

# BRUNSWICK NEWS-JOURNAL

SERVING BRUNSWICK, LOVETTSVILLE, ROSEMONT, JEFFERSON, BURKITTSVILLE

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DECEMBER 2025

FREE

## Local Food Banks Stressed as Food Needs Increase

By JEAN TOLEMAN

November was a difficult month for those in need of food assistance due to the federal government shutdown and the uncertainty of whether the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) was going to be funded. All this confusion impacted our local food banks and pantry.

### Brunswick Food Bank

The Food Bank in Brunswick has seen an increase in need over the past few months. Jennifer Effler, manager, indicated that in October and November they served 30% more clients. They were seeing people impacted by the federal government shutdown and the fallout from that, such as the "working folks" that rely on the federal workforce at Fort Detrick.

In November, donations were barely keeping up with need. On the first Thursday in November, when interviewed, Effler said, "This evening, there are ten cars waiting and we don't open for another hour." When spoken to later in the month, Effler indicated that donations from the community had increased, but the Boy Scouts drive had been about the same as last year.

The Brunswick elementary school has been a huge help, Effler said. They have a donation box competition by grade, which has really been successful. "A volunteer gathers the food each week and brings it to the food



Nancy Spannaus with helper preparing the Lovettsville food pantry for customers.

bank and helps stock the shelves." They have also been receiving more in their food bin and from on-line donations. When asked what they need most, it is financial donations so they can purchase perishable items like meat and fresh produce. They also need health and beauty items. "The community has been following us on Facebook and when we ask, they are giving. The community support has been amazing."

Donations of non-perishable food items can be dropped off any day at 601 E. Potomac Street where there are two plastic bins

outside. The bins are emptied several times a day by Food Bank volunteers.

### Jefferson Food Bank

The Jefferson Food Bank, located at Saint Paul's Lutheran Church, has also been seeing more people, according to Nick Agostino, manager. "People are experiencing unnecessary stress," Agostino said. "The confusion around whether there will be resources available is increasing this, the cruelty of it is what bothers me as a human being."

*Continued on page 2*

## Special Election Set for Brunswick City Council

Brunswick will hold a special election on Tuesday, January 20, to fill a vacant City Council seat, after the Council was unable to reach a unanimous decision on appointing a new member.

Two candidates, Carleah Summers and Jerry Bonanno, filed in October for the open seat. The City Charter gives the Council authority to make a selection in the event of a vacancy. However, the Council decision must be unanimous, and the five sitting Council members could not reach consensus on a choice, so a special election will be held.

Both candidates were interviewed at a public meeting on Nov. 4. Both were asked the same set of questions and then the Council convened in a closed-door session to discuss the appointment. When they emerged back into the public meeting, the Council voted. The vote was 3 for Bonanno and 2 for Summers.

"Both are strong candidates," Council Member Eric Smothers said after the vote. "The vision they both have can be beneficial to the city and the council."

"Both candidates were extremely well prepared and both have the capacity to do great things for the city," said Council Member Brian Sandusky. "Each council member in turn had praise for the quality of the candidates. Council Member John Caves concluded, 'It will go to the people and the people will decide.'"

Mayor Brown, who could not vote, told the candidates, "This is a really tough decision. You two are great candidates and either would do an amazing job on the Council."



### Candidate filing opens again

The Council vacancy was created when member Angel White stepped down in September. Her term ran until August 2028, so the new member will fill out this term.

Residents of Brunswick who wish to run for the Council position have until Monday, Dec. 22, at 4:30 p.m., to file their candidacy. A filing packet can be picked up at City Hall or downloaded from the Board of Elections page on the City website ([brunswick-md.gov](http://brunswick-md.gov)).

Brunswick Director of Finance/Administration Carrie Myers said that absentee ballot request forms will be available Dec. 22 and the ballots will be mailed starting on Jan. 6 for any registered voter who prefers to vote early. Myers also said that the Special Election will not make use of electronic voting machines, but will use paper ballots and be hand-counted. City elections take place at the City Park Building on East Potomac Street.

Questions about candidate filing, absentee ballots, or other election procedures can be sent by email to [cmymers@brunswick-md.gov](mailto:cmymers@brunswick-md.gov). ■

## Rohrersville Band Plays On



The Rohrersville Band plays while on the move in the 2025 Brunswick Veterans Day Parade.

By LAURA DVORAK

How do you fix a tuba? Use a tuba glue. Where can you play a tuba? Rohrersville Band of Washington County.

Each Tuesday evening volun-

teers meet at 4315 Main Street in Rohrersville. Together they play contemporary and older melodies—the Rohrersville Band library contains hundreds of tunes. "Some of these date back to the 1800s," said Ron Moss, the

band's Vice President and tuba/euphonium player.

The group's music lineup varies widely, from jazz to patriotic marches to movie themes and other genre to be practiced.

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Local  
Postal Customer

\*\*\*\*\*ECRWSS\*\*\*\*\*

PRSR STD  
ECRWSS  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
EDDM RETAIL



BRUNSWICK NEWS

Local Food Banks CONTINUED

Continued from page 1

Food donations can be dropped off at the Jefferson Food Bank in the bin behind the food bank or during distribution times on the first and third Saturdays. For financial donations call 301-472-8626. They also encourage people to volunteer.

Other programs that offer food assistance in Frederick County are Senior Services Meals on Wheels, Groceries for Seniors (301-600-1234) and Frederick County Health Department, WIC.

**New Jerusalem Lutheran Church Food Pantry**

The shelves at Lovettsville’s food pantry were full on a sunny day in November, but Nancy Spannaus, manager, indicated there were months this past summer when donations were very low.

Lovettsville and Northern Vir-

“It is our belief that none of our neighbors should go hungry.”

New Jerusalem Lutheran Church food pantry mission statement

ginia have seen some decline in the numbers coming to the food pantries. Those working at the sites have gotten the impression that people are “afraid” to come due to ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) concerns. Whether true or not, Spannaus indicated they had not had trouble in Lovettsville. Over the past year, they have served 1,040 individuals with over 5,200 total visits. Most people come to the pantry less than once a month.

“We receive no government monies,” Spannaus stated. “Several local organizations give to us regularly. The Lions and Ruritan give a monthly donation which really helps, and the Game Club, various churches and Brunswick Area Chamber of Commerce give yearly.”

Unlike many food banks, the Pantry requires no documentation. “People around here are more shy, more quiet about needing the pantry. They don’t want it known that they need food assistance,” Spannaus said. Shopping at the Pantry is based on an honor system. You don’t need to be a resident, no one needs to know your situation. It is assumed if you come, you are in need and you are welcome. As their mission statement says, “all should be treated with dignity and respect when in need of assistance.”

Spannaus said the Boy Scout

food drive was extremely successful this year. “They outdid themselves. It was over 4 tons compared to around 3 tons last year.”

When asked what the pantry needs, Spannaus said they need monetary donations on a monthly basis so they can reliably plan their purchases. On their web page is a button for Online Giving where you can set the frequency and amount. There are also lists of foods and personal items needed with a “most urgent” list updated frequently.

**The Season to Donate**

This is the time of year donations to food pantries, civic groups and those in need increase. The boy scout food drives have just finished and food banks are full, but the need is great. Local food bank managers have expressed their appreciation for the generosity and compassion shown by

**Brunswick Food Bank**

Open: Thursday evenings 6:30 pm  
601 E. Potomac Street

**Jefferson Food Bank**

Open: 1st & 3rd Saturdays each month 9–11 am  
St. Paul’s Lutheran Church  
3864 Jefferson Pike

**New Jerusalem Lutheran Church Food Pantry**

Wednesday 2–5 pm;  
Saturday 10–12 am  
12942 Lutheran Church Road, Lovettsville

people at this time of year, especially now with all the uncertainty, confusion and increased needs that have arisen. ■

Rohrersville Band CONTINUED

Continued from page 1

But it’s not just about practice; it’s also about camaraderie and community. There are audiences eager to listen to the band’s lively licks, and the group travels throughout counties and states, performing in parades, on bandstands and stages, delighting young and old alike through the power of music and artistry.

The Association of Concert Bands estimates there are 1,000 community bands throughout the country. For years these bands have been instrumental in keeping timeless tunes—many not played publicly or aired anywhere—alive.

Rohrersville Band, thought to be the oldest continuously performing community band in Maryland, began as McCoy’s

Cornet Band in 1837. Present day talent draws largely from Frederick and Washington counties.

Band Music Director Holly Feather was an English teacher at Brunswick Middle School when she learned of the band and joined. Jazz instructor Anita Thomas (Frederick Community College) plays woodwinds, and has her hand in composing and arranging music for the band. Members also include students, as well as older folks long-finished with school, yet actively learning.

This small-town musical group is eager to welcome newcomers. Dust off that trombone or flute and check out the band on Facebook. Rohrersville Band embraces a 188-year-old promise: *play on.* ■

IN MEMORY

Celebrating the Life and Legacy of Louis J. Iaquina

Driving through Brunswick on his way home, Lou Iaquina stopped at Sheetz for gas and was taken by the bucolic rolling hills parting into what is fondly known as the gap. As he took in the sweeping views, he couldn’t help but imagine a place where others could watch the sunset and raise their families. Lou’s vision inspired and became what is now known as Brunswick Crossing, changing the course of the City of Brunswick in countless ways.

Louis Joseph Iaquina, known fondly as Lou, lived a life defined by love, perseverance and service to his community. A tireless advocate for community, Lou was known for his boots-on-the-ground approach to real estate, getting deeply involved in the communities he lived in and worked in. From Brunswick City Council meetings to fire hall banquets and fundraisers, Lou’s spirit for helping others defined his life.

Born in Philadelphia in 1940, Lou’s entrepreneurial spirit took root early. After graduating from Pierce School with a degree in Business Administration, he moved to Washington, D.C., where he began his career in construction before finding his true



calling in real estate.

Lou founded IKO Real Estate in 1980. He was instrumental in envisioning and creating commercial and residential developments, including landmark projects like the Oland Professional Center and Brunswick Crossing. His work reflects a deep belief that building spaces means building opportunities for others.

Lou’s legacy extends far beyond business. A committed community advocate, he served on the MedStar Montgomery Medical Center Board of Directors, led the Olney Chamber of Commerce, and lent his leadership to civic associations and countless charitable causes. Whether or-

ganizing the Wounded Warrior Project or rallying support for cancer research with his daughter, Lou lived by a simple, powerful principle: service is the highest form of leadership.

Above all, Lou was a devoted husband to Sue, a proud father to Susie and Regina, and a loving grandfather to Luke and Lily. His impact will live on in the communities he built, the causes he championed, and the family he cherished.

When you are next at Sheetz and are taken by the sunset in the gap, take a moment to fondly remember Lou, his vision for community and the impact of his life’s work. ■

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Covering events, culture, economics, environmental issues and lots of other things in the Brunswick, Frederick County, and Lovettsville, Va. neighborhoods.

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Notices of events, news stories, photos, and interesting articles, poems or stories may be submitted by regular mail or email to: Editor@BrunsNews.com

Veterans Day Ceremony



Brunswick’s American Legion Post 96 held a Veterans Day ceremony on Nov. 11 at Veterans Park on A Street to honor the nation’s veterans.

SHIRLEY WARD



BRUNSWICK CITY COUNCIL

Mayor and Council  
November Update



Back Row L-R: Brian Sandusky, John Caves, Andy St. John, Eric Smothers  
Front Row L-R: Daniel Yochelson, Nathan Brown, Angel White

By DIANE ELLIS

Special Election

The City set January 20 as the date for a Special Election to fill a vacant seat on the City Council. The candidate filing deadline is December 22 (see story on page 1).

Utility Bill Payment  
Extension

During the federal government shutdown, the Mayor and Council expressed concern for furloughed employees and agreed to extend the due dates for utility bill payments to December 13. City code allows for this and all Council members consented to the action.

Municipal Infraction  
Penalties

The Council approved Ordinance 624 which clarified maximum fees for municipal infractions. The State increased the maximum fine municipalities can impose for violations of local ordinances from \$1,000 to \$5,000. At a previous meeting, the City opted to reflect this increase in its fees. The new ordinance clarifies these fees and makes the maximum fine \$5,000 effective October 1, 2025.

Bond Anticipation Note  
(BAN)

The Council approved Ordinance 625 which allows the City to borrow \$18.2 million through BAN funding for upgrades to the wastewater treatment plant, reservoir, Brunswick Sports Complex, and B&O Railroad Park. This funding would be used as interim financing and may be prepaid in part from grants or impact fees that might be received. Davenport & Company, the City's financial advisors, requested proposals from financial institutions and received one offer from M&T Bank for a five-year loan period at 3.47%.

Comcast Update

A representative from Comcast, which operates under a franchise agreement with Frederick County, was invited to give an update on their service. Tami Watkins reported that outages in Brunswick last summer have been resolved with enhancements to their network. She encouraged customers to use the Xfinity app where they

can test their internet connection and find answers to service questions. Responding to a question from the Council, she said their "Internet Essentials" package for low-income residents is still available and she will send information to the City for public sharing.

Police Report

Police Chief Kevin Grunwell reported there was a carjacking in Brunswick Crossing on Halloween night and they expect to make an arrest soon. There was a case of fraud in the city whereby someone passed fake \$100 bills at two local businesses, and the chief said they have a suspect in the case. He also stated that there was an incident at Brunswick High School where a parent had to be arrested. During the month of October, the Brunswick Police Department had over 1,500 calls for service of all types.

Illegal Dumping

The Department of Planning & Zoning is alerting the public to a problem with illegal dumping. They are putting out social media posts and increasing enforcement. The Council suggested installing City cameras where dumping is occurring. Penalties are severe with fines and possible jail time. Illegal dumping should be reported to the Code Enforcement Office at 301-834-7500 x301.

Appointments

- Former Mayor Jeffrey Snoots and Eric Ahalt were appointed to the Brunswick Board of Zoning Appeals.
- Wayne Allgaier, Julie Kloetzli and Syree Williams were appointed to the Brunswick Board of Election Supervisors.

Donations

- The Council voted to make these donations:
- \$350 to Brunswick Middle School to help send students to the Maryland Association of Student Councils Leadership Convention in March.
  - \$200 to "Battle for South Mountain," a charity basketball game between staff from Brunswick and Middletown schools to raise funds for the Mental Health Association of Frederick.
  - \$100 to All American Miss contestant Nikita Hvozda of Brunswick who is competing for the national title. ■

FROM THE MAYOR'S DESK

Brunswick Has  
Much to Offer  
for the Holidays

Happy December, Brunswick! We are now fully in the midst of the holiday season, a time that always reminds us just how special our community truly is.

I want to take a moment to thank the Greater Brunswick Area Chamber of Commerce for hosting the 10th Annual Business Expo this past month. It was a tremendous success and such a wonderful opportunity to showcase our incredible local businesses and organizations. Events like this highlight the spirit of collaboration and pride that define Brunswick.

Coming off that event and heading into the holiday season, I'd like to remind everyone to shop small and shop local as often as you can. Supporting our small businesses and community organizations not only strengthens our local economy



I'd like to remind  
everyone to  
shop small and  
shop local  
as often  
as you can.

but also sustains the unique character that makes Brunswick feel like home. Our local economic development efforts continue to be very successful, and our team is

working around the clock to build on that momentum. Your continued support plays a vital role in that success.

Hometown Holidays

I'm also looking forward to our upcoming holiday celebrations right here in Brunswick. Hometown Holidays will take place on Saturday, December 6, and it's sure to be a wonderful day filled with festive cheer. Be sure to visit BrunswickMD.gov for full details about all of the events happening during Hometown Holidays.

Don't miss the Santa Train Rides taking place that day, an annual favorite for families, and keep an eye out for other community events like Breakfast with Santa and more hosted by local organizations. There will be something for everyone to enjoy, and I encourage you to get out, participate, and support your community this season.

From my family to yours, I wish you all a joyful, safe, and community-filled holiday season. ■

Thank you,  
Nathan Brown

State Official Tours Downtown Brunswick  
to Assess Funding Assistance



Greg Brown, prospective buyer of Kaplon building; Crissy Barry, Brunswick Grants Coordinator; Carmen Hilton, Brunswick Community Development Manager; Julie Martorana, Brunswick City Administrator; Brad Fallon, Assistant Secretary for Business Development, DHCD.

By ABBIE RICKETTS

Brad Fallon, a newly appointed Assistant Secretary in the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), paid a visit to Brunswick on October 30 to tour downtown buildings that received major grant funding in recent years through DHCD programs.

Fallon leads the state's newly created Division of Business Development. The purpose of his visit was to see firsthand the success of public-private partnerships in renovating buildings and bringing new businesses downtown and to see potential projects that need funding assistance.

Newberry building tour

After a brief meeting in City Hall, Fallon walked with city staffers and guests to the Newberry Building for a tour. They were greeted by several business owners including Machel Lee and Eric Lindland who own the Newberry. The building was fully renovated with the assistance of several state grant programs and incentives as well as private investment by the own-

ers. Six businesses (four of them new and two from other downtown locations) are now housed in the once empty building.

Kaplon building renovation

The group moved on to the Kaplon building which currently houses the Corner Store. Joining the tour was Greg Brown, an entrepreneur from Frederick who owns Brewer's Alley, Monocacy Brewing, Bentztown and three other area restaurants. Brown is interested in redeveloping the Kaplon Building into an upscale restaurant on the first and second floors with apartments on the third floor. The building requires extensive renovations and modernizations for it to become a restaurant, including a fire suppressant system throughout, upgraded water and electric, and a new elevator. The costs are prohibitive and the City is working to find matching state funding in order to make the project financially feasible.

On July 25, DHCD Secretary Jake Day announced the creation of the new Division of Business Development with Fallon as the leader. The new department will focus entirely on new or expanding businesses and non-profit organizations in

Sustainable Communities and Priority Funding Areas.

According to the DHCD website, "The creation of this new division will allow the Department to provide greater support to new and existing businesses in Maryland by offering greater technical assistance and new tools, in addition to its slate of grants and loans." ■

New Extended Hours at  
Brunswick Post Office



Did you know that each post office sets its own hours? No more going down to 315 Brunswick Street at 5:30 in the afternoon to send a package and finding the door locked. According to Jonathan Sands, customer service supervisor at the Brunswick Post Office, they have 21 employees and are now open to serve the public Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and on Saturday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.



