

# Woodsboro - Walkersville NEWS-JOURNAL

VOLUME 5, NO. 1

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

JANUARY 2025

WOODSBORO.NET

WW-NJ.COM

WALKERSVILLE.NET

## NEWS

### Proposed Development Draws Negative Reviews

A proposed 95-townhouse development on the south end of Woodsboro met with a cool reception from the Town Council. **Page 2**

### Ground Broken on Woodsboro Town Hall

After years of planning, ground was finally broken on the \$1.4+ million Town Hall. **Page 3**

### Staley Property Applies For Agriculture Preservation

If approved by county, the farm will be preserved as is with no development allowed. **Page 4**

### Walkersville Approves Second Internet Provider

Residents will now have two choices when it comes to selecting their local internet provider. **Page 4**

### Cunningham Falls State Park's "Scales & Tales" Program

The park's aviary serves as a refuge for injured birds of prey. **Page 20**

## COMMENTARY

### The Bulwark

Actually, Never Trumpers were right. **Page 8**

### The Liberal Patriot

Hating the other side doesn't work for Democrats. **Page 9**

### Good Day, Neighbor

Applying the Parable of the Good Samaritan to today's world. **Page 9**

## ARTICLES

### The Book Of Days

The history and traditions of "Twelfth Day." **Page 11**

### Ecology

A look at some of our local winter wonders. **Page 12**

### The Retired Ecologist

Of mice and omens. **Page 13**

### In The Country

The Brown Recluse spider - the elusive recluse. **Page 14**

### Science Matters

Meet the human family. **Page 15**

### Gardening

Sustainability is not just for vegetables. **Page 16**

### Four Years At The Mount

Reflecting on interactions that had profound influence on one's life. **Page 28**

## The twelve acts of Walkersville's Christkindl

Celia Alspaugh  
WHS Class of 2028

Walkersville's streets were lined with families and neighbors on December 7th, all eagerly awaiting the blare of the fire engine's sirens. Contrary to their usual purpose, that day the screeching sirens symbolized the start of Walkersville's 6th Annual Christkindl Parade! Bundled up in their mittens and coats, the chilly weather didn't stop these townspeople from supporting their local services. Twelve groups in all, volunteers braved the cold to ring in the holiday spirit for their Town.

Directly after the fire department, kicking off the parade was Walkersville High School's Marching Band. Leading the marchers was the Color Guard, dressed in festive green and waving their snowflake adorned flags. As they traveled down Glade Road, the merry notes of "Do You Hear What I Hear?" could be heard blaring from the Marching Lions' wind and percussion ensembles.

Just behind the band were Scout troops 1070 and 36126, and the chant "eat more candy!" could be heard from the enthusiastic boys of 1070 as they tossed candy from their float, littering the streets with sugary sweets. Girl Scout troop 36126 was dressed up in their winter attire, spreading

holiday cheer with their reindeer antlers and Santa hats.

Of course it wouldn't be a proper Walkersville parade without the library! The local Walkersville Public Library added their own literary based touch with their book costumes. Sporting the classic tale "A Christmas Carol," was librarian Mamie Gorée, who states that the Christkindl Parade is an "absolutely lovely experience, it's a delight."

The fifth act was brought in by the FFA, navigating the streets on their tractors. Six in total, FFA students drove down Glade Rd followed by three others on horseback. Behind them was local country artist Mike Kuster playing his guitar and singing classic holiday tunes. Then came the sports trailer, with posters hung on the walls starring activities like field hockey and cheerleading, urging students to take up a sport.

Ushering in the ninth part of this parade was the Misfits Car Club, sporting their collection of vintage cars and trucks. Ten in total, everyone in the Town 'oohed' and 'ahhed' at this club taking their style to the streets. The last three acts of the parade were local hair salon Good Hair Days, Scout troop 37185, and bringing up the rear, Walkersville's Historical Society in a vintage 1964 VW Crew Cab Bus.



Boy Scout Troop 1070 are seen sporting their elf hats and throwing candy in the Christkindl Parade.

Both the Public Library and St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church opened their doors to share their warm spaces as shelters from the cold. Providing free hot chocolate and cider, St. Paul's parishioners had their tables full of eclectic and beautiful Christmas items, along with a bake sale. However, the true star of the show was their handmade sugared nuts for sale. Fresh and warm, customers had the options of sugared almonds, pecans, or cashews. At the library, local businesses were set up, selling items from woodcrafts to handmade lamps.

Just down the street, the Walkersville Southern Railroad was

celebrating the coming of the holidays with their Santa Trains. The trains took place the same weekend as the Christkindl Market and had band and choir members from the High School performing onboard for passengers. An employee and choir student, Annalyse Miranda-Ramos, loves singing on the Santa Train, stating "it's magical to see the kids' faces light up when singing their favorite Christmas songs and their bright smiles!"

It's safe to say that this year's Christkindl event was a success, and the Town of Walkersville hopes to see you next year, for the 7th Annual Christkindl Parade and Market!

## Residents call for budget workshop in early 2025

As a result of this year's audit report of the Town's finances, where the auditor cautioned the Town on the stability of the Town's water and sewer funds, concerned citizens used the public comment period at the end of the December Town Council meeting to ask questions of the Council in hopes of getting a better understanding of where the Town's finances stood, as well as where they were headed, all while calling for a special budget workshop where residents could weigh in on the Town's budget and spending priorities for next year before the budget "is cast in stone."

Financial concerns raised by residents ran from the shortfalls in funding of the routine operations of the Town's water and sewer plant, unknown costs related to overdue maintenance items in the water plant, funding for the new Town Hall, and the eventual costs related to completing the state's mandated lead pipe survey.

### Funding Of Water & Sewer Plant Operations

Dorothea Mordan led off the questioning, outlining to the Town Council the sum of the issues she saw the Town needing to address, specifically the ending of the COVID era American Rescue Plan funds the Town has been using for the past few years to buttress the "income" side of the Town's budget. "How," Mordan asked, "is the Town going to make up for the loss of these funds going forward?"

Mordan also noted that while the income side of the budget question was in doubt, the expense side was even more cloudy. "Our Water and Sewer Treatment Plant (WSTP) cost was based on the salary of \$70,000 for an individual contractor, who has recently left that job. He has been replaced by a company that will cost us \$180,000 annually. Where is the \$110,000 difference coming from?"

Mordan then noted that the new WSTP operator has identified a list of needed repairs because of inadequate



Concerns over town finances, especially surrounding Woodsboro's aging water & sewer plants, have residents unnerved.

maintenance spanning years, the cost of which could easily be in the tens, if not hundreds of thousands of dollars.

"Woodsboro is showing a shortfall of funds available to maintain our water supply. It is not clear that cash on hand or revenue from the

water bill or taxes paid by residents will cover the costs obligated by the Town. There is a new loan for the new town office. It is not clear that the mortgage will be covered by the current budgeted revenue. The logical conclusion is that the

Continued on page 2

Postal Customer

PRE-SORTED  
STANDARD  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Gettysburg, PA  
Permit No. 53

# WOODSBORO NEWS

## Residents call for budget workshop in early 2025

Continued from page 1

residents of Woodsboro will have their taxes increased, and that the water bill may increase by as much as 50%," said Mordan.

### Call For Special Budget Workshop

Mordan suggested that the Council allow the citizens of Woodsboro to help them out by holding a special public budget workshop in early 2025, before the budget is set in stone.

"Currently, the budget is submitted by the burgess to the Council at the Town meeting only days before the budget is required to be finalized," Mordan said, "This is the Council's only opportunity to make changes to the budget, and the public only gets to comment on the budget after the Council has approved it."

While Mordan's recommendation fell on the receptive ears of Commissioner John Cutshall, who made the same suggestion to the Council at the November Council meeting, Burgess Barnes shot the idea down, stating that residents have always had an opportunity to provide input on the Town's budget when it is presented to the Town Council for their approval.

Residents, however, are not given copies of the budget prior to the meeting for review and can only comment on items that are brought up by the commissioners during their questioning of the budget. Additionally, they can only raise issues or concerns after the budget has been passed, making any input they might have moot. The budget discussion focuses on the upcoming operating budget and does not address the future capital needs that Mordan raised for discussion at a workshop.

### Funding Of New Town Hall

Mordan was followed to the podium by resident Tracy Sando, who, after endorsing Mordan's call for a targeted budget workshop that would allow interactions with the residents and one that would allow them to provide timely input on budget items, pivoted the conversation away from the WSTP to

the funding of the new Town Hall, specifically, the status of the supposed \$400,000 grant the Town is expected to receive from the State. Barnes reiterated that he had been promised the money was "there" by former State Senator Michael Hough and Delegate Jessie Pippy and that the Town could not apply for the money until they had incurred \$400,000 in costs.

The pair had a heated back and forth, as Barnes was unable to produce any proof that satisfied Sando that the Town had a documented commitment from the state for the \$400,000. Barnes interrupted Sando, a grants professional, over 20 times as she tried to press her case for the Council to investigate the status of the \$400,000 grants for the Town Hall, for which Sando fears the authorization may have expired. Barnes frequently spoke over Sando as she tried to explain the State's grant process to the Council, often raising his voice so she could not be heard and at times, outright berating her.

Gerald Sando, following up on his wife's questions about the status of the \$400,000 in grants for the Town Hall, noted that the \$400,000 represents a huge down payment on the \$1.8 million dollar price tag of the new Town Hall. "If that money is not coming, then the Town needs to figure out how it is going to make up that shortfall. We are already taking \$200,000 out of our General Fund for the Hall; if we have to take another \$400,000 out, that will leave very little in the bank to cover any major costs the Town may incur in the future, such as an unanticipated breakdown in the water or sewer plant."

*Editor's Note: The News-Journal has reached out to the State to determine the status of the Town Hall grants, but as of the date of this paper going to press, has not received a response.*

### Funding Of Overdue Maintenance Items In The Water Plant

Andrew Velnoskey, who followed Sando, pressed the Council on when the list of WSTP maintenance items would be released. Barnes said that he was wait-

ing for the return of Commissioner Bill Rittelmeyer, who also serves as the Town's water commissioner, to go over the list with him. "We need to sort out what items on the list are 'nice things to do' and those that are 'must-do's.'" Barnes characterized the overall amount as "outrageous" but failed to share any sense of what the town could be facing.

Barnes failed to explain why the list, which was compiled by the new WSTP operator in September after it took over the plant, has not been sorted out yet. When pressed by Velnoskey on the possibility that some of the "must-do's" could cost a lot of money - money the Town may not have - Barnes brushed the comment off, stating that many of the high-ticket replacement items had already been purchased using COVID era funds.

However, Barnes was unable to elaborate on just how many "must-do" high-ticket item replacement parts needed to be bought. While the Town may have many of the replacement parts on hand, the Town would still have to come up with new money to pay the new WSTP operator to remove and replace the parts, as maintenance tasks like repair and replacement of equipment is not included in the WSTP operator's contract.

Barnes became visibly frustrated with Velnoskey, who continued to press the Council on when residents could expect to see the list of water plant corrective actions. Barnes berated Velnoskey for bringing this issue up. "I wish these concerns would have been brought forward before we had voted on them because we've been talking about them for a year and a half and I've never seen you before at a Town meeting."

Commissioner Case jumped into the fray, telling Barnes and his fellow Council members: "I get it, they are just stating their concerns, that's fine." Turning to Velnoskey, he said, "I appreciate you coming and telling us how you feel about it."

In response to Velnoskey's question on if there was any way the Council could be more forthcoming in sharing information with the residents, Case replied, "It sounds like your suggestions, and the suggestion of others who have spoken before you, are that you are wanting more publicity or public notice of anything [coming before the Council] in general." Velnoskey nodded his head in agreement.

Velnoskey acknowledged Barnes' comment that the funding of the Town Hall had been talked about for a year and people were coming late to the game on the issue, but noted that the discussion may have gone differently had people known about some of the issues with the water and sewer plants and their potential costs. "People did not have a clear idea about the status of the water and sewer system, and I think a

## Woodsboro-Walkersville NEWS-JOURNAL

P.O. Box 394  
Woodsboro, Maryland 21798  
301-471-3306

www.wv-nj.com

Emmitsburg.net, Taneytown.net, Woodsboro.net, Walkersville.net  
Mythurmont.net, Myfairfield.net, & Mygettysburg.net

The Woodsboro-Walkersville News-Journal is published the first day of every month by Toms Creek Hundred LLC. Proudly serving the communities of Woodsboro, Walkersville, New Midway, Keymar, Creagerstown, Union Bridge and Libertytown.

### Senior Advisors:

Boyce Rensberger  
Dorothea Mordan

Executive Editor: Michael Hillman, editor@ww-nj.com  
Managing Editor: Devin Owen, MSMU Class of 2026  
Assistant Editor: Dolores Hans, MSMU Class of 2025

'Does It Make Sense' Editor: Katie Wherley

English Editor: Rachel Sheehan

News Reporter: Jamie Kahl; news@ww-nj.com

Cub Reporter - Celia Alspaugh, WHS Class of 2028

Reporter-at-large: Alex Hayes

Graphic Design and Layout: Brian Barth, timebombstudios.com

Advertising: Sharon Graham, advertising@emmitsburg.com

Notice of upcoming events, news stories, and interesting and creative articles are welcome and may be submitted via regular U.S. Mail to P.O. box 394, Woodsboro, MD 21798, or by email to editor@ww-nj.com.

lot of people would prefer to have water over a new Town Hall."

### Funding Of Lead Pipe Survey Corrective Actions

Ed Mordan questioned the Council on the status of the Lead Pipe Survey, noting that like Commissioner Case and Cutshall, he had received a letter from the Town indicating his home may have lead pipes connecting it to the Town water system. Mordan specifically wanted to know what the next steps are that the Town will be taking.

Barnes responded that the letter was a State letter that the State mandated the Town send out to owners of all homes built before 1972 and as far as he was concerned, the issue was done and no further action was required by the Town. Barnes told Mordan he didn't care if there are lead pipes in his (Mordan's) house.

Barnes' position that no more action needed to be taken runs counter to the interpretation of the State Lead Pipe Survey Program requirements, as understood by surrounding municipalities. All municipalities contacted by the News-Journal said that Towns needed to determine if there are any lead pipes in a home's connection line from the house to a Town's water system. Towns have until 2027 to put in place a plan to determine the status of the connecting piping of all homes whose status is currently listed as unknown (houses listed as unknown were the recipients of the letter in question). The cost of this determination will be the responsibility of the Town.

The News-Journal reviewed the contract the Town signed in July and found that it only involved a paperwork review of Town records to determine and document what houses were

built before 1972, as well as determine if there were any records for houses built before 1972 that could be used to prove that their connection lines had no lead in them. Based upon that review, the Town sent out the mandatory letter to owners of homes where the service water line material was identified as "unknown."

A project plan to identify if a lead pipe is in the connection line to the Town water system still must be developed and executed for those homes that were flagged as "unknown," which the Town has not yet budgeted for.

*Editor's Note: The State's requirements to complete the lead pipe survey corrective actions can be viewed in the News section of Woodsboro.net.*

### Second Call For Special Budget Workshop

Last to speak was Rose Woods-small, who said that while she had no plans to speak when she showed up, after listening to the litany of issues related to the Town's finances, she questioned the wisdom of the Town incurring more debt to build a Town Hall that few would use. "The money you are borrowing to build this Hall, we, as residents, will all have to pay back through increased taxes for years to come."

Woods-small implored the Council to consider Mordan's request to hold a special budget workshop to get public input on next year's budget prior to its development.

In response to Burgess Barnes' frequent questioning of speakers as to why they had not brought up their concerns at prior meetings, Woods-small responded, "We can't undo what happened in the past, but we are here now, and we would like to have input going forward."



**Proud sponsor of the  
Woodsboro-Walkersville  
News-Journal**

**www.swbarrick.com 301-845-6343**

# WOODSBORO NEWS

## Proposed development receives negative reviews

A proposed 95-townhouse development on the south side of Woodsboro was met with mixed reviews from the Town Council at its December meeting.

The Preliminary Concept Plan for the development, to be built on a 15-acre lot on the east side of Main Street between the Town's memorial cemetery and the park & ride lot, was presented to the Town Council by the developer's architect, Fox and Associates, to get an "idea of the Council's initial feedback on the project."

The "feedback" came quick and fast. All Council members were stunned at the number of townhouses proposed. Burgess Heath Barnes said that the new number was a significant increase over the 58 townhouses proposed when the idea of the developing the lot was first proposed to the Council in October 2022.

The 2022 proposal only wanted to use 5.5 acres for homes, 2.5 acres for commercial use, 5 acres were set aside for open space, and approximately 2.5 acres were to be donated to the Mt. Hope cemetery. The new proposal looks to use 7 acres for homes, 5.5 acres for open space, and 1.9 acres to be donated to the cemetery.

The lot is currently owned by Steve Trout. Trout, the Council was told, has entered into a contract with DRB Development of Rockville Maryland for them to purchase the lot if the development plans are approved.

Commissioner Cutshall, when discovering that the entire development was to consist of townhouses, said he was a firm "no" on the development. Cutshall said that for him to even consider the development, all the homes on Main Street in

the development needed to be single-family homes.

"Let's be honest," Cutshall said, "we have a historic town, and I don't want it ruined by a row of townhouses on Main Street. All the houses on Main Street are single-family houses. Townhouses on Main Street will ruin the appearance of the Town. There needs to be single-family homes along Main Street. I'm a firm no on the development otherwise."

Commissioner Jessie Case joined Cutshall in his desire to maintain the historic look and feel of the Town. "People moved here because we have an 'old town charm.' A 95-townhouse development will ruin this Town. I've never been a big fan of jamming a lot of people into a small area, and that is exactly what this development will do."

Case pointed out that he had voiced his concerns in 2022, that he was not a fan of "packing as many homes onto a piece of land as you could. People move here to be away from that type of development." Case went on to say, "when I was elected to the Town Council, I promised to do my best to keep the Town as small as possible. This doesn't fit into that vision."

Case also warned of increased traffic on Main Street. "Let's face it, 95 town homes is going to put an additional 190 cars on the road in the morning and evening and, as they all will be having to enter and exit the development at the same entrance, we're going to have traffic issues."

Barnes summarily dismissed Case's traffic concerns, stating: "traffic was the least of concerns. Most of the time, Main Street has no cars on

it at all and most residents will be just entering or leaving the development and heading to or from RT. 194 and as a result, few will ever come into town, and hence create traffic issues."

But Cutshall questioned the width of the streets in the development, and when told they would be 20-foot-wide, that that would be insufficient. "Let's face it, residents are going to be parking on the development streets, and that's going to inhibit the ability of movement of fire trucks and snow plows in the development."

Cutshall reinforced his point by referencing the recent decision the Town was forced to make, restricting parking on 2nd Street to just the east side as a result of the parking issues at the eight new townhouses at Arnold's place. "Parking in the development is going to be an issue," Cutshall said. Barnes, echoing Cutshall's concerns, added that the Town doesn't have a police force and without one, there is no way to enforce a "no parking on the street rule" in the development.

Cutshall also requested that the development streets have old fashioned curbs and gutters, not the rounded swell that are in vogue these days. In addition, Cutshall insisted that any final design have a walkway in front of the development and pay for a walkway in front of the cemetery to connect to the main part of the Town to allow people to walk into the town if they wish.

Barnes expressed frustration that under the current design, the development did not set aside any space for commercial development. "In the old proposal, there was space set aside for a restaurant and some retail shops, but the new one is all town-



Diagram of proposed 95-townhouse development at south end of Main Street.

houses. I was really hoping the development would bring with it a second place to eat in town."

Barnes warned the developer that their proposed track for the sewer line to connect to the Town's sewer plant would run through a part of the cemetery where people are buried. "I can't see the cemetery committee allowing you to run a sewer line through an active part of the cemetery. That's going to be a problem."

"The advantage of running the line through the cemetery," the Town Staff said, "was it would not require the installation of a sewer pump which the Town would have to maintain and are always breaking down."

Town Staff put the Council on notice that the 95 townhouses would max out the Town's water permit with the State. "Usually it's no big deal, all we need to do is ask the State for the right to pump more water, but you just need to be aware, that the 95 units will put us at 98% of our allowable water draw."

Barnes also expressed dismay that the new concept plan reduced the size of the land being donated to the cemetery. "The original (2022) plan had a much wider strip of land between the development and the cemetery." When told that in the new plan, the distance between the cemetery property line and the first townhouse would be 50 feet, Barnes shook his head. "The goal of the 2022 design was to give enough land for the cemetery to plant some trees between it and the development. They didn't want to have people sitting on their back porch partying while people are holding a funeral just yards away."

The developer thanked the Town Staff and Council for their input, reiterating that their whole purpose of providing the briefing was just to get a sense of what the Council would approve in the long run, and promised to take their input and return at a later date with a revised design.

## Ground broken for new Town Hall

The rain held off just long enough for the "official" ground-breaking of the new Woodsboro Town Hall. After months of delays, preparatory excavation began on the site in November and by the time of the groundbreaking ceremony, trenches for the foundation were in the process of being dug and stakes had been positioned outlining the driveway and parking lots.

The ground-breaking came almost a year after Burgess Barnes had hoped it would. In the November 2023 Town Council meeting, where Barnes briefed the Council on the status of bids the Town was receiving, Barnes told the Council he was "eager to get the foundation and basement of the building in place before winter sets in. Those are the items that can be adversely affected by cold weather, so I would like to get them done as soon as possible," he said. "Once in place, the actual construction of the building can go on, no matter how cold the winter is."

The onset of last year's winter, however, was not the deciding factor in when the ground-breaking would occur, but the unexpected price tag.

In 2018, under direction by the former Town administration,

Woodsboro purchased a lot at 503 S. Main St., which was considered a prime location for an official Town Hall. Unfortunately for the Town, the width of the lot was not large enough for the building's design. So, in 2022, the Town purchased the JR Sports Bar and Restaurant lot, which was almost double the size of the original lot location.

All was going according to plan until the initial round of bids received in December of 2023 set everyone back on their heels. When the Town began the process several years back, the Town was prepared to spend \$800,000. That estimate was blown out of the water when the bids came in, the lowest bid being \$1.6 million.

Commissioner John Cutshall let out a laugh as he read over the proposed bid numbers. His statement, "well we are certainly not going to be spending that much," summed up the feelings of his fellow commissioners.

After a closed-door meeting, the Council agreed to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Sanbower Builders of Myersville that if they could make recommendations for changes in the current design that would get the cost of building the Town Hall down to \$1 million,

the Town would sign a contract with them to build it.

Working closely with Sanbower, the Town was able to get the cost of the actual building down to \$1,040,000. Not included in this figure was \$356,000 for site work, i.e. grading, paving, driveways, etc., for a total of \$1,396,000.

The final figure however, which was revealed to the Town Council at the June Council meeting, still stunned the Council, who expressed concern over spending that sum of money while the Town was facing unknown costs associated with upgrading the Town's water and sewer systems.

Commissioner John Cutshall proposed the Town search out another bid in hopes of getting a lower one to consider. But Barnes pointed out that the Town had signed a contract with the contractor, and they could not legally seek another bid unless the contractor agreed to opt out, "and even then, we have no idea if another round will result in a larger cost, as costs have already gone up since this bid was submitted."

Commissioner Jessie Case proposed delaying the final vote for a month. But when pressed by Barnes on what he would do during that

time, Case shrugged his shoulders and said he "just wanted to take the time to look over the proposed details of the building."

Case's response drew a friendly rebuke from Barnes, who repeated that the Council had been briefed repeatedly on the building and had been "thinking it over for years now."

In the end, the Council split 2 to 2 on moving forward with building the Town Hall. Barnes broke the tie in favor of moving forward with the construction. Since the vote, construction has been on hold while various building related permits were approved.

Even though it was well advertised, none of the Town Council attended the ground-breaking, nor did any of the state level elected officials Barnes had invited. Only County Council President Brad Young, Councilwoman Renee Knapp and Councilmember Mason Carter attended, as well as representatives from Woodsboro Bank, which holds the mortgage for the new hall.

The 2,960 square-foot building will include a conference room, four offices, a file room and two conference rooms, one large enough to seat 40. Its primary resident will be the Town manager.

Louie's

FAMOUS

Chicken & Subs



\$5 Off any order

over \$30 with this ad

WE  
DELIVER

2A West Frederick Street

Walkersville

301-304-0384

## WALKERSVILLE NEWS

# Auditors find Town's financials to be in order

At the November Council meeting, Erin Clark, Representative of Smith Elliott Kearns Company LLC, presented the results of the Town's approved financial audit for Fiscal Year 23/24 to the mayor and town council. They were tasked with verifying the Town's financial records and determining if the Town is following correct accounting principles, as well as the accuracy of their financial statements.

The time period reviewed was July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. Overall, Clark found the Town's financials to be in order. The auditors looked at the General Fund and the Enterprise Fund. The Town's assets exceeded its liabilities by \$24,624,914, also known as a net position. Of this amount, \$9,972,917 may be used to meet the Town's ongoing obligations to its citizens and creditors. At the close

of the fiscal year, the Town owes \$7,438,561 in the form of various loan payments.

The General Fund is the primary operating fund of the Town; it receives funds through various mechanisms, including taxes, licenses and permit fees. The General Fund is where the Town accesses funds for such items as the majority of staff payroll, insurance and pensions payments, new police cars, etc.

The Enterprise Fund receives money primarily through bi-yearly homeowner water payments and hookup fees for new homes and businesses. Sewer is billed through the County. Money in the Enterprise Fund is used to pay for the upkeep of the Town's water and sewer systems, and salaries of staff who operate them, and is considered self-sustaining.

Both the General Fund and Enterprise Fund are considered separate

accounts and the expenses and revenues are audited separately.

When combined, their assets or income total \$37.9 million (\$19.2 million in the General Fund and \$18.7 million in the Enterprise Fund) and their liabilities or expenses balance with the assets. Total revenues for the Town were \$6,863,393, which was 20.4% less than last fiscal year (\$4,854,373 for General Fund and \$2,009,020 for the Enterprise Fund). These revenues were primarily from charges for water services and the non-operating wireless tower rental. Total expenses for the General Fund were \$5,049,664 and \$1,750,175 for the Enterprise Fund.

Real estate property tax is revenue listed under the General Fund, which was approved at 14 cents per \$100 of assessed property value, which is consistent with prior years. The generated revenue from this rate was \$1,134,029,

an increase of \$89,635 over the last fiscal year. Even with the increased revenue, Walkersville has one of the lowest real estate tax rates in Maryland.

Discussion is ongoing regarding the possibility of offering 24/7 police protection to town residents. The cost for five full time resident troopers was \$1,704,148, which is a 14% increase over last fiscal year.

Operating revenues for the Enterprise Fund decreased by \$19,905 due to a decrease in connection fees, as there was less construction in town than the previous year. Charges for water services increased from \$1,510,049 last fiscal year to \$1,545,776 in this fiscal year, a \$35,727 increase.

