

The Villager

Newsletter of the Davidsonville Area Civic Association

Vol. 48, No. 2

P.O. Box 222, Davidsonville, Maryland 21035

July-August 2021

DACA's Annual Meeting in September

Given the long awaited relaxation of COVID restrictions, the DACA Board of Directors decided to plan for a regular in-person meeting of the general membership in SEPTEMBER. Thursday, September 2nd at 7:30 pm. In the meantime, the DACA Board invites members to attend the board meetings—next one is rescheduled to Monday, August 16—in person at DFRC at 8:00 pm. Now that we have learned Zoom, future meetings may be held by remote.

At the Annual Meeting DACA members will vote for officers for one-year terms and for Board members for three-year terms. Current officers are President Bruce Stein, Vice President Ed Woods, Secretary Gail Enright, and Treasurer Brian Stanton. Board members whose terms would end this June are Andrew Healy, Phil Livingstone, Lynn Marano, and Melissa Stanton. Their terms will be extended until the September meeting. DACA invites volunteers to serve as officers or board members. Phil Livingstone will retire at the end of his term. Frank Purdy has volunteered to be a candidate for that slot; all members are invited to serve.

DACA prepares and presents testimony to the County Council and county and state officials on issues that affect residents of Davidsonville, South County, and all Anne Arundel County. Its longtime presence in the community and its reputation for integrity, influence, and nonpartisanship have inspired elected leaders and department heads and staff in our county and state government to respect and respond to the concerns of this civic organization and its community.

Donner und Blitzen! Thunder and Lightning!

July came in with a bang and a roar. The violent storm wrought havoc across the county and evoked eloquent descriptions and vivid photos.

Among the power outages, it blew out the controls of the main well at DFRC, leaving the entire center with no running water. Chris Carroll wrote, "Repair staff worked all day to fix it, but parts they picked up brand new from Hanover were dead on arrival. It is likely the facility at large will not have water until sometime in the next week." Now it is restored to normal.



This 100+ years old tree has lost a major branch every ten years for 30 years; this is the third time it has missed the house. The huge hollow branch left a window through the hollow trunk, a see-through tree!

DACA People

Welcome new members Elizabeth DiMattesa and Jay Siembieda, and thanks for their contributions to DACA in addition to their dues. Many thanks to Life Members Peggy and David Boggs, and to Nick Kemp and Kay Osburnsen, Alan and Christine Tassej, and John Zacepilo for their contributions to DACA in addition to their dues.



July 1 – I watched the storm front line arrive and bend the closest row of trees practically through my windows. I could hear branches, limbs, and debris pummeling the roof as the wind and rain sent them flying past my windows. Now it is calm and I see across the cornfield out back a house I haven't seen in ten years, the view previously blocked by a huge tree that came down. J.R.

After the storm, the end of thunder and lightning and crash of trees and driving rain, came a moment of quiet and calm. Then the shriek of sirens of emergency vehicles—police cars and ambulances—tearing up and down Davidsonville Road to rescue the drivers who thought it was safe to drive in their normal fashion. Alas, not so. Roads were awash in flowing streams deep enough to sweep cars off to one side or the other. Great job on the newsletter as always. It is always so fun

and informative. I wish my neighborhood had one.

J. Slaughter

We have moved [but] we will always be concerned about the character of the area and will continue to support DACA. Thanks for all the hard work you do.

P.B

We moved to Davidsonville (Eagles Passages) in September 2019 and love it! I meant to join DACA earlier, so I immediately visited the DACA website upon reading the recent Capital Gazette article about Davidsonville. Having been a newsletter editor, I understand how much time and cost is involved mailing hard copies. That said, we are fine with an email advising us of a new issue.

Thank you for keeping us informed.

E.D.

In Memoriam
Marbin Anderson
June 30, 1932~July 4, 2021

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School Report from *Cyndi Morgan*

On June 2, Prismatic Services presented Phase 1 of their report to the Board of Education regarding bus routes and start times for the 2021-2022 school year. They plan to submit their Phase 2 report by August 2021. By September, Prismatic will present their proposed bus schedule according to a school's bell schedule, with the intent to implement it by late January 2022 or delay until Fall of 2022.

Assuming Prismatic has good news for the Board that the parameters they approved in January (elementary 8:00-9:00 am, middle school 8:30-9:15, and high school 8:30) are achievable at no additional cost, the Board must immediately direct AACPS to complete the planning for new school hours.

