

BRUNSWICK NEWS-JOURNAL

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VOLUME 4 NO. 1

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JANUARY 2026

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Is there something different about the BNJ? See page 10.

Brunswick Votes January 20 to Fill Vacant Council Seat

By DIANE ELLIS

The City of Brunswick will hold a Special Election on Tuesday, January 20, to fill one seat on the City Council. A vacancy was created last September when Council Member Angel White stepped down from her position. Her term ran until August 2028, so the new member will fill out this term.

Voting takes place at the Brunswick City Park Building, 655 E. Potomac Street, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Absentee ballot request forms are available on the City website: brunswickmd.gov. Voters must be residents of the City



of Brunswick and be registered with the Frederick County Board of Elections to be eligible to

vote in this special election.

City Director of Administration Carrie Myers stated that, unlike regular elections that involve a full slate of candidates, no voting machines would be used in this special election. Voters will fill in their selection on paper ballots that will be hand counted.

Brunswick has a Board of Supervisors of Elections who oversee the conduct of city elections. Serving on the Board are Wayne Allgaier, Julie Kloetzli and Syree Williams.

Candidates had until December 22 to file their candidacy. Two candidates, Carleah Summers and Jerry Bonanno, filed for this election and only their names will be on the ballot. Write-in votes are prohibited in all City elections, according to the City Code of Ordinances.

See page 2 for profiles of the candidates.

A Touch of Gold



New lettering for "The Newberry" at 30 West Potomac Street was installed just before Christmas to add sparkle to Brunswick's downtown. Owners Eric Lindland and Machel Lee stand in front of their historic renovation project that has taken three years and now houses five businesses.

Coyotes in Our Neighborhoods



An eastern coyote in the snow near the West Virginia-Virginia state line

By JANE CLIFFORD

Coyotes are a familiar presence across Maryland and Virginia. While not native to the region, they arrived naturally in the mid-20th century and quickly colonized, now inhabiting every county in both states. Denser populations tend to be found in the western portions of each state, including Frederick and Loudoun Counties, where habitat is preferable.

In Virginia alone, the coyote population is estimated at roughly 50,000, though experts note that number is likely low due to the animals' elusive, mostly nocturnal behavior. According to Joshua Tabora, a biologist specializing in small- and medium-sized carnivores with the Maryland De-

partment of Natural Resources (MDNR), coyote populations in the region are generally stable or only slightly increasing, and they remain naturally wary of humans.

Still, a quick scan of neighborhood forums like Nextdoor or local Facebook groups reveals frequent reports of sightings, and for at least one unfortunate resident of Lovettsville, significant loss of livestock. These reports are an important reminder that coyotes are highly adaptable wild animals capable of living alongside people in suburban and semi-rural areas. Like other predators and scavengers, they can pose risks to small pets and livestock, particularly during winter and early spring. January and February mark the start of coyote mating season,

when adults may become more active and males more territorial.

How Coyotes Came East

Maryland and Delaware were the last two states along the eastern seaboard to be populated by coyotes. According to MDNR, the first confirmed sightings occurred in the early 1970s. Coyotes migrated east from west of the Mississippi River along two routes: one through the southeastern U.S. and another north through Canada, and eventually converged in Maryland and Delaware.

Along the northern route, coyotes interbred with wolves. Sometimes referred to as "coywolves," Eastern coyotes are genetically distinct, and larger than their western counterparts. A study by Stony Brook University found they are roughly 65 percent coyote, 25 percent wolf, and 10 percent domestic dog. This mix has made them especially adaptable and well suited to sharing space with humans.

Spotting a Coy-Wolf

Eastern coyotes are often mistaken for German Shepherds. They typically weigh between 20 and 45 pounds, though large males can exceed 60 pounds. They have long legs, pointed ears, thick fur, and bushy tails with black tips that are usually carried low. Fur color can include brown, gray, black, reddish, or blonde tones.

Coyotes mate for life and may travel alone or in family groups of five to six. They are most active between dusk and dawn but are also

frequently seen during the day. Their distinctive yips and howls are an unmistakable sign of their presence.

Risks to Pets and Livestock

As omnivores, Eastern coyotes eat a wide variety of food that includes rodents, rabbits, deer, fruit, plants, insects, and carrion. Roadkill is an important food source during the winter months. Tabora noted that while coyotes often take the blame for other predators—in-

cluding bears, foxes, raccoons, domesticated dogs, and to a lesser extent bobcats—they can pose a real risk to small pets and livestock.

Cats: Coyotes are known predators of domestic cats. While supervision can help, the only way to fully protect cats is to keep them indoors.

Dogs: Dogs over 20 pounds are not usually targeted. Small dogs are more vulnerable, especially at night. Keeping dogs on a leash and staying close to them, even in

Continued on page 15

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Renovation**

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Cat Licensing**



PLUS: TOP STORIES OF 2025, PROJECT LIFESAVER, HIMES STORE, NATIONAL SPAGHETTI DAY, RIVER CROSSINGS OVER THE YEARS, AND MORE

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BRUNSWICK NEWS

CANDIDATES FOR BRUNSWICK CITY COUNCIL

These candidate profiles were compiled by Diane Ellis and Abbie Ricketts.

Jerry Bonanno

Jerry Bonanno and his wife Hope settled in Galyn Manor in 2005. Over the past 20 years, he said they have built a life in Brunswick filled with family memories and lasting friendships, and he is eager to give back to this community by serving on the City Council.

Bonanno said that filling the shoes of Angel White will be a “tall order, as she served Brunswick tirelessly for many years.” He believes that “electing a candidate who can immediately, diligently, and knowledgeably pick up that service is vital to the City’s continued success.”

Bonanno ran unsuccessfully for Brunswick City Council in 2022. Since then, he has volunteered on Brunswick’s Planning Commission, the Board of Zoning Appeals, and the Finance and Utilities Commission. Both he and Hope also worked for several years on the Brunswick High School New Build Committee, advocating for a long-overdue new high school for the community.

He stated that through these experiences, he has become familiar with City operations and worked collaboratively with several Council members, Mayor Brown, and the City staff. He believes that this has equipped him to step onto the Council ready to contribute on day one.

“Professionally, I’ve spent over two decades practicing law, focusing on complex legal and policy issues within highly regulated industries. That experience will help me guide projects through the legal and procedural web of municipal government,” he said. “For the past 17 years



Jerry Bonanno

I’ve worked for a national trade association, which has given me strong skills in collaboration, consensus-building, and problem-solving — skills I plan to bring to the Council.”

Bonanno believes the key issues facing the City over the next few years include:

- Project Management: Overseeing responsible growth and successfully completing key infrastructure projects.
- Economic Development: Supporting the success of existing businesses and fostering an environment attractive to new businesses.
- Effective Communication: Engaging with the community and clearly communicating City projects and processes.
- Fiscal Responsibility: Sensibly financing critical projects and managing the City’s budget.

“If entrusted with a seat on the Council, I promise you diligence, hard work, a steady hand, and a willingness to listen,” he concluded.

Bonanno invites readers to learn more about him from his Facebook page: Jerry Bonanno for Brunswick City Council. ■

Carleah Summers

Carleah Summers and her family — husband Luvine and three children — have lived in Brunswick for seven years. She loves the C&O Canal, as her parents were National Park Service rangers and instilled in her a deep appreciation for nature.

“I’m running for Brunswick City Council because I care deeply about families and their access to resources,” she said. “I want to advocate for policy changes that support housing affordability, substance abuse education, and transportation availability. As a leader, I want to prioritize transparency, accountability, and inclusivity, ensuring every voice is heard and valued, when making decisions. I believe we can build a government that serves the people and a community that



Carleah Summers

thrives.” She noted that she is a seasoned leader and founder of Andrea’s House, saying “I’m passionate about providing transitional housing for women impacted by substance use disorders and trauma. I’ve dedicated my career to serving vulnerable

families in Frederick County and across Maryland.”

She currently serves on the Local Management Board of Frederick County and the Frederick County Housing Task Force, with a focus on rural areas. She also serves with the Maryland Christian Chamber of Commerce, Smoketown Rotary, Zonta Club of Frederick County, Amplified Change, and Empowered to Live. As a nonprofit leader, she says, “I’ve built relationships with leaders across the spectrum, allowing me to effectively advocate for resources and support for our most vulnerable families.”

Her work has been recognized by the Frederick County Commission For Women, who voted her the “2025 Up and Coming Woman of the Year” for her efforts in recovery communities and family restoration.

If elected, she said her top priorities will focus on community engagement, resource accessibility, and support for vulnerable populations. She is concerned about issues that impact community well-being, such as housing affordability, substance abuse, and transportation.

She wants to create simple tools to help people get involved, making it easier for residents to share their ideas through regular community meetings and town halls, surveys and neighborhood gatherings, and partnerships with local organizations and leaders.

She wants to ensure that city staff are trained to truly listen and respond to resident input, so that ideas can be turned into action. “By prioritizing community engagement,” she said, “we can build trust, foster collaboration, and make informed decisions that reflect the needs and values of our community.”

She summed up her experience: “I’ve had the chance to connect with incredible individuals and organizations, working together to make a difference in our community. I’m excited to bring this experience and passion to the Brunswick City Council!” ■

For more information about the candidates, watch the candidate interviews on the archived meetings page of the City website (Brunswick-md.gov). Click on the November 4, 2025 Mayor & Council Workshop.



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www.BrunsNews.com

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

The Brunswick News-Journal is published monthly
by Potomac Publication, LLC.

Publisher: Ellis Burruss
Editor: Diane Ellis

ACE group (Advisors, Contributors, Editors):

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Design and layout: Patrice Gallagher, Gallagher Design, Frederick MD

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

CITY OF BRUNSWICK

Christmas Tree Collection

**Ecology Services will pick up
trees on Monday,
January 5 and 12.**

Place trees curbside by 6 a.m.

**Remove all decorations
from trees.**

**Trees will be collected in a
different truck from weekly trash.**



BRUNSWICK CITY COUNCIL

Mayor and Council
December 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

City Events Application
Policy Stirs Business
Owners

Several Brunswick business owners came to the City Hall meeting to express concern over a proposed “City Events Application Policy” and to urge better communication with businesses.

Their concerns were over fee increases and the lack of clarity in the event permitting process. They were concerned that the new policy would make it difficult to plan and budget events, resulting in fewer events, and that this would hurt local businesses.

One casualty of the communication gap appears to be the “Puerto Rico in Brunswick” festival, which had been planned for May, but when City approval was delayed, the event organizers moved it elsewhere in order to meet grant deadlines.

During a two-hour discussion, Mayor Brown and the City Council assured the business group that “we want to be supportive of events, but we need to have a structure to it.” The mayor explained all the costs associated with events that permit fees are intended to help offset. He said many of these costs are related to safety issues, which are a primary concern.

The mayor said the 11-page event application that was posted on the city website is a draft. He assured business owners that the application would be tweaked and reviewed with them before any final policy is enacted.

Among the remedies discussed were providing estimates for permit fees based on type of event, assigning a Council liaison to the business group, and setting up a fund in the City’s budget to help subsidize events that benefit the local economy.

Sports Complex

Assistant Administrator Jeremy Mose announced that, due to construction, the entire Sports Complex area is now closed and only local traffic is permitted on 13th Avenue. Rivers Edge Trailhead (next to the skate park) is closed until Fall 2026. (The Trailhead off Cummings Drive remains open.)

Vista Pointe

The Council approved 10-year agreements with Vista Pointe, LLC on the requirements of the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance and on Water & Wastewater Service. The number of proposed residential units is now at 500, down from 575.

North Maple Avenue
Sidewalk Improvement

The North Maple Avenue Sidewalk Improvement Project is moving forward. The bidding process was announced for work on Maple Avenue from B to F streets. Design work was completed last year. The first phase of construction, which is from E to F streets, is expected during April and June. The cost is covered by a grant last year just under \$500,000 from the federal Community Development Block Grant program.

Water Bill Payment

The City is sending out letters to utility customers about a new payment processor called Xpress Bill Pay. If you pay online, you can still use the “Utility Bill Payment” button on the city website. Due to rising costs, the City might eventually charge customers for the cost of credit card fees, so they are encouraging other means of payment, such as through a bank account. Remember to read this important letter from the City when you receive it. It provides helpful phone numbers and answers to questions about payment methods.

City Flag Contest

After months of delay, the Council decided to go forward with public voting on a new design for the City flag. The design contest was announced last April and the City received ten submissions from local residents. Three of the designs were ineligible due to copyright issues. A committee was formed last June to select the three best designs. In a status report at the December meeting, Assistant City Administrator Jeremy Mose stated, “There were some reservations of the selected designs, which led to reconsideration about moving forward with public voting.” The City Council voted to put it to the public in an online vote before they make a final decision.

FROM THE MAYOR’S DESK

Happy New Year,
Brunswick!

From my family to yours, I wish you all a very happy, safe and healthy 2026!

I am always looking for ways to help our residents better understand how our community operates and why certain decisions are made. To start the new year, I’ll be sharing a series of articles designed to educate and inform the community on topics many of you may be curious about. My goal is simple: to provide clear, factual information so that you can be more engaged and confident in your understanding of how our city functions.

I’ll be sharing
a series of articles
designed to educate
and inform the
community.

A topic that often comes up in conversations about our water system is the “ready-to-serve” charge. This is the portion of your water bill that covers the cost of maintaining and operating the water system, even if you use very little water. It ensures that our system is reliable, safe and prepared to deliver water whenever you need it. While water consumption charges cover the amount of water you use, the ready-to-serve charge covers the infrastructure, maintenance and staffing required to keep the system running for every resident.

The City’s water and sewer system is a critical piece of public infrastructure that must be maintained, operated and available at



all times, regardless of how much water any one customer uses. To ensure this reliability, our rate structure includes two components: a ready-to-serve charge and a usage charge.

Ready-to-Serve Charge
(Base Fee)

The ready-to-serve rate is a fixed fee that covers the costs of maintaining the system and keeping it ready for immediate use. This includes the upkeep of water mains, treatment facilities, pumps, storage tanks, meters and emergency response capacity. These costs exist even if no water is used. The charge ensures that every customer contributes to the overall reliability and availability of safe drinking water and fire protection services.

Usage Charge
(Consumption Fee)

The usage charge is based on the actual amount of water used. This portion of the bill encourages conservation, with a tiered rate structure, and ensures that those who use more water pay proportionally for the increased treatment, pumping and delivery costs associated with higher consumption.

What Does This Mean for
Your Bill?

Most customers fall into the base tier, where the average utility bill is about \$190 per quarter and includes water, sewer, bay restoration fees and trash. For those in Tier 1 service, the average bill is approximately \$297 per quarter. These figures help illustrate how the ready-to-serve charge and usage fees work together to maintain fairness and sustainability across our community.

Balancing Fairness and
Sustainability

Together, these two charges provide a fair and balanced system. The ready-to-serve portion guarantees that the system can operate efficiently for all customers, while the usage portion ensures that costs related to individual consumption are equitably distributed. This structure is common practice across the utility industry and helps the City maintain financial stability while promoting responsible water use.

Understanding the ready-to-serve charge helps explain why small, consistent rate adjustments are necessary. These charges allow us to maintain a stable, efficient water system that meets the needs of our growing community while avoiding large, sudden rate increases that can be a burden.

In future articles, I’ll continue with more topics that affect our daily lives, from public utilities to local government processes. My hope is that by sharing this information, residents can be better informed, participate more actively, and feel empowered in community discussions.