Operating expenses for the Enterprise Fund decreased this year by \$4,679 due to decreases in electricity usage and distribution maintenance. These were offset by increases in chemical costs, treatment fees and insurance costs.

Compared to FY 22/23, grants and shared taxes for the Town decreased from \$3,380,229 to \$2,767,813, mostly due to the lack of ARPA funds being spent on projects. Highway user revenue accounted for \$356,472 of this total. The rest was accounted for by admissions tax, Frederick County shared income tax and tax equity.

The largest portion of the Town's net position is its investment in capital assets, minus any outstanding debts, which acquired \$14,651,997. These assets include the acquisition of land, buildings, machinery, equipment and infrastructure and are for the benefit of the residents.

Overall, the Town's assets exceeded its liabilities by \$24,624,914. It is the desired goal of the Town to continue to operate conservatively and manage resources responsibly, while also beginning to spend some of the surplus funds. With many infrastructure upgrades needed, the Town should be able to easily obtain this goal.

# Town approves agreement for fiber optic services

The Town Council made two decisions regarding the future of the Town's cable and internet capabilities in December. They approved a draft Ordinance that would allow the Burgess and Commissioners to enter into agreements with cable and internet providers without needing to address the Town's Code and they took the next step by agreeing to work with Shentel, a telecommunications company offering Fiber optic internet capabilities.

With the revised Ordinance the Town will be able to keep the

existing agreement with Comcast for phone, cable TV, and internet access however they will be able to look for other providers without needing to make changes to the Town's Code which the previous Ordinance required.

The Ordinance change was encouraged after talking with neighboring municipalities and then researching other providers in the area. Town Manager Sean Williams said the Town settled on Shentel which utilizes Glo-fiber, a fiber optic-based system, that will allow the Town to see

higher speed internet than its predecessor DSL.

Shentel currently has cable franchise agreements with the city of Frederick, Middletown, and has recently signed with Thurmont. Emmitsburg has discussed signing on with them as well.

According to Williams the Town claims approximately \$80,000 in cable franchise fees a year from Comcast. With the addition of Shentel, he said that revenue shouldn't change much because some residents will stay with Comcast, some will move to Shentel and some may decide to

use both. No matter what, the Town receives about three percent of the total gross sales of what the providers make broken into quarterly payments throughout the year. "I don't know that this will make a dramatic change in the Town's revenue," he said. "There may be a slight increase in franchise agreement fees but realistically it will likely stay the same."

As for the physical construction of the fiber optic strands, Williams said that the lines would follow the existing path, if a community uses above ground wiring, they will receive above

ground fiber optics and if they use below ground that is how the fiber optics would be installed.

Williams did ask the Town Council to not officially sign the agreement with Shentel until December 31, allowing the Ordinance proper time to become law.

By first approving the Ordinance, the Town will be able to sign the agreements with Shentel to begin developing the plans for installation of the fiber optic equipment, bringing Walkersville residents faster speeds and steadier service.

# Staley property applies for agriculture preservation

The no growth versus growth argument has been a source of frustration for both the Town council and the planning commission for months during the Comprehensive Plan review. At the center of it was the 110-acre Mike Staley farm, originally zoned half industrial and half agricultural with original plans to develop it with over 350 homes. However after much back and forth between residents and Town staff, the develop plan was reduced to a mere 60 home development.

Months later Tiffany Staley, owner of

a 69-acre property that sits on the corner of Devilbiss Road and Eyley Court submitted an application to place her property in the Frederick County Agricultural Preservation Program that will permanently put her property under protection against development. Her property currently adjoins other easements sitting to the north and west. T. Staley has spoken against developing M. Staley's farm at past Comprehensive Plan meetings.

By applying through the Installment Purchase Program (IPP), T. Staley would be included in the pres-

ervation program. The IPP uses Installment Purchase Agreements where the program pays the farmer tax-free interest payments over a 10- to 20-year term, with a balloon lump sum principal payment at the end of the term.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Susan Hauver said placing the T. Staley property under agriculture preservation is consistent with the Comprehensive Plans goals of creating a permanent agricultural buffer zone between the town and surrounding municipalities and growth areas in the future. The agricultural buffer accounts

for 4,220 acres on the plan. Although at one point in time the Town would have hesitated to recommend farms that sit within Town limits be allowed into agricultural preserve due to their potential to be zoned for development. "You have to consider this as a limitation of future growth," said Hauver.

Town staff's recommendation to approve the application at the Planning Commission meeting was taken in stride by all members. Commissioner Liaison Russ Winch, a well-known proponent of 'no growth' voted a resolute yes to the recommendation. Chair

David Ennis surprisingly voted yes as well. Although a promoter of development he said his reasons were because of the rights of a property owner to do what they wish with their property.

At the Town Council meeting four of the five members supported the recommendation while Commissioner Betsey Whitmore-Branen voted against the application for unknown reasons. Regardless, it passed with a vote of four to one. The process will take approximately two years from application to final approval.



**Dale Clabaugh, Agent**  
23 E. Frederick St.,  
Walkersville  
301-898-7088  
dale.clabaugh.bvsv@statefarm.com

**BUSY. BUSY. BUSY.  
BUSY. BUSY. BUSY.**

**Life insurance shouldn't wait.**

Even though life is busy, take a moment to reflect on what's most important. For peace of mind, protect your family with State Farm® life insurance.

**We put the life back in life insurance.™ CALL ME TODAY.**



# WALKERSVILLE/UNION BRIDGE NEWS

## Large renovation for Lonza continues

One of Walkersville's largest water users, the Lonza Bioscience Group, shared updates on their interior renovations as well as their future plans with the Planning Commission at their October meeting. Lonza is one of the world's largest healthcare manufacturing companies with 35 locations on five continents. The company aids pharmaceutical, biotech, and nutrition companies with releasing their treatments to the worldwide market.

The Walkersville location began in 1974 in a 300,000 square foot facility on 116 acres with 600

employees. They manufacture the materials necessary to perform the endotoxin assay, which is used to help ensure the safety and compliance of parenteral (injectable) drugs and medical devices, according to the Lonza website. The website also notes that the endotoxin assay "is used by pharmaceutical companies to assess endotoxin levels in all injectable pharmaceutical products and medical devices to help ensure their safety and compliance with regulatory standards."

Site Head of the Walkersville location, Philipp Künti, named

the project, "Endotoxin 2.0" or "Endo 2.0." It entails the renovation of 18,000 square feet of dedicated manufacturing space to meet the growing demand for endotoxin assay products. Künti said the increase in manufacturing capacity is because "The existing capacity is not enough." These plans were originally approved in December 2023.

Planning Commission Member Nathan Shatto questioned Künti on the potential impact to their utilities usage with the expansion, specifically asking about water usage. Although Lonza "is the largest water

consumer in town," said Künti, he assured the Commission that they did not expect an increase in the utilities, water or electricity use.

As for water usage, Lonza purifies the water it draws from the town to remove all salts, bacteria and other compounds, then distills it to be used in 95% of their product formulations, according to Künti. He said a small amount is also used during the cleaning and cooling processes.

One concern expressed by Commission members was the impact on the Town's water and electric-

ity supply. Künti explained that the company's approach to reducing these impacts is to reduce the use of industrial water by improving their cleaning process because "that's where they can make the biggest difference," according to Künti.

Planning Commission Member Richard Brady suggested that the company investigate using their excess land for solar energy production to help with any possible increase in costs and mentioned using grey water to aid in cooling. Although interested, Künti said they were not looking at alternative cooling methods at this time.

## Union Bridge News-Briefs...

### Grant Money To Aid Shiner Court

In December, the Town Council approved a motion to distribute funds to the Shiner Court Retirement Community for much needed repairs.

The 20-unit (10 duplexes) community was built in the early 2000's to accommodate low-income seniors and provide them affordable housing. The apartments participate in the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) HOME Program, which provides grant

money to create these affordable housing opportunities.

This program allows some of the units to have the rent capped at the local Fair Market Rent (FMR) values or even lower. These values are determined by estimating gross rent cost to include necessary utilities. The rest of the apartments are either at or below 60% of the Area Median Income (AMI), which is the middle range for the region's income, meaning half are above this number and half are below.

There are a total of 11 HVAC

systems and eight hot water heaters that require replacement. Not surprising since the units are over 20 years old and many of said units still have their original HVAC systems and hot water heaters.

Councilmember Laura Conway met with grant representatives to obtain funding for the \$113,668 project and was successful in receiving \$81,900 for the replacements. This left \$31,700 for the Town to cover from the Shiner Court "budget," which was requested by Conway and approved by the Council.

### Lead Pipe Survey Update

An ongoing project for Union Bridge, as well as other surrounding small towns, is the Lead and Copper Rule Revision (LCRR) mandate that was released by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2021. The mandate requires every lead and galvanized pipe in the nation to

be replaced by 2034. A complete service line material inventory and replacement plan was required to be completed by October 2024.

According to Town Clerk and Treasurer Dawn Metcalfe, the Town continues to work on the project. Letters have been sent to houses with pipes made of unknown materials, as well as houses that are known to have

lead or galvanized materials. Metcalfe said they would need to hire a specialist to identify which pipes are lead or galvanized on the Town side (versus residential) that are currently unknown.

Mayor Perry Jones reminded the Council that the project is an unfunded mandate, and they plan on looking for and applying for grants to help pay for the required work.




**Walkersville Business and Professional Association**

Supporting businesses from Walkersville, Woodsboro and the surrounding area.

**Member Benefits:**

- ★ Website profiles
- ★ Sponsorship opportunities
- ★ Group voting rights
- ★ Sponsored events
- ★ Private Facebook group
- ★ Attend meetings
- ★ Social media sharing
- ★ Add our organization on LinkedIn
- ...and many more.

[walkersvillebusinesses.com/join](http://walkersvillebusinesses.com/join)



**TANEYTOWN NAPA**

Family Owned & Locally Trusted Since 1978

At Taneytown NAPA, we're more than just an auto parts store — we're your neighbors. Family owned and operated since 1978, we take pride in knowing our customers, their names, and even their rides!

Come see why generations of families trust us — where everyone knows your name (and your car)!

**117 E. Baltimore St.  
Taneytown  
410-756-2044**

**WALKERSVILLE INFO**

Thurs., Jan. 2 - 7 p.m. - Parks Commission Meeting  
 Wed., Jan. 8 - 7 p.m. - Town Meeting  
 Thurs., Jan. 9 - Christmas Tree Pick-up  
 Tues., Jan. 14 - 7 p.m. - Planning Commission Workshop  
 Thurs., Jan. 16 - Christmas Tree Pick-up  
 Wed., Jan. 22 - 7 p.m. - Town Meeting  
 Mon., Jan. 27 - 7 p.m. - EDC Meeting  
 Tues., Jan. 28 - 7 p.m. - Planning Commission Meeting

website: [www.walkersvillemd.gov](http://www.walkersvillemd.gov)  
 phone: 301-845-4500

 Walkersville:Our Town



**H&R Block - Thurmont**

**TAX SEASON KICK OFF BEGINS  
JANUARY 3, 2025**

**Take Advantage of our  
2025 REFUND ADVANCE PROGRAM**

- Requires your W2 and all tax documents to complete your return
- Same day funds of up to \$4,000 based on your refund
  - No fees and interest free
- Your advance amount is deducted from your refund

**Office is open Monday thru Saturday  
for appointments and walk-ins**

**Sundays by appointment**

**Call today for an appointment or schedule online**

**301-271-7809 / [www.hrblock.com](http://www.hrblock.com)  
120 Frederick Rd., Suite F, Thurmont**

## GOVERNMENT

### Congressman David Trone

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

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

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

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

to make life-changing impacts on our communities.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I've served during a time in which

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

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

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

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

### County Councilman Brad Young

The Frederick County Council meets regularly on Tuesday evenings at 5:30 at Winchester Hall, located at 12 East Church Street in downtown Frederick. All meetings are open to the public, and we welcome participation. Members of the public are welcome to attend in person or participate over the phone. Please note that there will be no Council meetings on December 24 or December 31.

On December 3, I was reelected by the Council to serve as the Council President for the remaining 2024-2026 term. I am

proud of the accomplishments that the County Council has achieved over the past two years in working collaboratively with County Executive Jessica Fitzwater on behalf of the people of Frederick County. Over the next two years I will continue diligently work for all Frederick Countians.

The Council also reelected Vice President Kavonté Duckett (District 4) to serve as the Vice President for the remaining 2024-2026 term. Vice President Duckett said, "I appreciate the support of my colleagues to continue in my leadership role. As I look ahead to the next

two years, I am filled with excitement and anticipation for the opportunities ahead. Together, we will work to further strengthen and elevate the voices of all of our residents, ensuring that everyone feels heard and valued in our community."

In the new year, the Council will have two upcoming Bills advancing through our legislative process. Bill 24-19 Amends Ch. 1-13-34 of the Frederick County Code, creating a Local Program for the Preservation of Critical Agricultural Land. Bill 24-20 Amends the Frederick County Uniformed Employees Retirement

Plan Offering a Deferred Retirement Option Program. I am sponsoring both of these upcoming Bills on behalf of the County Executive. For the most up to date agendas, full text of Bills, and Bill schedules, please visit our website.

There have been lots of events in the county recently and I was proud to attend the Wreaths Across America Ceremony in Brunswick. This Non-Profit places wreaths on all the grave sites of Veterans. It is to honor and remember them during the holiday season. Thank you to all out Veterans!

The Frederick County Council encourages public involvement at every stage of the legislative process. We wel-

come public comment at every Council meeting on Tuesday evenings. Members of the public are welcome to attend and give comment in person, leave a voicemail to be forwarded to each Council Member, or email us any time at councilmembers@frederickcountymd.gov. Please visit our website at [www.frederickcountymd.gov/county council](http://www.frederickcountymd.gov/county council) to view our latest agendas, legislation, and upcoming calendar of events.

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

### County Councilwoman Renee Knapp

In a few days, the Maryland General Assembly (MGA) will convene for this year's legislative session. Last month, the Frederick County State Delegation held a public forum at Winchester Hall to hear from other elected officials and residents about their legislative priorities. I appreciated the delegation having this meeting and I was happy to attend, along with County Executive Jessica Fitzwater, and other Council Members. For a Saturday morning during close to the holiday season, it was well attended by many community members.

In November, the County Council voted to approve the legislative package put forth by the County Executive. Additionally, the Coun-

cil approved legislation proposed by Council Member Mason Carter (District 5) to allow local non-profit organizations to accept credit cards for gambling activities like bingo and tip jars. This is the second year Council Member Carter has brought forth this legislation on behalf of local volunteer fire companies to help them with their fundraising, and the second year the Council has approved it for consideration by the MGA. Given the way most of us use credit/debit cards more often, and cash less, this is a reasonable accommodation. Frederick County has benefited from the tireless fundraising efforts of our volunteer fire company activities which have saved the County millions of dollars. Like many other things, the

costs to replace aging apparatus have risen a lot. With the number of commercials on TV for online sports betting, it's difficult to understand why local fire companies should be prohibited from accepting credit cards for things like bingo and raffles.

The State Delegation members recognized the crucial role fundraising by local fire companies plays in the county and state budgets, and public safety. They were also hopeful that this bill might make more progress this session. I hope the bill passes this year, and I appreciate Council Member Carter proposing it again this year.

If the New Year has you looking for a way to serve your community, joining one of Frederick County's Boards or Commissions is a great way to get

involved. Two commissions on which I serve as the County Council liaison currently have openings.

The Commission on Disabilities meets the second Monday every month at 6pm. Their work includes things like inspecting buildings and infrastructure in the county to ensure they meet the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act, finding programs in the county that will provide food to people with disabilities, and staying informed about transportation issues related to county residents with disabilities.

The Sustainability Commission meets the third Wednesday each month at 3pm. The Commission is made up of community members who are dedicated to issues related

to sustainability. They also guide the development of a Frederick County Sustainability Plan. If you are experienced or passionate about things like agriculture and food security, sustainable land use and transportation, open space and land preservation, green building practices, or recycling and waste reduction, then this may be a fulfilling opportunity for you.

Members of boards and commissions must be County residents. Appointments are made by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council. If you are interested in learning more or applying, you can visit the Boards & Commissions page on the Frederick County Government website.

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. My email address is [rknapp@frederickcountymd.gov](mailto:rknapp@frederickcountymd.gov).

### County Notes...

#### True to Lead Division of Aging and Independence

Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater has appointed Carolyn True as Director of the Division of Aging and Independence. The County Council voted to confirm her appointment today. A longtime

employee of Frederick County, Ms. True served as Deputy Director since January 2024. In September, she was named Acting Director upon the retirement of Kathryn Schey.

"Our community's most vulnerable residents deserve to be treated with care and respect,"

County Executive Fitzwater said. "Carolyn has incredible experience serving their needs. With her knowledge and data-driven approach, I am confident she will be a strong advocate for the people she serves."

The Division of Aging and Independence operates six 50+ community centers, the Scott Key Center, Meals on Wheels,

and the Service Coordination for Seniors Program. It also provides numerous resources for caregivers, seniors, veterans and people with disabilities. The division has a \$10 million operating budget.

Ms. True has worked for Frederick County Government for 27 years. She also has served on numerous boards and commissions, including the Continuum

of Care Committee, the Maryland Coordinating Caregivers Council, and the United Way of Frederick County. She is a graduate of Leadership Frederick County and was named a Person to Watch by Frederick Magazine in 2000.

Ms. True earned a Master's Degree in Human Sciences and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Hood College.

# GOVERNMENT

## County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

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

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

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

Partnerships are critical to our County's success, and our most important partnership is with the residents of Frederick County. You have a voice in shaping decisions that impact your community, and I hope to hear from you throughout the year. Whether it's main-

taining our roads, supporting our schools, or protecting the natural beauty of our County, every decision should start with input from the people who live here.

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

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

The schedule is as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Governments, and Households.

The ENOUGH program was launched by Governor Wes Moore as a first-of-its-kind, community-based strategy to address concentrated child poverty in Maryland. The program is part of a \$20 million historic investment to support communities as they develop solutions to deeply rooted challenges. The County's Division of Family Services and Local Management Board received one of the program's inaugural grants last month.

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

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

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

While this project is primarily

being funded privately, a portion of the funding will come from the State, Frederick County, and the City of Frederick.

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

This project has been a long-standing economic development priority for our local businesses and Chamber of Commerce, and this investment shows that the Governor understands and values the essential role Frederick County plays in Maryland's economy.

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

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

## Woodsboro Burgess Heath Barnes

Greetings, Happy New Year, and welcome to 2025. I hope everyone had a Happy and Cheerful Holiday Season. I look forward to good things this year and exciting developments in Woodsboro.

On December the 18th we officially broke ground for the new town office. It was attended by several local elected officials as well as our local fire department and many townspeople. This is project that has been in the work for several years now, but is finally happening. It is a much-needed thing for the town.

Mt. Hope, Rocky Hill, St. Johns, and Oak Hill cemeteries participated in the Wreaths Across America program for the first time this year. The support was overwhelming and the crowds that came out to lay the wreaths on our Veteran's graves were really nice. Now every Veteran in these cemeteries had a nice wreath on their graves for the Holidays.

With the new Townhouses that have been built on 2nd street, the town council voted to make parking only on one side of the street on S. 2nd Street from Coppermine Road to Elizabeth Street. This was necessary due to the width of the street to ensure emergency vehicles can get through. New signs have gone up for this along the street.

As always, I encourage everyone to support Glade Valley Community Services (GVCS) if you have clothes or food donations as they are always in need of items for members

of the community. For more information, please contact GVCS by email at [gladevalley.org@gmail.com](mailto:gladevalley.org@gmail.com), or call 301-845-0213.

If you have any questions, concerns, complaints, or compliments

please feel free to reach out to me at [hbarnes@woodsboro.org](mailto:hbarnes@woodsboro.org) or by phone at 301-401-7164.

Woodsboro Town meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m.. In addition, Plan-

ning and Zoning meetings are at 6 p.m. on the First Monday of the month as needed. If you have an item for the agenda, it needs to be submitted 14 days before the P&Z

meeting. The current location for meetings is the St. Johns United Church of Christ located at 8 North 2nd Street, Woodsboro. The public is always invited to attend.

### Battlefield

## Transport & Recovery

**We tow everything: Light, Medium, Heavy Duty**

Transport Vehicles, Buses, Cars, Machinery, Equipment



Licensed, Professional  
Friendly Drivers  
Available 24/7  
MD, PA, VA, WV

**1221 Bruceville Rd., Keymar 410-984-2082**  
Charles Mehring - Owner [charlie.battlefield@comcast.net](mailto:charlie.battlefield@comcast.net)

- **Pressure Washing**
- **Painting (Interior & Exterior)**
- **Roofing & Siding Repair**
- **Handyman Services**

**Call or text Ed for details**  
**443-326-4871**

MHIC #78710 • PA #114771



Farm or Residential

Happy New Year

Make 2025 the year you buy or sell your dream home! Let's make it happen together—reach out today!"



*Elle Smith*  
REALTOR®

**J&B Real Estate, Inc.**  
301-401-8620 | 301-271-3487  
[www.ellesmithhomes.com](http://www.ellesmithhomes.com)







## Not Just Clean, Squeaky Clean!

**INC.**

**www.squeakycleaninc.net**  
Free Estimates  
Fully Insured MHIC #51996




**Residential/Commercial**

- **Power Washing**  
Houses, Concrete and Brick
- **Wood Restoration (Clean/Stain/Seal)**  
Decks, Fences, Cedar Siding, Log Homes
- **Driveway Sealing**

301-845-8550



# COMMENTARY

## Words from Winterbilt

### Predictions for a new year

Shannon Bohrer

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Adam Grant, the author of Think

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

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

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

—Don Yaeger

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

## The Bulwark

### Never Trumpers were right, actually

Jonathan Last

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

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

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

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

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

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

With respect: This is silly.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Trump is dangerously ignorant of basic reality.

He is easy to manipulate.

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

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

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

Now what did the reality of Trump deliver?

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

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

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

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

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

He muddled public health messaging coming from the government.

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

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

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

He refused to accept the results of

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

These are not encouraging.

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

first term.

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

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

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

This is narcissism.

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

Me neither.

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

What's the alternative? Hoping for the worst?

But hoping and analyzing are different things.

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



# The Liberal Patriot

Hating the other side doesn't work for Democrats

John Halpin

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

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

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

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

did not deliver after 2020.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Democrats are obsessed with diversity so perhaps they should apply these



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# Good Day Neighbor

The Golden Rule

Dorothea Mordan

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

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

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

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

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

From the King James Bible:

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

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

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

And he said unto him, Thou

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

And he said, He that shewed mercy on

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

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

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

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

Long term involvement in eleemosynary community service activities, or

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

interest of humanity and that epitomizes excellence and leadership.

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

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

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

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

## PASTOR'S DESK

# Peace on earth, good will to men

Pastor Phil Beck  
St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Where are you experiencing the bleak mid-winter or are you in the middle of a place where Peace has been elusive or difficult to achieve? This is the point in our church year where we are invited to seek the Lord in prayer to discern a way to be encouraging to one another, to listen to the call of peace in all we do which when shared with those around us will offer a straighter road to overcome the desolate emotions we find are weighing us down keeping us from God.

There is a voice calling out to us in the wilderness for us to listen to pointing out the Good News of Jesus who has come into the world bringing peace into our lives. The Gospel of Luke points us in the direction of the hope that is to come and especially gives us notice that in the wilderness peace can be realized. As the spirit of hope fills our heart we are called to seek out a peace with one another and experience the hope found in Christ. In the lighting of the second candle we are reminded of the peace Christ brings, encouraging us to foster peace in our relationships and communities as we await His coming.

Peace is a profound state of tranquility transcending the mere absence of conflict, embodying a deep sense of inner serenity and collective well-being. Peace flourishes in spaces where understanding, compassion, and respect for one another prevail, fostering con-

nections that bridge divides. In moments of peace, the clamor of discord quiets, allowing for reflection, dialogue, and the nurturing of relationships. It is the gentle rhythm of coexistence, where diverse voices come together to celebrate differences while working collaboratively towards common goals. It is in this peace we find our love for one another, a love asking us to move past the seeds of discontent and self-centeredness allowing us to experience new growth and the renewal of relationships strained in whatever wilderness we may be residing.

In a quote from Pastor April Fiet she clarifies for us that "both the Greek and Hebrew words for peace (eirene and shalom) have more to do with wholeness than with quiet or rest. Eirene comes from the verb that means "to join together" or "to tie into a whole." Shalom is about wholeness and goodness in the relationship between things. Perhaps, our calling in a world without peace is to participate in the work of tying things back together. In peace-less days, we are called to be peacemakers, with all of the grit and difficulty that will entail."

While many people equate this time of year to a time of peace, there are many who struggle for whatever the reason. As Pastor Fiet mentions, it is incumbent upon us to join together and make whole those whom we know to be challenged in this time or any time. We are called to love our neighbor and share the peace of God with those who find themselves outside of good tidings.

Often, we look at the state of the world; war, division, injustice, and think peace can only come through political solutions or the end of conflict. But the peace John speaks of is much deeper. It is a peace transcending our particular issues and addresses the inner turmoil of the human heart. The peace of God is not just the absence of conflict; it is the presence of justice, wholeness, and reconciliation. For us, this means looking at the obstacles in our own lives hindering the peace of Christ from entering. What are the things that are keeping the Peace of God from entering our hearts?

Are there places in our hearts that are holding bitterness, unforgiveness, or anxiety that we need to reconcile? In this season of Peace, we are called to remove the obstacles in our hearts that keep us from experiencing the peace of God. The Peace of God which allows us to join together with our friends and family to dispel any turmoil we may have weighing us down.

True peace is not merely the absence of war or conflict but the presence of God's transformative love and grace in our lives. This peace is not something we create on our own, yet is a gift from God, made available through the work of Christ. Christ comes beside us to show us the way and lead us from the dark days into a place of tranquility and calm, a combination of joining together to follow in His way to make our roads straighter.

In a world full of anxiety and turmoil, we are reminded that God's peace is not bound by the shifting sands of political systems or human rulers. Christ, the Prince of Peace, brings lasting peace to all who receive Him, despite the brokenness and conflict around us. John's message of repentance is an invitation to experience the peace of God. Repentance is a joyful return to God, recognizing He is the source of all peace. It is in the absolution of our sins through Christ that we experience the reconciliation and peace of God. As Luther said, "The peace of God is not just peace with God; it is peace within ourselves, through the forgiveness of sins."



Christ's work on the cross reconciles us to God by making peace through the blood of His cross. This peace is received through our faith as we trust in the Gospel and are comforted by the forgiveness of sins. John's call to prepare the way for Christ is an invitation for us to experience this peace in our own lives. We are called to turn from sin and trust in the promise of God's salvation, which is found in Christ alone. We, as the faithful, are called to be proclaimers of this peace. Just as John the Baptist prepared the way for the Lord's first coming, we are called to proclaim the peace of Christ to a world that is still in need of reconciliation. Through our witness, we can be the bearers of the peace of Christ to all who believe.

