

# SKIPJACK COMMUNITY NEWS

PROVIDING INFORMATION TO THE COMMUNITIES OF WENONA, DEAL ISLAND, CHANCE, AND DAMES QUARTER

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### **Text Too Small?**

- Press "Control" and scroll up to make text larger.
- Tap and stretch fingers to zoom on a mobile device or tablet.
- Print newsletter from email, not Facebook.



## **CULTURE CORNER**

**ALVERDA HOFFMAN**  
BY: GLORIA HORNER

"I've had a good life." Miss Alverda



'The Lord, my family, and the Baltimore Orioles.' Ask Miss Alverda about her life and she will proudly tell you what means the most to her. A glance around her home, and near to hand is her Bible, always. While the proof of her love for the Orioles is proudly displayed on the walls, even as you pull into the driveway, as well as photos of her family scattered around. Sitting with her in her cozy kitchen, it's easy to see how it's so well organized for someone who obviously loves to cook. But more than these modest artifacts, Miss Alverda turned 98 in April, nonetheless, she's amazing. Still living on

her own, she possesses a strong constitution, a resiliency, and a positive outlook on life.

Even the recent problem with her leg, the only thing that has slowed her down from a life of attending church, cooking Sunday dinners, going to the MAC center, and participating in a range of activities. Yet with her optimism and spirit, she is sure it is temporary. Musing that; "Come warmer weather she expects she might be able to walk to church."



Indeed, Miss Alverda has an attitude that can only be described as unfaltering faith, a conviction of trust, and a belief that she's had a good life. Listening to her, she's a story teller, a chronicler of our community spanning nearly 100 years. And the memories she holds define our community.

The stories she shares are not plain facts of an event; rather listening to Miss Alverda, she is someone who can recreate a story full of feeling for the people, the places, and the era, full of warmth, humor, and alacrity. Reflecting on her life, a smile, always a smile, as she remembers her parents, Julia Thomas Horseman and Leon David Webster.



Born on the seventh of April, 1925, Julia “Alverda” was one of nine children. Her siblings; Irene, David Leon “Hoss,” Jeannette, Jennie “Francis,” Aileen, Juanita, Jennings, and Clyde, each themselves a well-respected member of our community. And her husband, Woodrow “Wilson” Hoffman and his parents, Stanley James Hoffman, Sr. and Helen Daniels, and siblings: Marva, Stanley Delmas, Roger, Natalie, and Alice. Both families are well entwined within our community; the names of their family members are direct connections to our ancestors and people living today. People named their children after their parents, beloved grandparents, or other relatives as a way to honor their elders and connect each new generation to the previous. And perhaps it is that intimate interlacing of families which defined and built the community we inherited and benefit from. In a community so bound by our connected families, there is no escaping the wrath of someone done wrong or being the love of another’s life. Our community is founded on the experience, trust, and faith we share with one another.



Her mind, still clear, preserves almost a century of knowledge of our community and world events. And listening to Miss Alverda fondly reminiscing on her life as a young girl, you are transported to an idyllic past and realize what a blessing it was to live in a community founded on trust, harmony, and fellowship. Miss Alverda is a member of what is known as The Greatest Generation; these Americans came of age during the Great Depression and served in World War II, and these individuals are whose character and honor helped win it. This generation saw momentous change in our world and their life experiences created patriotic individuals, epitomized with commitment, humility, and personal responsibility. They possessed and appreciated a strong work ethic, understood frugality, and embodied the ideals of sacrifice and honor. Even living in such a small community as ours, Miss Alverda and her generation experienced monumental changes for them and the world. However, in our community, childhood was uncomplicated, when not doing chores or going to school, they played outside. Children bonded by time spent together, built enduring relationships, created memories, and forged lifetime friendships.



Miss Alverda recalls how as a young girl living on the island in the 1930s and 1940s, not everyone owned even one vehicle or made a daily trip to Salisbury, now where many members of our community work and routinely shop. As a teen, Saturday evenings meant a trip to Salisbury, the highlight of the week. But the journey to Salisbury required taking the bus Thomas Price drove. Along with her friends, Mary Benton and Nora Lee Webster, they looked forward to an evening out and enjoying a meal at Johnny and Sammy's, then a drive through.