Together, we can ensure that our city remains a place where knowledge, engagement and transparency guide the decisions that impact all of us. ■

Nathan Brown

Staff Report Highlights

Planning & Zoning – Planning Director Bruce Dell reported that work has begun on Phase III of B&O Railroad Park. Council Member Eric Smothers asked about the uncomfortable benches in the park and what could be done. Assistant City Administrator Mose said he would consider doing a change order to replace the benches.

Police – Chief Kevin Grunwell said there were over 1500 calls for service in November, which is up from 663 in November 2024. These include 13 motor vehicle accidents in the city. He reported there was a burglary at Jerry’s Liquors and they are still working on the carjacking case in Brunswick Crossing. No arrest has been made yet, but the vehicle has been recovered. He said the police are getting calls every few months from the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) about somebody in Brunswick pointing laser lights at aircraft. He reminded the community that this is a federal offense and anyone witnessing this activity should call the police.

Public Works – Director John Gerstner said two water main breaks were recently repaired, one on Souder Road and one on East E Street in the 100 block.

Utilities – Director Matt Campbell reported that Wastewater Treatment staff handled a chemical overflow that was caused by a chemical company driver. The acetic acid chemical was within the

tank’s containment zone. Spilled chemicals were transferred into barrels, and the chemical company is investigating the incident. The company issued a credit for the amount spilled. ■

BRUNSWICK INDOOR POP-UP MARKET

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MORE INFO

BRUNSWICK NEWS

2025 Year in Review

By ELLIS BURRUSS

Do you remember January of last year? Or February? Here's a chance to revive those memories.

While the rest of the world saw dramatic events and coped with war, weather disasters and political upheavals, Brunswick was mostly calm. The pages of the Brunswick News-Journal were filled with entertaining and informative articles about life here at home. These are highlights of the past year. You can also go to our website at www.BrunsNews.com to review the full year of stories.

January

What's Going on with Downtown Parking?
Park Mobile Installed

Historic Bell is Removed
from First Baptist Church

Maison Bakery Opens

City Starts Homeowner Survey
of Lead Water Lines

February

Affordable Housing in the Brunswick Area
Power Line Controversy Heats Up

March

Layoffs of Federal Workers Expected to Impact
Local Communities

Lovettsville Mayfest is Back

April

Brunswick High School Replacement Gets
Funding

Nearby National Parks Impacted by Cuts

Are We at Risk of Wildfires?

Brunswick Farmers Market Launches Biggest
Season Ever

May

Spring Festivals Highlight the Month of May

County Advances Plan for New Brunswick
Senior Center

Boys & Girls Clubs Coming to Brunswick
Middle School

June

MARC Train Accident Kills Two in Sandy Hook

Rosemont Elects Two New Commissioners

Potomac River Reaches Flood Level

Lockhouse Gallery Opens

July

Data Center Overlay Legislation Proposed
by County Executive

Juveniles Charged in Alleged Assault at BHS

Brunswick Little League Wins Fogle Classic

August

New Valley Elementary School Opens
in Jefferson

Maryland Comptroller Visits Brunswick
B&O Railroad Park under Construction

September

Flood Planning Needs Community Input

Angel White Leaves Brunswick City Council

October

42nd Annual Brunswick Railroad Days

Route 340 Interchange Work Underway

Renovation Completed on Downtown
Mommer's Building

Two Brunswick Artists Chosen
in Metro Wide Survey

November

Brunswick Business Expo Returns

Heritage Museum Façade Restoration
Celebrated

Valley Craft Network in 44th Year
of Studio Tour

December

Local Food Banks Stressed as Needs Increase

Special Election Set for Brunswick City Council

Brunswick Collision Center Opens

River Plunge Set for New Year's Day to Help
People in Need

Project Lifesaver:
Bringing Loved Ones Home

By JEAN DOYLE

For families caring for someone with a cognitive disorder, the fear of that loved one wandering away can be serious. Project Lifesaver is a community-based, public safety, nonprofit organization that provides a program for law enforcement, search and rescue teams, caregivers and families. It is designed to protect and quickly locate individuals with cognitive disabilities who are prone to the life-threatening behavior of wandering or running away.

The program was founded in 1999, in Chesapeake, Virginia, and has grown to an internationally recognized organization that provides tools and training needed to quickly locate and safely recover individuals. Bringing the missing loved one home quickly and safely is the heart of the program.

The mission of Project Lifesaver is to provide a timely response to save lives and reduce potential injury for adults and children with the propensity to wander due to conditions such as Alzheimer's disease, autism, dementia, and intellectual disabilities. Project Lifesaver's program is accessed locally through the Frederick County Sheriff's Department and the Brunswick Police Department.

Radio frequency tracking system

Project Lifesaver works by utilizing a radio frequency tracking system. The individual wears a small battery-powered transmitter on the wrist or ankle that emits a unique signal. If an individual wanders away, trained responders use mobile receivers to track the signal and locate the individual. Corporal Gary Cline of the Brunswick Police Department is the local contact person for the program. He emphasized how notifying the police immediately can lead to a recovery, usually within 30-60 minutes. The approach has led to 45,000 successful recoveries since it began.

Corporal Cline can be reached on his cell phone, 301-473-3914, or at his work phone, 301-834-9101. Before joining the Brun-



Corporal Gary Cline demonstrates tracking the transmitting radio signal to find a missing person.

swick Police, Corporal Cline was the trainer for Project Lifesaver for the Frederick County Sheriff's Department. He is available to assist residents who want to get more information. The process starts with completing an application that Corporal Cline can provide.

The liaison at the County Sheriff's Office is Officer Amber Blackmire, Community Services Deputy. Once an individual has a transmitting wrist or ankle device, they are given a unique frequency that is kept in an individualized file at the Sheriff's Department. A monthly fee of \$10 is charged to replace the battery and maintenance costs. Costs can be waived if necessary.

Peace of mind for caregivers

Jim Dixon, a Boonsboro resident, recommends the Project Lifesaver program. He used the program when he was a primary caregiver. Mr. Dixon said that the program gives caregivers peace of mind and he wanted to make more people aware of the service. He said that it isn't publicized enough and it provides an additional layer of protection to keep people safe.

You can read more about Project Lifesaver on their website: projectlifesaver.org ■



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Construction Begins on Sports Complex Renovations

By DIANE ELLIS

A multi-million-dollar renovation of the Brunswick Sports Complex has begun. It will upgrade existing facilities and create new amenities for the community.

The project has taken many years of planning, grantsmanship, community meetings, site design and political will. Mayor Nathan Brown has praised it as “an investment in the youth of our community.”

Key features of the project include:

- Renovation of existing softball fields, including dugouts, bleachers and scoreboards.
- Installation of new field lighting in several locations.
- Construction of two new multipurpose sports fields and two pickleball courts with fencing and lighting.
- Building a new playground and a centrally located concession stand.
- Conversion of the former radio station into a public restroom.
- Creation of paved parking areas with 282 spaces and a new loop road to help with traffic circulation. Curbs and gutters will be installed along roadways, and sidewalks will be improved.
- Creating a trail for walkers and runners around the perimeter of the complex.
- Widening 13th Avenue, the road leading to the Sports Complex, and adding on-street parking.

The skate park is not part of the current renovation, but according to Mayor Brown, will be improved or changed in use in the future. Requirements of the original skate park grant specify that it must stay in its contracted use for a certain number of years.

During construction, 13th Avenue will be closed, and only local traffic will be permitted. The Sports Complex itself will be closed for safety reasons, as well as the trailhead for Rivers Edge Trails next to the skate park. The trailhead off Cummings Drive across from Brunswick Middle School remains open.

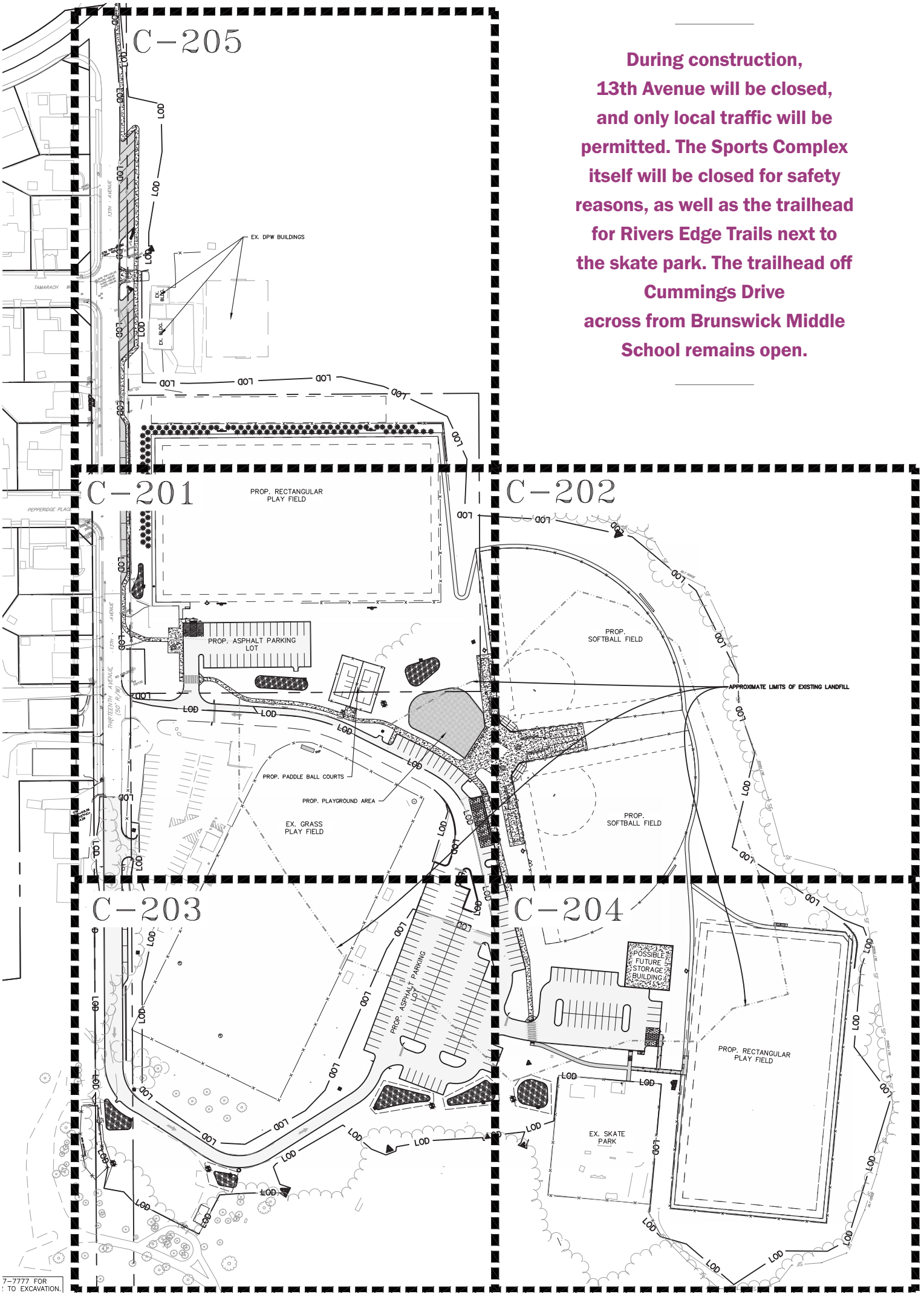
Cost and timeline

The City has contracted with Contour Construction for this work. Financing is from multiple sources including grants, city budgeted funds, and bond financing. Total construction and design costs are about \$6 million. Assistant City Administrator Jeremy Mose said that over \$2 million of the funding comes from grants provided by the National Park Service’s Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources’ Program Open Space.

Contour expects to complete the work by Fall 2026.

Many local sports groups will benefit

The Brunswick Junior Railroaders, which runs football, lacrosse and cheerleading programs for area youth ages 4-14, is one of the major users of the Sports Complex. Brunswick



During construction, 13th Avenue will be closed, and only local traffic will be permitted. The Sports Complex itself will be closed for safety reasons, as well as the trailhead for Rivers Edge Trails next to the skate park. The trailhead off Cummings Drive across from Brunswick Middle School remains open.

Railroaders Little League, Potomac Valley Youth Association, and Rivers Edge Trails, as well as individual residents, will all benefit from the improvements. The City is considering implementing a reservation system for organizations to book certain fields, according to Mose.

Former dumping ground reclaimed

Until 1980, the land that is now the Sports Complex was used for a town dump site. A 2012 article in The Brunswick Citizen quotes a long-time Department of Public Works employee saying “The first job most of the men did was run the garbage truck back when

the City had its own dump out on 13th Avenue.” Many older residents recall it as a place where one could find discarded furniture, housewares, metals and other thrown-away but still useful items. “One man’s junk is another man’s treasure” applied here. By the late 1970s, as environmental regulations tightened, Brunswick transitioned to using the county landfill. The dump closed in 1980.

By 1987, plans were underway to turn it into athletic fields for rapidly expanding sports teams. Ground was broken in 1989, but the Sports Complex was not officially opened until Fourth of July weekend in 1995. Most of the work of building the fields was

done by community volunteers.

Tom Smith was mayor at the time, and Nelson Smith cut the ribbon for a project that he had coordinated. The Brunswick Citizen reported that Opening Day was an exciting time filled with softball games, volleyball and horseshoe tournaments, a football place-kicking contest, and fireworks at night.

Because of the land’s history as a dumping ground, construction was limited on the site and environmental testing continued for years. Even today, Mose said, “Structures built on the old landfill require additional concrete support due to the unstable nature of the ground.”

New use for old radio station

Radio station WTRI, 1520 on the AM dial, was located in a small white building on the northern side of the Sports Complex. From the 1960s through 1980s, it provided local news and country music on the airwaves over Brunswick and Loudoun County, Va. It changed ownership and format several times in later years and ceased broadcasting in 2023 when the land was purchased by the City and the radio tower dismantled. The building will be converted to a new public restroom. ■

BRUNSWICK NEWS

GBACC Gives Back



Left to right: Karen and Thomas Blank of the Jefferson Food Bank, GBACC President Abbie Ricketts, Andrea Miller of Western Loudoun Food Pantry, Dr. Wayne Allgaier of the Brunswick Food Bank, and Julie Kloetzli of the Brunswick Heritage Museum.