AACPS hopes to offer Virtual Academy learning (budget pending) next school year for a limited number of students entering grades 3-12 who are unable to return to in-person instruction. Virtual high school will begin at 7:30 am and virtual middle and elementary school will begin at 7:50 am, in order to align lunch times so virtual students could still potentially access meals at school locations but the planned change in start times for all schools would be altered to re-align with new school hours.

Thanks also to Lisa vanBuskirk of Start School Later

Urban Farming Work Group

Anne Arundel County, Prince Georges County, and Baltimore City Extension faculty are starting an urban agriculture working group for the area. The first meeting of the Anne Arundel and Prince George's Urban Farming Work Group will be held on Tuesday, August 24, at 10:00 am at the Anne Arundel County Extension Office, 97 Dairy Lane, Gambrills, 410-222-3909. It will include a tour of the Gambrills Flower Farm, then lunch at the Extension office, followed by the Urban Farming Work Group with a brainstorming session to develop an urban farming initiative, and planning workshops on topics such as business planning, land access and zoning regulations, IPM, machinery and production technologies for vegetables, fruits, livestock and high value specialty crops. The meeting is free, but registration is required.

To register, go to https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfTK5ooHeh5C_4_bj8RTmEqSWZZIjQslmIp1EVICpl9KCSwqQ/viewform
University of Maryland Extension Service

Welcome to well-lit Davidsonville!

Ed Woods proudly announced that the solar powered lighting for the Welcome to Davidsonville sign is installed and working quite well. Now we all can drive by after dark to see and admire it! Almost as bright at night as it was in the sunshine. A celebratory parade? Many thanks to Ed!



Road news on the corner

Many thanks to Homestead Gardens for replanting the triangle between the main roadway and the right turn lane at the corner of Davidsonville Road and Central Avenue, beautifully landscaped as ever, after the State Highway crews refinished the road surface. Summer is their busy season as they repair and improve bad spots in our roads. Thanks also to the folks who work outside in the heat to smooth the way.

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Alliance for Livable Communities asks, After Plan 2040 passed, then what?

Plan2040 was approved by the AA County Council on May 3 and now the planning process will focus on the Regional Area Plans (RAPs). The County has been divided into nine regions. This type of small area planning is new for the County, and we should expect the first plans to be the products of a learning process.

Planning will be carried out for three regions at a time, starting with Regions 2, 4, and 7. The Regional Plans are to be prepared by Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) members who will gather information from their local region. What degree of influence the SAC will have on the actual content of the plan and many other issues will have to be resolved.

Applications for Committees for Regions 2 and 4, north county, and 7, Annapolis, will be accepted from June 16 to July 18, 2021. Applications for other regions will be accepted as the program progresses. Before you apply you can do your homework.

- Read the press release found at <https://www.aacounty.org/news-and-events/news/county-executive-announces-applications-for-region-plan-stakeholder-advisory-committees>
- Review the Committee Charter found at <https://www.aacounty.org/departments/planning-and-zoning/long-range-planning/region-plans/advisory-committee.pdf>
- Review the Handbook (see map page 5) found at <https://www.aacounty.org/departments/planning-and-zoning/long-range-planning/region-plans/region-plans-handbook.pdf>
- Review and file the Region Plan Stakeholder Advisory Committee Application found at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SACapp>.

Areas and issues of concern to ALC

Who is a stakeholder? SAC members for each region will be selected by the County Executive with input from the County Council from the applications.

Amendment 55 of Plan2040 requires that the SACs be composed of 9 to 15 members, only 2/3 of whom must be residents of the Region. Recommended backgrounds of SAC members are listed here:

- Long time resident, property owner/renter, over 20 years; recent property owner/renter, less than ten years; HOA or civic association board member
- Local business representative; home builder; real estate developer; military, Dept. of Defense or other relevant government agency, or contractor
- Environmental organization; community or social organization; affordable housing advocate
- Member from a commercial or maritime association; real estate broker; member of a school organization
- Young adult representative; member of a local recreation council or group; farming and agricultural representative .

The Alliance for Livable Communities notes that the recommended backgrounds include a strong representation of commercial interests, but is weak in representation of simple salaried workers who constitute the large majority of the population. If the goal of the RAP is to plan for the people who live in the region now, we should hope that the SACs would be composed of a cross-section of current residents. We can only trust that the County Executive will vet prospective SAC members very carefully to assure representation of all citizens of the region.

