

# The Villager

Newsletter of the Davidsonville Area Civic Association

Vol. 49, No. 6

P.O. Box 222, Davidsonville, Maryland 21035

March–April 2023

## Better than Ever!

The 12th Annual Green Expo is presented by the Davidsonville Area Civic Association (DACA) and hosted by Homestead Gardens.

The annual Davidsonville Green Expo features exhibitors offering information, education, and demonstrations on environmentally friendly products, sustainable lifestyle, lawn and garden techniques, agricultural practices, energy use, water conservation and preservation, recycling, land use, and conservation. Green Expo will provide attendees with all the information needed to live a sustainable life and protect and preserve our environment, our waterways, and our Chesapeake Bay.

**Trees and more trees! Seedling giveaway:** DACA, along with the Anne Arundel County Forestry Board, will hold their annual tree seedling giveaways from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm in Homestead Gardens' greenhouse.

**Flag ceremony and Scouts participation:** Scout Troop 454 will present colors at 10:30 am at the flagpole in the parking lot. Harold the Piper will lead a procession from the exhibits to the flagpole. Bring your worn and tattered old flags to the Scouts' exhibit table for respectful disposal.

**More!** In addition to an exciting array of exhibitors, the Expo will again offer face painting courtesy of the Southern High School Art Department. Also, come meet and learn about raptors.

**Food!** Agape Coffee and Sweets, 2 Bold Chefs, and Kernel Gunther's popcorn, funnel cake, and other snacks will be on site.

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**Become a member of DACA.** Pay dues of \$20 per person and your voice will be amplified by this respected civic association in meetings and discussions with representatives of our county and state government. DACA exists to assist by speaking with you and for you. Let your voice be heard.

**A Note to *The Villager's* Readers**

After more than 50 issues over 50 years, this is my last issue as editor of *The Villager*. Oh, so much I have learned since it began in March 1973 with a single page, typed on an IBM Selectric!

John Quinan designed the title logo at the top of the front page; he taught me to type in columns and to cut and paste them to pasteboard sheets using hot wax. Frank DeBrouse persuaded a printer in Washington to print it for free. In the late 1980s, teenager George Perry installed DACA's first computer, taught me how to use it, then coached me through various upgrades, including a new gift from Kevin Joyce to DACA, until I bought my own (I'm now on my third laptop). Each improvement in the machine entailed more learning on my part. My son-in-law Mike Greason has been my computer guru for the past 15 or so years, and although I still can't get along without him, he has helped me learn to solve some of my problems. We've come a long way!

But 50 years is enough. It's time for me to move on. It has been most interesting, very educational, lots of fun, sometimes frustrating, and endlessly challenging. The next editor might learn as much as I have about how the county government works and much, much more!

Thanks to all my readers who have rewarded me with their many kind words. You've made it worthwhile.

Gail

**Notes to DACA**

Many thanks to Robert Kornmeyer, owner of Choisser Automotive Services, for their contribution to DACA in addition to buying an ad in *The Villager*.



Gardeners: Please take note also of Obligation Farm's ad offering compost for sale.

Greetings Gail! Bravo for your excellence. Mike L.

Thank you, Gail Patricia S.

My "loyalty" to Davidsonville goes back to 1999 when I first arrived and will outlast August 2021 when I left to study Zeriscaping in the southwest (*see page 14*). It's a beautiful town, and the efforts I read about in the *Villager* indicate that its future is assured. The county is experiencing so many wonderful things. And yes! I am going to stay tuned! My best to you for the reporting you do. AA County seems to be going great! Nice job, Gail Enright! Elizabeth M.