By ABBIE RICKETTS

The Greater Brunswick Area Chamber of Commerce (GBACC) held its annual “GBACC Gives Back” holiday celebration on December 11 at the Brunswick Heritage Museum. All three floors of the Museum were open for touring during the event and it was beautifully decorated for the holidays. Food and drink were purchased from GBACC member restaurants and stores. Those in attendance enjoyed the evening

speaking with fellow business owners and their guests. The Brunswick City Council’s liaison to GBACC, John Caves, attended along with Council Member Andy St. John, who is liaison to the museum. Monetary donations were presented to the Brunswick Food Bank, Western Loudoun Food Pantry, and Jefferson Food Bank, as well as the Brunswick Heritage Museum. GBACC extends its thanks to the museum for hosting the GBACC Gives Back gathering. ■

Distinguished Citizens for 2026

The Brunswick History Commission is seeking nominations of individuals to honor this fall at the annual Distinguished Citizens Luncheon. Every year, several individuals who have made significant contributions to Brunswick, whether living or deceased, are given special recognition by the History Commission and the Mayor. A list of past honorees can be found at: www.brunswickmdhistory.com/index.php?title=Category:Brunswick_Distinguished_Citizen. If you have someone you would like to nominate, we invite you to submit their name,



a little bit about why you feel they should be recognized, and your contact information to: historycommission@brunswickmd.gov. Honorees will be selected from the names submitted. The deadline for submission is Saturday, January 31. ■

Community Foundation Announces Career Education Scholarships

The Community Foundation of Frederick County is committed to supporting students who are seeking career education and training outside of traditional post-secondary schooling. Scholarships are available for qualifying students who apply through the Community Foundation’s online application. Thanks to generous donors who have created charitable funds, scholarship support is available for Frederick County residents to help pay for training at an accredited trade or technical program as well as certification exams, tools and other necessary supplies for study and work in the trades. The online application is open, and scholarships will be awarded until the funds are depleted or until the application closes on May 1, 2026. The application and related in-

formation can be found at ScholarshipsFrederickCounty.com. Applications will be reviewed as they are received, and students will be notified of the status of their request within 45 days of the application. Scholarships will be paid directly to a school in support of tuition payments or purchases of exams, tools, or supplies. Scholarships may not be used to reimburse the student. The Community Foundation The Community Foundation of Frederick County is a recognized leader in providing scholarships to area students, made possible by generous donors who establish funds or add to existing funds. For more information about creating or adding to an existing scholarship fund, visit FrederickCountyGives.org. ■

Happenings at the 50+ Community Centers

By JEAN DOYLE

The winter session at the 50+ Community Centers starts on January 5 and goes through March 26. Registration is open. To register and pay online, visit the eStore at <https://frederickcountymd-gov.3dcartstores.com>. Once on the website, locate 50+ Community Programs. Then click on the program you want and add it to your shopping cart. To pay by check, make checks payable to “Frederick County Treasurer.” You can drop off your check at the Brunswick Community Center, 12 East A Street. You can also mail your check and form to Frederick County Division of Aging and Independence, Attn: 50+ Programs, 1440 Taney Avenue, Frederick, MD 21702. For the free programs, register at VirtualSeniorCenter@FrederickCountyMD.gov.

Trips in January

Friday, January 23 — The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA). Self-guided tour of the exhibit Amy Sherald: American Sublime. The exhibition traces her evolution as a defining voice of her generation who transformed American portraiture. Time: 8:30 a.m. to approximately 3:30 p.m. Ticket cost: \$40 per person. Bring money for lunch (options are Gertrude’s located inside the museum, Gertrude’s To-Go Kiosk, or bring lunch to eat on the bus on the way home. Leave from the Frederick Senior Center. Register by Friday, Jan. 9. In person registration at any center, or online at the eStore.

Special Events at the Brunswick 50+ Center

Thursday, January 8 — Monthly Dinner Dance. Held at the Brunswick Eagles, hosted by the Brunswick 50+ Center. Time: 2-5 p.m., dancing at 2 p.m. and dinner at 4 p.m. Cost: \$17 per person. Paid reservation due one week in advance. Call 301-834-8115 for more information. Thursday, January 15 — Winter Cabin Fever Lunch. Menu is stuffed chicken, mashed potatoes, green bean casserole, and pie. To reserve a meal, contact the senior center at least one week in advance, 301-834-8115. Voluntary contribution (\$6) toward cost of the meal is appreciated. Tuesday, January 27 — Weis Market Nutritional Talk. Build a Better Breakfast. At Brunswick Center and Virtual, 1 p.m., Free, pre-register. Tuesday, January 27 — Start a Conversation Book Club. Held at the Brunswick Library. Book for January is The Counterfeit Countess, by Elizabeth B. White. Time: 2 p.m. Free, pre-register. Friday, January 30 — Memory Café. Social and educational gathering for anyone affected by early-stage memory loss, their friends and family. Held at the Brunswick Library. Time: 11:30-1 p.m.

Virtual Programs Highlights

Healthy Mind Series, presented by Frederick County Health Department Monday, January 12 — Depression and its effect on the brain. Learn that depression is a treatable condition at any stage of life. Discuss strategies for building resilience and managing emotional distress. Time: 11 a.m. The presenter is in-person at Frederick Center and virtual at Brunswick. Free, pre-registration preferred at VirtualSeniorCenter@FrederickCountyMD.gov. This is a three-part series, with additional sessions in February and March.

Winter Fitness Programs at Brunswick Center

Line Dancing — Mondays 10-11 a.m., Fee, pre-register. Strength and Stretch — 9-10 a.m., Tuesday and Thursday, Fee, Pre-register.

Free Exercise Programs at Brunswick Center

Pickleball, Wednesdays and Saturdays at 9 a.m., at the Brunswick Tennis and Pickleball courts, Free, Drop-in. Walking Group — Mondays at 8:30 a.m. at Othello Park. Meet near the restrooms for an easy stroll with others. Free, drop-in.

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

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Remembering Mary Elizabeth Bowie

By JOHN DONOGHUE

I first met Mary Elizabeth in the early 1990s at the Community Action Agency in Frederick. I was a part-time outreach worker and I believe Mary Elizabeth was an administrative assistant. With Mary’s pleasant disposition and easy-going nature, we quickly became friends, and she made working there fun.

Mary was one of those people who, when you get to know her, makes you feel like she has been your friend for years. She would often talk about her family which she valued greatly. After the FCAA days, we lost touch for a few years, and when we did reconnect, it was as if no time had passed.

In 2009 she was elected to the Brunswick City Council, becoming the first African American to hold a council seat in Brunswick, and she served for five years. She worked hard for all the people in Brunswick in that position and



Mary Elizabeth Bowie

in other volunteer positions. We would occasionally continue to see each other around town, but as her health declined, she became less mobile. We remained in contact over the phone and I always received a text at holidays.

Mary Elizabeth was a beautiful woman inside and out. To hear of her passing is hard to take. Rest in peace. ■

Remembering Jim Politis

By DIANE ELLIS

Jim Politis and his wife Hanna opened Beans in the Belfry, a cafe in the old German Reformed Church on West Potomac Street, in 2004, restoring the historic church and its stained glass windows. Along with their daughter, Melanie Di Pasquale, they managed the café for nearly 20 years as it became a special place for friends to meet over food, drink and music. Jim passed away on September 3, 2025.

A memory card from his family describes a life well lived: “Jim devoted his life to education, teaching public high school for 28 years, and continuing as a substitute teacher for another 27. He shaped countless lives through his love of learning and mentorship. For more than 60 years, he was a steadfast advocate for teachers and students alike.

“Beyond the classroom, Jim embraced life with a spirit of adventure. He loved to travel, ex-



Hanna and Jim Politis in 2023 in the old church that became a café.

plore the outdoors, prepare and enjoy good food and wine, and capture his experiences in photographs, which he shared freely. Jim was a lifelong supporter of YMCA Camp Letts, having been a camper, counselor, director, and later, a board member. Gifted

with words, he spun vivid tales, enlivened everyday conversation with humor, and picked up new languages with astonishing ease. Jim’s example will continue to inspire those who knew him to live fully and well.” ■

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LOCAL NEWS

Himes Country Store Will Take You Back in Time

By ABBIE RICKETTS

Pleasant Valley is a scenic area, known for its natural beauty and rural atmosphere, nestled between Elk Mountain to the west and South Mountain to the east. If traveling from Brunswick to Boonsboro, the main route through the valley is Rt. 67. Just a couple miles up Rt. 67 from Rt. 340 is Garrett's Mill Road. Turn right there, then left on Weverton Road, and just past a white house trailer on the left there is an old-time country store owned and operated by the Himes family. Gary Himes is the proprietor who started working there with his father and mother when he was growing up.

113 years in business

Himes Store has been in business for 113 years. Gary's grandparents opened the store in 1912 in the living room of their home, which was located where Rt. 67 is now -- just down the hill from the store's current location. Gary's grandmother ran the store while his grandfather worked at a job. They moved to the current building in 1930, and Gary's mother and father, Roger and Dot, eventually ran the store. Gary and his brothers were born there. His mother Dot was a long-time fixture in Pleasant Valley and managed the store long after her husband passed away.

Gary is a fixture himself in Pleasant Valley. He's sometimes jokingly referred to as the Mayor of Pleasant Valley. Everyone that

knows Gary (and that's a lot of people) is aware of his sense of humor. Signs that he hangs about store news or product information are always signed "Love, Gary." Eyes twinkling, he likes telling humorous stories and laughing with his customers.

More than a grocery store

Himes Store is much more than a grocery store. People stop in to talk with Gary and get a taste of local flavor. It's the kind of place where people like to stay awhile and chat. Washington County Commissioner Jeff Cline, who likes to visit said, "A visit with Gary Himes at Himes Country Store will take you back in time when the pace of life was less complicated. You are always greeted with a welcoming smile and a conversation of local concerns. Homemade sandwiches are something special made with South County hospitality. I often refer to Gary, respectfully, as the Mayor of South County."

His store has everything from custom cut meats and grocery items to hardware and plumbing items that help out people in an emergency. There is a deli featuring cold cuts, country ham and salads, and his sandwiches are known as some of the best around, chock full of fresh sliced lunch meat, cheese and extras if you like. Himes Store carries canned and frozen goods, bread and milk, and everything else you might expect from a small country store, including cold beer. Sportsmen can buy ammu-



Gary Himes in his country store on Weverton Road.

nition there and he can order guns. You can even buy tires and get your oil changed!

Coal was sold at Himes Store until recent years when regulations made getting it too difficult. Years ago, they sold gas but modernization would have been too costly so they discontinued selling it. Like other small stores who have withstood time, this store has been deftly aware of what its customers want and need.

The Himes Classic

Once a year, the store sponsors

a charity golf tournament known as the Himes Classic. They partner with the Sons of the American Legion in Brunswick, along with others, and proceeds are given to area veterans organizations including Wounded Warriors. Gary is also known to have helped many of his local customers over the years get through hard times. Most have appreciated his generosity and eventually paid him back.

Ten minutes away

Gary Himes is in his late sev-

enties and not ready yet for retirement. He says he likes the people and it's what he loves doing. These days his wife Sam helps him and there are high school students working there, but he's there every day the store is open which is 9:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday-Saturday. He doesn't open on Sundays. The address for Himes Country Store is 1324 Weverton Rd., Knoxville. The phone number is (301) 834-9815. It's just over the mountain ten minutes from Brunswick. ■

Steadman Keenan American Legion Post 96 Serves the Community and Supports Those Who Serve

Steadman Keenan Post 96 remains committed to uplifting the Brunswick community and honoring those who serve our nation. On November 12, the Post hosted a benefit bingo to raise funds for the Brunswick High School marching band, drawing an enthusiastic crowd of supporters. The event raised more than \$1,700 to help the band purchase much-needed equipment. Post 96 extends a special thanks to 84 Lumber for their generous donation, which helped make the fundraiser a success.

On December 2, the Ameri-

can Legion Auxiliary continued the spirit of service by preparing care packages for troops stationed overseas. Volunteers gathered to assemble boxes filled with essentials, comforts from home, and personal messages of gratitude — ensuring that service members know they are remembered during the holiday season.

Comedy Night

Comedy Night on February 28 — the Post's American Legion Riders (ALR) will host a special Comedy Night featuring three professional comedians.



The Post hosted a benefit bingo and raised \$1,700 for the Brunswick High School marching band.



Tickets can be purchased online at Eventbrite.com (scan the QR code) or in person through the ALR. Guests are encouraged to secure their tickets early for an evening of laughter and community.

Benefit Concert

Save the Date — Post 96 will host a Benefit Concert on March 28. More details will be released soon, but the evening will include performances by Hannah Ponce, The Mack Berry Band, and Jacob Tolliver, promising a night of outstanding entertain-

Left: Volunteers with the American Legion Auxiliary prepare care packages for overseas troops.



Scan for Comedy Night tickets.

ment in support of the Post's revitalization efforts. Through impactful events, charitable outreach, and exciting opportunities for fellowship, Steadman Keenan Post 96 remains dedicated to making a meaningful difference both locally and abroad. ■

Petersville Ruritans Serve the Farm Community and More

By ABBIE RICKETTS

There are four Ruritan clubs in the greater Brunswick area: Petersville, Jefferson, Burkittsville, and Point of Rocks. Ruritan National with 25,000 members is the parent organization, but local clubs develop their own programs of goodwill and service to fit the needs of their communities. Serving mostly rural areas, nearly all clubs work with FFA, 4-H and other organizations serving youth. One in three Ruritan clubs sponsors a Boy or Girl Scout unit.

Ruritan and Farmers Clubs

Petersville has both a Ruritan Club and a Farmers Club which share the Farmers Woods on Petersville Road. The Farmers Club formed first and has an interesting back story with the railroad, which helped organize farmers

for agricultural economics.

Petersville is a historic community of homes and farms just outside Brunswick. It was a growing village in the early to mid 1800s, with homes and buildings that lined Jefferson Pike and still do today. With the emergence of railroads, commerce moved to Brunswick. Petersville became a sleepy little place dominated by farming.

Beginning as a farmers' cooperative

In the early 1900s, Brunswick farmers formed a cooperative whose members met the train in Brunswick to take advantage of bulk rates on cars filled with goods such as sugar and coal. Farmers in the Brunswick cooperative and Petersville farmers transported their corn and wheat down to the railroad and up onto a tippie to load into train cars. This led to the formation of the Petersville Farmers Club in June 1920.

The Petersville club began meeting in the old St. Mark's School, then built its own quarters in 1925 after purchasing about six acres on Petersville Road. The site, known as the Mount O'Donnell woods, was once owned by General Columbus O'Donnell and, before that, by Maryland Governor Francis Thomas. The club grew and expanded its building in the 1940s. The Merryland Tract Homemakers Club formed in the 1930s as part of the Farmers Club. Farmers with well-known local names such as Zecher, Kefauver, Flook, Tucker, Shafer, Arnold, and Clag-



The 2026 Petersville Ruritan Slate of Officers/Directors (left to right): Matt Welsh, Bill Campbell, Chuck Smallwood, Donnie Blumenauer (Treasurer), Nancy Blumenauer (Secretary), Sunora Knill Wilbar (President). The presenter is Ruritan Zone Leader Wayne Harris. Absent is Bobby Backover (Vice President).

ett were part of the club.

The Petersville Ruritan formed in 1961 and, while most are members of both organizations and work together on projects, the Farmers Club remains a separate organization. They began butchering together in 1961. Hogs are no longer butchered on the property; a butcher shop does it for them. Pork products are wrapped and sold to the public at the Farmers Woods twice a year. Several local organizations purchase sausage from them for their own fundraising breakfasts.

Serving the community

John Wenner, a member of both clubs since the early 1960s, remembers when he was just seven or eight years old going to the Farmers Woods for large picnics, oyster suppers, and live entertainment. At one time there was a bandstand. Entertainers such as Hank Snow and Minnie Pearl put on shows. A large pavilion and commercial kitchen were built

in later years to host picnics and other functions.

Wenner said members of the Farmer's Club started hosting jousting tournaments in 1921. Farmer Bert Enfield, who once owned one of the farms that became Brunswick Crossing, was one of the founders of jousting events at the Farmers Woods. Generations of his family have long been jousting champions. Maryland State Jousting Tournament Association matches are still held there every year.

Fundraisers

The Petersville Ruritan holds nine to ten fundraisers a year and sponsors several yearly scholarships for local high school graduates. The club also donates to the Brunswick Senior Citizens, the Food Bank, and Brunswick High School Future Farmers of America.

The club is famous for its Friday night auctions, starting with

auctioneer John Rickard (now retired) and conducted for the last few years by Andrew Jahn Auctions. Concessions are by the Petersville Ruritan Club.

The club holds twice a year sausage and pork chop sales, popular seafood boils twice a year, country breakfasts four times a year, and an annual Christmas cookie bake for veterans. A large car show is held at the Woods every year.

Classes

President Sunora Wilbar hopes to offer canning, sewing, and jelly making classes, paint nights, and other activities for the community. Learn more at petersvilleruritan.org.