Surveys and data collection

Past experience with Plan2040 and several Master Plans has shown that the engagement of citizens that is required to develop community visioning can be challenging. Extensive and specific citizen input will be needed. OPZ has begun using online surveys as a means for assessing the opinions of regional residents. Short surveys could be emailed to residents of each region using lists currently available to the County, augmented by contributions from the SAC members. Email contact information for SAC members should be publicly available, much as it was for CAC members. Also all (Continued on page 5)



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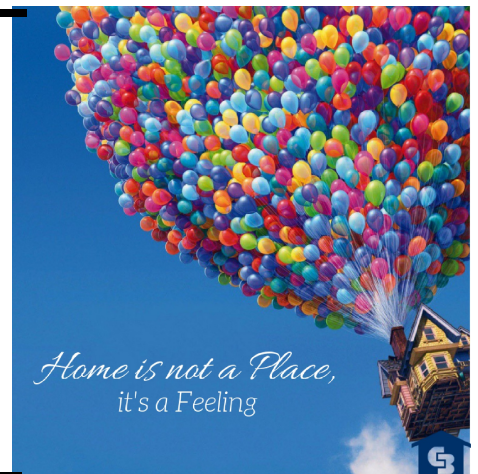
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ALC on Regional Plans (from page 5)

SAC meetings should be open to the public with time reserved for public comment. It is essential that there be ample public opportunities to observe the process.

Councilmanic courtesy

Regional Area Plans will require approval by the County Council, which will also act upon recommendations made for comprehensive rezoning. Council deliberation of Plan2040 showed that councilmanic courtesy (I'll support your recommendations if you support mine) often prevailed in the land use decision process. Since each region will be associated with one or two Council members, it seems possible that ultimate approval of each RAP may effectively be at the discretion of just one or two Council members. This could create extensive lobbying opportunities for special interests and threaten the representation of the broader community.

The Alliance urges all Anne Arundel County citizens to monitor and engage in the Regional Planning process. Please make an extra effort to get involved in the SAC team and represent your community.

June 7, Alliance for Livable Communities

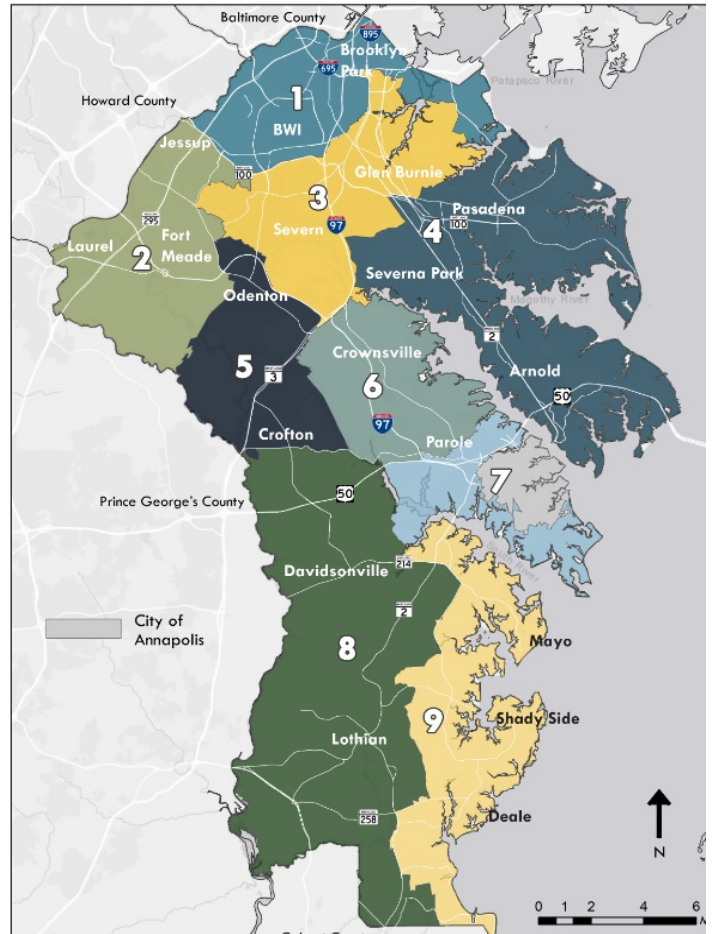
Growth Action Network on Regional Plans

July 2, 2021: GAN urges citizens to participate in Regional Planning to provide detailed guidance for development in the nine County regions.

The Region Plans and their recommendations will align with the goals and policies of Plan2040. They will provide opportunity for residents to participate in planning for the future of their local communities.