DACA's **Annual Meeting** of the general membership will be held at **7:30 pm on June 1, 2023**, in the **Scouts Building, DFRC**, 3789 Queen Anne Bridge Road

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**Thank you, Margaret Herbers!**

Margaret Hebers responded to DACA President Bruce Stein’s article in the January–February *Villager*, in which he expressed DACA’s need for a membership list manager: keeping up with new members, renewals, and dues payments. It is an almost invisible task, but if the members are not cultivated, the numbers shrink. We need them to pay the dues so we can print and mail *The Villager*. It takes money to pay for financial support and dues to the organizations that share DACA’s interests and to build a network to keep in touch with government officials who do the work of serving citizens. Here is a repeat of Bruce’s item from the previous issue (minus the list management request):

DACA needs volunteers who care about their Davidsonville community. Below are specific operations and tasks for which DACA would gratefully appreciate help.

- For DACA to continue as an advocate for Davidsonville and its residents, we need help with collecting information on land use and zoning issues that will affect Davidsonville, forwarding it to our board members, and sharing it at board meetings to facilitate informed decision-making.
- DACA’s webmaster would appreciate help managing the website.
- We have openings for a recording secretary (preparing agendas, taking minutes at monthly board and annual meetings); and a communications secretary (handling incoming email).
- *The Villager* needs an assistant to solicit and bill for advertisements.

Much of this work has been done by one person. Breaking it into separate tasks for different people makes it less demanding and more doable.

You do not have to be a board member to carry out a specific task or to attend meetings. All DACA members are welcome at Board meetings, and many have attended to share their concerns and seek help from the larger number of residents represented by DACA. Bring your concerns and interests you already have and are willing to share. What you do not know already, you can learn. Past board members have stated that this activity is a super method of learning how the county government relates to your community and serves it.

**Applications Open for the 2023–2024 DACA Scholarship**

The Davidsonville Area Civic Association’s Gail Enright Educational Scholarship helps DACA members and their dependent children pursue educational training, be it academic, technical, agricultural, or professional.

The scholarship is available to high school seniors and graduates of any age.

You can learn about the scholarship and access the application by visiting [www.daca-md.org](http://www.daca-md.org) and selecting the Scholarship page. (Or use the direct link: [www.davidsonvillemaryland.org/scholarship](http://www.davidsonvillemaryland.org/scholarship).)

Applications are being accepted for the 2023–2024 academic year and are due no later than Thursday, June 15, 2023, 11:59 pm.

The DACA scholarship was established in 2017 through a donation by Davidsonville residents Tom and Kris Angelis. The fund’s growth depends on the generosity of our community. Help us grow the scholarship fund by making a check in any amount payable to DACA and write “scholarship” in the memo space. Or donate online via the “Scholarship” button on our “Dues, Donations, Payments” page.

The Davidsonville Area Civic Association (DACA) is a tax-exempt 501(c)4 organization recognized by the U.S. Internal Revenue Services. Donations to DACA are *not* tax-deductible for the donor.

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### Sports Gambling in Riva

Michael’s on the South River (next door to Mike’s Crab House) proposed introducing a sports gambling facility in the restaurant. Many residents of Riva are strongly opposed to the project, citing the increase in traffic it would cause and the lack of sufficient parking available around both businesses.

Hannah Mosser Goldbeck posted on Facebook to alert residents of Riva to the proposal by Michael’s. She wrote that she “focused on traffic, safety, and property values. I described the continual traffic jams ... we have already and explained that the property cannot adequately support the existing business. The addition of yet more traffic, year-round, is going to be unsustainable. I also brought up the numerous times that emergency services are called to this property already. During the summer it is at least once weekly and often more frequent. I have personally seen fire trucks and ambulances unable to enter the parking lot when they are called because of the congestion. It is a recipe for disaster, and it is our community that will suffer. Lastly, I addressed the fact that study after study has shown a decline in property values in areas surrounding gambling facilities. This is a residential area and I do not want this on my doorstep.... I encourage you to express yourself as well.”

Goldbeck contacted the Office of Planning and Zoning to request a public information meeting, and received a reply that included the following: “A sports wagering facility is not allowed at this location based on the current C-1 Local Commercial zoning. If and when Michael’s on the South River comes to the County for approval, you will have opportunity to comment.”