The Petersville Ruritan and Farmers Club welcome new members. The Farmers Club is led by Chris Thomas with Tom Arnold as VP, Danny Wenner as secretary, and John Wenner and Amy Dinges together in the treasurer's position. ■



Sign on Petersville Road

Jefferson Ruritans Select Couple of the Year



Left to right: Kevin and Jackie Grantham and Ruritan Club President James Morgan.

The Jefferson Ruritan Club was pleased to present the annual Couple of the Year Award to Kevin and Jackie Grantham at the Club's 70th Anniversary Banquet in October at Dutch's Daughter Restaurant.

The Granthams were an integral part of the success of Jefferson's 250th Anniversary Celebration. They have also been actively involved with the Car-

nival each summer, cooking and serving food at numerous breakfasts and banquets, and working on other committees. Currently, Kevin serves as Vice President and Jackie serves as the Recording Secretary. Congratulations, Kevin and Jackie!

For more information about the Jefferson Ruritan Club, visit their website, www.jeffersonruritan.org. ■

Larry Putman Honored by Jefferson Ruritan

The Jefferson Ruritan Club presented a Tom Downing Fellow Award, the most prestigious award given to a Ruritan member by Ruritan National, to long-time member Larry Putman in November.

Larry served as President, Vice President, and Treasurer, in addition to serving in many other capacities. The Ruritans thanked him for his honorable service throughout the years.

For more information about the club, visit their Facebook page, The Jefferson Ruritan, or their website at: www.jeffersonruritan.org. ■



Larry Putman (left) was honored by the Jefferson Ruritan Club and given a plaque and pin by President Jim Morgan.

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OPINION

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Yes, there is something different about the BNJ

The page is a little smaller: 10½" X 16" instead of 11½ X 17. The color is a bit brighter and the pictures and other bits are not as blurred as before. It also costs a little less and is printed closer to home.

The content will remain the same: local, local, local: Brunswick, Lovettsville, Jefferson, Rosemont, Burkittsville and parts of Knoxville.

Our newspaper is now being printed by the Frederick News-Post. The lower cost means that we can continue our higher circulation without having to increase advertising rates.

What do you think of the new look? Please write and let us know. In February, we will offer an online survey of readers and advertisers as we continue to seek your ideas, critiques and suggestions. ■



The Brunswick News-Journal's designer, Patrice Gallagher, examining the press at the Frederick News-Post where the BNJ is now printed.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Keep Our Current Flag

I have watched with interest the recent saga of designing a new City flag. Suggestions were solicited from the public, and ten designs were submitted, following which a professional artist was asked for input. While I appreciate those who have taken the time to share their ideas, I struggle to find a strong affinity for any one of these designs as a representation of Brunswick.

By contrast, our current flag, which displays our city logo on a white background, is bright, colorful, and incorporates a lot of what Brunswick is and has been – railroad, river, mountains, and the sun rising at “the Peep o’ Day.”

We want a flag that we are proud of, and I will support whatever the majority feels is best. I would simply ask that when this is put to a vote, the current flag be listed as an option.

— Wayne Allgaier
Brunswick

How to send a Letter to the Editor

Letters intended for publication should be emailed to 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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Heather Jones, CRNP

FREDERICK COUNTY NEWS

FROM THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Happy New Year! As we begin 2026, I first want to express my gratitude for the opportunity to serve Frederick County. The new year is a time for renewal and recommitment to the shared values that make our community a place where everyone can live, work and thrive while enjoying a strong sense of place and belonging.

In Frederick County, we create partnerships and engage our community to find thoughtful solutions. Every decision we make should start with input from the people who live here. You have a voice in shaping decisions that impact your community, and I encourage you to get involved throughout the year.

Sign up to receive news alerts about ways you can participate at www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/Subscribe.

Budget Town Hall Meetings

This month, you're invited to share your priorities for the Fiscal Year 2027 budget at a series of upcoming town hall meetings. I will hold one town hall meeting in each of the five County Council Districts in the coming weeks. The schedule is as follows:

- Saturday, January 10 at 1 p.m. — Libertytown Fire Station Social Hall
- Monday, January 12 at 7 p.m. — Whittier Elementary
- Wednesday, January 21 at 7 p.m. — Brunswick Elementary
- Monday, January 26 at 7 p.m. — Governor Thomas Johnson Middle School
- Thursday, January 29 at 7 p.m. — Deer Crossing Elementary

All meetings are open to the public. Feel free to attend whichever meeting is most convenient. You are not limited to the meeting in your home district.

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

To learn more about the upcoming meetings or to submit comments online, visit www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/BudgetFY27.

Keeping Transit Services Fare-Free

Last month, I joined County Council Vice President Kavonté Duckett, County Council Member Renee Knapp, and then-City of Frederick Council Member Kelly Russell to announce new legislation to ensure local Transit remains fare-free.



County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

Transit services are crucial to connect our community. They provide access to employment, education, healthcare and essential services. Frederick County's fare-free service has made Transit more accessible for our riders during a time when many families have been tightening belts and pinching pennies. Ridership soared after fares were eliminated.

The County originally used funding from the CARES Act, passed by Congress in March 2020, to go fare-free. That funding expires in June 2026.

The new proposal would invest a portion of recordation tax revenue directly into Transit so the services remain fare-free for riders in our community. Recordation tax is collected on every real estate transaction in the County.

The proposed bill will be presented to the County Council at the January 13 meeting. Council Vice President Duckett and Council Member Knapp are sponsoring the legislation. To learn more, visit www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/Council and look for the January 13 meeting agenda.

Community Partnership Grant Program

Eligible nonprofit organizations are invited to apply for Frederick County's Fiscal Year 2027 Community Partnership Grant Program by January 20 at 4 p.m. This program awards competitive grants to nonprofit 501(c)(3) community organizations that provide and deliver services to people in Frederick County.

The FY27 grant program will accept applications that target the following priority areas:

- Addressing Homelessness and Housing Solutions.
- Quality of Life Initiatives.
- Public Health.

- Supporting the Arts.

Frederick County is honored to work with local nonprofits to enhance services and improve access to resources. By fostering partnerships that are inclusive, collaborative and innovative, we are continuing to build a stronger, more vibrant community.

To learn more and apply, visit FrederickCountyMD.gov/CPG.

Data Center Updates

Frederick County has long considered the impact of data centers in our community. Through an inclusive workgroup and in partnership with the Council, we've made data centers the most regulated industry in the county.

The current proposal regarding data centers avoids the sprawl we've seen in Northern Virginia by concentrating development to an area where infrastructure exists and limits development to no more than one percent of the county's landmass.

As we continue to navigate the opportunities and challenges the data center industry brings, we also listen closely to our residents' concerns. In the coming weeks, we will hold community benefit listening sessions on data centers to gather more ideas and feedback directly from community members.

These community benefit listening sessions will take place on:

- Wednesday, January 28 at 6 p.m. at Winchester Hall in Frederick
- Wednesday, February 4 at 6 p.m. in Adamstown

I encourage everyone to attend one of the upcoming meetings to learn more and provide input. For the latest updates on data centers and upcoming meetings, please visit www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/DataCenters. ■

Join County Executive Fitzwater at the Fiscal Year 2027 budget town hall meeting in Brunswick to share your budget priorities.

**Wednesday
January 21 at 7 p.m.
Brunswick Elementary
400 Central Ave,
Brunswick 21716**

FROM CONGRESSWOMAN APRIL MCCLAIN DELANEY



Congresswoman
April McClain Delaney

Happy New Year, Brunswick! It's hard to believe the holidays have come and gone. I celebrated this season with my husband John, our four daughters (and their families), and our first grandchild, Baby Charlie. It is for the future of our children and grandchildren that I publicly serve and which gives me strength each day.

This season always reminds me how much to be grateful for, especially the strength, generosity and resilience of our local communities. During the recent 43-day government shutdown, the people of Frederick County stepped up in extraordinary ways to support public servants, active-duty service members, veterans and neighbors. We witnessed the very best of our community, from local food banks launching special programs for federal workers to financial institutions helping families navigate difficult circumstances. Your compassion made a real difference for those facing uncertainty.

But our work isn't finished.

Affordable Care Act (ACA) tax credits were not extended by the recently passed continuing resolution in Congress, which expires January 31. As a result, more than 24 million Americans are projected to see their health insurance premiums more than double in 2026—increases that far too many of our families simply cannot absorb. I will continue fighting to protect access to affordable care, particularly for our rural hospitals, clinics and treatment centers, which already operate on razor-thin margins. I'm urging lawmakers on both sides of the aisle to support measures that prevent these steep price hikes and ensure families can continue receiving needed care.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) continues to deny federal emergency relief for the historic floods in Western Maryland this past May, and I am pushing back. Neighboring West Virginia received their FEMA relief assistance, but our state did not. I will not give up, as emergency assistance is paid for with all our tax dollars and should be distributed based on qualifying need, irrespective of zip codes, circumstances, or politics.

Food Banks are another essential safety net, and I'm bringing the same commitment. When SNAP benefits were paused in November, one in nine families

(half of them children) in our district were at risk of going hungry. While volunteering locally, I saw firsthand how tirelessly our food pantries worked to stretch limited resources. With supplemental funding, these organizations can better mobilize during emergencies—because hunger doesn't wait for Congress to act.

New Legislation — I have introduced several pieces of legislation this quarter to assist rural and farming communities, for child and consumer protections related to AI algorithms, and to push back against cuts to our Maryland research and government agencies. I also introduced legislation to overturn the attempted illegal naming of the Kennedy Center and prevent similar public memorials and institutions from being named after sitting Presidents. I believe that our national treasures, memorials, public golf courses or other assets should not be "branded" by President Trump or any senior elected official for self-promotion or enrichment. It's past time Congress drew a firm line to prevent this.

My office is here to help all my constituents throughout the year. I was recently at Frostburg State University with multiple public, private and philanthropic stakeholders about how to best meet the needs at this pivotal moment. What struck me was the heart and commitment of people throughout Western Maryland in helping one another and working collaboratively to leverage resources.

I remain deeply grateful for the partnership, compassion and determination of all the communities across the 6th Congressional District. Thank you, Brunswick, for everything you do to lift one another up. I wish you and your families a joyful, peaceful and safe new year. ■

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LOCAL NEWS

State Legislative News

By MARK ROHNER

Frederick County lawmaker’s legislation calling for a study on the impact of data centers won approval in a special session of the Maryland General Assembly Dec. 16.

Lawmakers voted to override Governor Wes Moore’s veto of the measure, which was sponsored by Frederick County Sen. Karen Lewis Young, a Democrat. The override passed the House 111-24 and the Senate 44-0.

The legislation directs the University of Maryland School of Business, the Maryland Department of the Environment and the Maryland Energy Administration to assess the environmental, energy, and economic aspects of data center development in Maryland. Frederick County is the site of the 2,100-acre Quantum Frederick project, a data center campus near Adamstown.

Sen. William Folden, a Frederick County Republican who supported the override, said he was concerned about the Quantum Frederick project’s impact on homes and an elementary school nearby.

For the 2026 session of the General Assembly, which begins Jan. 14, Frederick County officials are asking lawmakers in Annapolis to give counties new authority to tax commercial property, including data centers.

Legislative priorities for Frederick County

County officials outlined their priorities for the upcoming session of the General Assembly at a hearing with Frederick County’s legislators Dec. 6.

Taxing commercial property — County Executive Jessica Fitzwater asked lawmakers to pass legislation allowing county governments to tax different classes of commercial property at different rates. Maryland municipalities currently have this authority, but counties don’t.

“We need to find creative solutions addressing our needs while not continuing to put the burden on residential properties,” Fitzwater told lawmakers. “We will need to find a funding mechanism that does not raise residential property taxes but instead taxes commercial entities that can pay higher rates.”

“If this bill passed, we would use it as an opportunity with the County Council to evaluate commercial subclasses and determine if any entities are not paying their fair share in comparison to residential rates,” she said. “This would



provide us with the potential funding solutions for our school construction.”

Separately, the County Council is seeking legislation that would allow the county to tax the personal property of data centers, which the Council estimates could generate between \$69 million and \$74 million annually.

District 2 Councilman Steve McKay, calling Frederick County “ground zero” for data center development, said the proposed tax would bring Maryland new revenues of the kind now collected by northern Virginia without putting Maryland at a competitive disadvantage.

In northern Virginia, “the lion’s share of their revenue comes from the business personal property tax that they levy” on data centers.

Whereas Virginia taxes data center personal property at a rate of more than \$4 per \$100 valuation, “we would be taxing at \$2.70,” McCay said.

Kelly Schulz, CEO of the Maryland Tech Council, said it’s “not completely accurate” to argue that Maryland wouldn’t pay a price for enacting the new data center tax.

“Just because the personal property tax in the state of Maryland or Frederick County could be less than other jurisdictions does not mean that we would be a cheaper place to be,” Schulz said. “Maryland is not cheaper to do business than other states that are surrounding Maryland.”

More housing that is affordable — Outlining other legislative priorities, Fitzwater said the county wants to see legislation passed to foster development of more affordable housing for working families and seniors.

“Truly this is the issue we probably care about the most for our community,” she said.

“Our essential work force such as teachers, nurses, first responders are unable to secure housing in the county,” she said. “And our senior population is unable to keep up with the rising cost of inflation, especially those that are on a limited income.”

Fitzwater didn’t discuss specific legislation to address housing

Changes to Animal Control & Licensing

By JEAN TOLEMAN

It used to be, at the end of the year, a news story would feature a list of the most popular baby names. Now that list is not for human babies but for our pet babies. According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, the U.S. dog population increased by 36.8 million between 1996 and 2024, and we now have about 90 million dogs. The total U.S. cat population is somewhat less at 60 million.

This increase in furry friends living in households has led to efforts to minimize the risk of injury due to accidents that harm both people and pets. Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater has proposed prevention strategies that involve updates to the Animal Control Definitions and Licensing in the County Code. The recommendations came from Frederick County Animal Control and were discussed at the Nov. 25 meeting of the County Council. They include:

- Revising the definition of “Dangerous dog” and “Potentially dangerous dog” to better align with the Dunbar Dog Bite Scale (a broadly accepted standard).
- Clarify leash requirements by updating the “At Large” definition.
- Update the “Proper Enclosure” definition.
- Update the requirement for owners of dangerous dogs or potentially dangerous dogs to notify the director of a change of address.

The bill also establishes a new license fee schedule, including

needs but said several measures are being drafted.

Education funding — She also asked for legislation to create a task force to study new formulas for allocating state education funds. The current formula, she said, doesn’t take enrollment growth into account, putting fast-growing counties like Frederick at a disadvantage.

“It has left our county with hundreds and hundreds of unfunded seats and has required the county to cover both the local and state share of education funding,” Fitzwater said.

The state education plan, the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future, “has a multitude of requirements that counties are unable to fund, and are not fully funded at the state level,” the county executive said. “And that really exacerbates the county’s funding struggles.” ■



a lifetime dog or cat license for altered (spayed or neutered) animals. This is to encourage pet owners to alter their pets and maintain vaccinations. The fee options are:

- Annual license for unaltered dog or cat: \$20 (up \$5)
- Annual license for altered dog or cat: \$5
- Lifetime dog or cat licenses (must be altered and maintain up-to-date rabies vaccination): \$25
- Multiple domestic animal licenses (must be altered): \$30
- County Residents over 65 years of age — Annual license for unaltered dog or cat: \$10
- County Residents over 65 years of age — Annual license for altered

dog or cat: \$3 (down from \$7)

To obtain a lifetime dog or cat license, one must provide proof the animal has been altered, a current rabies certificate, and the animal’s microchip number.