We recognize this peace is given to us by way of the means of grace, the Word and the Sacraments. In Baptism, we receive the peace of forgiveness; in the Lord's Supper, we experience the peace of Christ's body and blood, given for the forgiveness of sins. These gifts are the way God continues to prepare our hearts for His coming, a coming we experience in the Peace of a snow covered lane or as we exit a midnight Christmas Service.

A peace that exudes a subtle joy in knowing God's creation is holding us close, filling us with a togetherness found only in the arms of God bound by hope and the promise of our life with Christ. Our Peace comes to us in a manger with everything to give and asking for nothing in return for our salvation. We are reminded in Philippians that we are to "be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and

supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

In the middle of the Civil War, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's wife had recently died, and his son had been critically wounded in the war. Longfellow wrote from a sense of despair and offered up the Hope in a Peace to come in these words:

*I heard the bells on Christmas day  
Their old familiar carols play,  
And wild and sweet the word repeat*

*Of peace on earth, good will to men.*

*And in despair I bowed my head:  
"There is no peace on earth,"  
I said,  
"For hate is strong, and mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good will to men.*

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: "God is not dead, nor doth He sleep; The wrong shall fail, the right prevail, With peace on earth, good will to men."

Because of the tender mercy of our God, we experience Peace, a peace sent to our hearts through the work of the Holy Spirit. Peace be with you always.

*To learn more about Walkersville's St. Paul's Lutheran Church visit them online at [www.saintpaulslutheran-church.org](http://www.saintpaulslutheran-church.org) or better yet, join them for Sunday services.*

### Graceham Moravian Church

All  
Welcome  
to Our Service



Served with Grace Free Dinner  
Monday, January 6

Sundays at 10:30 a.m. & Sunday School 9:15 a.m.  
[www.gracehammoravian.org](http://www.gracehammoravian.org) / 301-271-2379  
8231-A Rocky Ridge Road, Thurmont

*Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old.  
I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?  
I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.*

Isaiah 43: 18 - 19



*Woodsboro Evangelical Lutheran Church*

*prays that the New Year brings hope, joy and peace.*

**Come and worship with us in our Sanctuary  
Sunday Mornings at 10 a.m.**

If you are unable to join us in the sanctuary you may view our services on our YouTube channel. For more information on how to access our services please see our website or contact the church.

**Free Community Dinner - All are welcome!**

**January 7 - 5 to 7 p.m.**

**January 18 - 5 to 7 p.m. (Co-sponsored - St. Paul's Lutheran Church)**



**Woodsboro Evangelical  
Lutheran Church**

101 S. Main Street, Woodsboro

[www.woodsborolutheranchurch.com](http://www.woodsborolutheranchurch.com) 301-845-4533



# THE BOOK OF DAYS

## Twelfth-Day



### January 6th

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

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

The primitive Christians celebrated the Feast of the Nativity for twelve days, observing the first and last with great solemnity; and both of these days were denominated Epiphany, the first the greater Epiphany, from our Lord having on that day become Incarnate, or made his appearance in "the flesh;" the latter, the lesser Epiphany, from the three-fold manifestation of His Godhead—the first, by the appearance of the blazing

star which conducted Melchior, Jasper, and Balthazar, the three Magi, or wise men, commonly styled the three Kings of Cologne, out of the East, to worship the Messiah, and to offer him presents of "Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh"—Melchior the Gold, in testimony of his royalty as the promised King of the Jews; Jasper the Frankincense, in token of his Divinity; and Balthazar the Myrrh, in allusion to the sorrows which, in the humiliating condition of a man, our Redeemer vouchsafed to take upon him: the second, of the descent of the Holy Ghost in the form of a Dove, at the Baptism: and the third, of the first miracle of our Lord turning water into wine at the marriage in Cana. All of which three manifestations of the Divine nature happened on the same day, though not in the same year.

"To render due honour to the memory of the ancient Magi, who are supposed to have been kings, the monarch of this country himself, either personally or through his chamberlain, offers annually at the altar on this day, Gold, Frank-incense, and

Myrrh; and the kings of Spain, where the Feast of Epiphany is likewise called the "Feast of the Kings," were accustomed to make the like offerings."—Brady.

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

"Three priests, clothed as kings, with their servants carrying offerings, met from different directions before the altar. The middle one, who came from the east, pointed with his staff to a star. A dialogue then ensued; and, after kissing each other, they began to sing, "Let us go and inquire;" after which the precentor began a responsory, "Let the Magi come." A procession then commenced; and as soon as it began to enter the nave, a crown, with a star resembling a cross, was lighted up, and pointed out to the Magi, with, "Behold the Star in the East." This being concluded, two priests standing at each side of the altar, answered meekly, "We are those whom you seek;" and, drawing a curtain, shewed them a child, whom, falling down, they worshipped. Then the servants made the offerings of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, which were divided among the priests.

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

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

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

In England, it appears there was always a queen as well as a king on Twelfth-Night. A writer, speaking of the celebration in the south of England in 1774, says:

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

In the sixteenth century, it would appear that some peculiar ceremonies followed the election of the king and queen. In

one tradition, the king, on being elected, was raised up with great cries to the ceiling, where, with chalk, he inscribed crosses on the rafters to protect the house against evil spirits.

On Twelfth-Day, 1563, Mary Queen of Scots celebrated the French pastime of the King of the Bean at Holyrood, but with a queen instead of a king, as more appropriate, in consideration of herself being a female sovereign. The lot fell to the real queen's attendant, Mary Fleming, and the mistress good-naturedly arrayed the servant in her own robes and jewels, that she might duly sustain the mimic dignity in the festivities of the night.

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

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

Serving Maryland since 2000  
CHRISTIAN BASED TO-DO-LIST SPECIALIST  
**MR FIX IT SERVICES**  
Interior/Exterior Installations & Repairs  
Call or text Ed 443-326-4871  
MHIC #78710 PA #114771

**Apples United Church of Christ**  
2024 AUCC Community Support  
Thurmont Boy Scouts  
Town of Thurmont - Utility Assistance  
Thurmont Food Bank  
Hospice of Frederick County  
School Supplies - Frederick Co. Students  
Catoctin Safe 'n Sane  
Hurricane Relief  
Driscoll Family  
Compassion International - sponsored child  
Catoctin High School Seniors - 2 scholastic gifts  
Thurmont Ministerium  
7908 Apples Church Road  
Thurmont  
301-606-2169  
[www.applesucc.org](http://www.applesucc.org)

**Johnsville United Methodist Church**  
**Soup Sale**  
Sat., Jan. 4 &  
Sat., Jan. 11  
Chicken corn soup and  
Vegetable beef soup **\$9 qt.**  
*Stock your freezer!* (Cash or check only!)  
Orders due by Monday, January 13  
Call Karen at 410-775-7627  
Soup pick up Monday, January 20 from 1 to 3  
There will be a bake table available  
JUMC Parish Hall  
11106 Green Valley Rd., Union Bridge

**CRUISE PLANNERS**  
MORE THAN JUST CRUISES  
On Stage Alaska Presentation  
by Holland America - Sat., March 8th  
• On Stage Alaska performance will be at a location in Frederick and features entertaining information by a team who have lived and worked in Alaska.  
• Get a glimpse of the state's history, scenery, wildlife, & hospitality including Denali National Park & the spectacular wilderness.  
• Enjoy stunning footage, get helpful planning tips & get exclusive travel benefits!  
Land & cruise special promotions combinable with "Have It All" perks for even more value!  
Call or email our office for more details, time and location

Virtual VIP Experience  
Scan here to register to attend a Sandals® & Beaches® Resorts Virtual VIP Experience on  
**Tues., January 28 from 7 to 8**  
Attend the live session & qualify for exclusive booking incentives!

Barb Cline, ECC  
Your Personal Travel Professional  
240-575-5966  
BarbClineTravel.com  
CruisePlannersFrederick.com

Kimberly Mogard  
Associate  
240-415-8186  
kimberlymogard.barbclinetravel.com

# ECOLOGY

## Winter wonders

Anne Gageby  
Director of Environmental Education  
Strawberry Hill Foundation

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

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

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

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

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

burrow under a pond’s silt and go dormant.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Strix - one of Strawberry Hill’s Animal Ambassadors.

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

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

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

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

Help us make their New Year a little brighter!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Why are Animal Ambassadors important?

Animal Ambassadors help support education and conservation goals through awareness and personal connections to animals and nature. They provide opportunities to meet local wildlife up close which can spark a life-long interest in animals and environmental causes.

What does it mean to sponsor an Animal Ambassador?

Being a sponsor means helping Strawberry Hill provide enrichment and training for our Animal Ambassadors. Your donation also helps us provide housing, food, and veterinary care. Sponsor an Ambassador or give a sponsorship as a gift to friends and family.

What will I receive as part of my sponsorship?

As a thank-you for your donation, you will receive a packet with photos and information about your sponsored animal and a certificate of sponsorship.

If you would like to make a gift to support our Animal Ambassadors this holiday season, please mail a check to: Strawberry Hill, 1537 Mount Hope Road, Fairfield, PA. 17320 or visit [www.strawberryhill.org/donate](http://www.strawberryhill.org/donate).




Plan for Tomorrow

Vinores Financial Services is committed to helping people, business and estates pursue their financial goals. We offer access to a wide range of financial products and services. By working with a skilled financial professional, you will be able to identify your needs and make sound financial decisions to help work toward those goals.

Once we understand your long-term plans, we will customize strategies to implement your vision and objectives. By illustrating your current financial situation we can better work with you in developing the road map best suited to reach your goals.

---

**Call Us Today & Let's Start Planning For Tomorrow**

Meet our investment team including a Financial Planner and Advisors.



David Rectenwald  
Eric Vinores  
Ed Gills

**209 E. Main St., Thurmont • 301-304-6004**  
VinoresFinancial.com

Securities offered through Grove Point Investments, LLC, member FINRA/SIPC. Investment Advisory Services offered through Grove Point Advisors, LLC. Grove Point Investments, LLC & Grove Point Advisors, LLC are subsidiaries of Grove Point Financial, LLC. Vinores Financial Services is not affiliated with Grove Point Financial, LLC or its subsidiaries.



**Services**

- Retirement Planning
- Estate Planning
- Personal Finance
- Financial Planning
- Exit Strategies
- Annuity Products
- Income Planning
- Farm Estate
- Transition Planning
- Retirement
- Education Savings Accounts
- Investment Management

View Form CRS



# THE RETIRED ECOLOGIST

## Of mice and omens

Bill Meredith

*"The thing that has been is that which shall be; ... and there is no new thing under the sun."*

—The Preacher, ca. 200 BC: Ecclesiastes 1:9

*"When choosing among alternative explanations, select the one that requires the fewest unprovable assumptions."*

—William of Ockham, ca. 1320.: "Ockham's Razor."

*"The best laid schemes o' mice an' men / Gang aft agley."*

—Robert Burns: "To a Mouse," 1785.

When we got married, one of the wedding gifts we received was an alarm clock. It had a light built into it, and when the appointed time arrived, it would begin to flash off and on; and then after a minute or so, the alarm would begin to ring. It became a fixture in our lives; we set it for 6 a.m., and after we came to Emmitsburg, it started our days for the next ten years or so until it wore out. Eventually, we no longer actually needed it; the rituals of getting kids ready for school and ourselves ready for work became imprinted in our brains, so the alarm became a kind of security blanket, like an insurance policy that was there but never actually used. But after we retired, things began to drift, at least in my case. I'm an "evening person," rarely to bed before midnight, so I soon fell into a more random pattern of rising. My wife, however, has always been an early riser, so in recent years she has become my alarm clock. Our original clock actually had a bell; more recent ones beeped. My wife does neither; when she decides the time has come, she calls, "Bill," from the kitchen; or, more recently, "BILL," as I have become more deaf.

One day last month the signal changed to "BILL!" which jolted me awake from the middle of a rather complicated dream, and sent me staggering to the kitchen wondering whether we needed an ambulance or a fire extinguisher. My wife was looking out of the kitchen window and pointing toward the bird feeder; she said, "That golf ball keeps moving around out there!" I looked, and indeed there was a round, white object about the size of a golf ball on

the ground under the feeder. A light drizzle was falling and fog obscured everything beyond the driveway, so visibility was poor and I was momentarily puzzled; but then the "golf ball" turned around, and presented a side view. It had four short legs, a long pink tail, pink eyes, and prominent ears. Based on long years of experience as a biologist, I recognized it as a white mouse. It was busily eating sunflower seeds the birds had spilled onto the ground.

The first thing that popped into my mind was that I had finally found a case where Ecclesiastes was wrong. We have had shrews, chipmunks, field mice, rats, squirrels, rabbits, possums, raccoons, groundhogs, deer, foxes, a coyote and a bear in our yard, but never a white mouse, until now. We couldn't see the sun because of clouds and fog, but I was pretty sure it was still up there somewhere, and we and the mouse were here under it. Never before!

We watched it for the better part of an hour, while we had breakfast and went through the newspapers. The temperature was in the low 40's, and the drizzle continued, but the mouse did not appear to be in distress. It was plump and healthy looking; its fur was thick and and must have been well oiled from grooming, because it seemed to shed water. There were a couple of squirrels and several sparrows on the ground near it; they did not seem to be perceived as a threat. But, then, neither did anything else, as far as the mouse was concerned. Each time a car or a pedestrian came by, the natives... squirrels and birds... scattered to cover; but the mouse ignored them. It even ignored a delivery boy who came by and left the weekly collection of advertisements on the porch. The boy seemed equally obliv-

ious to his environment; he was wearing earphones and listening to music, and walked within five feet of the mouse without seeing it. I guessed that both boy and mouse were members of the new digital age, and I did not envy them.

Eventually the mouse waddled off around the corner of the garage and disappeared into the Pachysandra ground cover. It probably made a nest there among the leaf litter, for it survived the night and appeared under the bird feeder again the next day. I watched it for a while, but when I left for a moment to refill my coffee cup, it disappeared. It did not come back.

Things like that always beg for an explanation, and sometimes I wish just a little bit that I could ignore a lifetime of training and fantasize. It would make a nicer story if the mouse was an omen that foretold the coming of a White Christmas... you could think of a whole raft of interesting conclusions to a story like that. But there are at least a dozen former teachers up there watching, and if I started thinking that way, there's no telling what kinds of fire and brimstone would come raining down. I was taught that when you are faced with a new problem that has several possible answers, you should use a method called Ockham's Razor (quoted above).

In this case, the most likely explanation was that someone had a pet mouse that they no longer wanted, and they dropped it off by my yard because this is the last house on the block. The other obvious explanation is that the mouse could have been born in the wild and found its way to my bird feeder like the squirrels and chipmunks did... a possible but unlikely suggestion. Albinos are born to wild mice occasionally, as they are to most species of mammals; but



their chances of survival to adulthood are small, and if they do survive their behavior will be quite different than the one I saw. No wild mouse would have been so oblivious to danger. The most inexperienced hawk, owl or fox would have caught it as soon as it left the nest; it would never have lived to be a fat, slow-witted adult.

Some 230 years ago, Robert Burns was doing his fall plowing on his farm in Scotland, and accidentally ran over a mouse's nest. He was a poet instead of a biologist; he recognized the mouse as a fellow mortal, and apologized to it for ruining its winter home. But he also understood that the mouse had one advantage over him; it would be able to get busy and build another home, without wasting time cursing over its lost nest or worrying about what the future would bring. Burns ended his poem with these lines:

*Still, thou art blest, compar'd wi' me!*

*The present only toucheth thee:*

*But Och! I backward cast my e'e,*

*On prospects drear!*

*An' forward tho' I canna see,*

*I guess an' fear!*

On the whole, I guess I wouldn't change places with the mouse, but I agree with Burns that there is some wisdom built into its nature. As we enter the New Year, we find our world in a pretty sorry state. Worrying about it will not help anything; but it's hard not to worry. Maybe life as a mouse wouldn't be so bad, after all. But not a white one!

To read past editions of *The Retired Ecologist*, visit the *Authors* section of [Walkersville.net](http://Walkersville.net).



**EMMITSBURG TATTOO CO.**

2 West Main St., Emmitsburg

Call for appointment! **301-447-6837** Walk-ins welcome!

EmmitsburgTattooCompany.com  
emmitsburgtattoocompany@gmail.com

Tues.-Fri. 10 - 9 ~ Sat. 10 - 8

## Quality Auto Repair

# 24 Hour Towing



*Before*



**We repair dents and dings from scratches to roll overs!**

*After*



**Professional courteous service from the office to the shop!**

**Complete Auto Body Service!**

Serving over 20 years in Thurmont

All major insurance carriers accepted  
Lifetime warranty on all repairs  
Car rentals available on-site  
All makes and models



## Mike's Auto Body Collision & Towing, Inc.

12917 Catocin Furnace Rd., Thurmont

**301-271-7626**






**CRAMER & SON, INC.**  
WOODSBORO, MD

## Offering a variety of Home Owner and Contractor services

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Custom moulding doors &amp; windows</li> <li>Material takeoff and estimation</li> <li>Lumber and plywood cut to size</li> <li>Key cutting</li> <li>Rope &amp; chain cut to length</li> <li>Rekeying lock sets</li> <li>Saw and tool sharpening</li> <li>Glass and plexi-glass cut to size</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paint and stain mixing</li> <li>House charge accounts</li> <li>Outside sales rep will come see you</li> <li>Delivey to your job site</li> <li>Blueprint takeoff</li> <li>Engineered wood &amp; truss design welcomed</li> <li>Large variety of moulding and trim on hand</li> <li>Window and door specialists</li> </ul>
---	---

NZ Cramer & Son is a building material dealer who serves contractors, homeowners and commercial accounts. Our showroom provides the perfect environment for homeowners and professionals to plan their building or renovation projects.

Hours of operation: Monday - Friday 7 - 5, Saturday 7 - Noon, Closed Sunday

101 Creagerstown Rd., Route 550 North, Woodsboro 301-898-9116 or 301-845-6731

## IN THE COUNTRY

# The elusive recluse

Tim Iverson, Naturalist

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

Time and time again I've been drug into this argument in a professional sense as an employee of park and natural resource agencies, with friends, with acquaintances, with strangers, with family, and the list goes on ad infinitum. I don't make many friends when I rebuke them, but the honest truth is that there is no native population of Brown Recluse Spiders in Maryland. The natural distribution range for this species of spi-

der is roughly the entire Midwest of the United States. They can be found from southern Ohio down to Texas, and from as far west as Nebraska and Iowa to as far east as Kentucky and Georgia. I guess the Appalachian and Rocky Mountains are too much of a hike for them to cross. Outside of this range there is no known established population anywhere else in the United States. If you live outside of this area (which you do if you're reading this newspaper) you're golden. This is great news to an arachnophobe like me! This fact flippantly flies in the face of self-reported accounts of citizens, media, and even medical diagnoses.

According to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, University of Maryland, and the US Department of Agriculture the Brown Recluse spider is not usually found outside of its native range. So despite many rumors and media reports to the contrary it has not established itself elsewhere outside of the Midwest. On rare occasions there have been confirmed cases of the spider outside of its native range. This is almost always attributable to "hitchhiking". The spider may be transported by luggage of people traveling from the Midwest or in packaging material originating from there. There have even been reports of single build-

ing infestations in places outside of the range where the spider has successfully made a colony, but a single incident like this does not count as successful colonization of a new area.

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

In areas where they are found this spider is extremely common. Where you find one you can almost certainly find dozens or more. In 2002, the Journal of Medical Entomology reported one Kansas family living in a home from the 1850's who collected 2,055 Brown Recluse spiders in a period of six months. Not one member of this family of four had ever been bitten. An anecdotal story of an entomologist in Missouri collected 5 in a child's bedroom in one night. There's another anecdotal story of a person who found 6 living under his box spring. If you were to believe sensational media reports and the sheer numbers they're found in you'd think the entire Midwest



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

ought to be in a constant state of unrest over these villainous violin-backed arachnids. The simple fact is that the name "recluse" is more than accurate. These spiders are very reclusive and are generally not seen. They are primarily nocturnal, and hide in small dark places usually only emerging at night to hunt. They are not aggressive towards humans, and prefer flight to fight. When bites do occur it's generally a result of being caught between skin and clothing or bedding material.

In the highly unlikely event that you think you've found a Brown Recluse in your home or elsewhere there are a few key features that can help you to correctly identify whether or not it is in fact a recluse spider. The spider's legs are uniformly light brown in color covered only in very fine hairs. If you find a spider with stripes or spines on the legs it is NOT a Brown Recluse. The abdomen will be a light to dark color brown, with a darker brown shape of a violin on the back - the

neck of the violin will begin just behind the eyes. The eyes are the most tell tale characteristic of the Brown Recluse. Most spiders have eight eyes arranged in two rows of four. The Brown Recluse has six eyes arranged in three sets of two. The eyes will be positioned with one set directly in front, with the other two positioned on the sides. Finally, the body of the Brown Recluse measures in at 3/8 inch long. If you find a spider that is larger than 1/2 inch in body length it is NOT a Brown Recluse. If you find a spider that does not meet these specific qualifications it is NOT nor ever will be a Brown Recluse.

Though bites from the Brown Recluse are rare, they ought to be taken seriously. The venom contains a hemotoxin which can cause necrosis of the skin in the affected area. According to the University of Maryland Medical Center symptoms may include: itching, nausea, chills, fever, and a general feeling of discomfort and illness. They recommend washing the affected area with soap and water, applying ice, remaining calm, and most importantly - to seek emergency medical attention. Again, Brown Recluse spiders are not typically aggressive towards humans. These spiders prefer dark sheltered areas. They only bite when threatened. A bite can be easily avoided by just steering clear of the Midwest altogether. If you can't do that then don't put hands or feet into areas such as logs, underbrush, clothing that is rarely worn, or any area you can't visually inspect without checking these areas first. Also, wear protective clothing when traveling through potential habitat.

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

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

**TROUTVILLE HOME REPAIRS INC.**  
 Windows • Metal Roofing  
 Shingles • Gutters • Siding  
 MHIC #20303  
**301-898-9620**  
 P.O. Box 345, Woodsboro www.troutvillehomerepairsinc.com

**Staley's onsite services**  
 Septic tanks should be pumped every 3 - 5 years.  
 Call or email today to schedule an appointment.  
**Staley's Onsite Services**  
 6830A Putman Rd., Thurmont  
**301-788-3636**  
 Staleysonsite.com

**Kubala & Son**  
 Landscaping and Lawncare, LLC.  
 Mulching • Mowing • Patios • Garden edging • Weeding • Hedge trimming  
 Landscape design • Brush clearing • Junk removal • Power washing • Milled asphalt & gravel driveway installation  
**717-321-4866**  
 KubalaLandscape@gmail.com  
 Veteran-owned & Operated

**DAVID RIDENOUR**  
**D&J AUTO ENTERPRISES**  
*Bills Auto Body*  
 • Collision Center • Towing  
 • Mechanical Repairs  
 12440A Creagerstown Rd., Thurmont  
**301-898-5080**  
 Fax: 301-898-0165  
 newbillsautobody@comcast.net  
 www.newbillsautobody.com www.facebook/NewBillsAutobody

*Roofing it right the first time.*  
**Roof Replacement • Roof Repair**  
**Siding • Gutters • Skylights**  
**FREDERICK ROOF REPAIR**  
 EST 2003  
 LICENSED • BONDED • INSURED  
 Stefan Mach, Owner  
**301-788-3061**  
 frederickroofrepair.com  
 MHIC#85927  
 Visit our website and fill out our Contact Form  
 hire your local roofer

# SCIENCE MATTERS

## Meet the human family

Boyce Rensberger

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

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

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

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

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

If we extend the time horizon to the last few million years, at least 20 different species of human beings have lived on Earth. Each of them survived for a few hundred thousand or a few million years. Then, one by one, each died out. Except for one.

Here are just a few examples of our ancient relatives who lived

during our 250,000 years and who we may have met.

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

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

**Homo heidelbergensis**—These people, descendants of H. erectus but with larger brains, began around 700,000 years ago and were the first to move into Europe, learning to live in colder climates. They knew how to control fire. They built shelters of stone and wood. They had impressive brow ridges, which gave them a rather forbidding look. But we could have interacted because our species overlapped with theirs in Europe for 50,000 years. They died out around 200,000 years ago. They were the last common ancestor of



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

today's people and the next two groups.

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

They were such close cousins that during the 200,000 years we both lived in Europe we interbred with them numerous times and produced healthy children. All of us who have ancestry from Europe or Asia are offspring of those matings. Between 1 and 3 percent of our genes were inherited from Neanderthals. People of African ancestry share much fewer Neanderthal genes. Moreover, we do not all share the same set of those genes. My Neanderthal genes are probably not the

same ones that you have. If you add up the different sets of genes found in living Europeans and Asians, it turns out that modern humans carry as much as one third of the total Neanderthal genome.

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

Denisovans—These people were closely related to the Neanderthals but were genetically different enough to be considered a separate species. Named for the site in Siberia where they were first found, these folks emerged about 370,000 years ago and con-

tinued until about 30,000 years ago, basically paralleling Neanderthal dates. It seems likely that both species evolved from Homo heidelbergensis but migrated in opposite directions, Denisovans to the east and Neanderthals to the west. Parts of the Denisovan genome survive in people from Melanesia such as New Guinea and the South Pacific islands.

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

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

To read other articles by Boyce Rensberger, visit the Authors section of Walkersville.net.

**Carroll & Ferguson**

Personal, Professional Service  
Attorneys at Law

We help clients with  
**Bankruptcy, Estate  
Planning and other needs.**  
Personal service  
Reasonable rates

- ▶ Weekend & Evening Appointments
- ▶ Bankruptcy
- ▶ Estate Planning
- ▶ Wills, Deeds, Contracts
- ▶ Business Planning

9438 Woodsboro Pike  
Walkersville  
Call for appointment  
301-845-0470  
www.carrollandferguson.com

**Mick's Plumbing,  
Heating &  
Air Conditioning**

*Installation, Service & Repair*

Oil & Gas Furnaces ~ Heat Pumps ~ Well Pumps  
Water Heaters ~ Drains ~ Leaky Faucets ~ Bathroom Remodels

**No Job Too Small - 24 Hour Service**

**The Harry & Edith Show!**  
Commercials air on WFRE!

**Heat Pump Inspection**

**\$89<sup>95</sup>**

**Duct & Dryer Vent Cleaning**

1 Year Interest Free Financing Available  
We Offer HVAC Service Agreements  
Call For Details!

**27 Howard Street, Thurmont**  
**301-271-2488**

Happy New Year!

2025

This is a new year. A new beginning.