A zoning change would require support from the County Council. Both Shannon Leadbetter, our Seventh District Council member, and Lisa Rodvien, District 6, have declined to introduce the necessary legislation. This may not be the end of it, as the business owners may try again in the future.

### Traffic Safety at Davidsonville Elementary School

Concerned residents have requested a traffic study along the Davidsonville Elementary School portion of Central Avenue. The study has not started but is in SHA’s queue to be done.

In May 2022 (see *Villager* Sept–Oct 2022) DACA President Bruce Stein wrote to officials at SHA and MD Department of Transportation, and, in July, to School Board member Michelle Corkadel. He and Ms. Corkadel met to discuss the issue, and in June he received a reply from District 5 Engineer Kimberly Tran. Ms. Tran responded to each of the concerns he noted in his letters.

Stein replied, “A consensus was reached that a traffic study was required and would be conducted by MDOT. The importance and priority of this study to AA County was, we believe, brought up by County Executive Pittman and expressed to then Secretary Ports.”

“In your Jun 7 reply you provided an update on several issues, you said that the time frame for the traffic study is usually 120 days to complete and the results of the study would be shared once they were available.

“As we have not received the traffic study and results, we assume the study has not been completed. If it has not, we urge that it be completed quickly before the school year ends. A study of traffic safety at an elementary school would be of little value if it done while school is not in session. If indeed, it has been completed, we ask that the study results be shared as soon as possible.

“Thank you for your efforts on behalf of the children of Davidsonville.” *Bruce Stein*

Ashley Keres, labeling herself “DES Mom,” asked DACA about making the flashing light work during pick up and drop off at the school. Our response is that DACA is trying to make this area safer!



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# STOP THE DAVIDSONVILLE 140 FT. CELL TOWER!!

*To be installed at Maryland Farm Bureau, 3358 Davidsonville Rd.*

### What is Happening?

- 140' cell tower will be installed behind the Maryland Farm Bureau office building at 3358 Davidsonville Rd. (just north of the Davidsonville Rd/Central Avenue intersection.)
- Installation was approved by Anne Arundel County in November 2022.
- Local community has filed an appeal.
- New hearing with Anne Arundel County Board of Appeals will be take place March 21, 22, 23 (3 days scheduled in case it runs long)



### Why do we oppose the tower?

- Tower will degrade the rustic beauty of Davidsonville
- *5 other cell towers in the Davidsonville area already provide ample coverage*
  - Newest tower installed in late 2021
- Tower will impact nearby historic sites
  - Davidsonville Historic District
  - Mt. Airy historic site
  - Union Memorial United Methodist Church & Cemetery
- Negative impact on home values
  - Effect on values can extend up to 1 mile away
  - Closest homes may lose as much as 7% in value
- Tower may get taller
  - Once the tower is installed, no additional approvals are required to increase the height to 160 ft.

### What can you do to help?

- Sign our petition!
  - <https://www.change.org/p/vote-against-huge-cell-tower-on-davidsonville-road>
- Attend the hearing!
  - Anne Arundel County Board of Appeals
  - Arundel Center, Room 160, 44 Calvert Street, Annapolis, MD 21401
  - March 21, 22, 23, 5pm – 8pm
- Donate \$ for legal expenses
- Visit our Facebook page for more information
  - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/683094800181005>
  - Or search “Davidsonville cell tower” on facebook

## February Agriculture Report to DACA

*Margie Chase, February 9, 2023*

The Maryland Department of Agriculture announced that farmers who planted small grains last fall for harvest may start top dressing these crops with commercial fertilizer beginning February 15 in accordance with their nutrient management plan as long as ground conditions are favorable.

University of Maryland Extension is offering the following webinars online on the third Wednesday of each month. Registration is FREE. February 15 was on septic tank upgrades.