A 2023 Pew Research poll showed that 97% of pet owners consider their pets part of the family, with 51% saying they are on the same level as a human family member. Considering this, updating the county’s policy for animal care is timely. Encouraging the altering of pets helps prevent undesired offspring and helps maintain healthy animals.

And those most popular pet names for the year? They are Bella, Remi, Lola and Milo for dogs. For cats, they are Luna, Olive, Gus, Loki, Stormi, according to rover.com. ■

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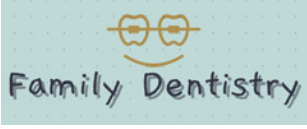
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The Dirty Secrets of Composting

BY MARIANNE WILLBURN

It's fantastic to see that the word "compost" is no longer a dirty one in modern American culture. There are a few hold-outs here and there, but I have noticed that guests no longer look quizzically at the buckets on the edge of my sink, and instead ask me where I got them.

I have two buckets. One that accepts everything from meat to oatmeal, and which gets thrown to the chickens; and another that takes coffee filters, tea bags, paper towels, banana and orange peels and which is thrown onto the compost pile.

The manure that the chickens create from the scraps is also dumped onto the main pile; so, directly or indirectly, the only kitchen material that doesn't get composted around here is chicken itself. And that's only because I'm uncomfortable with it — the chickens couldn't care less.

In years when the raccoons that circle the coop at two in the morning finally find a way in, and we lose our compost-making machines for a season, I find myself distinctly put out to have to dig the contents of those buckets into a pile — the way I did when chickens were 'illegal' in my town, (but barking dogs weren't).

During that time (we're in one now) the bucket makeup changes to a cleaner mix of veg peelings and scraps, lest we encourage generations of rats to make their home with us.

You've Got to Be Flexible When You Compost

No matter how gung-ho you



are in the quest to compost everything from paper towels to dryer lint, there are moments in the composters' life when things don't tick along like clockwork. These are problems you might not have read about when you originally began to treat household waste like gold dust, and followed the online 'recipes' for the perfect pile.

The people you live with aren't as excited as you are. It is hard for a rabid composter like me to watch someone flagrantly throw a banana peel in the trash — as if this act negates all my work for the previous 20 years. Of course this is a ridiculous reaction. Composting is not a zero-sum game.

Anything that gets put in the compost pile is one less thing in the landfill. When my children were small and I caught them being thoughtless, I had the ability to make them fish it out of the trash and put it in the bucket, which is a terrific way to ensure that they don't do it again (or at least don't get caught doing it again).

The learning curve proved to be a little steeper with my husband; but picked up sharply when we moved to a property where trash wasn't collected weekly, and he had to visit the municipal dump every four weeks. Smelly trash cans packed with organic waste are not fun after four weeks.

The bucket fills up too fast and needs to be dumped continually. There are a couple solutions here. Either get a bigger bucket (made-for-the-purpose buckets are almost always woefully undersized); and/or consider having an 'interim bin' right outside the back door for daily dumping which is then dumped once a week into the main bin. This is particularly helpful when there is snow on the ground and your daughter stole your boots again.

The bucket attracts fruit flies in the summer. This is one of the toughest challenges for composters, but for most of the season, it is admirably solved

with a fruit fly trap or old vinegar bottle with pour spout filled with red wine sitting nearby. In deepest August, the every other day dump schedule I use here turns into 'every day'.

Compostables "accidentally" slip down the disposal. Save your septic tank or waste treatment facility with a Dollar Store recessed sink strainer. Organic bits can then be dumped straight into the compost bucket, conveniently located next to the sink. If you don't have chickens and are trying to be careful with meat scraps, a few tiny remnants will not hurt your pile. You may have a garbage disposal, but it doesn't mean you have to use it.

The bucket smells. Assuming that you have a lid for your bucket, every time you dump it (which should be at least every two days), wash it out with soapy water. If you do this, you will not notice a smell. Fail to rinse and you'll knock yourself flat when you next open it.

Being Green Means Living Green

When it comes to green initiatives, walking the walk is always more effort than sharing the meme. And it feels better. Whatever you manage to compost is one less thing processed by landfills or waste-water

treatment plants, and eventually one more bit of organically rich soil for your garden or that of your neighbors.

Composting makes sense on many levels, and although it requires effort, it's a shame to see people stop because of a few solvable obstacles or a small lifestyle change.

And, if your neighborhood still insists on restricting composting, it might be time to hop on the zeitgeist and use national awareness to marshal a group of supporters, stand in front of your HOA board and change their minds through the miraculous power of shame. ■

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

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2 Corinthians 5:17-18

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IN THE KITCHEN

National Spaghetti Day is January 4

By ABBIE RICKETTS

Who doesn't like spaghetti? From toddlers smearing orangy-red sauce all over their happy faces while eating little plates of spaghetti to adults twirling the long cylindrical shaped noodles around a fork, spaghetti is one of the most popular dishes in America today, so popular that it has its own day of celebration on January 4th this year called National Spaghetti Day.

According to the research company American Biotech, "almost six in every ten U.S. adults eat a noodle or pasta dish at least once a week. Among these pasta lovers, over two-thirds prefer spaghetti."

Besides its widespread popularity, spaghetti is certainly one of the most versatile dishes to be found. From its inclusion in various varieties on high-end restaurant menus, to being prepared as an economical meal at home, spaghetti cuts a path across a wide range of social and economic levels. From old-world sauce recipes to spaghetti sauce in a jar to homemade pasta or dry pasta, spaghetti is a very affordable choice for a hearty meal whether preparing at home or even dining in a restaurant.

Spaghetti origins

Spaghetti found its way across the Atlantic Ocean from southern Italy to America during a large wave of Italian immigration between 1880 and 1930. U.S. soldiers returning home from Europe following the World Wars had experienced the taste of Italian meals while serving there. A dish mostly saved for special occasions in Italy, spaghetti became an everyday staple on America's dinner tables and was eventually commercialized by American companies.

In the 1920's, Chef Boyardee (Ettore Boiardi) started selling his



NEREE MIRANDILLA / UNSPLASH

A dish mostly saved for special occasions in Italy, spaghetti became an everyday staple on America's dinner tables.

restaurant's popular spaghetti sauce in jars in Cleveland, Ohio. In 1937, the Cantisano family in Rochester, N.Y., began making sauce in their basement and selling it, establishing Ragu as a well-known American brand. Italian American pasta and spaghetti rose in popularity worldwide in the early and mid twentieth century.

The story of how spaghetti developed into an Italian-American dish has other interesting facets.

Tomatoes didn't become a staple in Italian cooking until the late nineteenth century. In a 1955 New York Times article about spaghetti sauce by June Owens, she noted "Columbus may have introduced Italians to tomatoes, which once grew only in this hemisphere."

"Spaghetti Italiane" was the usual dish restaurants in Italy began serving in the late nineteenth century, which consisted of spaghetti noodles and mild tomato sauce that was flavored with spices such as cloves, bay leaves and garlic. Not until the twentieth century were basil and oregano added to spaghetti.

Although the sauces enjoyed today have a nineteenth century origin in Italy, it's the pasta itself that has a much deeper history. According to Food Inspiration magazine, a popular theory claims that

pasta was invented in China and Marco Polo brought it to Venice, but it is more likely that pasta was originally created in Sicily more than 500 years before his time. Arabs occupied Sicily in the seventh century A.D. and brought a meal called itriyya, which was described as "dry pasta." This is likely where spaghetti, meaning "little strings" came from, an Arabic origin.

By the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, pasta was a common meal throughout Sicily and Italy due to the "Age of Sail," a sixteenth to mid nineteenth century period in European history where sailing ships dominated in global trade. Pasta was dry and could be transported and stored for long periods. Spaghetti factories established in the nineteenth century further increased its popularity in Italy.

Common spaghetti dishes

- **Carbonara:** popular in Italy; sauce is made of fresh egg yolks, crisp cured pork such as bacon or pancetta, grated cheese and black pepper.
- **Spaghetti aglio e olio:** spaghetti with garlic in oil.
- **Spaghetti alle vongole:** Italian for "spaghetti with clams."



An AI generated image that the writer created for National Spaghetti Day.

- **Spaghetti with meatballs:** Italian-American dish with spaghetti, tomato sauce and meatballs.
- **Spaghetti bolognese:** spaghetti with tomato sauce and minced beef.

In Brunswick, King's Pizza and Italian Restaurant has an extensive list of authentic spaghetti dishes made with old-world recipes passed on from the Scotto family. Among others in Brunswick who serve spaghetti on their regular menus, Potomac Street Grill has several choices of spaghetti. There is no shortage of non-Italian restaurants that include spaghetti on their menus.

Whether dining at home or out, Happy National Spaghetti Day! ■



ABBIE RICKETTS

King's Pizza in Brunswick offers authentic spaghetti dishes.

IN SEASON: CITRUS



STEPHANIE SARLOS / UNSPLASH

By CHRISTINA FRITZ

This winter, embrace the seasonal flavors of citrus. Citrus fruits not only bring a refreshing pop of color and revitalizing taste but also nutritional benefits to this dreary season.

Citrus fruits are often associated with vitamin C, but that is just the tip of the iceberg. They also contain folate, potassium, and vitamin A which help with blood cell production and may help regulate blood pressure. Citrus fruits may play a role in supporting immune health, aiding in digestion, and reducing cholesterol

with its high fiber content.

Navel Oranges: A staple in many households, navel oranges are juicy and sweet. Since they peel easily and do not contain seeds, they are perfect for snacking or enjoying with a meal.

Blood Oranges: Quickly identifiable by its deep red flesh, blood oranges are tart and tangy with hints of berry. This variety of orange is a fun way to nutritiously add color and flavor to salads, bruschetta, mocktails, and more.

Cara Cara Oranges: Seedless and sweeter than their navel cousin, Cara Cara oranges contain 100%

of the daily recommended intake of vitamin C. Cara Caras have a pink colored flesh due to lycopene, an antioxidant associated with heart and skin health benefits.

Mandarins: Generally smaller and sweeter than oranges, mandarins have thinner skin that is easier to peel. Canned mandarins can be a tasty snack or fun addition to a fruit salad. Clementines and tangerines are types of mandarins that are convenient additions to any lunch box.

Grapefruits: A cross between an orange and pummelo, grapefruits are more bitter than sweet. Red and pink grapefruit varieties get their color from lycopene. Scoop out the flesh with a spoon, dice up into a salsa, or use as a topping for fish or poultry. Grapefruit and grapefruit juice may interact with certain medications.

Pummelos: Largest of the citrus fruits, they may also be spelled pomelo. Their dark green peel fades to yellow throughout the growing season. This fruit is described as having tropical, tangy, sweet flavors with lower acidity. Just ¼ of a pummelo contains 4

grams of fiber, making it an excellent source.

Lemons: Available year-round, lemons are a great substitute for salt — adding flavor without the sodium. Lemons can fit into almost any recipe from squeezing onto fish, zesting into a lemon bar dessert, or garnishing a mocktail. Meyer lemons, a variety of lemon, are slightly sweeter and less acidic.

From appetizer to dessert and everything in between, citrus fruits can brighten up any dish.

Try a new variety of citrus this winter to keep snack time interesting. Store citrus fruits in the refrigerator to extend shelf life. Left over peels? Simmer them in a pot of water to release fresh scents throughout the kitchen or toss the peels into the garbage disposal for a quick cleaning with a pleasant citrus scent.

Visit weismarkets.com/recipes for some citrus-inspired recipes.■

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



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DAY TRIPS FROM BRUNSWICK

The Museums of Boonsboro

By JOHN CAVES

What town near Brunswick has four museums? If someone asked that out of the blue, your response might be, “Uh...DC?” But if you are a frequent and keen-eyed visitor of the Brunswick area’s neighboring communities, you just might have another answer: Boonsboro.

Boonsboro is a 20-minute drive from Brunswick and has about half of Brunswick’s population, but it has four museums run by three separate organizations: the National Road Museum and the Trolley Station Museum run by the National Road Heritage Foundation, the Boonsborough Museum of History, and the Bowman House run by the Boonsboro Historical Society. Visiting them makes for a fascinating indoor day trip, or a few trips if you take time to thoroughly examine their diverse exhibits.

National Road Museum

The National Road Museum tells the story of the old Route 40, a road almost as old as the nation. The road was a federal initiative begun by Thomas Jefferson in 1806, and it eventually connected



National Road Museum director Reuben Moss poses in front of a photo of the Sideling Hill Cut.

Baltimore to St. Louis, much like the B&O Railroad.

The start and end points of the route aren’t the only thing that will be familiar to some Brunswick residents: The museum’s director, Reuben Moss, grew up on 3rd Avenue in Brunswick and

learned the ropes of museum curation as a volunteer at the Brunswick Heritage Museum. He and the other volunteers can expertly walk you through the National Road Museum’s exhibits, which tell you how the road was built, who and what rode on it, and how it changed over two centuries.

Trolley Station Museum

The Trolley Station Museum is next door. In the early 1900s, Frederick, Hagerstown and several communities in between were connected by an extensive trolley system. Brunswick almost became part of it, too, but the B&O Railroad, which considered the trolley a potential competitor, vetoed connecting Brunswick to the line at Jefferson. Such was the railroad’s influence at the time.

The museum preserves the look of the station a century ago and has a neat collection of trolley artifacts as well as a wealth of information, including recordings of interviews with passengers on the last trolley trip in 1954. The National Road and Trolley Station Museums have no entry fee, but the foundation asks that you consider donating \$6 per adult and \$3 per child age 6-18, as they have plans to add exhibits in the coming years.

Boonsborough Museum of History

The Boonsborough Museum of History has a collection of artifacts from far beyond Boonsboro—such an extensive one, in fact, that it has been called “a miniature Smithsonian.” The museum houses the collection of the late Douglas Bast, a Boonsboro native who spent his life collecting curiosities across America and as far afield as China. Inside are Civil War sabers, John Brown’s pikes, WWII memorabilia, Eastern European religious icons, and an impressive array of cannon, as well as much else.

Admission is \$5 per person, but the museum would appreciate any additional donation you could make. Donations go toward what museum president Chuck Schwalbe says are his top priorities: moving the exhibits to a larger building next door and making the information contained in a

vast trove of paper records dating back to the Revolutionary War available to the public for ancestral and historical research.

Bowman House

The Bowman House is a two-story log home dating to the early 1800s. John Bowman operated a pottery business following the Civil War. The Boonsboro

Historical Society maintains the building as it would have looked in that period, and word on the street is that they occasionally do hearth cooking demonstrations there.

Getting to Boonsboro: From Brunswick, go west on U.S. Route 340 and take the exit for Route 67. Drive 11 scenic miles up Route 67 and hang a left at the traffic circle to find yourself on Boonsboro’s main drag (Alt. Route 40). Park on the street or turn left just before the gas station to park at Shafer Park, which is conveniently located near all four museums.

Scheduling your visit is trickier, especially in winter. The National Road Museum and Trolley Station Museum are open Saturdays from 11a.m.-3 p.m. The Boonsborough Museum of History has regular hours from May through December (1-4 p.m. Saturday-Sunday on the second and fourth full weekends of each month), but in the winter you need to make an advance appointment by phone, 240-816-0488, or email, boonsboroughmoh@gmail.com. The Bowman House has regular hours from 2-4:30 p.m. the fourth Sunday of each month, but only April-October. In winter, make an appointment by emailing info@boonsborohistoricalociety.org.

After your museum visits, stretch your legs at Shafer Park. It has a playground, a paved path, a dog park, and a disc golf course. Boonsboro has a coffee shop and several local food options, so no need to pack a lunch. ■



The Bowman House, one of Boonsboro’s oldest residences, is maintained by the Boonsboro Historical Society.



