, in fact there were over 100 open beds currently. He shared a desire to build a

solid relationship between the Town and Mount students. “I would prefer to really build up Emmitsburg and the relationship between the University and the Town.” He apologized for any issues Mount students may have caused in the past and assured the Town that the Mount is and will be responsible for their students.

Commissioner Jim Hoover favored the second option; however, he pointed out that any home in the Village Zone that meets the required items in the amendment would then be able to rent to students regardless of the potential that a string of student rentals could occur side by side. This concerned the Council, so they added a restriction of 500 feet between student rentals. Powell pointed out that apartment buildings (multi-dwelling units) are exempt from this restriction, meaning a home could legally have student renters right beside an apartment building.

Commissioner Amy Boehman-Pollitt questioned how the Town would police the off-street parking requirement as that one restriction is going to be one of the toughest to accommodate. Powell responded by pointing out that Code enforcement in most small municipalities, such as Emmitsburg, is complaint driven. If someone complains, the Code Enforcement Officer has to visit the location to determine if it’s a legitimate issue. If found to be in violation, warnings and fines follow. “There’s nothing wrong with it, that’s just the way it is,” she said.

Another concern voiced by Hoover is the current status of the International Building Code requirements. He asked if the Town was set up to deal with this requirement if the amendment is approved. Town Planner Najila Ahsan confirmed that, currently, the Town does not have the IBC mechanism.

Development mitigation fees approved

With only two developments in Emmitsburg’s future, Brookfield and Emmit Ridge, and nothing else on the horizon, the Town Council voted to update the Public Facilities Ordinance to include a new fee on residential developments geared at benefiting the Town’s school system.

The changes will focus on how the Town evaluates public school capacity when reviewing new residential developments. Developers will be given the

option to contribute money to the Town that will be specifically used to fund school improvements such as expanding facilities and upgrading infrastructure.

The existing ordinance allows the Planning Commission to determine whether a school can handle a new development by using the School Adequacy Test conducted by the Frederick County Board of Education. The test looks at the current and projected enrollment numbers at the elementary, middle and high schools that would serve the potential development. If any of these are found to exceed 110% enrollment capacity, then the test is considered a failure, and the development cannot proceed unless mitigation steps are taken.

Currently the only mitigation option would be to request redistricting, which is a complex and time-consuming process. The changes to the ordinance would allow a developer to choose to pay a miti-

gation fee instead of redistricting, but only if the school adequacy test is found to be under 120% and the development passes.

The Council decided that 120% was too high for the school adequacy test threshold and they discussed lowering it to 115% instead. Eric Soter, of Rodgers Consulting said if the Town were to start at 100%, any new development would likely need to pay the new fee which would include Emmit Ridge, a 48-single-family detached development on Timbermill Run, because it currently trips the APFO Ordinance. Soter recommended that the Town start at 105%, which would allow Emmit Ridge to proceed.

Although Thurmont Middle School (54% capacity) and Catocin High School (70% capacity) serve Emmitsburg residents they are considered to “have adequate space to accommodate” more students. The issue lies with

Emmitsburg elementary, “The current capacity after March is probably 98%,” said Soter. “I think they have 225 seats and the capacity is 218.”

If the Town agrees to use the same fees as the County, they are estimated to be \$10,400 per dwelling unit. The developer would also pay around \$18,000 in County impact fees, plus whatever fees the Town decides to implement. “We didn’t want to chase developers away, but under this proposal we would ask the developers to pay a school fee not only to Frederick County but a duplicate fee to Emmitsburg,” said Commissioner Valerie Turnquist. “I have a concern about it raising housing costs.”

“It does affect the affordability,” confirmed Soter. These fees would have a direct impact on the cost of a home as they are typically passed onto the home buyer in the purchase price. The funds accrued from the developers would be put into an interest-bearing account and only used for school projects.

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School District votes to raise property taxes

Fairfield Area School District residents will realize a 2% property tax increase when they receive their bills this summer. The board approved the hike during their June meeting as part of the 2025-26 district budget.

The action puts Fairfield's millage at 12.2357, the second lowest in Adams County. A mil equals one dollar for every \$1,000 of the assessed value of a property.

The district's expected expenditures, according to the agenda for the June 23 meeting, total \$23,349,181. School leaders expect revenues to equate to \$22,812,181. The remaining \$537,000 will be allocated from the assigned fund balance and dedicated to the following capital projects: high school auditorium stage curtains, elementary school gym floor, maintenance building roof, utility vehicle, stadium scoreboard, stadium lights, and library refresh.

Business Manager Scott Wilt told the board he expects the federal government to cut Fairfield's funding by \$14,113. In 2024-25, the district received \$175,398 from the federal government.

However, state funding is expected to increase \$647,289 for a total income of \$8,650,003.

The district is placing \$100,000 of its expenditures into a special account for the future expansion of Adams County Technical Institute. The school—which is a partnership between Fairfield, Littlestown, Gettysburg, Conewago Valley, Bermudian Springs—hopes to have a new facility in the coming years so it can expand its offerings. This is the second year Fairfield and other districts have saved money for the anticipated expense.

Salaries remain the district's largest expense, totalling \$8,657,671, a 4.80% increase over the current year. The district expects to spend \$5,077,634 on employee benefits, a 5.15% increase. Wilt attributes the increases to a planned rate increase of 4.5%, a new middle school autism class, hiring for all coaching positions, and a new staff accountant generalist position.

The board also unanimously approved a 3% salary increase for District Superintendent Thomas Haupt.

In other news, Haupt announced that the high school field hockey season is in jeopardy. The superintendent asked board members and the public to spread the word that a head coach is needed. Haupt said Athletic Director Keith Bruck has been advertising the position to no avail. Haupt said he remains hopeful that a qualified candidate will emerge within the next month so the board can approve their hiring when they return from summer break in August.

Carroll Valley plans road work, seeks grant funds

During their June meeting, the council unanimously approved advertising for bids for 5900 tons of Flexible Base, a granular, unbound material used as a foundational layer in pavement structures. Borough Manager Dave Hazlett said the borough tested the material on a small number of borough streets last year and was pleased with the results. This year, municipal staff plan to repair about a dozen roads, Hazlett said.

"It's a big year for construction work for us," he added.

Hazlett said Flexible Base resembles paving but is more economical. Tar and chip, which the borough has used in the past, is cheaper but cracks easily.

"It's a stark improvement over tar and chip," Hazlett said of Flexible Base.

The manager said he will soon announce which streets the crews plan to repair. Work should begin in September.

"This type of material, you don't want to put down in the dog days of summer. You want to wait until it just starts getting cool," Hazlett said.

The borough also plans to upgrade the Kay Sullivan Park at Lake Kay on Trout Trail, Hazlett said. The borough is applying for a \$15,000 grant from the People, Parks, and Community Foundation Grant Program. It also plans to apply for funding through the Adams County Green-space Program. If successful, the borough will improve the fishing pier, install park benches, and replace the small playground equipment.

The grant applications are just two of the several ways Carroll Valley is aggressively seeking funding to improve the borough outside of local tax dollars. The borough works with GMS Funding Solutions of Carlisle to research, monitor, and apply for grants.

GMS is hoping to acquire the borough's police department funding for new bulletproof vests through The Patrick Leahy Bulletproof Vest Partnership Program. It also submitted a \$115,000 grant application to the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) for the Carroll Valley Nature Preserve and Trail. Last year, DCED awarded the borough \$212,000 for the trail.

Police Chief Clifford Weikert reported his department plans to seek funding for a new police cruiser through the Local Share Account (LSA), also managed by DCED. The LSA provides local governments with money from state gaming proceeds.

Liberty Township News-Briefs...

Roadwork Plans Altered

The Liberty Township Road Department is taking a detour. During the supervisors' monthly meeting in June, Supervisor Chair Walter "Mickey" Barlow, who also serves as roadmaster, said the township rejected all bids for Flexbase material to rehabilitate Bullfrog Road.

The township sought bids for 20 tons of Flexbase Modified and 1,400 tons of Flexbase-3 Modified. Now, it is seeking bids for 1640 tons of Flexbase Modified to repair road shoulders on Orchard Road. Barlow said the township will revisit the Bullfrog Road work in 2026.

Barlow did not specify why he recommended the township reject all bids for the original proposal.

Township Personnel changes

Michael Dickerson was sworn in as an auxiliary member of the Liberty Township Police Department. Chief Terry DeWitt said Dickerson's position is permissible under a 1952 Pennsylvania law that allows depart-

ments to appoint auxiliary officers to supplement existing police forces during emergencies and disasters. Dickerson is the pilot of Liberty 1, the department's helicopter that is owned and paid for by Tripwire South.

Also on a recommendation from DeWitt, the supervisors increased Administrative Secretary to Police Department Jessica Ilko's hours from 10 to 20 per week. Ilko recently resigned her position as the township's assistant secretary/treasurer. Barlow said the township hopes Freedom and Highland townships,

which receive police protection from Liberty, will help fund Ilko's increased hours, but that won't be known until the contracts are negotiated in 2026. Until then, DeWitt said he has unused funds in his budget.

The township also accepted the resignation of Dethlefs Pykosh & Murphy as township solicitor. Municipal leaders did not expound upon the reasons for the resignation. The firm began providing services to the township earlier this year and will continue as a special counsel as needed, Barlow said.

The resignation opened the door

for longtime Solicitor John Lisko to return. However, for that to be possible, another change needed to occur. Township meetings will be held at 6 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month instead of the first Tuesday of each month. Barlow said the schedule alteration is necessary to accommodate Lisko's availability.

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THURMONT NEWS

Simmer’s property lawsuit shackles defendants

Even with the pending lawsuit against the Town and residents, Cross and Company resubmitted the Concept Plan for a 38-home community to the Planning Commission in May due to how much time had passed since the original submission in March of 2023. The “Albert Meadows” development would sit on a 7.8-acre portion within Town limits, with a stormwater management facility on the remaining 16.7-acre portion. The 38 townhouses would be broken down into 30-three story units with integrated garages and eight two-story villas with integrated garages.

The controversial development is part of a larger issue involving the annexation of the remaining 16.7 acres. This portion was annexed

into the Town in 2022 and then revoked two months later. Cross came before the Commission in January of 2025 asking for annexation once more, however, a lawsuit was in place by that time involving the residents of the neighboring Albert Courts community, as well as the Town of Thurmont, Frederick County, two HOAs and a construction company.

This lawsuit was in response to a derelict silt pond that was part of a larger stormwater facility on the Simmer’s parcel left over from the construction of the Albert Courts Community in 1992. The facility was considered abandoned in 1997 and according to Cross and Company must be removed by the defendants because its presence on the Simmer’s property prevents the

land from being developed.

Originally, the defendants in the case were heading to Court in June of 2025; however, the case has been pushed to September of 2026, shackling residents to their homes. Although you can legally sell a home under a pending lawsuit, it is extremely difficult and can be expensive and time consuming. Court fees for the case are also extremely costly.

Understandably, Residents of Thurmont have been opposed to the annexation and development of the Property from the beginning. One resident emailed a picture of the Simmer’s property flooding after a significant rain event. “My concern is that the location of the proposed stormwater management pond will be of little to no value in assisting with storm-

water runoff from the proposed new development because it is not at the low point of the property,” read Town Planner Kelly Duty from the email. Commissioner Marty Burns, was also concerned about the flooding, pointing out that the stormwater pond that is intended to allow water to drain is potentially uphill of the Property’s lowest point. He urged the Commission to be cautious about the proposed management pond as the Town of Thurmont has had issues with County approved ponds for decades. “We have to make sure the County got it right,” he said.

Resident Alicia Kuchinsky said she had to delay her retirement because of the lawsuit. “None of this matters,” she said. “It shouldn’t even be on the table until all of the

legalities are done.” She questioned why Cross and Company was in such a rush to get the Concept Plans approved when the lawsuit isn’t expected to be finalized until September of 2026. Many other residents agreed, frustrated that they are being sued for something that occurred with many of the previous owners of their homes.

Although the Concept Plan was resubmitted with all requirements met, Burns pointed out that the Commission isn’t voting on anything at this time. Their job is to make sure all of the boxes are checked and everything is done correctly. Duty pointed out that the Town has utilized a third party to review stormwater plans in previous projects to make sure the Plan’s design is adequate and suggested it may be prudent to do so for this project as well.

Council lowers property tax; approves budget

The Town of Thurmont has approved their Fiscal Year 2026 budget, which includes a decrease in the Real Property Tax Rate. The Council also instituted a temporary hiring pause in the General Fund, except for critical positions.

At the May 20 meeting, Commissioner Marty Burns was concerned about borrowing \$230,000 from the Town’s capital reserves, which is essentially the Town’s savings, for the purchase of two trucks under the General Fund. Mayor John Kinnaird assured the Council and residents that there still are funds remaining in the capital reserves and that the Town is required to replace the money, but agreed with Burns’ concern.

Commissioner Bob Lookingbill brought up the concern again at the June 3 meeting, pointing out that the Town could find itself in financial difficulty if there were an issue. Burns was concerned about the implications from return-

ing the money the following fiscal year, when it’s unknown where the Town’s finances will be. For that reason, Kinnaird suggested the Town revisit the policy to return the money within the next year, potentially providing the Town with additional time to return borrowed funds from the capital reserve.

The Council agreed to remove the line item from the budget for Fiscal Year 2026, but to revisit the use of the capital reserves in four to six months. “Because of taking the constant yield into consideration, we cut our income back, which may have been close enough to covering that but we had to think about the taxpayers,” Commissioner Wayne Hooper said. “I think by putting this off for maybe a six-month budget amendment would be a good thing.”

The Thurmont Real Property Tax Rate will be to \$0.2780 per \$100 of assessed value for FY-26, which the Council approved 4-0 at the May 7 meeting. Last year,

the Thurmont Real Property Tax Rate was \$0.2987 per \$100 of assessed value. The Personal Property Tax Rate will remain at \$0.62 per \$100 of assessed valuation for this fiscal year. Of course, the Town cannot determine County property taxes.

“I’d just like to reiterate that the tax rate is based on the constant yield tax rate,” Kinnaird said. He went on to explain that despite the decrease in the property tax rate, the valuation of properties has increased. This means Thurmont residents could find their taxes to be the same or even slightly higher than the current fiscal year.

Taxes are expected to bring in almost \$2,191,689 in revenue for the Town over the next fiscal year, as noted in the budget. The Council also approved the budget for Fiscal Year 2026, to go into effect on July 1.

Burns suggested a hiring “pause” until around the end of the calendar year to save money for the

tax payers. “Just to make sure that we’re okay,” he said at the June 3 meeting. The Council agreed to review any vacancies as they come up, especially for critical positions.

At the May 20 meeting, Burns spoke directly to residents at the May 20 meeting to explain that the appearance of a surplus in the budget is not as it seems. “You would think after looking at this [budget worksheet] that the Town of Thurmont has \$831,367 net positive that we can spend on anything,” Burns said. “That is not true.”

In addition to the capital reserve funds, which appeared under revenue before it was removed from the budget, Burns explained that the \$529,796 from Capital Improvement Highway User Revenue (HUR) under the capital budget can only be used for specific projects, unlike other revenue sources. According to Kinnaird, the HUR Program is funded by taxpayers, and the money received

from the State government can only be used for roads and sidewalks in the Town. Because of this, Burns explained that, in his opinion, the real surplus is closer to \$71,571 to spend on unexpected needs.

Kinnaird explained that he prefers having the HUR revenue in the budget every year for transparency. “It shows that we’re getting that revenue,” he said. “And at the end of the year, we’ll have spent that revenue on the roads, which is what we’re supposed to do.” He went on to explain that the Town of Thurmont has never had a line item for road repairs because of this Program.

Kinnaird ended the discussion by encouraging residents to ask questions about the budget if they have any, whether through public comment or other means. “The Town of Thurmont is run on the investment of our residents and businesses,” he said, encouraging both to be involved in future budget proposals through public hearings at the Town meetings.

Town outlines planned capital works projects

The Town Council reviewed the Capital and Capital Improvements budget for each department during fiscal year 2026. CFO Suzanne Saxton presented capital projects/budgets for the general fund, water fund, wastewater fund and electric fund at the May 20 meeting.

Saxton presented nine projects or purchases for the general fund budget, with a surplus in the budget of \$71,571. The Board decided to remove the project that would install a garage on the Radio Lane property, which would help to reduce the initial \$36,872 budget deficit. Mayor John Kinnaird asked Town Manager Jim Humerick if the garage was a “want or a need.” When Humerick confirmed it was more of a want, Kinnaird suggested they put off the garage when more funds are available. Humerick told the Council that, if he found a grant for the garage, he would bring it back before the mayor and commissioners.

To further reduce the funding needed, they also lowered the funding for the tree treatment program at Community Park, initially \$20,000 but reduced to \$10,000. Humerick said that the Town is currently treating 167 ash trees in Community Park, only losing about 25-30 trees over the years. “That’s amazing considering that everywhere you go, every ash tree has been killed,” Kinnaird said. “I think we benefit greatly from that.” Commissioner Bill Blakeslee suggested that any remaining funds go toward the tree treatment program.

With these two changes, the costs changed from \$108,443 to a final estimated total of \$68,443 for general fund capital and capital improvements. The streets project will operate under the general fund capital budget but will be funded by the use of highway user revenue. Other remaining projects include replacing trucks, the roof on the garage at 10 Frederick Road and more.

The water fund has \$307,340 available in its capital budget, allowing for more projects to be completed in the next fiscal year. For the water department, Saxton presented seven projects ranging from new fire hydrants to the N. Center St. water main project. All seven projects total \$236,000, allowing all to be funded in Fiscal Year 2026.

Of the seven wastewater capital and capital improvements, the Council approved six of the projects, agreeing to use capital reserves to cover the \$144,960 shortfall. The mayor and commissioners denied funding for the Howard St. sewer replacement project, lowering the department’s capital costs from \$632,000 to \$312,000. The Howard St. sewer replacement was at the bottom of the list, in order of importance.

Initially, the wastewater department asked to replace parts in the truck, but included a new truck purchase at the top of their capital fund list. The truck will include a plow for

snow removal, which is why it costs \$80,000. “The wastewater department not only takes care of the plant, obviously, but they also take care of the plowing and salting major interstates since they’re close proximity,” Hamrick said. The mayor and commissioners approved the purchase.

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TANEYTOWN NEWS

City hires new Economic Development Director

After months of turmoil surrounding the Economic Development Commission Director position and the Main Street Program, the City Council finally hired a new EDC Director at the June Council meeting.

The need for a new EDC Director is necessary after the firing of the former EDC Director, Jay Meashey, earlier this year. Meashey was also performing the duties of the Main Street Manager, where he

was responsible for the revitalization of the downtown area which included managing the Main Street advisory board, coordinating volunteers, managing administrative tasks, and acting as the community's representative.

After months of miscommunication, arguments and questionable ethics surrounding the Main Street board, Meashey, and the entire Main Street board were disbanded. This meant the Program itself came

to a grinding halt. Council members spent the better part of last year working on a plan to revamp the Program, starting with combining the positions of the EDC Director and Main Street Manager into one position. Then finding the right candidate to fill the position.

Although Miller was initially intending on choosing the candidate himself and asking for Council approval after, he retracted that decision after Council pushed back

asking for a proper job advertisement and for whomever qualified to get a chance at applying for the position. One comment made at previous meetings was whether the Council needed to increase the EDC Director's salary to encourage more applicants or to leave it at \$58,000. They discussed boosting it up to \$70,000 in March, however, the Council couldn't agree whether it was reasonable to do so, and the salary was kept at \$58,000.

By the June meeting the Council had nine applicants for the position. After a vote Robert E Jones was appointed Director of the EDC, and he will be responsible for overseeing and planning the City's economic growth. He will be in charge of developing the local economy, attracting and retaining businesses, as well as working with the creation of a new Main Street Program designed to boost the downtown business area.

FY-26 City budget approved

The City Council held a public meeting in June to gather residents' opinions on the FY-26 budget before approval. Like many local municipalities, expenses are up across the entire budget, however, Mayor Christopher Miller asked the Council to decrease the City's water rates by 5% to "give residents some relief" regardless. To do so, Miller informed the Council that many cuts have been made in various departments as well.

Taneytown's operating budget is divided into the General Fund and the Utility Fund. The General Fund meets the financial needs of the City's day-to-

day operating expenses such as office salaries, insurance and vehicle maintenance. The Utility Fund covers the Water and Sewer Funds operational expenses.

Overall, the General Fund expects nearly a 9% increase, primarily due to a \$1.5 million capital investment in the Police Department. Revenues total \$9,025,834 and balances with expenses at \$9,025,834. This is an increase of \$735,840 compared to last FY. Local and State tax revenue will increase from \$4,567,423 in 2025 to \$4,805,093 in 2026, an increase of \$237,670. The current tax rate remains unchanged from .37 cents

per \$100. New for FY26 is the Open Space Impact Fee bringing the City \$250,000 in revenue. The Parks and Rec Department will see a decrease in revenue of \$30,000.

General Fund expenditure increases include a \$70,910 annual salary for an Assistant City Manager, \$233,053 in the City's Public Safety category and \$1,510,651 in Parks Capital Outlay. Police Capital Outlay will see a decrease of \$172,600, and the Public Safety Department will see a decrease of \$233,053.

Overall, the Utility Fund will see a net decrease in expenses of 33% com-

pared to last year, despite an increase in revenue of \$3,360,575 primarily due to MDE grant payments. \$950,000 in utility charges are expected even with the Water Rate decrease of 5% that was approved last month by City Council. The Sewer service fees will bring in \$1,866,750.

Both the Water and Sewer Capital Outlay Funds will see decreases of \$1.2 million and \$1.8 million respectively.

Two residents were present to share their opinions before the Council voted to approve the budget. "The annual budget should always address the priorities of the residents and the landowners," said resident Paul Clouth.

He pressed for the Council to prioritize the Main Street Program and its future. Miller pointed out that the City recently hired an Economics Development Director who will be in charge of the Main Street Program.

Resident Alex Kelly pointed out that the bypass should be a priority because, by moving the big trucks out of the center of Town, the Main Street District should be able to blossom again. Miller addressed this concern, commenting that the City is still working on options for the bypass, however it will be a long term goal.

The FY26 budget was approved by Council and will take effect in July 2025.

Police Department to see changes in FY 25/26

With the Fiscal Year 25/26 budget beginning in July, the City Council began working on the draft of the document in May, the first meeting for the three newest Council members. Mayor Christopher Miller introduced the Budget with reductions across all the City's departments, partially due to the need to find funds for the salary for an additional police officer and to place another in the drug task force. "That's kind of the final step as far as what we can do as far as drugs in this area goes," he said. "We already got the K9, we're already making more stops on the streets, you know drug task force is the next natural step."

Another change for the Police Department was the introduction of an ordinance that would allow the City to adopt a police manual supplied by Lexipol. The Company provides state-specific public safety policies and training solutions via subscription. The adoption of the Ordinance would also make any changes available for viewing by the Mayor and City Council. "If anyone is familiar with the police manual, it's been on the back burner of Council's radar for probably a couple years now," he said.

The only change to the Ordinance was the removal of "sole authority", as Commissioner Christopher Tillman expressed his dislike for the singularity of the term. "If we just remove the word sole and [replace with] Chief of Police shall have the authority to adopt then that's fine," he said. The Council agreed with Tillman and approved the changes.

The last ordinance introduced, which affected the Police department, involved Police Protection Standards. According to Miller,

the City is technically required to have a minimum of 17 patrol officers as its population exceeds 8,000 (two officers per 1,000 residents). However, per the Taneytown website, the City currently has fifteen officers and two civilian personnel. These positions/employees? make up two patrol squads, three administrative positions, an administrative assistant, and one crossing guard.

The introduced Ordinance would set a minimum of 16 patrol equivalent officers (your "boots on the ground" officers, not administrative

positions in the force) and officially gives the Chief the ability to sign off on an incoming development if the 16 minimum hasn't been met and he still feels that adequate police protection can be provided.

City Manager Jim Wieprecht added that once the City is staffed 24/7 and has adequate coverage for officers to take leave, court duty, etc., then the "two officers per thousand" formula may not need to be continued. "Once we have the critical mass for coverage of the City, we may be able to accommodate additional population without hiring," he said.

Resident Alex Kelly requested the Council also consider expanding the Police Force's service area, "There are plenty of people that live in Taneytown but they're not in Taneytown proper and they're not able to get the services," he said. "They're reliant on

the Carroll County Sheriff's Department for that, so if we are going to increase the number of officers then we might want to consider how we can help our fellow residents."

The Council has only begun discussing the introduced ordinances and will continue working on the ordinances this year.



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FROM THE DESK OF...

Congresswoman April McClain Delaney

In the summer of 1980, National Public Radio (NPR) completed the first nationwide radio satellite distribution network—a transformative step that allowed its programming to reach millions of additional listeners across the country. For the first time, people living in rural towns and underserved communities had access to the same high-quality journalism and storytelling as those in urban centers. This groundbreaking achievement didn't just expand radio coverage—it laid the foundation for a public media system built on the values of education, accessibility, and service, rather than profit.

In the decades since, more than 1,000 local public radio and tele-

vision stations have helped bring those values to life. These stations air programs guided not by corporate interests or advertising dollars, but by a mission to inform, educate, and uplift the public. Whether it's through trusted reporting, award-winning documentaries, or beloved children's programming, public media has become a vital part of the American cultural and educational landscape.

Now, however, that legacy is facing a serious threat. The Senate is preparing to vote on a bill that would eliminate \$1 billion in funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB). This proposed cut puts essential programming at risk—including PBS staples like Sesame

Street, Arthur, and Mister Rogers' Neighborhood. For decades, these shows have offered children across America high-quality, age-appropriate educational content. For many families—particularly those without cable or reliable internet—PBS may be the only free, educational screen time available to their children.

We can't afford to eliminate the very tools that help kids learn to read and understand the world around them. That's why, when this harmful bill was brought before the U.S. House just a few weeks ago, I proudly voted against it. I also took to the House floor to speak out—on behalf of Marylanders, rural communities, early childhood educators, and the chil-

dren and families who depend on these vital services.

Before I came to Congress, I spent decades working as a non-profit advocate focused on children's online safety, digital literacy, and closing the digital divide. I've seen firsthand how educational inequities can shape—and limit—a child's future. For many rural areas like my hometown of Buhl, Idaho, and communities throughout Western Maryland, public broadcasting is more than a media outlet. It's a lifeline. It's how families receive the news. It's how children without high-speed internet still get to learn from trusted educators. It's how seniors stay connected to current events and cultural programming. This

broadcast programming is free to every American—and priceless in its impact.

Cutting this funding isn't just shortsighted—it's harmful. Public broadcasting delivers extraordinary value: for under \$1.50 per American per year, it provides news, emergency alerts, children's programming, and local reporting to nearly every corner of the country. Slashing public media funding won't solve our fiscal challenges, but it will shortchange working families who need it most.

Investing in public broadcasting is investing in our shared future. It's an affirmation of our values—that every child deserves a chance to learn, every citizen deserves access to reliable information, and every community deserves to be heard. I'll continue to fight for those values in Congress.

Emmitsburg Mayor Frank Davis

I have some exciting news. We are one step closer to addressing the parking shortage in the downtown area. We have qualified for a grant that will allow us to purchase a property to add additional parking within a block of the town square. With negotiations underway, we feel confident that we can reach a deal to address a fifty-year problem that has hindered both

business and residential needs. I hope to get more information by next month.

The Town Council has passed the budget for fiscal year 2026. For the most part, this should allow us to continue to provide services that are expected by you, the residents, and fund upgrades to some town amenities. The one concern I have is with the decrease

such as roadway paving and park upgrades, to name a few.

We will be forced to put on hold the much-needed waterline replacements for West Main Street and the Waynesboro Road customers, as well as beginning to save over twenty million dollars for improvement projects that are a major concern. I was hesitant to share my concerns, but I've promised that I will always be transparent with you all, so that there are

no surprises that may affect the services we provide.

Last but not least, I want to congratulate the graduates of Catoclin High School Class of 2025! I apologize for not attending the ceremony as I had committed to attending an event at the Mother Seton School the same evening. I wish all of you the best of luck in the next chapter of your lives.

If the Town of Emmitsburg can help you in any way, please reach out. Have a great summer!

Due to all the rain we have been experiencing, this work is taking longer than anticipated. I am certain that by the time you are reading this, the blacktop will have been laid and the net posts will have been installed. Then the fencing will go up, leaving only the application of the painted top coating. The courts will be painted for both tennis and pickleball, and as previously, pickleball equipment will be available in the

Thurmont Mayor John Kinnaird

It's hard to believe that we are halfway through the year already! Schools are out for summer vacation, and our kids are exploring and playing. Be extra careful on residential streets and near parks and playgrounds. Kids don't always look both ways when crossing streets and often cross where there are no crosswalks. They are also riding their bikes,

skateboards, skates, and scooters, and can pop out in front of you from driveways and from between cars. Please remember that people using crosswalks have the right of way and you are required to stop while they cross the street. A little care and heightened awareness of kids walking or riding on sidewalks and roads will keep you and the kids safe.

As everyone must know, the tennis courts at Community Park have been under construction for a long time. Recently, we have contracted with a new company to complete the project. The work required the removal of the blacktop and fence posts installed last fall. The new contractor has installed the new fence posts and has placed the sub-base for the blacktop.

storage box at the courts. We all look forward to the completion of this long and aggravating project! A grand opening ceremony will be planned and advertised!

Work has begun on the new pump station on Radio Lane to connect the high and low-pressure water systems. This connection will help improve service capabilities and give us the ability to take specific wells offline for maintenance without interruption of service. This work will involve new high-voltage electric lines, several hundred feet of water main, line connections and the construction of a pumphouse on Radio Lane. This project is expected to be completed by late fall.

Contractors have begun work on the improvements to the electric substation on Moser Road. The project will include new breakers, switches, electronic controls, and the refurbishment of both of the main transformers. The vast majority of the equipment at the facility dates to the mid-1990s when the plant was opened. These improvements will carry us well into the future with the most up-to-date electric distribution equipment. This project will be completed without any planned service interruptions.

The rebuilding of Sheetz is nearing completion. I understand they are looking at a July 3rd opening.

Karen and I hope everyone has a wonderful summer. I can be reached at 301-606-9458 or by email at jkinnaird@thurmont.com.

Public Notice

The Board of Commissioners for Emmitsburg will hold a public hearing on July 14th at 7 p.m. to hear public comments prior to voting on adopting the Town's updated Comprehensive Plan.

The 2025 Comprehensive Draft Plan can be viewed on line on the town's website at: www.emmitsburgmd.gov/departments/planning_and_zoning/com_plan.php

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GOVERNMENT—SOUTH OF THE BORDER

County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

July is a month brimming with excitement and community spirit. As we embrace the warm weather, our community comes together to celebrate our nation's independence. Fireworks will illuminate the sky on the Fourth of July, and we encourage everyone to enjoy the festivities safely and responsibly.

Freeze on Data Center Applications

I've heard concerns from the community about developers trying to rush data center applications before stronger regulations can be put in place.

That's why I issued an executive order last month that temporarily prevents the consideration of any new applications for data centers. The order also applies to electrical substations that support data centers.

This temporary pause gives the Council time to act and should give the community peace of mind about the process.

The order is designed to prevent further development of data centers before new standards become law and while the County Council considers zoning regulations. On May 20, the Frederick

County Council approved Bill 25-05, which created stricter design requirements for critical digital infrastructure facilities and substations. But like most bills, there is a 60-day delay before it takes effect.

Council members and I announced a separate bill to limit the construction of data centers to the area around the old East Alcoa property north of Adamstown. The bill to establish a zoning overlay was introduced June 17.

To learn more about Executive Order 03-2025 and legislation being considered by the Council, visit www.FrederickCountyMD.gov.

Tracking Progress of Livable Frederick

You can now track Livable Frederick goals through a newly launched online dashboard. This tool allows users to see how the County and its partners are making progress on implementing Livable Frederick.

The new online dashboard makes Livable Frederick more transparent, measurable, and collaborative. I encourage you to explore the dashboard to see how Frederick County is

turning our shared vision into action.

Livable Frederick is Frederick County's Master Plan. It lays out a vision for the future of our families, neighborhoods, and overall community. The plan includes actions designed to create a vibrant and unique community where people live, work, and thrive while enjoying a strong sense of place and belonging. The plan was adopted in 2019 after a multi-year public outreach process.

The dashboard will be updated regularly. You are invited to share their thoughts and ideas by emailing LivableFrederick@FrederickCountyMD.gov. To learn more and access the new Livable Frederick Dashboard, visit www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/LFDashboard.

Celebrating Agriculture in our County

Frederick County continues to support agricultural innovation and economic growth through its Agriculture Innovation Grant Program. Last month, I announced \$125,000 in grant awards as part of the March 2025 cycle. Seven agricultural businesses were selected to receive funding for projects through

this competitive grant program.

The Agriculture Innovation Grants Program is a strong and successful partnership between County government and our farmers. Our targeted investments will help make farming more viable and sustainable, which is good for our economy and our quality of life.

Projects awarded in this cycle are expected to create 16 jobs across Frederick County's agricultural sector. For more information and to see this cycle's winners, visit www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/Agriculture.

Our community is full of hardworking, passionate individuals who make Frederick County such a special place. The Office of Agriculture recently released the latest issue of Homegrown Frederick magazine to showcase the people, businesses, and products that drive our agricultural community.

The 2025 edition features inspiring stories on unique non-alcoholic craft beverages, women in agriculture, agricultural education in local schools, and innovative farming projects. From multi-generational family farms to emerging enterprises, Homegrown Frederick paints a vivid picture our community's deep-rooted agricultural heritage and forward-thinking vision.

To get a copy, call the Office of

Agriculture at 301-600-3039 or email FCAG@FrederickCountyMD.gov. A digital version of the magazine is also available at www.HomegrownFrederick.com.

July Celebrations

In addition to celebrating Independence Day this month, July is recognized as Disability Pride Month, a time to celebrate the achievements, contributions, and diversity of people with disabilities. To watch a recording of our Disability Pride celebration, visit www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/FCGTV or tune in to Comcast channel 1072 or 19.