BRUNSWICK NEWS



Hometown Holidays in Brunswick December 6

By DIANE ELLIS

Hometown Holidays in downtown Brunswick started with a simple tree lighting. Each year events have been added, so now it's a full day of activities attracting hundreds of people who come together to share the happiness and goodwill of the season.

Breakfast with Santa

The day begins with breakfast at the Brunswick Volunteer Fire Company, 1500 Volunteer Drive. Starting at 8 a.m. Santa will be there to talk to children. Breakfast costs \$14 for adults, \$8 for children 6-12, and it's free for ages 5 and under. Photos with Santa cost \$5.

Santa Train Rides

Two train rides, with Santa aboard, depart Brunswick Station at 1 and 3 p.m. Trains travel roundtrip to Shenandoah Junction, W.V. Purchase tickets in advance on Eventbrite.com. Search Brunswick for Santa Express Train Rides 12/06/25.

Holiday Market & Santa Workshop

Vendors will sell locally made products for the holidays including crafts, wreaths, baked goods, honey, hot cider, cocoa and more. Food trucks will be there too. The outdoor market is in the Martin's Creek parking lot on East Potomac Street from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Brunswick Art Market

Local artists will display and sell handmade goods upstairs at Smoketown Brewing Station, 223 W. Potomac St. from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. This one-day art market is sponsored by the Brunswick Arts Council. Stop by their afterparty



Santa and one of his elves last year at the annual Christmas tree lighting in Square Corner Park.

downstairs at Smoketown Brewing from 7-9 p.m. for artist networking and live music.

Jingle Bell Run & Santa Stroll

This is a fun run and walk with Santa and Mrs. Claus leading the way. It starts at 3 p.m. at Square Corner Park, goes about 4 blocks, then returns to the park. Registration begins at 2:30. Donate \$5 or 2 cans of food per family (donations go to the Brunswick Food Bank). Ugly sweaters, costumes and other festive attire are encouraged.

Holiday Parade

The parade starts at 4 p.m. on the west end of town and goes down West Potomac to Square Corner Park. Santa and a few city officials will brave the cold on top of a fire truck, in a procession with floats, marchers and music. When the parade ends, Santa will

greet his fans in the park.

Christmas Tree Lighting and Photos with Santa

As the sun sets, the annual lighting of the town Christmas tree brings everyone together in the park to enjoy the lights and community spirit. Santa and Mrs. Claus will help decorate the tree, and then greet children on the park stage to hear holiday wishes and have photos taken.

Holiday Lights Downtown

A new attraction this year will be downtown businesses lit up for the holiday season. Look for lights on more buildings and holiday scenes painted on windows. This is an initiative of business owners and the Main Street Design Committee which is encouraging businesses to light up for the holidays. Businesses will be open during the event for holiday shopping. ■

Why Is There an Orange in My Christmas Stocking?

By JEAN TOLEMAN

The stockings were hung by the chimney with care, in hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there..." reads the famous poem by Clement Clarke Moore penned in 1822. It brings images of children on Christmas morning bursting forth to find their stockings filled with toys and candy and ... an orange? How many of us have received an orange in our Christmas stocking and wondered why it was there? Did Santa toss it in just to take up space or was there another reason?

The history of oranges in stockings goes back to Saint Nicholas, and through him the practice has continued. Ol' St. Nick was born in Turkey where the Silk Road connected with the Mediterranean Sea, sending trade goods to Europe. The Silk Road was an early caravan route, moving spices, produce, silk, animals and ideas across the continents. Oranges were one of those treasures. Native to southeast Asia, oranges from ancient times were thought to bring good luck, joy and ward off evil. The orange and red color was believed to be magical.

Saint Nicholas was the son of a wealthy merchant, becoming a bishop in adulthood. He was known for his kindness and generosity. Legend has it that he took pity on a poor family with three daughters by tossing a bag of gold or a golden sphere (the story varies) through their window. This gift landed in their stockings, which were hanging by the fire to dry. Over time, this gold turned into an orange and those stockings are still being hung by the chimney.

A treasure in northern climates

In the early twentieth century, without modern transportation and refrigeration, oranges were expensive and rare in northern



climates. An orange in a Christmas stocking was a grand treasure and came to symbolize hope and a bright future. During the time of the longest nights and coldest days, the orange color was like a little sun, full of light and sweetness. The way the segments separate came to symbolize giving and sharing.

In 1908, the Sunkist brand was created and their oranges were the first produce to have an ad campaign. The ads highlighted sunny climates, warmth and prosperity. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, an orange and a few nuts were frequently the only things children received for Christmas. It was a sweet nutritious gift that came from a place of dreams.

Holiday rituals

The rituals and family traditions of holidays get passed down from one generation to the next. We frequently lose track of why certain things are done year after year, but there is a history surrounding each and every one of them. It may be something silly that great Uncle Jimmy did or it may be religious or culturally based. Maybe your family has a holiday tradition that you have always wondered about. Go ahead and find out. You might be surprised by the answer and understand why it's meaningful today. Happy Holidays! ■

Where to Buy Christmas Trees Locally

Milltown Creek Farm

CUT YOUR OWN and FRESH CUT Pine, Spruce and Fir Hours: Mon-Fri 12-5 pm Sat-Sun 9 am-5 pm Payment: Cash or Check only 38757 Householder Road Lovettsville, VA 540-822-5428 Milltowncreekfarms.com

D.R. Virts Flower and Garden Center

PRE-CUT TREES and WREATHS Open daily 9 am-5 pm 800 Petersville Road Brunswick, MD 301-969-6115

Boy Scout Troop 766

PRE-CUT TREES Hours: Thurs and Fri 5-8 pm Weekends 10 am-7 pm Jefferson Ruritan Center 4603 Lander Road, Jefferson, MD

Dreamland Christmas Tree Farm

CUT YOUR OWN and PRE-CUT Hours: Tues-Thurs 5-8 pm Fri 12-7 pm, Sat-Sun 9 am-5 pm Cut-Your-Own Fields close at 5 pm 2700 Sumantown Road Middletown, MD 301-418-5348 Dreamlandchristmastreefarm.com

This list was compiled by Abbie Ricketts

BRUNSWICK MAIN STREET

HOLIDAY MARKETPLACE

OVER 16 VENDORS OFFERING HANDMADE, UNIQUE, AND FESTIVE FINDS! PERFECT FOR EVERYONE ON YOUR LIST!

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6  
11 AM TO 5 PM

Martin's Creek Municipal Parking Lot

Santa's Workshop kids crafting center

Santa Train Rides  
1 PM and 3 PM

Brunswick Holiday Parade  
4 PM

Tree lighting and photos with Santa to follow

LEARN MORE:



## A Hero is Honored

On Saturday, November 8, 2025, Charles W. Harbert was honored by his fellow Brunswick citizens. Charlie Harbert was a PFC in the 101st Airborne Division stationed in Vietnam. He was killed by small arms fire on May 12, 1968, in the Thua Thien province. He graduated from Brunswick High school in 1966 and was the only Brunswick High School student killed in action in Vietnam.

Charlie Smith, former state legislator, contacted Mayor Nathan Brown and asked him to support the effort to memorialize Charlie Harbert with naming the bridge on the 600 block of West Potomac Street "The Charlie Harbert Bridge."

Mayor Brown was very enthusiastic about this proposal and supported it fully. Charlie Smith contacted State Senator Bill Folden and asked him to move this proposal forward. Maryland law requires a state legislator to propose the naming of a bridge and Senator Folden quickly endorsed the idea and helped to make it happen.

The State of Maryland erected the sign and it was dedicated on November 8, 2025. At the dedication, Mayor Brown, Senator Folden, and Charlie Smith were the speakers. Mayor Brown spoke of Charlie Harbert's army service and the pride we had in him and his sacrifice. Sen. Folden spoke about the honor of sponsoring the legislation so that we may honor our fallen heroes. Charlie Smith talked about PFC Harbert attending Brunswick schools from the 1st grade to graduation. He then read two letters posted about Charlie Harbert.

The first was from Harold



Reed who attended school with Charlie Harbert the entire time in Brunswick schools and one of Charlie's friends. He wrote:

### SOAR by Harold Reed

*We grew up within 3 blocks of each other, shared classes, graduation, movies, and good times. You were in Nam and gone before I arrived. I don't know how your tragic loss was kept from me until I arrived home. You wore an eagle on your shoulder and I wore an eagle, globe, and anchor on my collar. I hope that is good enough to someday soar with you and chuckle over our childhood memories. Rest in peace, my friend.*

### The following is from an article written by John Fabris in memory of Charlie Harbert:

*Charlie is like a butterfly; it lights beside us like a sunbeam and for a brief moment in its glory and beauty belongs to us and our world. But then it flies away again, and through it we wish he could have stayed. But we feel lucky to have seen it and experienced it. May God bless you, Charlie Harbert.*

Sergeant Perry Mentzer, a Vietnam veteran, then played "Taps" on his trumpet as we bowed our heads in memory of Charlie Harbert. May he rest in peace. ■

## Berlin Turnpike Roundabout to Replace Traffic Light

By MARK ROHNER

If you've ever sat through a red light or two at Virginia Route 287 (Berlin Turnpike) and Virginia Route 9, be prepared for traffic to get worse before it gets better.

Construction is underway on a roundabout that will take the place of the existing traffic light. Loudoun County government advises motorists to be prepared for increased traffic, lane shifts, and flagging during the project, which is expected to continue through summer 2027.

The intersection south of Lovettsville is a major bottleneck for drivers from the Brunswick and Lovettsville areas going to

or from Dulles Airport, Leesburg and Purcellville. Traffic volumes are as much as 18,000 vehicles per day on Route 9 and 9,200 vehicles per day on Route 287.

Traffic gets backed up at the light for as much as 1,400 feet on westbound Route 9 and 1,200 feet on southbound Route 287, according to Loudoun County. When the roundabout is completed, backups will be reduced to 100 feet or less, the county government projects.

The new roundabout will include widened approaches from both Route 287 and Route 9, as well as new drainage and storm water improvements. The project is estimated to cost about \$20-23 million. ■



## Brunswick Collision Center Opens in Grand Style

By ABBIE RICKETTS

The atmosphere was charged with excitement and anticipation on Saturday, Nov. 8, as the new Brunswick Collision Center, located at 1200 N. Maple Avenue, held its grand opening celebration. Crowds were strolling through the parking lot and cars lined the street. Food was served as people wandered about taking in all the major renovation work on the building.

Several automotive vendors had tents set up and grand opening flags were flying. DJ music from Spin City Pro kept young children dancing with hula hoops. The bouncy house was also a fun attraction for kids. Car enthusiasts were invited to bring their cars and a line of Lamborghinis of every color came by with engines roaring.

### Owners Expand from Loudoun County

Owners Jose and Nadin Gonzalez were on hand to greet their guests and talk about their new business. They have six locations already established in Loudoun County. The Brunswick loca-



Jose and Nadin Gonzalez are the owners of Brunswick Collision Center.

tion is the first in Maryland. The couple lives in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, where they manage their operations. A General Manager oversees the Brunswick location. Some of their employees were on hand at the grand opening.

Jose Gonzalez grew up in Ashburn, Va. He took an interest in auto body repair as a high school student at Broad Run High School in Loudoun County, followed by training at Monroe Technology Center. What started as a small operation in a home garage has now grown into a business with seven locations and more than 60 employees.

### Stylish Renovations

The interior of the building is striking with high design flooring and lighting as well as modern, stylish furniture in their signature electric blue color. There is a row of TVs for



The interior of the building has a Brunswick mural and a row of TVs.

those waiting, a well-equipped children's playroom, and a café to grab a coffee. The exterior was enlarged and completely renovated to house the new business.

The property has a long history of business operations, including a car dealership, a night club, a bus repair and storage company, and it was once a church, Potomac Believers Fellowship, which is now located in Rosemont.

Gonzales said there were challenges in completing the renovation, but the permitting process went well. The Frederick County Office of Permitting was helpful and so was the City of Brunswick's Planning and Zoning department. He said, "We had great support from the City." The City of Brunswick held a ribbon cutting at the center the previous day with attendance from local and county officials.

For now, the main niche for the business is body and collision repair, but car detailing, mechanical repair, and vehicle wrapping will be added in the near future, said Gonzales.

Hours are 8 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Monday-Friday. Their website is [www.brunswickcollision.com](http://www.brunswickcollision.com) and their phone is 301-588-6333. ■

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BRUNSWICK NEWS

Cathy Barnes: the Heart of the Brunswick Senior Center



Cathy Barnes at the 50+Community Center in Brunswick.

By JEAN DOYLE

Cathy Barnes is a fourth generation Brunswickian who lives in a home that has been in her family for three generations. Most people know her as the Director and the heart of the Brunswick Senior Center, or as it is now known, the 50+ Community Center.

The Mayor, City Council and the Brunswick History Commission honored Cathy as a Distinguished Citizen in August of this year. She was recognized for her dedication and commitment to citizens of Brunswick as demonstrated by her years of service at the Senior Center.

**Director since 1990**

In 1990 Cathy started working at the Brunswick Senior Center as its director. She has continued in this position ever since, and the center has flourished because of Cathy’s dedication and hard work.

During the Covid pandemic, the Senior Center was closed for two years, but Cathy and her coworkers have since brought back all the daily activities and have added more events, such as the monthly dinner dance at the Eagles Club attended by 70 plus people every month. Exercise programs are held at the City Park Building twice a week, as

well as a weekly line dancing class. A pickleball program was started for 50+ members and has become very popular in the greater Brunswick community.

A new 50+ Community Center is planned for Brunswick, which will provide a much larger space for more activities. Cathy is looking forward to the opportunities a new facility will offer the community, and she is optimistic that it will bring increased participation.

**A long-time Brunswick resident**

Cathy and her husband, Greg Barnes, live in her family home, which was home to her maternal grandparents and then to her parents. Cathy and Greg moved into the family home when her parents needed help, and have remained there ever since.

Cathy has lived in Brunswick since she was two years old when her parents, Paul and Betty Gaither, returned to Brunswick, their hometown, when Paul Gaither took a teaching position at Brunswick High School. She has remained in Brunswick, first raising her children, Greg and Mandy, while doing day care. She worked at the Learning Tree Day Care Center, followed by employment in the Brunswick Middle School and Brunswick High School cafeterias, before

Happenings at the 50+ Community Centers

By JEAN DOYLE

The Winter Activity Session runs from January through March. The Activity Guide will be available online by mid-December and registration begins then. For programs with a fee, register at: <https://fredrickcountymd-gov.3dcartstores.com> or in person at any 50+ community center. For the free programs, register at: [VirtualSeniorCenter@FrederickCountyMD.gov](mailto:VirtualSeniorCenter@FrederickCountyMD.gov).

Trips in December

**Wednesday, Dec. 10 — Shopping at the Valley Mall.** Visit the Valley Mall in Hagerstown to get your holiday shopping done. Time: 10 a.m. to approximately 2 p.m. Cost is \$15 per person. Leave from the Brunswick Senior Center. Register at 301-834-8115.

**Monday, Dec. 22 — Celebrate Holiday Lunch at the Hickory Bridge Farm, Gettysburg.** Located in a beautifully restored 165-year-old barn serving family style meals. The menu includes roast beef, fried chicken, and crab imperial. Transportation is included; participants will not be driving themselves. Time: 10:15 a.m. to approximately 3:30 p.m. Cost is \$55 per person, leaving from Frederick Senior Center. Register by December 12. Call 301-834-8115 for more information.

Virtual Tours

**Wednesday, Dec. 3 — Landfill, Recycle and composting.** Take a virtual ride with Paul Vargus at the Frederick County landfill. Ask questions and get a firsthand view of how the landfill is operated. Free, pre-register at the Virtual Senior Center.

Special Events at the Brunswick 50+ Community Center, 12 East A Street

**Spirit Month every Tuesday** — Dec. 2 wear something Red; Dec. 9 wear something Green; Dec. 16 wear something Inside Out; Dec. 23 wear something Holiday; Dec. 30 wear PJs. Free, pre-register at 301-834-8115 (optional lunch served at noon with advanced registration).

**Tuesday, Dec. 2 — Blood pressure check and safety presentation.** December presentation is Cold Weather Safety. Time: 11 a.m. Free, Drop In.

**Thursday, Dec. 11 — Monthly Dinner Dance.** Time: Dancing at 2 p.m., Dinner at 4 p.m. Cost: \$12 per person. Location: Brunswick Eagles. Hosted by the Brunswick 50+ Community Center. Register by 1 week in advance at 301-834-8115 or stop by the Brunswick Center.

**Tuesday, Dec. 9 — Weis Nutritional Talk.** Topic is “Eat more fruits & veggies.” Time: 1 p.m.

**Wednesday, Dec. 17 — Holiday Luncheon at the Brunswick Center.** Register 1 week in advance at 301-834-8115 or at the Brunswick Center. Voluntary donation toward the meal cost is appreciated (\$6 suggested).

**Wednesday, Dec. 17 — Intake Clinic with Legal Aid.** Time 9 a.m. to noon. Drop in during the scheduled clinic hours to complete an intake form for assistance with an array of civil legal issues.

**Thursday, Dec. — Winter Greens Arrangement.** Make it and take it, pine cuttings with sprigs of holiday cheer. Time: 1:30; Cost \$10. Pre-register at 301-834-8115.

**Tuesday, Dec. 23 — Coffee with a Cop.** Enjoy lunch and visit with a Brunswick City Police officer. Time: Noon to 1 p.m. Pre-register for lunch at 301-834-8115.

**Tuesday, Dec. 30 — Noon's Eve Luncheon.** A special pork loin lunch to celebrate the New Year. Time is noon. Register a week in advance at 301-834-8115. Voluntary donation toward the meal cost is appreciated (\$6 suggested).