We Are Open Year Round!

**10524 Liberty Road, Frederick, Maryland 21701**  
**301-898-3181**

Mon.-Thurs. 3-9 p.m. ~ Fri. 3-10 p.m. ~ Sat. 12-10 p.m. ~ Sun. 12-9 p.m.

[www.libertyroadseafoodandsteak.com](http://www.libertyroadseafoodandsteak.com)

Friend Us On Facebook!

# THE MASTER GARDENER

## Sustainability is not just for vegetables

Maritta Perry Grau  
Frederick County Master Gardener

Practicing sustainability and its partner, resiliency, pays off in unexpected dividends, not only in a healthier landscape and in our own health, but in other ways as well.

Recently, one early morning I was laughing out loud as I looked out our dining room window at about a dozen house finches jumping around, rooting (beaking??) in the detritus of a narrow flower bed along our front walk. They were flipping leaves on the ground, zipping up to the still-standing seedheads of mums, black-eyed Susans, and coneflowers. Sometimes it seemed one bird was warning another off his territory as both aimed for the same seedhead. Lots of wing fluttering before one of them would fly off to another area.

We have flowerbeds and shrubs on all four sides of our house, so we get this delightful entertainment wherever we are. In our family room, our recliner is often turned to a view into the yard rather than into the room so we can watch the birds there, too, as they fight over their favorite perches at the bird feeders and suet cage. They peck through birdseed for their favorite morsels, like children picking through the foods they don't like for those they do. On the ground, besides the fallen bird seed, they find a banquet in the leaves, loose mulch, seedheads from cockscomb and zinnias, and other

plants; insects, larvae, and earthworms. Rhododendrons, azaleas, arborvitae, Scotch pine and other evergreens, thick with leaves and branches, provide them with shelter from storms.

It warms my heart to watch these antics but even more, it warms my heart to know these little creatures have a safe haven (at least, when the hawk's not around). More and more of these birds, insects, and other pollinators overwinter safely because more and more gardeners are practicing "sustainable gardening" and developing "resilient landscapes," even though the gardeners may not realize they are following the precepts of sustainability.

"Sustainable gardening" is most often associated with growing vegetables, especially organics, but its principles can be applied to home landscapes, too. The University of Maryland's Extension Service explains that sustainable gardening relies "on locally available materials and resources, practicing the 4Rs (reduce, re-use, recycle, rethink), and minimizing negative environmental impacts." UMD puts forth eight best practices for sustainable gardening:

- Protect and improve the soil;
- Recycle plants and nutrients;
- Water and fertilize wisely;
- Control stormwater;
- Increase biodiversity;
- [Utilize] Integrated Pest Management (IPM);
- Attract and conserve pollinators and natural enemies; and
- Rely as much as possible on

locally available materials and resources.

Following these eight best practices as best we can results in that second buzzword phrase, "resiliency" of the landscape. How well can the earth bounce back from all these episodes of extreme weather we keep experiencing—heatwaves, drought, warmer winters in some areas and colder ones in others, etc.? Whether you believe in climate change, or, like the Old Coach, are still skeptical about it and think it's a normal part of ancient earth cycles, our weather ups and downs do affect our plants, trees, shrubs, lawns, the wildlife, and through all of that, us.

UMD notes that as "we move and change the soil, alter water flow across the ground, and [plant] what pleases us, ... we disrupt the larger ecosystems made up of soil, water, air, plants, animals, and microorganisms that interact in the web of life... The words 'organic' and 'sustainable' are often used interchangeably to describe a holistic gardening approach that recognizes that soil health, plant health, ecosystem health, and human health are all interconnected."

In a 2022 blog< maryland-grows.umd.edu>, Dr. Anahi Espindola, an assistant professor in the Department of Entomology at the University of Maryland, points out that "Even when they look dry and 'dead,' our green spaces are full of life.... [H]erbaceous perennials... are... retreating underground, while annuals [spend] the winter as seeds in the ground.... Squirrels become less active, snakes retreat to sheltered spaces, and insects may overwinter as adults underground or in



A bee "house" designed for solitary bees can easily be made of bamboo tubes bundled into a length of PVC pipe. The bees will lay their eggs in one of these tubes, then plug the hole with mud or some other debris to keep the developing eggs safe until they hatch in the spring.

crevasses or as juveniles in their nests or chrysalises." She goes on to explain that among the insects, pollinators in particular "either migrate to warmer conditions or...overwinter right here in protected spaces such as crevasses, underground nests, and within plant stems."

I've mentioned before that certain solitary bees like to lay eggs in the hollow stems of plants such as black-eyed Susans, zinnias, bee balm, sunflowers, and asters; or in the beehouses you can make simply by bundling hollow tubes about 10 inches long, placing them in a suitable PCV pipe or other structure, and hanging the resulting bee house in a tree or shrub. By fall, the eggs have

hatched and begun to develop into larvae, protected by being in the aforementioned hollow stems and twigs or in the bee house.

Dr. Espindola supports the idea of leaving dry stems for nesting, thus encouraging more pollinators next spring. Or, if we must trim some really tall plants, she suggests that we pile the trimmings into a brush pile somewhere that they'll still be available to the overwintering insects (and next year, trim the tall plants down to about 24 inches as soon as they finish blooming). If it bothers you or your neighbor to see the brush pile, consider disguising it with a temporary fence of some kind, perhaps with a vine growing on it, shrubs, or a three-sided bar-

**X SERIES | Cub Cadet**

**ENGINEERED FOR EXTREME.**

FIND THE RIGHT X SERIES® MODEL FOR YOUR NEEDS.



**2X® 24" INTELLIPOWER™ TWO-STAGE POWER**

- 243cc Cub Cadet® OHV 4-cycle engine w/ IntelliPower™
- 24" clearing width and 21" intake height
- Push-button electric start

**\$1,199\***



**2X® 30" MAX INTELLIPOWER™ TWO-STAGE POWER**

- Powerful 357cc Cub Cadet® OHV 4-cycle engine w/ IntelliPower™
- 30" clearing width and 23" intake height
- Reinforced 12-gauge steel side panels

**\$1,999\***



**3X® 28" INTELLIPOWER™ THREE-STAGE POWER**

- 357cc Cub Cadet® OHV 4-cycle engine w/ push-button electric start
- 28" clearing width and 21" intake height
- Trigger-controlled power steering
- Self-propelled all-wheel drive with positive traction

**\$1,799\***

FOR FULL PRODUCT SPECS **Cub Cadet** VISIT [CUBCADET.COM](http://CUBCADET.COM)

**HARRINGTON & SONS**

427 E. Main St., Emmitsburg

**301-447-6666**

[harringtonandsons.com](http://harringtonandsons.com)

Mon. - Wed. 8 - 3, Thurs. & Fri. 8 - 5, Sat. 8 - Noon



**Accepting trees through January 20**

TREECYCLE!

---

**Frederick County provides a number of temporary sites to take your Christmas tree to for recycling:**

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

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

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

---

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





# THE MASTER GARDENER

## Master Gardeners January Seminars

### Fredrick County Master Gardener

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

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

All seminars are free unless otherwise stated. Seminars are held at the University of Maryland Extension office at 330 Montevue Lane, (off Rosemont Avenue) in Frederick.

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

### Adams County Master Gardener

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

rier, like a compost pile, to contain the clippings; or just putting the brush pile in an area not easily seen by neighbors.

You’ll be glad to know that leaving all this detritus helps not just the pollinating bees, but also other pollinators such as butterflies and moths. “[T]he leaf litter acts as a protective layer for pollinators, buffering them from extreme temperatures and protecting them from predators,” Dr. Espindola writes. Even though all this detritus keeps birds busy in the winter, searching for food—seeds, worms, insects, and larvae—with the natural protection, many more pollinators survive than would otherwise.

Our Master Gardeners’ winter 2024-25 newsletter, Garden Smart (formerly called What Can We Do for You?) includes a short article on how to help beneficial insects overwinter in your yard. The article points out that “Quite a few beneficial insect species in Maryland spend the winter months in one of their life stages, and many require plant debris like leaves, pithy woody stems, and flower stalks as winter habitat. You can support pollinators, beneficial insects, and other native wildlife in your landscape by: adding a new native plant, leaving the leaves in your beds and around trees, waiting until spring to prune woody plants, leaving flower stalks and seed heads, creating a brush pile, and educating your neighbors.” If you don’t already get our free newsletter, you can subscribe to it

at fgardenersnews@gmail.com.

Locally, Frederick County Master Gardeners are headquartered at the University of Maryland Extension Service, 330 Montevue Avenue, Frederick. Check our website or Facebook for 2025’s upcoming free seminars, Master Gardener certification classes, gardening information, advice, and publications (some in Spanish), as well as other announcements, at the following URLs, or call us at 301-600-1596. Note that some of the links to Frederick County Master Gardeners and the University of Maryland Extension Service pages have been changed for the better: the links are now much shorter than they used to be.

Frederick County Master Gardeners’ website, [bit.ly/FCMG-Home-Gardening](http://bit.ly/FCMG-Home-Gardening);

Facebook, <https://bit.ly/FCMGFacebook>;

University of Maryland Extension Home and Garden Information Center, [bit.ly/B-WForms](http://bit.ly/B-WForms);

Frederick County Master Gardeners publications, <http://extension.umd.edu/locations/fredrick-county/home-gardening>.

The University of Maryland is an Equal Opportunity Employer and provides equal access to programs. La Universidad de Maryland es una institución con Igualdad de Oportunidades de Empleo y con Igualdad de Acceso a Programas.

To read other gardening articles, visit the Gardening section of [Walkersville.net](http://Walkersville.net)

## Small Town Gardener

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

Marianne Willburn

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

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

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

Relax. You’ve Got Time.

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

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

Direct or Indirect?

Whatever you’re planting, get organized the moment the seeds hit your mailbox. Take some time to think about whether you are direct

sowing (straight into the ground) or indirect sowing (into a pot for transplant later).

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

### Now, Get Organized

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

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

### Divide Your Seeds for Easy Browsing

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Sort Your Seeds by Week Numbers

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

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

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

### Feel Exceptionally Organized

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

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

### Think Once, Plant Efficiently

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

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



- Patios/Walks
- Retaining Walls
- Paver Driveways
- Outdoor Kitchens
- Firepits
- Outdoor Landscape Lighting
- Planting
- Seeding/Sodding

301-898-3615      8408 Links Bridge Rd.  
 Fax: 301-898-1150      Thurmont  
 Email: DavidJr@Hawkinslandscaping.com      HawkinsLandscaping.com



**1-800-383-4595**  
 147 Water Street, Thurmont

Licensed & Insured  
 MD Tree Expert Lic# 904 • CTSP Cert# 1437 • ISA Cert. Arborist# MA-4258A

www.bakertreeservices.com  
 treecare@bakertreeservices.com



**ABLOOM LTD**  
 FLOWERS & EVENTS  
*Fresh flowers make the new year brighter! Order today!*

**FLOWER SUBSCRIPTIONS**  
 Set up your subscription online!  
 Choose your recipient...or yourself

Select a delivery schedule (weekly, monthly, etc.; minimum of 3 reps)  
 Tell us your card message  
 Select your budget, starting at \$40 +delivery & tax  
 for each delivery in Frederick County  
 Call or email us with the information.  
 We'll call you for a credit card (charged prior to each delivery)  
 and Abloom takes care of the rest!

flowers@abloomltd.com    301-898-5550    www.Abloomltd.com

Open Mon., Wed. & Fri.  
 8-ish to 1-ish  
 Other hours by appt.  
 or by chance  
 Closed Sun. & Tues.

# PETS

## A time of potential, possibility, and opportunity

**Jennifer Vanderau  
Cumberland Valley  
Animal Shelter**

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

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

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

It's all basically up to you.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We have a scanner that reads

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

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

Maryland also offers lifetime license.

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

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

*Jennifer Vanderau is the Public Relations Coordinator for the Cumberland Valley Animal Shelter in Chambersburg, Pa., and can be reached at [cvascomm@cvas-pets.org](mailto:cvascomm@cvas-pets.org). The shelter accepts both monetary and pet supply donations. For more information, call the shelter at 717-263-5791 or visit the website [www.cvas-pets.org](http://www.cvas-pets.org). CVAS also operates a thrift store in Chambersburg. Help support the animals at the shelter by donating to or shopping at the store.*



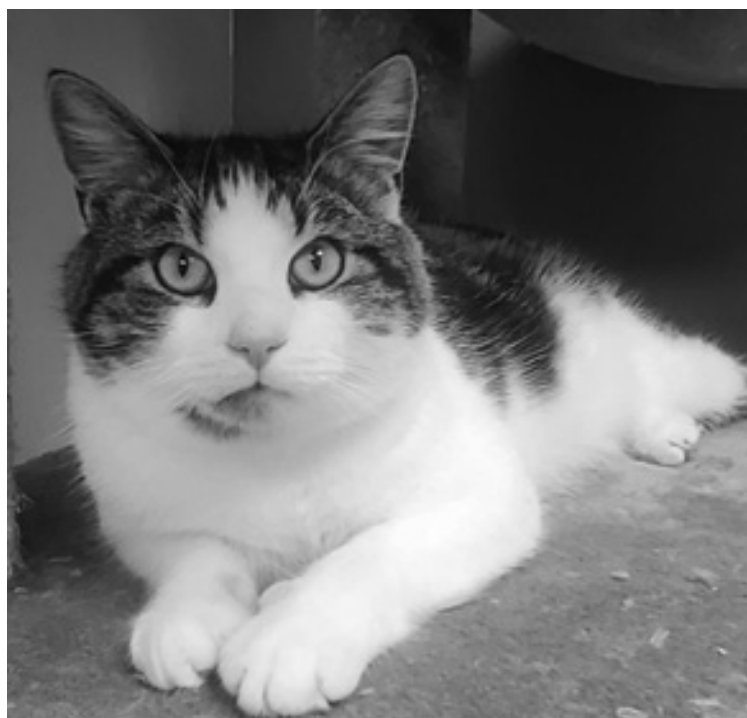
**Odin is a big guy who loves attention! He knows how to sit and shake. He enjoys going on walks and going to the play yard! Odin is dog-selective and will chase cats, so it would be best if Odin was the only pet in the home. Odin is a big baby who is 5 years old and loves getting scratched. He is content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



**Olivia is a smart, fun-loving girl that will need a strong leader. She came into the shelter as a stray in September 2023 and is one of our long-term residents. Olivia is a lab/terrier mix who is about two years old. Olivia knows sit, shake, and (sometimes) down. She is an active, playful, and occasionally stubborn girl. She is treat motivated and is always looking to please but sometimes has her own agenda! Olivia loves to go to the play yard and run so a fenced in yard is highly recommended. Due to her energy, an age restriction for children in the home may apply—please discuss this with shelter staff. Olivia has a high chase drive and does not seem to care for the company of other dogs, so being the only pet in the home may be best for her.**



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



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

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



**SENIOR Benefit Services, Inc.**

**SERVING YOUR MEDICARE AND RETIREMENT NEEDS**

- Specializing in insurance and financial needs for retirees
- We practice "Safe Money" principles for retirement plans
- Offering most major insurance carriers
- Our services are FREE

Providing our clients with hands on personalized service

**Ask for Karen or Shawn**

**112A Main Street, Thurmont • 301-271-4040**

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

To a poor and lonely stray I'd give:

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


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

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

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

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

-- Author Unknown



# The value of experience

Shawn Snyder

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

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

Khloe and Brooklyn are both calm, friendly and enjoy lounging in a comfy bed, watching the world go by. Currently, they live in one of the shelter's free roam cat rooms and shelter visitors will find that neither cat demands attention, but both appreciate a good



Khloe and Brooklyn

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

Khloe and Brooklyn have many great qualities and are deserving of a

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

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



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



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



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



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

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

## BECOME A MEMBER!

### WHAT DO YOU GET WITH AN ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP?

**ONE TIME PERKS OF:**  
 ONE FREE SAFARI RIDE AND ONE FREE CUP OF ZOO FOOD FOR EACH PASSHOLDER ... AND MORE!



**VISIT OUR WEBSITE, STOP IN OUR GIFT SHOP OR CALL US AT: 301.271.4922**

**ONE FULL YEAR OF:**  
 10% OFF IN OUR GIFT SHOP  
 20% OFF OF GUESTS GENERAL ADMISSION  
 RECIPROCAL FACILITIES  
 MEMBER ONLY EVENTS  
 ...AND MORE!

VISIT: [WWW.CATOCTINWILDLIFEPRESERVE.COM/MEMBERSHIP](http://WWW.CATOCTINWILDLIFEPRESERVE.COM/MEMBERSHIP) TODAY!

## Reifsnider's Farm Supply & Hardware Store

Wood Pellets  
In Stock Now!  
Call for Pricing!



We Sell  
DRYSHOD  
WATERPROOF FOOTWEAR  
Boots



TREBUTE<sup>®</sup>  
EQUINE NUTRITION  
Feed  
For Horses

K  
KALMBACH  
Feeds For  
Dogs, Cats, Sheep, Goats,  
Chickens and Cattle.

Animal Bedding  
Saw Dust & Shavings  
Animal Health Supplies

We carry everything from tools to paint! • Tools • Household Goods • Fencing & Gates • Plumbing & Electrical Supplies • Paint & Painting Supplies

2080 Francis Scott Key Highway, Keymar • 410-756-6066  
Mon. - Fri. 8 to 5 ▪ Sat. 8 to 1



**FREDERICK  
KITCHENS &  
BATHROOMS**

# ***Super Sale!***

***Our December promotion was  
such a great success, we're  
extending the offer!***

**Now thru January 31st**

# **20% Off All Jobs!**

- Complete kitchen & bathroom remodeling
- Designers on staff
- Personal attention



**Visit Our Showroom  
47 W. Frederick St., Walkersville**

MHIC # 146736

**301-845-7070**

License # 144542

[www.FKandB.com](http://www.FKandB.com)

**WWNJ**

# Woodsboro-Walkersville NEWS-JOURNAL SECTION 2

## Cunningham Falls 'Scales & Tails' program

Mia Ferraro  
UMD Class of 2025

The residents at Cunningham Falls State Park have unique features, ranging from a shell with yellow markings and only three legs, to a partially broken feathered wing. But whether it's on their feet or entire bodies, these animal ambassadors all wear scales.

Scales & Tales is a program within the Maryland Park Service that rehomes birds of prey and reptiles that are deemed non-releasable. An animal is deemed non-releasable if it is unfit to survive in its natural habitat. There is a lesson about protecting our wildlife behind every backstory – or tale – that each animal carries about its species and its own arrival to the aviary.

The program's purpose is to offer visitors the educational experience of observing wild animals up close and learning about the challenges our wildlife faces and what they can do to protect it, lead ranger Claudia Padilla said.

"The park animal ambassadors provide a different experience and way for patrons to connect to nature," Padilla said. "Scales & Tales engages and encourages members of the public to become stewards of their state parks."

One reason an animal may be non-releasable is because of an injury that restricts its survival abilities. After the animal recovers and is deemed non-releasable, the aviary may take it in. This is the case for Olive, one of three eastern box turtles being housed by the aviary. Olive lost a leg due to a run-in with a lawnmower, Padilla said. Or Teddy, the bald eagle who was found with an ulcer on his eye and a partially broken wing due to unknown circumstances, she said.

An animal may also be deemed non-releasable due to human influence, Padilla said. When a wild animal is fed by humans for long enough, it begins to "imprint," or rely, on humans and loses its natural hunting instincts, she said. The aviary houses numerous imprints.

Most of the animals in the aviary are native to Maryland, but a lot of them – especially the reptiles – are rehomed nonnative pets, Padilla said. This is the case for Raphael, the red-eared slider. Red-eared sliders are an invasive turtle species from the Mississippi River that

was transported by pet trade.

"And then I think a lot of the pet owners realized how long they can live," Padilla said. Red-eared sliders can live up to 60 years, which can be unexpected for pet owners who are used to their cats or dogs living 10 to 20 years, she said. Raphael's projected age is in his upper 30s.

"So I think it's important for people, if they want to have a reptile, that they do the research in advance to see, like, 'how long does this pet live for? Am I willing to keep it for that lifespan?'" Padilla said. She also listed the pet owner's knowledge about and ability to provide the habitat and food the animal needs as other important considerations.

Cunningham Falls is just one of seven facilities in Maryland that offers Scales & Tales programs. Through displays and presentations at places like parks, schools, senior centers and festivals, Scales & Tales reaches hundreds of thousands of people, according to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) website. These presentations provide naturalists with the platform to discuss environmental issues impacting wildlife, like climate change, according to the website.

One impact of climate change is that global warming has extended mosquito season, according to the World Mosquito Program website. Because mosquito season is longer now than it was in past years, birds are susceptible to West Nile Virus for an extra month or two, Padilla said.

Avian flu, also called bird flu, has been more persistent and severe now than in the past, Padilla said. While it's not confirmed, climate change is considered a potential contributing factor to the spread of avian flu, she said.

Habitat loss is another pressing concern the program aims to educate the public on, Padilla said. It is a prominent issue affecting species like the box turtle or the barn owl, she said. Barn owls tend to live in old structures and hunt in farm fields, and as areas like Frederick County continue to develop, barn owls lose the structures where they live, the fields where they hunt and their prey, Padilla said.

It's issues like these that Scales & Tales aims to bring awareness to. The program enlightens the public with

lessons around how humans can contribute to the effort to protect wildlife, such as setting up boxes to offer a habitat for different species of birds.

One of the main ways to contribute is to "leave no trace" as emphasized in the Maryland DNR website's guidelines for respectfully exploring state parks. One example it gives is observing animals from a distance and refraining from feeding them. Padilla gave the example of leaving food out in one's yard which can be harmful to bears as they may continue to return and imprint on humans.

Another habit Padilla warns visitors against is throwing trash onto roads, because garbage attracts rodents which then attract birds of prey. This could result in a bird being hit by a car in an attempt to hunt these rodents, she said.

The program teaches that reducing pesticide and rat poisoning is another way to care for the health of wildlife, Padilla said. These chemicals can bio accumulate, or build up, in the bodies of rodents which, she said, poses a risk to predators like birds of prey and snakes. Padilla relates it to cat owners, as an owner wouldn't want their cat to catch a mouse that had ingested poison.

According to the American Eagle Foundation website, the populations of bald eagles declined immensely as a result of the extensive use of the insecticide DDT in the 40s. The chemical made its way to eagles through contamination in the food chain and would weaken their eggshells and cause the shells to break, according to the



An injured Bald Eagle, who is unable to fly, has found refuge at the Cunningham Falls Park's aviary which specializes in caring for injured birds.

website. The species steadily rose after DDT was banned in the U.S. in the 70s, the website reads.

Supporting state parks and educational programs like Scales & Tales can be an excellent way to contribute to wildlife protection efforts. One way to support, Padilla suggested, is by donating to the nonprofit Friends of Cunningham Falls and Gambrill State Parks which raises funds for the park. These donations will help provide necessities for the animals, like food and enclosure enhancements, she said.

Volunteering is another helpful option that Padilla suggested, whether for the park or the Friends of Cunningham Falls and Gambrill State Parks. Volunteering at Cunningham Falls could entail helping remove invasive species of plants around the park, for example, or occasionally helping with animal care and staffing the visitor and nature centers.

Coming to the park and participating in events not only helps the program, but offers visitors a fun and educational experience. The park hosts annual events to raise funds for the program, like turtle races and a Maple Syrup Festival in the spring. The park also holds several various events throughout each month, like reptile feeding or aviary tours where rangers share the tales of each animal.

The tales of these animal ambassadors shed light on urgent environmental matters, including human-inflicted harm on our wildlife. The first step to solving these challenges our wildlife faces is education, Padilla said, and having an interest to learn about animals' habitats and other needs.

"It doesn't matter your age or your background," Padilla said, "people are drawn to and naturally curious about animals and want to learn and understand them."

## Discover Taneytown

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

*"Moving forward to the future!"*

The City of Taneytown hosts more than 140 businesses, from international manufacturers to sole proprietors operating out of their home. A central location convenient to many interstate highways and larger cities, Taneytown is an ideal location for all sectors of business.

We invite prospective business owners and operators to view our demographics, regional transportation connectivity, and our currently available commercial and industrial sites.

We welcome shoppers, residents and tourists alike to come and enjoy Taneytown's businesses. You can learn more about our walkable downtown at Main Street Taneytown.

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



### XLR8 DIESEL TRUCKS

Light and Medium Truck Sales and Service

Do you have a Ford and suffering from 6L Syndrome? Is it hard to start in the morning? Then call XLR8 Diesel Trucks and schedule your appointment today!



xlr8dieseltrucks@yahoo.com  
[www.xlr8dieseltrucks.com](http://www.xlr8dieseltrucks.com)

5 Council Drive  
Woodsboro

301-845-2224

# HISTORY

## Williams History of Frederick County

Continued from last month

### Emory Crum

Emory Crum, a civil engineer, son of Henry and Mary Crum, was born on his father's farm near Walkersville, June 30, 1884.

John Crum, grandfather of Emory Crum, a retired farmer of Walkersville, was born February 14, 1821. In early manhood, he engaged to farming and spent the greater part of his life in the cultivation of the soil. Hard work made him successful in business. He owned three valuable farms near Walkersville, and by, intelligent care, improve all the land that came into his hands. In 1885, Mr. Crum retired from farming, and removed to Walkersville, where he bought a comfortable home in which he spent the rest of his life. He enjoyed the respect of his fellow citizens, and for a number of years held the office of constable in and around Walkersville. John was married to Mary Browning, and eight of their children reached adulthood.

Henry Crum, son of John and Mary, was born November 14, 1858, on his father's farm outside of Walkersville. He was educated in

the public schools of his native district, and remained with his father until he married and began farming for himself on land he bought from his father. Henry afterwards sold this property and bought a farm situated one mile northwest of Frederick on the Hamburg pipe. In 1907 Henry retired and removed to a residence, which he purchased in Harmony Grove. He has scribes all of his success to constant care and industry. Henry was married to Mary Cramer, they had two children. Mr. and Mrs. Crum were members of the Glad Reformed Church in Walkersville, where he served the congregation for some years as Deacon.

Emory Crum, son of Henry and Mary, attended the public schools of the Walkersville district, and the high school in Frederick. He completed his education by a course in civil engineering at Washington and Lee University of Virginia. When he finished this courses, Emory secured a position with the Tidewater Railroad. He remained with a company one year, and was employed by the city of Norristown, Pennsylvania, to assist the city engineer in making plans for complete system of sanitary sew-

ers for that city. After completing this work, he was employed by the Clark and White Construction Co. of Philadelphia, to take charge of the engineering work on the New York, Auburn, and Lansing Railroad, a third-rail electric line constructed from Auburn to Ithaca New York.