We also acknowledge the importance of Parks and Recreation Month, a time to appreciate the natural beauty of our County and the numerous recreational opportunities available thanks to the amazing team at our Division of Parks and Recreation. Take time this month to visit your local park or join a recreational sports league. Visit www.Recreator.com to learn more.

As always, we continue to celebrate our rich history in Frederick County while remaining committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming environment for everyone in our community.

County Councilwoman Renee Knapp

I hope you're enjoying the summer so far, and that you have maybe had a chance to have some ice cream at one of dairy farm stores in Frederick County. It's fun to drive to all of them, take in the gorgeous scenery, and try different flavors. No need to try and pick a favorite!

I continue to hear from County residents inquiring about data centers and how they will be regulated. I have a new update to share this month. In May, the County Council passed legislation to update design and siting criteria, and it was signed by the County Executive. There are now stronger regulations that address air pollution, noise and vibration reporting, light pollution, and viewshed protection. These regulations apply to the data center buildings themselves.

To address where they will be located, and where they will be prohibited, the County Executive has proposed a Critical Digital Infrastructure Overlay. That is a zoning designation that will confine data center development to a specific area to prevent the kind of data center sprawl that we have seen in Loudoun County and ideally prevent data center sprawl all over Frederick County.

If you've had a chance to get down to the Adamstown area, you have seen that data center development is underway at the Quantum Frederick campus which is located on the old East Alcoa site. That's the area where the CDI Overlay is proposed. On June 17th, the bill to establish this overlay was introduced to the County Council. The bill will now go through the usual legislative process with several opportunities for public feedback.

At the May workshop for this bill, the County Executive's office outlined the next steps in the process which include a zoning text amendment, a comprehensive plan amend-

ment which has not been introduced, and a zoning map amendment to add the overlay to the other County maps. This map has also not been published. The Council also learned the criteria that will be used by the Department of Planning and Permitting to select parcels that are being proposed for the overlay. They include proximity to industrial lands and the growth area boundary, and parcel size.

These recommendations will then be presented to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will then review the proposed CDI Overlay proposal, and they can make recommendations to the County Council. There is opportunity to provide public comment at their meeting on Wednesday, July 9th, and again when The County Council holds a public hearing on Tuesday, July 17th at 7 p.m.

An important component this bill is a cap on land designated for data center development. The proposed limit is 1% of total County land as an upper limit. That's about 4,200 acres. My understanding is that does not mean the overlay will necessarily include 1% of County land. I'm not convinced that we need to be devoting that much land to data centers, and I'm waiting to see the proposed map. The proposed overlay will include the East Alcoa site, which is 2200 acres.

The clear reality is that we need to do something to further define where data centers can be located in Frederick County. Current law permits a data center to be built on any land that is zoned industrial. With no zoning changes, right now that's about 5,000 acres that are eligible.

We need to continue to define where we want data center development, and what value it brings to Frederick County. The revenue can help us address the many needs that we have in our growing county, like provid-

ing senior services and updating the Career and Technology Center. However, development must be balanced in a way that preserves priorities such as agricultural preservation and protection of our scenic views.

Wishing you a safe and Happy Independence Day!



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FROM THE DESK OF...

Carroll Valley Mayor Ron Harris

The Carroll Valley’s annual fireworks display will be held on July 4th on Ski Liberty Mountain at 9:45 pm. The Carroll Valley Commons (park) and free parking will open at 5:30. Once again, “The Reagan Years” band will be in concert on the Carroll Commons Stage. This band recreates the sounds of the 1980s. These talented musicians with remarkably diverse vocal abilities enable this group to replicate uncanny versions of the pop, rock, new wave, and heavy metal hits of the MTV era. The band covers all the mega-artists, including Bon Jovi, Madonna, Devo, Joan Jett, Def Leppard, Billy Idol, Gus ‘N Roses, A-Ha, and ZZ-Top, to name a few. So, bring your family, your friends,

and your neighbors. Pack your picnic basket or stop by one of the food trucks; Antietam Dairy, Bricker’s Fries, Funnel N Around Funnel Cakes, Jimmy’s Famous Seafood, R & A Asian Cuisine, The Savagery, Fryzaholic, The Hot Mess Express, What’s Popping Kettle Korn, Michaux Brewing Company, Rough Edge Brewing, 1623 Brewing Company and Stacey’s Orangeade. The venue is all grass seating, so bring chairs or blankets and save a little room around you to dance! As our borough manager, Dave Hazlett, said, “What began as a small community picnic in 2005 has evolved into a musical celebration of the community.” So please come and join our commu-

nity and celebrate the anniversary of our country with your friends and neighbors. The show begins at 6:30 and lasts until 9:45 when the fireworks explode on top of the mountain. Hope to see you there. I will be the guy with the camera. The summer started on June 20th, the longest day of 2025. During July and August, we need to pay attention to heat advisories. It would be best if you understood the difference between an “Excessive Heat Warning” and a Heat Advisory.” Excessive Heat Warning means “the Heat Index values are forecasted to meet or exceed locally defined warning criteria for at least two days of daytime highs = 105 degrees Fahrenheit or higher”. A Heat Advisory means the “Heat Index is forecasted to meet locally defined advisory criteria for 1 to 2 days of daytime highs 100 degrees Fahrenheit or

higher”. During a heatwave, you should listen to the updates from the National Weather Service. Stay hydrated by drinking fluids. Avoid drinks with caffeine or alcohol. Use the buddy system when working in excessive heat, and take frequent breaks if you must work outdoors. Check on your animals frequently to ensure they do not suffer from the heat. Please discuss heat safety precautions with members of your household. Also, we need to be aware that the summer months represent a time when the cases of Lyme disease increase. Why? The reason is that we spend more time outdoors enjoying where we live. In Pennsylvania, Lyme disease is the most reported tick-borne disease and is usually seen from June through September months throughout the commonwealth. Lyme disease is an infection caused by the bacterium Borrelia burgdorferi. It is carried to people from a black-legged or deer

tick bite. The disease affects different body systems, such as the nervous system, joints, skin, and heart. Early symptoms may include headache, fever, fatigue, and a characteristic circular skin rash. Some of the things you should consider when you are out and about are: stay out of tall grass and un-cleared areas of the forest floor; don’t roll in a pile of leaves; check daily for ticks; and if you plan to use insect repellent, be sure to review the safety information on the label. Many websites provide information on Lyme disease. One site you may want to visit is www.cdc.gov/lyme/. This website addresses diagnosis, testing, treatment, tick removal, and post-treatment Lyme disease syndrome.

The 162nd anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg is right around the corner. The commemoration will include a variety of programs and tours at Gettysburg National Military Park, re-enactments at the Daniel Lady Farm and Shriver House Museum, the Gettysburg Foundation’s Sacred Trust Series, living history encampments, the Civil War Collector’s Show, return of “The Night Before Gettysburg”, as well as programs, lectures, and events at museums and historic sites throughout the destination. The Anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg takes place on July 1st, 2nd, and 3rd.

You should have received an advertisement in the mail announcing the Adams Regional Emergency Medical Services (AREMS) Drive. While you still receive emergency ambulance service if you do not subscribe to this program, you are strongly encouraged to participate to avoid costs beyond what a typical insurance will cover. Please note that you must have a minimum primary insurance plan to be eligible for the AREMS ambulance membership. Three memberships are offered: Individual, Family, and Family Extended. The Individual membership costs \$50 and covers one adult age 18 or older. The Family membership costs \$75 and covers two adults and all dependent children under 18 who reside in the household. The Family Extended costs \$125 and covers three or more adults and all dependent children under 18 living in the household. When you have time, read the AREMS materials and determine whether the AREMS membership cost will cover any amounts not allowed by your insurance company. For further AREMS information, refer to www.AREMS.net.

During the June Council meeting, I had the pleasure of swearing in Emma and Sarah Simmons as Junior Council members. The Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs Junior Council Person Program allows youth in a community to engage in borough government and develop leadership skills. It allows the borough officials to mentor students who will be future community leaders. When driving, please watch for residents walking on our trails. Keep safe and enjoy your summer.



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GOVERNMENT—NORTH OF THE BORDER

County Commissioner Jim Martin

It is July and Adams County Government is halfway through its January to December fiscal year and nearly all county real estate taxes have been collected. As we approach this juncture, we paused to review our debt repayment ability relative to tax revenues and expenditures.

On May 28, Adams County elected officials took their pause to meet with our third-party financial advisor to evaluate the county's financial health. Unlike bond ratings such as "Moody's", the presentation given by our financial advisor, rated the county's ability to meet our future debt obligations. Our financial advisor summarized this review by saying, Adams County's fiscal house is in amazingly good order".

The same advisor also reviews the financial health of numerous other counties. In comparison, Adams County ranks fiscally stronger than many of those counties. After checking the present commissioner's history in office, he was amazed to see what we accomplished without utilizing tax anticipation notes. These notes are short-term obligations used to pay current expenses when reserve funds are insufficient, generally the first quarter of the fiscal year. Then upon receipt of real estate taxes the county pays the notes in full using the revenues that arrive early.

We are able to avoid periods of insufficient funds due to excellent internal financial review. This analytical review is done by our in-house Financial Review Team and these analytics become valuable information for making our financial decisions. I compare this team to a baseball team's general manager that constantly works to keep his team competitive.

Other financial activity that is continuously going on in our community are the fund raisers for our non-profit organizations. One organization in particular that depends on regular seasonal funds raising is the United Way of Adams County. The Annual Fund Raising Campaign is instrumental for the agency to provide sufficient funds to support programs that meet the needs of struggling individuals and families. So far, the United Way 2024-2025 campaign goal of \$190,000 has fallen short by \$23,000. Hopefully there are enough generous donors among our communities to meet this need by June 30th. Your gifts at this time of the year are essential in meeting very special needs in our community. Donation may be sent to United Way of Adams County, 123 Buford Avenue, Gettysburg, PA 17325.

Wednesday evening June 18 the United Way of Adams County had its

78th Annual Awards Ceremony to recognize its top donors and volunteers. Adams County Community Foundation received the Spirit Award to recognize their support since 2011, giving tens of thousands of dollars which included special grants, all totaling over \$250,000. These funds are one of the most critical financial lifelines to the agency. Strong financial support was also received by many community members donating \$1,000 or more. Nearly all of these donors gift \$1,000 or more every year, amazing.

As part of the Adams County United Way giving campaign; ACNB Bank employees raised over \$36,000 through their payroll deductions, earning the R.C. Hoffman Award as Adams County's top employee fund raising group. Great job! Added to this great effort, ACNB Bank donated \$8000.

I am extremely grateful for the community spirit of giving to Adams County United Way and all the help from Gettysburg College and a long list of volunteers. During the later part of May, the College and approximately 85 volunteers supported the Give It Up for Good Sale held in the College's Fieldhouse. This special sale was very successful; it raised \$18,500 that was welcomed funds for summer operations.

A community service and event provided by the Allied Veterans that should not be overlooked, occurs on June 14th, Flay Day. Every Flay Day, there has been a special flag retirement service held at the Legion Park just beyond the Biglerville Borough line. The ceremony that is conducted is a formal military retirement of United States Flags that are no longer serviceable. The ceremony ends with a gun salute and the burning of unserviceable flags collected by the American Legion Post. This is an educational and patriotic event that should go on your calendar next year.

The event is made possible by the sponsorship of the Biglerville American Legion Post. They also provide a picnic style meal at the conclusion of the ceremony. The Allied Veterans have done the flag retirement ceremony faithfully for many years, pray that they can continue this tradition. As a special touch to the evening, The Apple Core Band provides a selection of patriotic music. The evening is truly a slice of local Americana.

For next year, America 250PA, there are plans being made for a Flag Day parade. The parade is to go through the center of Biglerville and it is to end inside Oak Side Park. This parade is planned to be a cooperative event of the Upper Adams Communities, So,

pay attention to the events of next year. If you have never been in a parade, this could be your opportunity. The Biglerville Borough Office will be taking applications for parade entrants.

One of the characteristics of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is that its counties are divided into townships and boroughs as governing bodies. To serve their respective communities adequate facilities are necessary to conduct municipal services and business. Over the past several months the Adams County Commissioners have taken part in two townships groundbreaking ceremonies; Butler and Cumberland. Butler will be moving from an inadequate rented building with limited capabilities. This will be a much-needed new construction that will far exceed the functionality of its rented building and will replace the deteriorating maintenance building. In contrast to Butler, Cumberland will be upgrading their present facilities to meet the growing needs of their township. In particular Cumberland will have a much-needed expansion and modernization of their police department that includes greater security. Both projects received state funding to help defray the cost of construction; thanks to our legislators that pursued state funding. Hopefully both townships can celebrate project completions for America 250PA.

Liberty Township Supervisor Walter Barlow

There was not a lot going on for the Road Department in the month of June. At the Supervisors' meeting on June 3, the Board moved the Liberty Township monthly public meetings from the first Tuesday to the first Wednesday of each month. This change takes effect on July 2.

One bid was received at the June bid opening, and it was rejected by the Board. On June 10, I met with PennDOT District 8 Representative Jim Leshar to revise the bid package for FB-modified for Orchard Road. New bids will be accepted until noon on July 2, and the bid opening will be at 6 that evening. If we receive an acceptable bid, we will be moving forward with getting a full flex base modified put down and widening Orchard Road by two feet.

On June 12, Supervisor Bobby Keilholtz and I attended PA Safety Day in York sponsored by PA 811 (PA One Call). This course is offered to area excavators, designers, facility owners, emergency responders, and other public officials to promote the protection of critical underground infrastructures. The program gave us updates on gas, water, and sewer lines and the new rules and regulations dealing with PA One Call. This was a very informative class, and I believe both of us came away with some knowledge that we didn't already have, so I do appreciate that PA One Call offered the free class.

In September, I will be attending the Annual ESM Workshop to renew my certification that is required to apply for PA Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road Program grant funds. The Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance Course is a classroom training focused on providing the knowledge and tools necessary for road owners to maintain roads in a more cost-efficient and environmentally sensitive manner. The course is offered at no

cost to municipal, county, and state agencies involved with PA's Dirt and Gravel Road Program.

The Zoning Hearing Board of Liberty Township will meet on Thursday, July 10 at 5:30 to organize and review the application for Variance filed by Thomas Skowron regarding a proposed accessory apartment use at his real property located at 620 Triact Road in the Township's Agricultural Rural (AR) District.

The Liberty Township Board of Supervisors is currently accepting applications for openings on the Zoning Hearing Board and Planning Commission. Some openings are available immediately and some

will be available in January. Residents of Liberty Township who are interested in serving the community on a board or commission should submit a letter of interest to the township.

I want to encourage everyone to come out and join us on Tuesday, August 5 as we celebrate National Night Out at the Mid-Atlantic Soaring Association 154 Pecher Road in Fairfield. Liberty Township is partnering with Greenmount Community Volunteer Fire Department, Freedom Township, and Highland Township to host this event that is part of a national annual community-building campaign that promotes

police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie. There will be food trucks, child safety education, face painting, bounce house, emergency vehicles, law enforcement personnel and community outreach programs. You can meet and greet our police officers, Township Supervisors, and enjoy the festivities with other members of our community. So please come out and be

a part of it. We look forward to seeing you there.

Be aware that the Township Municipal building is generally open to the public Monday through Thursday from 8 to 4 and anyone in need of cooling off is welcome to stop by to make use of the air conditioner, water cooler, restroom, and electricity for device charging. Be careful out there, it's hot. Keep checking on your elders and your pets and make sure that they're safe and not overheated.

JULY EVENTS

First Friday Bingo - July 11
Doors open 5:30 ~ Early Birds 6:50 ~ Regular Bingo 7
Kitchen will be open with full menu.
SGOC will also be available for purchase.

No Thursday Bingo

Sandwich Lunch - Saturday, July 12
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
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COMMENTARY

Words from Winterbilt

Politics, promises and reality

Shannon Bohrer

When running for office, our current president made multiple promises, as many have before him. He was going to lower the cost of food, reduce taxes, and exempt Social Security from taxes. He was also going to balance the budget and make America great again. He also promised to end the war in Ukraine and the Israel-Palestine conflict, which is a war. Both would end in one day, if not before. We heard this before, as he made promises before his first term. Back then, he was going to build a wall, balance the budget, and make America great again. Some would say that America was already great before his first term, so his promises were puzzling for many, but also believed by many. Making America great again had mixed reviews. During his first four years, the economy was not good. Not one job was created, the worst record since President Herbert Hoover. In fact, under his administration, the US lost 2,720,000 jobs. As to the budget, he increased our deficit by close to eight trillion, the most in any four-year term. Adding to his record, the unemployment rate grew to 6.4 percent, resulting in a growth rate of minus 2.2 percent. It was not all sad news; corporate profits rose 17.4 percent,

and the wealthy received tax reductions during his first term. Even with his dismal record, many of his loyal fans believed it was a great four years. Making America great again worked for corporations and the super-rich, but not the rest of us. During his first term, he also promised to build a wall between the U.S. and Mexico, ostensibly to reduce illegal migration. He did build part of his “beautiful wall,” but it was never completed. The cost surpassed eleven billion dollars, or twenty million for each mile. It became the most expensive wall ever built. He also promised that Mexico would pay for the wall. Is it possible that nobody sent them the bill? Before Trump was reelected, a bipartisan bill created by Congress to address the illegal border crossings was put forth. Both parties agreed upon the contents and the Border Patrol endorsed it. According to all reports it was a well-received bill. The legislation was never passed. Citizen Trump campaigned against illegal migration and lobbied his party not to pass the bill. Apparently, he did not want the problem corrected. After all, if corrected he could not complain about the issue. There is a pattern with his promises of projecting what he intends to accomplish, but the follow-through has had mixed results. Large corporations, businesses, and wealthy individuals did well during Trump’s first term. The

burdensome business regulations were reduced and eliminated, and the rich were granted tax reductions. The tax reductions, it was said, “would add \$1.8 trillion in new revenue.” That was wrong. Tax reductions for corporations, millionaires, and billionaires have never led to a decrease in our national deficits. Conversely, they have consistently contributed to our annual deficits, thereby increasing our national debt. During this term, his promises were again grand, but the results thus far have been questionable. Large corporations were again promised deregulation; however, the business environment has undergone significant changes. The on-and-off tariffs have affected large corporations in multiple venues. Planning and purchasing products and materials, along with projected sales, has become a guessing game. Large corporations plan their purchasing and sales strategies for months and even years in advance. The tariffs have been on and off, interrupting the process. The administration has told many large businesses to produce their product in the U.S. One such business was threatened with severe tariffs on their product if they did not start manufacturing the product in the U.S. The iPhones made in China are expensive, but the estimated cost of manufacturing them here is \$3,500.00 per phone. That is a no-win situation. Many small businesses have also been affected because of the tar-

iffs. Operating on smaller margins is more financially challenging. It is expected that many small businesses may close. Deregulation is supposed to be beneficial for business, of course that is providing the business can survive. It was curious that many of the country’s wealthiest mega-business owners attended Trump’s inauguration. They were invited, they attended, and one would expect they would receive good, or at least fair treatment by the government. Historically, the party advocating for fewer regulations for businesses has been considered business-friendly; however, that perception has shifted. In addition to the tariffs, these businesses have also been told to reduce their importations of products and materials by building manufacturing plants in America. As with the phone example, if the products were produced here, they would cost more, a lot more. Incumbering businesses also includes telling businesses how to conduct their personnel policies. Large companies that have used the model of Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) were threatened, and many of these businesses have changed their policies to conform to the government’s request. Even law firms have been the target of this administration. Some huge firms have relented to his demands, and others have sued them in court. The higher education system in our country was the envy of the world, but that has changed. Just as the administration has dictated

to private industry, they have also dictated to colleges and universities. The demands include curriculum, what is taught, who can attend, and where the students can come from. The administration also targeted states and cities, as if they were not independent entities. Telling the governor of New York to cease traffic fines in parts of New York City. This administration is attempting, and often succeeds in micromanaging private industry, universities, and even local governments. That is not ensuring our freedom; it is restricting them. The party that has always believed in freedom is now imposing additional regulations and even restrictions on personal life. The business, manufacturing, legal, and educational communities have not been deregulated, nor have they even been given more freedoms. Instead, they are being micromanaged. Dictating to industry, legal, local governments, and educational institutions is restricting your freedom. A government that wants to run everything is not a democracy, but an autocracy. So, who benefits from this government? “The purpose of government is to enable the people of a nation to live in safety and happiness. Government exists for the interest of the governed, not for the governors.” - Thomas Jefferson. *To read prior editions of Words From Winterbilt, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.*

The Bulwark

Dems figure out resistance under Trump 2.0

Lauren Egan

The nationwide “No Kings” protest against Donald Trump was, by all accounts, a smashing success. Millions of people showed up at hundreds of events in red and blue state houses and town centers across the country all in the spirit of rallying against the Trump administration. The crowds dwarfed those that came to Washington D.C. to participate in Trump’s combination birthday/armed forces parade. And while that certainly provided Trump’s opponents with a fair share of schadenfreude, it also raised the question: Why hasn’t this type of resistance risen up sooner? After all, Trump’s first term saw opponents sprinting to the nation’s airports within weeks of his inauguration to protest his ban on travel from Muslim-majority nations. When Trump did a more expansive version of that same policy several weeks ago, the response was relatively mild and diffuse. Though there have been glimpses of real grassroots energy—from the Tesla Takedown movement to the “Hands Off” rallies—these moments of light and heat showed how dim and cold the once-ubiquitous #Resistance movement had become during Trump’s second term. That is how it was, at least, until Saturday. The “No Kings” protests

offered the first real sign that the grassroots resistance to Trump hasn’t died—but it does look different from how it did, and it may, perhaps, be taking a more strategic form. “The first time around there were a lot of [protests], like March For Science, Families Belong Together,” said Amanda Litman, the cofounder of Run For Something, which recruits and trains first-time Democratic candidates. “This time around, people are being more targeted and asking themselves: ‘What will actually move the needle?’” There are a variety of reasons anti-Trump protest culture looks dramatically different from eight years ago. One reason is that Trump made more inroads politically and culturally during his 2024 run for office, and he has since used his newfound power to browbeat major institutions into acquiescence. But activists on the left also acknowledge that their side has changed, too. Sustaining outrage during a presidency designed to produce continuous outrages is an exacting proposition. The Democratic base is not immune to becoming desensitized to Trump’s actions. Presented with the challenges that come with Trump’s flood-the-zone strategy, organizers have tried to be more selective in the way they protest. “It’s different, not less,” Deirdre Schifeling, the ACLU’s chief political and advocacy officer, said of the protests under the second Trump

administration. “This time around, people are not shocked. They have lived through four years of this . . . and so, I think protest is taking a different form.” In addition to fighting exhaustion and choosing their moments, organizers during the second Trump term have tried to appeal to a broader coalition. That’s meant trying to get more moderates, independents, and working-class voters to show up, especially in red parts of the country—not just the college-educated MSNBC-addicts who were largely the face of the 2017 protests. It’s required organizers to shed some of the defining features of the original #Resistance, like the pink pussyhats. “There’s a little bit more of an all-hands-on-deck approach and a clear understanding that you ain’t winning this with a bunch of base Democrats this time,” said Democratic strategist Joel Payne. “That requires work on the part of the people driving the opposition, because you have to check your desire for purity at the door. You have to check your desire to have everyone conform,” Payne continued. “You don’t want it to be so homogenized that it makes it feel like it’s something easy to write off and disregard.” But even if “No Kings” felt like the first moment of mass demonstration against Trump 2.0, the data show that protest culture has become quite active over the past five months, perhaps even more so than during Trump’s first term. According to the Crowd Counting Consortium, a

Harvard Kennedy School and University of Connecticut research project that measures political crowds, there have been over 15,000 political protests since Trump’s second inauguration compared to just over 5,000 at this same point in his first term. (Data journalist G. Elliott Morris has a helpful graph of those numbers.) Organizers estimated that, across the country, three million people participated in the April “Hands Off” rallies, and five million turned out for the “No Kings” demonstrations—which would make Saturday one of the largest single-day demonstrations in U.S. history. One reason that it may feel as though the anti-Trump protest movements have been late in arriving this go-round is that the opposition party itself has had trouble deciding how best to harness them. Democrats spent the early weeks of Trump’s second term in a state of soul-searching, and on some issues they have sought accommodation, fretful that they had badly misjudged the social and economic currents that resulted in Kamala Harris’s loss. That has started to change, in part because of public and private pressure from activists for elected members and leadership to act against Trump with more urgency. In conversations with leaders on Capitol Hill, organizers have stressed that while grassroots movements play an important role, lawmakers needed to do more to help break through in the Trump-dominated media envi-

ronment. One organizer who helped lead the “No Kings” rallies told The Bulwark that they recently met with Senate staffers to stress that the Democrats’ usual press conferences and floor speeches chiding Trump for his latest actions were not going to cut it in today’s internet culture. Democratic organizers said that recent events felt like a clear sign that party leaders were starting to understand how best to push back against Trump—that the goal, in the end, must be about producing moments as much as feeding movements. “There’s definitely a dispute in the Democratic party right now about sort of how urgent this moment is,” Sen. Chris Murphy (D-Conn.) said in an interview with The Bulwark before the Los Angeles ICE raids broke out. “It’s not hard to see that the democracy could disappear. I think we’re converting more Democrats as each week goes by to this case, but it’s slow. And my hope is that the conversion rate is not too slow to save us.” Murphy may have been worried a week ago. But the subsequent rush of activity suggests that more people are adopting his view about the urgency of the moment. At the Nashville “No Kings” protest, the crowd was packed with people motivated by existential concerns about the direction of the nation, convinced that the threat now was far greater than eight years ago. *To read other articles from the Bulwark, visit www.thebulwark.com.*

COMMENTARY

The Liberal Patriot

Life in America feels unsettling right now

Michael Baharaeen

As Donald Trump ran for a second term last year, a frequent attack he leveled at Joe Biden and Kamala Harris was that they were “weak.” He focused specifically on the porous southern border and conflicts abroad, problems he said never would have happened under his leadership. Enough voters ultimately bought this argument. In a post-election study from Third Way, among the top words they associated with Trump were “strong” and “leader.” The AP VoteCast survey similarly found voters were likelier to view Trump (56 to 43) than Harris (46 to 53) as a “strong leader.”

The efficacy of the “strong” versus “weak” framing likely stemmed from a deeper issue in American life: many people feel like the country is going through an uncertain and unstable time and are looking for strong leadership to navigate it. In a poll last month, YouGov asked respondents which periods in U.S. history they believed were the most and least politically stable. There were several contenders for most stable, but the top choice was the Reagan Era, which many seem to fondly recall as a time when the country succeeded under the leadership of a strong and confident president—especially coming out of the Vietnam War and economic

stagnation of the 1970s. But respondents were less divided when it came to identifying the least stable era: a decisive plurality (31 percent) picked the present, which appears to include everything that has happened since 2020. Tack on the decade or so just before that, including the Great Recession and tumult of the 2010s, and that figure rises to 36 percent. The next-closest era? The Civil War, which just 17 percent identified as the most unstable period in American history. In moments of vulnerability and precarity, people often turn to leaders who project strength—or whom they believe can at least deliver some sense of stability. In 2020, facing a global pandemic, that leader was Joe Biden, who pitched his steady hand and decades of experience as the antidote to four chaotic and unpredictable years of Trump and pledged a “return to normalcy.” However, Biden’s term was marred by much of the post-Covid fallout detailed above, including growing inflation and a spike in border crossings that sharply reversed a previous uptick in favorability toward higher levels of immigration. According to the 2024 VoteCast survey, a large majority (60 percent) identified either inflation or immigration as the top issue facing the country—both issues dealing with matters of security and stability—and these voters broke heavily for Trump. Since assuming office for the

second time, though, Trump has overseen even more instability. His haphazard tariffs have left allies, consumers, and markets spinning. Many of his executive orders pertaining to federal departments and agencies have been ill-conceived, leaving states, municipalities, and ordinary Americans unsure of whether federal funds and jobs will continue flowing to their communities. On the immigration front, far from any kind of organized and methodical deportation program focused primarily on criminal offenders, Trump’s approach has been more akin to shock-and-awe, engendering backlash from many Americans. Just this past week, the country was rocked by a series of destabilizing events, as it watched marines arrive on the streets of L.A. to put down protests, a U.S. senator handcuffed and dragged out of a public event, the start of a new war in the Middle East, and the assassination of a Minnesota state legislator (and the near-killing of one of her colleagues). And yet: despite all this, voters aren’t yearning for a return to Democratic rule. In fact, Trump has retained a higher level of support up to this point in his second term than he did in his first. Democrats thus cannot assume the pendulum will naturally swing back to them four years from now. Even if Trump is unpopular or the current tumult hasn’t abated by 2028, there’s no guarantee voters will be ready to abandon the GOP. Research has found that during periods of rapid and unsettling changes, voters aren’t often look-

ing left. In the face of economic uncertainty, for example, support tends to increase for right-wing populists rather than progressive parties promising to expand the safety net and increase income redistribution—moves some Democrats might believe could address voters’ feelings of insecurity. Or consider that following the violent riots of the 1960s, support grew for the law-and-order candidacy of Richard Nixon. Viewed in this context, one could reasonably argue that Biden’s 2020 win—a victory for the left party—was more of an aberration. This isn’t to say Democrats can’t win back the presidency in 2028. However, to do so, they would be wise to reckon with the disquieting feelings many people possess right now, including speaking directly to the issues that informing those feelings. Though it may be a while before the public trusts them again to handle immigration, Democrats could at least offer their own alternative to Trump for how they plan to control the flow of migration over the southern border—a primary driver of the recent rise in anti-immigration sentiments—and plug other holes in the system while still pledging to defend the country’s rich tradition of welcoming and assimilating new immigrants. There’s also another issue on which Democrats continue to hold an edge over Republicans and which they may be able to credibly press with voters: healthcare. Post-election evidence suggested that even at one of the Democrats’

lowest points in recent memory, voters still continued to trust them more on this issue. People who don’t have health insurance often fear they are one medical issue away from bankruptcy. And for those who do have it, the threat of taking it away might be strong enough to move their votes. Given the overwhelming public opposition to the current Republican plan to cut Medicaid—and possibly curb Medicare benefits, too—there may be an opening here for Democrats. Another way to address people’s concerns could be through the type of candidates they nominate, in particular for president. Maybe it’s someone with a national security or military background who can market themselves as a leader with a steady hand. Or perhaps it’s an experienced governor who successfully helped guide their state through the Covid pandemic, a difficult and fearful time for many Americans. This period of precarity is unlikely to end soon, especially in the face of uncertain technological changes around artificial intelligence, growing partisan polarization, continued mass migration globally, and the persistence of foreign conflicts. Whichever party is able to compellingly speak to voters’ anxieties during this time and offer a reassuring vision for helping guide the nation through it may stand to enjoy sustained success in this decade and beyond.

To read other articles from the Liberal Patriot, visit www.liberalpatriot.com.

Good Day Neighbor

The right to celebrate

Dorothea Mordan

We might be losing rights a little at a time, but we still exercise our right to celebrate America’s birthday. Who doesn’t like a party? The Fourth of July is a celebration of what we have as Americans. Freedom and property. Property rights are easy to define. Civil rights and freedom? Easy to give to ourselves, not so easy to give to others. The founding of the United States of America was based on the idea that to protect an individual’s property, our governing laws have to protect everyone’s property. Freedom of Speech supports the right to Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. One reason Freedom of Speech is explicitly included in the Bill of Rights is that historically one punishment for speaking out was to seize property. Most of the Founding Fathers were only a generation or two away from living in England where their fathers and mothers would have seen up close the King taking property from someone who displeased him. The current administration expects people to not use specific words—equity, women, cli-

mate change. Funding is withheld from educational institutions simply because they offended the President. The NIH is losing funding, in turn rescinding funding for projects that impact all of us. One defunded project in Mississippi is a study to find a “novel treatment for glioblastoma”, a form of brain cancer that can occur in any anyone, not a specific demographic. It is defunded because one of the scientists, Eden Tanner, has a disability. The study had qualified for funding from a pool of money designated for researchers with disabilities. The Trump Administration virtually uses a keyword search to identify what to remove based on how it fits into the DEI category. Not based on merit or efficacy, just using the wrong word when applying for funding—disability. The right to say anything has long been defended, not defunded. The ACLU defended a Chicago based group of Nazis in Skokie, Illinois in 1977. The group wanted to prove their right to free speech by having a demonstration of their obsession of hating another group of people. Their pushy little display was to be held in Skokie, a town where about 50% of the population was Jewish, many of them Holocaust survivors. The group asked the ACLU

to represent them in defending the First Amendment right of an American to speak in support of anything. The demonstration was a protest against “decisions by Chicago-area park districts, including Skokie’s, barring them from holding a demonstration in Chicago area parks.” It was to be about 30 minutes, consisting of the participants wearing Nazi uniforms with swastika armbands and carrying Nazi banners and signs. “Everything that the village did in opposition to the assembly boiled down to the same thing: Skokie wanted what is known to lawyers as a “prior restraint” against any Nazi speech in Skokie. In non-technical language, this meant that Skokie wanted to find a way to stop the Nazis from speaking before they had a chance to articulate their message. The First Amendment principles that apply to prior restraints are straightforward. While any effort to censor by punishing a speaker after the fact is likely to violate the First Amendment, preventing the speech ahead of time is even more likely to violate the Constitution, even where the anticipated speech is profoundly offensive and hateful. Central to the ACLU’s mission is the understanding that if the government can prevent lawful speech because it is offensive and hateful, then it

can prevent any speech that it dislikes. In other words, the power to censor Nazis includes the power to censor protesters of all stripes and to prevent the press from publishing embarrassing facts and criticism that government officials label as “fake news.” Ironically, Skokie’s efforts to enjoin the Nazi demonstration replicated the efforts of Southern segregationist communities to enjoin civil rights marches led by Martin Luther King during the 1960s.—from the ACLU website The ACLU invited, and received, major criticism by taking this case. That’s what Americans do, take on a project no one wants, and take the heat for it. It’s how we survived the Revolutionary, Civil, and two World Wars. We will survive the manipulation of words. Words need to mean something. We expect words to matter. Freedom of speech is being used to say “I can say whatever I want regardless of any factor, including truth.” The bar was, “you can’t yell fire in a crowded theater.” When you repeat a lie to manipulate people, it is functionally setting people up for the same kind of irrational behavior as stampeding out of a crowded theater, crushing anybody in your way. Freedom of speech gives any speaker the freedom to agitate anyone in earshot to the point of loosing all impulse control. Anyone who

works with, or is raising a person with a developmental disability can tell you that lack of impulse control is often the root of socially difficult behavior that disrupts peer relationships and learning in the classroom. Random, emphatically repeated comments by our elected officials and endless online “influencers” is conditioning listeners to behave as though they have a developmental disability—no impulse control. We want freedom of speech for ourselves. If what we say comes from hurt feelings or being angry at another person or a group, so be it. We have the right to say whatever we want. We know what we expect of ourselves. But what do we expect from others? Good manners? A little patience with our opinions, while we have none for the opinions of others? We can celebrate how much we’ve been able to work together in the last 250 years. Our constitution encourages us to work together. We can celebrate the right to turn out backs on each other. We celebrate our right to vote for officials who would impulsively take away our rights. Or we can elect people who will bring them back.