**Don't forget all the many and varied ongoing activities offered by the Brunswick 50+ Center. For information about the Brunswick 50+ Center call 301-834-8115 or stop by at 12 East A Street. ■**

taking on her position at the 50+Community Center. This year marks the 35th year that Cathy has been the Director of the Brunswick Senior Center. She is very connected to Brunswick, both professionally and personally. As she says, “I just love the Brunswick community.” In return, Brunswick recognizes Cathy Barnes for her years of dedicated service. ■

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**2 PM**  
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**Live Music by DJ Hub**  
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Square Corner Park

**Holiday Parade &  
City Tree Lighting**  
**4 PM** PARADE STARTS  
West Potomac Street to  
Square Corner Park  
*- Tree Lighting to follow*  
*- Photos with Santa & friends by  
Ron Batcher Photography*



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LOCAL NEWS

The Story of Two Tommys

By LEE ZUMBACH

The year was 1983. Two names appeared at the top of results for the Maryland Boys High School State Cross Country Championship. The State Champion was Tom Dudley of Beall High School who ran the three-mile course in 16 minutes and 26 seconds. The runner-up was Tommy Clark of Brunswick High School at 16 minutes and 28 seconds. Two athletes, each from small western Maryland towns, finished two seconds apart – the time it takes to draw in a breath. Two seconds separated victory from heartbreak.

This is the story of two athletes who met on one unforgettable day in a race that showed what true sportsmanship looks like.

A talented youth

Brunswick’s Tommy Clark was born in Dallas, Texas in 1966. At some point, he moved to Burkittsville with his sister and parents. I first met Tommy when he was a student in a math class I taught at Brunswick Middle School. Even at that young age, his talent began to show as he placed second out of dozens of area runners in the Frederick County Middle School race.

Tommy told me that someday he wanted to run in the Olympics. He spoke of competing in



Tommy Clark running at Glenville State College (now Glenville State University) in West Virginia.

high school cross country and track. Talent paired with ambition is rare, and Tommy had both.

The Brunswick boys cross country program had been strong through the 1960s, but in the mid-70s the coach moved on and the program dissolved. In 1978, several distance runners approached me, knowing I was a marathoner, and asked if I would revive the program. I agreed, and the team was reborn just in time for Tommy who soon arrived in high school.

As a freshman, Tommy ranked third on a strong, dedicated team. By his sophomore season, he was among the area’s best runners, but it was during the summer before his junior year that he truly transformed himself.

Tommy spent the summer running, often running Route 17 between Burkittsville and Middletown, 6-10 miles of up and down hills in the summer heat. His work paid off. That fall he won many races and became the first male Brunswick runner to win the Frederick County Championship. Though he placed in the top 5 that year at the state meet, he fell short of a championship.

Character sets Tommy apart

Through all of this, what set Tommy apart was not just talent but character. He celebrated the success of teammates and competitors alike. After races, he stood at the finish and greeted every runner with a smile, a handshake or high five, and his famous cry of “Rah.”

He never uttered an unkind word and spent time praising others for their accomplishments. At school pep rallies, his name regularly drew standing ovations. The late Kim Doyle admired Tommy’s spirit and dominating performances and gave him the nickname of “Tom the Bomb.”

The showdown between Tommys

In the fall of 1983, Tommy’s senior year, he had more wins and another county title, making him the only Brunswick male runner to ever claim back-to-back county championships.

The regional meet that year was held at Middletown High School and marked the first showdown between the legendary Tommy Clark and another legend, Tom Dudley from Beall. Both were considered top 1A contenders for the late season championships.

The race, however, was run in a torrential downpour. Runners slipped and stumbled and Tom-



Tommy Clark back in the 1980s.

my also took a fall near the mile mark and struggled to work back into 12th place at the finish line. He was sad, but never made excuses. With quiet determination he promised to redeem himself at the state meet.

The final showdown took place on the brutal hills of Hereford, a course regarded as one of the toughest high school cross country courses in America. It was the race everyone was waiting for: Clark versus Dudley, one last time, two elite runners at the peak of their ability.

From the starting gun, they ran stride for stride. At the one-mile mark, their splits were identical. At the two-mile mark, nothing

changed, both stride for stride, neither gave an inch.

With 500 meters to go, the pair charged up the infamous final Hereford hill, a steep, punishing climb that usually breaks the field apart. Not this time. They crested together and locked in a duel of endurance and pride.

A left turn around a backstop helped to decide the outcome. Dudley took the inside and Clark swung wide, losing a fraction of a second. The two sprinted the final 100 meters, but the narrow advantage Dudley gained on that turn held. He crossed the finish line two seconds ahead of Tommy, and thus he forever will be known as the State Champion.

A lifetime champion

Both boys were exhausted, but embraced at the finish and once again, Tommy shook the hands of all who came after him. Though disappointed, he wore a smile, proud that he had given all he had.

When we went into the gym for the awards ceremony, we had trouble finding Tommy but then we saw him sitting on the floor in a corner of the hall. He was in deep conversation with Tom Dudley, talking about what was coming next in their lives and looking like long-time friends. When the awards were handed out, they embraced again, two medal winners, one with gold and the other with silver by a scant two seconds.

Tommy continued running as a champion at Hagerstown Community College and then transferred to Glenville State College, West Virginia. He then served many years as the recreation director for the Federal Correctional Institute in Cumberland, where he continued to be known as “Tom the Bomb.” He married, raised a family, kept running in community races, and now works for the U.S. Postal Service in Cumberland.

“Tom the Bomb” represents the very best in athletics, perseverance, humility, respect for competitors and genuine kindness. He taught the lesson that success is measured not only in seconds and medals, but in how one carries oneself at the end of the race.

Two seconds separated him from a state title, but character like his lasts a lifetime. RAH! ■

BHS Students of the Month: October 2025



Students were nominated by their teachers for this award. Pictured (from left) are Juliette Bel (social studies, grade 11), Brookelyn Peddicord (physical education, grade 9), Melissa Charbonneau (English, grade 12), Gabryella Rivera Simonetti (media/FCVS, grade 11), Sharod Avery (world languages, grade 10), Kate Virgilio (visual & performing arts, grade 10), Alex Hartman (math, grade 11). Not pictured are Lucas Errett (career and technical ed, grade 12) and Sean Johnson (science, grade 10). Principal Schwarzenegger is on the right.

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# The Potomac River Keeps a Dark Secret

By ABBIE RICKETTS

The spot where the Potomac joins the Shenandoah River at historic Harpers Ferry is one of the most breathtaking views in the region if not the country. Thousands visit the area to boat and fish the scenic rivers, hike to popular vantage points for spectacular views, learn history about the country, and enjoy the peace and calmness of the natural world.

There was no peace and calmness to be found for Brunswick resident Geraldine Butts, a 29-year-old wife and mother, in the early hours of March 20, 1983. According to police reports, Butts was brutally bludgeoned to death at Sandy Hook and her body was dumped in the Potomac River, not to be found for over a month later on April 22. Her murder remains unsolved.

Born in 1954 and known by friends and family as "Gerry," Mrs. Butts grew up in the Boonsboro area and attended Boonsboro High School. She married her second husband, Robert Butts, in 1976, and they became parents of a daughter in 1979. Mrs. Butts had a son from her first marriage who passed away from natural causes in 2021. At the time of her murder, her children were eight and four years old. She and her husband had moved to Brunswick from Boonsboro.



Geraldine Butts

## The night of the murder

By several accounts from police reports and news articles, she, her husband and her children were visiting friends in Boonsboro on the evening of March 19. In the hours just past midnight, upset and angry, she walked into the abyss, unknowingly sealing her fate.

The men in the group had decided to go out somewhere to play pool. Mrs. Butts became angry when they were not back. She left her children with a friend and went to the Boone Tavern, which was located where Inn BoonsBoro is today. She saw her husband's brother there. She asked him for a ride home, and he told her when his pool game was over, he would take her home, but when he went out to the bar area, she had left. Witnesses heard her say she was walking home to Brunswick.

While the investigators who worked on the case back then are now retired, one of them, Victor Wolf, in a 1995 interview in the Frederick News-Post by reporter Julia Robb, said he believes Mrs. Butts was walking to the home of an acquaintance, and he suspects the acquaintance was the killer.

Several witnesses saw her walking south on Rt. 67 that night, near Netz Road just outside of Boonsboro. A Washington County Deputy Sheriff stopped and offered her a ride but she said she wanted to walk. The night was dark, chilly and rainy, and Mrs. Butts was wearing jeans, a sweater and a hooded windbreaker. Police believe she met her attacker/



The Stone House on the left (once known as the Salty Dog Tavern) is located at the base of Maryland Heights. Across the road, large quantities of blood were found on a small footbridge over the canal lock.

attackers somewhere in the area and then was driven to Sandy Hook and murdered there across from the Old Salty Dog Tavern sometime after 2 a.m.

"She had very traumatic blunt force trauma to her head using some kind of blunt, sharper blunt — not a blade, but something that was sharper than a pipe or something like that," Sgt. David Sexton, with Maryland State Police, said in an earlier report. Sexton was in charge of the Maryland State Police Cold Case Unit back in 2019 when the most recent media coverage was released.

Blood was found on the other side of the road from the river and on the walking bridge over the C&O Canal, and a trail of blood ended at the river. Fishermen found the blood the next morn-

ing but didn't report it right away because Mrs. Butts hadn't been reported missing until the next day. According to police reports, the blood was typed, determined to be human, and an all-out search was initiated for Mrs. Butts.

## The body is found

Her body was found wrapped around a tree about a half mile south of Lander, nearly ten miles downriver, on April 22, 1983. Sgt. Sexton said in an earlier interview that all evidence had been washed away by that time. "Really a lack of evidence — physical evidence — for this case with the exception of witnesses and what people saw at the bar," Sexton said, leads this to remain an unsolved murder.

In another turn of events, the Washington Examiner reported

on May 20, 2010:

"A man charged in the slaying of a Hagerstown woman might be linked to three unsolved Frederick County cold cases, police said. Pennsylvania State Police last month charged Jeffrey S. Miles Sr. with killing Kristy Hoke, 29. That investigation led to the remains of a 17-year-old Angie Daley, of Waynesboro, Pa., who disappeared in 1995. No one has been charged in Daley's death. Now, Maryland State Police are seeking links to the deaths of Geraldine Butts, 27, of Brunswick, whose remains were found in 1983; Lorraine Zimmerman of Hagerstown, who was strangled in 1984; and an unidentified woman found dead in 1991, reports the Hagerstown Herald-Mail."

Nothing materialized from this investigation with regard to Geraldine Butts.

Her husband, Robert Butts, was never considered a suspect in the case. He passed away in 2005. Gerry Butts was interred in the Boonsboro Cemetery after a service held on May 7, 1983.

## An unsolved mystery

The case remains open and leads are still being sought. Anyone with information about the case should contact the Maryland State Police Cold Case Division. The best way to reach them is by calling the Criminal Enforcement Division at 410-694-4700. Since there is no direct number specifically for cold cases, this is the division that handles them. ■



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OPINION

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Fame! Glamour! Excitement!

The Brunswick News-Journal owes its existence to the advertisers who pay for the printing, the paper, the ink, the plates, and the postage to deliver each issue to your mailbox every month. In return, we hope that you, dear reader, will go to those advertisers for your business.

Just as much, the BNJ owes its existence to the communities we write about. They provide the people who report on events, write the articles, take the photos, or investigate the story.



Haven't you always wanted to be a newspaper reporter?

Now is your chance! The Brunswick News Journal needs you. We are looking for curious, public-spirited writers to help us cover the communities of Brunswick, Jefferson, Lovettsville and areas in between. We are all volunteers. Some of us have worked as professional journalists. Most have not. But we all enjoy keeping our readers informed and engaged.

It's the community support and involvement with our newspaper, especially those who have sent us their contributions as writers, that makes the Brunswick News Journal possible. We want this to be a true community newspaper and the only way that works is if lots of people in the community contribute to the paper — either by writing, distributing papers, advertising, or just giving us feedback on our content.

We continue to need more reporters and writers to help cover gaps in our coverage, such as the schools, county government, and Jefferson and Lovettsville. Many people are currently volunteering their time to report the news, but there is a continuous need for fresh perspectives and quality writing.

Interested? Email us at [BrunsNews@proton.me](mailto:BrunsNews@proton.me) or call Ellis at 240-409-7476. ■

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dr. Fleming Says Farewell

I am writing to inform you that I will be retiring from the practice of medicine on December 30, 2025.

Following graduation in May 1987 from the University of South Carolina, I completed a three-year Family Practice Residency at Franklin Square Hospital Center in Baltimore, MD. There were multiple practices within Frederick County to join in 1990 and I decided to join the Brunswick/Jefferson Family Practice with Drs. Allgaier, Stern and Pasierb. I have been here ever since and have had the privilege to serve so many wonderful patients over the years.

As most of you know, our practice has grown and changed over time and we became one of the founding groups of Frederick Primary Care Associates. I have enjoyed working with a wonderful group of colleagues and office staff since that time.

All of us here at the Brunswick and Jefferson offices of FPCA will do everything we can to seamlessly transfer your care to one of our other primary care providers following my departure.

I wish all of you the very best,

— Chris Fleming, MD

Scouting for Food Needs Business Support

Scouting America sponsors "Scouting for Food" the first weekend in November. Brunswick Troop 277 held a food drive at the shopping center in Brunswick Crossing and collected 461 pounds of food and \$320 in monetary donations. We thank everyone who made a donation and Papa Johns for their support.

In the past, our boys roamed Brunswick putting donation bags on doors and collecting them the following week. We would collect 4,000-5,000 pounds. As Brunswick grew, the scouts could no longer cover the town, so we had a food drive at Weis Market which was supportive until two years ago. Since then, Weis has not allowed the scouts to have the food drive at their store. They claim to support our community, yet deny the scouts this important outreach program. They do allow WFRE to have a food drive at their store, and the food collected goes to Frederick.

The troop attempted to get permission for the food drive by completing the online, multi-page request. The troop never got a response. The next attempt was a letter to the manager of the local Weis — again no response. A food drive should be a win-win situation — Weis would get more sales and more profit while the food bank would get more food. No one can understand Weis' position or explain it to the scouts. This was a very disappointing experience for the boys.

— Anne Zumbach  
Scoutmaster, Troop 277

How to send a Letter to the Editor

Letters intended for publication should be emailed to [editor@brunsnews.com](mailto:editor@brunsnews.com). Please include your name, town and phone number (phone numbers will not be published). Letters may be edited for grammar, length and content. We do not publish anonymous letters. Unpublished letters cannot be acknowledged. DEADLINE: the 18th of each month.



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## FREDERICK COUNTY NEWS

## FROM THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

This time of the year is an opportunity for us to come together and enjoy the holiday season with our friends, family and neighbors. It is also a time to reflect on how we are creating a strong, vibrant community.

I recently delivered my third annual State of the County address. I am proud to report that, thanks to the Frederick County Way, our county is strong!

We do things here the Frederick County Way. While this may mean something a little different to everyone, there are core values that set our community apart. To me, this means we are inclusive, collaborative, innovative, accountable and sustainable.

Frederick County brings people together. We have honest and hard conversations. We develop thoughtful solutions, make decisions designed to meet people's needs, and create partnerships and engage our community.

This isn't the easiest or fastest way to govern. But it is the best way to make the right decisions for our community. Because we do things the Frederick County Way, our county is strong. And we truly have made progress on so many fronts this year.

## Education

Frederick County has long had the fastest growing student enrollment in Maryland. School construction is one of the best examples of the Frederick County Way. We work with our legislative delegation to bring home as much state money as we can, and we partner with Frederick County Public Schools to ensure each dollar is spent with student success in mind.

Linganore Creek Elementary School is an example of this partnership in action. We are doing something no other Maryland county and school system have done: building a new school in one year to alleviate overcrowding at elementary schools on the eastern side of Frederick County and saving significant resources in the process.

Our success is grounded in a long-term, results-oriented partnership between our government and our school system. Just this fall, we opened two new replacement schools in Frederick County — Green Valley Elementary and Valley Elementary Schools.

I am also incredibly proud of our work building a new model for career and technical education. We brought the school system, community college and business stakeholders together to have an honest conversation about what's working — and where we can do more and do better. I am excited about this



County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

partnership with Frederick County Public School and Frederick Community College to design an innovative approach that can become a national model for career readiness for our students.

## Affordable Housing

I know that we need to do more to help workers connect with affordable housing. Government alone doesn't have all the tools to meet this challenge, but we play a critical role. This is why we developed a framework to assess county-owned land for housing development.

I am excited to announce that we are moving forward with the development of a 7-acre site adjacent to the Prospect Center on Himes Avenue in Frederick. This will bring nearly 150 affordable and deeply affordable homes to our community, strategically located next to a future hub for the county's health, aging and family services, and directly accessible to our fare-free Transit system.

This work reflects our commitment to social equity, economic stability and responsible stewardship of our resources.

## Data Centers

For more than five years, Frederick County has grappled with the question of data centers in our community. We have approached this with an inclusive workgroup which made recommendations for policymakers to consider. In partnership with the Council, we adopted many of those recommendations and made data centers the most regulated industry in Frederick County.

The data center industry creates opportunities. It also brings risks which we have worked to mitigate. To avoid data center sprawl, we are concentrating development to an area of the county with the infrastructure the industry needs, and we are limiting development to no more than one percent of our total landmass. These steps will ensure reasonable, well-regulated development.

We are also listening closely to our residents' concerns and

## FROM CONGRESSWOMAN APRIL MCCLAIN DELANEY

As fall settles once again over Brunswick, our community recently gathered to honor the service and sacrifice of America's veterans—those who have worn the uniform, defended our freedoms, and strengthened the very fabric of our nation. This year, I had the privilege of serving as a speaker for the 93rd Annual Brunswick Veterans Day Parade, one of the oldest in the country and one of only four Veterans Day celebrations in Maryland officially recognized by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Each year, the parade reminds us of what military service truly represents: dedication, courage, and the steadfast support of military families who serve alongside their loved ones. Our veterans' stories reaffirm that the freedoms we enjoy carry a cost, and they underscore our responsibility to support veterans not only in moments of ceremony, but through sustained action.

Ahead of Veterans Day, my office introduced the bipartisan Veterans Affairs Work Study Improvement Act, legislation that will modernize and expand the VA's work-study program so student veterans can access better real-world training and ca-



Congresswoman April McClain Delaney

reer pathways. Earlier this year, I also introduced the MIL FMLA Act to strengthen the Family and Medical Leave Act and ensure it better supports veterans and military families facing the unique challenges of service-connected injuries.

Our commitment to veterans also includes building communities worthy of their service. That is why our team was proud to help secure \$1 million in federal funding for the Brunswick Reservoir Project, a critical investment to modernize the city's 100-year-old concrete reservoir—an aging structure that supplies more than 80% of Brunswick's drinking

water and requires significant repairs. As Mayor Nathan Brown noted, "This infrastructure investment is designed to ensure reliable water storage and fire protection for our community, with the hope that it will serve future generations for the next hundred years."