Emory was next engaged as chief locating engineer by the York Railway Co. of York, and afterword became assistant, chief engineer of the entire system of eight lines operated by that company. Due to the financial condition of the country, all proposed new work was abandoned by this company, and their engineering force was reduced from 23 to 4.

Emory return to Frederick, where he opened the office as a civil engineer. He does a good business, and has received some large contracts in Maryland, and in Pennsylvania. He is a surveyor for Frederick County, consulting engineer of the Glenrock and York Electric Railway, and the Chambersburg, Greencastle and Waynesboro Railway.

Emory was married, October 25, 1905 to Ethel Myers. They have no children.

boro 35 years ago. He removed to Walkersville, three years later, he succeeded to the business in 1903. He was educated in the schools of his native town. He learned the trade of a tinner under his father, for whom he worked. About 1901, Thomas went to Baltimore, where he entered the employe of Charles C. Heath, the stove man, who conducts one of the oldest concerns of his kind in that city. From there, he went to Frederick City, where he worked for the Wilson Co., after what she returned home to Walkersville.

In 1903, he assumed charge of the enterprise founded by his father. Three years ago, he erected a new shop and store. Business was first carried on by the elder Saylor, in a small frame building that stands in the rear of the store of C. C. Saylor, and later removed to a log building opposite the establishment of J. H. Stauffer. It was located on the corner, diagonally across from the last place, from when it was taken to its present location by our subject.

Thomas stands high among the businessmen of Walkersville. He has display much ability in the contact of his enterprise, and his success has been well earned. He is progressive and energetic, and these qualities have been a large measure responsible for the success he has achieved.

In politics, Thomas is in sympathy with the principles of the Democratic Party. In religious affairs he is a Lutheran.

Thomas was married November 16, 1904, to Daisy Eylor, of Walkersville. She is a member of

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, in the work of which she is much interested.

Ezra Saylor, the father of Thomas, is a leading citizen of Walkersville. He is employed by his son, and has been a tinner for 42 years. He was born on his father's farm in the Woodsboro District, September 18, 1840. He was educated in the county schools. His father died when he was 10 years old, and he was taken by his mother to the village of Woodsboro, where he lived until he was 20 years old. Up to that time he worked at anything he could secure.

When he was 21, Ezra began to learn the trade of a tinner with John Fletcher, at Woodsboro. When, yet an apprentice, he bought out his uncle, George Saylor, who had a shop, and hired Mr. Fletcher to work for him. In 1876 he removed the business to Walkersville, and managed it until he sold it to a son Thomas in 1903. Since then, he has been employed by his son.

Ezra is a Democrat and married Tillie Anders, March 9, 1872, daughter of Henry and Elizabeth Anders. They are members of the Methodist church in which he is one of the stewards.

Henry Saylor, the grandfather of our subject, was born March 10, 1807 and spend all of his life on his farm near Woodsboro. He owned 146 acres, on which he operated a mill, he being a miller by trade. He died on this place, June 30, 1854. He was an honored citizen and well known in his days. He was a developed member of the Reformed Church. He died in Woodsboro, June 30, 1854. Henry was married to Catherine Anders, who died November 3, 1900 they had five children.

Henry Anders, the father of Catherine, and maternal grandfather of Thomas, was was a captain in the War of 1812, and raised the company about Union Town. He was a mason in stone and brick. He located after his marriage to Sam's Creek in Carroll County, but later moved to a farm near Woodsboro.

### Daniel Joshua Gernand

Daniel Joshua Gernand, who is engaged in agricultural, owns an occupes the old Beaver Dam farm, consisting of 112 acres in the Johnsville District. He was born in the above District, December 10,

**Thomas Saylor**  
Thomas Saylor, proprietor of the T. R Saylor Stove and Roofing Co., is one of the most enterprising and leading businessmen of Walkersville. He is a native of that place, where he was born May 15, 1879. He is the third son and child of Ezra and Tillie Saylor.

Mr. Saylor's business was established by his father in Woods-

# HISTORY

1848, and is the son of Andrew and Julie Gernand.

Jacob Gernand, the grandfather of Daniel, lived and died in the vicinity of Graceham. He was a Weaver by trade. He was three times married and raised a large family.

Andrew Gernand, son of Jacob, was born near Gracham. His mother died at his birth, and he was raised by Adam Williar, a farmer, with whom he remained until we reached manhood. After his marriage he came into the neighborhood of Johnsville, and farmed there the rest of his life. He owned two farms. His death took place in Johnsville, December 8, 1879, at the age of 58 years. He was a very industrious and hard-working man, and this aided in causing his death. For 20 years or more, he was much exposed to the weather, wagoning during that period to and from Baltimore. Andrew was married to Julian Schnuck. She died on the Grossnickle farm in June 1893, age 78 years old. They were the parents of nine children.

Daniel Joshua, son of Andrew and Julia, was raised in the neighborhood of Beaver Dam. He was a student at the Johnsville public schools until he was 19 years old. He began farming for himself on the place now owned by Andrew Graybill, in the Johnsville District. He then spent five years on the Zumbum farm in the Linganore District. The next two years were passed on the Charles Repp farm in Johnsville District. For a period of 17 years, he cultivated the farm of his father-in-law, David Grossnickle. He then made sale and removed to his present farm, which he bought in 1900. Here he has since lived, giving up much of his former activity at farming. This farm is considered one of the best

in Beaver Dam.

Daniel takes small interest in political affairs, and when he votes, he supports the Democratic Party. About 10 years ago, he became a member of the Beaver Dam German Baptist Church, and about 1906 was elected Deacon. Daniel was married January 14, 1875, to Mary Grossnickel. They had three children.

Ernest Joseph, son of Daniel and Mary, resides on a track of 28 acres at Good Intent, in the Johnsville District. He was born on a farm in that District, May 4, 1879. He first attended school at Beaver Dam schoolhouse. When he was a boy of five, his parents located on the David Grossnickle farm, near Good Intent, and he went to school there until he was 16 years. He was raised at farming. He first took charge of the Woods farm in Carroll County for one year, after which he removed to Upton Waltz's place near Johnsville. Here he stayed for three years, when he took up his residence at the present location. Ernest is affiliated with the Beaver Dam German Baptist Church. Ernest was married January 2, 1899 to Annie Garber, they are the parents of two children.

**John William Cramer**

John William Cramer, recognize as one of the substantial citizens of his community, is possessor of 51 acres along the Woodsboro pike, 1 mile south of the town at Woodsboro. His home was built by Samuel Phopps, about 1864, and the barn was erected by John in the spring of 1886. He was born a mile and a half east of Walkersville, November 15, 1848. His parents were Samuel and Susan Cramer.

Samuel Cramer was born and raised in the neighborhood of Walkersville. He was given a good

education, and when a young man taught school in Ohio. He would ride to and from Teffin, Ohio, on horseback, each season, doing this, for several years, returning each spring to help his father. He often met Indians, but was never molested.

After his marriage, Samuel located on his farm below Walkersville, and later sold and bought what is now the Samuel Barrick farm, just north of Woodsboro. Here he died. Samuel was a man who stood high in the community. He was esteemed by all, and his advice was often sought by friends and neighbors. He was a member of the Reformed Church, and active and religious work until his death. Samuel was married to Susan Bucky. By this marriage, they had eight children.

Henry Cramer, the father of Samuel, owned a farm in the Glade Valley, which he cultivated. His wife was Elizabeth Barack.

John Cramer, son of Samuel and Susan, received his learning in the schools of Woodsboro and Walkersville. He discontinued his studies when he became 18 years old. He was reared to farm work. At the age of 19, he went with his brother-in-law, Charles Gilbert, of Johnsville, to learn blacksmithing, but at the end of two years, he returned to the farm, and has ever since been identified with rural pursuits. In 1873, John leased a small farm in the Glade, and rented various places until 1886. In that year, he secured possession of his present property, which is a most desirable farm, fertile, and well improved.

Politically, John is connected with the Prohibition movement. He is a member of the Woodsboro Reform Church. John was married in 1873 to Rebecca Spahr, of Woodsboro. The couple had eight children.

**George Marshall Wachter**

George Marshall Wachter, one of the prominent esteemed agriculturalist of the Johnsville district, is the attendant on the George Buckley farm situated on the road from Union Bridge to Johnsville. He was born on January 3, 1882. He is a son

**Letter To The Editor**

My name is Joanne Harris. I was born in Union Bridge in 1933, to Bessie Ricketts Harris and William Harris. I had three brothers, Jack, Jerry, and James. My parents and brothers, Jack and Jerry have died, but my brother James still lives in Union Bridge.

I loved growing up there, as we had everything, and I knew everyone. I am sending you a list of what was in Union Bridge when I grew up.

I love your News-Journal, my daughter brings it to me.

I am now 91 years young – ha!  
Thank you and best wishes:  
Joan Harris Brody

**List of what was in Union Bridge:**  
Lehigh cement plant, the Western Maryland Railroad, two clothing

factories, three garages – gas stations, two beauty salons, three barbers, two doctors and one dentist, two funeral homes, three restaurants, four grocery stores, and One weekly paper – the Pilot.

We had a pharmacy, a hardware store, variety store, department store, appliance store, and a furniture store.

We had a car dealership, dry cleaners, a bank, a post office, a bowling alley and a movie theater.

The town also had several community groups, including the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Masonic Lodge, Order of the Eastern Star, the Lions Club, and a volunteer fire company.

There were three churches – the United Methodist, Lutheran, and Brethren.



Downtown Union Bridge ~ 1950

of Thomas and Cynthia Wachter.

The grandfather of George Wachter, was Joshua Wachter, who is descended from one of the long settle agricultural families of Frederick County. He spent his life in the vicinity of Zion Church. The name of his wife is not known. He was the father of seven children.

Thomas Wachter, son of Joshua Wachter, was born in the Tuscarora district about 1839. He followed agricultural pursuits during his active life. He is now living in retirement in Frederick City. He served through the Civil War as a member of Cole's Calvary. The name of his wife is Cynthia Measell.

George Marshall Wachter, son of Thomas and Cynthia, was educated in the schools of the Lewistown District. Until two years

after his marriage, he was employed by his father. In the spring of 1904, he began farming on his own account on Mrs. John Eyer's farm at Detour. He remained there for two years. In the spring of 1906, he settled on his present place, which contains 132 acres.

George is an up-to-date and progressive farmer, and is one of the more prominent of the younger agriculturalist of the Johnsville District. He has many good traits of character, and is highly esteemed by those of whom he has come in contact. He is a member of the Utica Mills Lutheran Church. Mr. Wachter was married January 6, 1902 to Hattie Schaeffer; she is connected with the Lutheran Church of Utica. They are parents of three children.

continued next month

**Tracy's TNT Tag N Title**  
36 Frederick Rd., Thurmont  
301-271-2617

Immediate tags, stickers, temp tags, tag returns ...and more!!  
Mon., Wed. & Fri. - 10 to 5  
Tues. & Thurs., - 11 to 5 Sat. - Call set up appointment

We invite you to come visit

**Life & LIBERTY BAPTIST CHURCH**

Sunday School 10 a.m.  
Morning Worship 11 a.m.  
Sunday Evening 6 p.m.  
Wednesday Evening - 7 p.m.

Traditional Preaching ~ Traditional Music  
Traditional Bible

30 West Frederick St., Walkersville  
301-845-0040  
lifeandlibertybaptist.org

**MYERS-DURBORAW FUNERAL HOMES**

We provide a dignified and meaningful funeral or memorial service for every family's loved one.

*Serving the needs of Woodsboro, Walkersville and Union Bridge.*

- Compassionate Care • Knowledgeable Guidance
- Attention to Detail • Unparalleled Professionalism
- Grief Counseling • Pre-Planning Available

• All Services and costs are clearly itemized and explained at the time arrangements are made.

Call for more information or to schedule an appointment.

**410-756-6688**  
136 E. Baltimore St., Taneytown  
Licensed in Maryland and Pennsylvania  
www.myersdurborawfh.com

# 100 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

## January 2

### Democratic Party Has Lost Public Confidence

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

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

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

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

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

### Eclipse Of Sun Due On January 24

For a few minutes on the morning of January 24, the moon will get between the Earth and the sun, and cut off all the light, which we get from that body. The eclipse will be visible in the United States, and it doubtlessly will be seen by more millions of people than any such occurrence in the past, according to Professor Brown of Yale University.

The accuracy with which the time and position can be predicted the eclipse is high, Professor Brown went on to say. The staff of the United States Naval Observatory at Washington is always at work, calculating the positions of the heavenly bodies years in advance in order that the predictions may be useful. The northern and southern edges of the shadow band can be laid down within a mile. All this

knowledge, however, is not a product of the present generation. It has been slowly accumulating through many centuries. Most of it is due to the proof of the law of gravity, which was given by Isaac Newton towards the end of the 17th century.

### Taneytown School Arrangements

An arrangement has been completed to carry on the various grades of the Taneytown school, in rented rooms. No part of the old brick building will be used on account of its presume, unsafe conditions. The arrangements are unsatisfactory, but are the best that could be secured, and at least, they will permit finishing out the school year, which is much better than no school. The following time schedules will be observed:

High school, all grades, in the Opera House, regular schedule nine in the morning to four in the afternoon. Fifth and sixth grades in the portable building on the school grounds from 12:30 to 4:30. Seventh grade in the portable building on the school ground from 8:30 to 12:30. First and second grades will be held on the second floor of the Lemmon building at the railroad station from 8:30 to 12:30. Third and fourth grades will also be held on 2nd floor of the Lemmon building, from 12:30 to 4:30.

According to the information we have, there is no plan, nor agreement, for new building for another year; but, there must be one, and it should be made during the next three months in order that Work may commence on the new building when spring opens. The present temporary arrangement for the school cannot be continued. It is highly objectionable in many ways, and is not to be thought of, at all.

There must be a way found for the conflict between authorities to be compromised. The demands of the one must be made to meet the ability of the other, and both sides must surrender to practical business sense. If there is either politics or personal antagonism in the situation, a way must be found to override both. The principle interest of all must be solving the present unbearable condition of the Taneytown schools.

## January 9

### Radio In The Family Circle

As an entertainment and education device, the radio is far surpassing motion picture theaters, dance halls, and any other forms of public amusement.

A new horizon has been opened up to two millions of families living in the country, the town, or the big city, a new means of culture. The world in its larger centers is offering programs of good entertainment and instruction to people in their homes, both day and night, the new marvel drawing families together.

Young and old, instead of wandering idly in search of diversion, can hear an orchestra, a band, a pipe, or organ, a religious service, or a good play in their own home, being in the city, on a farm, or miles away in mountains or deserts.

There are lectures for the serious minded all the way from literature to electricity and specialist give the latest ideas in dress, dancing, gardening, or the various fields of scientific progress. As broadcasting stations are engaged to giving better service overwater areas, radio will give still greater service to the nation.

We have lost track of those getting radio sets; the habit is becoming as common as buying automobiles, consequently, a purchase in no longer a important news item; and every now and then, someone tells us not to mention them as a purchaser.

### Snow Brings Out Sleighs

The great snow of last Thursday night and Friday blocked up roads, and in general cause many difficulties. Fortunately, there were no high winds to cause great drifts. The depth of the snow was from 10 to 12 inches, some more.

Old-time sleighing had its inning from Saturday until Tuesday, but it is one of the methods of travel that cleaned off State Road interferes with – to the satisfaction of horses, at least.

### Caught With 40 Gallons Of Hooch

William Kinsely, of Walkersville is in the county jail, charge for violating the liquor laws and officers are searching for Ernest Delva, a companion of Kinsely.

The two men were on their way from Baltimore with the monthly 'supply' for the Walkersville boozers, when their machine upset when they attempted to turn out of an icy rut in the road to allow another car to pass. Kinsely was thrown through the windshield and forced to seek medical attention, and when residence of the community went through their assistance, it was discovered that the car contained 40 gallons of 'white mule liquor'. Delva succeeded in getting away after pointing a gun at George Chester, and telling him that if he had a family to support, someone else would have to support them if he followed him.

### Cars Crash On One-Way Bridge Near Ceresville

Two persons escape serious injury and two cars were badly damage when the Nash touring car belong to Harry Wisner of Walkersville collided with a large Studebaker touring car belonging to Harry Wolfe of Union bridge,



on the one-way bridge over Israel's Creek on the Liberty Road near Ceresville, about 5 o'clock Saturday evening. Wisner, and a servant, whom he was taking to her home, narrowly escape being thrown into the creek with the machine. The car hung on the edge of the bridge.

Both cars were badly damage. The entire rear of the Wisner's car was smashed in. The Wolfe car was battered about the front.

Both cars reach the bridge at the same time and neither give the other right away. The Wolfe machine was said to have been traveling at a faster rate of speed than the other, and hitting the Wisner car, drove it to the edge of the bridge. Had the machine dropped into the creek below, both occupants would have probably been seriously, if not fatally injured.

In the Wolfe machine, besides the driver, or another man and two woman, all escaping injury. Neither Wisner, nor the servant girl, were injured. The owners of the cars were unable to reach in agreement, and it is understood that an investigation will be made by the State Police.

## January 16

### Small Fire Sunday Night In Woodsboro

A narrow escape was made from a destructive fire at Ernest Hyser's home on Main Street, in Woodsboro, on Sunday night, shortly before midnight. Mr. Hyser's daughter was awoken by difficulty breathing, and it was discovered that her room was dense with smoke, which was found to come from the sitting room on the first floor. Mr. Hyser, Ror Phillips, and Samuel Ringer, other tenants in the building, by prompt work, confined the fire to the one room.

The cause of the fire was likely due to burning soot falling from the chimney to the bottom, setting fire to a wooden fire-board, and then communicating it to the room – a very common cause of fires. The mantle, carpets, and all the contents of the room were practically ruined, and had not discovery of the fire been made, when it was, the whole house would have been burnt, as the room was blazing.

### Harney Residents Racked By Sickness

We are informed that Mrs. Clarence Naill is a very sick woman, at this writing. She has been sick for sometime. First, she was suffering from quinsy. About the time that her throat open, she was taken with Scarlet Fever, and we have just been informed that she has erysipelas. The three coming together, make her case very serious. Her niece, Miss Nelly Hess, a trained nurse from Baltimore, arrived on Wednesday evening to take charge of the case. It is hope that Miss Naill arrival will speed he aunt's recovery.

Meanwhile, we have been informed, Miss Pauline Fox, daughter, and Mr. and Mrs. Luther Fox, is also very sick with Scarlet fever, her temperature is running from 102 to 103. Miss Ethel Wantz who has been sick for several weeks with the same disease, is improving, and if nothing further develops will soon be around again.

All three families are under quarantine.

James Ohler, who has been suffering with a bad case of neuritis, is able to be up and around, but at times, his suffering is intense. Last Friday, he was in Gettysburg and had his teeth extracted. The doctors all seem to think that bad teeth have been the probable cause of his trouble.

## January 23

### The Home Newspaper

The local newspaper is the most valuable asset any community has. The daily papers furnish national and international news, but they do not, and cannot, act as a local town booster. The are in business to get all they can out of the towns and boost their own circulation.

We have said as much, in other words, at different times, and without particular prejudice against the dailies. They have the right to exercise, and to exploit their businesses, even when doing so, in some cases, it hits the little town newspapers hard. The dailies are reaching far out into county territory to get patronage that they do not have insufficient bulk in their home cities, and also to supply a natural demand for subscribers, so, from a business point of view, their course is well sustained as legitimate.

## Gladhill Plumbing & Heating, INC.

Licensed Plumber #3265

**Kenneth W. Gladhill**

P.O. Box 39  
Woodsboro  
gladhillp@comcast.net

301-898-3875  
301-898-3899  
FAX 301-898-4286

**It's the start of a New Year!**

*If you have a Christmas gift that doesn't quite fit...  
We can help!*

*We do watchband adjustments, ring resizing, chain extensions and so much more!*

*We have also have jewelry for Valentine's Day.  
It may be early, but it never hurts to get ideas!*

**36 E. Frederick St., Walkersville**

**301-845-2200**

Mon., Tues., Thurs. 10-5 • Fri. 10-7  
Sat. 10-5 • Closed Wed. & Sun.  
[oldetownejewelers.store](http://oldetownejewelers.store)



# 100 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

## January 30

### Eclipse Of The Sun

The eclipse passed off uneventfully, strictly tending to its own business. Not a bank was robbed and not a chicken went to roost in this section so far as was heard from. The height of the the eclipse, was about 9:10 and the darkness did not equal that of a summer electrical storm. All portions of the eclipse were directly visible to a very clear sky. The clearness of the sky, and the snow cover ground, prevent any very noticeable dominion of light. The eclipse seemed about 90% full in the section.

Hundreds of telescopic photos were taken and much scientific knowledge was gathered about such mysteries as the contents of the sun's corona, the composition of eclipse, Umbria, the explanation of the jumping jackrabbit on the moons, the deflection of light as related to the Einstein theory, the effect of eclipses upon earth's climate and tides and gravity, and its effects upon radio activity, upon earth's magnetic centers, its thermometers, and its barometers.

Scientist however were unable to use the eclipse to discover and insights into the way women think or why politicians think men are better off without access to liquor.

### Counties Have Trouble Keeping Main Roads Open

Frederick County today was occupied trying to emerge from the effects of the snow and hail storm, which on Thursday, swept through the section of the country.

Despite the severity of the storm, it is considered fortunate that not more damage was caused.

The snow and hail, accompany by a northwest wind of no mean proportions, has resulted in numerous roads being blocked in spite of the activities of the fleet of snowplows operated by the State Road Commission.

Virtually every main road in Frederick, Carroll and Adams Counties are blocked at some point as a result of the snowstorm. Almost all side roads are impassable. Reports from various sections indicate the storm hit with ferocity in all parts of the counties. It will take some time, it is estimated, to

clear the roads to such a point that traffic will be permissible. Officials of the counties promised that that they were doing everything possible to get at least one lane shoveled to allow normal passage of vehicles.

The bus companies serving the area were held up on Friday on account of 5-foot snow drifts. The Emmitsburg to Gettysburg bus driver was forced to dig his way through several places because of the deep snow, which blocked the bus's passage. Fortunately, he had packed extra snow shovels prior to departing for Gettysburg, and unable to move forward, required all the passengers to assist in shoveling the road in front of them. The objections of several of the passengers to being put to manual labor was silenced when the driver 'discovered' a bottle of top quality 'mountain hooch' behind the stack of snow shovels, which was liberally shared by all those helping to clear the road. Once the bus return to Emmitsburg, the station maser 'discovered' another bottle to help re-warm the driver and his helpers. All vowed that they would sign up to be passengers on the next big snow.

Railroads maintained thier schedules throughout the snow, although most were running late. Most lines ran an engine with a snowplow in front of the passenger locomotives to open the way.

The storm had very little effect upon the local branch of the C&P Telephone Co. Out of approximately 5,000 stations in the counties, only 60 were reported out of commission. The greatest difficulty encountered by the C&P workmen was getting to the stations to make the necessary repairs.

### Arrests Speeder At Point Of Gun

After sensational road race of several miles, during which a police officer was crowded from the road several times, Lester Horne, of Lewistown, was placed under arrest charged with reckless driving and disorderly conduct. Horne post a \$25 collateral for hearing.

Deputy Sheriff Schell was called to a restaurant in Walkersville on Saturday night to arrest Horne on the disorderly charge. When the officer arrived, Horne had left. He

But, there is the other side of the question, and that is the hometown and community side, in which the daily is not seriously interested. Accepting the truth, that the hometown newspaper is the most valuable asset any community has, it naturally follows that said community should support it. There is a partnership existing between the home, and the home people that must be mutually exercised and operated.

So, when a subscriber decides to cut out his local paper for the sake of taking a daily paper, he abandons not only his home paper, but also the best interest of his hometown – not only buy so much less in revenue, but by example.

No person can afford to make businesses profitable for a stranger, at the expense of a friend, sooner or later, also injuring himself, directly or indirectly; and when a town and community lacks pulling together – one for all and offer one – it lacks the essential elements of good citizenship, and displays poor business judgment – as well as unfairness.

### Bridgeport Robbery

On Thursday evening, about 8:30, three men from Baltimore were stopped on the Bridgeport Bridge, and relieved of their possessions, which they said amounted to about \$100 in money and some jewelry.

A car went around them just before they got to the bridge and stopped in front of them on the bridge and the occupants got out and made the three men give what they had and drove away with the two cars, leaving the three men standing. Constable Adelsberger of Emmitsburg was summoned, and the stolen car was found abandoned near Allison Ridge about 2 miles away. No clue of the thieves has been secured.

### Reckless Driving Case

Henry Wolfe, of Union Bridge, was arrested, by Deputy Radcliffe, on charge of reckless driving, preferred by Henry Whisner, of Walkersville. Wolfe was released on his own recognizance for a hearing later before Justice Bowers.

The case is an outgrowth of an automobile accident, which occurred at the one-way bridge spanning Israel Creek on the Liberty Road, about a week ago, when both machines were damaged.

### Saturday's Eclipse

Don't forget about tomorrow's eclipse of the sun, it will start about 7:41 in the morning and last until 12:06 in the afternoon. The darkness is promised to be sufficient to fool the chickens to go to roost, and to encourage deeds of evil – but just why these evilly incline items should wait for an eclipse, when there is a real night every 24 hours, is not explained.

Anyways, for 2 1/2 minutes, a total eclipse is promised at about 1006, through the total eclipse belt and it will be an experience not many have here before had. Streetlights are to be kept burning, and banks will be closed and lamps and flashlight will be in demand. So, it will be well to provide plenty of light, and perhaps to rearrange every day plans, to some extent.



was later located in Frederick and the race began.

Horne, in a sedan, tried to lose the officer in the Saturday night traffic. The race continued out of Frederick with the officer trying to stop Horne, and the latter, it is said, evading every attempt of the officer to pass him. He was finally overhauled near the intersection of Liberty and the Emmitsburg Pike in Lewistown, when the officer succeeded in passing Horne's machine and drawing his gun on Horne.

During the race, the officer said he narrowly escaped injury when he stopped his machine on the brink of a deep ditch after being crowded from the road by Horne's machine. Horne's was going at a rate of 50 mph, according to Schell. When brought into police court, Horne admitted he had tried to shake the officer.