To read prior editions of Good Day Neighbor, visit the Author’s section of Emmitsburg.net, or visit her website: www.ChandlerDesignsLimited.com.

THE PASTOR'S DESK

Set free to stand tall

Pastor John Talcott
Christ Community Church

Every year on July 4, we pause to remember the bold step our founders took in 1776 when they declared independence. In essence, they said, “We refuse to remain under the authority of England. We will not be a colony. We will be a free people.” That declaration marked the beginning of a long and difficult journey toward freedom—one filled with setbacks, struggles, and sacrifice. Yet the spirit of that declaration still echoes in the hearts of those who yearn to live free.

This year, I want to discuss a different kind of freedom. One that doesn't come from governments, constitutions, or revolutions—but from the gracious hand of God. It's a freedom that

runs deeper than politics or economics, deeper than race or history. It's the kind of freedom that straightens what life has bent and restores what sin and shame have shattered. It's the kind of freedom only Jesus Christ, the Son of God, can provide.

In Luke 13, we meet a woman who had been crippled for 18 years. Bent over and unable to stand up straight, she lived each day in pain and limitation. The Bible doesn't reveal her name. People didn't acknowledge her identity—only her condition. She was defined by what was wrong with her. Maybe you know what that feels like. Perhaps you've been identified by your addiction, your diagnosis, your past mistake, or your family struggle—not for who you are but for what's broken in your life.

This woman came to the synagogue as she always did, not expecting much—just another day of being overlooked. But this day was different. Jesus was there. And He saw her. Not just her bent back, but the spiritual weight she had carried for nearly two decades. He called her forward, laid His hands on her, and said, “Woman, you are set free from your infirmity” (Luke 13:12).

Immediately, she stood up straight and began to praise God.

Can you imagine her joy? After 18 long years of looking down, she could finally meet people's gaze. She could walk freely, breathe deeply, and worship wholeheartedly. Her body was healed—but more than that, her soul was set free.

Some members of the synagogue were angry because Jesus healed on the Sabbath, violating their religious rules. However, He responded, “Should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?” (Luke 13:16).

Jesus spoke about more than physical healing. He revealed God's heart to bring true freedom—freedom from sin, shame, and spiritual bondage. When we trust in Him, we are no longer slaves to sin. We are set free to live in the fullness of God's truth, grace, and purpose. As Jesus said, “If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed” (John 8:36).

That's the freedom that God offers—not just to manage pain, but to break the chains that have kept you bound.

Another story that illustrates this is found in Acts 3. Peter and John were on their way to the temple when they encountered



a man who had been lame since birth. Every day, someone would carry him to the temple gate so he could beg for money. He had accepted his condition and built a system for survival around it. He didn't expect healing—just hoped for enough coins to get through another day.

But God had something better in mind. Peter looked him in the eye and said, “Silver and gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk” (Acts 3:6). Instantly, the man jumped to his feet. He walked, leaped, and praised God all the way into the temple.

Both the woman in Luke 13 and the man in Acts 3 had learned to live with less than what God intended. They had adjusted to pain and accepted limitations. But Jesus showed up and changed everything. He saw them, touched them, spoke to

them—and set them free.

That's what Jesus continues to do today. He still sees those who are overlooked. He still calls people forward and touches the places that aren't working. He still speaks those powerful words: “You are set free.”

That is the heartbeat of Christ's Community Church. We're not a social club for the religious—we are a spiritual hospital for the broken. We believe the same Jesus who healed the woman in the synagogue and raised the man at the temple gate is still healing hearts, minds, bodies, and lives today. Moreover, we believe we are called to partner with Him in this work. Our mission is not to help people survive in brokenness, but to enable them to rise, walk, and thrive in the power of new life.

You might feel like that woman—bent under years of shame, depression, addiction, failure, or fear. Or like the man—stuck just outside the beauty of worship, trapped in survival. But hear this: Jesus has more for you than mere survival. He wants you to rise, to stand tall, to walk strong, and to worship freely. He came to set you free.

So this Fourth of July, as you celebrate the freedoms we enjoy as Americans, consider a deeper question: “Am I truly free? Have I stood up from what's held me down? Have I walked into worship, or am I still lying outside?”

If you're ready to rise, Christ's Community Church is here for you. You don't have to be perfect to belong. We are a community of people who have been healed, forgiven, and set free—and we continue to walk, leap, and praise God every step of the way.

There is room for you. We believe this could be your year for the miraculous, because Jesus still sets people free. And when He does, you'll never be the same because if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed (John 8:36).

To learn more about Christ Community Church, visit them online at www.cccaog.org. Better yet, join them for Sunday service!

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THE BOOK OF DAYS

Dr. John Dalton



July 27
At one of the early meetings of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, it drew out into prominence, and directed great reverence to, an old man from Manchester, who had been, up to that time, but little known to his fellow-citizens. For a long course of years, he had been an obscure teacher of mathematics—he was a Quaker—he was an unobtrusive and, to all outward appearance, an insignificant person. It was now learned, for the first time, by many of the Manchester people, that this quiet little old man enjoyed high esteem in the scientific world, as the originator of a theory of the utmost importance in chemistry, and was indeed one of the great men of his age, living there, as it were, in a disguise framed of his own superabundant modesty.

John Dalton, the son of a Cumberland yeoman, was born at Eaglesfield, near Cockermouth, on the 5th of September 1766. At the age of thirteen, he began to earn his living by teaching, and at twenty-seven he went to Manchester as a lecturer on mathematics. Until pensioned by government in 1833, he gave lessons at eighteenpence an hour in mathematics. He declined several offers to provide him with a competency, so that he might give his undivided attention to chemistry; asserting ‘that teaching was a kind of recreation, and that if richer, he would not probably spend more time in investigation than he was accustomed to do.’ He was of course frugal and provident.

The apparatus of his laboratory was of the simplest, and indeed rudest kind; scarcely superior to that of Wollaston, who, on a foreign chemist expressing an anxious desire to see his laboratory, produced a small tray containing some glass tubes, a blow-pipe, two or three watch-glasses, a slip of platina, and a few test-tubes. Dalton was a bachelor, altogether of most quiet and regular habits. Twice each Sunday he took his seat in the Friends’ meeting-house, and for forty years he ate his Sunday-dinner at one friend’s table.

The afternoon of every Thursday he spent in a bowlines green, assigning as a reason that he liked to take his Saturday in the middle of the week. He was fond of exercise in the open air, and made an annual excursion among the mountains of Cumberland and Westmoreland. He did not read many books, and was singularly indifferent to all that was written con-

cerning himself. His words were few and truthful.

A student who had missed one lecture of a course, applied to him for a certificate of full attendance. He declined to give it, and then relenting, said: ‘If thou wilt come tomorrow, I will go over the lecture thou hast missed.’

Dalton enjoyed robust health; he was middle-sized, and of a figure more sturdy than elegant. His head and face bore a striking resemblance to the portraits of Sir Isaac Newton. Like Newton, he referred his success, not to genius, but to patience and industry. ‘These, in my opinion, make one man succeed better than another.’

It is in connection with the Atomic Theory that the name of Dalton promises to go down to posterity. The constitution of matter with respect to divisibility, has been debated from very ancient times. Some hold that its divisibility is infinite, and others, that its reduction is only possible to the extent of atoms. Newton expressed the latter opinion in these words:

‘All things considered, it seems probable that God, in the beginning, formed matter in solid, massy, hard, impenetrable, movable particles, of such sizes, figures, and with such other properties, and in such proportion to space, as most conduced to the end for which he formed them; and that these primitive particles, being solids, are incomparably harder than any porous bodies compounded of them; even so very hard as never to wear or break to pieces, no ordinary power being able to divide what God made one in the first creation.’

At this point Dalton took up the question. He began by assuming that matter, although it may in essence be infinitely divisible, is in fact only finitely divided, so that each element consists of particles or molecules of a definite and unchangeable weight, size, and shape. He had observed that in certain chemical compounds the elements united in a constant proportion; for example, water, when decomposed, yields one part by weight of hydrogen, and eight parts by weight of oxygen; and it would be useless to try to combine eleven parts of oxygen with one part of hydrogen; water would be formed, but three parts of oxygen would be left free as overplus. What is the reason for the maintenance of this combining proportion? asked Dalton.

In his answer, we have the atomic theory, or rather hypothesis.

Taking for granted the existence of atoms, he went on to conceive that in the several elements they vary in weight; atoms of gold from atoms of silver, atoms of iodine from atoms of chlorine; but, on the other hand, that all atoms of the same element are of uniform weight; thus, that any atom of iron is equal to any other atom of iron the world over.

We have observed that water is compounded of eight parts by weight of oxygen to one part by weight of hydrogen, and an explanation of the combination is offered in the supposition, that each atom of oxygen is eight times as heavy as one of hydrogen. Further, it is presumed, that in the union of oxygen with hydrogen, the atoms of each are not interfused, but lie side-by-side, complete in their individuality. If, therefore, the weight of an atom of hydrogen be 1, and an atom of oxygen be 8, it is impossible that their smallest combining proportion, by weight, can be other than 1 and 8. The smallest quantity of water, in this view, must then consist of one atom of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen, bound together in that mystic tie which we term chemical affinity.

The example we have chosen from the constitution of water is a simple illustration of the constant proportion which exists throughout chemical compounds with infinite, complex, and multiple variations. It was in 1803 that the great cosmic idea entered Dalton’s mind. In 1804, he explained it in conversation to Dr. Thomas Thomson of Glasgow, who, in 1807, gave a short sketch of the hypothesis in the third edition of his System of Chemistry. The asserted law of combination in constant pro-

portions was quickly tested in a multitude of experiments, and the facts clustered to its confirmation.

It was discovered that there was as little chance or haphazard in the course of atoms as in the motions of planets. The hypothesis gave a prodigious impulse to the science of chemistry; it shot light through all its realms, and reduced a chaos of observations to purpose and system. Before Dalton’s happy conception there was not a single analysis which could be trusted as correct, or a single gas whose specific gravity was known with accuracy.

In the arts, his service was beyond value. He gave the manufacturing chemist a rule whereby he could preclude waste, teaching him how to effect combinations without the loss of an ounce of material. Even supposing that in the future Dalton’s notion of the coacervation of infinitesimal atoms should prove erroneous, his merit will remain untouched; for that properly consists in the discovery and promulgation of the law of constant proportion in chemical unions, where before law was unknown, or at any rate only dimly surmised. The theory of atoms was merely an attempt to reveal the mystery of the law, which will abide, whatever may be the fate of the theory.

Dalton was almost insensible to differences in colours. Whereas most persons see seven colours in the rainbow, he saw only two—yellow and blue; or at most, three—yellow, blue, and purple. He saw no difference between red and green, so that he thought ‘the face of a laurel-leaf a good match to a stick of red sealing-wax; and the back of the leaf to the lighter red of wafers.’ When, at Oxford, Dr. Whewell asked

him what he would compare his scarlet doctor’s gown to, he pointed to the leaves of the trees around them.

When a young man, 31st October 1794, he read a paper before the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, entitled Extraordinary Facts Relating to the Vision, of Colours, drawing attention to his own deficiency; which thenceforth became known under the name of Daltonism. Colour-blindness is by no means an uncommon affection. Dalton was acquainted with nearly twenty people in his own case. Dugald Stewart, the metaphysician, was one of them: he could not distinguish the crimson fruit of the Siberian crab from the leaves of the tree on which it grew otherwise than by the difference in form. Dalton tried to account for his peculiarity by supposing that it arose from the vitreous humour of his eyes having a blue tint instead of being colourless like water, as in the majority of man-kind.

After his death, in obedience to his instructions, his eyes were dissected; but no peculiarity could be detected. The true explanation of colour-blindness is, we apprehend, a phrenological one—namely, that in persons insensible to colours there is a deficiency or mal-organisation in that portion of the brain which receives impressions of colour; just as there are some similarly deficient in the sense of tune, and who cannot distinguish between one piece of music and another. In one thus insensible to melody, we do not assume any defect in his ears, but a deficiency in that part of his brain assigned to the organ of tune.

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

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ECOLOGY

Wineberry

Anne Gageby
Director of Environmental Education
Strawberry Hill Foundation

Berry picking has long been one of my favorite summertime activities. Growing up on the mountain, my grandparents regularly took me and my siblings to pick berries during the summer. We'd search for black raspberries, wineberries, blackberries, and more. Foraged foods were a staple in our household as store-bought foods were expensive, and berries were in abundance if you knew where to look. And foraged berries were exponentially better than store-bought in terms of flavor, color, and availability.

It wasn't until I became an adult that I learned how invasive and problematic wineberries are. Furthermore, I didn't know wineberries and raspberries were two separate species. I had assumed that wineberries were so named because that was just what mountain folk called them. Their canes and berries have a wine-like color, after all. Maybe growing on a mountainside just made them a little brighter, a little bolder, hence the name wineberries as opposed to just raspberries.

As an adult, however, I've discovered that I was both right and wrong about this little fruit. Wineberry (*Rubus phoenicolasius*) is an invasive plant in the same genus as blackberries and raspberries. It grows spiny, dense thickets that are impenetrable for larger wildlife. The canes appear reddish because of their thick coat of red hairs. These red hairs help distinguish wineberry from its cousins, the black raspberry and blackberry, both of which

have such sparsely populated thorns along their canes that they appear almost bald in comparison.

Similar to raspberry, wineberry, has silvery underleaves and a fruit core that remains on the stem when the berries are picked. Both have a raspberry-like flavor though wineberries are a little more tart and are a little brighter in flavor. Wineberries are also a bit smaller and juicier than their cousin.

This little sunburst of a berry was introduced to North America in the late 1880s as a breeding stock for cultivated raspberries. As with so many other invasives, it escaped cultivation, establishing itself in natural areas by the mid-1900s. It's more aggressive than many of our native berries and tolerates a wider range of soils, light, and moisture. It can be established in forest understories and roadsides alike. In our area of Pennsylvania, if there's a disturbance to the land, there's likely wineberry. Our climate and our soils are perfect for reproduction, and it has made its intentions clear: it's here to stay. Wineberry can now be found in most states east of the Mississippi.

It may dominate certain areas but at least it's delicious. I grew up eating jellies, jams, pies, sauces, and more made from foraged berries and wineberry is no different. As an adult, I created my own recipe for a wineberry jam that's similar to my grandma's only it has a dash of whipped cream vodka that brings out the full flavor of the berry as the alcohol cooks off. I also make jam called Fruits of the Forest with a combination of sweet cherries, blackberries, strawberries, and wineberries. I decided to add the wineberries almost as an afterthought because I wasn't sure if they would be too tart for the overall

flavor profile, but I was happy to discover that wasn't the case.

Wineberry is versatile and makes an excellent addition to many foods. Chicken baked in a wineberry glaze? Absolutely. Fresh wineberries tossed in a salad with blue cheese crumbles and almonds? A perfect dish for a July picnic. Wineberry crisp? A great breakfast choice. Wineberries are also a great source of fiber, vitamins, and antioxidants. They're refreshing and abundant in our area. After years of cooking with this particular berry, I'm convinced there's little wineberry couldn't do.

If you're interested in foraging this or any other wild berries, please keep a couple of things in mind. Identification is absolutely critical when foraging for anything. Use more than one source when practicing your identification skills. Find good, clear photos or images of what you're looking for and compare them to your find. Fortunately, wineberry is a beginner-friendly berry to forage. Wineberries are vibrantly red when ripe and look like smaller, rounder red raspberries. This helps differentiate it from native black raspberries and blackberries though both are edible. It has three leaflets per leaf. Many blackberry species have five leaflets so count them to make sure you're picking the right berry.

Wineberry has another unique feature in that the fruit is covered by sepals, hairy green to red petal-like structures, until it's just about ripe. It's also covered in a sticky substance that coats fingers making them feel sort of waxy when berry picking. Gloves or hand wipes are a good idea for the average forager.

Black raspberry, on the other hand, has whitish underleaves and the berries are usually a deep purple-black. Stems are green and have a bluish cast that rubs off when touched. Their thorns are sparse but robust and you'll know if one has pricked you. Red raspberries likewise have thorns but theirs are smaller and fewer per cane. They produce red fruit that looks quite similar to wineberry but the canes are green and have very few, if any, hairs, unlike its wild cousin.

If you're still unsure about identifying wineberries or other wild edibles, go with a knowledgeable guide who can teach you different identification methods and tips about each plant you're searching for. And know your property lines to make sure you're not foraging on someone's private property without permission. Check local and state forest regulations before hitting trails in search of a snack. And follow ethical foraging practices to ensure a sustainable harvest. To be fair, wineberries don't seem to be going anywhere soon and considering how they're crowding out native species, ethical



Wineberry is an invasive plant in the same genus as blackberries and raspberries.

foraging might mean collecting more than your fair share. Even the most robust colony of wineberry plants can become memory if conditions are right or if every forager collects with abandon but that's not entirely a bad thing in certain areas where it has pushed out more needed native species.

Wineberries will always have a spe-

cial place in my heart and at my family's table. They're a fine summer staple in my household and one that is useful for a wide variety of meals. And foraging for this lovely berry is something I look forward to every summer.

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

Adams County Land Conservancy
preservation accomplishments

The last six months have been an extremely busy time for the Land Conservancy of Adams County (LCAC) with a number of easement closings ensuring the protection of agricultural beauty for coming generations.

The 83-acre property of Sara and Jamey Tatman in Cumberland Township borders Marsh Creek and is nearly surrounded by other preserved properties. It is half-woods and half pasture, accommodating their new family home as well as horses, goats, pigs, alpacas, highland and longhorn cattle, chickens, and guinea fowl. Owner Sara Tatman feels strongly about preserving the land – “We see nothing but farmland being turned over to residential and other developments. We want to be among the select few who preserve farmland in this area.”

“We had significant help to get this conservation easement to the finish line,” according to Sarah Kipp, LCAC's land conservation director. She said funding was put together from the Adams County Community Foundation's Giving Spree, as well as a grant from the county's Green Space Grant Program and a

donation from the American Battlefield Trust.

In the heart of Adams County's extensive fruit belt, Boyer Nurseries and Orchards has preserved 159 acres in two conservation easements in Franklin Township. The easements connect to 900 acres preserved a decade ago and complete the preservation of “The Home Farm” with over 1,000 acres now permanently preserved! Rainfall and springs on Boyer's property drain to Marsh Creek, providing drinking water for Gettysburg residents. “We know there are a lot of natural springs and vernal pools in the woodland behind the farm and it's an important water resource, so limiting development in this area was really important to us”, said Emma Lower, a fifth-generation co-manager.

The Land Conservancy purchased both easements on Boyer's orchard land and forest with funding from the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, the Adams County Green Space Grant Program, and LCAC's own funds raised through the Adams County Community Foundation's annual Giving Spree.

Dave Salisbury, LCAC president, “We thank these private landowners for entering into protective agreements with our organization, thereby demonstrating their vision for the future.”

In the 30 years since its founding in 1995, the organization has worked with local landowners to preserve more than 13,800 acres in the county through 197 separate easements. The Land Conservancy of Adams County is a fully accredited, member-supported nonprofit land trust that works to preserve the rural lands and character of Adams County. For more information about the Land Conservancy, visit PreserveAdams.org.



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IN THE COUNTRY

Symphony of lights

Tim Iverson, Naturalist

Orange hues fade to purple, which rapidly descend into darkness. The sky resembles a backlit canopy with holes punched in it. Sultry summer air hangs on your skin and if you're lucky the magic begins to happen. The luminescent show begins with an overture from crickets and frogs. As a child your wonder and amazement are unparalleled as you run after the fluttering diamond like glint of lightning bugs. Your bare feet glide through the grass and you clasp your hands around these tiny little bugs in the hopes that you can inspect the phenomenon up close and personal. This natural light show subtly draws to a close by dawn, and may be doing so permanently.

Fireflies, or lightning bugs, can inspire awe in children and adults alike. Who can't say that they didn't spend summer nights running after this elusive illuminative force? To either catch and release or capture and hold in a jar empowered us as tiny masters and detectives of our natural world. Fireflies and lightning bugs are neither bugs nor flies. They are actually a type of beetle. What makes them a beetle is how their body functions. They have hardened forewings, called elytra, which extend in flight and will lay flush against their body when at rest. When in flight these elytra will be raised for balance, and they'll rely on hind wings, located underneath the elytra, for movement. This feature is what classifies them into the beetle family.

There are more than 2000 different types of firefly species in the world, and are found on every continent except Antarctica. They produce light that can vary in color from yellow, orange, or green. Each species has a different flashing pattern, and some species don't actually light up at all. Primarily, they'll use these lights to attract a mate, but they can serve other purposes too. Some species will communicate to others with their flash. This can range from marking or guarding territory or

to warn predators to stay away. They have a foul taste, so most would-be predators leave them alone as it is. When attacked fireflies do what's called "reflex bleeding". In the blood that is released is a chemical that tastes bitter and is actually poisonous to some animals. So, be careful of any pets that may try to eat them. On one particular evening though I had taken a stroll through Baker Park, and had stopped to sit down on a bench to talk with a friend. Ducks had been waddling by and every so often would lunge their necks out and snatch up a lightning bug. Apparently they didn't get the memo about not eating them, and I didn't see any keel over so I assume they're okay.

Adult fireflies aren't the only ones who glow though! Their eggs and larva (think babies) can also glow. There are two chemicals in their tails that make glowing possible - luciferase and luciferin. These chemicals when combined with ATP (which is found in all living animals) will produce a glow. ATP should be a relatively stable level in healthy cells. In diseased cells the balance may be off. Scientists and doctors have put this knowledge to good use, and can detect potentially cancerous cells in people by injecting these chemicals from fireflies into diseased cells to detect anything from cancer to muscular dystrophy. Other medical uses include detecting blood clots, marking tuberculosis cells, marking the progressing of diabetes, and more. That's not all though! Scientist will also use these chemicals to detect food spoilage and have even equipped space craft to detect alien life with it as well. Fortunately, medical science has created a synthetic form so we don't need to commercially harvest them from the wild anymore.

It's a good thing we aren't harvesting them from the wild anymore, and haven't in a sometime, because population levels seem to be declining by all accounts. The numbers aren't concrete yet, but some places in Asia are reporting up to 70% decline. Here in the

US evidence is still largely anecdotal, but the research is underway. Researchers from Boston's Museum of Science, Finchburg State College, and Tufts University have teamed up to create an organization called Firefly Watch. Their goal is simple - "to track the fate of these amazing insects." They rely on volunteers, or citizen scientists, to help them by collecting data. It requires minimal effort or time on the part of the participant. According to the Firefly Watch website, "We hope that you'll be able to spend ten minutes checking your backyard for fireflies, one evening a week throughout the summer. However, we realize that you may lead a busy life and may not be able to collect data every week. Any information you can send us is valuable, as long as you fill out the observations form, and upload the results to us." With your help they aim to understand population distribution and the behavior of fireflies.

While the research is still ongoing to discover the extent of population numbers and decline there are a few theories behind the apparent abatement. The culprit is likely human interference. First and foremost, habitat destruction has taken its toll. Fireflies live in fields and forest edges. When these fields and forests get paved over fireflies don't migrate to new homes. They simply vanish ad infinitum, they're gone forever. Light pollution seems to be a major problematic factor. Street lights, porch lights, and landscaping lights can make it difficult for fireflies to find the blinking lights of mates, which can make it hard to propagate the species. Broad-spectrum pesticides can also negatively impact them too.

A few simple suggestions to aid the lightning bug are to keep the pesticide use down. Fireflies spend the day resting in grass and shrubs, so by limiting pesticide use they'll find it easier to avoid getting poisoned. You could also plant more plants, trees, and shrubs in your yard. It'll beautify your home, and create homes for them and other wildlife. While you're at it, you can install a water feature



Fireflies, or lightning bugs, can inspire awe in children and adults alike. Who can say that they didn't spend summer nights running after these elusive, illuminative forces?

too! Fireflies prefer ponds and creek sides, so if you can include this addition to your home they'll love you for it. Turn off the outside house lights unless you need them to see. You'll save on energy costs and help cultivate an amorous atmosphere for fireflies.

The symphony of frogs and crickets wouldn't be complete without the light show offered for

free from fireflies. Hopefully with better understanding we can help this awe-inspiring phenomenon avoid the decrescendo into oblivion that many species have faced. Let's conduct the sonata forward illuminating the summers of tomorrow.

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



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SCIENCE MATTERS

Understanding the most powerful new genetic technology

Boyce Rensberger

I want to tell you about one of the most revolutionary developments in science in decades. You may have read about this thing with the strange name of CRISPR. It's a genetic technology that can seem like magic.

"It actually allows us to change human evolution if we want to," one of its discoverers has warned. That should get our attention. More immediately, dozens of clinical trials are underway for treatments that use CRISPR to diagnose or treat many different conditions from heart diseases to cancers to AIDS.

Scientists are already using CRISPR to make food crops more resistant to drought or disease. Some experts say CRISPR-modified crops will be in widespread use within 15 years. A whole new controversy about GMOs is certain.

So, this is a good time to try to get a sense of what it is. Stick with me through this piece, and I think you'll come away with a fair grasp of the basics.

Recently you may have read, a baby was born with a rare and rapidly fatal disease caused by a mistake in its DNA. The mistake was very small, involving just a single letter out of the 3.2 billion letters that make up the human genome, a copy of which is carried in every cell. And yet scientists constructed a machine small enough to enter the baby's bloodstream, find the mistaken letter, cut it out of the DNA strand and replace it with the correct letter. The molecule-sized CRISPR machine was custom made for this one baby's genetic defect.

This molecular machine is a shape-shifter. It has moving parts—levers and latches that swing and swivel to grab other molecules and push them around. I'll explain that as we go along with links to animations.

What's new in the baby's case is that CRISPR was used to repair a specific defect known only in this one baby, now ten months old and healthy. This bespoke version of CRISPR offers the promise of treatment for other extremely rare genetic diseases. But also treatments for more common diseases where a single mutation in one gene must be repaired.

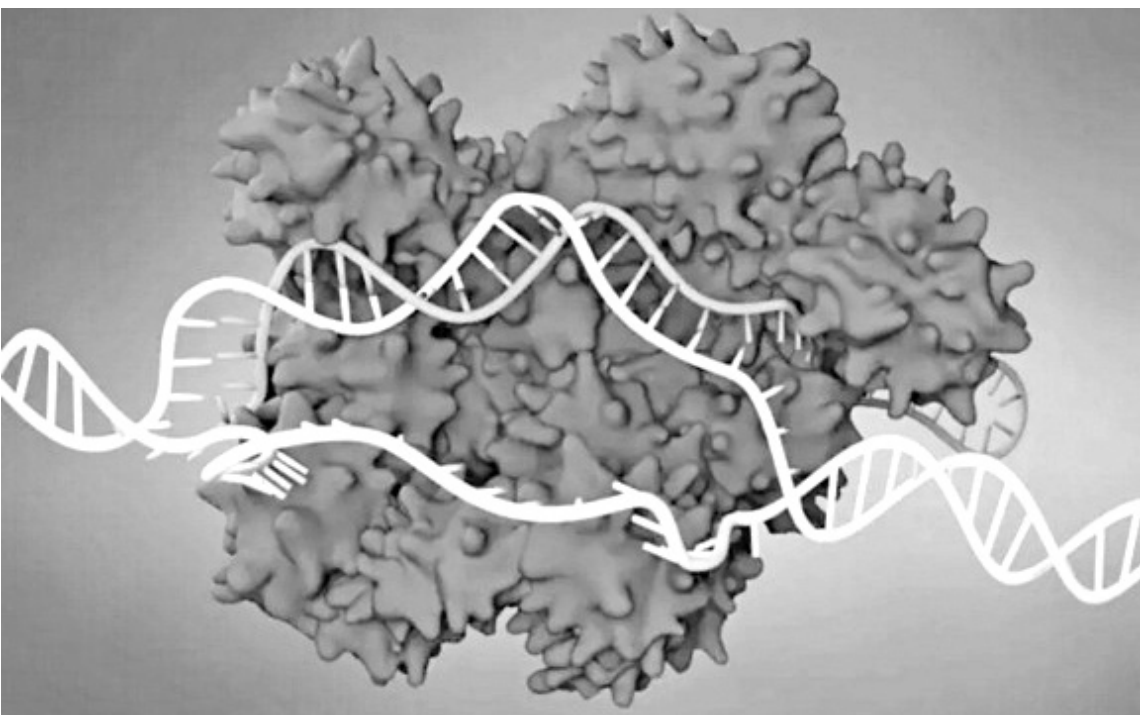
Two years ago, the FDA approved a standardized CRISPR-based therapy for sickle cell anemia—a treatment that a few dozen people have received so far. That was done by re-activating a good gene that functions in the fetus but that is normally dormant in adults.

So, what is CRISPR, and why does it have a name pronounced like a drawer in the fridge?

Its history goes back to 1987 when scientists discovered a fascinating phenomenon in bacteria. Many of those one-celled organisms have a kind of immune system that protects them against viruses. Yes, bacteria get virus infections. As you may know, viruses are mainly packages of genes in the form of DNA or its molecular complement, RNA. The bacterial immune system consists of a molecule that recognizes certain sequences found in most virus genes and with the help of an enzyme that bacteria also carry, it cuts up the virus's genes, stopping the infection.

These sequences (Are you ready for this?) are "clustered regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats." CRISPR is an acronym for that awkward term. (A palindrome is a sequence that reads the same in both directions. Viruses usually have these.)

In recent years, scientists realized that this system could be modified to recognize not virus sequences but any sequence in the genes of any cell. Molecular biologists have long known how to make DNA and



A molecular machine—CRISPR-Cas—unzips a double helix.

RNA in any sequence they want. They just couldn't splice it into a predetermined spot in a genome. A genome, you may recall, is the whole collection of genes (made of DNA) in a cell. Early forms of gene therapy used a shotgun method, randomly inserting new genes anywhere in the genome. Because CRISPR enables precise insertions, it opened vast frontiers in biological research and medical treatment. It is not only more accurate, but faster and cheaper.

The scientists who discovered this are Jennifer Doudna at the University of California-Berkeley and Emmanuelle Charpentier, director of the Max Planck Institute for Infection Biology in Berlin. Working together they did the basic science—and let me emphasize basic science—to understand these mechanisms and how to use them. And together they shared the 2020 Nobel Prize in chemistry.

CRISPR works something like a computer's word processor with

these four functions—find, cut, copy, and paste. The CRISPR "gene processor" has two main parts. The first is a short sequence of RNA that can search a cell's genome and "find" a corresponding set of letters in the sequence that makes up DNA. Doudna calls it a "guide RNA." Scientists can synthesize any RNA sequence they like, typically making a segment that corresponds to the DNA sequence they want to find.

The second part of the CRISPR machine is a huge protein molecule originally found in bacteria. It's called Cas, which is short for CRISPR-associated protein. Cas rides along with the guide RNA, unwinding the DNA double helix and separating the two strands so that the guide RNA can look for its corresponding sequence on one strand or the other.

The whole complex will bounce around randomly in a cell's nucleus until it happens to find the right sequence. Then it will stick there while the second part of the Cas molecule changes shape again and cuts the DNA right where the guide RNA indicates, leaving two dangling ends.

When DNA breaks, which happens often naturally, cells use their

own enzymes to splice the ends back together. At this point an optional third component of the CRISPR complex—the "copy" and "paste"—comes into play. It is a length of lab-made DNA bearing the correct sequence. This serves as a template that the cell, "thinking" that it is merely repairing a break, will automatically use to guide its repair. The result is the insertion of a new gene that may treat a disease or that may confer a new trait.

All this is slow to explain, but it happens in a fraction of a second in a living cell. And just as fast, if desired, in billions of cells simultaneously.

To see a short animation go to: bit.ly/CRISPRshort

To see a long animation go to: bit.ly/CRISPRanimation

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.

To read other articles by Boyce Rensberger, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.com.

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THE VILLAGE IDIOT

What next?

Jack Deatherage

Ever wake up wondering what to get into next?

The DW lives in dread of my doing that - the wondering rather than the waking. Though the day is fast approaching when she's likely going to dread my waking as well. Until that time - the answer to the question usually ends up costing us thousands of dollars over the span of however long it takes me to lose interest and wander off to nap time again.

When the offspring was five years old, and came home from kindergarten each day, I asked him if he'd gotten a job yet. He'd frown and claim no one would hire him because he was five. When I suggested he create his own business he'd reply, "I'm only five Dad. What business can I create?"

Thirty some years later I'm still trying to come up with a business a little kid, maybe a ten year old, could manage.

There have been and still are "businesses" kids can get into. One skinny little teen - a girl kid that occasionally hung out with the offspring - told me she'd been offered \$600 for a nude photo of herself. This was around the time digital cameras were becoming affordable, but before the ubiquitous "smart phone" and Only Fans. Clearly, she knew there was a business she could easily get into. She was also aware of the "controlled substances" trade in this burg. Though I don't recall her mentioning being involved in it, she certainly knew those among her peers who were dealing. I advised against her going down either of those paths.

Nine, ten years ago, during a rash of heroin overdoses that left several young cousins of mine dead, I suggested a youth market garden to give kids something to do besides sticking needles in their arms. While that idea never made it off the ground for two main reasons - I was told it would violate the state's child labor laws and we didn't have a garden - I'm still pondering the concept.