Life on the island in that era possessed a repeated tempo of nature, an intrinsic cultural norm born of generations living and working within the area, which determined its character. In the early 20th century job opportunities were limited. People grew up and embraced adulthood far earlier than today. Thus, life on the island echoed the pattern of generation after generation. Men

began working as soon as they finished school, then ending after the eighth grade and women often married young. Both desired to begin their own family and contribute to their community. Their society was defined by an inherent belief in what their ancestors created and established was the trusted precedent; yet ever moving forward. Children were born, played outside, grew up in safety, knowing everyone in the community, often related to many of their friends. Most men took up jobs following the traditional occupations each generation performed before. Life, culture, and society was handed down, father to son, mother to daughter. Becoming an adult was simply leaving one's family, marrying, and creating their own. People attended church together, worked side by side, and marriages were till death do us part. Thus, life in the community seemed secure and safe. But, already the war in Europe was impacting the US. And even in our community, the members were just beginning to experience the horrors of a war to come. Some men were already working away from the island reflecting the need of an American economy morphing into one driven by a global conflict. Wilson took a job with the Glenn L. Martin Company in Middle River, just outside of Baltimore, working in a plant that made airplanes, an industry already heralding the impending war for America. During the work week Wilson stayed with his sister, but returned home on the weekends.



Smiling as Miss Alverda tells the story of her marriage to Wilson, and in it you hear the intrigue and allure of a romance novel. With a smile, she described it; “We ran off and got married” --they eloped. Young, in love, already facing separation due to his working up the road, a decision was made. On a beautiful Sunday in 1941, the twenty-fourth of September, dressed in a blue skirt and top, Wilson drove the thirteen miles to St. Peter's Church in Oriole. Though she was only 16 and Wilson 20, they were determined to marry and began their life together as husband and wife. With only the preacher, Reverend McFarland and one witness, Percy Nutter, in attendance, they took their vows. After the ceremony, Wilson drove Alverda back to her parent’s home in Wenona, then returned to Baltimore for his job. Little time for any honeymoon. Though people knew they were dating, their decision to marry was determined to be a secret, for a while. Though the desire was not to tell anyone for the time being, that intention was not to last. While preachers might hold sacred any information brought before the altar, their witness held no such integrity. The following day, Mr. Nutter, a

meat salesman, came to the island and perhaps believing that his customers would appreciate being privy to this juicy bit of gossip, shared that Alverda and Wilson had married the day before. And in typical small community fashion, if one person knows something, very quickly others will also. Perhaps it is that desire to share, even gossip, which binds and defines a community. However, as the rumor quickly spread around the island, Alverda was outed and told her mom of the marriage. Listening to her tell such an endearing story, within it, the quintessential romantic tale of the boy and girl next door living on an island, who fall in love, run off to marry and live happily ever after.

When Wilson returned to Wenona the following weekend, the decision was made that Alverda would move to Baltimore and live with her husband. And within the year, Alverda was pregnant and they decided to return home, back to their community, surrounded by family and friends, wanting to raise their children where they grew up.

When they returned to Wenona, Wilson purchased the house his father built, now over 100 years old. Here they were surrounded by their family and friends. And here Miss Alverda still lives, every room is filled with memories. In this home they raised their children--Albert, Winston, Diane, Helen, and Julia. Her home sits on a small lane, Paul Benton Circle that loops to rejoin the main Deal Island Road, with several dozen homes closely set lining it.

Reminiscing, she grew up just across the lane. And her memories of Christmas, how in those years, the tree was put up on the 24th. Young children only saw the decorated tree on Christmas morning, never

before, all part of the magic of the celebration. And always an angel on the top of the tree. Everybody came to the house to celebrate and everyone had a good time. Her memories recall a different world, no phones or computers to distract people. Rather children spent time outside, playing with others. This is how deep bonds were forged, and life focused on family first and then the community.



Miss Alverda is modest, and it often takes prompting to get her to tell more of her personal life. Reflecting on her husband, Wilson. Returning to Wenona, he worked as a waterman in several different jobs over the years. He was a licensed Coast Guard tugboat captain formerly employed by C.J. Langenfelder, as well as working with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources for 12 years. Claiming, her memory isn't that good, however, it is amazing. She tells of the time her husband working on the water, he and his brother Roger, were hit by a torpedo near Piney Point, the Navy's

testing station. While the torpedo had no explosive charge, the boat sank in waist deep water, and that event serves as a stark reminder of the potential danger of working on the water. Memories such as Miss Alverda shared, are often overlooked or lost in dusty archives. But for Miss Alverda, she lived the event, and as she shared her experience, it's a reminder of how decisions made by people far from the Bay and our island impact our lives.