We are also fighting for the livelihoods of hardworking families who feed our nation. That is why I recently introduced the American Farmers First Act, which blocks \$20 billion in taxpayer funds from being used to bail out Argentina's economy and redirects those dollars to support American farmers—particularly soybean growers and cattlemen here in Maryland's Sixth District. These farmers have been hit hard by the ongoing trade war, and I remain committed to bringing those funds back home to the communities that need them most.

As we enter the holiday season, please accept my warmest wishes for you and your families. Our shared sense of purpose and community continues to inspire me. I look forward to the opportunity to visit again soon.

May God bless you, and may God bless America! ■

## Veterans Day Keynote



Congresswoman April McClain Delaney delivered the keynote address at Brunswick's annual Veterans Day Parade on November 9.

responding to their needs. In response to some Adamstown residents expressing concerns about water quality and the cost of testing, the Health Department will offer a free survey of their wells. The survey will evaluate water quality, and the data gathered will be used to guide future decisions.

In addition, Frederick County will hold community benefit listening sessions after the County Council finishes its work on data centers later this year. This opportunity will allow us to gather ideas directly from our residents

and ensure positive outcomes for our community.

## The Frederick County Way

Frederick County is an inclusive and welcoming community, and our public servants and community partners work to provide the best possible service to all people.

We are committed to bringing people together, having tough conversations and making decisions to keep us moving forward.

We do this work in partnership with others, because government

alone cannot meet all our community's needs, but absolutely must play our part. This isn't the way it happens in every community, and certainly not at every level of government, but it is the way it happens here.

Our way — the Frederick County Way — is why the state of our county is strong. I look forward to our continued work together to ensure Frederick County remains a place where everyone can live, work and thrive while enjoying a strong sense of place and belonging. ■

## The Sound of Hope: Overdose Awareness Concert

Two years ago in 2023, over 105,000 Americans died from drug overdoses. Of those, 72% died of fentanyl overdose. During that same year in Frederick County, 48 people lost their lives due to drug overdoses. Some of those were in Brunswick. One of them was Trinity Viola Ripley, who died on December 13, 2023.

Since then, the number of drug overdose deaths has declined, both nationally and in Frederick County. However, it's still taking the lives of

thousands of people a year. That's why the Ripley family started Trinity's Children in remembrance of their daughter and to help combat the drug problems we face locally.

The Mission of Trinity's Children is to empower families and youth through awareness, support, and advocacy. They partner with local organizations like Phoenix Recovery, Let There Be Rock School, the Maryland Municipal League, and the Community Outreach and Support Team

(COAST) through Frederick County Fire and Rescue Services.

They've also established the Trinity Viola Ripley Scholarship, to help a student in recovery attend a specialized high school program.

To support Trinity's Children, attend the concert on December 13 (see the ad on page 28) or see [www.trinitychildren.org](http://www.trinitychildren.org).



At right, Trinity Viola Ripley



LOCAL NEWS

Public is Invited to Breakfast with the Frederick County General Assembly Delegation

The League of Women Voters of Frederick County is hosting a Legislative Breakfast on Saturday, December 6, where members of the public can meet and talk with elected officials who represent Frederick County in the Maryland General Assembly. The breakfast will be at the Evangelical Reformed United Church of Christ, 15 W. Church Street, in Frederick. Doors open at 8 a.m. for

pre-breakfast networking. Breakfast begins at 8:30 a.m. During the event, each member of the Frederick County General Assembly Delegation will have an opportunity to address the gathering and share their legislative agenda, as well as answer audience questions, before they depart to Winchester Hall for the annual Delegation Hearing. Attendees can make a suggested minimum donation of

\$10 (by cash or check) at the door. The event will conclude by 9:30 a.m. Attendees should RSVP using the "Register Here" button on the League's website: [www.lwv.org/local-leagues/lwv-frederick-county](http://www.lwv.org/local-leagues/lwv-frederick-county). The League is expecting excellent representation from the 11 delegates and 4 state senators who represent Frederick County. ■

Annual River Plunge Helps People in Need

By LEE ZUMBACH

The 19th Annual "Freezin for a Reason" river plunge takes place on New Years Day, January 1. The event is at the Brunswick Family Campground, one mile east of Brunswick along the C&O Canal towpath. The actual plunge takes place at 1:00 p.m. This is a rain or shine event, unless weather or river conditions are severe. The event is sponsored by the Brunswick Area Recreation Council (BARC). It gives people a fun way to support three orga-

nizations that help many people in our area. All funds donated will stay in Frederick County and the Brunswick area to help people in need. The recipients of the fundraising are:

- **Brunswick Food Bank** helps feed many families throughout the year.
- **BEACON** (Brunswick Ecumenical Assistance Committee on Needs) helps with emergency needs such as housing, utility bills and help for children.
- **Frederick County Special Olympics** supports youth and adults

with intellectual challenges by providing a healthy and fun sports program.

How to be involved

Collect pledges from friends and family and take the river plunge yourself, or make a pledge to support someone else going into the river. If you choose to participate, a pledge sheet is at BARCMD.com. If you make or collect pledges in excess of \$40 and pre-register by Dec.10, you will get a fun Freezin T-Shirt. Light packaged snacks and drinks are provided. A changing area will be set up for use after the plunge. Pre-register by phone at 301-834-8045 or by e-mail [zum50@hotmail.com](mailto:zum50@hotmail.com) or bring your pledges to the event. If you want to stay on dry land, come out to watch the river plunge and cheer on all the participants.

Community support

BARC thanks River & Trail Outfitters for their support by allowing use of the campground and promoting the event. It also thanks the Brunswick Volunteer Ambulance Company for safety support. Key contacts for the event include Shirley Shores,

State Legislative News

By MARK ROHNER

The Frederick County Council has scheduled a public hearing on the county's legislative priorities — including a new tax on data centers — for the upcoming session of the Maryland General Assembly. The hearing with Frederick County's representatives in Annapolis is scheduled for 10 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 6, in Winchester Hall at 12 E. Church Street in Frederick.

Taxing data centers

The County Council voted in November to seek legislation that would add data centers as a new class of personal property for tax purposes. The Council estimates the tax could generate between \$69 million and \$74 million annually. Construction is underway on a 72-megawatt data center that will eventually consist of four multi-story buildings, part of a 2,100-acre data center park being developed near Adamstown.

Gaming at fire companies

The County Council is also asking for legislation that would allow volunteer fire companies to accept credit cards for gaming activities.

Banning ICE partnerships

Separately, County Executive Jessica Fitzwater is seeking a state-wide ban on local law enforcement



partnering with U.S. Customs and Immigration Enforcement (ICE). So-called 287 (g) agreements give local law enforcement authority to identify and process illegal aliens who face criminal charges. Fitzwater, a Democrat, said more than 70 percent of speakers at an Oct. 8 town hall event called for a state-wide ban on 287 (g) agreements. "Immigration enforcement is necessary, but we have witnessed enforcement tactics that are designed to intimidate all residents and cause unnecessary trauma to families and the communities," Fitzwater said. "It erodes the public's trust in the police when local law enforcement agents enforce federal immigration laws directly. 287(g) agreements have led to racial profiling and discrimination, and these practices intimidate our residents and reduce the likelihood that they will seek the police's help if they are a victim of crime or assist the police if they witness a crime," she said. Frederick County Sheriff Chuck Jenkins, a Republican, supports 287 (g) agreements and says they have reduced crime in the county. ■



Hardy souls gather on the Brunswick Campground boat ramp just before they take the plunge into the cold Potomac at a past "Freezin for a Reason" river plunge event.

Jefferson Man Fatally Shot

By MARK ROHNER

A Harpers Ferry woman has been charged with murder in the fatal shooting of a Jefferson, Md., man on Nov. 16. Melvin Todd Smith, 62, was found shortly after midnight in the driver's seat of a vehicle, suffering from gunshot wounds, the Jefferson County, W.V., Sheriff's Department said. The shooting occurred at a house in the 600 block of Dey Drive in Harpers Ferry. Sheriff's deputies found Lisa Marie Dickey, 32, of Harpers Ferry, at the residence, and determined that she had shot Smith, the Sheriff's Department said. She was arrested and taken to Eastern Regional Jail, charged with first and second-degree murder. She appeared in Magistrate Court Nov. 17 and pleaded not guilty. Deputies recovered shell casings, fired bullets, a firearm and video surveillance footage at the crime scene. Smith was the owner of MTS Trucking in Jefferson and was a graduate of Brunswick High School, according to an obituary posted by Stauffer Funeral Homes. "The investigation is still very active," said Lieutenant Steven Holz of the Jefferson County Sheriff's office. He asked anyone with information about the shooting to call the sheriff's office. ■

Fun for little ones

refreshments

Meet Santa at Thompson Best

Dec 20, 3-5pm

Bring the family and visit Santa for a fantastic photo opportunity.

4959 New Design Rd, #118 Frederick MD



# Stay Healthy with Vitamin C



By CHRISTINA FRITZ

While vitamin C plays an important role in the immune system, we may not be able to boost our immunity as much as we once thought, but it has many other functions in the body to help keep us healthy.

Vitamin C helps improve the absorption of non-heme iron, the form of iron found in plant foods such as beans and spinach. It also acts as an antioxidant, helping protect cells from damage. Vitamin C, most notably, supports immune function; however, studies do not show that excess vitamin C intake aids in prevention of colds, but may reduce the duration and severity of colds in some populations.

Vitamin C is needed to make collagen, connective tissue that is found in skin, tendons and ligaments. Even if the components to make collagen are present, if there is no vitamin C, it may not form. Scurvy, a sign of vitamin C deficiency, is a loss of collagen that weakens connective tissues. Although this deficiency is rare in developed countries, there are populations who may be at a greater risk, including those with low fruit and vegetable consumption, smokers and those abusing drugs and alcohol.

## Recommended dosage

Adults 19 years and older have a daily recommendation for vitamin C of 90 milligrams (mg) for men and 75mg for women. For women 19 years and older, this increases to 85mg and 120mg for pregnancy and lactation, respectively. Smokers should have 35mg more, as smoking lowers vitamin C levels in the body due to increased cell damage.

Even though vitamin C is not stored in the body, it is not recom-

mended to exceed 2,000mg per day. This is the maximum amount that is unlikely to have any adverse effects, whereas having over 3,000mg may cause gastrointestinal distress and diarrhea.

## Where to find vitamin C

Think beyond oranges and other citrus fruits! While those are great sources of vitamin C, many other fruits and vegetables naturally contain it, including tomatoes, broccoli, kiwi, strawberries and potatoes. ½ cup of raw red bell peppers contains 95mg of vitamin C compared to 1 medium orange which contains 70mg.

## Supplements

Vitamin C is also called ascorbic acid, which is what may appear on supplement labels. This supplement form is just as bioavailable, or as easily absorbed, as the vitamin C in foods; however, absorption may decrease with higher amounts. Since vitamin C is water soluble, it is not stored well in the body and excess will be excreted in urine.

According to the National Institutes of Health, supplements containing over 1,000mg have about a 50% absorption rate, or only about half (500mg) will be absorbed. A moderate intake of 30-180mg per day has a 70-90% absorption rate. Since about 500mg of vitamin C is absorbed at a time, consider spreading intake out throughout the day and remember to incorporate vitamin C rich foods into your diet.

Visit [weismarkets.com/nutrition](https://weismarkets.com/nutrition) for more information about the free services offered by Weis dietitians. ■

*Christina Fritz, MS, RDN, LDN is Regional Dietitian at Weis Markets in Brunswick.*

By JEAN TOLEMAN

Last January, U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. stated ultra-processed foods (UPFs) and food additives were poisoning Americans. At that time, his plan was to “educate” us, not ask food manufacturers to alter the foods they create or advertise.

While many of Kennedy’s health initiatives have been controversial, the majority of Americans agree on the need to curb filling our foods with chemicals and high amounts of sugar, salt and fat. A University of Chicago National Opinion Research Center poll found almost two-thirds of Americans favor reformulating UPFs to remove added sugar or dyes.

How will this be done? To start, the FDA and USDA just finished gathering comments from the public to develop a definition of ultra-processed foods. Using data from Aug. 2021 to Aug. 2023, the FDA.gov webpage states an estimated 70% of the U.S. food supply is comprised of foods commonly considered ultra-processed, and that children get over 60% of their calories from such foods.

In the commonly used “NOVA” food classification system, UPFs are defined as “industrially processed products made with additives, or ingredients not commonly used in home cooking.” It does not consider the nutritional value of foods, but classifies them into four groups:

- Fresh or minimally processed foods: fruits, vegetables, grains, milk, meat, eggs
- Processed culinary ingredients: oils, sugar, salt (basic items used in cooking)
- Processed foods: bread, cheese, sausage, canned vegetables
- Ultra-processed foods (UPFs), with added sugar, salt, trans fats, artificial colors and artificial sweeteners. UPFs typically have five or more ingredients.

So we know what UPFs are. Much research has studied their effect on health. A review of 45 studies that included almost 10 million people indicated diets high in UPFs were linked to more than 30 health conditions (bmj.com). Their negative role in obesity, cardiovascular disease, and

# Our Current Food Villain: Ultra-Processed Foods

type 2 diabetes is unquestioned. Other concerns include high caloric content, the way they replace healthier foods in the diet, and their effect on gut health, exposure to toxins and the brain’s response to these foods. The food industry, in turn, suggests more research is needed.

## All food is processed

All the food we eat has been processed in some way, even if it’s just washing and cooking it. Processing makes food safer (removes bugs and dirt by washing) and more digestible (cooking breaks down fibers and kills bacteria). Milk is processed into cheese, yogurt and butter. Animals have been bred to produce more milk, and vegetables have been modified to be more resistant to diseases, increase yield, and be prettier and sweeter.

easy to prepare, featuring cartoon characters that attract children. These highly processed foods include large amounts of sugar, fat, starch, salt, hydrogenated oil, preservatives and artificial colors, to add flavor and extend shelf life. They feature a lot of packaging, which may also contain “forever chemicals” and microplastics, and a lengthy ingredients list. You might need a magnifying glass to read that list and then research what they are.

Ultra processed foods were created to increase shelf life, almost to a point where they may outlive the purchaser, but they are also engineered to get you to eat more. Remember the Lay’s potato chips ad that bragged: “Betcha can’t eat just one!”

Manufactures spend a lot of money creating “hyperpalatable” foods that tweak all the taste buds



However, minimally processed foods still look like their source. Most of the vitamins, minerals and fiber are still intact. If packaged, their ingredients list may include two or three ingredients besides the original food. These are added to keep them safe in their processed form, or increase the vitamin or mineral content. Minimal processing can help preserve the nutritional content of food and prevent spoilage. Lightly processed foods include frozen or canned vegetables and fruit, dried legumes, and roasted nuts. While not fresh, they have been minimally processed to preserve them.

## UPFs lurk on stores’ inner aisles

The “bad guys”— the UPFs — are typically found on stores’ inner aisles, where shelves are filled with boxes in bright colors and pictures that suggest adventure. Meals sound exciting and

and trigger the brain’s reward center, luring us to keep eating. (How often does that fresh apple call your name compared to the sour cream-flavored chips?) The food industry might agree to make little changes to their products, but they won’t risk sales. While they continue to sell plain chips, they make more money with more flavors. The ingredient list on a bag of Tostitos original chips reads “Corn, vegetable oil, salt.” The list on a bag of Doritos Cool Ranch chips is multiple lines long and includes sugars, MSG, salt in various forms, artificial colors including Red 40 (linked to ADHD), Blue 1 and Yellow 5, and “natural & artificial flavors.”

Trying to get Americans to eat a less processed diet is nothing new. We have been “educated” for over 50 years about the concerns of eating a high sugar, high salt, high saturated fat diet. The

*Continued on page 14*

# Christian Community Church

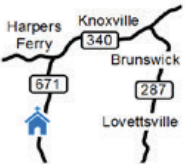
Visit this Sunday and you'll find a church where  
God's Word is the ultimate authority, and  
people who want to live and love like Jesus.

Bible Study 9am  
Worship 10am

Christmas Eve Service 5pm

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Visit us online at:  
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Celebrating 190 years!



GARDENING

The Perfect Month for a Break. Of Sorts

BY MARIANNE WILLBURN

December is here.

Are you ready? We are sent out to achieve the impossible this month. In the midst of lives already conducted at 80 mph, we are asked to do the following ten tasks with a smile on our faces:

- 1. Find thoughtful gifts for numerous friends and family.
- 2. Entertain at least 100% more than we normally do.
- 3. Bake mouth-watering treats with indecipherable recipes.
- 4. Maintain some measure of self-control whilst doing same.
- 5. Decorate our houses festively and tastefully.
- 6. Attend various social obligations and /or fun days out.
- 7. Skillfully avoid last minute post-offices, grocery stores and shopping malls.
- 8. Photoshop a family portrait to illustrate how fulfilled and impeccably dressed we are.
- 9. Highlight major life achievements real or imagined in a warm, personalized letter.
- 10. Locate 96 physical addresses in an email world; and even harder, 96 stamps.

Though the above list may have made your eyes water, I will admit that my obnoxious cynicism is in fact, forced.

I happen to love December. It is my birthday month, and every day of it comes lit up like the proverbial Christmas tree. And, once we've acknowledged we can't do everything on the above list and finally relax into the rhythm of this month, we find that it also comes with merriment, excitement and great beauty.

It is the longest month for children — the shortest for adults, and quite possibly the quietest month in twelve for health clubs. But it is also the quietest month for gar-



WALDEMAR BRANDT/UNSPLASH

Once we've acknowledged we can't do everything on the list, and finally relax into the rhythm of this month, we find that it also comes with merriment, excitement and great beauty.

deners in a cold climate. We get a break.

Sure, we have to break the ice on the chicken waterers and horse troughs, but we don't have to check on orange groves or irrigate acres of budding strawberries. There isn't a task on the list that needs to include the words 'prune,' 'weed,' 'sow' or 'dig.' All is calm. All is bright.

December symbolizes freedom from my gardening calendar. My daily desk calendar will still punish me with deadlines, pitches, podcast notes, and project proposals, but long ago I vowed I'd be done with the fall gardening chores in late November and winter chores wouldn't start until after the New Year. Anything I end up doing outside has to be conducted without urgency and with a joyful, creative spirit.