### March 15 – *Basic Tips for Managing Ponds*

Ponds are a dynamic ecosystem that involves numerous biological and chemical processes working together to maintain the variety of living organisms in a healthy condition. But sometimes things such as fish kills or excessive aquatic plant growth can get out of balance and require some management interventions. This webinar will discuss common problems that can occur in ponds and what practices can resolve or reduce the risk of these issues.

### April 19 – *Ensuring Safe Water by Well Testing*

We are what we drink, so ensuring that our well water is safe and of good quality makes good health sense. Since private wells are not regulated as public water sources are, it is up to the well owner to test the water and treat it if necessary. This webinar covers the basics of the how, what, and when to have well water quality tested.

If you've never watched *Maryland Farm & Harvest*, check this program out on MPTV Tuesday nights at 7:00 pm. You can also view past episodes online. The show is in its tenth season and does a great job of showcasing agriculture in Maryland.

AAEDC in partnership with Maryland Extension Service will hold an **agricultural scrap tire drop-off** event **March 8–22, 9 am–4 pm**. Agricultural tires are not accepted in landfills and will be accepted only through this program on these designated dates. (*Note: This program is not intended for bulk removal of tires on property. Such tires will not be accepted.*) Take your ag scrap tires to T&C Farm, 4758 Solomons Island Road, Harwood, MD 20776. For more information, contact Brittany Rawlings at [brawlings@aaedc.org](mailto:brawlings@aaedc.org)

## Future Farmers of America

Each July, an elite group of FFA alumni between the ages of 18 and 24 attends the New Century Farmer Conference (NCF), a five-day event held in Des Moines, Iowa.

In addition to growing their leadership and career development skills, particularly in the production agriculture sector, attendees can meet industry experts and get a glimpse behind the scenes of major ag businesses. Special thanks to the corporate partners who are supporting 2023 NCF.

*(As a Southern High School FFA alumna, Margie Chase learned many of the farming skills she employs today in Chase's strawberry fields. ~Gail)*

## Mid-Atlantic Community Church Resubdivision

Located on Davidsonville Road north of Route 50 within the Davidsonville Area, MACC received approval for a resubdivision on their property to create additional playing fields. Paul and Lori Thick, owners of the adjoining property, appealed the decision in the Circuit Court because the resubdivision would allow clearing of large trees from the area. The case was heard on February 15 with a decision to be rendered within 30 days.

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**School Report to DACA Board, March Meeting**

*Grayson Morgan*

AACPS weekly updates on new hire positions are found at [www.aacps.org/weeklyupdates](http://www.aacps.org/weeklyupdates).

- 41 bus driver vacancies (down from 45 last month) with 57 in training
- 195 teacher vacancies (down from 202 last month)
- 190 food service vacancies (same as last month)
- 31 custodial staff vacancies (down from 34 last month)

AACPS and TAAAC (Teachers Association of AA County—teachers union) recognize the following:

- AACPS retirees have been hired to assist special education teachers with testing.
- General education teachers are encouraged to become certified in Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI), and schools should maintain teams of CPI-certified staff to support emotional regulation of students in all environments.
- Professional development should be relevant and applicable to the work of special education teachers and related service providers.
- AACPS and TAAAC will also continue to advocate at the state level to reduce requirements of special educators that take them away from their important work of supporting students, and partner to recruit special educators for AACPS.

I visited one of AACPS’s three special schools last month with members of my military unit to show our support to the kids and faculty. It is beyond impressive to witness the staff and volunteers ensuring kids of all ages, with a wide degree of physical and cognitive challenges, have the best education available. Truly remarkable!

The Board of Education is now accepting applications for the 2023 Candace C. W. Antwine Military Service Awards, an initiative designed to provide assistance to Anne Arundel County Public Schools students who enlist in the military after graduation. The deadline to apply is 11:59 p.m., March 31, 2023.