Citizen participation is critical. County Executive Stuart Pittman said, "I promised that Plan2040 would transfer power to communities, but it takes willing volunteers to move us forward. Help create your Region Plan by serving on a Stakeholder Advisory Committee."

The first round of Region Plans will address three areas of the County: Region 2, Region 4, and Region 7 Each plan is expected to take between 18 and 36 months to complete.



From the **Regional Planning Handbook**: It is important to understand the County's limitations in managing development. The vast majority of development in the County is constructed by the private sector which responds to the market forces of supply and demand. County plans try to direct those market forces to guide development that meets community interests while acknowledging that there are many and diverse interests in land development and in respecting private property rights.

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Bay Bridge Study

On June 21 the Anne Arundel County Council passed a non-binding resolution by a 6-1 vote opposing the completion of the five-year study by the Maryland Transportation Authority, which is scheduled to be completed this winter. Three different possible locations for a new span of the bridge are one through Pasadena, one through Davidsonville/Edgewater, and one through Annapolis next to the existing bridge, as well as a no-build option

DACA opposes the option that would route the access to the Corridor 8 crossing at the Mayo peninsula from #424 and #214 through Davidsonville. Growth Action Network (GAN) stated its objections to an inadequate environmental impact study on the Route 50 bridge approaches between Route 97 and the #50/301 split on the Eastern Shore, including the Broadneck Peninsula and Kent Island. Both statements were printed in the May-June issue of the Villager.

At the Council meeting, Councilwoman Amanda Fiedler, R-Arnold, said what was being studied was too narrow in scope and didn't take into consideration the approaching corridor's infrastructure and the impact on residents as they are completing daily activities like running errands, picking up kids from school and returning home from work.

Councilwoman Jessica Haire, R-Edgewater, said the study is not considering infrastructure entering and exiting the bridge. No one is really looking at what happens immediately off the bridge. She said the study takes into account traffic from only one end of the bridge, but people cross it in both directions.

Councilwoman Lisa Rodvien, D-Annapolis, showed photos of traffic jams in the city limits on June 11 that were caused by a simple traffic incident and bad weather. "It started at one in the afternoon, or maybe even earlier, and went through rush hour."

Councilwoman Sarah Lacey, D-Jessup, said the county is overdependent on individual transportation via car and the traffic jams will continue to be a problem until the county finds a way to have less cars on the road.

County Executive Steuart Pittman has expressed his opposition to the study and said at Monday night's council meeting that county government remains committed to addressing the needs of residents affected by the traffic jams.

Gov. Larry Hogan has said the only option he would accept to alleviate the traffic congestion is adding the third span next to the existing bridge.

Information from Capital-Gazette by Ada Romano



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**What is CEPA all about?
A letter from the President, 2021**

Even as efforts to clean up the Chesapeake Bay progress, climate change is impacting its ecosystems at a faster rate. Warmer temperatures, sea-level rise, and more rain will introduce variables with unprecedented consequences, further complicating the effort to clean up the Bay. Environmental change is inevitable, but the choices we make about land use, pollution control, and energy usage will control how the Bay and its ecosystems respond in the future. CEPA is committed to helping the public understand these choices.

CEPA is a small, all volunteer non-profit that actively supports many efforts to clean up the Chesapeake Bay. Our primary means to do this is through public forums, an environmental newsletter, and advocacy for appropriate legislation. We encourage local and state officials to attend our trustee meetings to exchange perspectives. In 2020, we focused on three issues that we've been addressing for years: **unwise growth, water resources, and landfill toxins.**

In regard to **growth**, CEPA is a member of the governing board of the Alliance for Livable Communities in Anne Arundel County. The Alliance members are active in the development of the General Development Plan for the County. CEPA's main focus for the plan will be protecting the natural ecosystem services in the County.

We are one of the few environmental organizations advocating responsible management of our state's **water resources.** We are encouraged that Anne Arundel County is studying managed aquifer recharge, which is the practice of treating wastewater sufficiently to pump it back into the aquifer rather than dump it into the Bay. Depending on the geographic location, this prevents the depletion of our water resources, reduces [land] subsidence, reduces saltwater intrusion, and helps meet TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) requirements for the Bay. It is a cost-effective technique. CEPA held a public forum on this topic in 2019,

Say Goodbye!