Another idea I had involved teens making jewelry and selling it. Two attempts to get that going were partially successful. The kids really got into the making part of it, but the parents didn't want to spend money on it. The DW is still irritated that I ended up

giving away most of the books, materials and tools we bought for the project.

Painting pictures on T - shirts and cloth game boards momentarily captured the imaginations of a few teens - until the parents realized they'd have to fund some of the startup costs if the kids decided to take the hobby to the next level. That idea faded as fast as the paints dried.

Friend Marda died seven years ago, a few days after telling me she was shutting down her tea/herb shop and garlic farm. The last thing I recall her saying to me was "I'll help you get into the business." Which I was definitely considering as there was no one else in the area operating such a shop. Of course, I wasn't ready to start a new adventure let alone start a business. Marda's heir quickly sold the farm and shop. What became of all her culinary books, seasoning and tea mix recipes is beyond me.

Without book titles, trying to figure out what books she worked out of is proving difficult. Making the task more difficult is the likelihood the books were trade books, probably not held by public libraries. Still, I'm ransacking the state's public libraries via Marina and finding recipes I can begin with.

Begin what with? Concocting seasoning mixes for trialing among friends and acquaintances to determine if there's any type of market for them. If there is, I'll move on to the next step in my latest scheme - creating a business kids can own and operate - provided we find an adult capable and willing to supervise the venture.

Which ain't me! I learned that fact some years ago when I got into a multi - level marketing business. Yes, I sold enough product to justify filing taxes, but after two years of it I understood I'm an employee, not a business person.

The DW was once a taste tester for a woman we knew who was putting together "short" mead kits. We have a coupla kits - the family stopped selling them at least a decade ago so I'd not be stepping on toes if I took to making and selling a similar product. Kids couldn't legally sample mead, though they could sample the drink before the yeast is added. If the basic mix isn't delightful, the resulting mead probably wouldn't be either. The kits (envelopes filled with herbs, spices and tiny packets of yeast) sit in the pantry mocking me.

Making herbal vinegar is another skill easily acquired and would be a decent accompaniment to fresh veggies sold at farmers markets. Bread, cakes and cookies are also relatively simple products to make and sell at local markets.

Back when the Frederick Towne Mall was still a thing, I met a guy earning a living peddling his artwork there, among other places. He'd create an original piece, take it to Staples and have copies of it made. He'd slap a several hundred dollars price tag on the original and sell the smaller copies for \$60 each. He'd also have the art turned into greeting and post cards, which he'd sell 10 to a packet for about \$20.

I used to haunt Etsy when I was selling leather goods there. I found artists selling higher end, numbered copies of their work. Some of the better ones were generating as much as \$30,000 in sales a year - that was copy money! Their originals were going for over \$600, plus shipping. Gods know how much they were making selling at shows, open markets, or via private contracts.

Friend Marty, back when we were planning a homestead and the future loomed bright, used to insist we have multiple sticks in the fire because we'd never know which would become a torch to light our way.

"Build your market garden and perfect your baked goods." He advised. "Keep the factory going and get your Etsy store well



A rare photo of Jack in his youth. According to Wanda, his beard began to grow shortly after this photo was taken.

stocked. I'll keep breeding Rottweilers, do some custom farming, raise some 'yuppie' livestock. That way we'll always have streams of income and should one slow, or fail, the others will keep us going."

Mart's been gone 10 years now, but his advice seems to have stuck around.

There are a plethora of business ideas whirling 'round my skull, all trying to get my attention - "Pick me!" "No! Pick me!" Sheesh. How 'bout I pick all ya all?

Hell. That was easy. Now for the difficult part.

What do I create that young people would find interesting enough to come take a look at it? A crafters club? An entrepreneurs club?

Greater success with the community garden this year than I expected has me thinking I can pull off this "kids' business" program as well. But man! This is going to disrupt my nap dreams for a bit.

Opportunity's knocking. Is anyone home?

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

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THE MASTER GARDENER

Weeds, weeds everywhere!

Mary Ann Ryan
Adams County Master Gardener

When driving, we often see flowering weeds in fields or roadsides. Casual walks along a country road may cause us to stop and check out the weeds of summer. But are they weeds or wildflowers? Are they good or bad?

A weed is merely a plant that is in a spot that it isn't wanted. For instance, if a daylily is growing in a corn field, a farmer would consider it a weed, although a daylily growing in a garden – not so much. A wildflower is just a plant that grows, uncultivated, in fields, woodlands, meadows, etc. Some are native, others may be considered naturalized, and others may be classified as bad due to its invasiveness.

An invasive plant can be an ornamental or a weed and would be classified as such due to its capacity to spread to areas it is unwanted, and its ability to take over. A noxious weed is a plant that has a detrimental economic impact, and a negative environmental impact which deems it illegal to grow, sell or trade. These plants are definitely on the list to be destroyed when found. Getting to know and identify plants will help in determining the good from the bad.

A very common perennial plant, often seen in fields, planting beds, and along roadsides is the horsenettle (*Solanum carolinense*). This weed has prickles along its stem and on the midvein of the leaf. A white to light blue, star-like flower with a yellow center blooms atop

the spiny stems. Although a native to southern US, but spreading north through Canada, it is considered a weed in most situations. This plant should be controlled as it is poisonous to mammals and birds. Although it has not made it on the PA noxious weed list, it is considered a noxious weed in 37 states.

Black nightshade, found in most of the US, is in the same plant family as the horsenettle. The nightshade family also includes potatoes, tomatoes and eggplant. The black nightshade is native to the US, and is commonly found in moist areas, in open fields, and roadsides. It has a purple star-like flower with a yellow center, much like the horsenettle. As this plant is poisonous just like the horsenettle, it should be controlled in pastures and other cultivated fields. Any part of this plant is considered poisonous, from stem, leaf, flower to fruit.

Canadian thistle may be a plant you'll come across when walking past an old field. This plant has made the noxious weed list in 35 states, including PA and MD. Although found all over the US and Canada, this plant is native to the Mediterranean and Southeast Europe. It's aggressive, reproducing by roots and seed. The small purple and sometimes white flower on top of the prickly stems quickly spreads by wind and attaches itself to animals for ease of spread. If you have this plant, it's best to not only control it but get rid of it. As all noxious weeds, they take over our native habitat, leaving little food for our wildlife. Although some butterfly larvae do feed on the leaves of this plant, it isn't enough to control the spread or justify its life here.

Milkweeds are plants you may see in meadows. Two often seen milkweeds are the common milkweed and swamp milkweed. The common milkweed has broad leaves, gets up to 3' tall, and has a root system that goes on forever. Found in a wheat field or hay field? Not good,



The common "Milkweed" is considered to be a weed by many but is a prized find for the bees and butterflies!

however, found in a meadow... nice. Milkweeds are host plants for the monarch butterfly and bees absolutely love the flowers of these plants, but milkweeds are poisonous to livestock, therefore not welcome in a straw or hay bale.

The swamp milkweed is a perennial plant that has attracted the attention of the gardener. Adapting to moist or drier conditions, resistance to deer, fragrant, and growing well in heavy clay soils, this plant has showy pink flowers. Selections of this species, like "Ice Ballet" – a white form, can be found in nurseries and garden centers. A great substitute to the heavy texture of the common milkweed and not nearly as spreading, the swamp milkweed is a plant that has earned a place in the garden and in areas where livestock are not grazing.

Butterfly weed, another milk-

weed, is a native plant that is not incredibly common in fields. However, you may stumble across this bright orange flower that butterflies frequently visit. This native perennial likes drier locations, so can be found along roadsides and upland meadows. This is another native plant that has caught the attention of the gardener, due to its unusual orange flower. It reaches 12" - 18" and typically should be placed in the front of a perennial bed.

Jewelweed, also called touch me not, is a native annual plant that attracts hummingbirds. Found in moist locations along streams and on wooded edges, this annual is orange, reaches about 4' tall, and attracts hummingbirds. It's also been used to relieve itching. This plant is an impatiens, the same genus as our annual impatiens we buy every year to plant in the shade. The seed pods when ripe will explode when touched, hence the common name of "touch-me-not". This allows the plant to quickly reseed and become established year after year in the same location.

Culver's root has white, spiky flowers with whorled leaves gives this native perennial an interesting and somewhat unusual stature. It typically likes medium to moist soils but may be found in locations that are wet. Full sun to part sun is its preference. Butterflies are especially attracted to this perennial.

Many of the plants mentioned here have struck the fancy of the nursery industry. The swamp milkweed and butterfly weed are especially interesting, since they are easy to grow with showy flowers. Selections have been made of both these plant species, and when visiting a nursery, you may find specific varieties that have been selected for color, length of flowering or size.

Culver's root, *Veronicastrum virginicum*, has also struck it big in the industry. Selections with show-



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ier flowers, more sturdy spikes, and longer bloom time have made the nursery benches for gardeners to buy and enjoy.

Chicory, Cichorium intybus, is a common plant seen along roadsides and sometimes in lawns. Its course, stiff stems make it an unwanted plant in the turf, but the pretty blue flowers bring an interest in a meadow. Not a native here, this plant comes from Europe and Asia. It has naturalized, meaning, it has established itself in our environment without becoming a problem/invasive plant.

Queen Anne’s Lace, Daucus carota, or sometimes called wild carrot, is another naturalized plant. It was brought to our country by colonists for medicinal use. This plant is a biennial, growing a rosette of leaves the first year, and flowering the second, dropping seeds, then dying. The seeds that dropped start the life cycle again.

Mugwort, Artemisia vulgaris, has been known for it’s medicinal prop-

erties. However, once this plant comes into the yard, it will always be in the yard. Very difficult to eradicate, it is considered a weed in most environments. A native to Europe and Asia, it was brought to the US as early as the 1600’s. Its leaves and fragrance resemble that of a chrysanthemum. But it has tiny, inconspicuous, green flowers. Smothering this plant with a heavy layer of compost, cardboard, or layers of newspaper are probably the easiest way to control it.

Get to know the plants you see in fields, meadows, or your yard. Take a wildflower book with you on your next walk. You’ll find out that some are invasive and should be controlled and some are beneficial and great introductions to your own garden. Learning more about what is out there in our environment makes us better stewards of the earth.

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

Small Town Gardener
The necessity of underwear

Marianne Wilburn

The tricky business of last minute staking is on the agenda this month. Each year I fantasize that the storms won’t come, the vertical accents won’t go horizontal, and the work I shirked in May won’t haunt me in July. And each year I am slapped in the face (sometimes literally), by plants that really needed an assist to be all they can be.

There are many people who feel that staking plants is time consuming, overly meticulous and fussy. But staking is not solely about appearance, and can positively affect the production and purpose of a plant. If you choose to plant, for instance, an old-fashioned peony with heavy double blooms that smell sweetly, something is lost in translation if you have to pull the blooms out of a mud puddle in order to sniff them.

Tomatoes can flop, and the Italians often grow them thus – in an orgy of vining, twining summer stems reclining atop beds of straw, but I find that there is more production and less waste when they are (at the very least) leaning against an upright cage.

This sentiment might reflect the uptight part of my nature, but it is also very practical when one is dealing with a small space and a humid, fungus-loving climate. The Italians also live in Italy, and not in my cool stream valley.

Thanks to a friend’s successful example, I have now taken to removing the bottom leaves of my tomato plants as they grow to stop soil borne disease splashing back onto the

foliage. This is made possible by staking the plants in the first place -- otherwise all leaves are bottom leaves. I have had much healthier plants as a result.

And, if you’ve ever dug a huge hole, amended it with love, and within, planted a small, precious tree, only to leave the staking for another day; I trust that the resulting 60 degree angle of the trunk five years later is to your liking. Trees settle in their holes. They stretch toward the sun and must be gently reminded that building good character starts with boundaries – yours.

So, staking should be undertaken, and just like any good undergarment, the stakes should be discrete. But how, and with what? I am not a garden-gadget person, but a few years ago, I found green metal stakes in two and four-foot lengths topped with a half circle hook at one end, allowing the gardener to quickly pop in a stem and secure it without ever getting out the twine.

I love these reusable, camouflaged stakes and add a few to my collection whenever I see them at garden centers. They are great for plants like foxglove, large iris, Echinacea, and other perennials and annuals that throw up tall blooms that could be damaged by winds or rampaging guinea hens.

For larger clumping perennials whose blooms grow more as an extension of the foliage (peony, hypericum etc.), hoop style staking with attached ‘legs’ is the option we are always given at the home centers, but it is rarely satisfactory.

You will spend a great deal of time trying to get all three stakes at equal depths, and wind or rain can still push a plant to one end of the hoop or another. One is often left with the look of a too-big vase for a too-small bouquet. But hey, at least they’re off the ground.

My preferred method these days is either to create a pea-stick structure for the plant to grow through in late winter (which can be almost as beautiful as the plant itself), or create a network of twine and bamboo to create something similar with an inner cobweb-like structure once the plant is actively growing.

The term ‘pea-stick’ refers to the old practice of sticking branched twigs (often hazel or other bendable tree branches), into rows of pea seeds for the emerging plants to cling to. The branches are cut in winter when shed of leaves. In the early spring, they can also be used to surround a perennial crown in a circle, and the tops are carefully bent and broken to form a cobwebbed dome – woven into each other in a pleasing way that smacks of rusticity and cunning. It is almost a shame when the plant is fully emerged and the artistic shapes are lost.

But it is July, and that ship has sailed. Now your most egregious floppers require one or two stout canes pounded into the soil near the perennial clump, and some twine wrapped around several strategic outer stems to create a different type of cobweb.

Such staking won’t secure a small tree. But ½ inch rebar can be pounded in on either side of a newly planted specimen and connected with a bit of rope sheathed with rubber hose to protect the trunk from being gouged. Use a figure-eight configuration with the rope and don’t secure it too tightly – it’s important the tree is able to move a bit in the wind. After a year or so of this treatment, a tree is usually able to hold its head up high.

Some plants will require an immediate staking, others can grow into it, and still others will get by with a stake thrown in on an as-needed basis. Use your discretion, and think carefully about a plant’s need for extra support before you buy it. If you disapprove of underwear in the garden, you can easily find dwarf cultivars that make such trappings unnecessary – but burning one’s bra and letting it all hang out is not the answer.

Marianne Willburn writes from Lovettsville, VA. Join her and Leslie Harris for thoroughly un-boring gardening each week at The Garden Mixer podcast. Available wherever you get your podcasts.



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PETS

Summer heat

Jennifer Vanderau
Cumberland Valley Animal Shelter

Okay, so I have about had it with the humidity and heat. Oh my word, I swear the older I get, the worse I feel when temperatures climb above 90 degrees. I had my dad out for groceries the other day and it was one of those days where we had an excessive heat warning. The temperature display in the car actually said 100 at one point. I was so incredibly exhausted by the time I got home, I seriously thought something was rather strikingly wrong with me. After a quick Google search, I learned that fatigue during really hot days is because of the work our bodies do to cool us down. Our bodies have to work almost twice as hard when it's super hot in order to keep our internal temperatures at an okay place. Whew. The heat is quite literally too much. Then I imagined what it would be like for our four-legged friends. I mean, can you imagine wearing a fur coat in this heat? I absolutely can't. And yet, that's what it would be like for our pets when the temperatures soar above 90 – and sometimes get close to 100. Add to that the fact that animals don't perspire like we do to keep cool and you have a recipe for a rough afternoon for a dog or cat who has to contend with the elements. One of the biggest differences between us and our four-legged babies is our pets don't sweat like we do. They cool themselves down by panting – they pull air over their wet tongues and that helps lower their body temperature. They can also put their bellies or paw pads on a cool surface to help, but mostly it's panting. When they

pant, obviously their breathing accelerates, but so does their heart rate. If they can't cool down, excessive panting can lead to heart failure, brain damage, nerve damage and even death. Even if a pet doesn't die, he or she could literally be affected for life from excessive heat. The next time you get in a hot car to go somewhere, try to pant. Don't do it for long because you'll be overcome in a few short seconds, I'm certain, but that's what it would be like for a dog or a cat inside a hot car. In fact, I found a study that says, even when it's 72 degrees outside, a parked car's internal temperature can reach 116 degrees in one hour. That's too hot for anyone, let alone an animal covered in fur. When I think about it, it's tough to keep anxiety and panic from setting in because I can sympathize with the animals. Please, if you have to take your animal with you in the car, make it a short trip and don't leave them in a parked car. I always think people are sick to death of hearing about heat warnings for pets, but then I'll hear about someone who leaves a dog (or God forbid a baby) in a car on a hot day and my brain leaks out my ears a little. So, I'm going to keep saying it – please don't leave your animal in a car at this time of year, even with the windows rolled down. Many of them can't take it. Also remember in general at this time of year, our pets will most definitely need access to water and cool spots, especially the breeds with thick coats or smashed faces. Pugs have difficulty breathing sometimes as it is (if you've ever heard one of those little squirts snort like a pig, you know what I'm talking about – it's ador-

able, but can be problematic). If you add panting through incredibly hot heat to the mix for a pug, you could see where issues can arise rather quickly. Keep in mind sunburns aren't just for humans. The hairless breeds – or dogs that have lost their hair recently – can get sunburned. So, when you're out and about on those bright sunny days, keep your four-legged friends in mind and make sure they have access to shade. Oh, and asphalt. Man, I can feel the heat coming off it when I'm wearing flip flops. Imagine what it's like for our dogs and cats who have no protection on their sensitive paws. If you're taking a walk in the summer, remember to give your guy a chance to wander through some grass so he can get off that burning pavement. If your boy or girl appears to have signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke, call your vet or the emergency clinic for suggestions. Obviously, excessive panting is a sign, as well as drooling, reddened gums, vomiting, diarrhea, mental dullness, uncoordinated movements, loss of consciousness or collapse. Get him or her into a cool place and put cool water on his or her feet and belly. Your goal is to get them cool, fast, but don't make it too drastic a temperature change – that could do more harm than good. Take the advice of your vet or the techs at the emergency clinic to help cool your pets down.

Cats can also suffer from the heat, although they are often a bit more adept at finding cool spots. Outdoor kitties can usually be found under a porch or deep in the shade on really hot days. Still, they may need more water in the sweltering heat. If they don't eat as much, don't panic. Heat can make cats not as active and not as hungry, so they will likely cut down on their food intake. Keep an eye out for panting in cats. I've often said cats really shouldn't pant, so if they are, something is going on. The signs of heat issues in cats are essentially the same for dogs. A cat with heat stroke or heat exhaustion really should get to an emergency vet as soon as possible and you should try to cool their paw pads and if they'll let you, their stomachs. The heat can be tough on all of us, but keeping an eye on our pets will help make sure the whole family can have fun in the sun without repercussions. And that, to me, is the best way to spend these warm summer days. *The Cumberland Valley Animal 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.*



Calliope came into the shelter as a stray, so not a lot is known about her background. She is an active girl who is about 2 years old. Calliope is strong and will need someone who can work with her on leash skills and provide her with regular exercise. She is food-motivated and loves playing in the yard at the shelter. She would do best at a home without other animals.



We must talk about Bruno! He is a sweet guy who is looking for a special home. Bruno is blind and walks oddly due to a neurological condition. He was surrendered to the shelter when his former owner could no longer care for him, and because of this, he needed a little extra help adjusting to shelter life. Bruno has made strides since his arrival and is a happy dog! He is a 1-year-old mixed breed who enjoys attention and is very loving. Bruno does need help when navigating around objects, but otherwise, he does very well on his own! He will need someone who is understanding of his needs and is willing to work with him on adjusting to a new home. He would do best in an adult-only home.



Snowshoe came into the shelter as a stray, so we don't know a lot about her, but she is one good looking girl! She's about two years old and really nice. She's going to make someone a great companion.



Harvey was surrendered to the shelter when his owner could no longer care for him. He is an 8-year-old Jack Russell Terrier mix who is an outgoing fellow. Harvey would do best in an adult-only home. He can be a bit vocal so he may not do well in apartment living. Harvey does chase cats so a home without cats would be best. Could he be your new four-legged best friend?

For more information about Calliope, Bruno, Snowshoe, or Harvey call the Cumberland Valley Animal Shelter at 717-263-5791, visit them online at www.cvaspets.org, or better yet, visit them in person at the shelter!

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Stephani Rickerd & Aslan

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

PETS

New wheels

Shawn Snyder

There's a little more zoom in Giblet's zoomies these days thanks to a special gift from Frederick Friends of Our County Animal Shelter (FFOCAS). The nonprofit group recently paid for a cart from K9 Carts so the two-year-old Pit Bull Mix can finally run, play and do all the zoomies he wants without leg pain.

Giblet is one of two special needs dogs currently residing at Frederick County Animal Control. Upon his return in November of 2024, he was diagnosed with bilateral luxating patellas. While surgery is an option, our team recognizes that the recovery process may do more harm than good in terms of Giblet's quality of life. So, we've instead decided to go with a less is more treatment approach, daily medication to keep him comfortable.

Giblet doesn't let his condition hold him back. He may do things a little bit differently, but he still runs, plays and climbs onto the couch for cuddle sessions. Sometimes, however, he plays too hard and feels sore and still. That's where his new cart comes in.

His cart will serve as a walker or crutch, taking weight off his back legs so he can "dog." As Giblet ages this cart, which is his forever, can be converted into a full wheelchair in the event that he can no longer use his back legs.

The silly pittie has been using his cart for several weeks now and according to his foster mom "loves it." He gets into it without issue and has taken to it amazingly well. He is now able to play harder and go for longer walks. He's even taken it off road on a few short hikes. When Giblet's not zooming about, he loves nothing more than to be snuggling with his people. He has serious Velcro dog potential. But Giblet doesn't just love people, he loves other dogs too. He would love to live with another dog that wants to play and cuddle as much as he does. Additionally, Giblet has done well with kids and cats.



Giblet

Giblet would do well in most home environments apart from those with a lot of steps. While he can navigate a few here and there, multistory homes may prove difficult for the dog espe-

cially as he ages.

We are so grateful for FFOCAS and all of their donors. Without them, wonderful gifts like this wouldn't be possible for our residents.



Smart, energetic and affectionate are all adjectives to describe Mikey. He enjoys going for walks or playing outside but what he really thrives on is attention from people. Mikey's previous owner told us he was trusted alone and he never had accidents in the house. True to his hound dog pedigree, Mikey loves to sniff and follow his nose; therefore, his next family will need to ensure they can keep him safely at home.



What a beauty! Julianne has an amazing tortoiseshell coat and has the personality to match. She was found as a stray on Main St.in Mt. Airy. At the shelter, she is a social butterfly. She is relaxed when meeting new people, and she initiates petting by rubbing against your hand.



The first thing you notice about Ms. Meowgi is her cloudy right eye. The cause of the corneal scar is unknown, but her eye is healed and there is no further treatment needed. Ms. Meowgi was found as a stray in Emmitsburg, so not much is known about her past. She takes a moment to warm up to new people but once comfortable, she is friendly and enjoys being petted.



Simple math: looks + personality = Mufasa. This handsome fellow is going to make a wonderful companion. Mufasa loves attention but is not overly demanding or needy. At only 2 years old, he still loves to explore but is also content lounging in a cat bed. Mufasa has tested positive for feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV), which is manageable and cannot be contracted by humans.



Are you a patient person looking for a silly canine sidekick? Let us introduce you to Roderick. While Roderick is initially quite shy, your patience will be handsomely rewarded. Once he is comfortable with new people and surroundings, he turns into your typical adolescent dog; playing and exploring. A perfect gentleman on leash, he enjoys long walks, rolling in grass and collecting treasures like pieces of bark he finds along the way. Roderick has done well with dogs and cats, but his fearful nature makes him better suited for life in a quiet home with older children and adults.

For more information about Mikey, Julianne, Ms. Meowgi, Mufasa, or Roderick call the Frederick County Animal Shelter at 301-600-1319 or visit them online at www.frederickcountymd.gov/fcac or better yet, visit them in person at the shelter!

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COUNTY NOTES

July events for Buttonwood Nature Center



Make the best of the Dog Days of Summer with Buttonwood's Tree Trek: uncover nature's green giants.

(Unless otherwise noted, all events take place at the Pine Hill Recreation Area, 12684 Mentzer Gap Rd, Waynesboro.)

Wee Wonders Nature Series for Preschool, July 3, 10, 17, and 24 from 10 to 11:15. Outdoor nature series for kids ages 2.5 years through 5. Pre-registration for full series required. Children must be accompanied by a parent. Taught by Buttonwood educators, age-appropriate program activities make learning fun, and include exploring the outdoors, hikes, nature stories, rhymes, finger plays, nature games, and puppets. Series Fee: \$28 Buttonwood Nature Center member, \$32 general public, per child.

Salamander Scramble 5K Fundraiser, July 4 at 7 am at the Waynesboro Summer Jubilee, across from 500 East Main Street, Waynesboro. Lace up your running/walking shoes and join Team Salamander as we walk, run—or scramble!—around Waynesboro to raise funds for Buttonwood Nature Center. Team members secure funding pledges from friends, family, and co-workers. All athletic levels are welcome. Two

ways to participate—virtual and in-person. The race is conducted in conjunction with Waynesboro's Firecracker 5K. Our VIP tent will be set up with lots of perks for Team Salamander members.

Tree Trek: Uncovering Nature's Green Giants, July 5 from 9 to 11. Summer Saturdays program. Have you ever wondered what the names of trees are? Experience first-hand how to identify trees by looking at the different parts of the trees like leaves, bark and seeds. Then join Buttonwood educators for a hike to test your ID skills to identify trees like oaks, poplars, pines, and others. Wear comfortable walking shoes. Family friendly fun. Fee: \$5 per person, adult/child. Kids age 2 and under free.

Art in the Park Summer Camp (Session Two), July 7–11 from 9 to 3. In an outdoor park setting surrounded by nature, students spend a full week exploring and creating with a variety of mediums and techniques like drawing, painting, sculpture, clay, fiber arts and collage. With guidance from professional art educa-

tors, each student will complete one project in the morning and another in the afternoon, with a lunch break in between. An Art Show on the last day, July 11 at 3 p.m. allows students to share their work with their families. Two snacks a day provided and two recess breaks, morning and afternoon. Bring a packed lunch, water bottle, sunscreen and bug spray. Camp Fee: \$225 for the full week. Sibling discount \$5.

Discover! Fly Fishing Adventure Camp, July 9 & 10 from 9 to 2 at Orvis Hill Country, 519 Gladhill Rd, Fairfield. For students completing grades 5 through age 17. Presented by Buttonwood Nature Center, home of The Institute. During this 2-day summer camp at Orvis Hill Country, campers will learn fly fishing essentials like gear and knots, fly tying, plus freshwater biology and aquatic “critters.” An exploration hike allows students to discover many wonders of nature. The fee is \$100 for members of Buttonwood Nature Center/The Institute, and \$110 for the general public. Enrollment is limited and pre-registration is required.

Pollinator Palooza, July 12 from 9 to 11. A Summer Saturdays program. Join Buttonwood educators as we celebrate the world's essential pollinators like bees and butterflies. Pollinators are essential to the survival of all life on Earth; they transfer pollen from one plant to another, allowing the plants to grow seeds, and fruits to grow food and new plants for a healthy ecosystem. Discover how to attract pollinators to your backyard. Take home some pollinator-friendly plants and start your own pollinator garden. Family friendly fun. Fee: \$5 per person, adult/child. Kids age 2 and under free.

Outdoor Skills Day Camp, July 17 from 9 to 3 at the Buttonwood Nature Center. Learn some essential outdoor surviv-

Hollabaugh's 70th Blueberry Festival

Hollabaugh Bros., Inc. will be hosting their 70th Anniversary Blueberry Festival on Saturday, July 12th and Sunday, July 13th from noon to 4 to celebrate the bounty of blueberries on the farm!

The annual festival features two afternoons of family fun including live music by local artist Austin Rife, wagon rides, blueberry ice cream made with fresh Hollabaugh blueberries, samples of blueberry products, and of course, a blueberry ice cream tent featuring blueberry sundaes and pie a-la-mode. The farm will also be offering pick-your-own blueberries throughout the weekend.

Kids can enjoy a free blueberry craft, scavenger hunt, StoryWalk trail, and yard games. Be sure to bring your appetite – Dougies BBQ Smokehouse, Bricker's Famous French Fries, Kona Ice and Travelin' Tom's Coffee Truck will be onsite serving up delicious eats both afternoons.

The festival is free to attend. Some activities have additional costs. Visit hollabaughbros.com for a complete lineup of events and festivals on the farm.

Hollabaugh Bros. Fruit Farm and Market is located in Biglerville, just 10 minutes north of Historic Gettysburg. The market can be reached at 717-677-8412.

alist skills like tying knots, orienteering, and other skills you can use if you ever get lost in the woods. Campers will also learn to minimize their impact on the natural environment, following Leave No Trace principles. Participants should come prepared in weather-appropriate clothing that can get dirty with closed-toed shoes. Bring water, two snacks, and a packed lunch. For kids ages 7–12. Camp fee: \$50 for members of Buttonwood Nature Center; \$55 general public. For more information, email to jessica@buttonwoodnature-center.org.

Nature's Canvas: Journaling in the Great Outdoors, July 19 from 9 to 11. A Summer Saturdays program. Connect with nature on a stress-relieving hike and let nature's stories unfold. Create your own nature journal to record the sights, sounds and impressions of the beautiful world around you. Explore and discover the variety and benefits of nature journaling. We will provide materials to make and decorate your own small nature journal. Fee: \$5 per person, adult/child. Kids age 2 and under free.

Rocks and Relics Discover Camp, July 23 from 9 to 3 at Stoner Farm, 8777 Lyons Road, Waynesboro. For students ages 10–17. A Discover series program combining earth science, geology, archaeology and history. Students explore the secrets of a 200-year-old homestead and how its environment influenced early settlers. Offered in partnership with Little Antietam Creek, Inc. (LACI). Students join Buttonwood educators and LACI archaeologists to “dig into the past” at historic Stoner Farm—digging and working with artifacts, scientific testing of the properties of limestone and soil, using remote sensing, learning how limestone is cut, and mortar is made, and more. Camp fee: \$50 for members of Button-

wood Nature Center; \$55 general public.

Tracks, Scat and Signs, July 26, from 9 to 11. A Summer Saturdays program. Who is walking in the woods? Learn about different animal tracks, scat, and other signs you might find in the woods. Then put that knowledge to the test on a hike as we search for evidence of the many critters living at Pine Hill, such as deer, birds, insects, and other critters. Wear comfortable walking shoes. Family friendly fun. Fee: \$5 per person, adult/child. Kids age 2 and under free.

Textile Arts and Nature Day Camp, July 30 from 9 to 3. For students completing grade 3 through age 17. Instruction from a Buttonwood educator who is a master weaver and textiles expert. Students learn skills with textiles such as wet and dry felting and weaving. After a lunch break, campers will enjoy a hike and several nature activities as we connect textiles to nature. All materials included in the camp fee, and each student will take home their completed projects. Students should pack a lunch and beverage. Camp fee: \$60 for members of Buttonwood Nature Center, and \$65 general public.

Animals Adventures Day Camp, July 31 from 9 to 3 at Buttonwood Nature Center, 10356 Amsterdam Rd, Waynesboro. Come discover the animals and ecosystems of the Cumberland Valley. Participants will head out on a birding hike, enjoy several nature-themed games and activities, and create a nature-themed craft. Campers should come prepared in weather-appropriate clothing that can get dirty with closed-toed shoes. Bring water, two snacks, and a packed lunch. For ages 7–12. Camp fee: \$50 for members of Buttonwood Nature Center; \$55 general public.

More information on all these events can be found at ButtonwoodNatureCenter.org.

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2024 Mount St. Mary’s Treated Water Quality Report

Important Information About Your Drinking Water

We are pleased to present to you the Annual Water Quality Report (Consumer Confidence Report) for the year, for the period of January 1 to December 31, 2024. This report is intended to provide you with important information about your drinking water and the efforts made by the water system to provide safe drinking water.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulates Public Water Systems and the contaminants found in water through the implementation of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA).

The Mount St. Mary's University (MSMU) water works consists of three drilled wells: well #3 (FR738096), well #5, and well #6 (FR738105) The water is pumped into a storage tank and then distributed. The Maryland Department of the Environment has preformed a assessment of the sources of water the Mount draws upon, a copy of the assessment can be obtained by contacting Mason Lucas, MSMU Facilities Engineer at 240-409-3045 or via e-mail at m.j.lucas@msmary.edu. A copy of the 2024 MSMU water report will not be mailed to consumers but is available upon request. If you have any questions about this report, please contact Mason Lucas.

Definitions

In the table, you will find many terms and abbreviations you might not be familiar with. To help you better understand these terms, we’ve provided the following definitions:

- Action Level (AL): The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
- Maximum Contaminant Level or MCL: The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.
- Maximum Contaminant Level Goal or MCLG: The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.
- Maximum residual disinfectant level goal or MRDLG: The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.
- Maximum residual disinfectant level or MRDL: The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.
- Avg: Average - Regulatory compliance with some MCLs are based on running annual average of monthly samples.
- LRAA: Locational Running Annual Average
- ppb: micrograms per liter (ug/L) or parts per billion - or one ounce in 7,350,000 gallons of water.
- ppm: milligrams per liter (mg/L) or parts per million - or one ounce in 7,350 gallons of water
- ppt: One part per trillion is equivalent to one nanogram (ng/L) per liter. A single drop of food coloring in 18 million gallons of water.
- picocuries per liter (pCi/L): picocuries per liter is a measure of the radioactivity in water.

The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally-occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity.

Regulated Contaminantes

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the EPAs Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 800-426-4791. Contaminants that may be present in source water include the following:

- Microbial Contaminants - such as viruses and bacteria, may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations, and wildlife.
- Inorganic Contaminants - such as salts and metals, can be naturally-occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial, or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining, or farming.
- Pesticides and Herbicides - may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff, and residential uses.

Organic Chemical Contaminants – include synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-products of

industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems.

Radioactive Contaminants – can be naturally-occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

To ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. FDA regulations establish limits for contaminants in bottled water that must provide the same protection for public health.

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Contaminants may be found in drinking water that may cause taste, color, or odor problems. These types of problems are not necessarily causes for health concerns. For more information on taste, odor, or color of drinking water, please contact Mason Lucas at 240-409-3045.

Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline 800-426-4791.

Lead Prevention

Lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. The Mount St. Mary’s University Water Treatment Plant is responsible for providing high quality drinking water and removing lead pipes, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components in your home. You share the responsibility for protecting yourself and your family from the lead in your home plumbing. You can take responsibility by identifying and removing lead materials within your home plumbing and taking steps to reduce your family's risk. Before drinking tap water, flush your pipes for several minutes by running your tap, taking a shower, doing laundry or a load of dishes. You can also use a filter certified by an American National Standards Institute accredited certifier to reduce lead in drinking water. If you are concerned about lead in your water and wish to have your water tested, please contact

m.j.lucas@msmary.edu for a list of laboratories in your area that provide drinking water testing. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at www.epa.gov/safewater/lead.

Our water system tested a minimum of 2 sample(s) per month in accordance with the Total Coliform Rule for microbiological contaminants. With the microbiological samples collected, the water system collects disinfectant residuals to ensure control of microbial growth.

What Is PFAS?

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) conducted a PFAS monitoring program for Community Water Systems from 2020 to 2024. The results are available on MDE's website: www.mde.maryland.gov/PublicHealth/Pages/PFAS-Landing-Page.aspx.

PFAS — short for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances — refers to a large group of more than 4,000 human made chemicals that have been used since the 1940s in a range of products, including stain- and water resistant fabrics and carpeting, cleaning products, paints, cookware, food packaging and fire-fighting foams. These uses of PFAS have led to PFAS entering our environment, where they have been measured by several states in soil, surface water, groundwater, and seafood. Some PFAS can last a long time in the environment and in the human body and can accumulate in the food chain.

The EPA finalized regulations for 6 PFAS compounds in drinking water in April 2024. The MCLs for PFOA and PFOS are each 4.0 parts per trillion (ppt). The MCLs for PFNA, PFHxS, and HFPO-DA (GenX chemicals) are each 10 ppt. Additionally, a mixture of two or more of the following chemicals (PFNA, PFHxS, HFPO-DA, and PFBS) will be regulated with a Hazard Index of 1 (unitless) to determine if the combined levels of these PFAS pose a risk and require action. Currently MSMU water does not contain levels of PFAS that are above the EPA Hazard Index.

The table below lists all the drinking water contaminants that were detected during the 2024 calendar year. The presence of these compounds in the water does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in the table is from testing done January 1 – December 31, 2024. The State requires monitoring for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants are not expected to vary significantly from year to year.

Disinfectant	Date	Highest RAA	Unit	Range	MRDL	MRDLG	Typical Source
Chlorine	2024	1	ppm	-	4	4	Water additive used to control microbes

Lead and Copper	Date Sampled	90th Percentile: 90% of your water utility levels were less than	Range of Sampled Results (low - high)	Unit	AL	Sites Over AL	Typical Source
Copper	06/06/2024	.17	ND (<.05) - .52	ppm	1.3	0	Corrosion of household plumbing fixtures and systems
Lead	06/06/2024	< 2	ND (<2) - 2	ppb	15	0	Corrosion of household plumbing fixtures and systems

Disinfection Byproducts	Sample Point	Period	Highest LRAA	Range	Unit	MCL	MCLG	Typical Source
Total Haloacetic Acids (HAA5)	HAA5 @ ARCC	2023 - 2024	0	0 - 0	ppb	60	0	By-product of drinking water disinfection
Total Haloacetic Acids (HAA5)	THM @ Waldron Stadium	2023 - 2024	7	6.6 - 6.6	ppb	60	0	By-product of drinking water disinfection
TTHM	HAA5 @ ARCC	2023 - 2024	7	6.8 - 6.8	ppb	80	0	By-product of drinking water chlorination
TTHM	THM @ Waldron Stadium	2023 - 2024	26	26.1 - 26.1	ppb	80	0	By-product of drinking water chlorination

Regulated Contaminants	Collection Date	Highest Value	Range	Unit	MCL	MCLG	Typical Source
Arsenic	3/25/2024	5.35	3.56 - 5.35	ppb	10	0	Erosion of natural deposits; Runoff from orchards; Runoff from glass and electronics production wastes
Barium	2/15/2022	0.63	0.31 - 0.63	ppm	2	2	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits
Chromium	5/2/2022	9.4	0 - 9.4	ppb	100	100	Discharge from steel and pulp mills; Erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride	2/15/2022	0.44	0 - 0.44	ppm	4	4	Erosion of natural deposits; Water additive that promotes strong teeth; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Nitrate	4/1/2024	3.11	1.2 - 3.11	ppm	10	10	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, Sewage; Erosion of natural deposits

Radiological Contaminants	Collection Date	Highest Value	Range	Unit	MCL	MCLG	Typical Source
Combined uranium	2/11/2024	10.8	7.4 - 10.8	pCi/L	20.1	0	Erosion of natural deposits
Gross Alpha, Excl. Radon & U	8/25/2024	14	4.8-14	pCi/L	15	0	Erosion of natural deposits
Gross beta particle activity	2/11/2024	4.8	0 - 4.8	pCi/L	50	0	Decay of natural and man-made deposits.

Unregulated Contaminant Well 3 & 5 2024 PFAS	PFOS (ppt)	PFOA (ppt)	PFHxS (ppt)	GenX Chemicals (HFPO-DA) (ppt)	PFNA (ppt)	PFBS (ppt)	Hazard Index (unitless)
Results	18.5	16.77	4.29	0	0	2.47	.43
Range	10.2 – 26.8	8.66 – 24.8	2.3 – 6.29	ND	ND	0 – 4.94	.23 - .63

HEALTH

Melanoma prevention

Taylor Thomas
Frederick Health

Melanoma is a serious type of skin cancer. That’s why Frederick Health is raising awareness of sun safety and the importance of getting regular and yearly screenings to boost early detection.

While melanoma only accounts for 1% of all skin cancers, it causes the most skin cancer deaths. According to the American Cancer Society, in 2025, about 100,000 new cases of melanoma will be diagnosed annually in the United States with around 8,400 people expected to die from the disease.

“The latest statistics show that since the early 2000’s, new melanoma cases have been on the rise,” says Dr. Saro Sarkisian, MD MHA, a board-certified hematol-

ogist and oncologist with Frederick Health Medical Group. “Melanoma tends to spread more than other skin cancers which is why it’s so serious. Survival depends on the stage, if we catch it very early, stage 1 is better than stage 3 or 4.”

Early detection is crucial for a successful treatment. In fact, according to the Melanoma Research Alliance, the 5-year survival rate for stage 1 melanoma is 97%-99%. It’s important to understand the risk factors to prevent getting melanoma and the warning signs to look for so it can be treated as early as possible.

Melanoma cases most commonly occur later in life, with the highest incidences seen in individuals ages 65-78, followed closely by those aged 80 and older.

But why are the number of

cases so high among older people? When we asked Dr. Sarkisian about risk factors, he said a large contributing factor is excessive sun exposure as a child followed by a family history of melanoma, a weakened immune system and fair skin.

Melanoma is significantly more common among Caucasians who have a lifetime risk of 1 in 38, compared to 1 in 1,000 for African Americans.

Prevention starts now. It’s important to practice sun safety as it’s an essential step toward preventing melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancers in the future. Dr. Sarkisian recommends the following:

Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen of at least 30+ daily. Applying generously every 2 hours and after swimming.

Avoid tanning beds.

Limit sun exposure and wear

sunscreen when the UV is the strongest (from 10 am to 4 pm).

Wear protective clothing such as wide-brimmed hats, sunglasses with 100% UV lenses and clothing with an ultraviolet protection factor up to 50.

It’s important to check yourself for melanoma by performing monthly skin self-checks. Knowing what to look for can help increase the chances of spotting skin cancer early. The American Academy of Dermatology provides the ABCDEs of Melanoma, so you know what to look for when checking your skin for dark spots and moles:

A – Asymmetry: One half of the mole doesn’t match the other

B – Border: Irregular or poorly defined edges

C – Color: Multiple or uneven colors

D – Diameter: Larger than 6 mm (size of a pencil eraser)

E – Evolving: Changing size, shape, or color

In addition to monthly skin checks, book an appointment with your Primary Care provider for a yearly physical exam. If you have any concerns during your self-exam, new or changing moles, bleeding, itching, or painful skin lesions, see your Primary Care provider. Frederick Health has an expert team of providers who specialize in the early detection and treatment of skin cancer.

Melanoma diagnosis and staging depends on the results of a skin biopsy. For early stages of melanoma (0, I, and II) treatment is typically done with surgery to remove the tumor with certain patients needing adjuvant therapies. The later stages of melanoma (III and IV) will require surgery as well as immunotherapy and targeted therapy. No matter the stage, regular follow-ups are essential to help detect any signs of recurrence or new melanomas.

Treatment for melanoma has considerably improved over the past decade. The introduction of immunotherapy, which enables the body to attack cancer cells, and targeted therapies, which focus on the specific mutation in melanoma cells, have greatly improved the survival rate and quality of life for many patients. Other forms of treatment include clinical trials which are exploring personalized therapies and vaccines.

“Immunotherapy is the cornerstone for certain stage 2 diagnosis and everyone in stages 3 and 4.” Says Dr. Sarkisian. Immunotherapy saw a significant improvement in the 5-year survival rate for metastatic melanoma. It works by helping the immune system recognize and attack melanoma cells. About 35-40% of patients will require a targeted treatment which is a combination of pills rather than infusions.

Frederick Health’s expert oncologists provide patients with individualized treatment plans ensuring patients are getting the latest effective therapies. Dr. Sarkisian and his team continue to help shape the future of melanoma care with innovative techniques and personalized treatments.

Melanoma is less common than other skin cancers but it’s more aggressive and likely to spread. Early detection is key to improving your chances of survival. Be vigilant about doing monthly skin checks and yearly physical exams with your Primary Care provider. It’s important to follow proper sun safety measures and avoid using tanning beds.

If you notice changes or suspicious lesions on your skin, don’t delay seeking medical care.

Schedule a visit with a Primary Care provider online by visiting frederickhealth.org/find-a-provider or call 240-215-6310. To schedule a visit with Dr. Sarkisian, call 240-566-4100.

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Our 2025 Catoctin graduate: Richelle Zheng!

Devin Owen
Managing Editor
MSMU Class of 2026

Finally, the spring season has arrived! The weather is beginning to warm up, the birds are chirping outside our windows each morning, the sun is shining, and moods have been lifted. In just a few short months students will be making their way home for summer break and the lucky ones will be graduating! They will finally get to walk across the stage, be handed their diplomas, and cheered into their next season of life. Amongst these lucky graduates is our wonderful writer for Catoctin sports: Richelle Zheng.

Richelle is graduating from Catoctin High School this spring and has numerous accomplishments and extracurriculars, in addition to being a published sports writer, under her belt. These include clubs and organizations such as Mu Alpha Theta, Rho Kappa, English Honor Society, Science Honor Society, National Honor Society, Baking Club, Student Government Association, Mock Trial, and Senior Class Club. Of these clubs and organizations, Zheng is Vice President of the Student Government Association and Rho Kappa, President of the Baking Club, Officer of Mu Alpha Theta, and the Secretary for her graduating class. Zheng claims that her favorite part of her time at school has been the opportunity to have a place in these organizations.

“My favorite thing about high school was being able to explore the various extracurriculars that were offered, and the opportunity to make new connections through said activities. I think what I am going to miss the most about high school is the friendships I’ve built over the last few years,” she said.

Zheng has her post-graduation plans already laid out too. While she won’t be pursuing a career in the writing field, her plan is to attend a four-year institution and major in Biology, which we think is just as great! She has hopes to possibly go into the medical field as well but notes that it is all “subject to change”. Zheng states that her choice in major comes from a love of the subject, “I chose this major because I enjoy the subject, and it’s also a major that relates to the health field, which is what I’m looking to pursue” she stated.

Zheng has been our Catoctin Sports Writer for a little over a year now, having started when a friend of hers, our former writer for this column Gina Lin, graduated last year and asked her to take over the position in her absence. It seemed like a good opportunity when she heard it, so she said yes and here we are! Zheng notes that writing for the paper has made her a better writer overall, “I’ve watched my

mentor edit my work and tell me what I could improve on. Yes, I did have many hurdles to overcome when first starting to write for the News-Journal, many of which were grammatical errors with numbers and the like.” Writing for school and writing for a professional paper is a huge difference, so naturally there were going to be hurdles to jump over. For a high school student, Zheng has done a remarkable job capturing the essence of the Catoctin sports scene.

Zheng notes that one of the biggest difficulties for her when first starting her position at the Emmitsburg News-Journal was how she wrote. “I also really struggled with putting emotion and passion into my writing when writing about sports and sports highlights. I kind of wrote a bit like a robot almost. Though, I’m happy to say that I have since improved!” Zheng explained.

Balancing school, extracurriculars, and writing is also a hurdle in itself, one that many writers of the Emmitsburg News-Journal know very well. More often than not, writers are attempting to find the right life-work balance for them, add the chaos of high school into that mix and it’s a total whirlwind. Zheng has found it beneficial to refine her time-management skills to the best of her ability. Creating this balance between writing, school, her job at her parents’ restaurant and other activities has been made possible by her ability to prioritize her tasks and obligations based on what is most important and most urgent.

Zheng’s desire to write blossomed from her desire to improve and refine her writing skills as a whole. There is a big difference between academic writing

and writing for the paper, so by immersing herself in both worlds it gives her the best taste of the writing skills she hoped to gain. Seeing writing as an opportunity to express creativity and creative freedoms, Zheng says her favorite type of writing would have to be creative writing even though she writes about sports so frequently.

For young writers such as Richelle, seeing their writing published for all to see is a major accomplishment. “I enjoy writing because it is a way that I can express my creativity and show it to many others. Especially through the newspaper, which is where many of my classmates, friends and people who live in my town can read the works I have written.” Zheng looked back at her writing career as a whole and notes that she has many things she was very proud of but has one work in particular at the top of her list. While reminiscing she said, “The first thing I wrote that I was really proud of was an assignment for my 9th-grade English class where we had to write a newspaper article on a war we were learning about at the time. This English class had shaped my writing experience because it was the first experience I had writing after COVID hit. Safe to say my 7th and 8th grade teachers were not super strict about my writing and skills because they were navigating this new ‘way of life’. However, my freshman year English teacher was extremely strict, but I’m grateful for that because it was helpful; her numerous critiques on my writing shaped who I am today as a writer.”

In addition to her love for writing, Zheng also enjoys going to the gym, playing tennis, going on walks at the park, shopping, dancing, and of course hanging out with her friends in her free time! She has



Richelle Zheng, Catoctin High Class of 2025

quite a few things she would categorize as her “favorites”: retail therapy, R&B music, the musician Keshi, the colors light pink or dusty blue (specifically those exact colors), food from Chick-Fil-A, Arby’s and Taco Bell or pho, steak and dandan noodles, the season of fall, and the time of day whenever the sun is setting. These are all some of the things that make her who she is!

While she is a talented writer, she is still only seventeen and is counting down the days until graduation and summer vacation. Zheng says that she plans to hang out with her friends this summer and is very excited for her cruise vacation with her parents! She would also like to make some time to visit her family in China as well. “Hopefully I’ll have some time to relax before going off to college in August” she mentions.

Zheng is a very well-travelled

young woman, having been born in Brooklyn, New York then growing up in Lynchburg, Virginia for most of her life prior to her move to Maryland. She has even travelled to Fuzhou, China, noting it as her favorite place she has travelled so far. Even having had a few different states to call home for the different seasons of her life so far, Zheng is happy to have her Catoctin community to call home currently. Soon, Zheng will be travelling to Hanover, New Hampshire to start her newest season of life as a college student. While we will miss having her here on our team, we wish her the absolute best of luck in college! Congratulations Richelle on your wonderful accomplishment, we are excited to see you tackle this next chapter in your life!

See page 40 for Richelle’s article on her sister Rona who will be succeeding her as our Catoctin Sports writer!

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HISTORY

The Contralto

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

Chapter 14

The sun of a beautiful Indian summer morning had beaten into the east windows for some hours before the Professor awoke. When he did so he blinked several times, pulled up the covers, turned over and endeavored to sleep again, but the spell was broken, full consciousness swept over him. Physical discomfort made itself evident first; his whole head ached, his throat was parched, his tongue too thick for his mouth as he tried to moisten his cracked lips. The machinery of memory began the processes of reconstruction, the most awful torture in recovering from debauch.. The first scene was the singing of Miss Tyson as she faced him off the stage. The next was the shadowy porch with its temptation to kiss her, the recollection of which left him in a quandary as to whether he had yielded, with a hope he had done so; even if he was somewhat irresponsible at the time, it would be a breaking of the ice.

The thought of what condition he was in on his return from the office and whether anyone had seen him put an end to his short spasm of speculative happiness, causing him to sit up in bed and look round the room. Everything was in order, a fact which gave him another crumb of comfort, for he well knew from experience that when far gone he produced chaos in his sleeping apartment.

Finally he jumped out of bed, made for the mirror, examined his tongue and eyes, and gave vent to the expression, "Poisoned Pup!" Shrugging his shoulders and gritting his teeth, he rang for Bob, and while waiting for an answer, hastily got into his bathrobe

and slippers, thinking of the impression his appearance would make on the boy. Hearing the sounds of the youngster's footsteps as he bounded up to the door, the Professor turned his back and fumbled the articles on his chiffonier.

"Morning, Professor; have a good sleep?" "Splendid, Bob," without turning; "what time is it, I forgot to wind my watch?"

"Ten-thirty, they're all talking about the play, greatest thing they ever seen. Doc Forman was up this morning but I told him you was abed and I wasn't goin' to wake you all."

"That was right, now go and fill the bath with cold water. I am going away this afternoon, pack a few things in my bag - no, I shall do that myself - order some breakfast, just the juice of an orange and coffee. Have the horse saddled in half an hour. Is the Rector in his study?"

"Yes, sir; and, Professor, you all ain't goin' for keeps?"

"Oh no, I shall be back in a day or two."

"Good! and, Professor, Jimmy Carrigan's down stairs, been waitin' some time; I told him you was asleep; he said he'd wait."

"Bring him to me in the dining room," a vague memory stirring at mention of the artist's name.

The cold bath and brisk rub made some change for the better in his feelings but no application of boracic acid and rosewater would clear his eyes. Attempts at reconstruction of the night's events accompanied the process but the result was very unsatisfactory. His hand trembled on picking up the mail Bob left at his plate. Carrigan tiptoed in from the kitchen.

"Hello, Jimmy!" with forced cheerfulness. "Hello, Professor!" in a whisper, "how' you feelin'?"

"Pretty well," and as memory smote him, "did you come home



Northeast corner of the square ~1910.

with me this morning?"

"Just happened to meet you on the Square after you left the office and walked up with you," endeavoring to speak lightly.

"Out with the whole story, boy; I would rather know the details than worry over what may have been."

"Twant nothin', Professor, nothin' at all; I met you at the Square and walked up to the house with you; you went in as quiet as a mouse."

"Did you come up to my room?"

"Yes, there was no light and I was afraid you'd stumble."

"Come now, you put me to bed."

"Just went to your room to see that everything was all right."

"I thought so;" after a pause, "did we meet anyone?"

"Not a soul, and I took your shoes off outside." "What time was it?"

"About three o'clock."

He had eaten nothing but sat looking straight ahead, seeing with his mind's eyes the disgrace of his act, the failure of all his resolves. Mechanically he lifted the orange juice, put it to his

lips, then set it back on the table without tasting.

"Eat up, Professor," gently.

"No use, Jimmy," shaking his head, "no appetite."

Producing a flask, he uncorked it and began pouring into the glass of orange juice with, "Pardon me, Professor; say when."

He was permitted to fill the glass and as the other swallowed the contents, said:

"That's better, thought you might need it. Now put that coffee under your belt."

"Thank you, Jimmy," with a choke in his voice.

"Don't mention it, and don't worry; there ain't a soul knows but me and by God! they won't know it neither."

"You said it was three o'clock when you met me; how did you happen to be out at that hour?"

"Oh, I don't know; just couldn't sleep."

"Tell the truth, my boy—all of it."

"Well, after I closed the hall I walked through the alley intendin' to finish the pint; you crossed the alley goin' towards the office before I got out on the street. Just in front of John Glass's house, Miss Marion stepped from behind a tree. She says to me, 'The Professor has gone to the Chronicle, he isn't well tonight, all wrought up and nervous, I want you to wait and see that he gets home, will you do it?' 'Surest thing you know, Miss Marion,' I says. Then she grabs me by the arm and says, 'Are you sober, Jimmy?' I says, 'Sure.' Then she says, 'Have you any liquor?' I says, 'Only one drink.' 'Give it to me,' she says. I didn't like to, but she held on to me and I had to come across. She took the bottle, smashed it on the stones in the gutter and I walked up to the Square and waited."

"Horse ready," shouted Bob.

Harry rose, grasped the painter by the hand, held it in a long grip and went out. Going to his rooms before mounting the horse, he took a pair of goggle, from his trunk, and put them on. Climbing into the saddle, he smiled wanly, saying, "One drink of liquor makes all the guild kin."

At the gate of the parsonage he hesitated which way he should ride, while the dog stood, one fore-paw gathered under him, pointer fashion. Fear of meeting people generated by his guilty conscience, caused him to turn from the town and strike off to

the north on the road that led to the Battlefield. The horse having been in the stable for some days was anxious to stretch his muscles and broke into a brisk canter. The air beating into his face brought color to his cheeks. Holding the rein taut to guide the Admiral over the rough way gave him a sense of nerve confidence that was physically reassuring.

His mind would, however, stick to no groove of thought, jumping from considerations of Miss Tyson, which caused sinking sensations of shame, to the opinion Emmitsburg must have of him once it knew the facts, producing feelings of self-contempt mixed with bravado. He was doomed to recurrent outbreaks, he philosophized gloomily, so what was the use of postponing the expose that must come sometime?

'Midst the shuttlecock and battle-dore of these thoughts he came, at the top of a hill, to a lane which led off from the main road, and which he had never explored. He turned in, whistling to the dog who had frisked before, telling himself he was less likely to meet anyone. Near a tumble-down shack surrounded by a picket fence within which some chickens scratched and a pig rooted, he noticed a horse saddled. He recognized the animal at once, drew on the rein as though to turn back, but as his own horse whinnied in response to the tethered one, reconsidered and went on. In passing the house, Miss Tyson hailed him from the door:

"Good morning, if you are not in a hurry, I shall join you," her eyes beaming with smiles.

"I shall be delighted," pulling up, dismounting to help her, while three children, not at all ragged as their environment would seem to indicate, watched her from the window. The collie received a hug for which he was waiting, the Admiral a pat on the muzzle before she mounted. Riding side by side, Prince perfectly behaved in the company of his more sensible horse friend, the two travelled some distance before the girl asked:

"Are you feeling better?"

"Quite myself this morning," he lied, gracefully, his swollen and blinking eyes hid by the smoked goggles, "and you?"

"Provokingly healthy; I cannot even develop a tired look; sympathy never comes my way, I cannot grow pale under my copper complexion."

"You sang adorably last night. I



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HISTORY



Old Emmitsburg Road - Now Rt. 15. ~ 1900 (Taken from the Mason Dixon line looking south toward Emmitsburg).

never heard anything sweeter.”

“Thank you.”

“That is not my opinion only, perhaps mine is not worth having, but the judgment of Mr. Galt and everyone.”

“I did not solicit the judgment of Mr. Galt and everyone,” looking straight before her.

“They think you should have a wider sphere for your talent or genius,” recalling the discussion of the night previous.

“Indeed! and what might that wider field be?”

“The operatic stage I presume, at least that is what I gather.”

“Quite an elevating avocation; to grow fat and beefy, to prance before the footlights and sing to a crowd of matinee girls who munch bob-bons, flirt with young cubs, and talk about their adoration of Wagner and willow plumes in the same breath.”

“But they are not the only audience; at the night performance you would have—”

“A bunch of dowagers who should be home knitting stockings,” she interrupted scornfully, “a host of young matrons who exhibit their charms and jewelry for other men than their husbands, and to quote a friend, ‘a gang of rounders who would much prefer to be across the street in the Rathskellar, their fingers draping a mug of malt, their souls regaled with the beauties of rag-time discoursed by a four-piece orchestra.’”

“You have a good memory,” he laughed.

“The glamor of the footlights has not entered my soul; not yet at least,” then turning from the subject, “When do you leave for Washington?”

“This afternoon at three-thirty.”

“And you return?”

“Tomorrow evening; I presume there will be nothing to keep us longer.”

“I hope not,” with a well-defined solicitude in her tone.

“Which means?”

“Nothing; that is, everyone shall be waiting to begin rehearsals for our next play.”

“I think, Miss Tyson,” he said, slowly, “that we are intimate enough to tell each other the truth, and not yet so intimate as to be forced to prevaricate. I am going to be perfectly plain: I was beastly drunk last night; was put to bed by Jimmy Carrigan at three in the morning.”

“Well, what of it?” with a defiant inflection.

“Simply this,” surprised at the absence of scandal in her voice, “I feel I should tell you, should let you know my obsessing vice, should make confession that I am here for no other reason than to learn self-control, and yet am a dismal joke at it; the very first temptation floors me. I saw someone with a flask during the performance, and—”

“I saw it,” she said softly.

“You did?”

“Yes, I was standing in the opposite wing waiting for my cue.”

“That’s why you were there—that’s why you made Jimmy wait for me to come from Galt’s office.” “Who told you that?”

“I forced Carrigan to tell me everything this morning; Marion, I am deeply grateful to you.”

“Forget it,” said the girl hastily and

with annoyance. She was not seeking expressions of gratitude. Pulling the rein, her horse broke into a lope followed by the Admiral, while the dog scampered joyously before and talking became impossible. He watched her confident pose in the saddle, her rhythmic rise and fall with the horse’s gait, her control of the beast with strong gauntleted hands, and his heart called to him to be forever in touch with this woman, to ask her help in his struggle with the devil who threatened to overwhelm him. Yet it was no man’s right to ask any girl to share his weakness, to forge a chain that would tie her forever to an invalid, an imbecile, as he termed himself in his fit of remorse. And his work in the world of ideas; ‘L’homme n’est Tien, l’oeuvre eat tout,’ he quoted, for he was an egoist.

They turned down a road leading back to the village, bringing their horses to a walk as they came to a hill. The clock was striking and the clear tone floated out to them on the still autumn air. As his horse came abreast, she asked:

“Did you congratulate Vinny?”

“I haven’t seen her yet, in fact I have not seen any of the cast except yourself.”

“Please see Vinny before you go to Washington. That girl made great sacrifices for the success of the operetta; no one but you could draw her from her shell of reserve.”

“I shall see her most assuredly. I appreciate her kindness very sincerely.”

“I do hope Higbee will give her full mention in his article. She deserves it.”

A space of that silence which follows the exhaustion of a topic prevailed, and during it he ruminated on the unselfishness of his companion, even going into the abstract consideration of woman’s jealousy and its causes. The first houses of the village came in sight, the horses showing an inclination to gallop, their riders being forced to restrain them. Clattering over the bridge that spans Flat Run, the noise of the loose planking annoyed the black, and while soothing him, Marion asked:

“You will surely return from Washington tomorrow night?”

“Or call you on long distance.”

“Thank you, Harry, you great big boy, and God love you!”

This manifestation of feeling caused him to look at her with surprise and gratitude on his countenance. She continued: “We are intimate enough to wish each other well and something tells me you should not prolong your stay at the capital.”

“There will be nothing to keep me; besides I shall be auto and trolley shy,” with a smile.

“Don’t forget to see Vinny, you can stop on your way up the street; goodbye and be good.”

The ride had done him good; once more the blood, which for days seemed stagnant, sang in his veins; his body glowed, his cheeks flamed and the fear of meeting people had vanished. The absolution given by Miss Tyson heartened him and he resolved to justify her faith; he would go to Washington and return in such condition as to demonstrate his strength of will. In fact he needed some strong temptation to

awaken his fighting spirit; he was in a dramatic mood.

At the Seabold home the girl received him, frankly confessing surprise and pleasure at her success. There was no attempt at false modesty, but she grew ecstatic in her appreciation of Marion. There was nothing in the world for the contralto but the operatic stage; it was his evident duty to persuade it. Accompanying him to the door they met her father, who, during the introduction, looked the young man over shrewdly from under his shaggy eyebrows, then passed into the house. Vinny held his hand warmly for a moment, saying:

“I want you to meet father often, and I want you to like him.”

“Not a very onerous task, Miss Seabold, since he is your father, and I am sure very likeable in himself.”

Her insistence on Marion’s ability as a singer, coupled with what Galt had said, was a new and troublesome factor in his equation which detracted from the joy he had been feeling. Perhaps the contralto’s life orbit lay beyond his universe, perhaps for her: “La femme n’est rien, l’oeuvre est tout.”

The time after luncheon was spent in packing his grip and in conversation with the Rector, who much to Harry’s comfort, betrayed no signs of knowledge of the dark events of the previous night. At three-thirty the carriage drove up which was to take him and the editor to Brookville, whence the P. R. train would rush them to Washington. As he waved them adieu the Rector wondered if he had done right in not advising against the trip for his boy; it was a source of great temptation; but gold is refined in the fire; and the ways of Providence are past finding out; and he hoped for the best.

Chapter 15 next month

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100 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

July 3

Emmitsburg To Celebrate The Fourth

Everything is all set for the glorious fourth on Saturday in Emmitsburg. The day will be observed as a general holiday. Stores and businesses will be closed and special hours will be observed at the post office. The holiday falling on Saturday permits two rest days for businessman and workers and many have planned to spend the weekend out of town.

Arrangements have been made by the Vigilant Hose Company for a big celebration. For years, the firemen have celebrated the Fourth with the parade and demonstrations on Fireman's Field. This year, however, the parade will be on a larger scale than here-to-for and a larger crowd than usual is expected.

The parade will take place at 3 o'clock. In addition to the volunteer firemen, the Taneytown Fire Company, with its new chemical engine, will be in line. Fraternal and civic organizations and many school children will also be in the line. Floats, representing business houses, will be displayed, and cash prizes will be awarded for the best decorated automobile, best float, and the most comically attired youngster. The kiddies are taking much interest in the latter contest and some grotesque costumes may be expected.

The parade will wind up at Firemen's Field, were a game of baseball played between Emmitsburg and Walkersville will take place. The visiting team will arrive in time to participate in the parade. Ladies of the town have joined in the celebration to make it a success and refreshments will be dispensed from stands along the parade route and booths on the field.

Dies Of Fright Upon Arrest

Killed by fright, when he was served with a warrant charging criminal assault on a five-year-old child, Frank Zimmerman, 59 years old, of Thurmont, died Monday night.

Working in a barn on a farm owned by Lloyd Gooding, Zimmerman was approached by officers bearing a warrant sworn out by Gooding after his five-year-old daughter, Iva had told her parents that she had been criminally attacked by Zimmerman Sunday night.

When informed of the character of the warrant Zimmerman protested, vigorously denied the charges, seemed to go into a frazzled rage, and then fell dead at the feet of the men who had come to arrest him for an offensive punishable by death. Physicians attributed death to heart failure brought on by unusual excitement.

Emmitsburg Chronicle Moves

The Emmitsburg Chronicle has moved into new quarters, a portion of what was formerly the High School building, on Frederick St.. The new quarters will give more room in which to conduct the newspaper and printing business, and the location itself is more desirable.

July 10

Merle Eckard Badly Hurt

Merle Eckard, son of Mr. and Mrs. Russell Eckard, met with a serious auto accident, last Saturday evening. He was returning alone from Emmitsburg in his Ford coupe, and when about midway between Emmitsburg and Bridgeport, was struck by a large car going in the opposite direction, knocked off the road and down an embankment, his coupe turning over and completely around. Fortunately, he was not rendered unconscious, but was able to free himself from the wrecked car, and was taken care of by an Emmitsburg garage man and brought to his home. He was badly cut about the forehead, was otherwise hurt, and lost a great deal of blood.

His account of the accident occurred on the hill west of Cattail Branch Bridge. He was practically off the concrete, when the north-bound car going at a rapid speed collided with him without cause, breaking the left front wheel of his car and throwing it over the embankment, after which the car turned, facing the opposite direction, breaking the other front wheel and throwing him against the windshield, breaking it and cutting a deep gash in his head. The knob, which regulates the windshield, made a hole in the side of his head.

For several days Mr. Eckard was threatened with a serious case of concussion of the brain and was critically ill, but the last report is that he is improving. The other car, containing five persons, bore a West Virginia

license, and did not stop to render any assistance. The number of the license was taken at Emmitsburg where the car stopped for minor repairs.

Suffers Stroke While On A Ride

Mrs. Henry Cover of Thurmont, suffered a stroke of paralysis on Tuesday evening and is now in a very serious condition. She was enjoying an automobile ride at the time. In the machine with her were her two sisters, Mrs. Catherine Damuth and Mrs. Lily, and her nephew, Reverend Damuth.

It was not known that anything unusual had occurred to her until their arrival and Thurmont when it was recalled that she had become very quiet, and had rested slightly against her sister as they were passing through Lewistown. It is thought probable that it was then that she was stricken.