The anteroom in the Trolley Museum, designed to look like Boonsboro’s trolley station did in the early 1900s.



The Civil War room in the Boonsboro Museum of History.

OFF THE SHELF

After That, the Dark (2025)

By Andrew Klavan

Reviewed by LAURA DVORAK

This mystery novel is fifth in the Cameron Winter series. Without experiencing the prior four novels in the series, this story seems sufficient unto itself. Winter is a government assassin—was, that is—and still, if called upon. “He knew there were some men so low that only death could improve their personalities.” Still, cold-blooded killing was not behavior people expected from him.

Winter’s day job is professor of English Romantic poetry, and he opines to his new love interest, Gwendolyn Lord, “Every now and then, someone sees the beauty in something and has the ability to write it down...there’s a truth in that that’s real somehow, that you can depend on....(poetry) tries to use words to unite the material world with greater meanings.”

The truth he searches for while on summer break from teaching and book writing involves not poetry, but enigmatic deaths, conspiracy, a locked room mystery and a cold case murder. The territory ranges from D.C. to Tulsa to Connecticut. There are a few docile-seeming men who are turning very bad. The novel is a study in behavior modification. There is couch talk (therapy), pillow talk, a priest not allowed to talk, a Thaumatrix helmet that enables talk and significant crosstalk. Sometimes it’s tough getting to the truth through all the noise. ■



TRAVEL, ARTS, CULTURE

For the Love of Lute
Grant Gustafson enlivens Lovettsville Library

By LAURA DVORAK

Grant Gustafson gently plucks “Greensleeves” on his Renaissance lute at the Lovettsville Library. A patron walks by and whispers, “Is that a lyre? I get them confused.” It is an understandable misidentification. Gustafson estimates there are a mere two dozen lutenists in the entire DMV, in contrast with the 1600s, when the lute was a household’s most important instrument. Even Henry VIII took lute lessons.

For this solo appearance, Gustafson also has on hand his Baroque lute. The Renaissance lute, with its 8 courses of doubled strings, was popular from the 1500s through the mid-1600s. “Then they kept adding strings,” he said. The Baroque lute, popular from 1650 through 1750, typically holds 11 courses of strings. “It got more challenging to tune all those strings.” Musicians began setting their lutes aside, focusing more on the less-demanding harpsichord. “By the 1760s the lute was gone— at least until the revival of old music in the 1900s.”



At Lovettsville Library, Grant Gustafson plays his Renaissance lute.

But first, the guitar

By age 12, Gustafson became passionate about playing guitar. He and his brother decided to split the cost of an instrument, \$26, financed by a paper route. The music of the 60s was so exciting — The Beatles, Bob Dylan. By the 70s, Jimi Hendrix and Andrés Segovia were tied for best guitarists. “All my friends picked Hendrix. I chose Segovia.”

He studied classical guitar at Johannes Brahms Conservatory in Germany, remaining in the country for 20 years. Then, his return to the U.S. and subsequent day job set his music-making to the background for several years.

And next, the lute

It was not a giant step from acoustic guitar to lute. The techniques — arpeggiated chords,

strums, tremolo, rapid scales—as well as published scores using tab, are similar to guitar music. But the lute is less mainstream—which provides a patina of mystique and more than a possibility of challenge.

Gustafson found a luthier in Duluth, Minnesota, Gamut Music’s Dan Larson (fact: Duluth is French for “of the lute”). Larson crafted Renaissance and Baroque lutes for Gustafson over hundreds of hours. Each string (cattle intestine) takes eight weeks to process (his two instruments combined have 37 strings). “These strings have a rich, resonant sound nylon doesn’t. These (gut strings) have lasted three years with constant play. Nylon guitar strings need replacing all the time.” The lute’s intricate bowl-shaped back involves numerous curved ribs of wood (maple) and the flat front

(spruce) reveals the intricate and painstaking hand-carved rosette. Other elements to be handcrafted are the fretboard, tuning pegs, bridge and more.

And now: music, maestro

There was a world — or at least a continent — in the music lutenists played. “There wasn’t radio; still, music converged from countries including Germany, Norway, Sweden, Spain, Austria, Italy, France, Scotland—Robert Burns wrote poems to many of those Scottish tunes already known for years.” Gustafson strums the beautiful and famous ballad, “Helen of Kirkconnel,” a folksong of love, death and revenge: *I wish I were where Helen lies*. “There were dances from all over Europe. Lutenists put these together with the same tonality, creating art music. A contempo-

BNJ TRAVELS
Venice



Karen Russell and Scott Norris in Venice

rary of Bach—Silvius Leopold Weiss—wrote many suites, often with 4–8 movements, each lasting 15–20 minutes.” That’s a lot of dancing.

Gustafson segues into the tune, Kemp’s Jig. As the story goes, Will Kempe was an original Shakespeare company comic actor. A 100-pound bet said he could not dance the entirety of 100 miles from London to Norwich. He proceeded to Morris Dance through the miles — rhythmic stepping, choreography, handkerchief flapping — winning the bet and earning a celebrity tune.

Lute music is not entirely from distant centuries. Gustafson beautifully renders contemporary songs, including his arrangements of Shenandoah and Somewhere Over the Rainbow.

You, too, can play and/or listen

A quality lute is a substantial monetary investment. There is little point in procuring an inferior instrument — it won’t sound great and luthiers will likely decline making repairs. There is no lute store to pop into. If you want

to try your lute-playing hands (without breaking the bank) you can rent an instrument. The Lute Society of America, a non-profit, welcomes newcomers, offers rental plans and can assist with nascent musical steps.

In addition, there is opportunity soon to listen to prolific recording and Grammy-award nominated artist Ronn McFarlane. “He runs musical circles around me,” laughs Gustafson. “We are musician contemporaries, but Ronn continued with music throughout his life. He travels around the U.S. and beyond, giving performances.” McFarlane is slated to appear in Frederick for an afternoon concert on January 11, at Calvary United Methodist Church.

With 60 years of instrument playing, Gustafson now enjoys making music at libraries and assisted living facilities. He shares a mantra he has heard and believes. “You’ve got to get out there and play. You can practice in your room and think your playing will improve — and you’ll get to 70%. It’s playing with and for people — that interaction — that will truly elevate your playing level.” ■

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.

Vermiglio
(2024) 1 hr 59 min
In Italian/Ladin, with English subtitles
Director: Maura Delpero

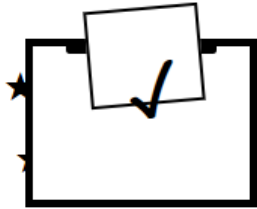
Vermiglio won the 81st International Venice Silver Lion grand jury prize and is a contender for foreign film, representing Italy, in this year’s Oscars. Director Delpero’s family history provided the storyline, which unfolds in this Alpine village in 1944 near the end of World War II. It follows Lucia, her two sisters Flavia and Ada, Cesare, her educator father and his long-suffering wife, Adele.

Pietro, a Sicilian army man, has saved Lucia’s cousin during battle; together the two find their way to the village. The town is both welcoming and judgmental, as Pietro is both savior and deserter. Only cowards run, some posit. Cesare has a more liberal view, believing that running from the brutality of war is not cowardly. Pietro stays on and develops a relationship with Lucia.

The gentle pace of this tale invites the viewer to be intimately drawn into rural life, whether milking the cow or receiving graded classwork and verbal feedback from the teacher. As in any enclave, there are secrets—everyone has them—and slowly the layers are presented and explored, cause and effect examined. The film is powerfully presented visually and genuinely engaging emotionally. ■



City of Brunswick
Special Election



Tuesday, January 20, 2026
Polls open 8am-8pm

Brunswick City Park Building
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Brunswick, MD 21716

One vacant Council Member seat
expiring August 2028

For more information or to request an absentee ballot, visit the Board of Elections page at www.BrunswickMD.gov

Friend or Enemy?

By ELLIS BURRUSS

Is artificial intelligence a useful tool or a threat to our existence? No one knows for certain, but it is possible to learn more about it at the Frederick Community College Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR).

"Artificial Intelligence Dilemmas: How to Thrive and Be at Peace in an AI-enabled world During Retirement" is a one-session course offered in early Feb-

ruary. In May there will be a six-session course "Topics on AI and Other Modern Technologies."

There will be other courses to help those who are struggling with the increasingly computer-dependent world. These include "Essential Digital Literacy Skills: Click with Confidence," six sessions in February and March, and "Going Paperless," three sessions in April.

Not retired? No problem, the courses are open to anyone 16 or over. Classes are offered in the day and evening. There are fees for the courses, but financial help is also available.

The ILR winter and spring offerings include a wide variety of other subjects from history and current issues to cooking, photography, philosophy and much more. Some classes are offered online. Learn more about this valuable resource at www.ilrfcc.org or by emailing CEInfo@frederick.edu or calling 301-624-2888. ■



The New Invasive Arachnid Out There: The Joro Spider

By DR. KATHY HEINSOHN

There's a new invasive out there causing lots of buzz. It's a new spider from Asia that came into the U.S. originally and primarily to the Atlanta, Ga. area. The Joro spider, scientifically known as *Trichonephila clavate*, is one of the orb weavers.

A separate population that may or may not be related has also been identified in the Baltimore region. These locations make sense as they are large ports for air and sea. Most invasive arthropods come into ports or by truck or rail through commodity transport.

A Huge Spider

The Joro spider is gaining a lot of attention as it is a huge spider compared to even the largest of our native species. Females can reach over 3 inches in body length and have a leg span of 4 inches. The male is much smaller and often lives in the web with the female. The female is quite colorful, with yellow and black



Joro spider

markings. Their webs are gold in color and can be 6 feet in diameter and represent one of the largest webs you may ever see. In addition, neighboring populations may link their webs to one another to make a super web of sorts. That would be a sticky mess if you happened to walk into it.

One thing that has caught the media's interest, besides the size, are reports that these spiders can fly. This isn't true. What does happen instead is that small spiderlings will send out a string of silk from their abdomen and the wind will catch it and carry the spiderling to new locations. This practice (not unique to Joros) is called ballooning. But most spiderlings are smaller and less noticeable when they do it. This is an excellent dispersal mechanism for the new invasive to spread into new previously uninhabited areas. So, if one of them lands on a trailer or railroad car bound elsewhere, then suddenly the Joro spider is in this new location.

This ballooning behavior primarily occurs in spring as spider egg cases hatch in late spring and early summer. Adults are noted over the summer months and early fall. They mate and the females lay egg cases that overwinter. The egg case survives the winter and then in the spring, the spiderlings hatch out and the life-cycle begins again.

Not Considered Dangerous

The media has also blown out of proportion that these huge spiders are venomous. Well, in fact, all spiders have venom glands at the base of their fangs, as this is how they subdue their insect prey for feeding. But the Joro spider is

not interested in biting or stinging humans. They are primarily a nuisance if you run into their webs. They are not considered dangerous. They are non-aggressive and shy and prefer to avoid human contact. If you were to be bitten, there would only be a mild skin irritation.

How to Keep Spiders from Your Dwelling

To reduce the possibility of attracting Joro or other spiders to the area around your dwelling, do anything to mitigate the number of flying insect pests. Reduce areas of standing water or moisture, remove vegetation close up or touching the house, keep mulch pulled back from the base of your home's exterior and landscape instead with pea-sized gravel three inches deep and three feet out.

You may also want to change exterior lighting on balconies and porches to yellow bulbs. Flying insect pests do not perceive yellow wavelengths of light and are not attracted to these bulbs, while white and uv light/blue bulbs have attractive wavelengths to flying insects. Fewer insects mean fewer spiders. You can also stress spiders in webs around your home by knocking the webs down repeatedly. Pesticides generally do not work well on spiders and are not recommended, as spiders do not have the tarsal foot pads that insects do to absorb the insecticide.

Through ballooning and commodity transport, the spiders have now been found in Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Maryland. Expect their range to increase with time. ■

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LOCAL HISTORY

Getting Across the River

By WAYNE ALLGAIER

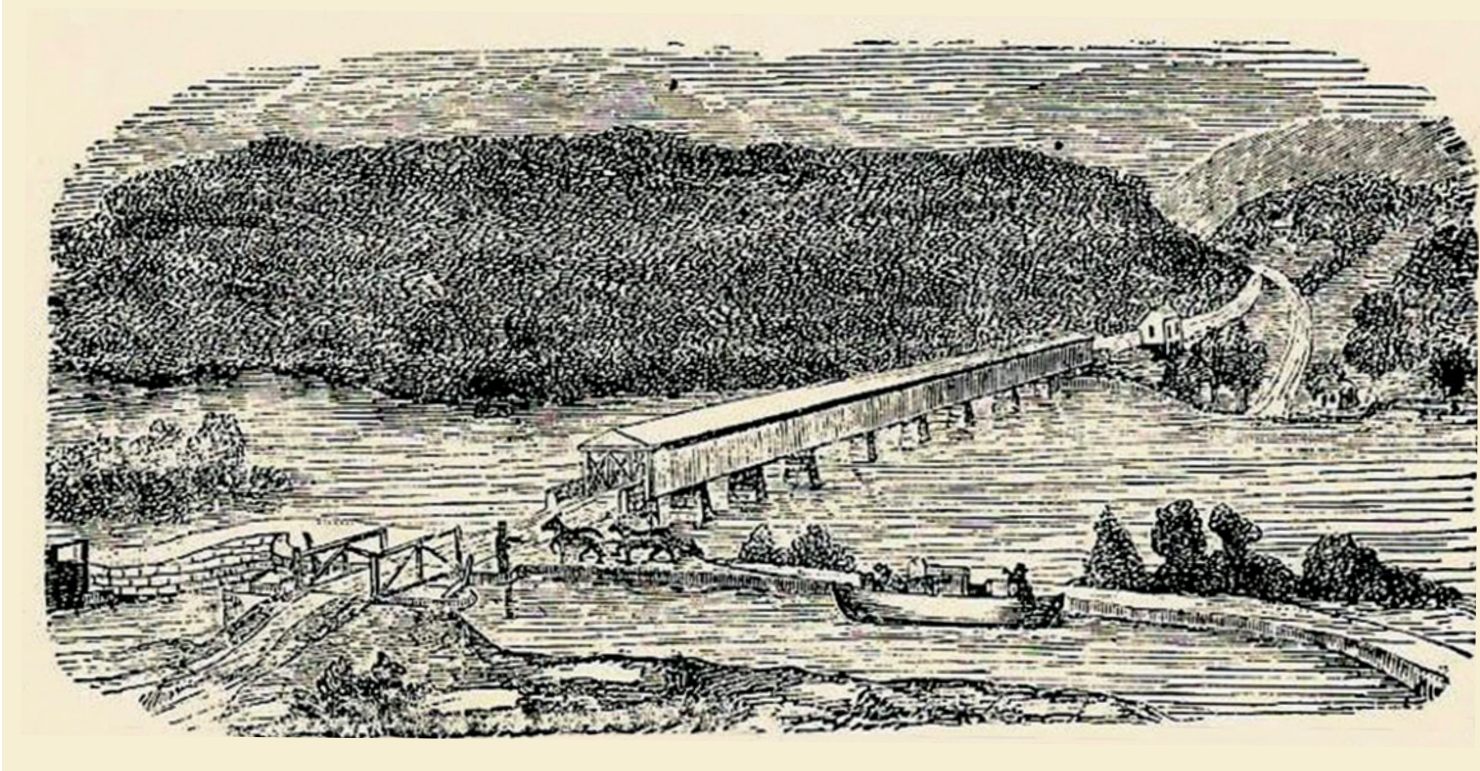
Every day, hundreds of cars and trucks drive across the Potomac River bridge at Brunswick, making that trip in less than 45 seconds. But it hasn't always been that easy. This is a story of how people have crossed the river over the years.