Applications for this year’s award can be accessed online at [www.aacps.org/serviceaward](http://www.aacps.org/serviceaward). For more details: <https://aacpsschools.org/pressr/?p=7964>

Families, alumni, business and community partners, and members of the public who would like to help strengthen bonds with schools across the county as part of the new #BePresent initiative can indicate their interest, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Mark Bedell announced. Those who wish to volunteer should email [bepresent@aacps.org](mailto:bepresent@aacps.org); include the name of the school where the sender is interested in volunteering as well as dates and times available, and pertinent contact information.

Members of the team working on the initiative will collect that data and match it to the needs of schools that have been conveyed by principals. Those who will be volunteering at schools will then be given instructions for training and any necessary background checks. Both are cost-free for participants. Details:

<https://aacpsschools.org/pressr/?p=7958>

**AACPS Budget from Vince Moulden, Feb. 22**

Anne Arundel County Executive Steuart Pittman issued the following statement regarding the Board of Education’s vote to adopt FY24 operating and capital budget requests:

“I want to congratulate the Anne Arundel County Board of Education for acting unanimously in support of Superintendent Bedell’s ambitious and carefully crafted budget request. Our Board of Education represents diverse political viewpoints but came together around one urgent and important agenda—better pay for teachers and school staff.

“Asking taxpayers to step up and invest their hard-earned dollars in education is never easy, but these board members sent a strong signal that without these salary enhancements our schools won’t have the personnel that it takes to deliver the quality of education that our kids and our county demand.

“This vote, and the input I received from the nearly 800 county residents who attended our Budget Town Hall series, gives me and our budget team a strong signal as we enter the final ten weeks of FY24 budget preparation. It will soon be time for some tough choices to be made.”

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**White Oak**

*Quercus alba*

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**Start School Later, February 21**

*Lisa VanBuskirk*

Updates on AACPS’s school bus transportation, Howard County, and potential legislation impacting start times and sunrise (with an ask at the end).

AACPS continues to make progress under the leadership of Superintendent Mark Bedell on transportation issues. Using emergency contracting to replace 30 to 40 school buses with vans and SUVs to transport students to private (special needs) placement, also homeless students, as well as aggressive recruiting of new school bus drivers, AACPS has made improvements so that bus drivers are now assigned to every route.

AACPS continues to build its substitute bus driver bench as there still are days with buses out of service when drivers call out for illness and such. From where AACPS started in August versus today, the Transportation Division and especially the drivers, are to be commended.

In late February, Howard County’s Board of Education will decide on new bell time options (high school at 8:00 am vs high school at 9:15 am). The current high school start times is 7:25 am. Needless to say, Anne Arundel’s experience the past few months/years has been a topic of discussion in Howard County as well as in the *Washington Post*, *Baltimore Sun*, and *Capital Gazette*. *Baltimore Sun* articles can also be found by searching on the *Capital Gazette*’s website and vice versa.

I also had the opportunity to highlight AACPS’s healthier and safer school hours when, for the fourth year in a row,

I testified before the General Assembly in opposition to state legislation (House Bill 165) which seeks to move Maryland to Permanent Daylight Saving Time (DST). Under permanent DST, sunrise in Anne Arundel County would be as late as 8:30 a.m. in the winter. First and foremost, this is a safety issue for all students and adults.

Permanent DST would negatively impact the circadian rhythms of all Marylanders and would negate Anne Arundel’s success in moving bell times to those that are healthier, safer, and more age-appropriate for all ages. For the past few years, AACPS has opposed permanent DST legislation because of the negative impact on student health and safety, yet Anne Arundel County’s delegates on both sides of the aisle supported permanent DST.

On Tuesday, March 7, I testified in opposition to similar Senate Bill 268. The two bills are slightly different, thus are not considered cross-files. Please reach out to your State Senators and Delegates in opposition to both the Senate and the House bills. In the last few years the permanent DST bill passed Maryland’s House of Delegates, but since then it has been held up in the Senate’s committee. With new leadership, new delegates, and new senators, how the bill will fare this year is unknown.

Thank you for your continued support of safer, healthier, and more age-appropriate school hours for all students.