Thus, December will see me doing things like organizing my potting shed to the sweetly embarrassing sounds of an early nineties mix tape. It will witness the making of Advent wreaths on the dining room table while Bridget Jones drinks heavily on my laptop media player. December will give me license to slowly walk around

my woods and mark trees to be thinned and vines to be cut without insisting I pull out the chainsaw before the mulled wine cools.

Certainly, I will partake in a few of those idealized December tasks mentioned above. Some willingly and enthusiastically, some willingly and less enthusiastically. The point is, I have choices — we all do — and I intend to choose carefully. A tight smile is not the same as a broad one.

A pilgrimage drive to Longwood's holiday display is definitely on the schedule, as is an evening walk in nearby downtown Frederick admiring festive shop windows, twinkling street trees, and a fleet of imaginative vessels gently sailing along Car-

roll Creek. I may even put aside a day to head down to the Washington DC Holiday Market and soak in the vibe of a big city during the holiday season.

Big cities, big vibes and big opportunities to spend big amounts of money aside, I'm looking forward to a bit of agenda-less browsing with my holiday-obsessed daughter in crowded stores and putting together a package of favorite treats for my Air Force son training as a pilot in Arizona. Even closer to home, a new route for my daily walk will allow me to enjoy a whole slew of holiday decorations I didn't have to put up myself.

Oh yes. I'm going to enjoy myself this month. For when January arrives, the banshees scream, and the work begins (brush-cutting top of the list around here), I don't want to look back and wonder why I didn't play more in December when winter felt kinder and wasn't trying to kill me.

If you can give yourself license to play, I invite you to do it this month above all others.

Splurge on a chunk of excellent cheese, or find out what the Gen Z hype over super-premium gin is all about. Watch a YouTube video and learn how to make a winter centerpiece. Pull out that huge collection of shiny new cookie cutters and actually make a few cookies. Decorate your front step with bounty from a quieted garden, and have a couple of friends over for a dinner that lasts for six hours and feels like two.

I think you get the picture. December is a celebration of the year we have just lived — let's live every day of it with gratitude and joy. ■

Marianne is an author and podcaster at The Garden Mixer and Garden-Rant.com. She gardens from her home in Lovettsville.

Ultra-Processed Foods CONTINUED

Continued from page 13

research keeps piling up, but our over-consumption of these foods keeps increasing.

Can a public service announcement counter the powerful messages of bright boxes and memorable ads? The industry is proposing a voluntary program where "Non-UPF verified" is put on food labels — the same labeling used for "nonGMOs," genetically modified foods.

Limiting UPFs in Your Diet

If you want to limit your intake of UPFs you will need to be diligent, for temptation waits around every corner. Some places to start:

• **Check the label.** Limit foods that contain high fructose corn syrup, dyes, MSG and hydrogenated fats. Limit foods with a sodium content over 20% of your daily need or added sugar over 2-3 grams in foods that don't need sugar. (A cake, yes— but frozen chicken tenders?)

• **Does it look like food?** Keep it as close to looking like the original food as possible. That means plain frozen vegetables vs. ones in sauces; canned fruit in its own juice vs.

sugar syrup; deli rotisserie chicken instead of fried chicken pieces; and plain corn chips or crackers vs. flavored.

• **Buy less:** We all love a little sweet or salty, but keep fewer snacks in the house. Make less processed options easy to eat: fresh serving-size fruits, ready-to-eat veggies (kept at eye level in the fridge), popcorn (microwave popcorn has palm oil and preservatives, pre-popped corn has fat and salt, but un-popped corn kernels are just corn).

We all lead busy lives, so it's easy to grab a bag of chips when the kids have practice, or a microwaveable dinner when you work late. Who has time to spend in the store deciphering food labels? But if it keeps you from getting sick or your children from having behavioral problems, a little time cutting UPFs in your diet is worth it. By decreasing foods with lots of additives and selecting more foods that look like what they are supposed to be, you and your family will be on a healthier path. ■

Jean Toleman is a retired dietician, living in Knoxville, who worked in the field of diet and nutrition for over 30 years.

Frederick County Parks & Recreation

WINTER PROGRAMS NOW OPEN

Scan code to explore 2026 Winter RECREATER Program Guide & Sports Leagues Guide!

We offer activities year-round! The Recreater program guide releases each February, July and November.

FOLLOW US: @frederickparksandrec recreater.com | 301-600-2936



LOVETTSTVILLE NEWS

Lovettsville Town News

By ABBIE RICKETTS

Town News

**Fiscal Year 2025 Audit Schedule** — The Town’s auditors have completed their on-site initial review of fiscal year 2025. Town staff continue to prepare the required documents for the auditors. The audit process takes a few months to complete, and the financial report is anticipated to be presented to Town Council in December.

**Chestnut Vale Development** — Construction has begun on Phase 1 of Chestnut Vale which is just outside the town limits. Due to delays in the grading work and getting permits for phase 2, which is in the town limits, the developer is anticipating the replacement of the water main on Park Place to commence as early as April 2026. Construction of the homes is anticipated to begin as early as March and take a minimum of a year to complete.

**Homeless Shelter Opens for the Cold Season**  
The Loudoun County Hypothermia Prevention Shelter opened on Nov. 15 for single adults aged 18 and older in the community who are experiencing a housing crisis resulting in homelessness. This temporary shelter, which provides a warm indoor sleeping environment and meals, will be open from 5 p.m. to 8:30 a.m., seven nights a week through March 31, 2026.

All shelter guests will be required to first check in at the Loudoun Homeless Services Center at 19520 Meadowview Court in Leesburg. After checking in, guests will be served dinner and then directed to the Hypothermia Prevention Shelter, which is located at 16450 Meadowview Court, just past the Homeless Services Center. For assistance call 703-777-0420. ■



Holiday Events in Lovettsville

Saturday, December 6  
**Lovettsville Cocoa Crawl 2025**

**12 Noon — Town Wide**  
Visit <https://www.lovettsvilleva.gov/.../lovettsville-cocoa-crawl> for more information and a Cocoa Crawl Map, Cocoa Crawl Menu, and List of Participating Businesses.



Saturday, December 6  
**Lovettsville Wintertainmentfest**

**6:30 PM - Zoldos Square/the "Squirkle"**  
Welcome the arrival of the annual Lantern Parade, sing along with the Lovettsville Elementary School Chorus, listen to a reading of The Night Before Christmas, search for the hidden Christmas Pickle, see the official Tree Lighting, and enjoy a special visit from Santa Claus!



Monday, December 8  
**Light Up Lovettsville**

**6:00 PM — Town Wide**  
A judging panel will tour the town on Monday, December 8 at 6 p.m. Decorate by December 8 to be considered for this year's contest. Awards will be announced and presented at the December 11 Town Council Meeting starting at 6:30 p.m. in Town Council Chambers located at 6 E. Pennsylvania Ave.

Monday, December 15  
**Lovettsville Menorah Lighting Ceremony**

**6:30 PM — Zoldos Square/the "Squirkle"**  
In coordination with surrounding area events, this ceremony will be held on the second night of Hanukkah.



GARY SANKARY/UNSPASH

Thursday, January 1  
**Berserkle on the Squirkle 2026**

**11:00 AM**  
Are You Ready to BERSERKLE?  
• Registration begins at 10 a.m. at the Squirkle.  
• Race begins at 11 a.m.  
• Bring an unwanted, but in good condition, gift to be regifted.  
• 27 laps around the Squirkle if you dare... or don't.  
• Wear a fun outfit. The crazier the better. There are prizes.

**LOVETTSTVILLE REPORTERS WANTED!**

The Brunswick News-Journal is looking for writers to cover:

**Lovettsville News**  
General news reporting and feature writing, Town government news  
These are volunteer positions. You can work on your own time.  
It's a great way to be involved in your community!

**Interested?**  
Write: [Editor@BrunsNews.com](mailto:Editor@BrunsNews.com) or call: 240-409-7476



Permanent Traffic Pattern Changes Announced in Lovettsville

As construction on E. Broad Way and S. Church Street nears completion, the Town of Lovettsville announced the following permanent traffic changes will take effect on or about November 20 (dependent upon weather / temperatures):

- **E. Pennsylvania Avenue (west of Locust St.)** will become a permanent westbound one-way street.
- **S. Light Street** will become a permanent southbound one-way street.
- **S. Church Street** will become a permanent southbound one-way street.
- **Oktoberfest Way** will become a two-way street.

The Town urges drivers to use caution and obey all posted signage as these changes take effect. For additional details and ongoing project updates, visit:

**Broad Way Project Update:** <https://www.lovettsvilleva.gov/capital-infrastructure/project/tlov-2019-01-e-broad-way-phase-2a-streetscape-improvements>

**Permanent Traffic Pattern Changes:** <https://www.lovettsvilleva.gov/capital-infrastructure/project/one-way-traffic-e-pennsylvania-avenue-s-church-street-and-s-light>

Toys for Tots

The Toys for Tots campaign is back in Lovettsville this year and runs through December. This year they are asking for new and unwrapped toys only. Donation boxes are located at the Lovettsville Trust Bank, Back Street Brews, the Lovettsville Community Center and the Lovettsville Co-op.



Wreaths across America

Wreaths across America will be held at Lovettsville Union Cemetery at noon on December 13. We hope to cover every veteran's grave but are only at one-third of our goal. Please consider sponsoring a wreath at \$17 each. Volunteers are also welcome. TheQR Code will take you to the page.





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TRAVEL, ARTS, CULTURE

FILM REVIEW

Reviewed by LAURA DVORAK

Kanopy is an on-demand streaming service offered by the Frederick County library system for films, documentaries and courses, among other selections. Kanopy participants receive “tickets” each month for “admission” to view choices.

Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill

(2003) 1 hr 23 min

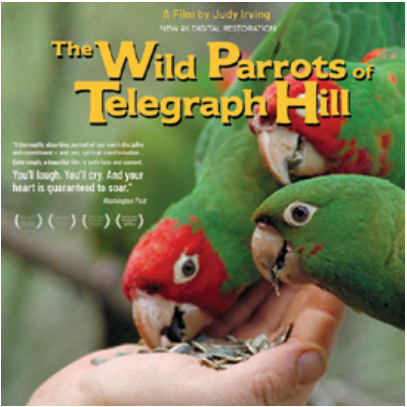
Directed by Judy Irving

Music by Chris Michie

It is the time of year to add some feel-good red/green to your days. These birds have got you covered — in flocks. **Wild Parrots** is a documentary of San Francisco’s Mark Bittner who aspired to be a musician. Instead, he became a sort of magician with cherry head conures. The wild birds captured his heart and he gave them his soul.

As the “Saint Francis of Telegraph Hill,” Bittner carefully studied the wild flocks that birders consider invasive, as bad as starlings. He was the only one researching them. He could discern individuals and gave them names: Picasso, Sophie, Conor, Pushkin, Olive, etc. He fed them and housed the ill until they were able to resume life outdoors. On a personal journey to discover his life’s “right livelihood,” he had no money but all the time in the world for the flock of approximately 45 parrots who were his world.

The film is a marvel of closeups, conures living their lives, as well as panoramic shots of Golden Gate Bridge, Alcatraz, Coit Tower and City Lights Book Store. There’s even a song sung by Jack Kerouac — “Ain’t We Got Fun.” **Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill** is energizing, educational, emotional and even has a very happy ending (no spoiler alert). ■



BNJ TRAVELS

Cuba — A Place Unlike Any Other

By SUE BLAIR

From the moment we landed in Havana, it was clear this trip would be unlike any other. Cuba is a nation of striking contrasts from the beautiful turquoise seas to the buildings worn thin by time. Music and conversation ring through the streets where material comforts are scarce. The beauty of the island is obscured by the poverty of the people, although the dignity of the people facing it is remarkable.

Everywhere we went we encountered resourcefulness tempered by the warmth and kindness of the people. Poverty in Cuba is evident in the flaking pastel walls of the once grand homes, in the daily power blackouts, the uncollected garbage and the patched together cars that somehow keep running. In the countryside, life is even more desperate. Transportation is difficult, basic goods are rationed and many rely on the sharing of others. Yet we encountered no crime. Everyone we saw was willing to assist us and the folks on the street love America.

One of the most moving, and sobering, experiences was our visit to a community health center. The building was a converted mansion and while beautiful, the need was evident. They lack antiseptic, gauze and band aids in addition to medical equipment. Patients in hospitals must furnish their own food and linens. Yet our nurse spokesman spoke quietly and confidently of serving the community and her pride in the medical people she worked with was evident.

We visited two organic farms outside the city, where scarcity has inspired innovation. One, a cooperative farm, was a model of sustainable agriculture. Tools were simple and well used, irrigation was simple but effective and the fields flourished. The farmers were proud of the fully organic operation. The second,



Bill and Sue Blair live in Knoxville, Md. They are shown here visiting the Vista Hermosa farm in Cuba.

also organic, used oxen to plow the fields, as did the other facility. Chickens, goats and sheep were evident and we were treated to lunch from their gardens and fields.

We were able to have a guided tour of the Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, which is the main art museum in the country. The exhibits of sculpture and paintings showcase revolution, cultural identity and perseverance. The building’s air conditioning and elevators were not working but the art was amazing and revolutionary.

Two other notable cultural experiences are worth mentioning. The first was an intimate jazz performance in a modern Havana restaurant provided by David Faya and his band. The music was vibrant and alive and conveyed traditional and modern messages. A few days later, in a converted warehouse with murals and string lights, we watched the Habana Compas Dance troupe perform. The dancers moved with explosive grace, weaving traditional Afro-Cuban rhythms with movement.

Cuba is a country of profound poverty but also extraordinary

humanity. Every gesture of kindness is reciprocated. With so little, the people display grace and ingenuity and hope for a better future. The experience left us with mixed emotions. It is hard to see how the economy, which is controlled in large part by forces the people cannot control, can change. It did leave me knowing that each of us needs a better understanding of the people who are our neighbors.

Travel for cultural and educational reasons is permitted to Cuba. We were able to travel under the very safe and efficient umbrella of the Cuban American Friendship Society (CAFS). There are restrictions on Americans in Cuba, not by Cuba but by our country. As an example, Americans cannot stay in hotels. We stayed in a private home, like a B&B here, arranged by CAFS.

We were free to travel on our own, but most folks do not speak English and transportation is almost non-existent. Our group had a private bus and a bilingual guide who, by the way, earned a monthly salary of less than \$40. It was completely safe to walk anywhere, but street signs are usually missing. ■

BNJ TRAVELS

Key West



Eliza, Zoe and Grandma Jean Toleman enjoy reading the Brunswick News Journal in Key West, Florida.

OFF THE SHELF

The Antidote (2025)

By Karen Russell

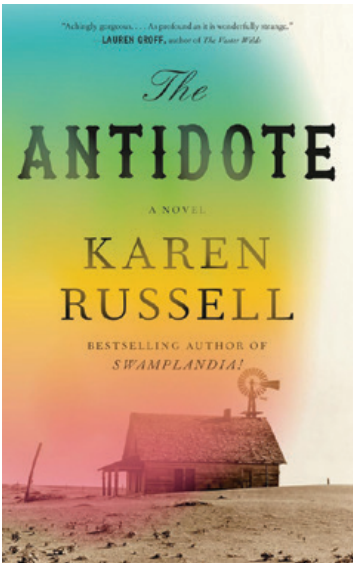
Reviewed by LAURA DVORAK

This novel is a mix of history, real and surreal. Set in the fictional town of Uz, Nebraska during the 1930s, the reality of Black Sunday’s dust storm, 1935, will leave you gasping for breath and appreciative of blue skies. Another reality—the flooding of the Republican River which received 24 inches of rain in as many hours—may have you viewing the Potomac with an edgy eye.

Other aspects of this lyrical work are fantasy. The Antidote is a witch who takes deposits from eager customers. Not money, but memories. These are stored within the witch until customers return for a withdrawal.

Like so many towns, there is a sheriff up for re-election, and he has a thing for going on a bender with the rules and “lucky” rabbits’ feet. Remember those? Thankfully, “lucky” paws are synthetic these days. Other town players in this story include a young basketball star, her uncle — a Polish dryland farmer whose parents left Krakow for the New World, and a black female New Deal Resettlement Administration Historical Section photographer, sent from D.C. to capture the essence of farm life. After her camera is stolen, she finds a pawn shop and purchases a Graflex Speed Graphic, which turns out to be a quantum camera. Minor characters include a scarecrow and a mother cat.

Also factual in this history is the fate of the Pawnee people, marginalized then vanished from the territory. To their credit, Pawnee remained resilient and can be found thriving throughout the United States and beyond. ■



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## ENVIRONMENT & SCIENCE

# The Case for Regenerative Agriculture: Inside Frederick County's Regenerative Farm Tour

Story and Photos  
By JANE CLIFFORD

On October 23, farmers, conservationists and local leaders gathered at three locations between Frederick and Adamstown for Beyond Sustainable: Regenerative Farm Tours, an all-day event hosted by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) and Mobilize Frederick to highlight how sustainable agricultural practices can support our environment, water quality, and farm families, while helping the region adapt to a changing climate.

Participants visited Stone Pillar Farm and Hedgeapple Farm in Frederick, and Jehovah Jireh Farm in Dickerson, each family-run and demonstrating regenerative agriculture in action.

Presenters from The University of Maryland Extension, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), American Farmland Trust, Future Harvest, Maryland Bird Conservation Partnership, the Maryland Forest Service and others shared expertise at stations focused on ecosystem health, water and climate impacts, biodiversity and farm economics.



Cows in the pasture at Hedgeapple Farm.

frequent tilling and heavy pesticide use. According to Environment, while monocultures can be easier to manage and produce high yields, they also deplete soil health, require more fossil fuels, water and chemicals, and create

direct economic loss as expensive fertilizers wash away.

### Birds, bees and biodiversity

Beyond soil health, regenerative farming restores habitat for wildlife, particularly birds and pollinators. Vast monoculture fields offer little more than an open desert to native species that rely on meadows, hedgerows and forests for food and shelter. Worse, heavy pesticide use can poison insects and birds, which are essential to natural pest control and pollination. As Gabirel Foley, from the Maryland Bird Conservation Partnership (MBCP) put it, "a bird looks at a vast field of corn, and they see a parking lot."