Before colonists came to this area, native Americans waded across shallow crossings called fords. Early explorers and settlers, including immigrants headed south from Pennsylvania, undoubtedly used these fords as well.

Ferries allow wagons as well as people to cross

Eventually, something more was needed to transport people and their wagons across the river. Records show that there were several river ferries between Point of Rocks and Harpers Ferry in the late 1700s and early 1800s. There is some uncertainty about the first ferry in Berlin (as Brunswick was then known). The late Rev. Austin Cooper, an early Brunswick historian, purports that Abraham Pennington, a transient squatter in this area, established the first ferry in 1731 and he lists seven subsequent owners of that ferry over the next 27 years. Unfortunately, Rev. Cooper left no references, so those claims still need to be substantiated.

The first documented owner of a ferry here was the Earl of Tankerville, a nobleman in England who, interestingly, never set foot on the property granted to him in America. He received a license from the Virginia legislature in 1778 to operate a ferry at "German Crossing," as this area was known at the time. This was nine years before the village of



The only sketch we have of the covered bridge.

Berlin existed. Whether the Tankerville Ferry was eventually passed on to Jacob Waltman, Jr., or whether Jacob established his own ferry is not known, but he received a license from Loudoun County in 1822 to operate the Berlin-Loudoun Ferry at German Crossing, "which he had already been operating for several years."

Arrival of railroad and canal makes a bridge necessary

For nearly 50 years after it was platted (in 1787), Berlin remained an insignificant remote village, but when the B&O Railroad and the C&O Canal came through town in 1834, it found itself on a major commercial transportation route. Farmers in Loudoun

County wanted to take advantage of these new transport modes to ship goods to Alexandria and Georgetown, but the ferry wasn't meeting their needs to get products across the river to Berlin. In 1857, the first wagons began rolling across a new wooden covered bridge.

But the dream didn't last long. Four years later, the Civil War broke out, and on June 9, 1861, Drake's 1st Virginia Cavalry, ordered by Stonewall Jackson, set the bridge ablaze to prevent Union troops from crossing into Virginia. Bridges at Point of Rocks and Harpers Ferry met the same fate that week.

During the Civil War, Union troops constructed portable pontoon bridges here. These were used after the battle of Antietam (1862) and the battle of Gettys-

burg (1863) to allow Union troops to cross the river into Virginia in pursuit of the fleeing Confederate army. In the interim, these portable bridges were transported to Fredericksburg to get troops across the Rappahannock River.

For the next 36 years, people again relied on the inefficient ferry to cross the river.

Two newer bridges

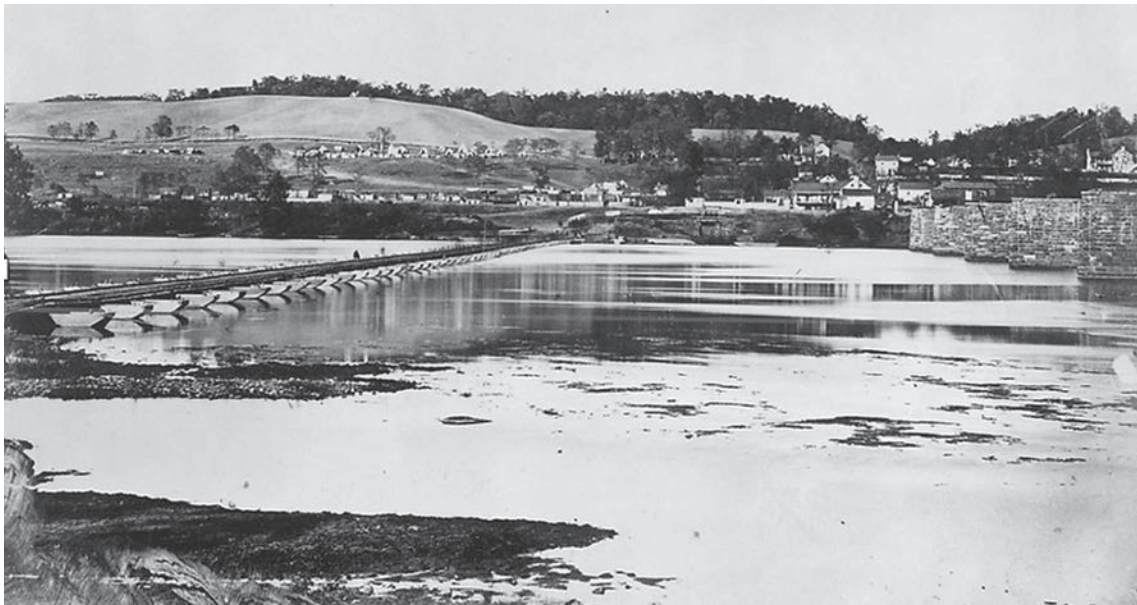
In 1890, the B&O Railroad chose Berlin as the site to construct the country's largest single-company owned railyard. Berlin became a boomtown, and the need for a new bridge was obvious. A new substantial iron bridge was created on the same eight piers that once supported the covered bridge. The cost was initially cov-

ered by charging tolls, but in 1934, the bridge became a part of the Maryland State Road System and vehicles were then able to cross toll-free.

Over the years, the old iron bridge became weakened by floods and needed to be replaced. The current concrete bridge was constructed in 1955 beside (and just upstream from) the iron bridge which was then demolished, including the piers.

So next time you head for Dulles Airport or drive to Lovettsville, hopefully you will have a greater appreciation for today's bridge that carries you over the river.

Dr. Wayne Allgaier is chairman of the Brunswick History Commission. ■



Pontoon Bridge used during the Civil War.



Taken in December 1932, this view of the old iron bridge looks south into Virginia. After a dusting of snow, it depicts the bridge's upgraded wood and wire parapet rail. The truss system was manufactured by the Youngstown Bridge Company of Youngstown, Ohio in 1893.

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LOCAL HISTORY

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

100 Years Ago
from *The Valley Register*

Compiled by
Julie Maynard

January 1, 1926.

Family Flies From Burning
Building in Their Bare Feet
8-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER
DISCOVERED THE BLAZE

The nine-room stone tenant house on the farm of Charles W. Shafer, three miles south of Middletown, occupied by Leslie Gross and family, was completely destroyed by fire, along with practically all of the contents, shortly before 11 o'clock Sunday night, only the walls being left standing. Mr. Gross, his wife and nine children were forced to flee from the building for their life, several children in their bare feet.

Mary, the 8-years-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gross, who was sleeping with several of the children on the second floor, was awakened to find a part of the room and some of the furniture blazing. She quickly awakened the other children on the second floor and hurried to the first floor to wake her parents. Mrs. Gross, with several of the children, ran to the home of Alonzo Shafer nearby, and aroused Mr. and Mrs. Shafer. Trouble was experienced in getting help to fight the fire, due to the fact that practically everyone was in bed asleep.

Mr. Gross, who had remained at his burning home, endeavored to save the furniture, and succeeded in getting several articles from the second floor as well as some from the first. The blaze had gained such headway, however, that the building was soon in ruins.

Because of the nearness of the barn to the blaze, help was asked from Thomas Chapline, president of the Independent Fire Company, of Frederick. Mr. Gross stated, however, that the home was too near gone to be saved.

It is thought the fire originated at a pipe hole between the first and second floors, through which a pipe from a wood stove heated the upper room. Quite a hole had been burned in the floor when the blaze was discovered and the family is very fortunate to have escaped with their lives.

The loss is estimated at from \$6,000 to \$8,000, and it is said there was no insurance on either the house or contents. Mr. and Mrs. Gross and family are for the present living with Mr. and Mrs. Alonzo Shafer. Mr. Chas. W. Shafer, the owner of the farm, has a force of hands at work tearing down the walls of the ruined building, preparatory to erecting a new frame dwelling.

Deer Holds Up Automobile.

Mr. and Mrs. C. Mason Hoffman, Mr. and Mrs. Osmond Derr and Mrs. Luisa Hartman, this place, experienced a novel sight while returning from the funeral of Mrs. Hartman's sister, at Chambersburg. While on the road between Chambersburg and Gettysburg, near Caledonia Park, a large doe, with three young ones, stepped into the roadway in front of Mr. Hoffman's car. The machine was stopped and the party watched the deer for about five minutes. Evidently not scared, although the hunting season has been open in Pennsylvania, the animals ambled slowly into the woods. While it is a violation of the Pennsylvania game laws to kill does, it seems strange that the continual hunting of their mates should not cause them become wary. *[Deer were not present in Frederick County at this time.]*

January 8, 1926.

The unusual heavy fog, which for the past week has paralyzed shipping along the Atlantic Seaboard, appeared locally Monday

and Tuesday nights, and traffic was badly tied up over the State highway. Travelers from Hagerstown reported driving under a terrible handicap. Mr. E. L. Colblentz, who lives in Washington, was compelled to put up with his chauffeur at Rockville Tuesday night, the fog being so thick.

A party of young people from Feagaville vicinity were entertained in a very pleasant manner at the home of Rev. and Mrs. Robert L. Lang, Jefferson, on New Year's Day. The young folks [Lang, Howard, Culler, Derr, Beard, Runkles, Poole, Renn, Kemp, Himes] arrived in automobiles and spent the evening playing games and other amusements. Delicious refreshments were served.

Stolen Jewelry Recovered.

A four-day hunt, during which blood hounds were used in Virginia, was ended when Worthington Ramsburg, 16 years old, former Frederick county boy, was searched by Sheriff Albaugh in his office at the court house, in Frederick, on Saturday last, and jewelry valued at about \$100 was found on him. The jewelry proved to be that taken from the jewelry store of E. O. Chinn, Lovettsville, Va., which was robbed Tuesday.

January 15, 1926.

The Board of Frederick County Commissioners met with John Mackall, chairman of the State Roads Commission, in Baltimore, Monday and presented their recommendation for State road improvements. Eleven recommendations in the list [included] one mile Brunswick road ... and one mile Broad Run road.

ARRESTED FOR STEALING POULTRY.

After more than a week of quiet investigation on the part of Sheriff Ingomar W. Albaugh and his deputies, Harry Stevens and Raymond and Howard Stevens, his sons, and Abraham Rohrer, all of near Burkittsville, were arrested and held awaiting the action of the next grand jury, on a charge of stealing six valuable breeding turkeys and about 20 chickens from the place of Baxter T. Horine, also of near Burkittsville ... on Dec. 26.

First Snow Storm of Season.

... the first real snow of the year [came] Friday night of last week, the flakes beginning to fall early in the evening. On Saturday morning, persons were surprised to find five and one-half inches of snow was down. On some of the country roads, the snow drifted to some extent, although there were no tie-ups of any consequence.

January 22, 1926.

BIG BLAZE NARROWLY
AVERTED AT JEFFERSON.

Tramp Sets Fire in Sacks,
Then Goes To Sleep in H. C.
Summers & Co. Warehouse.

A disastrous fire at the warehouse of H. C. Summers & Co., Jefferson, was narrowly averted on Wednesday night, Jan. 13, when a pile of sacks, in close proximity to a gallon can of gasoline, was discerned in a blaze.

As well as can be learned, the fire was started by a tramp, who in some manner gained entrance to the warehouse, made a fire of sacks and laid down on the other sacks against the door to sleep.

The blaze was discovered by Mr. Paul Culler, who lives opposite the warehouse, and who saw the reflection of the fire. He hastily summoned Mr. Summers and they endeavored to effect an entrance, which was made more difficult because of the sleeping man on the other side of the door.

After getting into the building,

it was found the weatherboarding was also on fire, and chemicals were used to extinguish the flames. Should the fire not have been discovered when seen by Mr. Culler, it is quite probable the entire building would have burned to the ground, probably taking with it other buildings nearby.

In the excitement caused by the fire, the tramp escaped.

A Narrow Escape

Alonza Magaha, of Brunswick, and a companion, made a narrow escape from serious injury last Friday afternoon when the large Studebaker coach, which Magaha was driving, skidded and turned turtle on the Jefferson pike, outside of Frederick. The car turned completely over, righting itself again as it came to a stop. Neither occupant was injured, and the machine was but slightly damaged.

Kicked By Horse.

Mr. Lewis Baker, an aged man residing near Jefferson, was severely injured when kicked in the stomach by his driving horse, on Friday of last week.

Arm Injured Cranking Auto.

Hilton Darner, son of Mr. Alonzo K. Darner, of near Jefferson, student at the Middletown high School, had his right arm badly injured last week in trying to crank his father's Buick automobile. He is compelled to carry the arm in a sling for several weeks, as his physician thinks one of the bones was cracked.

January 29, 1926.

Old King Winter returned last Friday night. The thermometers registered the second coldest day of the winter, and furnaces had to be worked overtime. Friday morning, at 12.15 a. m., the thermometer dropped to only 4 above.

STEER GOES ON RAMPAGE,
ATTACKS AN AUTOMOBILE.

Quite a bit of excitement was caused at the farm of Mr. Alonza C. Shafer, Rockville [north of Jefferson], last Saturday, when Mr. Shafer, together with several other men, attempted to kill one of Mr. Shafer's steers, which suddenly appeared to be of the opinion that it belonged to Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. The steer could not be approached close enough to effect its capture, and dashed madly up and down the roads attacking everyone and everything in general. In an attack on the automobile of Mr. George Dean, one of the fenders on the car was badly damaged and the machine nearly upset.

Albert Nichols, who was employed by Mr. Shafer, was thrown by the steer, as well as Mr. Edward Boyer, who was not nimble enough to keep out of the animal's way. The animal was finally run down and killed on the farm of Walter Poole, about a mile away from the Shafer farm.

Violated Fish Laws.

David Marsh, of Burkittsville, and J. C. Kinna and David Delauder, of Petersville, were arrested Monday by County Constable Charles W. Smith, on charges of violating the State fish laws. They were to be given a hearing before Justice Lloyd, at Petersville, tomorrow, Saturday.

Stolen Hams Found.

Automobile tracks leading into the mountains near Wolfsville, on Wednesday last, enabled Deputy Sheriff Morgan P. Runkles, of Burkittsville, to recover a number of hams, which had been stolen from the general store of J. E. Himes, near Weverton. Deputy Runkles, who found the hams hidden in a hollow chestnut tree, said that the thieves are known and that their arrest will follow.

MARYLAND DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION



Early photo of one of the ferries that ran between Northern Virginia and Berlin sometime in the mid- to late-19th Century.

BRUNSWICK HISTORIC COMMISSION



The new concrete bridge in 1955. The iron bridge is just to the left of the new bridge.

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SPORTS

BHS BOYS BASKETBALL

Railroaders Shift into High Gear

By BILL CAULEY
Photos EMMA HEMLOCK

It's been many years since Brunswick's boys basketball team has been able to boast strong rebounding at both ends of the floor as well as the ability to run a high-speed offense. Both have been on display in the early part of the season.

The Railroaders took a plus-.500 record into the holiday break after starting out winning four of five games. Brunswick's first three wins were easy.

Then came a stubborn Smithsburg team on Dec. 17, at Brunswick. It took a converted 3-point play by freshman Jaivyn Moody and a pair of foul shots by Tyrone Lee in the last nine seconds of the game to close out a 62-58 win over the Leopards.

The Railroaders closed out their December schedule with a game against Williamsport and a pair of games at the Ron Engle Classic, held at Middletown High School. The way Brunswick has been playing is just what fifth-year coach Larry Brown has waited for.