Seized Liquor Destroyed

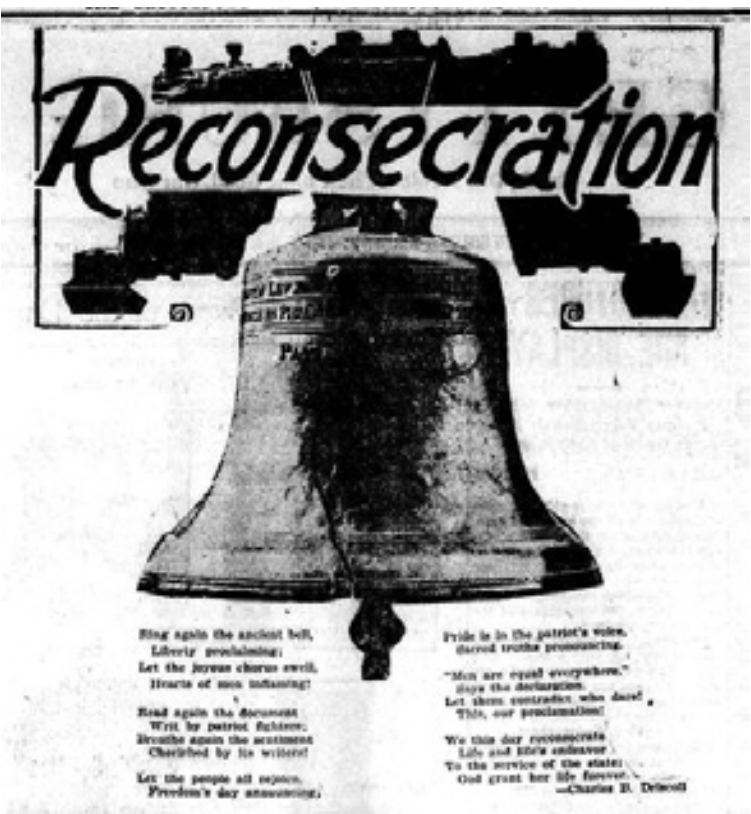
The large quantity of Scotch and rye whisky, which was confiscated by State police in Gettysburg, last November in the yards of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad, the haul comprising approximately 195 cases and being the largest seizure of liquor ever made there has been destroyed by Sheriff John C. Sheeler, acting on a court order.

With the exception of twenty-five cases, which were given to the Annie Warner Hospital, the bonded liquor was taken to the Spangler farm at the eastern edge of town, where the contents of each bottle was poured into the ground, the bottles broken and the packing burned. The work of destruction was done by Sheriff Sheeler.

Representatives of all surrounding Boozers Associations sent representative in the outside chance that the Booze would be 'pardoned' and allowed to find a rightful home in the belly's of hard workingmen in the community. When that did not come to pass, the representatives removed their caps an mourned the passing of the unjustly condemned spirits.

Airplanes "Smell Out" Still

A successful raid was made last week at the property occupied by a man giving his name as Oliver Grimm – on the John Frock property, near Kump's Dam. About 1,250 bottles of "homebrew" were found as well as 75 gallons, of "mash." Perhaps the airplane scout



“smelled out” the place, as we intimated last week. It is also reported that a trail from that source of supply - or some other source - led in the direction of Taneytown. “Smell” is getting to be dangerous evidence, and a risky thing to carry around.

July 17

Arrested On Theft Charges

Ludwick Simms, Russell Matthews and Jesse Recard, all over 20 years of age, all of Fairfield, were arrested Wednesday evening by the Adams County Sheriff.

Recard and Matthews were charged with larceny in connection with the theft of chickens from the farm of U.H. Cromer of Cumberland Township, along the Fairfield Road. An additional charge a conspiracy to steal chickens will be laid against Simms and Matthews.

Recard and Simms have signed written confessions of their guilt and Matthews has made a verbal confession.

Two hundred chickens have been stolen from the Cromer farm since April 1, according to the sheriff, and some of the chickens and two coops, identified by Cromer, were recovered recently at a local produce stand.

Simms and Matthews are said by the police to have plotted to rob chickens at Cromer's on Monday night, but

a truck, which they were to use to hallway the foul, did not show up, and they postpone the expedition until Tuesday night, when they planed to use Simms' car.

On Tuesday night, however, they noticed fresh tracks on the Cromer farm, and decided to abandon their attempt on that night. That the trio would have been arrested in the act of stealing chickens that night was almost a certainty for the state, county and borough police officers had thrown a cordon around the chicken house, ready to apprehend the intruders.

Evolution Case Now Being Tried

The evolution case made progress, this week, in the selection of a jury, after which counsels on both sides indulged in verbal fireworks over a motion made by the defense to quash the indictment, on the grounds of unconstitutionality and defective construction. Following the various arguments of counsel, Judge Ralston withheld his decision and adjourned the court for the day.

Attorney Darrow, for the defense, objected to the opening of the Court with a prayer, as has been the custom, stating that they were conducting a lawsuit and not a prayer meeting, but the Judge overruled the objection. A resolution was then offered to hear prayers from ministers who were not opposed to the evolution the-

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100 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

ory, the ruling of the Judge being that he would refer the matter of opening prayers to the ministerial association of the town, which precipitated a long debate on the subject of prayers in a court room.

The reply of the Judge to all objections was “I do not want to be unreasonable about anything, but I believe I have a right. I am responsible for the conduct of the Court. It has been my custom since I have been a Judge to have prayers in the courtroom when it is convenient, and I know of no reason why I should not follow this custom, so I overrule the objections.” The question of opening the court with prayer occupied portions of the first and second days proceedings.

The state quickly completed its side of the case on Wednesday in less than two hours, most of the witnesses being Dayton high-school boys. The defense then called Dr. Metcalf, of Johns Hopkins, as the first scientific witness, which was immediately objected to by the State, and the jury was sent out until Judge Ralston prepared his decision.

Counsel on both sides on Thursday, made speeches for and against the admission of expert evidence. The speech of William Jennings Bryan, which lasted for an hour and a half, was generally regarded as not being up to the Bryan standard, and was a disappointment.

Taneytown High School Building

It is currently reported that Edward Stuller has been given the contract for the building of the Taneytown High School, and as part of the contract has purchased the old school building for \$3,000, the material from which will be used in the new building as far as it may be suitable.

The contract cost of the high school building is reported to be \$46,000. The building is expected to be finished, ready for occupancy, about January 1.

July 24

Scopes Guilty In Evolution Case

In a brief written opinion, Judge Ralston refused to permit the jury to hear the evidence of expert scientists on evolution. The substance of his opinion was that as the state

of Tennessee had by law made it unlawful to teach evolution in public schools, the opinions of experts could not change that fact. After a half-hour of crossfire between the counsel, and tart allusions to Judge Ralston, the court was adjourned until Monday.

Attorney Darrow, whose expressions on Friday conveyed an attitude of contempt for the Court, greatly enraged the Tennessee Bar Association and the press of the state, and Judge Ralston was criticized for not disciplining him. On Monday, Darrow expressed his regret at having made such remarks, placing his remarks in the form of complete apology, which the Judge accepted, after Darrow had been formally cited for Contempt of Court.

The sensation of the week was the placing of William Jennings Bryan on the witness stand, and his cross-examination by Darrow (who does not seem to resent being called an atheist, nor deny that he disbelieves most, if not all of the Old Testament). Bryan's examination was stormy from beginning to end, and finally became so violent that the Court was suddenly adjourned. Most of the evidence in the case was mere publicity argument, and did not go before the Jury.

The case closed on Tuesday morning, and a verdict of guilty was promptly rendered. Judge Ralston imposed a fine of \$100 and fixed bail at \$500, pending the filing of an appeal. In commenting on the verdict, Scopes said he had been “convicted of violating an unjust statute.” As Scopes had admitted the charge of teaching evolution contrary to law, there was no other verdict possible, the only question being was the constitutionality of the law of the state.

As one of the outcomes of the case, a bill will be presented before Congress providing that Federal aid be withdrawn from all schools teaching the theories of evolution.

The Philadelphia Ledger commented, caustically, on the disgraceful features of the case, and particularly on the part played by Bryan and Darrow. It said in part: “If these are leaders of the two forces which met at Dayton, then the whole issue is an empty quarrel. If they are, in fact, the representative

champions of Science and of Religion, it is a shameful confession of America's intellectual bankruptcy.

“Neither is a true representative of the cause in which he fights. William Jennings Bryan is an aging politician who does not represent the greater Christian or religious forces of America. Clarence Darrow is a tired, disillusioned and vitriolic advocate, who made his reputation in the field of criminal law. He may represent unbelief, but he does not represent true Science which has no quarrel with spiritual life and Religion.

“The happenings at Dayton on Monday were a disgrace to a civilized Society, to Religion and to Science. They were a humiliation to the law, to Tennessee and to the Nation. It is time for the issues to be transferred to a higher tribunal and for this small town farce to end. It was high time for the curtain to be rung down on this hippodrome of self advertisers in a publicity-crazed community and on this clownish travesty that was making Science, the Church, the Law and the State of Tennessee ridicules.”

Suicide Near Taneytown

Charles Stonesifer committed suicide, some time Wednesday, by hanging himself in the barn at his home, near Taneytown. The body was found at about 5 o'clock, in the afternoon, by his son, on going to the barn to do some work, evidently sometime after the act had taken place.

Justice Davidson and Dr. Wells were called, and after viewing the body it was decided that no inquest was necessary, death having been due to suicide.

Mr. Stonesifer, who has been operating a bread route for the Everhart Bakery, left on his route, Monday, for Thurmont, apparently in the best of spirits. Just what happened during all of the time, is something of a mystery; but, he left his truck in Thurmont, and was next found on Tuesday morning in the barn on his farm at Keysville, occupied by Harry Welty. In the evening Mr. Welty brought him part of the way home. Mr. Stonesifer saying he would walk the rest of the way.

He was not seen at his home,

however, until found hanging in the barn. Recently, he had some financial trouble over the attempted sale of his bread route, and other matters, and this may have temporarily unsettled his mind.

He is survived by his wife, a daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hilterbrick, one son, Wilbur, and his father, Oliver Stonesifer, of Keymar; also by one brother, William Stonesifer, of Keysville, and one sister, Miss Carrie, of Baltimore.

Saint Joseph's Preparing For Annual Picnic

Extensive plans are being made for the annual picnic of Saint Joseph's Catholic Church, in Emmitsburg, to be held at the Firemen's Field, Saturday, August 1. Reverend Hulett Piper, C.M., and Reverend Francis Rozers, C.M., assistant to Reverend J. O. Haydn, C.M., pastor of the church are in charge of the arrangements. Efforts are being made to make the picnic this year, one of the largest ever held on Firemen's Field.

For the past 40 years Saint Joseph's church has held an annual picnic and the event is well known all over the northern section of the County. This year extra features will be added. A regularly scheduled county league baseball game will be played between Emmitsburg and Woodsboro and athletic events will be arranged for boys and girls.

The picnic will be much in the way of a reunion and a large number of former residents of Emmitsburg and vicinity and many persons from Thurmont, Woodsboro, and other places are expected.

The ladies of the church will arrange a fine supper, which will be served on the field. Last year the supper was one of the features of the occasion. This year extra plans are being made for the supper.

July 30

Annual Community Picnic At Rocky Ridge

The annual community picnic in Mount Tabor Park at Rocky Ridge will be held on August 8, with the

festival in the evening. The Knights of Pythin Municipal Band, a 50-piece band from Chambersburg will furnish the music both during the day and in the evening at the festival.

The park has been enlarged during the year to 16 acres. The park is improved with a large tabernacle where religious services are held every Sunday evening during the summer; a large refreshment booth; an artesian well; play features for the children such as sliding boards, one of which is in the process of completion, and which, is the largest in Western Maryland; and, seesaws, sandboxes, and the like.

Many prominent men will be present. William Gordy, the State Comptroller, will be the guest of honor and chief speaker. His subject will be the “Condition of the State's Finances”; David McIntosh, President of the Maryland Senate and many other prominent men will be present and speak. Several prominent men from Washington will also be present.

Heavy Damage In Windstorm

Considerable damage was done in southern Adams County as a result of the severe wind, electrical and rain storm, the second within a week, which broke here Thursday afternoon.

The roof of the Sterner farmhouse was ripped off by the heavy wind that blew in gale like fashion for some time. A number of telephone poles were broken off a few feet from the ground. Phone and power lines, especially in the rural sections of the county were down for some time, while workmen were kept busy erecting new lines and reopening communications between Cashtown, Fairfield, Orrtanna and other sections of the county.

Fields were soaked and considerable damage was reported to corn and fruit crops. A number of trees were also uprooted.

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TANEYTOWN HISTORY

Bollinger Park: from farmland to nature preserve

David Buie

With its sweeping meadows, quiet woods, and the gentle curve of Piney Creek running through it, Bollinger Park today offers Taneytown residents a peaceful place to reconnect with nature. But beneath its tranquil surface lies a rich agricultural and familial history rooted in the legacy of one of Taneytown's longstanding farm families - the Bollingers. Once the site of productive farmland, this 102-acre preserve is now a testament to the city's commitment to conservation, outdoor recreation, and preserving its rural heritage.

Long before anyone paved the first walking trail or planted wildflowers, the land that now forms Bollinger Park comprised part of the agricultural patchwork that defined Taneytown's economy and identity. Situated off Fringer Road, the gently rolling fields were typical of mid-20th-century farmland in Carroll County—home to rotating crops and livestock, bounded by stands of trees and the occasional creek.

The land remained in private hands until the late 20th century, most notably within the Bollinger family, whose roots in Carroll County stretch back for generations. According to deed and land transfer records, Percy James Bollinger (1901–1989) held the title to the property for many years. Following his death, Pauline R. Bollinger (née Becker) inherited the land, and the family subsequently transferred it in the 1990s. These quiet, internal changes recorded as non-arm's-length deeds reflected a close-knit family with strong ties to the land.

Although few public records detail exactly how the Bollinger family used the site, its location and condition suggest that traditional farming activities were likely conducted there. County planning documents confirm farmers cultivated the land well into the 1990s, considering it part of the region's productive farmland. Over time, however, as residential growth spread and the city began considering options for green space, the property took on new significance.

The land was used for agriculture until 2014, when the City of Taneytown purchased the 91-acre tract from its then-owner, David F. Garrett. Although the sale was not publicly announced at the time, the city's vision was evident: to convert the rural property into a passive park dedicated to environmental restoration and public enjoyment. In addition, the city had previously acquired two adjoining parcels from Robert Dayhoff in 2003, one nearly 4 acres and the other almost 7 acres, at no cost.

City planners acted with care. The land, which had long supported crops and perhaps grazing animals, required sensitive stewardship. Rather than adding baseball fields or playgrounds, officials embraced the site's natural beauty. Old fields were restored as wildflower meadows. Trees were planted along the creek. An environmentally friendly porous paved walking trail, stretching almost a mile, was designed to follow the natural contours of the land, providing gentle access to both the woods and open spaces.

This approach was in keeping with a broader shift in municipi-

pal parks: rather than only accommodating sports and structured play, Bollinger Park would offer serenity and quiet. It would be a place where brook trout swam in Piney Creek, where milkweed and black-eyed Susans bloomed each summer, and where walkers could spot bluebirds, deer, or butterflies along the trail.

In naming the new park, the city paid tribute to the land's lineage. "Bollinger Park" stands as both a geographic marker and a symbolic gesture. It honors Percy and Pauline Bollinger, and by extension, the many farm families who shaped Taneytown's agricultural identity.

Though the Bollingers no longer live on the land, their impact is still visible. The vast fields, bordered by creek and woodland, offer a glimpse into a past when agriculture was the region's lifeblood. And in preserving the land, the city ensures that the community's connection to its farming past is not lost amid modern development.

The Bollinger family name also appears elsewhere in the county, including with other landowners such as Francis L. Bollinger and his wife Mary Jean, who operated the nearby "Chenopodium Acres" farm in Westminster. While not directly connected to the park site, these individuals reflect the broader Bollinger presence in Carroll County and reinforce the family's enduring legacy as stewards of the land.

Today, Bollinger Park is a work in progress and a symbol of possibility. The City of Taneytown manages the site as a conservation park, open daily from dawn to dusk. It lacks traditional amenities



The entrance sign at Bollinger Park welcomes visitors while underscoring the Park's protected, community-oriented mission. It also highlights the City's partnership with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources' Community Parks and Playground Program and the National Park Service's Land and Water Conservation Fund.

like playgrounds or sports fields, but that is by design. Instead, it invites walkers, birders, and nature lovers to wander through wildflowers, listen to the rustle of leaves, and experience the quiet beauty of the Carroll County countryside.

Public events have begun to take root slowly. In 2024, the city hosted a "Birds & Bourbon" event at the park, combining a guided birdwatching tour with tastings from local distilleries—an example of how passive parks can also host creative, community-focused programming. The event was well received, drawing visitors who may not have previously explored the park.

Though plans to expand amenities — such as constructing a meditation garden complete with a gazebo, reflection centerpiece, and curated inspirational touches — have been slow due to a current shortage of funding, city officials have indicated their intent to

keep the park focused on quiet, low-impact recreation. The former farm fields will continue to be transformed into passive, natural landscapes, retaining habitats for native species and offering visitors a haven for reflection and rest.

Bollinger Park's story is a quiet one - told not in grand headlines but in thoughtful decisions: a family choosing to retain their land across generations, a city choosing to protect it, and a community choosing to explore and cherish it. From the Bollingers' legacy of stewardship to the city's modern investment in natural beauty, the park embodies both continuity and change.

In a fast-developing region, Bollinger Park offers something increasingly rare: open space that invites not activity, but stillness; not competition, but contemplation. It is a living landscape - rooted in the past, open to the present, and preserved for the generations yet to come.

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TEACHER TALK!

Summer reading

Claire Doll
MSMU Class of 2024

Summertime is finally here, and we’ve been waiting forever. Long days stretching out the same way we stretch in the morning. Sunrises too early to catch, and sunsets wasting time as we sit on the back deck, watching. While spring is my favorite season, there’s something special about summer: blue skies, warm air, and of course, more time. If you’re a teacher or student, whether in kindergarten or college, or even if you tend to use your PTO in the heat-filled months, summer is the perfect time to wind down or adventure. Many spend their days swimming and hiking and traveling; or, if they’d rather take the days slower, they can watch movies, go out for coffee, and do one of my favorite things in the world: read.

Now that school is out for the summer, one of the most important ways for students to continue learning is to read. In fact, one of the most important ways for anyone to continue lifelong learning is to read. Reading expands the imagination, builds vocabulary, and draws the mind to a natural curiosity. Summer reading is vital for building that love of learning, even in the hot, drawn-out months. For someone like myself, reading comes easily to me. However, if you find yourself struggling to pick up a book—or even wondering what the purpose is—I promise it’s worth it. Here are some tips and tricks for anyone—not just students—to pick up books over the summer and turn some pages by the poolside, at the beach, or even just at home!

Join summer reading programs
Check out your local library for summer reading programs. These programs often incentivize reading by offering prizes, keeping track of goals, and providing specialized recommendations. When I was younger, in middle school, I volunteered at my library to help elementary school students sign up for the summer reading program. After filling out a form, students and their families would stuff their library bags with books to rack up the number of stories they’d read together. When I didn’t have to sign families up for the program, I was allowed to read at my desk. I spent those

wonderful summers immersing myself in the pages of my books, encouraging others to participate in the summer reading program, and participating in the program, myself. When I returned to school that fall, I always felt prepared to jump back into my English and language arts courses. Nowadays, I keep track of my books using bookmarks my library hands out. I’ve read nearly 30 books this year, and my goal is 50 (but I’m hoping to go through more!). Because school is out and my schedule is freed up, I plan on going to my local library and wandering through the shelves to add to my to-be-read list.

Check out your local library’s website, or go in person, to learn more about your summer reading program!

Find summer reads

If you go to any bookstore or library in the months of June, July, or August, you’re destined to find a hand-picked selection of summer reads. Novels that take place at the beach, or by the lake, or in the mountains—either romance, thriller, historical fiction, or more. These recommendations are chosen by bookstore employees or librarians to attract readers. Just like how we crave mystery novels as soon as the leaves turn in the fall, we also long for books that make us feel like we’re on the sandy shores of Nantucket or the crystal beaches in Italy.

Browsing bookstores and libraries is one of my favorite hobbies. To up your summer reading this year, head to a local bookstore or library to find summer-specific recommendations!

Bring a book on vacation

Summer is a time for travel. Whether you’re taking a weekend road trip or a weeks-long adventure, bringing books is a must. You’ll often find yourself on an hours-long plane ride without a source of entertainment, and unless you have access to Wi-Fi or downloaded movies in advance, you might be bored. Novels are a cheap and easy way to pass the time during travel. And, if you get carsick, you can definitely resort to audiobooks!

Additionally, however you decide to vacation, novels enhance your experience. Do you plan on relaxing by the ocean every day?



Sunrise on the beach – the perfect place to read!

Packing a summery read is the ultimate way to unwind. Do you plan on adventuring through cities, or hiking through mountains? You can listen to audiobooks or relax after your journeys with a light read. Every time I pack for the beach, I often bring four or more books—even if I’m going for a week. I spend my beach days reading, swimming, and reading some more while basking under the sun. I read more on vacation than I do any other time of the year!

Vacations are better when spent living in real time, rather than on a device. By reading books instead of watching TV or scrolling on your phone, you are treating your mind to a calming yet rich and stimulating experience.

Join (or start) a book club

Despite what many say, reading does not have to be a solitary activity. Book clubs are the perfect way to get to know others while immersing yourself in a hobby. They can be more struc-

tured—a club led by your local library or bookstore—or they can be spontaneous and flexible. Perhaps you and a group of friends want to read the same book hitting the shelves next week. Simply set a date, read the book, and get together to discuss the story. This was one of my favorite activities in college. I remember being part of the Mount St. Mary’s book club, but also choosing a book to read with my roommates and discussing over a plate of cookies. While my schedule in college was super busy, I always made time for reading. Likewise, while summer can mean a crammed schedule, reading is a necessary outlet and an opportunity to be with friends.

Book clubs are the perfect summer activity because this is when schedules open, allowing for more friends and family to get together. In addition, authors often release books in the summer because it is a highly anticipated time of the year. You can spend your afternoons by the poolside, at a local

park, or even in your backyard discussing books. Don’t forget to bring refreshments as well!

To learn more about starting or joining book clubs, be sure to visit your local library or bookstore.

There are so many ways to indulge yourself in books this summer. Whether you’re just starting out as a reader and want to explore the benefits of reading, or if you’re an avid reader like me, summer is the perfect time to open the pages of a book and jump into another world while enjoying the one around you. I cannot think of a more relaxing and beneficial activity. I also cannot recommend this enough to my students—or, to anyone—as they prepare for their summer vacations. And once you begin with summer reading, you’ll learn to do it in the fall, then winter, then spring... and forever, hopefully!

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COOKING

Baby, you’re a firework

Sonya Verlaque
FCC Culinary Program

Looking back on these recipes, we might be a little lime and spice heavy, but it’s been a spicy summer and July isn’t going to give us any break. In the US, Persian limes are the most common but no matter the species: key, persian, desert or makrut, they contain loads of Vitamin C for immune support, as well as being high in antioxidants which can promote heart health and prevention of other chronic conditions. Also, they are delicious and refreshing in this summer heat.

Thai Lime-Garlic Steamed Fish with Coconut Lemongrass Sauce

- Ingredients*
For the Steamed Fish:
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 tbs. fish sauce
1 tsp. sugar
4 fish fillets (such as tilapia, snapper, or cod)
2 tbs. fresh lime juice
1 tbs. soy sauce
1 small red chili, finely sliced (optional, for heat)
Fresh cilantro leaves, for garnish
Lime wedges, for serving

- For the Coconut Lemongrass Sauce:
1 stalk lemongrass, trimmed and smashed
1 can (14 oz) coconut milk
1 tbs. sugar
1 small red chili, finely chopped (optional, for heat)
2 tbs. chopped fresh cilantro
2 tbs. fish sauce
1 tbs. fresh lime juice
1 tsp. grated ginger

Instructions: In a small bowl, mix the minced garlic, lime juice, fish sauce, soy sauce, sugar, and sliced chili (if using). Place the fish fillets on a heatproof plate or steaming dish. Pour the garlic-lime mixture over the fish. Set up a steamer over a pot of simmering water. Place the plate with the fish in the steamer, cover, and steam for 10-12 minutes, or until the fish is cooked through and flakes easily with a fork. Make the Coconut Lemongrass Sauce: In a medium saucepan, combine the coconut milk, lemongrass, fish sauce, sugar, lime juice, chopped chili (if using), and grated ginger. Bring the mixture to a simmer over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Cook for about 10 minutes, allowing the flavors to meld and the sauce to thicken slightly. Remove the lemongrass stalk and stir in the chopped cilantro. Carefully remove the fish from the steamer and transfer it to serving plates. Spoon the Coconut Lemongrass Sauce over the fish. Garnish with fresh cilantro leaves and serve with lime wedges on the side.

Cucumber Mint Yogurt Salad
There was this big trend last winter and spring, about just eating a whole cucumber and a lot of recipes that went with that. Many of them had a spicy peanut sauce, but this one is cool for summer, and incorportaing fresh herbs along with hydrating cucumber that you can easily keep for a few days in the fridge to be your side salad for any meal.

- Ingredients*
2 large cucumbers, thinly sliced
1 cup plain Greek yogurt
2 tbs. fresh mint, chopped

- 1 tbs. fresh dill, chopped (optional)
1 tbs. lemon juice
1 tsp. olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions: In a large bowl, combine the yogurt, lemon juice, olive oil, salt, and pepper. Whisk until smooth. Add the sliced cucumbers and chopped mint (and dill, if using) to the bowl. Toss gently until the cucumbers are evenly coated. Chill the salad in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes before serving for the best flavor.

Key Lime Pie Bars
You can use key lime, or lime juice for this. One of my favorite memories is making a key lime pie for my husbands birthday, and our middle son, Colt, decided he was going to chomp down on a key lime to taste it. That photo was the real birthday gift. This recipe is from the King Arthur cookbook.

- Ingredients for filling*
2 1/2 cups (568g) heavy cream
3/4 cup (149g) granulated sugar
1/8 tsp. table salt
zest of 1 lime
6 tbs. (85g) Key lime juice or lime juice

- For crust*
1 1/2 cups (150g) graham cracker crumbs, about 10 whole graham crackers (crushed)
1/4 cup (28g) confectioners’ sugar, sifted if lumpy
1/8 tsp. table salt
6 tbs. (85g) unsalted butter, melted

- For topping*
1 cup (113g) whipped cream, prepared
zest of 1 lime



Key Lime Pie Bars

Instructions: Preheat the oven to 350°F with a rack positioned in the center. Line an 8” square pan with parchment that hangs over the side like a sling. In the end you will lift the bars out of the pan. To make the filling: In a large sauce pan, heat the cream, sugar, salt, and lime zest over high heat until boiling, stirring occasionally with a heat-proof spatula to dissolve the sugar. Once the mixture comes to a boil, reduce the heat slightly to maintain a gentle boil for 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Watch the mixture carefully and further reduce the heat if the cream starts boiling rapidly — maintain a gentle boil. The mixture will thicken only slightly; it will look almost as fluid as plain cream. Remove the saucepan from the heat and stir in the lime juice. Set aside to cool slightly in the saucepan while you prepare the crust. Stir occasionally to prevent a skin from forming. To make the crust: In a medium bowl, stir together the graham cracker crumbs, confectioners’ sugar, and salt. Add the melted butter and mix until thoroughly combined. Transfer the crust mixture to

the prepared pan, then use the bottom of a measuring cup or glass and the pads of your fingers to press it firmly and evenly into the bottom of the pan. Bake the crust for 10 to 15 minutes; it’ll darken in color a bit. Remove it from the oven and place it on a rack to cool for 10 minutes. Gently pour the filling over the slightly cooled crust, then carefully place the pan, uncovered, in the refrigerator for at least 6 hours, or overnight, until set. Once set, lift the bars out of the pan using the parchment sling and transfer them to a cutting board. For the cleanest and most precise cuts, soak a chef’s knife in hot water, dry it thoroughly, then slice the bars. Repeat soaking and drying the knife between cuts, as needed, to keep the edges clean. To top the Key lime pie bars: When ready to serve, top each bar with a dollop of whipped cream, then zest the lime over the top. These bars are best served chilled. Storage information: Store any leftover Key lime pie bars, covered, in the refrigerator for up to 1 week; freeze for longer storage.

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MOMS' TIME OUT

Surprises: the good, the bad, & the ugly!

Michele Angel

When you are a parent the name of the game is surprise. Throughout their lives your children are going to do things that surprise you. You surprised your parents and now it is your turn to be surprised. We can only hope there are more good surprises than bad ones. The question is, once you have had four kids and the oldest turns 18 can they still surprise you.

My kids came into this world surprising me. No, I don't mean I was surprised to discover I was having a baby, but I was surprised to find out if I was having a boy or a girl. With my first I was also surprised to find out I was pregnant. We had trouble getting pregnant and tried one last thing that was suggested, of all things, by a business acquaintance of my husband who was a restaurant owner. These were all amazing surprises.

Move forward a few years and the boys are toddlers. Boys and toddlers don't always mean good surprises. Whether they are writing with markers on their furniture, running around falling into a coffee table and busting a lip open, or peeing in the neighbor's yard. When I had daughters who were toddlers the surprises were definitely different. I remember when my oldest daughter was 3 and her brothers said something not so nice to her. I can't remember what they said, but it wasn't that bad. She immediately started crying and said they had hurt her feelings. I was shocked and said, "What do you

mean, the boys didn't have feelings this young." She stomped off to her room.

As they got older there were many things that surprised me, but none more than how sneaky they were. They each had their own thing, except maybe my oldest. The girls would sneak snacks and drinks to their room. I remember when my oldest went on a church retreat and we decided to give her a surprise and clean and rearrange her room. We found 21 half-drunk bottles of water throughout her room. I was surprised but my husband was completely shocked. My younger daughter went through a period where she would sneak chips or other bagged snacks. What gets me about both of these is they weren't sneaky enough to discard the evidence. For my younger son it was dating. We did not allow dating until high school, but when my son was in high school, I found out he had "dated" several girls in elementary school through middle school.

In middle school my younger son "dated" a girl he met on an online game. That was not only a surprise but a shock and an eye opener. We sat all of the kids down and discussed the dangers of online activity and at what age we would allow that. This scared me more than anything. I also remember my oldest getting dumped on a first date for not moving quickly enough. This was a blessing and a surprise. I had to explain to him that if a girl would dump him for that, especially on a first date, then she was probably not the right girl for him. Luckily, I was not surprised when he told me he totally agreed.

Through all of these surprises you would think that eventually I could no longer be surprised. I would have agreed until recently. My youngest has just turned 18 and has suddenly become extremely independent. This is the little girl that had to be pried off my leg when she was little. There was a time when my husband and I worried that she might never want to leave the house. Move forward to her graduation and a switch was flipped. She was about to leave to work at a Christian summer camp and she would be gone most of the summer. I couldn't believe it when she said she was going to apply to work the whole summer. The previous year she cried uncontrollably when I dropped her off to work for 3 weeks. She didn't want me to leave, and it was heartbreaking!

During this summer camp position, the workers can go home for the weekend. So, I figured she would be home Friday night and leave after church on Sunday. What I didn't expect was her not calling and sending a text saying she might not be home on her first weekend. I was even more surprised when she popped in to do some laundry on Saturday and left before I got home from an outing I had planned. I am super proud of what she is doing and her independence, but I am also bummed that the little girl who would ask if she could live with me forever couldn't even wait to say hi to me before she left. Now she is talking about doing the year long internship at the camp and taking a gap year from college. This news shocked me more



than anything. If you had asked me last year if she would do the internship I would have laughed right at you.

The other surprise I am dealing with on top of all this is that she is having some health issues and is arguing with me about a doctor's appointments to figure out what is going on. I messaged her and told her the doctor wants her to have bloodwork done as soon as possible and her response was that she can't leave camp. So, I made an appointment to have the bloodwork done at 7 am before her graduation party on Saturday morning. When the bloodwork came back looking good, the doctor recommended we go see a cardiologist. Once again, I was surprised as she argued with me that she wasn't going to leave and let her campers down or her boss. I tried to explain that her having an undiagnosed heart issue would upset everyone way more than her leaving for the doctor's appointment for a few hours.

I was surprised and dismayed by her entire handling of this health concern. I was also surprised and proud of her responsibility toward her campers. What surprised me the most was how an overly clingy child could turn so quickly into an independent, hard-headed, defiant young adult. I truly had never experienced anything like this. Ultimately, she is an adult, but as a mom I know her health has to be number one!

As parents, the surprises in life are never ending and it can be a challenge to navigate them. Just remember to have patience and take comfort in the fact that the bad surprises are usually offset by the good ones. If all else fails remember you are the parent and simply love them through it!

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...SIGNED THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

Senior John Witherspoon

Devin Owen
MSMU Class of 2026

Independence Day. What do you think of when you hear that? Do you think of the barbeques, swimming at the pool, day drinking and the beach? Maybe you think of days spent with family, relaxing at home and playing board games or going outside and throwing a football around. Maybe you're like me and you're expecting to be working on Independence Day—personally, I expect to be working the entire holiday weekend—and are either dreading it, or excited for the opportunities being brought forth. Do you ever stop to think of what led to the holiday? The efforts that went into bringing about our freedom and separation from Great Britain's rule. Where would we be now without those efforts, specifically, where would we be without those who made those efforts?

We all celebrate America's freedom in different ways, but it's important that we don't forget why we really celebrate this holiday and what it means. Granted, we weren't there and can't know what exactly happened, but we can take time to educate ourselves on the history and remind ourselves how important the

signing of the Declaration of Independence was. As we do every July, the News-Journal is here to educate on the history of this period and shed light on those who signed the Declaration, many of whom we have forgotten or just simply don't know.

That said, I am here to introduce you to John Witherspoon, a Declaration signer for the state of New Jersey. John Witherspoon was the only clergyman to sign the Declaration of Independence, but his life was so much more interesting than that singular moment.

Witherspoon was not an American native. Instead, he was born in Yester, Scotland on February 5th in either the 1722 or 1723—depending on if you look at the Julian or Gregorian calendar—to James Witherspoon and Anna Walker. His mother, Anna, came from a long line of clergymen extending back to John Knox, a well-known leader for the Scottish Reformation in 1546, and his father was a minister himself; so it is safe to say that it's "in his blood". Witherspoon was incredibly well educated; having first been taught by his mother, he learned to read at age four, reading from the Bible and eventually being able to recite a majority of the New Testament. By age thirteen he was sent to University at Edinburgh and completed a four-year degree in only three and earned his Master of Arts degree, while petitioning to publish his thesis by the

end of the year 1738. He was only fifteen years old at this point—an incredible accomplishment at such a young age. Just after his sixteenth birthday in 1739, Witherspoon was awarded his Master of Arts with a thesis in Latin, *De Mentis Immortalities*, signed by Johannes Wederspan.