By contrast, regenerative farms incorporate diverse pastures, tree plantings and buffer zones that create thriving ecosystems. These practices support both agricultural productivity and biodiversity, creating landscapes where wildlife and working farms coexist. The MBCP's farmland raptor program is focused on repopulating four species considered of greatest conservation need in Maryland – the American Barn Owl, the Short Eared Owl, the Northern Harrier and the American Kestrel – by installing and monitoring nest boxes, tracking populations, and working with landowners to improve ecosystems. They have installed 100 barn owl boxes in Maryland with a 20 percent occupancy rate, 30 of which are in Frederick County.

### Why isn't every farm regenerative?

The biggest question is, if regenerative agriculture offers so many benefits, why isn't it the norm? The main obstacle, experts said, is perceived economic risk. Nationwide, only half of U.S. farms turn a profit in any given year; in Maryland, that figure falls to one-third. Asking farmers, many operating on thin margins and generations-deep traditions, to overhaul their production systems is a significant ask.

Mark Townsend from the University of Maryland Extension office emphasized that the shift is largely about mindset. While re-

soil health and resilience to extreme weather can increase profitability over time.

### Meet the farms

#### Stone Pillar Farm, Frederick

Mike and Abby Fahrner purchased this 20-acre farm with Mike's parents in 2019, trading a condo and desk job for a hands-on family farming life with their three young children. With no previous experience, they began with just three dozen laying hens in 2020, and a lot of YouTube tutorials. Today, they raise pasture-based chicken, turkey, rabbit and grass-fed beef; grow vegetables on a half-acre market garden; and produce microgreens year-round. Their farmstand, CSA, online shop, and partnerships with local bakers and beekeepers keep food dollars circulating in the local economy. Located just two miles from Frederick city limits, Stone Pillar Farm is a model of community-centered, small-scale regenerative agriculture. <https://stonepillarfarm.com/>

#### Hedgeapple Farm, Frederick

Spread across 370 acres, Hedgeapple Farm has been part of

*Continued on page 25*



Karen Cannon of Mobilize Frederick delivers some opening remarks at Stone Pillar Farm.

Attendees included farmers, nonprofit leaders, subject-matter experts and government officials, among them County Executive Jessica Fitzwater and a representative from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

### What is regenerative agriculture?

According to the CBF, regenerative agriculture is a holistic farming system that restores soil, water and air quality; enhances biodiversity; produces nutrient-dense food; and stores carbon to help mitigate climate change. These practices are by no means new, and in fact have roots in Indigenous culture—such as the "Three Sisters" method of planting corn, beans and squash together in mutually beneficial systems.

The renewed attention on regenerative methods comes after decades of monoculture farming, in which single crops like corn, soybeans or wheat are planted in large quantities, often relying on

landscapes that are increasingly inhospitable to wildlife.

### It all starts with soil

A single teaspoon of healthy soil can contain more than six billion microorganisms, according to the CBF. These microbial networks make plants more resilient and increase the nutritional value of the food they produce.

One demonstration during the tour illustrated the difference between degraded and healthy soil using local samples and a rain simulator. As rainwater poured over each, participants watched how quickly the heavily tilled soils eroded, sending sediment, nutrients, and pesticides into runoff, compared with the soil from a regenerative farm that practices rotational grazing, which resulted in clear runoff and much greater water retention. With extreme rainfall becoming more common due to climate change, erosion threatens farm productivity and the Chesapeake Bay's waterways. For farmers, it also represents a



Chickens grazing at Stone Pillar Farm.



Amanda Grev (R) and Mark Townsend (L) from Frederick County's University of Maryland Agricultural Extension office demonstrate healthy soil properties with a rain simulator.



ENVIRONMENT & SCIENCE

Litter Cleanup Shows High Number of Beverage Containers

Sierra Club Catoctin Group volunteers spent a recent Saturday morning picking up trash and cleaning an area of woods in West End Park between Brunswick and Potomac streets, behind the Dollar General shopping center. A small stream is in the park. Volunteers spent two hours picking up litter and sorting beverage containers from the litter.

The effort by the volunteers not only cleaned an environmentally fragile area but also provided documentation of the disproportionate amount of litter that comes from beverage containers. The effort resulted in a total of 11 garbage bags of litter.

The pickup is part of an ongoing effort by Sierra Club to encourage Maryland lawmakers to adopt the Beverage Container Deposit legislation. Containers from beverages (think beer, soda, water bottles) comprised slightly more than half of the litter retrieved, a figure that is consistent with other litter pickups in Maryland and elsewhere. According to the Sierra Club, each year approximately 5.5 billion beverage containers are purchased in Maryland with only 25% returned for recycling; the remainder are landfilled, incinerated or littered.

The beverage container deposit program places a small deposit on a container at the time of purchase and refunds the deposit completely when the container is returned, incentivizing return of the containers rather than disposing of them as litter or landfill. In the 10 states with a beverage container deposit system, up to 90% of beverage containers are recycled and roadside litter is reduced by up to 69-84%.

As volunteer coordinator for the local effort, Vanessa Gress remarked, "The Sierra Club is working hard to get the Bottle Bill passed to keep our roadsides and waterways clean. We will also continue to organize cleanups to fight the constant litter in our environment."



Sierra Club volunteers pick up trash in Brunswick's West End Park.



Signs say: Lose the Litter, Cash for Trash, Bottle Bill Now!

Young Scout Plants Community Food Forest in Othello Park



Hope Hesselink (front row, 4th from left), Scouts BSA Troop 962G, and volunteers at the Othello Park Tree Planting on November 8.

By JANE CLIFFORD

On November 8, Othello Park became a little greener thanks to a local teen's dedication to sustainability, food access and environmental stewardship.

Hope Hesselink, a 14-year-old from Point of Rocks, organized a tree planting event as part of her participation in Scouts BSA. The project, five months in the making, will earn her the rank of Eagle Scout, the organization's highest award for youth members. Her all-girl troop and a team of dedicated volunteers came out to support her on the unseasonably warm day.

With guidance from the Frederick County Parks and Recreation Office, Hope coordinated every detail of the project, from permitting requirements to mapping the planting site to determining proper spacing between saplings. The trees, which are all nut varieties including pecan, English walnut, and heart nut, were donated by Plant Path Nursery in Knoxville.

Hope's inspiration for this project came from a class discussion on climate sinks and the role trees play in mitigating climate change. Her grove now stands as a living, growing reminder that meaningful climate action can start young, and that seeds planted today can nourish a community for generations.

"These trees can live 500 to 600 years," said Eric Lotus, co-owner of Plant Path Nursery. "They'll support local wildlife, clean the air, and eventually feed the community."

Within a decade, the grove is expected to produce enough nuts to function as a small community food forest where anyone can harvest freely. The project not only enhances the ecological health and beauty of Othello Park, it also serves as a reminder of the fundamental connection between food and nature.

Plant Path Nursery, founded in 2020 by Eric and Jess Lotus, specializes in native fruit and nut trees and teaches regenerative farming practices. They welcome visitors by appointment and offer educational programs throughout the year at plantpath.org.

Brave schooner

Schooner, schooner sailing high,  
Climb the rigging of the night sky  
As star by star you go  
The albatross will watch below.  
You sails are trimmed to catch  
the moonbeams fair.  
And here come your friends from the deep  
Dolphins, whales and flying fish of the air.  
Starry phosphorescence spreads  
far and wide in your wake,  
a lovely bridal train for a queen it makes.  
And now your court is complete, but wait!  
One is left behind.  
The sea turtle wants to come too.  
Back your sales and heave to so he can come aboard.  
Set your sails for the lunar wind  
and with your court go like the queen you are  
into the night sky and around the sun  
and future generations to come,  
will say, only half in fun,  
"Here comes that comet from the oceans afar!"

— Ward Wright  
Coast Guard Licensed Master,  
Power and Sail, 1993-2014  
Ward Wright lives in Knoxville, MD

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LOCAL HISTORY

# B&O Railroad Park

## Why WB Tower was well worth saving

By PETER WENNER

The multiphase plan for B&O Railroad Park, a key feature of downtown revitalization, is progressing, with an opening date targeted for Springfest 2026. Passersby can already see the addition of an observation deck atop the historic WB Tower, a two-story frame structure that will offer sweeping views of the rail yard and passing trains. The tower, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, will be a centerpiece of the new park, highlighting Brunswick's prominent role in U.S. railroading history.

WB tower stands as the last remaining structure from what was once the largest single-company-owned rail yard in the United States. Having closed in 2011, the tower was also the last of its kind within the CSX, formerly B&O, system. Thanks to efforts by the Mayor and Council, along with a group of citizens who fought for its preservation over several administrations, the WB Tower was successfully moved on April 2, 2022.

As two-term City Councilman Andy St. John, a force behind the tower preservation movement, explained, "The tower was something that I felt was important to Brunswick, and it would be impossible to replace if the railroad decided to knock it down one day, which is exactly what happened to the roundhouse."

### "SAFETY FIRST": The role of the WB tower in railroad operations

An early-20th century, two-story frame structure that has seen several different paint jobs over the years, WB Tower was built in the yard sometime between 1891 and 1907. In Brunswick's railroading heyday, the tower oversaw the safe movement of 100,000 rail cars through the 6.5-mile-long rail yard every month.

Considering the number of fires in Brunswick's history, it's a testament that the wooden building never burned. According to Councilman St. John, "The timber construction was quite sturdy. The railroad has kept it dry and covered up so the wood was all in pretty good shape. It really was a pretty robust little structure (that was relatively easy) to



B&O Railroad Park taking shape. Note the facsimiles of railroad tracks and the roundhouse imprinted in the concrete.

be moved."

Previously located 100 feet south of its present location next to the tracks, WB Tower was a railroad interlocking and control tower, sometimes called a "signaling tower," built to control train movements through the complex network of tracks, switches, and crossovers at the Brunswick yard and junction area.

WB Tower served as the nerve center of the yard, managing mainline traffic on the B&O's busy Metropolitan Subdivision between yard operations in Washington, D.C. and Cumberland, Md. This included the entrance and exit of freight and commuter trains, along with switches and signals operated through a US&S Model 14 pneumatic interlocking machine, which remains in the building.

The Model 14 featured a long row of levers that controlled switches and signals. A team of shift-based operators, called "tower men" or "block operators," worked 24/7, aligning routes, clearing signals, and communicating with train crews and dispatchers.

Imagine a chaotic nightshift, known in railroad parlance as "2nd and 3rd tricks," in WB tower, circa 1965. As former tower operator Norm Cornelius described it, "A lot of communication had to be done passing along position reports to dispatchers up the line. All the while, you had the phones ringing, instructions coming over

the 'Bitch box,'" a standard intercom in similar towers. The model board, known as "The Plant," was lighting up continuously.

As Cornelius explained, "It was a high-stress job that involved directing all the incoming and outgoing trains onto the proper tracks. A wrong move could result in a fatal crash."

both on the engine and on the caboose."

WB Tower operators worked closely with dispatchers in Baltimore and Cumberland, who had a comprehensive view of the railroad system. They also relied on yard personnel, particularly in the nearby callers' office, where train crews were organized and



US&S Model 14 pneumatic interlocking machine in the WB Tower.

### WB doesn't really stand for "West Brunswick"

The vintage photo included in this article shows "West Brunswick" on the tower, but "WB," also known as a "Block Station Tower," was the telegraphic communications address likely derived from its location. This naming convention differs from that of other signal towers in the area, such as Weverton (VO) and Point of Rocks (KG), which did not have such connections. Both Weverton and Point of Rocks were decommissioned and dismantled in the 1950s. Together, these three towers formed a "block" that managed all railroad traffic between those locations.

Cornelius explained that WB Tower "was the center of the operations for this area from Point of Rocks in the east and Weverton in the west. The tower operator controlled everything that was on the mainline coming into the yard running tracks. Brunswick was a very busy terminal, and each shift had its unique operations. All freight trains stopped at WB Tower to change crews

communicated with the tower for real-time updates. Operators worked with the clerk's office to issue train orders and Form A documents outlining movement authority and safety instructions. These documents served as permission slips for trains to leave the yard and continue their journeys.

In addition to Cornelius, who worked in the tower in the 1960s, other tower employees from the 1950s to the 1970s were Eugene Harrison, Ira White, Charlie Selby, Damon Barnhart, Gary "Boogie" Snoots, and Blair Harrington. These men were aided by new technologies introduced during that time.

According to railroad historian David McIntosh, following the standardization of diesel engines in 1953, "Electric (switches) came in about the same time as dependable 2-way radios. When the radio came along, that made everything a lot easier. By the sixties, (tower operators) knew exactly where the trains were." Prior to that, it wasn't always the case.

### In the early days

By the 1890s, interlocking towers were common in North America at junctions, yards, bridges, and crossings. Telegraphers, trained in Morse code, operated them, as communications remained telegraphic until 1940. Most towers employed at least one qualified telegrapher, due to unreliable phone lines. By 1950, most railroads had phased out telegraphy in daily operations.

Born in 1872, Clarence Daniel Shewbridge may have been the first telegrapher at WB Tower, a position he held from the early 1900s until the 1940s. A native of Harpers Ferry, he was one of four Shewbridge brothers in the area who worked as telegraph operators for the B&O. His brothers were Alfred W. Shewbridge, who operated Harpers Ferry Tower; Howard L. Shewbridge, who worked at Weverton Tower; and Ewell H. Shewbridge, who was at Boyds Tower.

Brunswick native Bill Shewbridge, great grandson of C.D. Shewbridge, wrote that the brothers "even had their own code."

Back then, tower operators often walked down from the tower to relay train orders to moving



This 1975 photo shows the WB Tower in its former location across the tracks from the old B&O YMCA, now the site of B&O Railroad Park. The YMCA was destroyed by fire in November 1980.

RAY SODERBERG IMAGES

THE POSITION LIGHT BLOG



COMMUNITY INTEREST

The *LATEST* from the *LAST*  
C.E.N.T.U.R.Y

100 Years Ago  
from *The Valley Register*

Compiled by  
Julie Maynard

December 4, 1925.

Wind and Rain Storm.

A severe wind and rain storm broke over the valley on Wednesday evening last, causing some damage of a minor nature. Trees were uprooted, wires and signs torn down, and the rain, driven by the terrific wind, made its way through seams and under eaves of roofs, damaging plastering.

Among Those Who Are  
Upon Beds of Sickness

Mrs. Guy Bidle has been suffering with a severe bone felon on her thumb for the past 10 days.

The four-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John H. Sigler, Locust Valley, has been very ill for the past week with pneumonia.

Mr. L. H. Norris, of Sellman, Md., formerly of near Burkittsville, is undergoing treatment again at Johns Hopkins Hospital.

County Paid \$1958.30  
For Damages By Dogs

Loss of live stock and poultry in various sections of Frederick county, due to the activities of stray dogs, cost the county \$1958.30 the past fiscal year, it is shown in figures submitted by the auditors of the county's books.

The largest loss sustained by any one individual was that of Dr. C. H. Conley, who lost 24 high grade sheep, for which the county paid \$360. Two cows owned by D. Grant Miller cost the county \$150, while other comparatively large losses were sustained by William H. Layman, Roger H. Geisbert and C. Elbert Grossnickle.

Funds derived from the sale of dog licenses are used for paying damages brought about by the activities of stray dogs. During the past fiscal year, receipts from the sale of dog licenses totaled \$6,547.

Some of the locally known persons who sustained losses were: Curtis Gouker, one sheep, \$10; ... Amos R. Keller, two ducks, \$4...

Found Own Barn Burned.

Hurrying to the scene of a fire he saw reflected in the sky, former State's Attorney Samuel A. Lewis found the large bank barn on his own property in ruins, entailing a loss of about \$3,700. The origin of the fire is unknown, and it was the second time the property had been on fire since its purchase by Mr. Lewis, the first blaze occurring during Fair week.

Brunswick Downs Pirates 2-0

In a game which bordered closer on old-time rugby than the more recent soccer, the Middletown Pirates suffered their first defeat on Saturday afternoon, at the Middletown Athletic Field, when the Brunswick independent soccer team romped away with a 2 to 0 victory, their only field goal coming late in the last half of play. [Headline and first paragraph say 2-0; two later references suggest 1-0.]

Casualties were many, and time-out was taken on several occasions on account of injuries and for changes in the line-up. The center of conflict revolved around the two forward and half-back lines, where the battle started rough and remained rough until the final whistle. Several uniforms were splashed with blood, because of a nose having come too close to the line of battle. Several other uniforms suffered badly from their contact with the cleats of the shoes of opposing players, and Smith, Brunswick center and catcher of the Railroad County League Baseball Club, was knocked as cold as the proverbial "case of ice."

The game, which for no special reason at all, started as a rough and tumble "survival of the fit-

test" affair, came to a remarkable close with each club having a full eleven on the field. Strict refereeing, through which a number would have been banished from the field, would have seen but about half of each line-up finish the contest.

Just previous to the time at which Brunswick's only goal was kicked, any unknowing passerby would have without a doubt gained the impression that a hard-fought rugby game was in progress, for in front of the Pirate goal posts more than half of each club was huddled in a heap—not on their feet, but in practically every position ever heard of by a chiropractor, with full-back Main of the Pirates at the bottom of the pile, the ball firmly locked between his feet. However it came out of the mass is still a mystery, but it came out nevertheless, and was boot-ed through the posts. ... A return game will be played with the Railroaders, in Brunswick, sometime during the holidays.

December 11, 1925.

Seeks Freedom  
on Habeas Corpus.

Yesterday (Thursday) morning, the habeas corpus proceedings instituted in behalf of Jesse Campbell, Brunswick, held in the Frederick county jail in connection with the death of Mrs. Elsie Sullivan, aged about 24 years, also of Brunswick, were heard before Judge Glenn Worthington. The petition set forth that Campbell was unlawfully being held in the custody of Sheriff Ingo-mar Albaugh, and asked that the sheriff produce him in court, with the cause of his detention, so said cause could be inquired into, in conformity with the law.

Wild Deer Seen.

A wild deer, which had been seen several times cavorting about the State highway in the vicinity of the Catoclin Country Club, near Frederick, has stirred county hunters up, and some have been on its trail. It is thought that the animal came down from the Pennsylvania mountains.

Movie Spoon Fans Attention!

Sunday, December 13, the Baltimore American will run a four-spoon coupon for Mary Pickford, Norma Talmidge, Marion Davies, Thomas Meighan, the first four spoons in the Sunday Baltimore American Movie Star Spoon Series. In the following two issues of the Sunday Baltimore American, coupons will appear on each Sunday to cover the set of one dozen spoons. This will be the last opportunity to get these beautiful Silver Spoons, made of Oneida Community Par Plate, guaranteed for 20 years by Oneida Community Co. 12-11-1t-181

December 18, 1925.