"This is the kind of energy we've wanted," Brown said after the win over Smithsburg. "We want to play with a fast pace when we can, but then pull up and slow things down at other times when we need to."

When it comes to rebounding, Brady Renn, Mark Yongbi and Andrew Jones have shown a lot of power on the boards. In the win over Smithsburg, Renn pulled down a team-high 10 rebounds.



Brunswick's Jaivyn Moody (32) was 4 for 4 on his foul shots, including one to convert a pivotal 3-point play in the game's final seconds against Smithsburg.

Yongbi and Jones each had nine. The Railroaders also showed their ability to bounce back after a heart-breaking loss. Twenty-four hours earlier, Brunswick took Walkersville to the wire at Walkersville in overtime before losing on a last-second tip-in, 59-8.

Railroaders rally for exciting win against Smithsburg

In the game with Smithsburg the following night, the Railroaders blew a comfortable first-half lead and trailed by as much as nine before staging a strong rally down the stretch for the win. This is where Brunswick had to rely on Moody's and Lee's heroics to escape with the win.

The Railroaders were clinging to a 57-56 lead with 50.6 seconds to go in the game and Smithsburg had possession of the ball. The Leopards' Gavin Blumenaur hit an inside shot with 30.6 seconds left on the clock, giving Smithsburg a 58-57 lead. Brunswick called a time-out to set up its offensive play, only to turn the ball over with 20.6 seconds to go.

Smithsburg tried a shot, but missed. Brunswick got the rebound. Following the inbound pass, Nicholas Martinis fed an outlet pass to Moody, who drove to the basket, let go a floater, made the bucket and was fouled on the play with less than 10 seconds left in the game.

Moody converted the 3-point play and the Railroaders were up, 60-58. The Leopards took a shot, but missed. Lee got rebound and was fouled with less than two seconds to go in the game. He hit both shots to clinch the win.

"The thing for me was to just stay calm and put up that floater," Moody, who led Brunswick with a team-high 22 points coming off the bench, said. "Just finish the play."

Lee and Andrew Jones each had nine points for the Railroaders. Renn had four assists with five steals. Martinis had three assists. Yongbi had three steals.

Jacob Tyler led Smithsburg with a game-high 26 points. Blumenauer had nine. ■



Brunswick's Brady Renn (13) is defended by Smithsburg's Marquis Weakfall (5).

BHS GIRLS BASKETBALL

Railroaders Improving

By BILL CAULEY

There is little question, if any, that Brunswick High School's girls basketball team has improved from last year.

It's Sam Connolly's second year at the helm and the former Boonsboro assistant girls' coach has firmly installed his up-tempo, go after every loose ball, pound the boards style of play.

Last year was more of a getting-to-know you period. The Railroaders did not win a game and had an early exit in the Class 1A regional playoffs.

This year, Brunswick opened its season with a 61-23 loss to Class 1A, and county-rival, Catotcin on Dec. 5. Four days later, the Railroaders gave Winters Mill all it could handle before losing at home, 59-36.

Good takeaways from early games

Following that tough loss, Connolly said he is seeing good things from his team, but its problem is minimizing turnovers. That was evident in the loss to the Falcons on Dec. 9. Brunswick committed 30 turnovers in that game. Those miscues negated the good things the Railroaders did, but Connolly noted there were some good takeaways in spite of the mistakes.

"You take away those turnovers, it could have been a different game," Connolly said following the Winters Mill game. "We just had trouble handling the ball with our transition offense, but, yes, we are better than last year."

Connolly said Brunswick had trouble matching up against some of the stronger Falcons' players on offense. Hannah Neske and Rilee Haskins were the pace-setters for Winters Mill in the game. Neske led all scorers with 26 points. Her 15 points in

the second half kept the Railroaders at bay. Haskins also hit double figures for the Falcons, scoring 17 points, 10 in the first half.

Brunswick did hold the first lead of the game, 2-0, with 7 minutes, 21 seconds to go in the first quarter, on a bucket by Joedyn Njinyah. A 3-pointer by Neski at the 6:30 mark put Winters Mill out in front, 3-2. The Falcons would not trail in the game again.

Winters Mill opened up a 16-10 lead on the Railroaders after one quarter. Brunswick continued to hang with the Falcons in the second quarter but Winters Mill led at halftime, 28-20. The Railroaders would get no closer than two the rest of the game. Winters Mill held a 38-28 lead after three quarters.

High scorers for Brunswick

Juliette Bel and Michaela Douglass each had eight points to lead Brunswick. Bel hit a 3-pointer in the second and third quarters to help the Railroaders keep the game within reason. Douglass came off the bench to score six of her eight points in the first half.

Njinyah scored seven points for Brunswick. Her strong point in the game was her rebounding. Njinyah had 10 rebounds, eight in the first half. Madison Greenwood added nine rebounds for the Railroaders. Emme Miller had five.

"Joedyn really battled for the ball," Connolly said. "She's come a long way since her freshman year."

There is still a lot of basketball to play for the Brunswick season. Connolly likes what he sees and is looking forward to better games for the Railroaders. ■



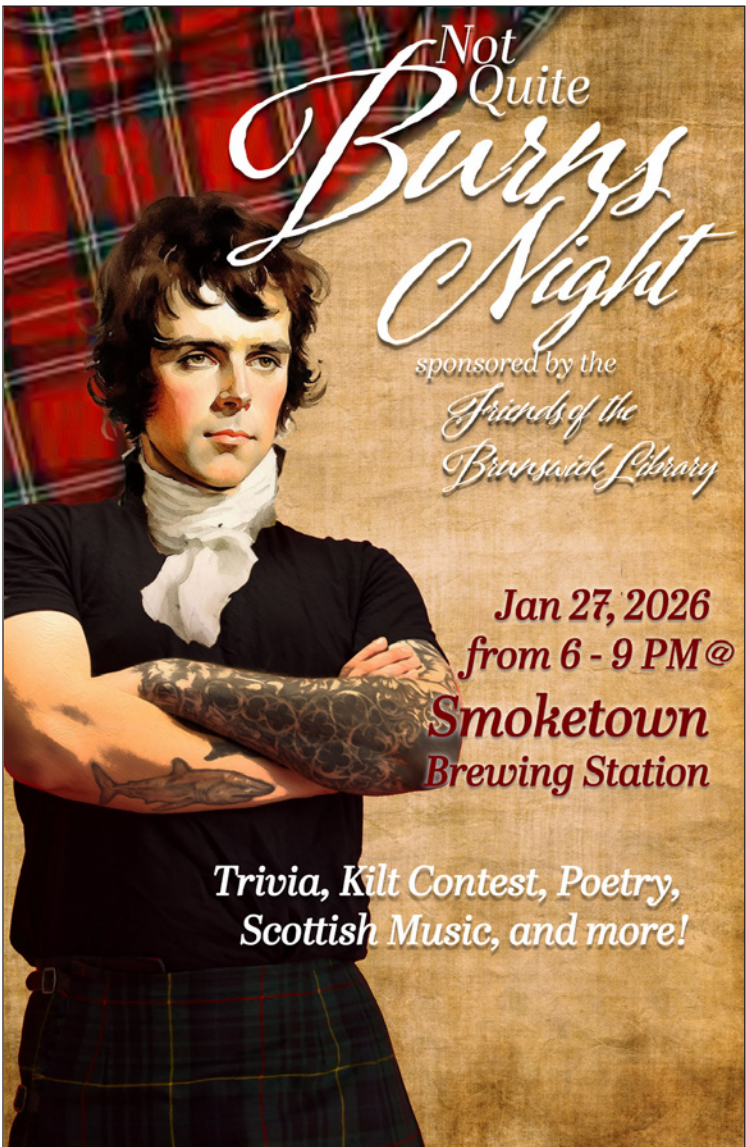
Brunswick's Nicholas Martinis (5) had three assists against Smithsburg.

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BHS Students of the Month: November 2025



Students were nominated by their teachers for this award. Pictured from left to right: Andrea Cedillo Diaz (science, grade 12), Chace Hammarlund (math, grade 11), Aley Peluso (media/FCVS, grade 11), Ronaldo Fonseca Santacruz (career and technical ed, grade 12), Libby Hoover (English, grade 9), Caroline Teague (physical education, grade 12), Caelia Stokes (visual & performing arts, grade 9), Olivia Modisett (world languages, grade 9), Principal Eric Schwarzenegger. Not pictured: Sophia Smith.

Brunswick Crew Wins Best Support Table for JFK 50 Miler



Pictured in Brunswick's Square Corner Park is the trophy with several members of the support crew (left to right). Back Row: Lee Zumbach, Walt Stull, Preston Tarleton, Mike Henderson, Ian Henderson. Front Row: Mark Tarleton, Sabastian Burke, Anne Zumbach, Kyle McCann.

By LEE ZUMBACH

For the past 15 years, a group of Brunswick High Cross Country team members and several Boy Scout Troop 277 members have worked the food and drink support table for the JFK 50 Mile race which starts in Boonsboro and finishes in

Williamsport. The local group sets up near the railroad track crossing at Weverton, just west of Knoxville. At this point in the race, over 1,000 dedicated runners have finished 16 miles of the Appalachian Trail section and are crossing the tracks to start the next 34-mile journey along the C & O Canal.

On November 22, the local JFK 50 Mile support crew served water, Gatorade, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, hot chicken broth, power bars, bananas and cookies to the hungry racers. At this point, runners have burned over 2,000 calories. Until they finish, they will burn another 4,000 or more calories. Think of running from Frederick to Washington, D.C. — that is the challenge for these runners.

JFK Race directors, with input from the runners, chose our local crew as best support table out of 15 along the 50-mile trail. The director presented a trophy in recognition of the group's hard work. The crew helped pick up the spirit of runners, served needed nourishment, and controlled the train crossing access as the runners have to safely cross the tracks before starting the long run west. The volunteers came out in the cold for four hours to help these amazing athletes. They also took leftover food and drink up the course to the 12 other stations to provide further support. Many runners took over nine hours to complete the grueling race.

The JFK is the oldest ultramarathon in the United States, starting in the early 1960s. Many runners come from thousands of miles away to do the famous race. The top ten runners cover the course in 5-6 hours or a 6 minutes per mile pace for 50 miles.

Along with the trophy, the Express Run Club and Scout Troop 277 will share a \$750 thank you donation from the race director for their service. ■

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ALL ABOARD BRUNSWICK

JANUARY 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.

Indoor Playground (ages 0–10) January 3, 2–4 pm Brunswick Library	Brunswick Indoor Farm Market January 9, 4–7 pm American Legion 18 S. Maple Avenue	Tween Time: Felt Monsters (3rd through 8th grade) January 15, 6–7 pm Brunswick Library	Not Quite Burns Night January 27, 6–9 pm Smoketown Brewing Station Sponsored by Friends of the Brunswick Library	Goose Creek Ruggers SECOND SATURDAYS 10 am–1 pm Catoctin Presbyterian Church, 15565 High St., Waterford, VA	(3rd Tues. calling all Dungeons and Dragons neophytes and/or pros) BYO drinks Traveling Bros. Cigars 302 W. Potomac St.
Alpacas and Their Fleece January 4, 2–3 pm Brunswick Library	Country Breakfast January 10, 6–10 am Burkittsville Ruritan Club	Teen Time: Felt Lab (ages 11–18) January 15, 6–7 pm Brunswick Library	Caregiver Toolbox: Potty Training Made Easier Readiness Skills (part 1) January 29, 11–11:45 am Brunswick Library	Games Club of Maryland THIRD SATURDAYS 12–7 pm Smoketown Brewing Station	Shuffleboard & Cornhole – \$2 TUESDAYS, 4:30–6:00 pm Parks & Recreation Building, Brunswick Elementary School
Elementary Explorers: National Technology Day (ages 5–10) January 6, 4:30–5:30 pm Brunswick Library	Country Butchering January 10, 8 am–noon Burkittsville Ruritan Club	Elementary Explorers: Whales (ages 5–10) January 20, 4:30–5:30 pm Brunswick Library	Teen Time: Mad Science Movie Night (ages 11–18) January 29, 6–7 pm Brunswick Library	Worship Service SUNDAYS, 9 am Jefferson United Methodist Church 3882 Jefferson Pike	Preschool Storytime WEDNESDAYS, 10:30 am, 3–5 year olds with caregiver Brunswick Library
Evening Storytime (ages 0–5) January 7, 6:30–7 pm Brunswick Library	Children's Museum at the Library January 10, 10 am–noon Brunswick Library	Teen Time: Homemade Stickers (ages 11–18) January 22, 6–7 pm Brunswick Library	Memory Cafe January 30, 11:30 am–1 pm Brunswick Library	Worship Service SUNDAYS, 9:30 am New Hope United Methodist Church 7 S. Maryland Ave, brunswickumc.com	Preschoolers School & STEM Skills WEDNESDAYS, 11:15 am, 3–5 year old with caregiver Brunswick Library
Teen Time: Book Art (ages 11–18) January 8, 6–7 pm Brunswick Library	Brunswick Arts Council Program: Mini Book Making January 11, 2–4 pm Brunswick Library	Go Team Therapy Dogs: An Adaptive Adult Program January 23, 11 am–noon Brunswick Library	Elementary Explorers: National Backward Day (ages 5–10) January 31, 2–3:30 pm Brunswick Library		Valley Quilters , all ages/levels FIRST WEDNESDAYS, 6:30 pm St. Paul Lutheran Church, Jefferson Peggy at valleyquiltersTLC@gmail.com
Country Butchering January 9, 8 am–5 pm Burkittsville Ruritan Club	Ayreheart January 11, 3 pm Calvary United Methodist Church, 131 W. 2nd St., Frederick	Read to a Dog (ages 0–10) January 24, 10:30–11:30 am Brunswick Library	RECURRING	Baby Storytime MONDAYS, 10:30 am ages 0–24 months with caregiver Brunswick Library	
In-person Workshop hosted by Frederick County State Health Assistance Program January 9, Session 1: 10:30 am–noon: Navigating the Medicare Maze January 9, Session 2: 12:30–2 pm: Medigap/Supplemental Insurance vs. Medicare Advantage Registration required: 301 600–1234 or DAI@frederickcountymd.gov Brunswick Library—Free lunch provided	Let's Get Moving: An Adaptive Movement Program January 13, 1–2 pm Brunswick Library	Reading with Heiress (ages 0–10) January 24, 1–2 pm Brunswick Library	Intermediate Conversation Class for English Language Learners SATURDAYS, 10:30 am Brunswick Library	Manly Movie Night MONDAYS, 7–9 pm, BYO drink Traveling Bros. Cigars 302 W. Potomac St.	Ladies' Movie Night WEDNESDAYS, 7–9 pm, BYO drinks Traveling Bros. Cigars 302 W. Potomac St.
	Elementary Explorers: Yoga with Bonnie (ages 5–10) January 13, 4:30–5:30 pm Brunswick Library	Great Comets in History January 25, 2–3 pm Brunswick Library	Brunswick Arts Council Meeting SECOND SATURDAYS, 10 am–noon Brunswick Library	Toddler Storytime TUESDAYS, 10:30 am 2 year olds with caregiver Brunswick Library	Musical Storytime THURSDAYS, 10:30 am, ages 0–5 with caregiver Brunswick Library
	Caregiver Toolbox: Baby & Toddler Speech January 15, 11–11:45 am Brunswick Library	Elementary Explorers: Snow Adventure (ages 5–10) January 27, 4:30–5:30 pm Brunswick Library	Connect & Create SECOND SATURDAYS Smoketown Brewing	Table Top Tuesdays TUESDAYS, 6–8 pm	

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