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

**Glenn Fogle & Sons Electric Service, Inc.**  
 Family owned and operated since 1946  
 Licensed • Bonded • Insured  
 Glenn Fogle Master Electrician      James Fogle Master Electrician  
 Walkersville  
**301-845-6543**

**New Midway Volunteer Fire Co.**  
 12019 Woodsboro Pike, Keymar  
**New Midway Vol. Fire Co. Breakfast**  
**Saturday, January 25**  
**7 to noon**  
 Pancakes, Scrambled Eggs, Potatoes, Sausage, Gravy, Puddin, Hominy, Spiced Apples, Orange Juice, Coffee  
 Adults: \$13  
 Children 5-10: \$7  
 Children under 5: Free  
 Carry-Out: \$14  
**\$ MONEY \$**  
**\$ BINGO \$**  
**Friday, January 31**  
**\$25 Per Person**  
 20 regular games ~ 3 specials ~ Minimum \$500 jackpot  
 Doors open @ 5 p.m. Games begin @ 7 p.m.  
 For more info call: **301-898-0543**

  
**The Upholstery Shop**  
 Custom Upholstery  
 Furniture Repair & Restoration  
 Wide Selection of Top Quality Fabrics  
 ~ Family owned and operated for over 50 years ~  
 Michael Woodhams - Owner  
 5810 Taneytown Pike • Taneytown  
 Look for the Blue Sign!  
**410-596-1935**  
 MichaelWoodhamsUpholstery@gmail.com  
 ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED VISA MASTERCARD DISCOVER

# LIBRARY NEWS

Start your 2025 with a fun resolution to visit every Frederick County Public Library. You can check materials out at one branch and return them to a different branch, explore programs for all ages or peek at the sale shelves for a good book looking for a new home. No matter where your interests lie, there is something for you at a library nearby!

Please note that all Frederick County Public Libraries will be closed January 1 for New Year's Day, January 19 and 20 for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Teens looking for job opportunities are encouraged to attend the Teen Job Fair on January 31 from 2:30 to 4:30. Geared specifically for youth, this is a great first step for young job seekers to connect with local business representatives to discover and pursue employment.

Beat the winter blues! Get out the binoculars and start a new hobby with a local birder. Join us to learn about birding basics, how to get

started and what to know to begin your backyard adventures on Sunday, January 26 from 1 to 2.

Elementary Library Explorers gather again on Tuesday, January 14 to explore beyond our world! Orbit the library to learn about deep space, astronomy and more on Tuesday, January 14 from 6 to 6:45pm. Travel to all the stations to earn your Astronomy Badge!

If your New Year's Resolution is to exercise more but you don't want to join the rush of folks at the gym, try out a free exercise program at the Walkersville Public Library! Calm your mind and body with a 1 to hour, free yoga class offered by Sol Yoga. It will be held on Monday, January 13 and 27 at 6. This is a great way to center yourself before the week ahead, but maybe you're looking for an exercise class that will invigorate instead; we have that too! Freedom BANG Fitness happens every Saturday at 10 and will surely get your heart racing.

Maybe you're nervous about start-

ing to exercise or are recovering from an injury and wonder what the next steps look like - drop in to the Walkersville Branch Library on January 9 at 10 to find out more about exercising safely. Tom Sutton from Med-Star Physical Therapy in Frederick will be here to answer questions and demonstrate motion and exercises that can benefit people of all ages.

The Walkersville Branch Library has programs designed for adults with developmental disabilities and their caregivers. Chair One Fitness will be here on Wednesday, January 15 for some adaptive exercises. January 29 is all about dance, so bring your best moves and wear your dancing shoes! Both programs start at 10:15.

Didn't get that puppy you wanted for Christmas? Snuggle with some for free and improve your reading confidence when you read aloud to a Go Team Therapy Dog on January 9 from 6:30 to 7:30 at the Walkersville Branch Library.

There are three fun afterschool programs this month at the library just for tweens! Minecraft Mon-

day is back on January 6 from 6 to 6:45, merge science and art to create a masterpiece on Wednesday, January 8 at 4 or design and build your own marionette puppet on Wednesday, January 22 at 4.

Teen Tuesdays at 3:30 are the perfect time to decompress after school, meet new people, and have fun with friends. Create your own reusable flannel hand warmers on January 7. Come join us and create something that shines! Learn how to roll and shape natural beeswax sheets into custom candles on January 14. No melting or pouring is required. Grab your friends for a winter to themed escape room challenge on January 21. Team up to crack icy puzzles, find hidden clues, and race against the clock to escape the cold mystery before time runs out.

Teens who want to be involved in the library happenings or those who need volunteer hours are welcome to join the Teen Library Council; the first meeting of the new year will be January 28 at 3:30.

Our "Take a Closer Look" pro-

gram for elementary and middle grades is back with a focus on aviation and the circulatory system. Talk to a local pilot and learn how she got her start in the skies when she visits the Walkersville Branch Library on January 3 at 1pm. Learn the ins and outs of your body a la The Magic School Bus—learn how to take your pulse, figure out where your blood goes and so much more on Friday, January 17 at 1.

Tired of playing with the same toys at home? Come out to Fri to Yay every Friday at 11 to explore new activities with your little one! Take a trip to Candyland on January 3, "Tech It Out" on January 10, stop at Imagination Station on January 17, bounce by the branch on January 24 for a selection of hands to on activities and games featuring everyone's favorite toy...the ball! Round out the month by learning all about shapes and sizes on January 31.

Our schedule for storytimes is as follows:

Monday: Infants 10; Baby Steps Skill Building 10:30; Babies 11  
 Tuesday: Toddlers 11  
 Wednesday: Family 6  
 Thursday: Preschool 11

Bilingual Storytime at the Walkersville Branch Library will be on Wednesday, January 15 6pm. This dynamic and engaging storytime is fun for the whole family and will feature songs, rhymes and more in English and other world languages.

Do you love the library? Want to spark the same excitement in others? Looking for a way to invest in your community? If you answered yes to any (or all!) of these questions, then you're a friend of the library. Make it official by joining The Friends of the Walkersville Library community group! We're seeking new members and volunteers to help fundraise and advocate for more high to quality programs and events. Stop by the Walkersville Branch Library or give us a call at 301-600 to 8200 to learn more.

**AFFORDABLE PEST CONTROL, INC.**  
*"We Eliminate Your Pests For Less"*  
 Residential & Commercial Services  
 MDA Certified & Insured  
 WDI Real Estate Inspections  
 Termite Treatment / Warranty  
 Prompt, Friendly & Effective Service

Free Estimates ~ Military & Senior Discounts  
 License #26631 ~ Insured

Termites ~ Spiders  
 Cockroaches ~ Crickets  
 Mice ~ Ants ~ Bees, Wasps  
 Bedbugs ~ Ladybugs

Family Owned & Operated For Over 25 Years!



**301-845-0163**  
[www.affordablepestcontrolinc.com](http://www.affordablepestcontrolinc.com)

**Rocky Ridge Vol. Fire Co.**



**Sat., January 11**  
 Doors open 5 p.m. ~ Games start 7 p.m.  
**Guaranteed Jackpot \$300**  
 13516 Motters Station Rd.  
 Rocky Ridge Activities Building  
[www.rockyridgevfc.com](http://www.rockyridgevfc.com)




**BROWNIE'S AUTO REPAIR**



Serving Walkersville For Over 70 Years

All Major & Minor Repairs  
 Emission Based Repairs  
 Approved MD Inspection Facility  
 Pick-Up & Delivery Available

42 Frederick Street, Walkersville  
**301-845-8400**  
[BrowniesAutoService@gmail.com](mailto:BrowniesAutoService@gmail.com)  
 Monday - Friday 8 - 5  
 Saturday by Appointment




**Thurmont Community Ambulance Service**  
 Proudly Serving Northern Frederick Co. for Over Half a Century

**YEAH! Friday Night YEAH!**



**Bring your friends & family for a fun filled night**

**Doors open @ 5**  
**Bingo begins @ 7**

**Thurmont Event Complex**  
 13716 Strafford Drive, Thurmont  
**301-271-7550** [www.thurmonteventcomplex.com](http://www.thurmonteventcomplex.com)

# The path ahead

Janie Monier  
Frederick County School Board

When the venerable Michael Hillman asked me to write an article, the goal was for more than the standard introduction to the aspirations of a Member-Elect of Board of Education, but also to provide information for readers to understand the challenges we will be facing in the coming years and how our communities and families can advocate for and support our students, educators, and schools. As a former PTA President, this is the sort of information I wish I had to reference when working with parents on questions they had about an issue with the school or their teacher.

My goal in this first article is to present the outline for a series of articles which will provide information on the two biggest constraints on our public schools, the FCPS operating and capital budget and the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, and the role of the FCPS Board of Education and how local, state and federal agencies affect what is possible from the dais. This series should provide a primer for you, the reader, to use for further exploration, to ask questions, and build your wealth of knowledge when advocating for you family and community.

In a perfect budgetary world, Special Education would be fully funded, there would be increased mental and behavioral health staff and support, CTC and CTE programs expanded to other parts of the county, a robust agricultural program emphasizing science and technology, develop our digital literacy to include artificial intelligence, see less rote testing and more time for critical thinking and problem solving. In a perfect world our class sizes would decrease because we have built, renovated, or replaced school buildings and filled them with amazing educators and staff making a living wage and ready for the next year of students. That would be a perfect world with a perfect budget. That is not what we have currently. It will take strong advocacy, careful deliberation of our needs, partnership with local and state stakeholders, and time before we see our budget capable of

meeting the demands of our ever-expanding enrollment. I will work to find resources, grants, and creative solutions to make progress on the goals of our schools and communities while being honest about the realities of our budget and resources.

Ever hear the expression of "putting the cart before the horse?" Remember the perfect world I presented above? That would be the cart. Let me introduce you to the two horses called, Capital and Operations. The budget for Frederick County Public Schools is divided into two main categories: the Capital budget and the Operations budget. Each serves a distinct purpose and is managed separately to meet the expansive needs of the school system and reflect the various sources of funding we rely upon to fill these budgets.

The capital budget is primarily concerned with school infrastructure, technology, portables at existing sites, maintenance, etc. Basically, anything that needs to be nailed down or connected to electric and water. The Capital budget for 2025 was just shy of \$73 million according to a FCPS webpage article on July 1, 2024. In order to deliver on the maintenance needs and capital improvements needed for the future, FCPS maintains an Educational Facilities Master Plan for the next 10 years of renovations, replacements, and new buildings for our public school system. Interactive maps, the Executive Summary, and the master plan can be found on the FCPS website: <https://www.fcps.org/capital-program/efmp>. Capital improvement projects are funded by County and State capital budgets for education. FCPS processes requests for improvements and works with partners at the County and with the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) which manages requests for state funding.

On the other hand, the operations budget covers the day-to-day expenses of running the school system. This includes salaries for teachers and staff, utilities, supplies, and other recurring costs. This past June, FCPS Board of Education passed the FY2025 Operating budget of \$940 million, a 3.3%

increase over FY 2024. The operating budget is funded by the County and State at 44% each and the remaining 12% are funds from the Federal budget and other income sources. The FY25 budget had to set aside 33% of the budget to cover inflationary costs. That left 67% for operations. After allocating funds for mandates, salaries, benefits, and utilities; there was roughly 28% left for discretionary spending. It was this 28% and staff salaries and benefits that were available to cut during discussions over the budget \$53 million budget deficit in Spring 2024 that brought the proposed budget of \$988 million down to \$940 million. And the portion of the 12% that includes other sources of income to address the budget deficit? Part of that was the facilities fees which were increased to continue to provide funding for 4th grade music education.

Our second horse, Operations, suffers from food insecurity. Each year a new set of students changes the funding provided by the state to address their unique needs. Some students may cost the system \$10,000 per pupil and others will be closer to \$20,000 depending on the unique needs of the student. We can make projections for changes in enrollment based on development around the county, but it is much harder to predict which students will require academic interventions, IEP's and 504's, other supports, or transportation to CTC, FCC, or the IB program at Urbana High School.

Understanding the difference between the capital and operations

budget, as well as the allocation of funds within the operations budget, is crucial for making informed decisions about school funding. It is a delicate balancing act to ensure that the needs are met for our public schools and public charters, while staying within the budgetary constraints.

The other constraint to our budget goals is The Blueprint for Maryland's Future. This legislation was passed by the Maryland General Assembly in 2021 before the state budget knew what would happen after Covid. It is aimed at increasing access to a high-quality education for all students, allocating resources to meet the needs of our students, and increase career pathways for every student. The Blueprint is based on the recommendations from the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education, commonly referred to as the Kirwan Commission. The Blueprint is structured around 5 Pillars, each designed to address specific areas of educational improvement as follows:

**Early Childhood Education:** This pillar focuses on expanding access to early childhood education programs. We are already seeing the implementation of this pillar in FCPS with the expansion of full day pre-kindergarten, pre-k centers in our high schools which allow our high school students to earn a Child Development Associates Certification, the Judy School model at several of our elementary schools, and public-private partnerships between FCPS and The Learning Bee.

**High-Quality and Diverse Teachers and Leaders** This initiative aims to

attract, retain, and develop a diverse workforce of educators and school leaders who are equipped to meet the needs of all students. At FCPS, there have been changes to the career ladder, incentives for National Board Certification, a starting salary at \$60,000, and raising expectations for teacher preparation, professional development, and mentoring.

**College and Career Readiness (CCR):** This pillar emphasizes preparing students for post-secondary education and the workforce, ensuring they have the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in their chosen paths. CCR includes pathways into programs offered through our Career & Technical Center (CTC) and Career & Technical Education (CTE) programs, apprenticeships, and dual enrollment with Frederick Community College. FCPS is currently working with guidance from State CTE on expanding CTE and CTC programs, working with FCC on individualized career counseling, and additional Youth Apprenticeship Partners.

**More Resources for Students to be Successful:** This includes increasing funding and resources for schools, particularly those serving disadvantaged communities, to provide students with the support they need to thrive. At FCPS, we are meeting this mandate through our Community Schools to provide wraparound services, multi-lingual services for dual enrollment in English while completing grade-level coursework and expanding Special Education and Behavioral Health Services.

continued next month



**LNG Contracting Inc.**  
30 years roofing experience  
Roofing is our specialty

**Contact**  
Claude "Jr" McIntosh  
for estimates

**301-748-7483**  
MHIC #132583



the **Y** YMCA

**FIND YOUR STRENGTH. FIND YOUR Y.**

Sign up for an **ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP** and receive **one month FREE!**

- ✓ \$0 Joining Fee
- ✓ No long-term contracts
- ✓ 7 days FREE to Try the Y with a tour!

\*Sign up in person at the YMCA from 1/1 - 1/31/25 and receive one free month when signing up for an annual membership.

» **FIND YOUR Y AT**  
YMCA OF FREDERICK COUNTY  
[FREDERICKYMCA.ORG](http://FREDERICKYMCA.ORG)

For a better us.®

# FOUR YEARS AT THE MOUNT

*This month we asked our students to write about someone in their life whose interaction with them had a profound influence on their lives today.*

## Freshman

**How you can change without knowing**

**Cameron Madden  
MSMU Class of 2028**

I think that whether we know it or not, there is always someone who has fundamentally assisted in changing something about ourselves, whether for better or worse. As the holiday season concludes and I am surrounded by family and friends, it makes me realize that the slightest change to my personality or character would have changed every interaction and infliction I have made on them, and furthermore what I know about them, the world and myself. It is kind of impossible to really know when I turned into the person I became today, but I think that besides being born there is one distinctive time in which I can say set me up for the future. This time corresponds with the introduction to one of the greatest people I know to this day, and for the sake of anonymity we shall call her Jules.

It was during sophomore year, a time where I was in the maximum pubescent experience, wondering

just how my world will turn out, while also ignoring the future and world to just enjoy the moment. I had somewhat complicated ideas of plans, but it all basically boiled down to keeping good grades, going to college, and ending up in law school to become some kind of lawyer. Because of this mock-up of a life goal, I was taking unique classes in my high school that would prepare me for office and legal assistant work. During the multiple years of going to this class, I know that the people who attended it with me did not care for me much, and honestly the feeling was mutual. That was except for one person who I met there, obviously being Jules since I built this background up to explain her! She was quite reserved, but personally extroverted and built with a good sense of humor and “outgoingness” (a.k.a. she was feisty.) We certainly clicked, but for the first months of knowing her I regret to say that we were just classroom friends, and it meant nothing more to me at the time than just knowing a person I could talk to.

You see, at this time I was really struggling with friendships due to me being truly separated from my best friend since young childhood, and the friends that I made at school were

all changing and I felt less and less included. Besides my mock-up plans I didn't know what I myself wanted to do, nor what I thought was fun or interesting. I was really just boring, at least in my own opinion, and I really wanted to find out what made me happy. All my friendships by this logic then were kept alive by convenience, and material interest rather than being interested by the person.

Yet as I got closer to Jules, I began to find more things to which brought me joy, but there are a couple of specific things that made me develop differently in terms of deciding who I was. Jules wasn't fine herself, and without giving away anything I had promised to keep secret, she was really struggling mentally with a lot of things. The first day I caught her crying really was a turn around for me specifically. For hours she spilled out feelings about things I had no idea about, and for the first time in so long I realized that she, my friend, was a real and amazing person; not just another classmate or seat next to me. I knew from that moment I had to step in and do everything I could to make her happy, and looking back this is what really helped my sentiment of commitment towards others. I really think a large part of my purpose is to be of help to oth-

ers, and to make the lives of people I care about easier, because more than anything else that is what makes me happy, and I know that because it sums up the whole dynamic I have had with her since then, and I couldn't be happier! My experience with her made me reproach my relationships with all my other friends, and grow closer and stronger with them, all because of her just existing.

Not only was her existence enough, but her perseverance taught me way more than I have given it credit for! She was smart for sure, but due to her own interests and also problems, school and its work were not priorities; especially when her attitude often made her feud with teachers! Yet every time, when the workload seemed impossible and the grade could have turned to disaster, she worked harder than I knew was possible and got it done. Everytime. It really inspires me to get things done, both professionally and personally. My work ethic and personal goals were all changed and inspired by her, but there is one more minor miracle that she has done (quite inadvertently) that has made me believe not only in the things I am now inspired to do, but in something beyond. I never was religious in my youth, and when going to Sun-

day school I just went for some cookies that were given to us. Yet during this time of feeling lost, I prayed on a specific night about some specific things, relating to friends and such, and one of the things I asked was to get the numbers of people I was friendly with. Wouldn't you believe that it was the night before Jules broke down as mentioned before, and right after that she definitely cemented not only our friendship but my faith, as she made me put my number in her phone.

I feel as though on that particular day, and the further experience of knowing her, my old and depreciated views of myself and the world were taken away and given new purpose, new meaning, and for that I realize just how much of my confidence, life, and faith I have gained from her. Thank you, Jules, you will never know how much you have meant to me, because even I am still inspired and am encouraged to be better by your example! I hope all you readers can find someone just like this, or at least one without the problems that hurt them, so they don't have to hurt at all!

*To read other articles by Cameron Madden, visit the Authors section of Walkersville.net.*

## Sophomore

**Making history**

**Gracie Smith  
MSMU Class of 2027**

“Middle school sucked”. It is a common phrase spoken by middle schoolers around the country. Nevertheless, it holds even to this day. During my middle school years, I always faced new challenges—mostly that of being alone. In 6th grade, I had one friend, my friend of nearly 10 years at that point. However, he and I never crossed paths since we had all different teachers and different “teams” as our school did. In my first year of middle school, I was left to fend for myself in a way I suppose I never had to before. I made new acquaintances, though nothing to brag about. Navigated my way around the new building and even survived gym class and my first encounter with locker rooms. As someone who was painfully shy and honestly pre-

ferred to be alone, I hated myself for being the way I was; so introverted.

7th grade came and went rather quickly. However, that year I reconnected with some friends I had made in preschool. These connections ultimately guided me to finish that year of school. It was also that year I became more and more confident in myself. I was asked to give a presentation to my entire class on Crohn's Disease, which I would say turned out pretty successfully.

It wasn't until 8th grade that I learned it was okay to like something other than science. This was all thanks to my history teacher, Mr. Robert Housch. I remember the first day of class, and I thought immediately to myself “Oh my gosh, I'm going to hate this class.” I went home to my mother that day and shared with her everything about my first day and she told me, “Gracie, you're going to love that class.”

I thought about her words for the next few days, still not fully convinced. However, Mr. Housch was all about routine,

as was I. Quickly, I recognized the routine and came overly prepared to class, ready to answer each question. So much so that I was competing with my best friend to see who could throw their hand up the fastest. My favorite memory of being in Mr. Housch's class was acting out the Battle of Bunker Hill. We went outside to the hill behind the middle school, and acted out the battle, running uphill and “loading” our bayonets. In addition to our fine acting skills, we were required to memorize the Preamble to the Constitution. Mr. Housch had played for us a song that, to this day, I can still recite. My favorite part of the course, however, was Gettysburg. Having always been fascinated by it since it's 20 minutes from my house, I took to this unit rather quickly. It was a cold January day when Mr. Housch gave me and my class a tour of the Gettysburg Battlefield since he is a Licensed Battlefield Guide himself. It was at this point that I realized what I wanted to study.

I left Middle School a very different person than the one I was when I entered. I was very disappointed I couldn't just have Mr. Housch teach me history in

High School too. Nonetheless, I was moved by his passion for History. When my little brother Jack was in the 8th grade, I was overjoyed to hear that he also would have Mr. Housch to teach him. I have to admit, I saw an opportunity and I took it. I emailed Mr. Housch as a junior in High School and asked to chaperone Jack's trip to Gettysburg. He wrote back and was more than willing to have me chaperone. I think I was more excited about the field trip than my brother. The trip this time was a bit different. I not only knew what to expect, but I was able to retain and appreciate more of what Mr. Housch was explaining about the battle. This led me to study it some more in my free time and visit Gettysburg with my father and my aunt - I wrote about those adventures in another article.

When it came time to graduate, I had a very important decision to make. Not where I wanted to go, but what I wanted to study. I was faced with the pressure of going into the medical field since A) that's where the money is, and B) my family “saw me working in a lab”. Both of those points are hard to dispute. However, I decided to put

what I wanted and what would make me happy ahead of what would make others happy. Thus, I chose to major in History. Had Mr. Housch not fueled my interest and now passion for History, I would not be accomplishing the things I am today. Despite Mr. Housch encouraging me to study law, I decided that might not be the best field since I tend to cry during arguments.

Mr. Housch taught me in middle school, aided me in high school, and is still guiding me in college. Last summer he met with me and my father to help me train for the Licensed Battlefield Guide Exam that I just took in early December. The exam contained 161 questions and 3 essays. After nearly 2 years of preparation, Mr. Housch supplied me with yet another tour of the battlefield, as well as suggested readings and practice questions for the exam. Never in my life have I encountered someone who wants so much to see people succeed in doing what they love best.

Mr. Housch, thank you for making history fun. Thank you for normalizing a passion for the past. Thank you for your time, your effort, and your support to help me accomplish my dreams. You have made such a lasting impact on me and my future. I hope to influence and impact people in the same way you led me to study history. Knowledge is power, and our history is forever relevant.

*To read other articles by Gracie Smith, visit the Authors section of Walkersville.net.*



**Platinum**  
**AUTO SALES & SERVICE**  
**301-845-0575**  
609 S. Main St., Woodsboro  
www.platinumautoss.com  
Platinumautoss@gmail.com



**Mark 1 Towing**  
24 hr. emergency  
police dispatch service  
**Light to Medium Duty Towing**  
F350 twinline 4X4 wheel lift wrecker &  
F450 rollback wheel lift service  
9633 Woodsboro Pike,  
Walkersville  
301-898-9869  
mark1service@comcast.net  
www.mark1towing.com

# RIPPLES IN A POND

## Junior

### Remembering my favorite 'Flounder'

Devin Owen  
MSMU Class of 2026

Can you think back to a moment when you threw a rock or a stick into a pond and the water would scatter into different ripples? They go on and on and on. Have you ever felt a ripple effect in your life though? That is, a person or event that changed or guided the trajectory of your life, leading you to where you are today. I myself can probably think of multiple, both good and bad events that occurred in my life, people who had positive or negative impacts, and people who I hold a special place for in my heart.

The new year of 2025 marks two years without my Uncle Charlie. He passed away in April of 2023 after a fifteen-year battle with cancer. He was one of the absolute strongest people that I knew. His kindness and loyalty shined bright even when he was facing his darkest of days. When Mike prompted us to write about somebody who made an effect on our lives I sat and thought for a while. I feel like there

are so many meaningful people in my life, all of which made numerous impacts on my life, shaping the way it has turned out so far. How could I possibly pick one person or event to write about when I've been alive for twenty years already? My uncle was very popular during his time on Earth, I was always hearing stories about him from everyone who found out I was his niece. It was always all good things; thinking of him brought smiles to a person's face and their eyes would light up as they laughed and talked about him and their experiences with him over the years. For someone who had such a positive, significant impact on others I found that he is the perfect person to talk about, especially when focusing on the ripple effect.

When I was younger, my childhood was filled with a lot of experiences that a child my age should not have had to endure. Even though I was surrounded by so much negativity, my uncle was always a guiding light that reminded me of all the good that awaited me in the world. I always referred to Uncle Charlie as 'Captain Flounder.' You see, I was absolutely *obsessed* with "The Little Mermaid" growing up and anytime that I would swim at my grandma's pool I would make

Uncle Charlie play mermaids with me, and I dubbed him Flounder, because I (of course) was Ariel and Flounder was Ariel's best friend. Up until he passed, we kept this name going. I even told his friends at the docks his nickname, although he wasn't too pleased with that part.

Charlie Helmer was a man of many talents, but the one that mattered most to me was his talent for putting other people first. I can name a plethora of times that Charlie would go to great lengths to make sure I had everything I ever wanted or needed, but the one time that meant the most was my graduation party. The two sides of my family don't always get along and frankly, I was worried that neither side would even show up due to the long-time 'feud.' Uncle Charlie went above and beyond that day. He was barely a year away from the date that he would pass, yet he made sure that he was there supporting me, making sure I knew that this was my day of celebration so I shouldn't have to worry whether or not my family would get along. He went and talked to my mom's side of the family and made conversation, he laughed with everyone, he met all of my friends, and he took pic-

tures with me that I now get to cherish forever.

I remember when I introduced Uncle Charlie to my boyfriend for the first time. I had never introduced my family to someone unless I knew it was serious, so this was his first time ever meeting someone who I had been dating, and boy was he ready! My aunt and uncle hadn't had children of their own but, he was fully prepared to play the role of over-protective dad for a moment. It didn't last very long though; Uncle Charlie was too sweet and personable to appear intimidating to anyone really, let alone a teenage boy who loved his niece. They talked about swimming, fishing, sushi, food, and water polo for the entire weekend that we were visiting. It was the first time in a while that I was able to see my uncle's eyes and face light up; it was as if the sickness that had its hold on him was non-existent for the time being and God did we revel in it. This was only a few months prior to his passing, and it warmed my heart to know that he got to have a few more normal moments and feelings to experience.

Grief is a funny thing. I feel like most people don't expect it to shape us and change the way we

view life; I know I certainly didn't. Losing my uncle completely hot-wired my brain and view of life in general. We take so many moments for granted and don't think twice about it. Looking back at the memories I have with Uncle Charlie makes my heart happy, but it also brings tears to my eyes because I miss him dearly. Life hasn't been the same without him here.