School Christmas Tea.

The first year Home Economics students delightfully entertained the senior class and faculty at a Christmas tea last Friday afternoon. The room was beautiful decorated with Christmas greens and lighted by candles. The menu consisted of fruit and nut sandwiches, salted peanuts, gum drops, small cakes and hot chocolate with whipped cream.

The members of the fifth, sixth and seventh grades spend one period a week singing Christmas Carols. This is included in their course of study of music.

RADIO SETS

Five Tube Radio Sets, with all accessories needed, \$100. Call at my home and hear these Sets perform. ALBERT M. COBLENTZ 12-18-2t Middletown, Md.

Deaths.

Thomas—Dec. 15, near Mt. Pleasant, from the effects of a knife

wound received while butchering two weeks previous, Clifford Lee Thomas, aged 44 years, 10 months and 28 days.

Cox—Dec. 14, at Sharpsburg, of pneumonia, Mrs. Daisy Alice Cox, aged 47 years and 17 days.

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December 25, 1925.

Burkittsville Youth Arrested.

Paul Biddinger, aged 15, of near Burkittsville, son of Roland Biddinger, now serving a 10-year sentence in the Maryland Penitentiary for incest, was arrested on grounds of incorrigibility by Deputy Sheriff Tilghman Ausherman, of that district, and is being held for a hearing before Judge Worthington, of the County Juvenile Court.

Injured Second Time.

Henry Baker, near Broad Run, who recently had the misfortune to lose one of his fingers by having it torn off in a corn grinder, and who had just recovered sufficiently to return to work on Saturday last, suffered several broken bones in one foot, when a piece of sawed wood rolled on the member.

Short Day.

Monday last was the shortest day of the year, and many older persons hold the belief that the day accentuates the cold weather. This is often found not to hold good, however.

Arnold—Marker.

John T. Arnold, son of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Arnold, of near Brunswick, and Miss M. Agnes Marker, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Carlton P. Marker, of near Myersville, were married in the parsonage of the St. Paul's Lu Ch, Myersville, by the bride's pastor. The ring ceremony was used. Members of the immediate families were present. They have gone on a wedding trip to Ohio.

Monster Hogs.

Marshall C. Ahalt, of near Broad Run, killed four hogs one day last week, one of which dressed 658 pounds. A.D. Arnold, of near Brunswick, butchered four hogs which weighed a total of 2460 pounds. One weighed 897 pounds and another 763 pounds. Mr. Chas. Wolfe and son were head butchers.

FOR SALE—Stayman, Wine-sap and Jonathan apples; also sweet cider, at 50 cents per gallon.—ELMER BEACHLEY, near Broad Run. 12-15-3tp

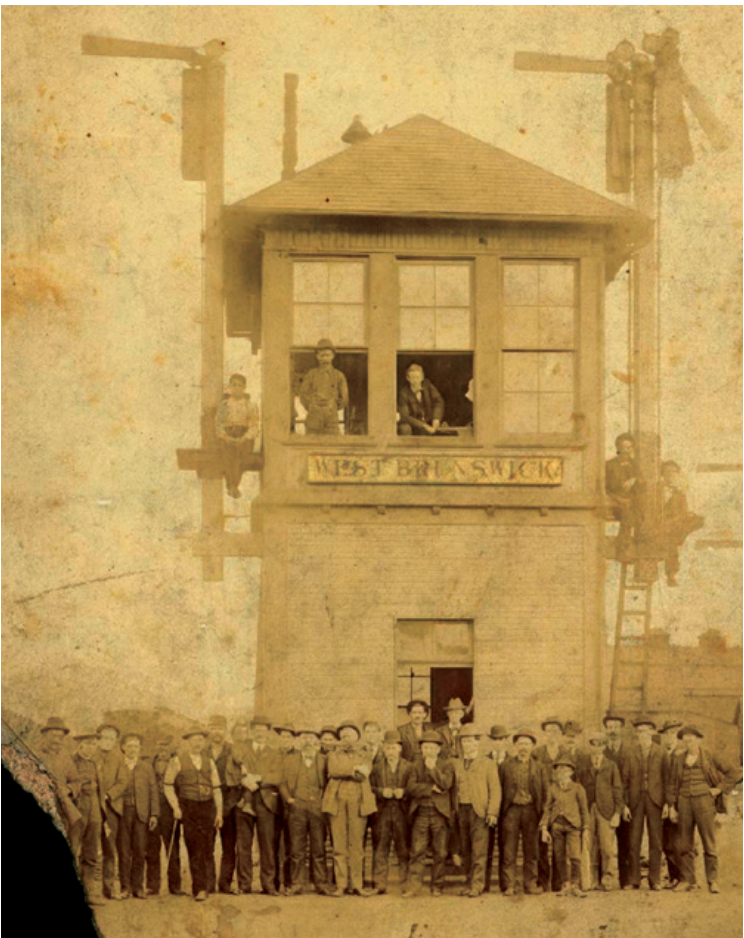
No Trace of Deer.

Following reports of a wild deer seen near the Catoclin Country Club, near Frederick, early one morning last week, no further trace of the animal has been discovered. It is thought the animal strayed from the mountains in the southern part of Pennsylvania.

Severe Cold Weather.

A very severe cold spell, accompanied by high winds, which struck practically every section in the State, suddenly last Sunday, has caused untold trouble for residents. Water pipes without number have been frozen, some have bursted, some furnaces have been damaged through freezing pipes, and coal piles are diminishing more rapidly than they can be replenished. But, after all, it could be worse, couldn't it? Jan. 1, 1926

BILL SHEWBRIDGE



This old photo shows a large gathering in front of the WB Tower, with telegrapher CD Shewbridge in the middle window on the second floor. The original roundhouse, replaced in 1907, is visible on the right. Note the semaphores on each side of the tower, as well as the man with the musket.

and are possibly slated for demolition on Amtrak's expansion corridor, that we're trying to get an angle on."

In the 1890s, George Westinghouse introduced electro-pneumatic (E-P) interlocking systems that used compressed air to operate track switches, making operations easier. After World War II, railroads began transitioning to electric switch machines for greater efficiency, leading to the gradual phasing out of E-P systems by the 1990s.

The postwar era also saw the rise of Centralized Traffic Control (CTC), allowing remote management of train movements. This resulted in the decommissioning of most traditional signal towers and centralized control of operations. Today, rail traffic coordination is handled via computer screens, with dispatchers managing operations from locations often hundreds of miles away from the tracks.

Future plans for the park

Assistant City Administrator Jeremy Mose provided an over-

view of the \$1.4 million park project, highlighting its multi-phase development, grant-based funding sources, and historical preservation efforts. After relocating the tower in phase one, it was critical to retain its historic elements in accordance with requirements from the Maryland Historical Trust. The old YMCA building steps were also preserved.

Phase two included building the viewing platform, installing benches, stamped sidewalks, restoration of the historic train bell, and storm-water management. It's mostly complete.

Phase three will focus on the WB Tower's roof and gutters, the addition of "adult swings," and completion of the park's connection to Martin's Creek parking lot. Refurbishing the tower's interior will take more time and funding, with an opening date to be determined.

Brunswick residents are fortunate to have this important piece of railroad history preserved for future generations. ■

BRUNSWICK HERITAGE MUSEUM



WB Tower in the mid-1940s on a rainy day. Could that have been a tower operator getting ready to pass train orders up to the engineer?



SPORTS

Brunswick High School Winter Sports Schedules 2024-25

Boys' Basketball

Dec. 5	Catoctin	7 p.m.
Dec. 9	at Winters Mill	6:30 p.m.
Dec. 12	at Clear Spring	7 p.m.
Dec. 15	at Walkersville	7 p.m.
Dec. 17	Smithsburg	7 p.m.
Dec. 19	Williamsport	7 p.m.
Dec. 29	vs. Yorktown at Ron Engle Classic (Middletown)	7 p.m.
Dec.30	at Ron Engle Classic (Middletown)	TBA
Jan. 6	at Catoctin	7 p.m.
Jan. 9	at South Carroll	6:30 p.m.
Jan. 13	Middletown	7 p.m.
Jan. 16	at Boonsboro	7 p.m.
Jan. 20	at Jefferson	7 p.m.
Jan. 23	Walkersville	7 p.m.
Jan. 27	Clear Spring	7 p.m.
Jan. 30	at Williamsport	7 p.m.
Feb. 3	Boonsboro	7 p.m.
Feb. 6	at Smithsburg	7 p.m.
Feb. 9	New Life (varsity only)	6 p.m.
Feb. 10	at Middletown	7 p.m.
Feb. 13	Liberty	7 p.m.
Feb. 20	S. Hagerstown	7 p.m.

(Unless otherwise noted, a JV Game precedes the varsity game)

Girls Basketball

Dec. 5	at Catoctin	7 p.m.
Dec. 9	Winters Mill	7 p.m.
Dec. 12	Clear Spring	7 p.m.
Dec. 15	Walkersville	7 p.m.
Dec. 17	at Smithsburg	7 p.m.
Dec. 19	at Williamsport	7 p.m.
Dec. 26	vs. Springbrook at TJ Tournament	Noon
Dec. 27	at TJ	Noon
Jan. 6	Catoctin	7 p.m.
Jan. 9	at St. James (varsity only)	6 p.m.
Jan. 13	at Middletown	7 p.m.
Jan. 16	Boonsboro	7 p.m.
Jan. 20	Jefferson	7 p.m.
Jan. 23	at Walkersville	7 p.m.
Jan. 27	at Clear Spring	7 p.m.
Jan. 30	Williamsport	7 p.m.
Feb. 3	at Boonsboro	7 p.m.
Feb. 6	Smithsburg	7 p.m.
Feb. 10	Middletown	7 p.m.
Feb. 13	at Liberty	6:30 p.m.
Feb. 17	Tuscarora	7 p.m.
Feb. 20	at S. Hagerstown	7 p.m.

(Unless otherwise noted, a JV Game precedes the varsity game)

Wrestling

Dec. 8	Frederick	6 p.m.
Dec. 10	at Oakdale	6 p.m.
Dec. 16	Middletown	6 p.m.
Dec. 22	at Tuscarora Tournament	TBA
Jan. 5	at Smithsburg (tri-match)	5 p.m.
Jan. 7	Boonsboro	6 p.m.
Jan. 12	at Liberty	6 p.m.
Jan. 16-17	at CM Wright Tournament	TBA
Jan. 21	at Urbana (tri-match)	5 p.m.
Jan. 26	Jefferson	6 p.m.
Jan. 28	Tri-match	5 p.m.
Feb. 2	Williamsport	6 p.m.
Feb. 4	at Linganore	6 p.m.
Feb. 21	FCPS Championships at Middletown	9 a.m.

Swimming and Diving

Dec. 9	at Catoctin (Walkersville)	6 p.m.
Dec. 11	at TJ (Walkersville)	6 p.m.
Dec. 17	Middletown (Middletown)	6 p.m.
Jan. 7	at Oakdale (Walkersville)	6 p.m.
Jan. 9	Urbana (Middletown)	6 p.m.
Jan. 13	Walkersville (Middletown)	6 p.m.
Jan. 21	Frederick (Middletown)	6 p.m.
Jan. 23	Tuscarora (Middletown)	6 p.m.
Jan. 29	at Linganore (Walkersville)	6 p.m.
Feb. 5	FCPS Diving Championships at Walkersville	6 p.m.
Feb. 7	FCPS Championships at Walkersville	6 p.m.
Feb. 14	Regional Championships at Eppley Center (UMCP)	TBA
Feb. 21	State Championships at Eppley Center (UMCP)	TBA

Indoor Track and Field

All meets during the regular season will be held at Hagerstown Community College.

Friday, Dec. 5, TBA.  
Monday, Dec. 8, 6 p.m.

BHS Fall Sports Wrapup  
Railroaders bring home one state crown

By BILL CAULEY

With the 2025 fall sports season completed at Brunswick High School, the Railroaders brought home one state championship among the seven sports offered by the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association.

Boys Cross Country

Brunswick's lone state championship, an individual one, was recorded by senior Simon McGilivray. He won the boys' individual Class 1A state cross country championship at Hereford High School in Baltimore County on Nov. 8 with a time of 16 minutes, 28 seconds.

Smithsburg's Dylan Herbst came in second at 16:42. Asher Adelman, a fellow senior for Brunswick, finished third at 16:44. As a team, Brunswick's boys achieved a second-place finish behind state champion Smithsburg.

Girls Cross Country

Brunswick finished eighth in the Class 1A state championship with 194 points. Sophomore Kate Virgilio finished 23rd with a time of 22:48.

(For more on the state cross country meet, see the accompanying article.)

Boys Soccer

Brunswick nearly won a championship in boys soccer, but, once again, came up oh-so-close. In a rematch of last year's Class 1A state championship, the Railroaders fell to the Liberty Lions, 2-1, on Nov. 15 at University of Maryland Baltimore County in Catonsville.

The Railroaders, under coach Shawn Baker, defeated Catoctin in a regional second-round match, 8-1, then edged South Carroll, 3-2, to advance to the state-quarterfinals. Brunswick had an easy time against Snow Hill, winning a 7-2 decision over the Eagles.

In the state semifinals, the Rail-

roaders bested Chesapeake 4-1, setting up the rematch with Liberty in the Class 1A state championship match. Brunswick had a chance to tie the match in the second half, but the goal was disallowed on an offside call.

Another disappointing finish for the Railroaders, but still quite an accomplishment to reach a state championship match for the second straight year.

Girls Soccer

The Railroaders, coached by Dara Demich, went 1-1 in the playoffs. Brunswick defeated Smithsburg in the second round of the regionals, 3-0, but were shut out by eventual Class 1A state champion South Carroll, 5-0, in the regional finals.

Football

Under first-year head coach Nicholas Rhoades, Brunswick went 2-7 during the regular season. The Railroaders' wins were against Smithsburg and Catoctin. Loch Raven, a team Brunswick defeated last year in the first round of the Class 1A North regional playoffs, came away winners this time in a 32-21 decision.

Golf

At the Class 2A-1A boys state championships at University of Maryland's golf course in College Park on Oct. 29, Brunswick freshman Jared Ricketts finished tied for 32nd (169).

Volleyball

Brunswick was ousted in the first round by Catoctin, 3-0.

Flag Football

Brunswick finished the season with a 2-8 record. ■

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Indoor Track and Field (continued)

Saturday, Dec. 13, 2:30 p.m.  
Friday, Dec. 19, 3:40 p.m.  
Friday, Jan. 9, 3:40 p.m.  
Friday, Jan. 23, FCPS Championships, 4 p.m.  
Friday, Jan.. 30, CMC Championships, 4 p.m.  
Regional Championships at HCC. Date and time TBA.  
State Championships at PG Center, Landover, Feb. 17-18, 7:30 a.m. (Day 1), 10:30 a.m. (Day 2).



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# PVYA Cross Country Season of Progress

By LEE ZUMBACH

The Potomac Valley Youth Association's cross country team completed its 40th season and had many accomplishments to take pride in. This was the largest team in the past four years with 33 registered boys and girls ranging in age from 1st through 8th grade. Training sessions were held two nights a week and attendance was excellent.

## Seven local meets

The team attended seven offered meets in the local and regional area, including a home meet on the high school cross country course. Over 400 runners took part in that meet.

Many improved personal best times were recorded throughout the season. Young runners learned pacing skills, how to warm up, and tips on diet and staying healthy, while winning ribbons and prizes.

## Thanks to our coaches

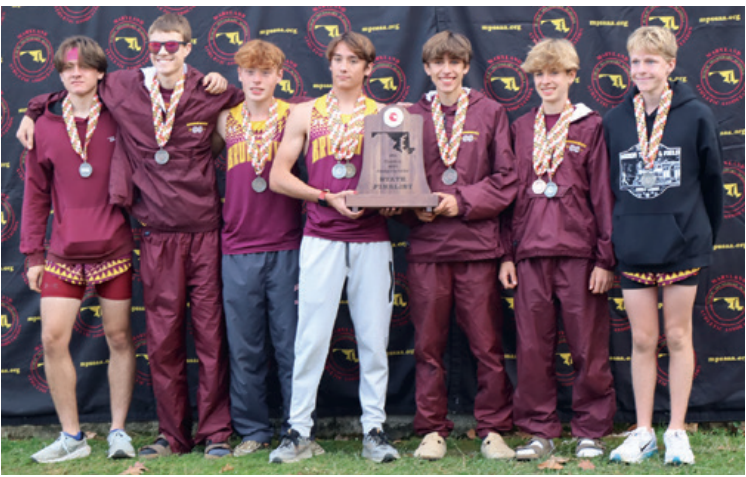
Head coaches Lee and Anne Zumbach thank the three great helper coaches, Rebecca Kenawell, Inga Hawkins and Erin Straley.

The next season is spring track which starts in mid-March. Parent helper coaches will be needed to make the program work. Contact Coach Zumbach if you can help. For more information go to [pvya.com](http://pvya.com) or email [zum50@hotmail.com](mailto:zum50@hotmail.com). ■



Members of the PVYA fall cross country team at their end-of-season pizza party.

# BHS Cross Country Strong in State Meet



The Brunswick boys cross country team with their State Finalist plaque and team medals at the State Meet at Hereford High School.

By LEE ZUMBACH

The Brunswick High School boys and girls cross country teams turned in excellent performances at the State Cross Country Meet on Saturday, Nov. 8. The boys team placed 2nd as the state finalist out of 15 schools in the boys 1A state race at Hereford High School.

Brunswick senior, Simon McGillivray, won the meet with a first place finish with a time of 16:28, the best time for all Frederick County runners in the state meet and 130 runners in the 1A boys race. He was joined at the finish line by senior Asher Adelman with a 3rd place finish in 16:44.

The boys were awarded the finalist state plaque. It was a total team effort as all seven of Brunswick's runners contributed with high finishes. Griffen Adelman placed 18th, Rowen Williams was 32nd, Rickey Riley was 34th, Jonah Miller came in at 35th, and Adam Parde placed 46th. Smithsburg High won the meet as they were a very deep team all season.