**OPZ Pets Corner:
Bugging Out**



Name: Brutus the Cicada (TBD if it's a zombie)
Owner/Photographer: Rob Konowal, Planner III/Zoning
Duties: Creating and monitoring noise violations

From OPZ's newsletter

and, because developing such a system will involve considerable experimentation, we will continue to monitor and report on that effort.

To conserve water, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) is developing a plan for residential use of graywater. CEPA has advocated the use of graywater for years, including testifying to the state legislature on two different graywater bills. CEPA was invited to join the advisory committee for drafting that plan, and that committee is currently active.

With a grant from Anne Arundel County, since 2007, CEPA has monitored **landfill toxins** associated with the PST Rubble Landfill on Sands Road *(Turn to page 8)*

Ray Alcorn

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A letter from CEPA *(from previous page)*
 in Harwood. PST owns is one of the largest unlined landfills on the East Coast. Test wells in the landfill show higher levels than federal MCL (Maximum Contaminant Level) standards allow for arsenic, beryllium, cadmium, chromium, and vinyl chloride. The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) required the owner to rectify the situation, but progress is unacceptably slow. CEPA will continue to evaluate the adequacy of the measures proposed by the owner.

To keep our members informed on these and other issues, we issue newsletters three times a year with articles on a variety of environmental and energy-related subjects. We also hold public forums on important issues; the next one is planned for 2021 but the date had not been set when this letter was written.

All of CEPA's Trustees are volunteers and membership dues are the main source of operating funds. Members receive our mailings and newsletters and elect the Trustees. We strongly encourage input and feedback from our members. We have three levels of membership with graduated fees: Individual membership \$30; Sponsoring membership \$50; Sustaining membership \$100. We offer the option of payment through PayPal on our website www.cepaonline.org. Also, CEPA is registered with the Amazon Smile program. This program donates 0.5 percent of your Amazon purchase to a registered charity. To

participate, sign in to Smile.Amazon.com instead of Amazon.com to make your Amazon purchases. Details to get started are on our website. Even if you do not become a member, we would be happy to put you on our email list and notify you when our newsletters are posted on our website www.cepaonline.org. Send your email address to garyanto@verizon.net.

Thank you,
 Albert Tucker.
 President of the Board of Trustees



P.S. Note that at present we have fewer than the 15 trustees called for by our bylaws. If you are interested in serving as a trustee, please contact Al Tucker, (410-741-1014, altucker@cepaonline.org). CEPA, PO Box 117, Galesville, MD 20765.

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It's a bird! It's a nest! It's a mystery!

July Free Outdoor Walking Tours have resumed with increased capacity! Wednesdays and Saturdays at 10:00 am. Get an inside view of SERC science, while you explore the wetlands, forests and shorelines of the campus. Tours are open for up to ten people plus your guide. Each tour lasts approximately 90 minutes and involves about a half mile of walking, starting at the Reed Education Center. Masks are optional outdoors; required indoors to use the Reed restrooms. Go to <https://serc.si.edu/visit-us/serc-public-tours> for required advance registration.

You can once again experience your own walking tour along the waterfront, across marsh boardwalks and through the forest. You can learn about SERC's projects on climate change and other issues where the land meets the sea. Our trails are approximately one mile in length, but can be combined to form longer hikes. Check in at the Reed Education Center to pick up a map which shows the Discovery Trail, Java History Trail, and Contee Watershed Trail. Proper footwear is required (no flip-flops).

Take Central Avenue (Md. 214) east to traffic light at Md. 468 (Muddy Creek Road). Turn right (south). Proceed about one mile; then turn left (east) onto Contees Wharf Road. You'll see a brown "Smithsonian Environmental Research Center" highway sign at the turn. You will pass a security kiosk. After about 3/4 of a mile, the road will fork. Continue straight to go to the Reed Education Center and the SERC dock (there is an old wooden tobacco barn on the road to Reed). After passing the security kiosk, drive about 3/4 of a mile until the road forks. Go straight and follow the road until it ends. The Reed Education Center is the blue building near water. For all other SERC buildings, veer right.

For Boaters: We have a floating dock where you may tie up your canoe, kayak or dinghy. Motorized boats more than 15 feet long are not permitted, so please anchor out and come ashore by dinghy if you have a larger vessel. You may also launch a non-motorized canoe or kayak from the dock to explore our water trails. The launch fee is \$5.00 per kayak, payable at the Reed Center. Please note that due to limited parking and our mission to preserve the area, we can only accommodate small groups. Please call the main number with questions and please alert us if you plan to bring multiple kayaks, due to limited parking: 443-482-2200.