*Lisa VanBuskirk*

Our newly elected District 33 Senator is Dawn Gile and our newly elected District 33 Delegate is Stuart Schmidt. Their phone numbers and email addresses are on page 14.

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DACA President Bruce Stein stands beside the banner that he and Gray Morgan placed on the fence at Davidsonville Elementary School. The school and its staff have been generous friends to DACA for many years.

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*Broadening DACA’s Horizon to Help Good Neighbors Revive a Piece of their History*



Galesville Market as it appeared during the 1990s

**Saving Galesville Market**

*by Mike Lofton*

Every now and then the stars align behind a seemingly impossible cause. In this case, the iconic Galesville Market building—operated until 2015 as Hartge Boat Yard Marine Supplies, previously West River Market—was succumbing to decay and indifference, vacant and abandoned since 2015 to slow collapse, with the help of invading raccoons, marking THE END of a community landmark of historic Galesville that dates to at least 1871.

Enter a group of determined neighbors, who through talent and grit wove together a public/private partnership that since 2022 has succeeded in purchasing the property from a long-time owner, created a 501(c)3 public charity, Galesville Community Properties, to restore the property, won fiscal and zoning support from Anne Arundel County, and set in motion a robust fundraising effort that is aligning the needed cash and volunteer support to restore the Market in a manner that preserves its character and returns it to community use.

**History and Community:** Today, Galesville represents a remarkably preserved and unique confluence of our collective history. Fishers and farmers, Black and White, have inhabited the village for more than 350 years—a community demographic that has not been paved over or pushed out. While our jobs and lives have changed, many inhabitants can trace their family roots back well over 100 years. As for the Market, mercantile activity of some kind was established at the current site around the Civil War and was operated by several local families for generations. By the 1920s, returning World War I veteran Francis Kolb and his sister Margaret acquired it from their father and ran the

store for nearly 50 years before handing off the reins in the mid-1970s. Fond memories of the Market abound across the greater Galesville community—visits on horseback by local farmers as late as the 1970s, summer lunch dates, Halloween and Christmas “open houses” offering free and ample cider, Thanksgiving pie runs, and folks just getting together to talk on the porch, or by the old stove. Overhead model trains, a barber chair, checkerboard, wood barrel table, and a fuzzy spider that scared the unsuspecting visiting boaters and city folk, still inspire many happy memories. Working at the Market was a rite of passage for many local youth. And, being able to buy simple staples and breakfast or lunch sandwiches in town was just plain convenient for locals, boaters, and visitors.

The old Market’s heyday came to an end with high rent and building decay, but interest in restoring the Market was revealed in a recent survey which showed a common desire to have once again a village watering hole. Not willing to be just a “bunch of houses, the people of Galesville longed  
*(Continued on page 12)*

**Galesville Market, (from page 11)**

for a place where residents and visitors by land and sea could come together. This vision is consistent with the Anne Arundel County 2040 Long Range Plan, and resonates with Galesville’s three community organizations, the Galesville Community Center, the West River Improvement Association, and the Galesville Heritage Society.

Preserving Galesville for future generations, residents and elected representatives have brought back to life the Hot Sox baseball park established in 1915 while baseball was segregated, stabilized the Wilson House—the 1870s home of prominent citizens and former slaves Henry and Kitty Wilson—with future use plans under consideration, and maintained a Rosenwald school, operated from 1929 to 1956 for the Black community until desegregation. The County Pier in Galesville will undergo a major restoration this spring. Longtime sit-down restaurants Pirates Cove and Stan & Joe’s Riverside continue to thrive, and Galesville is fast becoming a local destination for a taste of south county culture.