It was a season of success for Brunswick as the boys placed 1st, 2nd or 3rd in all of the big meets. When asked about the win, Simon said, "I felt good at the top

of the last hill and just decided to make a move." This was the first race that Simon has ever won in his four years. Asher finished out a very strong season also. During the fall he won four races and placed in the top three of most of his meets. It was an unusually warm day and the heat got to Asher, but he pushed to the finish and capped an outstanding senior year of racing.

In 2021 Brunswick won the

state meet and back in 1988 and '89 they were also the top 1A school in the state. Simon becomes just the 2nd BHS runner since the team formed in 1978 to win the individual title. Russ Adams last accomplished the championship in 1989.

## Girls Have Outstanding Season

Despite being a young team with just three seniors out of 12 team members, the girls team had an outstanding season. They became the first Brunswick girls team since 2019 to qualify to the state meet. The lady Railroaders placed 8th in the girls meet.

Sophomore Kate Virgilio led the girls with a 23rd place finish for 3 miles with a time of 22:48. Kate had a spectacular season as she was the top runner in all of the meets for the local team. She is also a state champion wrestler. Other runners with strong races included Vivian Alexander 43rd place, Shelby Kenawell 49th, Caroline Teague 57th, freshman Kim Porter 62nd, Haddie Shullenbarger 67th and Kaitlyn Heck 69th. ■



The first BHS girls cross country team to qualify for the state meet since 2019, placing 8th at the state meet.

Front row (left to right): Kate Virgilio, Haddie Shullenbarger, Kaitlyn Heck. Back row: Ramata Sautter, Emma Myer, Caroline Teague, Kim Porter, Shelby Kenawell, Vivian Alexander, Samantha Junker, Sasha Steyee. Not available for the photo was Maren Clatworthy,



State champion Simon McGillivray in the front of the lead pack with 3rd place finisher Asher Adelman, cresting the last hill at the state meet at Hereford High School. McGillivray won the meet in a time of 16:28, topping 130 other runners in the race, while Adelman came in at 16:44.

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## Regenerative Farming CONTINUED

Continued from page 18

the Jorgensen family since the 1950s. In 1996, the family placed the land under a permanent conservation easement, ensuring it would not be developed. It was around this time they began regenerative agriculture practices. Today, it is managed by the Jorgensen Family Foundation, producing quality beef, pork and other products. They also host six of local beekeeper John Gardener's 40 active colonies situated at four farms in Frederick County. All of Hedgeapple Farm is in pasture and forest, hedgerows have been restored, and since 2022 cattle have been rotated daily across fields—allowing at least 30 days of regrowth for each paddock. With help from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the farm recently planted 2,400 trees to shade animals and enhance soil health. Its mile-long frontage on the Monocacy River makes water-quality stewardship essential. <https://www.hedgeapplefarms.com/>

### Jehovah Jireh Farm, Dickerson

Myron and Cathy Horst operate this certified organic, pasture-based farm with more than 2,000 laying hens on 35 acres. The property also contains a historic log cabin dating to the late 1700s. One of its most unique features is a 1.5-acre American Chestnut breeding orchard managed by the American Chestnut Foundation, part of ongoing efforts to restore the species to Eastern forests after blight decimated it in the early 20th century. The experiment has reinforced the importance of healthy soils and well-managed pastures for forest restoration. <https://www.jehovahjirehfarm.com/>

### A Path Forward

The economic and environmental case for regenerative agriculture is clear. It's also backed by evidence. During the tour, CBF and the Million Acre Challenge Fund, which aims to bring one million Maryland acres under healthy soil practices by 2030, highlighted research from Open Book Farm, a former dairy operation and monoculture crop farm in Maryland that has been converted into a rotationally grazed regenerative farm. In just 10 years, emissions from the farm decreased 106%, transitioning the land from a carbon emission source to a carbon sink, and proving that farms can be a part of the climate solution. ■

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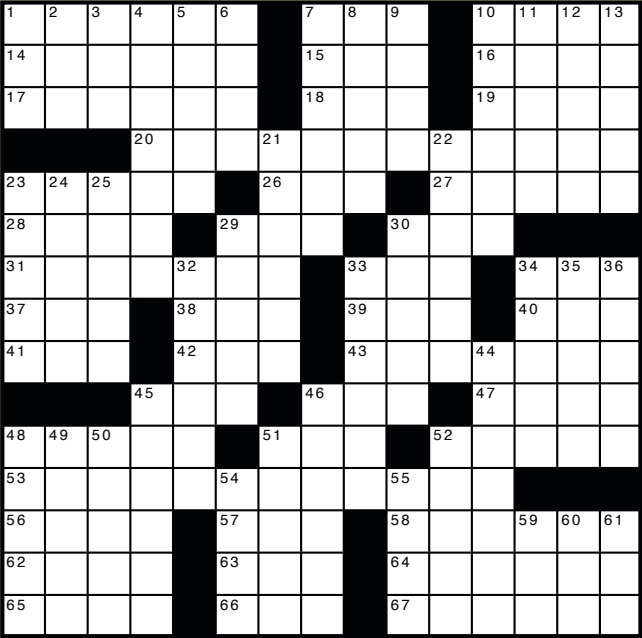
# STUFF & NONSENSE

Across

- 1. Cottonwoods
- 7. \_\_\_ kwon do
- 10. Conked out
- 14. Go over again
- 15. Egyptian cobra
- 16. The King \_\_\_
- 17. Theater district
- 18. Go downhill fast?
- 19. Cornfield cacophony
- 20. Aviation mechanic
- 23. Belle or Bart
- 26. Boy
- 27. Unfolds
- 28. Amos or Spelling
- 29. Like some ears
- 30. \_\_\_-Cat (winter vehicle)
- 31. Imperial dynasty of Russia
- 33. Injection amts.
- 34. Sprechen \_\_\_ Deutsch?
- 37. Mineral suffix
- 38. "Lord, is \_\_\_?": Matthew
- 39. That's gotta hurt!
- 40. Tolkien ogre
- 41. Third degree?
- 42. Legume
- 43. Uncommon
- 45. Belief system
- 46. Get older
- 47. Annapolis sch.
- 48. Hippodrome, e.g.
- 51. Menu words
- 52. Distinguishing characteristic
- 53. Made to resist breaking
- 56. Pigeon coop
- 57. Cinco de Mayo, e.g.
- 58. Scoffs
- 62. Polecat's defense
- 63. Common Market abbr.
- 64. People of courage
- 65. Neutral shades
- 66. D.C. advisory grp.
- 67. Size up

Down

- 1. Sheet music abbr.
- 2. Wreath of flowers



- 3. I've got it!
- 4. Swampfever
- 5. Blender maker
- 6. Restaurateur Toots
- 7. Dutch navigator
- 8. Inquired
- 9. Larger-than-life
- 10. Repeated from the beginning
- 11. Mindlessly stupid
- 12. Newsman Newman
- 13. Flat circular plates
- 21. Singer Newton-John
- 22. Island in central Japan
- 23. Piece of bacon
- 24. Fang, e.g.
- 25. Equipped
- 29. Tribal emblem
- 30. Teatime treat
- 32. Tries to bite
- 33. Puma
- 34. March man
- 35. Afghan's neighbor
- 36. Brilliance
- 44. Wave riders
- 45. Buries
- 46. Llama relative
- 48. Cravat
- 49. Role for Valerie
- 50. Stationery brand
- 51. Sign of spring
- 52. Shades
- 54. First place
- 55. Dept. of Labor division
- 59. Fair-hiring abbr.
- 60. Hi-\_\_\_ graphics
- 61. Conscription org.



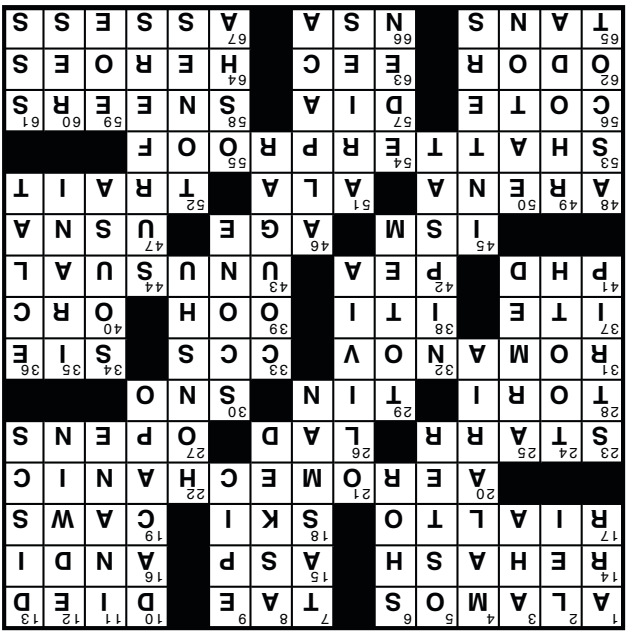
Dear Satan,  
For Christmas, I want a cure for my dyslexia.

A couple is walking in East Berlin on Christmas Eve. They feel a slight precipitation.  
"I think it's raining," says the man.  
"No, it's snowing," replies the woman.  
"How about we ask this Communist officer here? He is always right!" exclaims the man. "Officer Rudolph, is it raining or snowing?"  
"Definitely raining," Officer Rudolph replies before walking off. The man turns to his wife with a smile. "See? Rudolph the Red knows rain, dear."

Winemakers have just introduced a new variety of grape. They combine the Sebastian Moore with the Pinot Grigio for a dry, white wine that will be very popular with the over 60 crowd. It's called the Pinot Moore.

I was having wine with my wife when she said, 'I love you so much, you know. I don't know how I could ever live without you.' I said, 'Is that you or the wine talking?' She said, 'It's me talking to the wine.'

CROSSWORD ANSWERS



Bumper sticker on a local truck



An exercise for people who are out of shape: Begin with a five-pound potato bag in each hand. Extend your arms straight out from your sides, hold them there for a full minute, and then relax. After a few weeks, move up to ten-pound potato bags. Then try 50-pound potato bags, and eventually try to get to where you can lift a 100-pound potato bag in each hand and hold your arms straight for more than a full minute. Once you feel confident at that level, put a potato in each bag.

— Beverly Gross

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Offers valid on select in-stock vehicles with contracts dated before January 5, 2026. Not valid on prior sales. "No Payment for 90 Days" program available on new 2025-2026 Honda models financed through Honda Financial Services (HFS). Interest accrues during the deferment period. Subject to credit approval; tiers 1-8 eligible. 0% APR available on the purchase of 2025 Honda Prologue through HFS; not all buyers will qualify. Discounts valid on Prologue stock #SS527730, Accord Hybrid stock #SA072637, and Pilot Black Edition stock #SB175071. Offers and vehicle availability subject to change without notice. Stock photos shown for illustration purposes only. Ourisman Honda of Frederick is not responsible for typographical errors. See dealer for complete details. Offers expire January 5, 2026.

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Happy Honda Days



ALL ABOARD BRUNSWICK

DECEMBER COMMUNITY GUIDE FOR ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, EVENTS, ETC.

To have your event listed in next month’s newspaper, email events by the 15th of this month to [info@BrunsNews.com](mailto:info@BrunsNews.com).

<b>Beginning Readers Club</b> (K–2nd grade) December 1, 4:30–5 pm Brunswick Library	<b>Brunswick Holiday Market</b> December 6, 11am–5 pm Martin’s Creek parking lot	<b>Wreaths Across America</b> December 13, noon Park Heights Cemetery, Brunswick	<b>Holiday Lights Contest</b> December 18–21 Register by Dec. 12 <a href="http://www.brunswick.md.gov/specialevents">www.brunswick.md.gov / specialevents</a>	<b>Brunswick Arts Council</b> 2nd SATURDAYS 10 am–noon Brunswick Library	<b>Table Top Tuesdays</b> TUESDAYS, 6–8 pm (3rd Tues. calling all Dungeons and Dragons neophytes and /or pros) BYO drinks Traveling Bros. Cigars 302 W. Potomac St.
<b>Elementary Explorers: Make a Map</b> (ages 5–10) December 2, 4:30–5:30 pm Brunswick Library	<b>Santa Train Rides</b> December 6, 1 pm & 3 pm Brunswick Train Station Tickets at Eventbrite.com	<b>Wreaths Across America</b> December 13, noon Lovettsville Union Cemetery	<b>Brunswick Indoor Farmers Market</b> December 19, 4–7 pm American Legion 24 S. Maple Ave.	<b>Connect &amp; Create</b> 2nd SATURDAYS Smoketown Brewing	<b>Preschool Storytime</b> WEDNESDAYS, 10:30 am, 3–5 year–olds with caregiver Brunswick Library
<b>Teen Time: Author Workshop with Aliza Layne</b> (ages 11–18) December 4, 6–7 pm Brunswick Library	<b>Jingle Bell Run &amp; Santa Stroll</b> December 6, 3 pm Square Corner Park, Brunswick	<b>Museums by Candlelight: Serenade and Afternoon Tea with the British</b> December 13, 2–4 pm Brunswick Library	<b>Holiday Buffet Breakfast</b> December 20, 6:30–10 am Petersville Ruritan, 3816 Petersville Rd.	<b>Worship Service</b> SUNDAYS, 9 am Jefferson United Methodist Church 3882 Jefferson Pike	<b>Preschoolers School &amp; STEM Skills</b> WEDNESDAYS, 11:15 am, 3–5 year–olds with caregiver Brunswick Library
<b>Let’s Dance to Holiday Music: An Adaptive Adult Program</b> December 5, 11 am–noon Brunswick Library	<b>Holiday Parade &amp; Tree Lighting</b> December 6, 4 pm Potomac Street, Brunswick	<b>Luminary Event</b> December 13, 5–8 pm Old Berlin Cemetery, Brunswick Park Heights Cemetery, Brunswick	<b>Read to a Dog</b> (ages 0–10) December 20 10:30–11:30 am Brunswick Library	<b>Worship Service</b> SUNDAYS, 9:30 am New Hope United Methodist Church 7 S. Maryland Ave. <a href="http://brunswickumc.com">brunswickumc.com</a>	<b>Valley Quilters</b> , all ages /levels FIRST WEDNESDAY, 6:30 pm St. Paul Lutheran Church, Jefferson <a href="mailto:valleyquiltersTLC@gmail.com">valleyquiltersTLC@gmail.com</a>
<b>Brunswick Families First—</b> Sponsored by YMCA (all ages, free) December 5 and December 12, 6–8 pm Topics: grocery /meal assistance, financial education, job training /preparation, etc. City Park Building, 665 E Potomac St.	<b>Pre–Holiday Stress Relief Retreat</b> December 7, 2–3 pm Brunswick Library	<b>Community Christmas Carol Sing Along</b> December 14, 2pm St. Paul Lutheran Church Jefferson, MD	<b>Christmas Eve Candlelight Service</b> December 24, 4 pm St. Paul Lutheran Church Jefferson, MD	<b>Baby Storytime</b> MONDAYS, 10:30 am, ages 0–24 months with caregiver Brunswick Library	<b>Ladies’ Movie Night</b> WEDNESDAYS, 7–9 pm, BYO drinks Traveling Bros. Cigars 302 W. Potomac St.
<b>Breakfast with Santa</b> December 6, starting at 8 am Brunswick Volunteer Fire Co.	<b>Elementary Explorers: Design a Pokemon</b> (ages 5–10) December 9, 4:30–5:30 pm Brunswick Library	<b>Brunswick Arts Council Program: Visible Mending</b> December 14, 2–4 pm Brunswick Library	<b>Teen Felting Hangout</b> (ages 11–18) December 27, 2–3 pm Brunswick Library	<b>Beginning Readers Club</b> (K–2nd grade) MONDAYS November 17, 24 and December 1 Brunswick Library	<b>Musical Storytime</b> THURSDAYS, 10:30 am, ages 0–5 with caregiver Brunswick Library
<b>Guinea Pig Storytime with Jenn’s Uncommon Critters</b> (ages 0–10) December 6, 10:30 am Brunswick Library	<b>Tween Time: Friendship Bracelets</b> (3rd through 8th grades) December 11, 6–7 pm Brunswick Library	<b>Elementary Explorers: Puzzle Piece Picture Frames</b> (ages 5–10) December 16, 4:30–5:30 pm Brunswick Library	<b>Freezin for a Reason</b> January 1, 1 pm Brunswick Family Campground Sponsored by BARC	<b>Manly Movie Night</b> MONDAYS, 7–9 pm BYO drink Traveling Bros. Cigars 302 W. Potomac St.	<b>Goose Creek Ruggers</b> 2nd SATURDAYS 10 am–1 pm Catocin Presbyterian Church 15565 High St., Waterford, VA
<b>BAM! Brunswick Art Market</b> December 6, 11 am–6 pm upstairs After party 7–9 pm downstairs Smoketown Brewing Station	<b>Teen Time: Window Decorating</b> (ages 11–18) December 11, 6–7 pm Brunswick Library	<b>Teen Time: Rubber Stamp Greeting Cards</b> (ages 11–18) December 18, 6–7 pm Brunswick Library	<b>RECURRING</b>  <b>Intermediate Conversation Class for English Language Learners</b> SATURDAYS, 10:30 am Brunswick Library	<b>Toddler Storytime</b> TUESDAYS, 10:30 am 2–year–olds with caregiver Brunswick Library	<b>Games Club of Maryland</b> THIRD SATURDAYS 12–7 pm Smoketown Brewing Station

# Sound of Hope

Overdose Awareness Concert

December 13 — Doors open at 4 p.m.



Honoring  
Trinity Viola Ripley  
2-10-2005 — 12-13-2023

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The Upstairs at Smoketown Brewing,  
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SCAN FOR  
TICKETS



4:30 p.m. Let There be Rock School

6:45 p.m. No Politics

7:30 p.m. Phoenix Recovery Academy

8:15 p.m. Nicholas Paré and The JAGS

Raising awareness about fentanyl  
and overdose and honoring the life  
of Trinity Ripley on the two-year  
anniversary of her passing

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<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/sound-of-hope>

[trinityschildren.org](http://trinityschildren.org)



# Valley Craft Network



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At the close of our 44th year of Studio Tours,  
the Valley Craft Network artisans want to  
**THANK YOU** from the bottom of our hearts.

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To learn about these events and our open hours,  
please visit our website.

Check out our work online, make appointments to visit our studios,  
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Mark your calendars for our Spring Showcase,  
April 25 & 26, 2026, 10 am - 5 pm both days.



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