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A newer market farm is Mise En Place

The Minetola family—J.J., Cristina, and son Dean, age 12,—raises a wide assortment of vegetables, herbs, and nutrient-rich microgreens on their small Mise en Place (French for “put in place”) farm. They also keep a small flock of laying hens that provide all the eggs they need. Each Saturday they open their stall at the AA County Farmers Market to present the bounty of their labor and prepare and sell gourmet soft tacos made to order, with fresh ingredients from their farm as well as from other vendors at the farmers’ market.

The “FARM TO TACO” menu board lists the sources for these market ingredients, promoting their fellow vendors. Mise En Place Farm’s green garlic and micro cilantro contribute to the seasonings for the tacos. A visit in June revealed that J.J. was featuring hothouse cucumbers from Wirth Farm on the salmon taco, kohlrabi slaw from Oksana’s Produce on the smoked pork carnitas taco, and eggs from Good Luck Farm on the breakfast taco.


On another Saturday J.J. was cooking with Oksana’s kimchee, asparagus from Knopp’s Farm, maitake mushrooms from The Bay Mushrooms, and his own pickled daikon radishes. Dean helps make the gourmet taco sauces the day before; and the soft corn tortillas, also made fresh the day before, come from a local Hispanic grocery market.

By using and featuring produce from the other farm market vendors along with his own farm’s ingredients, J.J. supports the economic collaborative that the market fosters. He buys their produce, cooks with it and sells it, advertises it, and his customers who like what they’ve tasted in his Farm to Table tacos know where to go to get more of the same ingredients for their own use. Not only providing an economic benefit, J.J. feels that this also contributes to the esprit de corps among the market’s vendors.

Unlike the more traditional larger farms with sprawling acreage that are seen all along our Davidsonville Road countryside (think Marco Ridge, Chase’s Produce, Y Worry, and Doepkens’ Farms), the Minetolas’ Mise En Place Farm is tucked away on just over two acres off Rossback Road. Despite the farm’s small size, J.J. nonetheless grows a substantial quantity and variety of produce. In addition to the weekly farmers’ market, Mise en Place has provided its specialty bounty both to large regional wholesale restaurant suppliers and directly to local restaurants such as InGrano Bistro and Level—A Small Plates Lounge, both in Annapolis.

(Continued on page 11)

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Saturday 10:00~5:00

Mise en Place, from page 10

Grown in a combination of traditional vegetable garden plots and green houses, J.J.'s crops include a variety of salad greens (arugula, red Russian kale, mustard greens, butter lettuce, red and green sweet crisp lettuces, red oakleaf lettuce, and tatsoi); microgreens (sprouts without roots—which he grows nearly year round); veggies such as turnips, radishes, carrots, beets, garlic, tomatoes, celery, pink celery, cucumbers, and shaishito peppers (thin fleshed peppers: grill or sauté whole and dip into sauce); and many herbs and spices (basil, parsley, cilantro, dill, thyme, sage, lemon grass, chives, and mint, with ginger and turmeric available for the fall and winter market offerings).

Although Cristina works another job during the week, J.J. appreciates the family's assistance on market days. One of the few silver linings with the COVID-19 pandemic has been the incredible positive effect on their farmers' market sales. Market days became considerably busier than they were before the pandemic. And their Farm to Taco offerings have become very popular as well—one Saturday morning during the pandemic he made and sold 215 tacos!

Excerpted from an article by Meredith McQuoid-Greason, for Davidsonville Country Living

Never too many farmers markets!



A new Community Farmers Market has come to Davidsonville at **Riva Trace Baptist Church**, 475 West Central Avenue, marketing local bakers, makers, growers, and much more!


Open Friday evenings from 5:00 until 9:00 pm through October 29th

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**A Pleasant Find
June 23, 2021
from ARF's website**

In mid-June, we scientifically sampled fish along some of the oyster reefs on the South River. We were excited to find a baby Summer Flounder, a species that has been rare to see on the river in recent years. We also discovered Croaker, Spot, Weakfish, Hogchokers, Terrapin and more.

When thinking about the habitat created by an oyster reef, you might picture minnows, mud crabs, and barnacles that hide in and among the shells. However, the ecosystem of an oyster reef also extends high above in the bottom as larger fish also enjoy living near the structure and feeding on the smaller fish. As part of my capstone research project comparing the health of five oyster reefs on the South River, I conducted a biodiversity assessment of these waters above the reefs. I did so using an otter trawl, which is a large cone-shaped net that is dragged behind a boat to capture any fish or other critters in the water column.. I surveyed the waters above oyster reefs at Duvall Creek, Glebe Bay, Persimmon Point, and a control site in the main stem of the river where there is no reef (see Google Earth image below for exact locations). I anticipated catching the most fish at Glebe Bay, which is often touted as a great spot for fishermen. To my surprise, Duvall Creek by far yielded the largest catches and the most diversity of species.