Witherspoon is most well-known for his time as the President of what is now Princeton University. Following the completion of his degree, Witherspoon was recruited by the trustees of the College of New Jersey to become President following the death of the previous President, Samuel Finley. Amongst said recruiters was Benjamin Rush and Richard Stockton, both who would also go on to sign the Declaration of Independence, who went as far as travelling to Scotland to personally request Witherspoon's presence. The institution flourished under the direction of President John Witherspoon; with him growing the endowment fund, instituting circular changes and having patched up a major schism in the Presbyterian church. He is considered to be one of the greatest Presidents of Princeton University to this day.

Witherspoon was a crucial advocate to the American cause. In the years 1774-1775, he represented his county in the New Jersey Provincial Assembly, where he successfully agitated for the removal and imprisonment of the Royal Governor and received appointment to the

Continental Congress, which he stayed with until 1782. Within his years on the Continental Congress, he aided in the reorganization of the Board of Treasury, drafted a letter of thanks to Lafayette, the credentials, and instructors for Ben Franklin as minister plenipotentiary, and designed seals for the Treasury and Navy department. He also was part of the ratifying convention that led to New Jersey having the honor of being 3rd to ratify the US Constitution. During the period of war, Witherspoon even went as far as advocating resistance to the crown in a commencement speech at the University. With war though comes destruction and chaos, which led to Witherspoon closing down the College once the war entered the New Jersey territory in 1776. During this period, the British occupied the college; they burned its library, burned many of Witherspoon's papers and left things a complete and utter mess. He never gave up on it though; come 1778, Witherspoon had the College of New Jersey back up and running again with classes resuming in November of that year. By 1789, Witherspoon had returned to the New Jersey assembly with the responsibility of setting priorities of business, which included the following: the body shall deal with the treatment of prisoners, pensions of invalids, public debts, promotion of religion and mortality, divorce, paper money, establishment of records of vital statistics and encouragement of manu-

facturing. Witherspoon also chaired a committee concerned with the abolition of slavery in New Jersey, even though he was a slaveholder himself.

Witherspoon was more than just his accomplishments though. He was a son, a father, a brother, and a husband. John was one of six children, although he lost a brother in the West Indies. Witherspoon was a father to eleven children total, but only six of them made it to adulthood. On September 2nd, 1748, he married Elizabeth Montgomery. Together they had nine children, however, only five survived to adulthood and made the journey to North America from Scotland. In October 1789, Elizabeth died suddenly and unexpectedly at age 68. Two years after his wife's death, Witherspoon remarried 24-year-old Ann Marshall Dill. The two had two children together, sadly though, one of these children died nine days after birth.

Witherspoon lived a long and full life, filled with numerous accomplishments to be remembered by. He died in his Princeton home, "Tusculum", on November 15th 1794, at age 71. I'll end with this: take the time to enjoy your holiday this summer, but don't forget why you have it at your disposal. Take a moment to remember those who signed the document of America's freedom.

To read other articles by Devin Owen, visit the Author's section of Emmitsburg.net.

Creative Writing

War Horse

Abby Dacombe
MSMU Class of 2026

At one point, they had lived in calm lives. They'd grown up in fields, so grassy you could only dream, following each other around, frolicking in the sun. Some worked the fields, some were used for sport and entertainment, and some pulled families in their carriages. Others stood for hours, herding cattle until the sun set.

They spent years without a care in the world. Until their world began to burn. The men in red came first, taking them in the night.

Then came their men, the men who had raised them, fed them, and worked them. They got upon their backs and took them into battle for the first time.

They had a new purpose in life. Their peace was gone.

The posts they were tied to creaked as they stood, waiting for the men to return. They were murmuring this morning, their excitement rolling off of them in waves. There was an uncertainty among the herd; this much excitement from men only meant one thing.

Something had changed. It had been many months since they'd seen their men this happy. The darkness in the air had lifted, and a feeling of hope had taken over their men. A

sense of freedom lingers in the air. They were in the eye of the storm.

The earth was moving, rattling beneath iron shoes. It hadn't always been like this. There had been peace, green grass, and brimming brooks. Back then, there was calm, and blood flowed slowly through their veins. But now it was pumping, their eyes wild and afraid.

The ground cracked beneath them, sparking with each step they took. Cobble-lined streets were unforgiving to their trek. They passed homes, riddled with flames, echoing with screams. It made their ears ring, their nostrils flare, and their eyes widen. They wanted to refuse, to hold back from the fray, but the men on their backs urged them on, and they had no choice but to obey.

The sound of their shoes ricocheted throughout the street, heard above all else, alerting the people to their presence. Brown fabric whipped out from in front of them, and they reared back, away from the men in boots and black hats. These were not the men who sat upon their backs; these were men who'd taken from them their peace and their friends.

They marched on, past the men in brown, who to any other eyes were cloaked in red. Their eyes were sharp, watching as they passed through, ready for any form of disobedience from their men.

This was only the beginning of their new jobs. They would spend the rest of the days marching for the men who sat upon their backs.

Bells tolled over their heads. By now, they were used to the war-time call. Their ears no longer flickered anywhere but forward, always alert, always marching. The men,

upon their backs, left them when the skies turned dark, returning to their women and their ale. They were left to eat from troughs of scraps left behind, fueling them enough to start over when the skies lightened, and the ringing started again.

Their work was never done. It had been years, but they still responded to the call of their men and the bells that rang from churches high above. Their backs never broke from the leather thrown over them; they became stronger from it. Resilient, pushing through, obeying the men who fought for their land.

At first, they hadn't understood their purpose. They ran from it. But in time, they began to understand. This was their lives now, they needed to be strong, to fight battles in their own way.

The war lasted for years. They were older now, wiser, no longer afraid of what was to come every time they stepped onto that field. It was a miracle they'd made it this far. So many of them had been lost to the terrain, and the men in brown. The grief tore through them all, wondering how different things would be if they were no longer needed. How many of them would be left when this was all over?

They spent their days marching, over and over again, until their shoes came loose, and their muscles ached in ways they'd never ached before.

No more were there parades and children looking up at them. Now it was battle-torn fields, and faces filled with hatred for the men who sat upon their backs.

They were the collateral damage that could be spared for the lives of the men they served. No longer did they pull their carriages; now they pulled carts full of weapons, carts full of bod-

ies, carts full of men in uniforms.

They no longer ate clover in the sun or rolled in the dirt until they were covered in it. Life wasn't carefree any longer. It was darker as the shadow of war loomed over their heads.

It lingered in the men who sat on their backs, the men who lay across the fields. The men in red who'd stolen their friends in the night. It wrapped itself around everything, until all that was left was duty, sacrifice, and the fight for freedom.

Fields of grass were now ripped apart by battle—their once lush fields, marred by the footprints of their friends. The remnants of chaos now lay in the wake of a once peaceful place they called home.

The rivers they drank from were polluted with the aftermath of war. The air smelled of gunpowder and fear. They had served their time, but what did they have to show for it, but ruined land and fearful minds.

The men who'd led them into battle discarded them now. They were left to return to fields of clover and handfuls of grain, as if nothing had ever happened. As if the war-torn land was how, it had always been. They were trotting upon the corpses of men and the friends they'd shared pastures with.

It would take them years to relearn how to live without war. Any time a bell tolled, their ears would prick, eyes wild with fright and adrenaline. Their purpose had ended, some moved to fancy properties, where they continued to work, in the fields, over large fences, or chasing foxes.

Others lived quietly, separated from the ones they'd risked their lives with. They found it hard to adjust, constantly on edge, always waiting for the

men who'd occasionally be on their backs to call them to war again. But for them, that call would never come.

Their children would spend their lifetimes in peace. It would be the generation after them that would experience the same story as their ancestors. It would follow them, for years, until machines replaced them, and they went back to their lives of peace and pastures full of clover.

They were getting older, the ones who had survived. They had no job now, no one to serve. Their lives were spent on the grass, eating to their heart's content.

A little girl came to visit them once. Her hair was in braids, ribbons tying them together. She held a lone cube of sugar in her small hands.

She passed it to the war horse, petting her nose gently.

She had served her duty to the men who'd sat upon her back. This was the first gentle hand she had felt in years. She nudged the child back, something warm blooming inside of her chest at the tinkle of laughter that came from the girl.

She no longer had a purpose, but she still felt the warmth of the world through the children of the men who'd led her through war and back.

Living out the rest of her days in that field, slowly greeting the little girl until she couldn't anymore. War hadn't taken everything from her. She had finally found her peace.

To read other articles by Abby Dacombe, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.

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.
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 – June 21 from 5 to 6. This month, we

are reading *Piranies!* by Susanna Clarke. This is our fantasy selection of the year. Copies will be available at the library and all are welcome to join us!
The Summit Stitches Quilt Club meets at 5:30 on July 15. 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.fcpl-spa.org or call 717-792-2240.
Fredrick County Libraries
Summer is finally here at the Emmitsburg Branch Library! Seas the day, and dive into programs for all ages!
The Summer Challenge is back for 2025! Read for 20 days, explore desti-

nations, and enter raffle tickets for cool prizes! Reading each day helps lower stress and strengthens empathy and understanding. For more information about getting started with Summer Challenge, visit fcpl.org/summer.
Free Summer Lunches for youth ages 18 and under are available for pick up at the Emmitsburg Branch Library! These are generously provided by Helping Hands and Caring Hearts. Each lunch is packaged in a brown bag and includes shelf -stable items to last 1 week. Lunches will be handed out on a first come first served basis, and children must be present. Pick up will occur on Tuesdays beginning June 17 from 10 to noon and ending August 12 from 10 to noon.
In observance of Independence Day, all FCPL locations will be closed on Friday, July 4.
For Children: Junior Gardeners continues through the month of July! Children and caregivers will learn what it’s like to care for and maintain a garden through stories, songs, crafts, and visits to the Community Garden! This program runs on Wednesdays from 10:30 to 11:30. More family garden fun can be found with an author’s visit! On Thursday, July 10 at 6, meet Frederick County children’s book author, Ashley DeCapua as she reads her book *I Woofn’t Do That* and answers questions about her writing journey. There’ll also be a craft related to the book, which attendees can take home! Reptile Smiles is back this summer on Thursday, July 31 at 6! Join Nicole, as she showcases her collection of exotic pets. Attendees will learn about the characteristics of reptiles and get up close to them in an interactive experience. Other programs for children in July include Saturday Craftaculars, Go Team Therapy Dogs, and I Survived... The Shark Attacks: A STEAM Event!
For Tweens/Teens: There’s still time

for your tween/teen to join us for our Tween/Teen Leadership Camp! This program will run on Thursdays from 10:30 to noon, and attendees will earn community service hours. Our July topics include public speaking with Project H.E.A.R.T.S., making toys/treats with Shawn Snyder from Animal Control, healthy snacks, creating greeting cards for a local nursing home, and making no sew blankets with Project Linus. Other tween/teen programs occur on Tuesday evenings! They include Tween/Teen Garden Time on July 1, 15, and 29, Go Team Therapy Dogs on July 8, and Food Preservation - Canning & Freezing on July 22. These programs are geared towards patrons ages 9 -18.
For Adults: On Saturday, July 12 from 2 to 3, a master gardener will present a Herbs 101 program! Learn how to care for, harvest, and use herbs in a variety of culinary dishes. There’ll also be a demonstration on how to dry and store herbs, such as basil, mint, tarragon, thyme, dill, rosemary, parsley, lemon verbena, and oregano. Mind Care for Seniors & Caregivers returns on Wednesday, July 16 from 11 to noon! The topic is memory care, and Lindsey McCormick from Silverado Memory Care will serve as our guest speaker. Other July programs for adults include Go Team Therapy Dogs and Food Preservation - Canning & Freezing.

July 8 - Go Team Therapy Dogs from 6 to 7.
July 10 - Book Party in the Garden: Ashley DeCapua, from 6 to 6:45.
July 12 - Herbs - Fresh, Dried, and Culinary Uses from 2 to 3.
July 15 - Tween/Teen Garden Time (Ages 9 -18) from 6 to 7.
July 16 - Mind Care for Seniors & Caregivers - Topic: Memory Care from 11 to noon.
July 16 - I Survived... The Shark Attacks: A STEAM Event from 2 to 3.
July 19 - Saturday Craftacular: Ice Cream Cone Art from 2 to 3.
July 22 - Food Preservation - Canning and Freezing from 6 to 7.
July 26 - Saturday Craftacular: Paint a Seashell from 2 to 3.
July 29 - Tween/Teen Garden Time (Ages 9 -18) from 6 to 7.
July 31 - Summer Spectacular - Radical Reptiles with Reptile Smiles from 6 to 7.

Thurmont Regional Library:
Mondays, Baby Storytime at 10:30.
Tuesdays, Preschool Storytime at 10:30.
Tuesdays, Get Ready for Kindergarten at 11:15.
Tuesdays, Night Owls at 6:30 p.m.
Wednesdays, Toddler Storytime at 10:30.
Thursdays, Musical Storytime at 10:30.
Thursdays, Elementary Explorers at 2.
Saturdays, Family Storytime at 11.
July 1 - Action Packed Summer Program with Chris Vaughn from 2 to 3.
July 2 - Green Homes: Simple Steps for a Big Impact from 6:30 to 7:30.
July 3 - Red, White, and Blue Special Musical Storytime! from 10:30 to 11.
July 3 - Teen and Tween Open Chess Play (Ages 9 -18) from 5:30 to 6:30.
July 5 - Family STEAM Drop -In from 2 to 2:45.
July 7 - Anime Afternoon, (Ages 10 -17) from 5:30 to 6:30.
July 9 - The Gift of Funeral Pre-Planning from 6 to 7.
July 9 - A Conversation on Inter-

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TUESDAY - "HONKY TONK TWINS"
WEDNESDAY - PARADE NIGHT @ 7PM - ON STAGE "CATOCTIN MOUNTAIN BOYS"
THURSDAY - TAYLOR BROWN'S "ELVIS SHOW"
FRIDAY - "LODI"
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SCHOOL NEWS

Frederick County school budget

Karen Yoho
Board of Education

As of this writing, the 2024-25 school year has ended, all graduations have occurred aside from the Remote Virtual High School which will take place in mid-July, and the FY2026 FCPS budget was close to being balanced by its due date of June 30.

This seems like a good time to review the budget process before we turn around and start all over again in the not very distant future. Public input is an important part of our process.

First, let me say that much of the information I will provide came from the FCPS website on the dedicated Budget page. I highly recommend becoming familiar with this site. Our CFO, Heather Clabaugh, and Director of Budget, Denise Frock, along with the other dedicated Finance Department and Public Affairs personnel, do an outstanding job of presenting the information and keeping it up to date.

Determining exactly how the money we receive is spent is one of the main roles of being a Board of Education member. Our seven-member board acts as a collective. To pass any budget or portion thereof, at least four votes are necessary to achieve a majority. FCPS has a number of budgets. The best-known are the Operating Budget and the Capital Budget, but we also have a budget specifically for the following: Self-Insurance Fund, Artificial Turf Fund, and Food and Nutrition Services. The latter

gets no money directly from the school system and must run on its own like a business.

All five budgets must be balanced and submitted to the county and state by the end of June. Aside from the Operating Budget, the other four are more straightforward as to what funding is anticipated against what expenditures are planned. When it comes to the Capital Budget, FCPS works in close conjunction with the Frederick County planning office and the Interagency Commission on School Construction to maximize our capital dollars.

We have a 10-year Capital Improvement Plan that is updated annually. The Educational Facilities Master Plan is a 200 plus page document available online along with interactive maps that will tell you everything you need to know about our current and planned facilities.

Now, let's focus on the Operating Budget because this is the main one that the Board and staff spend so many hours working to balance.

Beginning in the early fall, not long after school has begun, the Superintendent will start to determine the priorities for the next year by meeting with department heads and school administrators. This past year, four Community Budget Listening Sessions with the Superintendent were held either virtually or in-person. In early January, the Superintendent then releases her Recommended Budget.

At this point, the Board takes

over as we spend a budget-filled January. At our first meeting in the new year, we have an opportunity to discuss the recommended budget as well as the expected funding amounts. In mid-January, often the same day the Governor's budget is released, the Board holds a full day Budget Work Session where we hear from each department/division so we have that background as we proceed through the next few months. At every stage, the Board is asked to submit questions ahead of time to allow staff to prepare answers, while still being able to ask questions during meetings. The questions and answers that are submitted are posted on the FCPS Budget site for the public to access as well. Typically, on the last Wednesday of the month, the Board holds a Public Hearing on the Operating Budget.

Mid-February, we approve the initial budget request that will be forwarded to the County Executive. From this point forward, it is now the Board of Education's Budget. Throughout the next few months, we will continue to discuss the budget, learn what our revenues will be, and receive recommendations from staff. By our last meeting in June, the final budget must be balanced, and a majority of the Board members must vote to accept the specific budget we've worked on over the past six months. It takes the Budget Department several days to put everything in order before the final budget is sent to the County and the State. The Maryland State Department of Educa-

tion mandates fifteen categories that school systems must align their budgets with.

A few additional numbers of interest. FCPS receives funding as follows: 47.4% from the State; 46.1% from the County; 4% from the Federal Government; 2.5% from other sources such as facility rental, earnings from investments, and nonresident pupil tuition.

The total operating budget for FY-26 ended up being \$970,236,964. Of this total, 85% goes to salary, wages, and benefits. The other 15% covers all other expenditures. For the past decade, Frederick County has been the fastest growing county in the state. The school system is projected to have 48,867 students next school year, 8% growth.

Student numbers are compiled for what is known as the "September 30th Count". This number is submitted to the state for funding that will occur in the next fiscal year. That means that a growing county will go an entire school year with additional students not funded until the next school year. This is one of the major reasons it becomes difficult to keep up with growth.

Additionally, it is becoming more difficult for all school systems to fund their public school systems. The federal government passed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 1975. The original law promised to fund 40% of special education services in public schools. The reality has never seen this number at even half that amount, and is currently at 10.7% according to Secretary of Education McMahon.

A big part of crafting a balanced budget involves negotiations with our three personnel bargaining units, the Frederick Association of School Support Employees, the Frederick County Teachers Association, and the Frederick County Administrative & Supervisory Association. All three negotiated agreements were ratified and signed at our June 25 meeting. This is another long process that requires teams from both parties meeting to work together to come to a resolution that is hopefully satisfactory to all.

In order to balance the budget the past few years, positions have been cut while student enrollment has grown. This means that class sizes are bigger and staff has had to pick up the slack. This is not business as usual, and our personnel will have a breaking point. And the next few years do not look promising. The federal cuts that have already occurred won't hit us until the next federal fiscal year begins on Oct. 1. Maryland continues to work on its structural deficit but we're not there yet which doesn't bode well for education.

So, what can you do? Attend one of the Superintendent's budget meetings this Fall, send your ideas to the BoE, advocate on behalf of students with our local, state, and federal legislators. Public schools are supposed to support and do the best for all students. This requires adequate funding and good decision-making. You can help us with that. To contact the Board, email Board@fcps.org. For Budget questions, please contact fcps.budget@fcps.org.

Town of Thurmont Parks & Recreation

"A Day in the Park"

for children ages 6-12

at the Community Park in Thurmont

8:30 to noon in rain or shine!

This year's program will be held for one week during each month of the summer from 8:30 to noon. Registration is limited to 30 children and closes the week prior to programming. The fee for each week-long program is \$55. All participants receive an official "A Day in the Park" t-shirt, knapsack, and more! See what's new this year!

Registration is open!

Each week includes nature exploration, un-plugged adventures, group games, fun art projects, science experiments, daily snack, and park visitors!

WEEK TWO: July 14-18
Registration closes July 8th
Eco-Quest Expedition - A fun-filled journey where kids solve nature's mysteries, learn survival skills, and take on exciting eco-challenges like building a pollinator garden and supporting native wildlife!

WEEK THREE: August 4-8
Registration closes July 27th
Mad Scientist in the Wild - A wacky, activity-packed week where kids mix nature and science with solar-powered inventions and hands-on outdoor fun dissecting flowers, building birdhouses, and studying insect superpowers!

You may stop by the Town Office at 615 East Main Street between 8 & 4 to pick up the registration packet or call 301-271-7313, press 0, and a packet can be sent to you.

For more information or if you have questions about the program, please email:
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ARTS

Behind the scenes at Other Voices Theater’s Guys and Dolls

Caroline Watson  
MSMU Class of 2027

With school being out for the summer, I have the opportunity to enjoy some arts outside of the Mount. As a local, I am lucky enough to know many of the ins and outs of the Arts scene in Frederick. This month I am thrilled to give you a behind the scenes look at Other Voices Theater’s production of *Guys and Dolls* beginning in August!

This summer, the stage of Other Voices Theater goes back to the streets of New York for a rolling time as they follow an infamous traveling game of craps in *Guys and Dolls*, directed by theater veteran Lee Rosenthal. The show itself is familiar to her, as she admitted to seeing it multiple times but said that the opportunity to actually direct essentially fell right out of the sky after she starred in *Big Fish*, another one of Other Voices Theater’s productions last year. “I’ve never done it, it’s never been on the bucket list of something that I have to work on,” she admitted when asked if *Guys and Dolls* was ever on her radar as a director. “It just kind of appeared, and I was like, ‘Oh, okay.’”

Lee Rosenthal is no stranger to theater productions, either performing in them or directing them herself. She’s been performing for about forty years, she told me, and directing as well for around twenty. She’s directed productions such as *Heathers: The Musical*, *Shrek: The Musical*, and *Grease* in previous years. She stated that she’s much more drawn to directing more modern and contemporary musicals; venturing into musicals from the Golden Age of

Broadway isn’t exactly her style because of the subject matter. We discussed some scenes in Golden Age musicals such as *Guys and Dolls*, but also ones like *Bye Bye Birdie* and *Grease* that might have some trouble translating to a modern audience with their messages and treatment of female characters and other cultures. It’s hard to strike a balance with shows like that, because both the director(s) and the actors have to figure out how to stay true to the story while making the audience more comfortable with the show. When I asked Rosenthal how she dealt with this balance she wasn’t very worried about it. “It’s not much of a struggle due to the actors,” she said. Being sure to lay everything out plainly with the actors in scenes that might be a particular struggle, and make sure that all of them were on the same page is crucial. “It’s all about choices made with line readings and what-not”, she said, and expressed that “things have worked out really well” in that regard.

One of the more infamous scenes along those lines in *Guys and Dolls* is the Havana scene, where gambler Sky Masterson takes the leader of a Christian mission, Sarah Brown, to Havana, Cuba on a date and gets her drunk without her knowledge. Bill Brown (Sky Masterson/Set Designs) admitted that there are some moments in the show that “need tweaking for a modern audience”, but, despite its name and initial impression to some, the show isn’t quite the old-fashioned show it gets the reputation of. He elaborated further, saying “I see people saying, ‘oh it’s so old and misogynistic’, it’s not



Earlier this year, Other Voices Theater transformed into Nurse Ratched’s ward for *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*. Tickets for *Guys and Dolls* are on sale at [othervoicestheater.org](http://othervoicestheater.org)

that.” Colleen Prior, who plays Sarah Brown, agreed. “Especially the Havana scene; the way it’s just scripted on the page- yeah, it’s pretty problematic,” she continued. Prior went on to say that the lines of the script, at face value, don’t exactly give the full picture. “I think if you read between the lines, it could be a totally different situation.” Both actors emphasized the importance of actors digging further into character motivations and exploring every bit of the script to determine what they believe to be the true meaning of a scene. Bill said he’s dug deeper into Sky’s character nuances and that’s allowed him more insight into the man, which gives him more insight into the show’s depiction of Sarah. “He helps her. He goes sightseeing. He’s complaining the whole time, but he’s not just leaving her alone in another country,” Bill said. “He gives her the option to do this to save the mission, and she has the agency to do that. People always make fun of *Grease* and *Annie Get Your Gun* cause, at the end, the woman changes everything she is for the man, and here at the end, Sky joins the mission. It’s a surprisingly progressive show for the time.”

*Guys and Dolls* is one of the more famous shows considered a “classic” from the golden age of Broadway, from around the 1940’s to the 1960’s. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that, of the three actors I spoke to, they’d all been waiting for an opportunity to do the show. Bill Brown, who stars as Sky Masterson and doubles as the set designer, has been waiting and working for this role for over thirty years: nearly his entire theater career, which began when he was in high school in 1991. “I first saw *Guys and Dolls* in 1993 at a local high school and fell in love with it,” he said. “It’s been my favorite musical since that day and Sky Masterson has been the role I wanted to play in that show since that day.”

Michelle Boizelle, also doubling up as both one of the Hot Box girls and the understudy for Miss Adelaide, has done theater since the age of seven and adores Adelaide’s character. “She’s just a fun character, and she’s just iconic, and when it comes to Broadway musicals, Miss Adelaide is a recognizable character,” Michelle said. “She’s funny, she’s the comedy relief, she’s a little bit of everything.”

Colleen Prior, playing Sarah Brown, has also been performing since a young age, around nine or

ten, she said, and has always wanted to play Sarah. “*Guys and Dolls* has been one of my favorite shows since I was a kid,” she commented. “And I’ve wanted to play Sarah since I was, I think, nine years old. I found the CD in, like, a bargain bin at Tower Records,” she told me while laughing, “and that’s how I was introduced to the musical.” She said she’d fallen in love with Sarah’s numbers and has been waiting for the chance to play her ever since!

“Directing as a performer,” Lee Rosenthal has developed a unique style of directing shows. “It’s nice to feel like the director is listening to you,” she said, and that statement has shaped much of her directing style. She stressed the importance of listening to what an actor thinks of their own character and how that may change readings of the script. One actor’s idea of their own character may in all honesty change the entire show, and so it’s the director’s job to be flexible and allow for the actor’s vision to shine through as well. “When they have an idea, I don’t shoot it down because it’s not my idea. It doesn’t have to be my idea just because I’m the director.” It’s important to her that actors feel like they’re heard and that their creativity gets to shine as well, because it’s what she enjoys feeling as a performer.

*Guys and Dolls* is a classic with a plethora of iconic numbers. Bill Brown is particularly excited to bring *Luck be a Lady* to the stage as a performance because he’s been using it as an audition piece for years. Michelle Biozelle is looking forward to *The Crapshooter’s Ballet* because of the dancing: it’s got “the most difficult dancing” she’s had so far, but it’s a blast. Colleen Prior wants to let Sarah loose in *If I Were a Belle* because it’s at a point where she feels she can have a little more fun with such a strait-laced character. Every single one of them are ecstatic to bring this Golden Age classic to the stage. As Michelle put it: “*Guys and Dolls* is classic Broadway, and you will be absolutely entertained.”

*Guys and Dolls* takes the stage at Other Voices Theater on August 1. Tickets are available online at the Other Voices Theater webpage. [www.othervoicestheatre.org](http://www.othervoicestheatre.org).

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

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Caroline Watson  
Class of 2027

On May 8th and 9th of this year, the day after my last final exam, I went to the Gettysburg Film Festival with my mother and the rest of my family. The first talk I sat through was one by Ken Burns entitled “The Art of Storytelling”. I remember sitting in the Majestic Theater in Gettysburg after watching a collection of clips from various features by Ken Burns and frantically scribbling down storytelling tips into a notebook that I brought with me into the dark theater. One of the things Ken Burns said—which I remember very vividly—is that, when he was asked about storytelling he started talking about a cursive neon sign he has in his editing office that says: “it’s complicate”. It made everyone laugh, but then he continued, and he talked about how the message of “it’s complicated” has affected his storytelling. It’s complicated, everything is. What good story isn’t complicated? It is that complexity of life that makes a story compelling. All of these things made me think about my own journey for storytelling, and it seems only fitting considering this new chapter of writing I’ve found myself in and my introduction (finally!) to the world of journalism.

I grew up in dance and theater, but I’ve always loved books. When I was younger, I spent most every waking moment with my nose in a book. There are pictures of me less than a year old, sitting in my dad’s lap and pointing at words on a page. I wanted to become an author because I thought writing a book would be the coolest thing ever and I’d get to make up my own worlds like all of my favorite authors have. Musical theater and dance opened my eyes up to different types of storytelling, but even between rehearsals I’d be making my way through one thick novel after another.

I had read every book I could get my hands on, no matter the genre, and my parent’s love of history broadened my literary and creative horizons even more! I sped through The Hunger Games series, The Martian, and The Westing Game. I binge-watched Bobby Kennedy for President, The West Wing, and Over the Garden Wall time and time again. I saw Les Miserables, Jesus Christ Superstar, Hamilton, and The Phantom of the Opera live, and then was in Newsies, Jr. and Bye Bye Birdie over the summers. I pumped story after story practically into my bloodstream until my brain was a living, breathing amalgamation of all the stories I’d ever consumed, no matter the format.

My life changed forever, though, when I randomly picked up a book by Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein called All the President’s Men. All the President’s Men changed every aspect of storytelling I’d internalized. The book was a snapshot of Watergate, but it read like a journalism spy novel. It enraptured every bit of my brain, and I’d find myself picking it up at every resting moment I had. And the craziest part? All of it was true. The secret meet-ups, the wiretapping, the codenames, the politics; every bit of it had actually occurred in real life. These facts were

brought to light by journalists, and they changed American history. After I was finished with the book, it suddenly dawned on me that sometimes not even the strangest, most bizarre work of fiction could hold a candle to cold, hard reality. All the President’s Men changed storytelling for me because I realized that I could tell stories that were already happening to the world. Being a journalist seeped its way into my future aspirations. It provides the opportunity to tell people the facts of life and tell real world stories with real world consequences.

Storytelling is the main aspect of journalism. To me, there’s a difference between the news and journalism. The news is facts and information, while journalism is a true story with real-world consequences. Journalism is where one takes a story and starts from the smallest of facts or images before expanding upwards and outwards for the whole picture. I don’t want to work in the news; I want to be a journalist. I don’t want to look at the forest, I want to look at each branch on a tree and then be able to step back to say, “This is what it means to be a forest”.

I actually do need to thank one of my English professors for bringing this job opening to my attention. If it weren’t for him, I probably wouldn’t be doing this. I met Dr. Wehner in the fall, but he became both my professor and advisor this past spring. He sent out the email about the arts correspondent job for the Emmitsburg News Journal, and I jumped on the opportunity. My reasoning was simple: I want to be a journalist and an opportunity had just presented itself to me on

a silver platter, and I am very involved with the theater arts on campus at the Mount. This was also an opportunity to bring Mount theater to a wider audience. The theater program is a passion project for anyone there, and I’m so proud to be a part of it!

Theater is another method of storytelling that, just like journalism, is essential for the humanities. Actors have to be so in tune with their characters that even an ensemble member feels just as alive and well-rounded as the main characters. Unless a character speaks directly to the audience, nobody has any idea what they’re thinking except through their actions. No two shows are the same. I started out my community theater career earlier this year playing Sandra in One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest with Other Voices Theater. Despite the rehearsals four days a week for two months, not one of the six shows we did was the same as the other.

My attitude towards theater and its importance can be easily summed up by something said at the cast party after closing night for Cuckoo’s Nest. We were all eating food, taking turns saying a few words, and mostly pretending that we weren’t crying when the partner of a cast member stepped forward to speak. He’s a director himself, and he had one of the warmest smiles on his face that I’d ever seen as he said, “There’s a lotta people who are going to suck because they didn’t get to see this show.” Everyone laughed, because it’s one of the highest compliments an actor can get; that the show you were in and your portrayal of a character can change someone’s life. His statement,



though it was much blunter than I’d have put it, is very true.

One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest is not a happy story, far from it. It’s meaningful, it’s tragic, it makes you laugh with one breath and punches you in the gut with the next. It makes you think and see the perspective of people you hadn’t considered. That’s what theater is about. It’s about bringing people with different perspectives together to share witness in the same story about the struggles of life. Theater is unifying. Art is unifying. It’s what the arts in general are about, and that’s what I’d like to bring to people with this paper.

Now that I’ve spilled all that to you, I think it’s time I properly introduce myself. Hello! I’m Caroline Watson. I’m majoring in English and minoring in Political Science and hoping to add a theater minor as well before I graduate from the Mount around 2027, and most importantly,

I’m the new Mount arts writer!!!!

I danced for eleven years and did competitive dance for four of those years. I live with my parents, my three little brothers, and our five cats (listen, when a cat adopts you, you have no choice but to adopt them back. That’s just how it works). When I’m not doing homework or writing for this paper, I’m probably either writing creatively, dancing, or being a theater kid in whatever capacity I can. I enjoy The Hunger Games series and Joss Whedon’s Firefly probably more than is healthy. My favorite music artists are Mitski, Florence and the Machine, and Sufjan Stevens, and my drink of choice is peppermint tea. I’m very happy to be working for this paper and writing for you all!

To read other articles by Caroline Watson, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.



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CATOCTIN SPORTS

Introducing Rona Zheng, your new Catoctin Sports writer!

Richelle Zheng  
CHS Class of 2025

With summer coming into full swing, Catoctin High School’s class of 2025 has officially graduated as of May 28. Therefore, as my time with Catoc-tin High School comes to a close, so does my position as the writer for the Emmitsburg News Jour-nal. Thus, I am pleased to intro-duce the new writer who will be taking over shortly: Rona Zheng. She is an upcoming freshman at Catoctin High School, meaning she is part of the class of 2029! To start her freshman year, she has decided to take on the massive role of being the new writer for the news journal.

Although writing for the news journal is a significant commit-ment, Rona exemplifies that she is capable of handling the position, as she has also partic-ipated in numerous extracurricu-lar activities throughout middle school. Her most significant com-mitments were the Leo Club and band, which she partici-pated in all three years of middle school. Additionally, during her 8th-grade year, she became presi-dent of the Leo Club, demonstrat-ing her leadership and dedication to her community. In addition to those activities, she also decided to join Student Voices during her final year of middle school. Zheng

expresses her love for her commu-nity by immersing herself in it. Therefore, she decided to join the Leo Club and Student Voices, as she wanted to contribute more to the community.

As mentioned before, Rona is just freshly out of middle school and only thirteen years old. Still, being young does not deter her as she has decided to challenge her-self by taking on this new posi-tion, on top of the additional clubs she plans to join in high school. When asked about what caught her interest in writing for the journal, she said that she wants to take over the newspa-per because she enjoys writing and learning about what is happening in her community. Furthermore, Zheng mentions, “I am also inter-ested in writing for the Emmits-burg News Journal because it seems like a great opportunity.”