**Save the Market:** With the generous support of local donors, Galesville Community Properties is rehabilitating and reimagining the property to make it capable of supporting several small businesses and activities in line with the desires of the village. They are running a capital campaign to collect pledges and tax deductible donations for the revival of the Market, and to date have

raised over \$413,000 towards the goal of \$600,000. Demolition and repair of the decayed structure has started, the raccoons moved out, and restoration is planned to begin in earnest in the April–May time frame. A soft opening is targeted by autumn, with the goal of having a small breakfast and lunch shop and general store operated by a private business from the leased market space. Indoor and outdoor seating is planned for up to 20 customers. There is great momentum. Asked what has surprised them about the Market effort, project leaders Jim Chandler and Susan Case responded, “How smoothly and quickly it is progressing. AA County officials have been very supportive.”

Financial donations and volunteers, including carpenters, plumbers, and woodworkers, are sought to continue the momentum. You can get connected through various social media postings on Facebook Groups, (Save Galesville Market or Galesville Enough Said) to learn how to get involved. Opportunities for community members to contribute skills and talents will accelerate as the year progresses.

Project leads Jim Chandler, Jody Shuart, Holly Clark, Mark or Susan Case, and Tracy Richardson can be reached at [galesvillemarket@gmail.com](mailto:galesvillemarket@gmail.com) and will be happy to find ways to channel volunteer talent and DONATIONS. You can also reach the team by USPS mail at Galesville Community Properties, Inc., 1000 Main Street, P.O. Box 202, Galesville, MD 20765.

*Mike Stricker*

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### County Executive’s Weekly Message

The Office of the County Executive held a staff retreat February 3 at Arlington Echo overlooking the Severn River.

We have a strong team heading into term two, and we like each other, so it was a fun day. It’s a group that pretty much works all the time under a lot of pressure, so we need to take good care of one another and stay fit, at least mentally.

My goal was to inspire. I wanted every member of our team to feel personally invested in and passionate about at least some of the things we hope to accomplish in the next four years. So before leading a discussion on some of our priorities, I told them why I believe our work matters. Here are a few of the things I said.

The elections that put us in office and kept us there were partisan, but the issues we work on are not, at all. Put the politics behind us.

Everything we do is about two things: One is figuring out how to get along with one another and finding peace in our communities across income levels, races, neighborhoods, and industries so that we can achieve prosperity.

The other is to nurture rather than destroy that which created and sustains us—nature. Human beings have always confronted these two challenges, and, over many generations, we built and improved a tool called government as a way to face them. It is an extraordinary honor and responsibility to steward this government in this place and in this time.

Anne Arundel County is a microcosm of America. We are well-connected and respected, and if we succeed we will be noticed. Others will learn from us.

Governments build or lose legitimacy, depending on their performance and the public’s perception of their performance. World history tells us the stakes are very high.

This legitimacy is serious. I majored in Latin American studies at University of Chicago from 1980 to 1984. What drives the transitions from democracy to authoritarianism and back again? Latin America in that era offered lots of examples, and it always came down to legitimacy. I studied with students who had escaped military dictatorships in Chile and Argentina, and I protested against U.S. engagements in El Salvador and Nicaragua.

Government was a widely respected tool in America from 1933 until 1981, when President Reagan said in his inauguration speech, “Government is not the solution to our problem. Government is the problem.”

It was an effective rallying cry, and it carries a solid kernel of truth, but the strategy of running “against government” built steam over the decades, eventually costing government so much legitimacy that an attack on the United States Capitol to block the transfer of power is today justified by many Americans as “legitimate political discourse.”

I can’t do much to rebuild the legitimacy of our federal government institutions, but if you’re wondering what gets me out of bed in the morning, it’s the prospect that we can do just that here in our little microcosm of America.

If we restore trust in government, we can deploy its tools to nurture one another and our environment. That’s worth doing. *Steuart Pittman, February 7, 2023*

### King’s Branch Flat Creek Natural Area

Residents of Gravelly are concerned about an attempt to persuade the AA Department of Recreation and Parks to allow public parking on Ashe Street for visitors to the County-owned Natural Area of 58 acres.

The property has always been open to the public for passive enjoyment—walking, hiking, bird-watching, etc. Two years ago, a stream restoration project took place to control erosion on the property, which is accessible to bicyclists and pedestrians through a narrow entrance at the end of the Ashe Street cul-de-sac.