She researched, did not sign her article!

Oyster Update:

In June, the Federation received lots of healthy oyster spat from our Maryland Grows Oysters volunteers, which we deposited on reefs in the South and West Rivers. The baby oysters are already hard at work filtering the water and providing great habitat.



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What will become of the Capital?

Some folks call the Annapolis Capital the “crab wrap-per,” and that is not an insult in this area. For all who read it, it provides news of local events and always includes a mix of heavy, informative, and light articles about world, national, and local events. The Capital is very important to the community and I have learned a lot about writing and editing from reading it for many years.

Now, no longer a surprise, but very disappointing that Tribune Publishing, owner of Baltimore Sun and Capital-Gazette, was bought by Alden Global Capital, a hedge fund based in New York, even culturally more distant than previous owners. The departure of Editor Rick Hutzell is even more disappointing, as he felt obligated to accept the “buy-out” that Alden offered the staff. Mr. Hutzell’s farewell column was printed June 20. After that date, he was no longer named in the Capital. Readers do not really know who works there. The Capital’s webpage shows no staff names, only positions. The staff listed in the printed paper shows a Director of Content, Jay Judge—the same person as in the Baltimore Sun—a Sports Editor an an Advertising Director. A flurry of emails to tips@capgaz.com elicited a reply from reporter Brooks DuBose, who told me the new editor is Brandi Bottalico at bbotalico@capgaz.com and gave me the name of another live person to whom I can send the Villager; an email to Ms. Bottalico on June 29 has not been answered.

Wikipedia (believe it or not) has nothing good to say about Alden Global. Articles on the web page from the past couple of months, while the sale of the Tribune was making news, include the following quotes:

“Alden has a reputation for sharply cutting costs by reducing the number of journalists working on its newspapers.” “In March 2018, Margaret Sullivan, the media columnist for The Washington Post, called Alden ‘one of the most ruthless of the corporate strip-miners seemingly intent on destroying local journalism.’” Alden received critical coverage from the editorial staff at the Denver Post,

who described Alden Global Capital as “vulture capitalists” after multiple staff layoffs. (the Tribune lost 80 staff).

Since Alden Global bought the Capital and the Sun, I and many other readers are deeply concerned for the health of our local paper. As the editor of the Davidsonville Area Civic Association’s newsletter, the Villager, I have always sent it to a live person on the Capital staff, and shamelessly used the Capital as a source of information (I always credit the Capital and the writer) about events that affect Davidsonville and South County residents, that many of them might otherwise miss. Some of us discussed this in a meeting on Sunday morning, June 27, and all agreed that we would be happier if we could believe the Capital will continue its local news coverage, especially of Anne Arundel County, as Brooks DuBose assured me it would..

County Executive Steuart Pittman wrote an open letter to Alden on June 22. On June 23, the Capital published excerpts from Mr. Pittman’s letter, but I found it worthy to print in full, as many residents do not receive the County’s Community updates.

“To Alden Global Capital and all of its shareholders, I am the County Executive of a place called Anne Arundel County in the heart of Maryland, where the 580,000 residents get local news from a little newspaper that you just bought, the Capital Gazette.

You got a gem. The paper started publishing as the Maryland Gazette in 1727. It’s had a lot of owners and changed with the times, but it’s always kept the people around here informed.

We’ve heard that you are bad news, that you buy papers like ours, lay off staff, cut local news coverage, and squeeze out whatever profit you can. We worried when we heard you were buying our paper’s parent company, Tribune Publishing. We rejoiced when other investors stepped in with a competing offer, promising to preserve our paper and the Baltimore Sun under the oversight of a local nonprofit. But you won. That was a blow, but we’re not ready to give up. *(Continued on page 15)*



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 Del. Michael E. Malone 410-841-3510 michael.malone@house.state.md.us
 Del. Heather Bagnall 410-841-3406 heather.bagnall@house.state.md.us
 Del. Sid Saab 410-841-3551 sid.saab@house.state.md.us

Anne Arundel County

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boardoffice@aacps.org garlotto@aacps.org

New on the County Contacts list, above:

The Office of the Clerk of the County Court often gets questions about marriage licenses, land records, business licenses, legal questions, and jury duty (even though that is another department). If you ever have any questions or need anything please contact Scott Poyer any time.