Charlie Helmer created a ripple effect in my life unlike any other. He taught me that our time is precious, and we shouldn't waste a second of it. His presence in my life always reminded me that I am never alone, and he supported and pushed me to pursue every dream I had. Without him, I wouldn't be where I am today: I wouldn't be as good at baking or talking to people, I wouldn't be as compassionate or empathetic as I have learned to be, and I certainly wouldn't understand the true power that love and time hold. I learned very quickly the impact that one person can have on your life, the ripples they create in the path of your life plans, it just all comes into view once you've lost them.

To read other articles by Devin Owen, visit the Authors section of Walkersville.net.

## Senior

### Words I should've said

Dolores Hans  
MSMU Class of 2025

As I sit back in solitude and observe the blue-sky transition to various shades of pink and orange, I remember the one who taught me to stop and pay attention to the little details in the world around me. I used to sit on the back deck of my Great Pop-Pop's house with him and watch the sunset. Just the two of us. We would sit in absolute silence, unless he asked me a question or tried to tell me something important. To this day I can still remember the smells, sights, and feelings of his house. How the best feeling was stepping onto the ice-cold tile floor of the porch first thing in the morning. Or sitting on the rocks by the lagoon and watching the ducks float atop the water before venturing further out to sea. I remember the way it smelled when all of my uncles and cousins would bring an endless supply of meats and just barbecue for hours.

Great Pop-Pop was very protective of the flowers on his deck, and I remember them so vividly because everything else around his house was either rock or wood, there was no grass or line of trees where he lived in south Jersey. One time he told me that having his flowers there reminded him to keep an eye out for beautiful things. I was just a child when he said that so I don't remember the context of it but, I do remember looking at them for a solid

five minutes after he said it, with who-knows-what kind of childlike thoughts bouncing around in my head. I think what he said must've really stuck with me because I think one of my strongest qualities is my ability to see the incredibly subtle, yet beautiful parts of nature.

This quality has led me to find one of my biggest passions: photography. Through my lens I can clearly see every feather on a songbird, every vein of a leaf, and every detail of a flower like the ones on his porch. I can also observe the easily ignored qualities of people that make them beautiful. One of things I thought most beautiful about my Great Pop-Pop was that when he held you or hugged you, it always felt like home and intentional, like it was just as important for him as it was for us as children.

Somewhere down the line, I decided I didn't want to sit on the deck and watch the sunset with him for one night. I don't remember why, or if my little child brain even had a reason, I just remember telling my mom I didn't want to. I think maybe I just thought that it took a long time and that because of that, I would get bored, as children usually do with their short attention spans and wandering minds.

Great Pop-Pop died when I was still young. I don't remember him ever looking or behaving sickly, or even really noticing his old age. I remember my dad saying he was sick but to me that just meant he had a cold or something, I was too young to really understand the extent of it. And then all of a sudden, he was gone.

Those things I loved about his house just happened to become

things I would come to miss. Being held by him would be something I would lay awake at night aching for. Looking at his face would only be done once more at his wake and from then on only in photos. I remember him not even looking like himself at the wake. He looked too dressed up, too clean, too young. It didn't look or feel real.

I never got to thank him for teaching me everything he did. I never got to say goodbye. I should have stayed with him that one night to watch the sunset. I should have said thank you when he gave me cheerios with syrup for breakfast, or when he would hide quarters in the rocks that we would search for, and when he would give me a container full of change, he saved up every time he went to the store.

Now all I can do is think of him every time I see those yellow landscape stones or feel cold tiles beneath my feet or when I sit outside for hours beneath the color changing sky and appreciate it. As the sun sets, I wonder if he is proud of me, I wonder if he still sees that little girl or if he knows me better as an adult than I even know myself. I wonder if he grabs God's attention and directs his gaze toward me. I wonder if God thanks Great Pop-Pop on my behalf every time I stop in my tracks to look at something beautiful. I wonder if he can still see the sunset.

Dear Great Pop-Pop,

I miss you. All the time. I hope I make you proud. Thank you for teaching me to appreciate the beautiful things around me. Thank you for saving up all of your change and giving it to me. Thank you for providing us with a home in your hugs.

Thank you for leaving your wife's rings to me, I treasure them. I hope you smile when you see the love I have found. He reminds me a lot of you. His hugs make a home, he is tall like you and likes golf, and he makes me laugh like you once did. We watch the sunset together like you and I once did, and I think of

you every time. I try not to feel the empty space beside me as a place where you once were, but as a place I have saved for you, if somehow, someday you were able to be here, and I just didn't know it.

To read other articles by Dolores Hans, visit the Authors section of Walkersville.net.



**INTEGRITY**  
**AUTO CARE**  
Honesty. Transparency.  
Integrity.

**Automotive & Motorcycle  
Repair & Service!**

**WINTER IS HERE!**

**10% Off**

**Parts and Labor**

When coupon is provided  
on next visit!

**All makes & models!**  
General maintenance  
Repair & replacement from A/C to tires  
Maryland state inspection

12052 Main St., Libertytown  
301-898-5541  
Open M-F 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Integrity-autocare.com

## ARTS

## Way Off Broadway opens its 2025 season

Following its 30th Anniversary Season in 2024, The Way Off Broadway Dinner Theatre will open its new 2025 Season with one of the most iconic murder mysteries of all time, Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap*. The classic whodunnit will open at the Frederick theater on Friday evening, January 17th.

In the world's longest-running play, when a local woman is murdered, the guests and staff at Monkswell Manor find themselves stranded during a snowstorm. It soon becomes clear that the killer is among them, and the seven strangers grow increasingly suspicious

of one another. When a second murder takes place, tensions and fears only escalate. Brimming with intrigue, sophisticated humor, and surprising twists, *The Mousetrap* is one of Agatha Christie's most iconic murder mysteries.

The *Mousetrap* first opened at the Ambassadors Theatre in London's West end in the fall of 1952. The production included a young Richard Attenborough as Detective Sergeant Trotter and his wife, Shelia Sims, as Mollie Ralston.

On March 25, 1974 the production transferred to the St. Martin Theatre where it has been

performing since. In its over seventy year run, the only time the show has not been performed was when the West End was shut down during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The cast of Way Off Broadway's production includes Joseph Batz as Christopher Wren, Betsey Whitmore Brannen as Mrs. Boyle, Emily Flack as Mollie Ralston, Brian D. Kaider as Major Metcalf, Dominic Massimino as Mr. Paravicini, Wil Spaeth as Giles Ralston, Randy Stull as Detective Sergeant Trotter, and Megan Elizabeth West as Miss Casewell.

The production is directed by Justin M. Kiska, Way Off Broadway's Managing Director and the author of the award-nominated Parker City Mysteries book series.

The *Mousetrap* will run from January 17th through March 1st, with performances every Friday and Saturday evening, and matinees on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sunday of the month. Ticket prices vary by performance date and may be purchased by contacting the Box Office at 301-662-6600.

To learn more about *The Mousetrap*, or any of Way Off Broadway's productions or events, including

its upcoming 2025 Season which includes *A Second Help – The Church Basement Ladies Sequel*, *Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella: The Broadway Musical*, *Company*, and *Once Upon a Christmas Night*, visit the theatre's website at [www.wayoffbroadway.com](http://www.wayoffbroadway.com).

The Way Off Broadway Dinner Theatre, under the direction of the Kiska family since 2002, celebrated its 30th anniversary of bringing live theater to the stage during the 2024 Season. Since it first opened in 1995, the theatre has been a leader in the area's theatre community, proudly bringing both classic musicals, as well as regional and area premieres to the Frederick stage.

## Winter Lecture series at Gettysburg National Park

Beginning January 4, the popular Winter Lecture series will begin at Gettysburg National Military Park (NMP). Featuring some of the best National Park Service rangers and historians from across the region, the 8-week Winter Lecture Series of hour-long talks will examine a wide array of subjects related to the American Civil War and Gettysburg history.

From A.P. Hill, Frederick Douglass & John Brown, to the Bat-

tle at Mine Creek and much more, these lectures illuminate the different events and personalities of this pivotal chapter in American history. "Winter is an excellent time to visit the Gettysburg National Military Park Museum of the American Civil War," notes Christopher Gwinn, Chief of Interpretation and Education at Gettysburg National Military Park. "Through this lecture series we hope to offer visitors a reason to visit the Museum and Visitor

Center and connect with the history of this special place and time in American history."

Of special note this year is a musical performance, inspired by Civil War poetry entitled "Marching On" by composer Ryan Mascilak and his ensemble. Additionally, visitors will be able to participate in a conversation featuring abolitionists Frederick Douglass and John Brown. Brought to life by living historians Nathan Richardson and

Doug Dobbs, this special theatrical performance is done in partnership with the Lincoln Cemetery Association Project.

The Winter Lecture Series is held at 1:30 p.m. every Saturday and Sunday from January 4 through February 23, in the Gettysburg NMP Museum and Visitor Center. Inclement weather dates for select presentations will be on March 2 & 3. Limited seating is available on a first come – first serve basis. Free

tickets will be available day of at the Gettysburg NMP Museum and Visitor Center.

For those unable to attend in person, each lecture will be filmed and made available via the Gettysburg Foundation YouTube channel: [www.youtube.com/@gettysburgfoundation](http://www.youtube.com/@gettysburgfoundation).

For more information, and a full listing of all programs and events, visit the park website at [www.nps.gov/gett](http://www.nps.gov/gett).

## Weinburg Center & New Spire Arts

It's the 5 O'clock Somewhere Tribute to Jimmy Buffett – January 19 at New Spire Arts. Come and experience the life and times of Jimmy Buffett as told through the back stories of his greatest hits, performed by musicians who played the same stages Jimmy played in Key West. Join us for an unforgettable evening celebrating the life and music of Jimmy Buffett. Hear the stories behind his greatest hits, performed by musicians who played the same stages in Key West. Enjoy classics like *Come Monday*, *Changes in Latitudes, Changes in Attitudes*, *Cheeseburger in Paradise*, *A Pirate Looks at 40*, *Son of a Son of a Sailor*, *Margaritaville* and so many more. You'll

leave with a newfound appreciation for Buffett's timeless songs.

**Gangstagrass – January 30.** A true example of the belief that we are better together, Gangstagrass combines great American traditions of bluegrass, hip-hop, and beyond to create a whole new musical genre that is more than the sum of its parts. Gangstagrass is a multi-racial collective of musicians who demolish every preconception you have about country music and hip-hop music. These string pickers and MCs create a shared cultural space for dialogue and connection between folks that usually never intersect. The boundaries are

gone and Gangstagrass is out there doing things nobody thought would work but when you hear it you know, down in your soul, that it does work. Gangstagrass is here to help us party together with an irresistible blend of America's rural and urban music traditions.

**1964 The Tribute – February 7.** Experience a Beatles' Concert the way it was performed over 60 years ago... 1964 meticulously re-creates the magic of a live Beatles' performance with artful precision and unerring accuracy, and brings you as close as anyone could possibly get to feeling the magic of a Fab Four live performance. For over 30 years, 1964 has thrilled audiences with what is considered to be the most authentic tribute to The Beatles using period instruments, clothing, hairstyles and onstage banter with an accuracy that is unmatched. A perennial favorite on the Weinberg stage, you won't want to miss this one-of-a-kind salute to the boys from Liverpool.

**Admiral Radio – February 7 at New Spire Arts.** This husband-and-wife

singer-songwriter duo weave a unique Americana sound blending traditional country, folk, and roots music. Inspired by the prior life of their 1941 wooden Admiral Radio, South-Carolina based duo Coty Hoover and Becca Smith create a unique Americana blend rooted in traditional styles that also touches the heartstrings of the modern-day listener. This husband-and-wife singer-songwriter team weaves threads of country, folk, and roots music together to create a nostalgic sonic tapestry evoking simpler times filled with homespun comfort.

**The Frederick Speaker Series - Dr. Robert Ballard – February 6.** Renowned Ocean Explorer & Scientist. On more than 120 deep-sea expeditions, Robert Ballard has made many major natural discoveries, such as the deep-sea vents. Oh, and he found the Titanic. The man who made some of the most startling undersea discoveries in recent years, Robert Ballard describes what it was like to locate the Titanic, among other sunken famous ships. In his talk, through the use of stunning high-quality images and personal accounts, Dr. Ballard will present his most recent work in deep water archae-

ology and the technology of tele-presence. He discusses motivating people to think outside the box, learning how to deal with failure-that failure is just a step along the way to success, motivating children to choose careers in math, science, and engineering; and how to live your dream. Ballard is a dynamic speaker who will have you on the edge of your seat wanting to start a whole new career in exploration!

**Porter Carroll's The Evolution of Cabaret – February 8 at New Spire Arts.** This dynamic show reinvents traditional cabaret by blending R&B and pop songs with interactive, re-imagined arrangements, captivating audiences. Evolution of Cabaret is a dynamic show that redefines the traditional cabaret experience. Porter Carroll, Jr. founder of Atlantic Starr the R&B/Pop hit machine from the 70's, 80's and 90's is selling out shows in "The Evolution of Cabaret", an innovative cabaret/nightclub act that puts a new exciting spin on popular classics never before seen on the Jazz club and cabaret circuit, featuring a tasty panoply that runs the gamut from R&B and improvisational jazz to soul, funk, blues, Rock & Roll and more.

**Scythian – February 15.** Rousing and raucous, Scythian (sith-ee-yin) plays roots music from Celtic, Eastern European and Appalachian traditions with thunderous energy, technical prowess, and storytelling songwriting, beckoning crowds into a barn-dance, rock concert experience. The Washington Post says "Scythian's enthusiasm is contagious, and shows seem to end with everyone dancing, jumping around or hoisting glasses."

Tickets for all these events may be purchased online at WeinbergCenter.org, by calling the box office at 301-600-2828, or in person at 20 West Patrick Street.

**Petrella Piano Studio**  
Erin Petrella, B.A. Music, SPC  
Piano Teacher, Accompanist, & Organist  
Accepting students / clients for piano lessons, accompanying, & religious services / events.

Thurmont & Hagerstown  
(610) 984-5075  
<https://petrellapianostudio.com/contact/>

**Kramer's**  
PIANO SHOP  
Family-owned & operated since 1974

SALES • TUNING • LESSONS • MOVING

12049 Woodsboro Pike, New Midway  
301-898-3245 [www.kramerspianoshop.com](http://www.kramerspianoshop.com)

January 17th - March 1st

**THE Agatha Christie**  
**MOUSETRAP**

Way Off Broadway  
5 Willowdale Drive | Frederick  
Box Office: (301) 662-6600 [www.WAYOFFBROADWAY.com](http://www.WAYOFFBROADWAY.com)

# Feeling lucky in the new year

Sonya Verlaque  
FCC Culinary Program

As Michael Scott would say, "I'm not superstitious, but I am a little stitious..." There are ways to ring in luck for the New Year in many cultures. Although I don't think any of these are guaranteed to bring you wealth, health and happiness, they are a delicious way to connect to past traditions and couldn't hurt to try.

## Black Eyed Peas

Black eyed peas have a long history in southern cooking for ringing in the new year. Rumor is you are supposed to eat 365 of them for wealth every day in the new year, and when cooking, they are presoaked and swell so hopefully your money grows as well. Black eyed peas are also high in protein and flavonoids so may contribute to your good health in 2025 also. Always remember to soak your beans, preferably overnight if you can, and add salt if needed near the end (the bacon and sausage can be salty enough). Also almost every recipe you find will have jalapeños in it, they can be optional depending on your family and friends spice tolerance.

### Ingredients

- 1 pound black-eyed peas (453g)
- 4-5 slices chopped thick bacon
- 5 ounces diced smoked sausage or turkey (about 1 cup)
- 1 large diced onion
- 1 diced celery stalk
- 2 to 3 teaspoons minced garlic
- 1 optional minced jalapeño (or substitute with 1/4 teaspoon cayenne)
- 2 tsp. fresh minced thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 to 2 tsp. creole spice mix
- 7 to 8 cups chicken stock
- 2 or more cups of collard greens (or substitute with kale)
- Salt and pepper for seasoning

Preparation Directions: Start by rinsing the dry black-eyed pea beans thoroughly and pick through them. Place the beans into a large pot and cover them with 3-4 inches of cold water. Let the beans sit and soak for 2-3 hours, or if time permits, overnight for optimal texture. In a large, heavy sauté pan, cook chopped bacon over medium heat until it becomes brown and crispy, which should take about 4-5 minutes. Add sausage to the pan and continue to sauté for an additional 2-3 minutes. Once cooked, remove the bacon and sausage mixture from the pan and set it aside for later use.

Using the same pan, add chopped onions, celery, garlic, jalapenos, thyme, and a bay leaf. Sauté the mixture for 3-5 minutes until the onions become wilted and aromatic, then pour in chicken broth or water to deglaze the pan and incorporate flavors. Drain the soaked beans,

rinse them thoroughly, and add them to the pot with the sautéed vegetables. Season the mixture generously with Creole seasoning and salt to taste. Stir everything together and bring the pot to a boil. Once boiling, reduce the heat to a simmer and cook uncovered for approximately 20 minutes.

After 20 minutes, add collard greens along with the set-aside bacon and sausage mixture back into the pot and continue cooking for another 10 minutes. This allows the beans to become tender and for the broth to thicken to your desired texture. Add additional stock or water if the mixture becomes too dry or thick. The resulting texture should be thick and somewhat creamy, not soupy. Remove the bay leaf, and taste the dish and adjust the seasonings as needed with additional salt, pepper, and Creole seasoning. Serve the dish over cooked rice and garnish with chopped green onions or cornbread.

## Pear and Pomegranate Spinach Salad with Maple-Lemon Mustard Dressing

Pomegranates are an auspicious symbol in many cultures. The story of Persephone tells us that she was bound to the underworld because she ate a few pomegranate seeds and humans then experienced winter, which was cold and barren. But when she returned to the mortal world, spring followed and the pomegranate was associated with fertility, luck and abundance. And really, I'm ready to try anything to advance spring.

### Ingredients Salad dressing

- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 3 tbs. Dijon mustard
- 3 tbs. maple syrup or honey
- 3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice

### Salad ingredients

- 1 cup pecan halves toasted
- ½ cup pomegranate arils
- ⅓ cup dried cranberries
- 1 large pear
- 5 oz baby spinach
- ⅓ cup goat cheese crumbled

Preparation Directions: Make the Salad Dressing. Combine olive oil, Dijon mustard, maple syrup, and freshly squeezed lemon juice in a mason jar. Whisk with a fork for 1-2 minutes until smooth and emulsified. Toast the pecans in a preheated oven at 350°F for about 10 minutes, just until they turn a bit darker. Remove the red arils from a whole pomegranate by slicing it in half and using your hands to carefully detach the arils from the pith, discarding the peel and membranes. Soak dried cranberries in hot water for a few minutes to make them soft and juicy. Thinly slice pears just before serving to keep them fresh. In a large bowl, put your spinach in and mix with dressing to coat well. Then top with sliced pears, pecans, cranberries, pomegranate, and goat cheese to serve.

## Irish Soda Bread

I follow a Korean culinary team (crazy Korean cooking) faithfully because their parents are so adorable in their reactions to trying food. Their genuine delight and enthusiasm with what is made for them is so endearing to watch. One of the daughters' husbands is Irish, and made mutton stew for them along with Irish soda bread and the father started tearing up on camera. He said that it reminded him of bread his mother baked for him when he was a boy in Korea, and I thought it was so remarkable that people across the world from each other were sharing the same bread thorough decades. Some traditions include



Black-Eyed Pea Soup

leaving a piece of buttered bread out on new years, is said to banish hunger for the year. So, if you don't make cornbread for your black eyed peas, you can make this quickly instead.

### Ingredients

- 4 cups of flour
- 1 and 1/4 cups buttermilk
- 4 tbs. sugar
- 1 tbs. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 cup softened butter (one stick) I use salted butter.
- 1 egg

### Glaze

- 1/4 cup salted butter, melted
- 1/4 cup buttermilk

Preparation Directions: Pre-heat the oven to 375 degrees. Mix together the dry ingredients: Flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Use a whisk to make sure it is well combined. Add in the wet ingredients: buttermilk, butter, egg and

use a hand mixer to help combine everything. Turn out the dough on a floured surface and kneed it for about 10 minutes. Dust it with flour as needed. It's done when it is about the consistency of Play-dough. Form dough into a loaf and put it on a cookie sheet with parchment paper. Score a large X in to the top of the dough. Bake.

While the bread is cooking, make the glaze by melting butter, then add the buttermilk and mix. When 15 minutes are done, take the bread out of the oven and brush the glaze over the top of it. You will bake for about an hour, but brushing the glaze every 15 minutes. Use a tooth pick and check the middle of your bread. If it comes out clean it is done. If it doesn't, glaze it again and put it back in for a final 10 minutes. When done, let the bread rest for 20 minutes. Then serve with butter, jam or your black eyed peas.

To read other Cooking articles, visit the Authors section of Walkerville.net.



**Catoctin Mountain Orchard**

U.S. Route 15 - 15036 N. Franklinville Rd.  
**301-271-2737**

**Open Friday, Saturday & Sunday only until January 31**  
**Closed February until May 1**  
 We still have plenty of apples, pears and some winter vegetables available!

Apple Cider Slushies  
 Apple Cider Donuts, Fresh Apple Cider  
 Jams, Jellies, Honey  
 Fresh Baked or Frozen Fruit Pies

**Open 9 to 5**  
[www.catoctinmountainorchard.com](http://www.catoctinmountainorchard.com)

**Rocky Ridge Volunteer Fire Company**




**COUNTRY BUTCHERING & PANCAKE BREAKFAST**

**Sat., February 15**  
**6 to 10 a.m.**



Activities building - 13516 Motters Station Rd., Rocky Ridge  
**Orders must be placed by February 7**  
 Pick up orders February 15 - 6 to 10 a.m.  
 For butchering orders call:  
 Helen 410-775-2758 - Kelsey 240-397-0351 - Cindy 301-471-2143  
 or Paulette 240-674-4944



**Glade Valley Food Bank**

21 West Frederick Street, Walkersville  
 gvfb21w@gmail.com  
 301-845-4229

**Monday: 6:30-7:30 p.m. and Thursday: 1-3 p.m.**



**THE OLDE TOWNE RESTAURANT, LLC**

**Open for indoor dining!**

Thurs. - Sun. 7 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
 (Closed Mon., Tues. & Wed.)

American Owned & Operated  
 Carry-out Available

200 N. Second St., Woodsboro · 301-898-5686

# ASTRONOMY

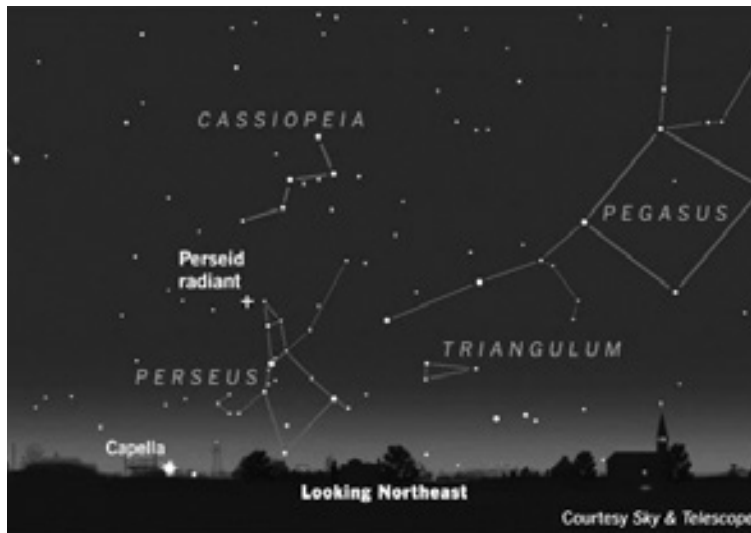
## The night sky of January

Professor Wayne Wooten

On New Year's evening, a very slender crescent moon can be seen right after sunset, well below Venus. By January 2, the Moon will move just below Venus, and by the 3rd, it will be above Venus. If the afternoon is clear, this would be an ideal time to catch Venus with your naked eyes in broad daylight, for it is near its brightest, and will be just below and to the right of the crescent moon before sunset. By the 4th, the moon now sits above the planet Saturn in the Southwest.

The Earth is closest to the Sun at perihelion on January 4, only 91.4 million miles from our home star. Doesn't feel like it? Our orbit is so close to a perfect circle that the small change between perihelion and aphelion in July is overshadowed by our 23.5 degree axial tilt. We just passed winter solstice in December, when our northern hemisphere is tilted away from the Sun, hence longer nights and the sun 47 degrees lower in the sky than in summer, and for our area, the days are four hours shorter now.

The first quarter moon on January 6th. The waxing gibbous moon passes just north of Jupiter in the NE. The big action is with the occultation of Mars by the Full Moon on the evening of January 13th. Stellarium indicates the Red Planet will disappear near the south pole of the Moon about 9:03 p.m., and as you



The Cassiopeia Constellation is one of the oldest known constellations. It ranks as the 25th largest of the original 48 Constellations listed by the Greek Astronomer Ptolemy in the 2nd century.

see below, reappear on the NW limb about an hour later, at 10 p.m.. Note the moon moves its own 1/2 degree diameter eastward every hour in its orbit of the earth, as this event shows nicely. The last quarter moon occurs on January 21st. The new moon is on January 29th.

Mercury is lost in the Sun's glare all month. By contrast, Venus dominates the SW evening sky, reaching greatest eastern elongation, 47 degrees up from the setting sun, on January 11th. It will then appear exactly half lit in small telescopes, but the bright disk of sulfuric acid clouds will reveal no detail except the phase. It moves much faster than distant Saturn, and will overtake the ringed planet on January 18th; note how thin the rings, almost edge on

now, appear in your scopes. Venus will become a larger crescent in your scope after this, as it overtakes the Earth in the next three months.

By contrast, Mars will be at opposition on January 15th, two days after the moon occulted it. It will be largest in the sky as seen from Earth then, some 15" across, and brightest, magnitude -1.4. Contrast its bright red color to equally bright blue Sirius, the brightest star in the sky, rising in the Southeast at the same time. At the end of this month, the planet parade goes from Venus (overtaking Saturn on the 18th), then Jupiter almost overhead in Taurus, and Mars in Cancer on the Northeast horizon at sunset. Jupiter is well placed for observing high up in the East just below the V shaped Hyades cluster in Taurus. Note the four Galilean moons in a row around Jupiter's equator with small scopes, and how they change places night by night.

The constellation Cassiopeia makes a striking W in the Northwest. Her daughter, Andromeda,

starts with the NE corner star of Pegasus" Square, and goes Northeast with two more bright stars in a row. From the middle star, beta Andromeda, go about a quarter the way to the top of the W of Cassiopeia, and see a faint blur with the naked eye. M-31, the Andromeda Galaxy, is the most distant object visible with the naked eye, lying about 2.5 million light years distant.