She reveals that she is excited to take on this opportunity so she can learn more about what is hap-pening around her in the commu-nity. Moreover, in addition to her love for writing, she enjoys read-ing and playing the violin. Also, in her free time, she enjoys read-ing and spending time with her friends. Some more of Rona’s “favorites” include her favorite animal, bunnies, because that is her Chinese zodiac sign, and her favorite time of day: nighttime. She also likes the color yellow and

enjoys swimming whenever she gets the chance to dip her feet in a pool or the ocean.

Middle school is all about discovery and making connections. Throug-hout these hectic three years, children become teenagers and explore their likes and dislikes, allowing them to discover a sense of identity. When asked about her experiences in mid-dle school, Zheng reveals that her experience was “one of a kind.” She mentions that her middle school experience felt unique from others due to the countless times she had to move states during those years, which were tough to navigate, she says. Still, Zheng cherishes these moments deeply, mentioning that she had a lot of fun throughout her years. Above all, she states that her last year in mid-dle school was the best.

Although she notes that there was the usual drama that occurs during these stages of self-discov-ery, everyone came together in the last few weeks – “like a big family.” Zheng has also provided some advice that she would like to offer to the upcoming middle schoolers. She pushes for them to “savor every second of middle school since it is only three years and will go by in a flash.” In addi-tion, because the people one sur-rounds oneself with have the greatest influence on them, she suggests that they should choose their friends carefully. More-over, most importantly, she adds



Rona Zheng, our new Catoctin Sports writer!

that they need to remember to be themselves and have fun.

After experiencing the annual 8th-grade move-up day that Catoc-tin High School holds every spring, following the seniors’ departure, Rona has many aspira-tions for the clubs she would like to join once school starts again in August. New clubs that Zheng mentioned she would like to join are the Catoctin Conservation Club, the Student Government Association, and Freshman Club. She wants to join these clubs to get more involved in the commu-nity. She would also like to con-tinue her participation in the Leo Club and Student Voices, as she has enjoyed being a part of these organizations and helping out in the community through them.

Nonetheless, Rona is also ner-vous about becoming a freshman. Zheng mentions that she feels her years in middle school have flown by, and expresses her feelings about high school: “Becoming a high schooler feels so surreal—younger me thought it was so far away, but now it is only two months from now.” Having ner-vousness and uncertainty when starting a new chapter of one’s life is completely understandable, as most people have all been there

before. Regardless, Zheng men-tions that although she is nervous, she is also excited about the new opportunities that come with high school and the wider variety of course choices available, as most of the courses in middle school are predetermined by the coun-selor and teachers. Since Zheng is still young, she is unsure about her future career plans after high school. However, she is certain about planning to attend a four-year institution after high school.

Zheng also mentions that her drive for success mainly comes from her background as a first-genera-tion student. Knowing that her parents never had the opportuni-ties she now has, she is on a mis-sion to make the most of them and make her family proud. Moreover, she adds that things have not always come easily for her due to her back-ground; however, it has led her to discover the importance of grati-tude. In addition, Rona describes her parents as extremely hard-work-ing people who have worked tire-lessly to provide her and her siblings the life they have, teaching her the significance of hard work.

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MOUNT SPORTS

Frederick announces \$39 million renovation of Nymeo Field

*Editor's Note: With activity at the Mount having dwindled as the students enjoy their summer vacation, we were left with no Mount Sports to write about this month. Instead, we opted to write about efforts to bring semi-pro baseball back to Frederick!*

Steve Morano  
MSMU Class of 2024

In a transformative move for baseball in Frederick, Nymeo Field at Harry Grove Stadium is undergoing a \$39 million renovation that aims to modernize the historic ballpark and revive the professional aspirations of the Frederick Keys. Once a proud affiliate of the Baltimore Orioles, the Keys have been without a Major League Baseball affiliation since 2021 after being dropped by the O's due to poor stadium and player development conditions. With plans now firmly underway and support secured from state and local bodies, there is renewed optimism that the team could regain affiliated status as early as the 2026–2027 seasons.

The Frederick Keys' journey from Minor League affiliate to independent ball has been both humbling and transformative. The team was dropped from the Orioles' minor league system following MLB's sweeping reorganization of Minor League Baseball in 2021. Since then, the Keys have participated in the MLB Draft League, a summer league intended to showcase draft-eligible college players. While the league provides developmental opportunities, it lacks the prestige, financial backing, and long-term player development structure of full minor league affiliation. For the City of Frederick and its passionate baseball community, rejoining an MLB farm system is not merely a hope — it is a mission.

That mission received a monumental boost when the Maryland Stadium Authority (MSA), the State's official governing body for sports venues, approved \$39 million in funding for a comprehensive renovation of Nymeo Field at Harry Grove Stadium. The MSA's involvement reflects the State's broader commitment to fostering community development through sports infrastructure. The stadium, which has served as a community hub since its opening in 1990, is now set to enter a new era of functionality and fan engagement.

Joining the MSA in this ambitious endeavor are the City of Frederick and Attain Sports and Entertainment, the ownership group behind the Keys. Together, these stakeholders have charted a bold path forward, setting 2026 as the target year for completion. To bring this vision to life, the City has enlisted the expertise of Whiting-Turner Contracting Company, a nationally recognized construction firm, and Little Diversified Architectural Consulting, known for their innovative and fan-centric sports architecture.

The upgrades to Nymeo Field are not merely cosmetic; they are fundamental changes aimed at meeting the rigorous standards set forth by MLB and Minor League Baseball for player development facilities. One of the key objectives is to make the stadium compliant with MLB's Player Develop-

ment League (PDL) standards — a prerequisite for any team seeking reafiliation. These standards emphasize not only player amenities but also the overall functionality and safety of the ballpark.

From a player development standpoint, the renovations are comprehensive. The stadium will receive entirely new home and visitor clubhouses, designed to foster professional-level training, recovery, and camaraderie. Enclosed bullpens will provide year-round usability and protection from the elements, enhancing pitcher preparation and safety. Perhaps most significantly, a state-of-the-art hitting facility will be constructed — an essential tool for skill refinement that brings the Keys' facilities in line with those found at MLB-affiliated parks. These upgrades reflect a commitment to creating a professional environment that attracts talent and satisfies MLB evaluators.

While player facilities are central to the stadium's renovation, fan experience is receiving equal attention. Seating capacity will be expanded, offering more options for a growing fan base. Updated and modern seating configurations will provide better sightlines, increased accessibility, and enhanced comfort. The concourse will be completely overhauled, creating an inviting atmosphere for families, casual fans, and die-hard supporters alike. Expanded concessions, merchandise areas, and interactive zones are likely to follow, making game day a more holistic experience.

Beyond the physical upgrades, this renovation project signifies something far more impactful: a renewed sense of purpose and identity for the Frederick Keys. According to the Frederick News-Post, the team has expressed a strong desire to reaffiliate with an MLB organization by the 2026–2027 seasons. This timeline coincides neatly with the stadium's renovation schedule, providing a clear and strategic roadmap



Harry Grove Stadium has stood since 1990, but with the newly announced renovations, the stadium will look to enhance the baseball atmosphere in Frederick for decades to come.

toward reinstatement in the professional baseball pipeline. Achieving this goal would not only elevate the Keys' standing but also reinvigorate the economic and cultural vitality of the Frederick community.

The importance of MLB affiliation cannot be overstated. Affiliated teams benefit from a steady stream of top-tier talent, greater national visibility, and financial support from parent organizations. These elements translate into more competitive games, larger crowds, and stronger local business partnerships. For Frederick — a city with a rich baseball heritage and a loyal fan base — reafiliation would restore a cherished tradition while also generating significant economic benefits through tourism, job creation, and civic pride.

Community response to the renovation has been overwhelmingly positive. Fans and residents alike recognize the potential of a modernized Nymeo Field to serve as a year-round venue for not just baseball, but also concerts, festivals, and other civic events. The stadium's central location makes it an ideal gathering place, and the improvements promise to make it more accessible and accommodating than ever before.

There is also a symbolic signifi-

cance to the renovation efforts. In an era where many smaller markets have lost their minor league teams entirely, Frederick's decision to double down on baseball is a statement of resilience and ambition. Rather than accept their relegation, the Keys — supported by a coalition of public and private partners — are actively investing in their future. This commitment to excellence may well set a precedent for other cities hoping to regain their place in the MLB development system.

As construction progresses, all eyes will be on Frederick and the evolution of Nymeo Field. By 2026, fans can expect to walk into a facility that blends the nostalgia of traditional baseball with the modern amenities of contemporary sports venues. For the players, it will be a place of growth, opportunity, and professional promise. And for the city, it will serve as both a cultural anchor and an economic engine.

The \$39 million renovation of Nymeo Field at Harry Grove Stadium is more than just a facelift — it is a catalyst for transformation. After meeting the MLB's player development standards to draw a minor league affiliate back to Spire City, the renovations will also seek to improve the fan experience through an increase to the stadium's capacity and overall concourse experience. Through upgraded facilities, expanded fan engagement, and compliance with professional standards, the project positions the Frederick Keys to rejoin the ranks of affiliated Minor League Baseball. With a target date of 2026 for completion and a stated goal of MLB reafiliation by 2026–2027, the vision is clear, the groundwork is laid, and the future of baseball in Frederick is brighter than ever.

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# COMPLEMENTARY CORNER

## Understanding intelligence

Jefferson Breland

Last month I introduced a different angle on the idea of “Natural Intelligence” in relationship to the “Artificial Intelligence” fad thing.

To summarize last month’s column:

I wrote about some differences between “Artificial Intelligence (AI)” and “Natural Intelligence. (NI).”

The primary distinctions I wanted to point out are that AI is external and mechanical while NI is internal and biological.

NI helped our ancestors survive for many thousand’s of years. It is the wisdom we have inherited from our ancestors. NI exists in all aspects of our being. When our body and/or mind is out of balance, NI is expressed as physical and/or mental symptoms.

The more we can learn to recognize symptoms as our body’s wisdom, the less we will have to rely on someone else or a technology to tell us what our bodies already know.

Natural intelligence is simply waking up and paying attention to what we experience in our bodies. When we do this, we can address minor health concerns before they become more serious ones.

What I didn’t share was the generally accepted ideas and definitions of “Natural Intelligence (NI).”

Also called Naturalistic Intelligence, the various definitions range broadly from the “act of observing nature, knowing the names of plants, animals, nature events, bird song, etc”

to being a gardener, a farmer, natural scientist, or conservationist.

The suggested paths to cultivating Naturalistic Intelligence include the indirect route of studying the various components of nature in books, films, television, internet sources, etc, and the direct approach by gardening and the like or by getting out into nature to observe it. The direct interaction with the great outdoors is considered “practical experience.” You learn by doing nature; practicing nature, if you will.

The indirect method is helpful to gain information, however, it lacks the experience of our senses. You can’t really learn what the natural world smells like, or sounds like, tastes like, feels like, or actually looks like from an intermediary source like a book or video.

The direct method of being in nature affords us the opportunity to smell, hear, taste, touch, and see it, giving us a better opportunity to more fully understand the natural world around us.

Direct methods of observation allow us to “know” nature as intimately as possible by observing the interaction of all the aspects of our environment. Indirect methods only allow us to “know about” nature.

Earlier I mentioned “practical experience” is learning by doing. One may then say that learning by reading or simply watching information about a subject is... wait for it... hold... yes, it is impractical.

The Oxford English Dictionary

(OED) defines “impractical” as: adjective- 1. (of an object or course of action) not adapted for use or action; not sensible or realistic. 2. North American; impossible to do; impracticable.

By inference, studying information in books is not practical. Okay, okay, okay, while literally true, I am just having a laugh here.

In my wandering thoughts and subsequent wandering research, I began to think about intelligence in general. I then began to think about the consequences of not recognizing the different kinds of intelligence and how we learn differently based on them.

In last month’s Complementary Corner, I wrote, “Intelligence simply refers to our ability to understand. We all understand things slightly differently in our own unique way.”

In his 1983 book, “Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences,” Howard Gardner describes nine different types of intelligence. These are logical-mathematical, musical, linguistic, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, visual-spatial, existential, and naturalist.

If this information peaks your interest, please look it up on line. There is a vast amount of information on this topic.

Gardner’s definitions of intelligence describes a mental process to know about something outside of us (with the exception of intrapersonal intelligence). He shows his hand in the title of the book, “Frames of Mind...”

All of Gardner’s types of intelli-



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gence refer to an unconscious capacity to connect to the world in a specific way. Once identified, this ability can be cultivated.

The failure to recognize that we all have a different relationship to understanding information, that we may have a different “intelligence” points to one of the challenges of standardized education wherein everyone is expected to learn the same material in the same way.

Early in the educational process, students are sorted by their ability to participate successfully in the standardized learning environment. Students are labeled as smart, average, not smart, overachiever, underachiever, and so on.

Students are then separated into groups based on these distinctions. These distinctions can affect every aspect of a student’s life including relationships, their ability to learn, and future decisions.

Often students carry the stories that their teachers and peers told about them for the rest of their lives. Not only that the teachers and peers carry the same stories about those students, too.

At my 40th reunion, a teacher who taught many of my classes rolled his eyes when I told him that I knew I wasn’t a good student in high school. He was caught off-guard when I told him how well I did as a student after high school. He did not know what to say to me because my later experiences contradicted his 40-year-old beliefs about me.

Over those 40 years, I was fortunate to learn “how I learn.”

I learned that I remember lectures better when I scribble copious handwritten notes. The physical action of writing seems to help the ideas stick in my brain.

I learned that, generally speaking, I remember better when I see words, like someone’s name, or when I read books and write notes in the margins. If I watch a video or listen to a talk without taking notes, I remember general ideas but I am fuzzy on details.

I remember information better when I walk around while I am memorizing it.

I learned I am pretty good at learning dances and other types of movement just by watching a demonstration of it.

I mention my ways of learning not to toot my own horn, but because they connect to a number of different types of intelligence as described by Gardner. Many of us have more than one way of understanding our world.

Many of us have a variety of ways of relating to and understanding the world around us. Some of us don’t and that doesn’t mean there is something wrong with us.

According to Kendra Cherry in her [verywellmind.com](http://verywellmind.com) article on Gardner published this past January, some of the criticism of Gardner over the ensuing decades claim that he offers too broad a definition of intelligence. The criticism states that he is simply defining abilities or personality traits. Other criticisms cited the lack of evidence-based studies.

I disagree with these complaints. I offer that generally-accepted ideas on intelligence are too narrow. If we look to nature and its amazing diversity (which is necessary for the healthy function of every ecosystem ), why wouldn’t humans reflect that same diversity.

While humans have many similarities, it is our diversity of interests and ways of understanding that help societies function effectively and make life more interesting.

This is similar to the innate Natural Intelligence our bodies have. We need the intelligence of each of our body’s systems to help us be healthy. The feedback or messages that we receive from these systems allows us to make changes to improve our health.

If we think of our symptoms only as pathology and not as our body’s Natural Intelligence, we miss the opportunity to experience the miracle of our natural healing ability.

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HEALTH AND FITNESS

Summertime food traps avoided!

Linda Stultz  
Certified Fitness Trainer

Summer's here and so are the cookouts, picnics, pool parties and smore's campfires. We all know how easy it is to over indulge at the summer gatherings, even if we are so sure we will be good and watch what we eat. There's so much to choose from and so many different kinds of dishes and desserts we think we just have to try them all and we usually do. Here's a few tips to enable you to sample the variety of delicacies without sabotaging your weight.

One thing to do is eat a little something before you leave your house. Try eating some veggies, a little yogurt, a protein bar or perhaps a small sandwich of peanut butter or and egg sandwich. The sandwiches will help fill you up while giving you protein. Other foods low in carbs and calories will help keep you from eating as much at the event you are going to. Most of the time people bring dishes to a summer party that are poplar and that people like but don't make at home on a regular basis. While these dishes are very well liked and are pleasing to everyone there, they can be high in calories, sugar and carbs that add up to eating much more than you normally would.

Another thing you can do to prevent eating more than you intended to is to drink a glass of water when you get to the picnic. We don't always realize how dehydrated we

get when we are outside in the heat. By the time you feel thirsty you are already getting dehydrated. Drinking water before and during your meal can help you feel fuller and may help from overeating.

Sometimes the variety of food is just too hard to resist. I know you want to try everything but that can lead to feeling stuffed and uncomfortable. If the event is an all day thing perhaps you can try some dishes at lunch and different ones at dinner time. Doing this will give you a chance to sample everything you want to without feeling uncomfortable. Another way is to only take a little of the things you really want and pass over the food you have tried before. New dishes are always tempting and this way you get to try something you have never had before.

One more way to avoid eating too much and feeling stuffed is to make a plate after the meal is over and everyone else is finished. You could ask the host if they would mind if you take a little something home because you really wanted to sample everything but just couldn't eat that much at once. I'm sure they wouldn't mind sending the leftovers home with their guests. Most of the time people are glad to send desserts and food home so they do not have it tempting them.

Summer gatherings are so much fun but don't let them put you in the habit of overeating. If you are watching your weight don't let summer outings get you off track.

Be strong and sensible about what and how much you put on your plate. If you do over indulge a time or two go for a walk or get others at the event to get some exercise. Play a game of basketball, go swimming, play tennis or whatever you can to work off some of the extra calories.

Enjoy your summer and remember to "Keep Moving", you'll be glad you did.



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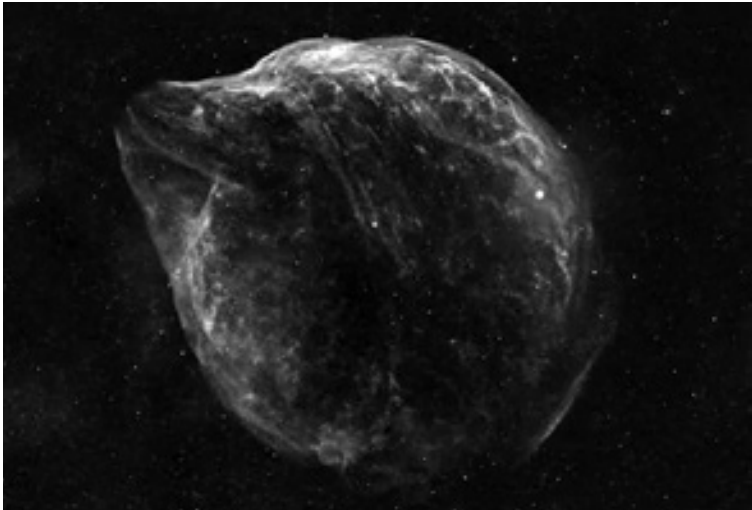
The night sky of July

Professor Wayne Wooten

For July the moon is first quarter on July 2nd. The full moon is on Thursday, July 10th, the Thunder Moon due to all the afternoon thunderstorms. The last quarter moon is on July 17th, the day after it passed just south of Saturn in the dawn. The waning crescent moon is just above Venus on the morning of July 21st, and makes a nice triangle with Venus above and Jupiter below it on June 22nd; a great photo op for anyone with a smartphone! The moon is new on July 24th, and passes just below Mars in the twilight on July 28th.

Mercury is briefly visible in the dusk in the west on first week of July, then passes between us and the Sun. Venus dominates the dawn sky, far brighter than even Jupiter some 22 degrees to the SE of it in the morning skies. Saturn's rings are now open 3.5 degrees, looking much more familiar than even a month ago. It is in Pisces, rising at midnight. The only evening planet for July is Mars, faint red in the west at dusk, and getting lost in the Sun's glare by August.

High overhead is the Big Dipper, and good scouts know to use the pointers at the end of the bowl to find Polaris, the pole star, staying 30 degrees high in our night sky all year long. By midnight, the earth's rotation will carry the dipper low in the NW sky, yet Polaris will still be in the same place. This was critical to early navigators like Columbus, for if they kept Polaris at the same altitude in their northern sky, they knew they



The Lagoon Nebula is a giant interstellar cloud in the constellation "Sagittarius". It is one of the only two star-forming nebulae faintly visible to the eye from mid-northern latitudes.

were sailing due west, leading him to the new world.

If you drop south from the bowl of the Big Dipper, Leo the Lion is in the SW. Note the Egyptian Sphinx is based on the shape of this Lion in the sky. Taking the arc in the Dipper's handle, we "arc" SE to bright orange Arcturus, the brightest star of Spring. Cooler than our yellow Sun, and much poorer in heavy elements, some believe its strange motion reveals it to be an invading star from another smaller galaxy. This is the Sagittarius Dwarf Galaxy, now colliding with the Milky Way in Sagittarius in the summer sky. It lies on the far edge of our own barred spiral, and may account for the formation of our bar. Moving almost perpendicular to the plane of our Milky Way, Arcturus was the first star in the sky where its proper motion across the historic sky was noted, by Edmund Halley.

Arcturus is currently the brightest star overhead, but that can change any day now. To the NE of Arcturus is the northern crown, Corona Borealis. Its brightest jewel is Gemma (or Alphacca, here), in the center of the crown.

Spike south to Spica, the hot blue star in Virgo, then curve to Corvus the Crow, a four sided grouping. North of Corvus, in the arms of Virgo, is where our large scopes will show members of the Virgo Supercluster, a swarm of over a thousand galaxies about 50 million light years distant.

To the east, Hercules is well up, with the nice globular cluster M-13 marked on your sky map and visible in binocs. The brightest star of the northern hemisphere, Vega (from Carl Sagan's novel and movie, "Contact"), rises in the NE as twilight deepens. Twice as hot as our Sun, it appears blue-white, like most bright stars.

Northeast of Lyra is Cygnus, the Swan, flying down the Milky Way. Its bright star Deneb, at the top of the "northern cross" is one of the lumi-

naries of the Galaxy, about 50,000 times more luminous than our Sun and around 3,000 light years distant.

South of Deneb, on a dark clear night, note the "Great Rift", a dark nebula in front of our solar system as we revolve around the core of the Milky Way in the Galactic Year of 250 million of our own years. The star at the south end of the Northern Cross is one of my favorites, Albireo, the "gator star", a notable orange and blue double at 20X.

Altair is the third bright star of the summer triangle. It lies in Aquila the Eagle, and is much closer than Deneb; it lies within about 13 light years of our Sun. Just east of Altair is the tiny, faint, but very distinctive Delphinus, one of the rare constellations that indeed look exactly like its name.

This Dolphin in the myths carried the Greek Poet, Arion, to safety when he was robbed and thrown off the ship that was carrying him and his considerable fortune home to Corinth. It is claimed his singing of a dirge before being cast overboard caused his savior to come to his aid. Shades of Jonah and the whale!

As we head south, Antares is well up at sunset in Scorpius. It appears reddish (its Greek name means rival of Ares or Mars to the Latins) because it is half as hot as our yellow Sun; it is bright because it is a bloated red supergiant, big enough to swallow up our solar system all the way out to Saturn's orbit! Scorpius is the brightest constellation in the sky, with 13 stars brighter than the pole star Polaris! Note the fine naked eye clusters M-6 and M-7, just to the left of the Scorpion's tail.

Just a little east of the Scorpion's tail is the teapot shape of Sagittarius, which lies toward the center

of the Milky Way. From a dark sky site, you can pick out the fine stellar nursery, M-8, the Lagoon Nebula, like a cloud of steam coming out of the teapot's spout. This view of our home galaxy stretching overhead is for about midnight on July evenings, looking from the South to overhead.

My favorite way of learning the many deep sky objects (open and globular clusters, bright nebulae like the Lagoon, and the many dark nebulae that make up the "Dark Constellations" of the Inca) is to use low power binoculars (I prefer 8x40s because they are light and easier to hold steady with my Parkinson's, but younger folks with a better grip on life will find 10x50's will show fainter objects and at high power) and lean back in a lawn chair (also an ideal way to observe meteor showers like August's Perseids with just your naked eyes) and slowly sweep up and down the Galaxy, marking off the deep sky objects on your SkyMap as you spot them.

Note the back of the SkyMap has a fine selection of the best deep sky objects to spot with the naked eyes, binocs, and small scopes to help you find your way across the Galaxy this summer. Of course, you will need dark skies to see this kind of beauty, but many have plans for trips to parks and out west this summer, so be sure to plan for at least a few evenings under dark skies to appreciate our galaxy.

Also, most new smartphones can get fine shots with timed exposures on a tripod like this one, using night camera or Starry Camera Pro programs. Try out yours dark evening. For iPhones, download the app, "Nocturne by Unistellar" free. It needs to be steady, so a tripod like the Vivitar pistol grip smartphone holder (\$7 at WalMart) is ideal.

Farmers' Almanac

"I realize that patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness towards anyone" —Edith Cavell (1865-1915)

**Mid-Atlantic Weather Watch:** seasonably warm and humid, then very hot with late day showers and thunderstorms followed by a transition to more tolerable temperatures (1, 2, 3, 4, 5); turning hot and humid with PM showers and thunderstorms then turning slightly less humid (6, 7, 8, 9, 10); less humid at first, then turning hot and humid with a round of afternoon thunderstorms (11, 12, 13, 14, 15); mainly dry and seasonably warm and humid (16, 17, 18, 19, 20); quite humid and seasonably hot with a few rounds of shower and storms, then turning far less humid and dry (21, 22, 23, 24, 25); isolated afternoon thunderstorms and showers and seasonably warm, then turning more comfortable and dry (26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31).

**Severe Weather Watch:** The Town and Country Almanac sees excessive heat (2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10) along with severe thunderstorms and heavy rain (14, 15, 16, 22, 23, 24).

**Full Moon:** July's Full Moon will occur on Thursday, July 10th. Many Native American tribes referred to it as Buck

Moon because of rapid growth of antlers on young bucks during the month. It has also been called Thunder Moon because of the numerous severe thunderstorms during the month (just look at this month's forecast above!) Many other tribes called it either Ripe Corn Moon, because of the appearance of young corn on the stalks that were planted in the Spring, or Hay Moon since hay tended to ripen as well.

**Special Notes:** Watch out! Those Dog Days of Summer will be upon us starting Thursday, July 3rd. Get ready for some the hot and humid weather to hit and last until mid-August.

**Holidays:** The Fourth of July is celebrated on Friday in 2025. On this day, in 1776, the Continental Congress passed a resolution saying, "These United Colonies are, and of right, ought to be, free and independent states". And always remember, if planning any extended outdoor activities, use the appropriate level of sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher). Apply it frequently, especially if swimming or perspiring. The Islamic New Year falls on Tuesday, July 18th. If a barbeque is planned, double-check the grill. Nobody wants any surprises, so it is wise to make sure that it is functioning properly and that you remember to fill up the propane

tank (or to pick up plenty of charcoal and charcoal lighter fluid!).

**The Garden:** This is the last month to plant these veggies for a fall crop if you are in zone 5: snap beans, peas, cukes, carrots, kohlrabi, summer squash, early sweet corn, and green onions, can go in right now! Allow roses to rest in July and August. Do not fertilize, but continue spraying, and give them a light pruning in July to encourage new fall growth. During the dry summer months, remember to mow the lawn when it is high and mow less often. Taller grass withstands drought better because its blades shade the soil.

**The Farm:** Best for planting root crops (18, 19); weeding and stirring the soil (25, 26); planting above-ground crops (4, 5, 6); harvesting all crops (7, 8); the best days for setting hens and incubators (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18); the slaughtering and butchering of meat (1, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31); transplanting (1, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31); the weaning of all small animals and livestock (7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15); harvesting and storing grains (17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23).

**J. Gruber's Thought For Today's Living**  
"Do not regard liberty and freedom so lightly that you forget its value and take it for granted."



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COMPUTER Q&A

Windows 11 privacy concerns & AI features

Aysé Stenabaugh  
Jester's Computer  
Fairfield

With support for Windows 10 ending in October 2025 many end-users have expressed concerns about upgrading to Windows 11. The preferred settings of Windows 11 are configured to collect what users might consider to be an uncomfortable amount of unnecessary data. This paired with what many consider to be invasive Microsoft ads and AI integrated features has many hesitant to upgrade or use the latest Microsoft Windows operating system. The good news is that Microsoft has recently changed some of the more concerning features which were previously expected to be enabled by default. Many of the settings that are configured during setup to share user data and collect optional diagnostic data can be disabled if you know how to find them and verify that those settings are no longer functioning.

Both Windows 10 and Windows 11 contain settings that some users may find invasive or unnecessary. These settings are independent for each user account on the PC and can be adjusted to minimize privacy concerns. Often during the setup process users find themselves skipping through screens that contain the information about these settings. Once Windows is installed, users will need to navigate through settings to disable options such as location sharing, notifications, annoying tips and suggestions, advertising settings and diagnostics and feedback. Tech-savvy users should be able to locate many of these settings to disable them, less advanced users should either research where to change those settings or seek help from a tech support professional.

Copilot is an AI powered digital assistant that can be found on some compatible Windows 10 devices and Windows 11 devices configured with the required Windows updates installed. Copilot is like ChatGPT in the way that they are both AI assistive technology that use large languages models (LLMs) to accomplish tasks. The main difference between the two is that when enabled Copilot also utilizes information from data found in your documents, calendars, emails, chats and more. Some of the tasks that Copilot can help users do including; automating tasks like summarizing documents or writing emails, creating and editing content, review information and suggest ideas.

Windows 11's new Recall Feature is available only on Copilot+ compatible computers in an update that was scheduled to be released in June\*. Recall found itself amid controversy as users began to express concerns that Microsoft was trading users' privacy for "convenience". The idea behind recall is to be able to retrieve past activities and data performed on the device. This is achieved by my screenshots of your screen being taken and stored in a way that allows users

to search or "recall" this data later. Not only did many users find this practice downright creepy, security researchers began to raise concerns about how this data was being stored. Some found it even more concerning that the proclaimed "feature" was originally slated to be turned on after the update was installed and/or during a fresh install of Windows 11 on compatible devices. This backlash Microsoft received for this ultimately prompted changes to how recall is expected to function upon release. Most users don't need to worry about Recall at all, since the AI features required by Copilot+ require extremely new technology that have yet to be released by many manufacturers\*. It's also worth noting that none of the current desktop CPUs are compatible with the AI technology on Copilot+ capable devices.

\*At the time that this article was written this update was scheduled to be released, this update may have been delayed and users interested in this information are encouraged to check updated information for any changes that might have been made

to Recall as well as new devices that may have been released supporting this technology.

AI features can be found all around Windows 11, and AI is becoming more and more common, not just in Windows. Google users may have noticed recently while searching that a new AI Overview shows up to highlight common or popular potential good search results. I say potential good search results because back in May google released many improvements to their AI results after providing some shocking answers that were obviously bad advice. Among those results users found obviously false information that suggested that Batman was a cop, provided a recipe for cooking spaghetti with gasoline, stated that running with scissors has health benefits, that people should eat at least one small rock per day and many more ridiculous answers. Whether we like it or not in a technology fueled world consumers are finding AI more in everyday life in more obvious ways such as website AI chat bots or through backend systems like Walmart's recently announced smart product order-



ing systems which utilizes an AI customer purchase tracking.

If you are ready for a Windows 11 computer or have recently purchased one and have privacy concerns, we can help at Jester's Computer Services. Visit us on the web at [www.jesterscomputer.com](http://www.jesterscomputer.com) or at our new office located at 105 West Main Street Suite 1 in Fairfield where we are open Monday – Friday 9 to 5.

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### Sunday, July 20

2 p.m. - 4 - Registration of Open Exhibits

### Monday, July 21

4 - 7 p.m. - Registration of Open Exhibits

### Tuesday, July 22

4 p.m. - Fair Opens, Exhibit Buildings Open  
5 p.m. - 10 p.m. - Carnival Rides Open (Approximate times)  
7 p.m. - Adams Co. Jr. Livestock Market Swine Judging, Show Arena  
7 p.m. - Mullet Contest - Auditorium - Free  
7:30 p.m. - Food Auction - Auditorium to benefit an Adams Co. charity

### Wednesday, July 23

3 p.m. - Open Goat Judging, Show Arena  
4 p.m. - Open Sheep Judging, Show Arena  
4 p.m. - Fair Opens, Exhibit Buildings Open  
5 - 10 p.m. - Carnival Rides Open (Approximate times)  
6 p.m. - Adams Co. Jr. Livestock Market Goat Judging, Show Arena  
6 p.m. - Draft & Miniature Horse Pulling Contest, Rear Arena  
7 p.m. - Adams Co. Jr. Livestock Market Sheep Judging, Show Arena

### Thursday, July 24

3 p.m. - Open Beef Judging, Show Arena  
4 p.m. - Fair Opens, Exhibit Buildings Open  
4 - 10 p.m. - Laser Tag  
5 - 10 p.m. - Carnival Rides Open (approximate times)

4 p.m. - Junior Livestock Dairy Beef Feeder Calf Judging, Show Arena  
4:30 p.m. - Junior Livestock Dairy Beef Finished Steer Judging, Show Arena  
5 p.m. - Junior Livestock Steer Judging  
7 p.m. - Austin Rife - Auditorium - Free  
9:30 p.m. - Fireworks Display - Visible from entire fairgrounds

### Friday, July 25

4 p.m. - Fair Opens, Exhibit Buildings Open  
4 - 10 p.m. - Laser Tag  
5 - 10 p.m. - Carnival Rides Open (Approximate times)  
5 p.m. - Junior Livestock Dairy Judging, Show Arena  
6 p.m. - Dairy Showmanship Judging, Show Arena  
6:30 p.m. - Open Dairy Cattle Judging (All breeds), Show Arena  
7 p.m. - Chris Woodward and Shindiggin' - Auditorium - Free

### Saturday, July 26

1 p.m. - Fair Opens, Exhibit Buildings Open  
2 - 10 p.m. - Carnival Rides Open (with afternoon break for dinner)  
4 - 10 p.m. - Laser Tag  
4 p.m. - Adams Co. Jr. Livestock Sale - Show Arena (Steer/Dairy/Beef/Goat/Sheep/Swine)  
4:30 p.m. - Parade Of Antique Farm Equipment  
6 p.m. - Pedal Tractor Pull For The Kids  
7 - 9 p.m. - Country Line Dancing with Lars and Dana - Auditorium - Free  
10 p.m. - Exhibit Buildings Close (Only Livestock May Be Removed)

### Sunday, July 27

2 - 4 p.m. - Fairgrounds open to remove all remaining exhibits



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