**Anne Arundel
Medical Center**

The Auxiliary of Anne Arundel Medical Center, 2001 Medical Parkway, Annapolis, needs volunteers ages 18 and older, day-time and evening hours, week-days and weekends. Positions include opportunities in patient interaction, customer service, and retail assistance. The auxiliary has been serving the hospital since 1944. Volunteers are an integral part of AAMC's mission of providing patient-centered, high-quality health care services. Please call the auxiliary office 443-481-5050 to volunteer or to request more information.



Davidsonville Country Living magazine is dedicated to residents of our fair community and features families and individuals who make Davidsonville the place we love. It also features an occasional local history or nostalgic interest. If you are a Davidsonville resident not currently receiving the magazine and would like to, please send your email address to david.grabau@n2pub.com.

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Pittman's letter to Alden Global (from page 13)

You see, our newspaper got attacked three years ago, by a guy with a shotgun who didn't like what the paper wrote about him. He killed five of our newspaper's staff as they worked in the newsroom. Their names were Gerald Fischman, Rob Hiaasen, John McNamara, Rebecca Smith, and Wendi Winters. They were our heroes. They didn't deserve to die.

On the day of the shooting, the surviving staff made a commitment. They refused to let that gunman shut down their newspaper. They kept working. A reporter named Chase Cook tweeted, "We are putting out a damn paper tomorrow," and they did. The newspaper arrived at our homes the next day, and every single day since.

Our paper's editor, Rick Hutzell, is also a hero. He's worked at the Capital for 34 years, and his knowledge of this county and his drive to tell us the truth are extraordinary. His editorial board endorsed the guy I was running against in the last election, but even I recognize that he is the heart of our paper, and that our paper is the heart of our community.

We understand that you are a hedge fund, and that your purpose is to make money for your investors, but your investors are people, right? Do they know what you are doing with their money? Do they know that your first move as owner was to pressure our paper's staff to leave by offering buyouts? Do they know that your buy-out offer, and the inherent threat of a pink slip, has already forced both Rick Hutzell and Chase Cook to announce their departure, and that others are likely to follow?

Your first strikes against us have left us staggering, but we are still standing.

You may not have noticed, but just as you take our journalists away, our paper is gearing up to cover the trial of the killer that attacked it. And just as you take our journalists away we are unveiling a memorial.

Let me tell you about the memorial that will be unveiled here next week. It was the brainchild of our Caucus of African American Leaders and is funded by the county, the city of Annapolis, and the state of Maryland. It has five pillars to honor our fallen heroes and a large wall with the words of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution inscribed on it.

We are calling it the Guardians of the First Amendment Memorial. It will inspire this community and all of its visitors to act in defense of a free and independent press, and to protect and preserve our local newspaper, whether the attacks come through the barrel of a gun or the greed of corporate raiders.

It's not too late for you to join us. Our paper is profitable. That's why you fought so hard to prevent The Baltimore Sun and Capital Gazette from being carved out of your acquisition. We can grow rather than die, allowing your investors to feel better about how Alden Global Capital invests their money.

To move us forward on this new path, I invite you to join us on June 28 at 11 am in Annapolis for the unveiling of our Guardians Memorial. After the event, you can meet with community leaders, elected officials, and Capital Gazette staff for a conversation about how we can protect local journalism as a career and the Capital Gazette as an institution.

I look forward to your response, and promise that your trip here will be informative and worthwhile.

Steuart Pittman County Executive

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The Capital's coverage of the dedication of the Freedom of Speech memorial to its five employees had no mention that any representative of Alden Global attended the event, nor has any response been noted.

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The Villager

Newsletter of the Davidsonville Area Civic Association
P. O. Box 222, Davidsonville, Maryland 21035



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The Villager is published at least six times each year. We invite your written and signed contributions of letters, articles, and community notices.

J O I N D A C A

MEMBERSHIP: I wish to be a member of DACA and receive the VILLAGER. At \$10.00 per year for each person, my check for \$ _____ is enclosed, payable to DACA for membership for _____ person(s) for _____ year(s). Also enclosed is my contribution of \$ _____ to DACA to help with the expenses incurred in the effort to maintain the quality of life that brought us to the Davidsonville area and to help guide the growth and development of our community OR _____ for the Scholarship Fund.

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