Overhead is Andromeda's hero, Perseus, rises. Between him and Cassiopeia is the fine Double Cluster, faintly visible with the naked eye and two fine binocular objects in the same field. Perseus contains the famed eclipsing binary star Algol, where the Arabs imagined the eye of the gorgon Medusa would lie. It fades to a third its normal brightness for six out of every 70 hours, as a larger but cooler orange giant covers about 80% of the smaller but hotter and thus brighter companion as seen from Earth.

Look at Perseus' feet for the famed Pleiades cluster; they lie about 400 light-years distant, and over 250 stars are members of this fine group. East of the seven sisters is the V of stars marking the face of Taurus the Bull, with bright orange Aldebaran as his eye. The V of stars is the Hyades cluster, older than the blue Pleiades, but about half their distance.

Yellow Capella, a giant star the same temperature and color as our much smaller Sun, dominates the overhead sky. It is part of the pentagon on stars making up Auriga, the Charioteer (think Ben Hur). Several nice binocular Messier open clusters are found in the winter milky way here. East of Auriga, the twins, Castor and Pollux highlight the Gemini. UWF alumni can associate the pair with Jason and the Golden Fleece legend, for they were the first two Argonauts to sign up on his crew.

South of Gemini, Orion is the most familiar winter constellation, dominating the eastern sky at dusk. The reddish supergiant Betelgeuse marks his eastern shoulder, while blue-white supergiant Rigel stands opposite on his west knee. Just south of the belt, hanging like a sword downward, is M-42, the Great Nebula of Orion, an outstanding binocular and telescopic stellar nursery. It is part of a huge spiral arm gas cloud, with active star birth all over the place. You should be able to glimpse this stellar birthplace as a faint blur with just your naked eyes, and the larger your binoculars or telescope, the better the view becomes.

To warm your winter nights, here is the "Flame Nebula", just east of the lower star in Orion's rising belt. Just south of it is the famed dark nebula, "the Horsehead", a dark cloud in front of the glowing hydrogen background here. While M-42 is an emission nebulae, shining reddish from the ionization of its hydrogen gas by hot young stars forming inside it, at Orion's right foot is brilliant Rigel, one of the most luminous blue super giants ion the Galaxy, about 50,000X more luminous than our Sun.

Last but certainly not least, in the east rise the hunter's two faithful companions, Canis major and minor. Procyon is the bright star in the little dog, and rises minutes before Sirius, the brightest star in the sky. Sirius dominates the SE sky by 7 PM, and as it rises, the turbulent winter air causes it to sparkle with shafts of spectral fire. Beautiful as the twinkling appears to the naked eye, for astronomers this means the image is blurry; only in space can we truly see "clearly now". At 8 light years distance, Sirius is the closest star we can easily see with the naked eye.

**GARDNER'S GARAGE**  
Auto Repair

Justin Gardner - Owner  
301-898-5580  
611 S. Main Street  
Woodsboro

www.gardnergarage.net

**ERENSBERGER AND Family LLC**  
**BUILDER**

1 South Main Street, Woodsboro  
Joel Rensberger, Owner  
MHIC# 4286161 • MHBR# 6677  
www.cerensbergerbuilder.com

301-370-4042

**Custom Homes**  
**Historic Restorations**  
**Major Home Remodels**

**FrederickCustomHomes.com**

## Farmers' Almanac

*"The next twelve months offers us a world of promise; it depends on each of us and how much we are willing to give of ourselves to help make it a better world"*  
—John Gruber (1768-1857)

**Mid-Atlantic Weather Watch:** Seasonably cold at first, then turning mild with a few rain showers followed by seasonably cold temperatures under clear skies (1, 2, 3, 4, 5); turning mild with a rain and snow mix, then dry with mild daytime temperatures and a chilly overnight (6, 7, 8, 9, 10); seasonably warm and dry at first, then rain with a brief period of snow on the storm's backside; becoming blustery and chilly with dry weather on the 15th (11, 12, 13, 14, 15); chilly at first, but becoming much milder with dry weather expected (16, 17, 18, 19, 20); rain followed by snow showers and turning much colder (21, 22, 23, 24, 25); period of light snow and rain, then breezy and staying on the cooler side of average (26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31).

**Severe Weather Watch:** The Town and Country Almanack warns of heavy snow and high winds (24, 25).

**Full Moon:** The first Full Moon of 2025 will occur on Monday, January 13th. It has often been referred to as Hunger Moon because of the extreme difficulty finding food in most regions at this time of year. And it has also been called Wolf Moon because of the increased presence of wolf packs that boldly wander close to tribal villages and encampments searching for any food.

**Holidays:** New Year's Day falls on Wednesday, January 1st and Epiphany follows on Monday, January 6th. The famed civil rights activist leader, Martin Luther King, Jr., was born on January 15th in 1929. His birthday has been celebrated as a federal holiday on the third Monday of the month since 1983 and a state holiday in all 50 states by 2000. In 2025, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is Monday, January 20th. MLK will be forever remembered for paying the ultimate sacrifice in

the pursuit of unity and racial harmony which still eludes us today.

**The Garden:** Now is the time to spoil those indoor plants! They not only brighten up the house but they also rid indoor air of nasty pollutants. Extra watering is required to keep them from drying out indoors. They also need to be rotated periodically to ensure they receive adequate sunlight all around during the winter months.

**The Farm:** Best for planting root crops (19, 20, 21); weeding and stirring the soil (10, 11); planting above-ground crops (12, 13, 31); harvesting all crops (24, 25, 26); the best days for setting hens and incubators (7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22); the slaughtering and butchering of meat (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 29, 30, 31); transplanting (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 29, 30, 31); the weaning of all small animals and livestock (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29); harvest and store grains (21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 7, 28).

**J. Gruber's Thought For Today's Living:**

*"Resolutions are only as good as the intent to keep them"*



# WALKERSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

## Come hear the music play...

Celia Alspaugh  
WHS Class of 2028

Happy New Year! The Walkersville High School Theatre Department is kicking off 2025 by showcasing local talent with the WHS Cabaret. This exciting event is dedicated to spotlighting the talents of Walkersville High School's students, alumni, and teachers. Wednesday, January 15 at 7pm, come be dazzled by tap numbers, rock bands, and instrumental music performances in the WHS auditorium!

More often than not, seen facing away from the audience is Band Director Alexander Loy and Photography, Choral, and Musical Director Louise VanGilder-Martin, both of which you will also have the chance to take the stage for their own acts. VanGilder-Martin is thrilled to have this event on the horizon, stating, "I love the idea of a Cabaret showcase for our students! It gives [students] a chance to shine while also raising money for the Theatre Department." It's a win-win scenario.

GVAA soccer players know him from the field, and hundreds of high school students have participated in his math classes, but some may not know that Jonathan Newman is also a talented violinist. Participating in the Cabaret alongside his co-workers, this triple threat will be displaying his passion for orchestral music in his performance!

Not only are WHS teachers participating, but so is the Social Studies teacher, Madeline Soypher, from Walkersville Middle School. Soypher states, "Dance and theater have continued to be a huge part of my life, even as an adult, so helping kids grow their passion is really a great opportunity." Soypher played the role of

Finch in Other Voices' summer theater production of "Newsies". Soypher has a special place in her heart for inspiring her students to reach for the stars and pushing them to achieve their dreams. She hopes that the Cabaret will encourage them to do just that.

Some of the student performers taking the stage include Guadalupe Peralta-Orellano, Addison McAllister, and Breana Kendall amongst many more. The majority being participants in musical theater, these talented pupils have grand plans in store for their few minutes of fame. This Cabaret is not just made up entirely of solos though, group performances such as the WHS Step Team will be showing off their lion's pride onstage too.

In terms of tickets, admission is by donation at the door, and everyone is welcome. Students are encouraged to attend to support their teachers and friends, seeing as all proceeds go to supporting their school's events. This joint performance between students and their mentors is larger than the event itself, as it speaks to the importance of arts education. Former Chairman of The Kennedy Center, James D. Wolfensohn, puts it simply, "The Arts must be at the heart of every child's learning experience if they are to have a chance to dream, to create, to have beliefs, and to carry a sense of cultural identity."

If you're looking for an example, I can give you a firsthand account as to how participating in the Arts has changed my life. But let's not get ahead of ourselves. Hi, my name is Celia. I am a freshman at Walkersville High School (I know my past couple articles have had varying graduation dates, but I promise I'm a freshman) who has found that she has not properly introduced herself. What better time than in the

new year? This January article is the fourth that I've written for the Woodsboro-Walkersville News-Journal, and as a very enthusiastic writer I am thrilled to be able to tell others about my school's events!

Words are one of my favorite things. Ask anyone who knows me, I always have a lot to say. Reading is one of my favorite pastimes, just last year I read over one hundred books across all sorts of genres. I credit my love for words to the outrageous amount of time I spend burying myself in the fictitious worlds of novels. In other words, I'm a nerd, but nerds are cool. The library is my happy place, and not everyone can say they have a librarian best friend (Love you, Ms. Mamie Gorée). That love of the English language extended to writing, which is why I was absolutely thrilled to get this job!

When I was offered this position, I knew I wanted to write about the aspects and organizations of my school that did not always get proper recognition. For my very first article (in November of last year), I was tasked with writing about our school's fall play "Murder at Café Noir." If you ended up being able to go and snagged a show program, I take great pride in being able to say that I made those. If you missed it, keep an eye out for the upcoming spring musical, "Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" coming in April!

How about we get back to the Arts, shall we? I am incredibly passionate about musical theatre and music. I myself am an actor and the Program Manager for WHS's Theatre Department, a member of the choir, and a marching band volunteer. No, I am not IN the band, I only help in order to feed my never-ending hunger for live



Introducing our new writer for the Woodsboro-Walkersville News-Journal: Celia Alspaugh!

music. I am a dancer of eleven years, a dedicated thespian, and a driven participant of all things pertaining to a stage. WMS theatre and choir teacher, Mrs. Duncan, was the first one to introduce me to theatre and I could not be more grateful. I have been in three full-fledged musicals so far (hopefully to become four very soon) and have performed in a multitude of smaller shows. Portraying Anna in "Frozen" a few years back kick-started my love of performing, which then snowballed (no pun-intended) into the honor of being Belle in "Beauty and the Beast," and that became community theatre. One of my favorite productions is the 'Back from the Dead' cemetery walk that takes place up in Emmitsburg at The National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton. It is a meaningful performance that moves many of the audience members each year. I am honored to be a part of it.

Some random fun facts, I have two brothers making me a middle child. I was born on Friday the 13th, and henceforth my favorite number is 13. I can read

music. I am a dancer of eleven years, a dedicated thespian, and a driven participant of all things pertaining to a stage. WMS theatre and choir teacher, Mrs. Duncan, was the first one to introduce me to theatre and I could not be more grateful. I have been in three full-fledged musicals so far (hopefully to become four very soon) and have performed in a multitude of smaller shows. Portraying Anna in "Frozen" a few years back kick-started my love of performing, which then snowballed (no pun-intended) into the honor of being Belle in "Beauty and the Beast," and that became community theatre. One of my favorite productions is the 'Back from the Dead' cemetery walk that takes place up in Emmitsburg at The National Shrine of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton. It is a meaningful performance that moves many of the audience members each year. I am honored to be a part of it.

While I am the one writing these articles, my life is far from a one-woman show. My mom is my rock, and these articles would definitely not make it in on time if not for her. I love you, mom!

I hope you enjoyed your little Celia crash-course and thank you for reading my stuff! You're a trooper if you made it all the way through, so give yourselves a pat on the back. You get bonus points if you join us in just a few weeks on January 15th for Cabaret at 7:00pm, hope to see you there!

To read other articles by Celia Alspaugh, visit the Authors section of Walkersville.net.



# J & B Real Estate, Inc.

13-1/2 Water Street, Thurmont • 301-271-3487  
142 Walkers Village Way, Walkersville




<p><b>BETH OHLER &amp; CO.</b></p>  <p><b>5529 Adamstown Rd., Adamstown</b> Commercial/ Renovated 3000+ SqFt/.92 Acres <b>\$1,050,000</b> Call Erin Kelly</p>	<p><b>NEW LISTING</b></p>  <p><b>9575 Woodland Dr., Woodsboro</b> 3 Bdrms/ 2 Baths/ Lg. Level Lot/ Full LL Newer Roof &amp; HVAC <b>\$465,000</b> Call Elle Smith</p>	<p><b>NEW LISTING</b></p>  <p><b>132 E. Main St., Sharpsburg</b> 4 Bdrms/ 2.5 Baths/ Historic Downtown Sharpsburg/ Period Details/ Streams/ 2 Car Garage <b>\$475,000</b> Call Kelly Rumpf</p>	<p><b>COMING SOON</b></p>  <p><b>16 Lombard St., Thurmont</b> 4 Bdrms/ 2.5 Baths/ double Lot w/ Lg Back Yard 2 Fireplaces/ Lg Lvg Rooms/ Fam Rm/ Updated Kit <b>\$475,000</b> Call Elle Smith</p>	 <p><b>1 Foxfield Pass, Middletown</b> 4 Bdrms/ 2.5 Baths/ Custom Built Colonial/ Hdwd Flrs 2 Car Attached Garage/ Lg. Brick Porch/ Patis <b>\$669,200</b> Call Kelly Rumpf</p>
<p><b>NEW LISTING</b></p>  <p><b>20 Zanella Dr., Emmitsburg</b> 5 Bdrms/ 3 Baths/ Wrap Around Porch 2 Car Attached Garage/ Open Floor Plan <b>\$424,999</b> Call Diane Bowers</p>	<p><b>BETH OHLER &amp; CO.</b></p>  <p><b>N. Nixon Rd., Crystal Springs, PA</b> 28+ Acres/ 2 Lots/ Perc'd Homesite or Hunting <b>\$185,000</b> Call Beth Ohler</p>	 <p><b>12 E. 14th St., Frederick</b> 2 Bdrms/ 1 Bath/ Bangalos/ Fireplace/ Hdwd Floors Covered Porch/ Large Yard <b>\$365,000</b> Call Cindy Grimes</p>	<p><b>BETH OHLER &amp; CO.</b></p>  <p><b>4 Snow Plow Tr., Fairfield</b> 3 Bdrms/ 2.5 Baths/ Carroll Valley <b>\$389,900</b> Call Courtney Eyer</p>	<p><b>Beth Ohler &amp; Co. - COMING SOON</b></p>  <p><b>1230 Hunters Woods Dr., Hagerstown</b> 2 Bdrms/ 2 Baths/ One Level End Unit TH <b>\$310,000</b> Call Erin Kelly</p>
<p><b>COMING SOON</b></p>  <p><b>122 Bennet Dr., Thurmont</b> 3 Bdrms/ 2.5 Baths/ Bennet Estates Community Fenced Yard/ Finished Lower Level/ No HOA <b>\$490,000</b> Call Elle Smith</p>	<p><b>COMING SOON</b></p>  <p><b>1050 Brinker Dr., Hagerstown</b> 3 Bdrms/ 2.5 Baths/ Condominium Great Investment Property <b>\$209,000</b> Call Elle Smith</p>	 <p><b>12836 Hessong Bridge Rd., Thurmont</b> 2 Bdrms/ 1 Bath/ 10.95 Acre Farmette/ 2 Car Garage Fenced Field for Horses &amp; Livestock/ 2 Sheds/Barn <b>\$499,900</b> Call Cindy Grimes</p>	<p><b>Owens Creek Overlook Lots</b></p>  <p><b>Foxville Deerfield Rd., Sabillasville</b> 1 Lot Available Wooded/ 5 Acres w/ Well/ 3 Bdrn Perc <b>\$129,900</b> Call Cindy Grimes</p>	 <p><b>15021 Roddy Rd., Thurmont</b> 3 Bdrms/ 2 Baths/ 1 Acre/ Full Unfinished LL <b>\$399,990</b> Call Diane Bowers</p>
 <p><b>Kelly Weddle</b> Salesperson, MD &amp; PA 301-693-7232 kellyweddesells@outlook.com</p>	 <p><b>Elle Smith</b> Salesperson, MD &amp; PA 301-401-8620 smith21788@comcast.net</p>	 <p><b>Cindy Grimes</b> Broker - 301-271-3487 x203 301-788-5354 Cindy_Grimes@msn.com</p>	 <p><b>Beth Ohler</b> Salesperson, MD &amp; PA 240-575-1700 bethohlersells@gmail.com</p>	 <p><b>Deb Gartner</b> Associate Broker, MD &amp; PA 301-748-1960 deb.theamericandream@gmail.com</p>
 <p><b>Courtney Eyer</b> Salesperson, MD &amp; PA 240-575-1700 Courtney@BethOhlerCo.com</p>	 <p><b>Diane Bowers</b> Salesperson, MD &amp; PA 301-898-4663 bowersrealtor@hotmail.com</p>	 <p><b>Carroll Glass</b> Salesperson, MD &amp; PA 240-674-2538 carroll-glass@gmail.com</p>	 <p><b>Kelly Rumpf</b> Salesperson, MD 240-292-1746 kelly_rumpf@outlook.com</p>	 <p><b>Erin Kelly</b> Salesperson, MD &amp; PA 240-575-1700 Erin.Kelly90@outlook.com</p>

# COMMUNITY NOTES

## Gap financing: a barrier to affordable housing

Gary Bennett and Hugh Gordon  
Frederick County  
Affordable Housing Council

It is true that most developers are not hurting for money. No news there. But it is equally undeniable they provide great community value, particularly when working to provide affordable housing.

Unfortunately, there's a huge barrier affordable housing developers must overcome: the ability to fully fund development and pre-development costs without the promise of market-rate revenues. As one developer put it: "Providing housing at rents low- and moderate-income folks can afford and still cover our costs is like trying to solve a Rubik's cube."

Think of it this way: To build any development, a developer must pay for

land, materials and labor, not to mention taxes and myriad permitting and other government fees. During the last two decades these costs have skyrocketed while renter and homeowner salaries have stagnated. Therefore, rents that low- and moderate-income households can afford are often too low to cover the full costs of building, owning and managing an affordable property. Add to this the seemingly never-ending delays in the governmental approval process, and you have a recipe for possibly abandoning a project.

When development and pre-development costs can't be met by traditional methods such as taxable and tax-exempt bonds, local bank loan funds, General Partner (GP) capital, or Federal Home Loan Banks (FHLBs), developers must turn to other methods to fill the gap.

Hence the need for what is known in the affordable housing world as "gap financing."

Gap financing, also known as bridge or interim financing, is a short-term loan that can help affordable housing developers fill the gap between the cost of a project and the funds available. To fill the gap, developers usually need help in the form of subsidies. Those subsidies most often come from local, state or federal governments, but can also come from other sources.

The sources include tax credits in various forms, mortgages with below-market interest rates, tax-exempt bonds, federal grants or loans from programs like the HOME Investment Partnerships Program, local grants, land donations, contributions from charitable foundations and deferred developer fees.

Almost all affordable housing projects begin with tax credits awarded by the state. The most common of these is the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (or LIHTC, pronounced LIE-TECH.) It finances about 90% of all affordable housing developments nationwide. This U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program was enabled by Congress in the 1990s, was an undisputed bipartisan success and is operated by each state's housing agency including Maryland's Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCH).

Tax credits are greatly needed to make the books work, but the problem is that LIHTC is ultra-competitive and extremely limited. In Maryland, DHCD establishes its affordable housing priorities and then developers compete for the

tax credits based on how well their project satisfies those priorities. Developers receiving an award use the tax credits to raise capital from investors. Only a handful of Frederick projects have won these tax credits in recent years.

Because a project is not feasible unless it covers 100% of its funding gap, every source of funding matters. A relatively modest local contribution can be the critical investment that makes a project work and allows the community to benefit from a large amount of federal subsidy that would otherwise flow to a different community.

That is why Frederick County and the State of Maryland try to be aggressive when helping affordable housing developers. The county and state often step in with funding options such as:

Waivers or deferrals of impact of fees charged to buyers that meet income requirements for affordable housing purchases from a developer.



Family owned & operated since 1997

Reliable and affordable trash service



### Services offered:

- Trash & recycling dumpster in any size capacity (2, 4, 6 & 8 yds.) Any service frequency desired!
- 96 gallon toter service
- 15, 20 & 30 yard roll-off dumpsters
- Bulk collections

Get a free custom tailored quote for what your business needs!

No hidden fees!

No extra yardage charges!

No multi-year agreements!

The best customer service available in our industry!

www.jandjinctrashservice.com

301-898-2109 • 800-465-2350

Servicing Frederick, Montgomery, Carroll and Washington Counties

2504 Back Acre Circle, Mt. Airy

Vigilant Hose Company's

2025

Spring Fling  
65K GIVEAWAY

Drawing to be held  
Saturday, May 10  
Drawings begin at noon  
Tickets can be purchased at the  
Vigilant Hose Co.

NO PAYOUT LESS THAN \$500!

1 - \$5000	17 - \$500	33 - \$500	49 - \$500
2 - \$500	18 - \$500	34 - \$500	50 - \$500
3 - \$500	19 - \$500	35 - \$500	51 - \$2000
4 - \$500	20 - \$1000	36 - \$500	52 - \$500
5 - \$500	21 - \$2000	37 - \$500	53 - \$500
6 - \$500	22 - \$500	38 - \$500	54 - \$500
7 - \$500	23 - \$500	39 - \$500	55 - \$500
8 - \$500	24 - \$500	40 - \$1000	56 - \$500
9 - \$500	25 - \$500	41 - \$2000	57 - \$500
10 - \$500	26 - \$500	42 - \$500	58 - \$500
11 - \$2000	27 - \$500	43 - \$500	59 - \$500
12 - \$500	28 - \$500	44 - \$500	60 - \$500
13 - \$500	29 - \$500	45 - \$500	61 - \$1000
14 - \$500	30 - \$500	46 - \$500	62 - \$2000
15 - \$500	31 - \$2000	47 - \$500	63 - \$3000
16 - \$500	32 - \$500	48 - \$500	64 - \$4000

Grand Prize Drawing #65 - \$10,000

### Early Bird Drawing

Purchase and submit your ticket by March 1 for chance to win a \$1,000 cash prize! (2 winners - \$1,000 each)



\$100 Per Ticket

Good for two people. Includes food, drinks and chances in the drawing.

# Getting the right care

Josh Faust  
Frederick Health

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

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

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

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

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

with 10 Primary Care locations across the county including a new state of the art location, Frederick Health Emmitsburg. The Emmitsburg location offers services such as Primary Care, Urgent Care, Laboratory, Imaging, and Physical Therapy & Sports Rehab. Most importantly, these services are accepting new patients.

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

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

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

"I like to think of my work as the glue," Lowrey added. "Primary Care puts together the pieces and holds everything else together for the other specialty areas. I want to establish a relationship with patients and work on preventative care so that they could avoid being hospitalized or falling sick."

Additionally, Frederick Health has expanded online scheduling for some providers, including Lowrey. Patients can find a time that works for them and schedule a visit from their computer or smartphone. Lowrey strongly believes that equity and access cannot be a barrier to good health, and increased access has shown results.

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

That access extends beyond Pri-

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

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

While Primary Care offers routine checkups and healthcare referrals, for existing Frederick Health Primary Care patients, same-day and next-day sick appointments are available for medical care that can wait a day. Urgent Care

is available to patients who need same-day medical care, but it's not necessary to visit an emergency room. Frederick Health offers Virtual Visits or walk-in visits at four convenient locations—no referral is needed. Within an hour, Virtual Visit patients are connected online with a trusted Frederick Health provider from the comfort of their own home.

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

"Everyone deserves to be healthy and to work with some-

one that understands where they are," added Lowrey. "We have individuals, especially in northern Frederick County, that would benefit from the services we offer at Frederick Health, whether Primary Care, Urgent Care, or Virtual Visits."

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

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



**Catoctin Dental**  
Neil H. Feldman, DDS, FAGD

*Convenient, comfortable and exceptional care for the whole family!*

Preventive Care • Implants • Root Canals • Fillings • Crowns • Bridges  
Extractions • Cleaning and Periodontal Care • Clear Aligner Ortho • Dentures

**New smiles always welcome!**  
10 Water Street, Thurmont  
**(301) 271-2811**  
CatoctinDental.com



If it's urgent,  
don't wait.

Frederick Health Urgent Care has you covered for non-emergency medical care with no appointment or referral required. Choose the care option that works best for you by visiting one of our convenient locations or connecting online with a trusted provider through a Virtual Visit, available in an hour or less.

Our locations:

**Frederick Health Virtual Visit**  
Online Care  
[frederickhealth.org/VirtualVisit](http://frederickhealth.org/VirtualVisit)

**Frederick Health Urbana**  
3430 Worthington Blvd  
240-566-7300

**Frederick Health Emmitsburg**  
16403 Old Emmitsburg Rd  
240-566-7310

**Frederick Health Toll House**  
501 W 7th St  
301-698-8374

**Frederick Health Brunswick**  
1194 Dutchmans Creek Dr  
240-566-7110

Learn more  
[frederickhealth.org/UrgentCare](http://frederickhealth.org/UrgentCare)



YOUR COMMUNITY OF CARE

**Timber Ridge Apartments, Inc. & Ridge Residences, Inc.**  
Offering Studio, 1 and 2 Bedroom Apartments  
**ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS**



- Rental Assistance • Utility Allowance • Maintenance FREE
- Laundry Facilities • Community Center • Park-like Setting
- Individual A/C & Heating Units • Wall-to-Wall Carpeting
- On-Site Parking • Local Bus Transportation • Activities

**AFFORDABLE SENIOR LIVING CONVENIENTLY LOCATED IN WESTMINSTER FOR LOW INCOME SENIORS 62+\***

For information or to request an application,  
**Call 410-876-2550 or 410-876-5200**  
Weekdays 8:00am-4:00pm  
\*INCOME LIMITS APPLY



# Children's World Early Learning Centers

Give your child the best beginning in the new school year!

*Year-round child care*

*Pre-school ages 5 - 12 years*

*Before & after school care with transportation!*

*Child care scholarships/vouchers readily accepted!*



Guarantee your spot now...

Enroll & get 1 week free!

Call for details!

Open  
Mon. - Fri.  
6:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.

#### CHILDREN'S WORLD EARLY LEARNING CENTERS

8402 Discovery Blvd., Walkersville 301-845-4984  
419 Burck St., Frederick 301-662-3004  
Ages 18 months - 12 years

#### LEARNING TREE EARLY LEARNING CENTERS

607 East D St., Brunswick 301-834-7577  
Ages 2 - 5 years  
Before & After School Program of Brunswick Elementary, Brunswick 301-834-7577  
Ages 5 - 12 years

## 301-845-4000

or email

[earlylearning4@verizon.net](mailto:earlylearning4@verizon.net)

Visit our website at  
[www.luvyourkids.net](http://www.luvyourkids.net)

***You'll love our rates!***