Children play in the cul-de-sac. It is too small for a proper vehicle turn around, and the edge is already showing wear from delivery trucks and trash collection trucks causing a sediment problem. The abandoned farm-house on the site is an attractive nuisance, among the many other safety concerns that need to be addressed. The Department of Recreation and Parks has a limited budget for improvements in natural areas.

Access is available from St. George Barber Road at the old entrance, 853 St. George Barber Road, although there is no parking area on the road.



At the Arundel Rivers Federation, we know the recipe for restoring our rivers: it requires scientific monitoring to pinpoint pollution sources as well as identifying opportunities to restore streams and shorelines to prevent sediment from clouding our rivers. We invite residents young and old from all corners of our watersheds to get their hands dirty planting trees, nursing baby oysters, and cleaning up our beloved rivers. In 2022 we made huge strides to protect and restore the South, West, and Rhode Rivers.

*Matt Johnston, Executive Director*

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**The Auxiliary of Anne Arundel Medical Center**, 2001 Medical Parkway, Annapolis, needs volunteers ages 18 and older, daytime and evening hours, weekdays 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.

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**STROLL DAVIDSONVILLE**

**S**troll Davidsonville 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 piece of local history or nostalgic interest.

If you are a Davidsonville resident not currently receiving the magazine and would like to see it, please send your email address to [david.grabau@n2pub.com](mailto:david.grabau@n2pub.com). David Grabau will email you a free PDF version that you can open and read.

**Gardening in New Mexico**

**X**eriscaping is an educational thing with MNLGA [New Mexico Landscape and Garden Association], and the agricultural and horticultural zones are the same. Except you need more water here for things that are not native. Iris and roses do so well, along with many of the plants we enjoy in Davidsonville. There are very few diseases that can make trouble for plants, and few insects—a few ants, a few flies, a few mosquitoes if you live near the Rio Grande or leave your rain barrels untended.

There are many beautiful native plants here, like red yucca that would rival the beauty of anything, and prairie rose, apache plume, indian hawthorne, and an *Elaeagnus ebbingei* (photo; an autumn olive type) that has a sweet fragrance in autumn vs. the *E. pungens* familiar to the East Coast. I am enjoying studying here immensely and really loving the rocks and the Mesa.



E.M.



*South County  
Concert Association*

The South County Concert Association is a nonprofit organization of volunteers who are dedicated to offering fine music and community cultural enrichment.

Concerts are held at Southern High School, 4400 Solomons Island Road, Harwood. Evening concerts begin at 7:30 pm; Sunday concerts begin at 3:00 pm.

Admission is by season subscriptions, price for the remainder of the 2023–2024 season is reduced to \$50 per adult; students 18 and under are free. Tickets sold at the door for individual concerts are \$25. Because of a reciprocity agreement, our SCCA members are invited to attend the five concerts offered by the Anne Arundel Community Concert Association at Severna Park High School. Please contact Betty Knupp at 410-956-4881 for more information and a printed brochure.

**2023 Season at Southern High School**

*Divas Three* Friday, March 17, 7:30 pm

Divas 3 consists of powerhouse Las Vegas vocalists performing your favorite chart-topping hits. Their three-part harmony arrangements joined by piano and tracks pays tribute to some of the biggest divas in music history including Cher, Dolly Parton, Whitney Houston, and more.

*Ilya Yakushev and Thomas Mesa, Piano and Cello*  
Monday, April 24, 7:30 pm

Two world-class soloists are an impressive duo with international flair. Ilya Yakushev is known for his musical pyrotechnics on the piano, and Thomas Mesa is heralded as one of the most charismatic and engaging cellists of his generation; they perform as the *Stalwart Classical Duo*.



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**Sunday, April 23 at Maryland Hall, *Rising Stars***

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*The* **Villager**

Newsletter of the Davidsonville Area Civic Association



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