Never one to be doing nothing, when she was fifty-five Miss Alverda began working at Deer's Head Hospital, a job she held for eleven years. Over the years, Miss Alverda managed to travel a bit. Once a visit to the World's Fair in Memphis, Tennessee. Another time in 1981, she and Wilson, with her sister, Aileen and her husband James, went to Hawaii. There she saw Don Ho perform, who gave her a kiss and she had her picture taken with him. However, it was Jim Neighbors she thought was the better singer when she saw him perform at another nightclub. Miss Alverda knows how to have fun.

However, a fan, as she says; "I love the Orioles." It was the visits to see her team at Spring Training in 2014, 2015, and 2016, with her girls which she recalls so fondly. She was even invited into the club house. And had her picture taken with Pat Sejack.



Miss Alverda has a number of hobbies; playing Bingo, doing puzzles, especially ones based on words and numbers that challenge the mind. And she and her husband enjoyed playing cards games, but both were a bit competitive, keeping score of who won. She loved cooking dinners for the family and baking cakes for people.



As she reflects on her life, she remembers losing her mom after an accident, falling off a stoop. And that Wilson's mother died in their house. And when the time came, she

cared for both her father and Wilson's. In 2010 her husband passed away and in 2021, she lost her daughter Helen to cancer. Yet, she still maintains that she's had a good life. Yet her faith keeps her strong. As she says: "Thank the Lord, I had a normal life. The Lord has been good to me." And, maybe a bit of right living, noting she; "I never drank or smoked. That kept me a normal person." But it is her caring for her family, her friends, and the Lord that reveal her as far from normal, rather amazing, esteemed, and the best example that any of us might aspire to. Indeed, our community reaps the benefits of Miss Alverda, she embodies accumulated experiences of what has happened over the last 100 years and with that comes wisdom, quite witty, kind, and admirable. May we all celebrate her recent birthday and may we all have the grace and fortitude she possesses.



COMMUNITY NEWS

AARP TRIP

Upper Somerset AARP presents



Miracle on 34<sup>th</sup> Street  
December 13, 2023

Cost is \$132, due when you sign up. Checks are not deposited until trip is confirmed. The cost includes the 2023 Christmas show at Toby’s Dinner Theatre in Columbia, MD, bus transportation, buffet lunch and driver tip. Pick up at Ollie’s in Salisbury at 7:30am. Expected return approx. 6 pm. All checks payable to **Upper Somerset AARP**. Mail to Sharon Malone 13371 Oyster House RD, Princess Anne, MD 21853. Questions? Call Sharon Malone 410-621-0091 H or 410-726-1049 C. [swmalone@comcast.net](mailto:swmalone@comcast.net)

NEWSLETTER INFO

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION



Somerset County 4-H  
30730 Park Dr  
Princess Anne, MD 21853  
410-651-3973

LOOK!

Deal Island 4-H Afterschool Program!

**Who:** Students from Deal Island ages 5 to 18

**What:** “A Taste of 4-H”

**When:** Thursdays from April 27 through June 1 after school until 5:30pm (for 6 weeks)

**Where:** Rock Creek Church

**Why:** To introduce families to 4-H and start a club in Deal Island if there is interest

**How:** Youth will be travel by bus from Deal Island School and are to be picked up by their families by 5:30pm

For more information, please contact:

Jennifer Howell

410-430-3647 [jhowell@umd.edu](mailto:jhowell@umd.edu)

NEWSLETTER INFO

Do you have an activity you want to promote? Would you like to write an article about a cultural, current, or historical event? Would you like to share a favorite recipe? Please email [skipjackcommunitynews@gmail.com](mailto:skipjackcommunitynews@gmail.com) to contribute and if you would like to be added to the email distribution list for our community newsletter.





Rock Creek Church  
23580 Deal Island Road  
Chance, Maryland

\$5 PER PARTICIPANT

# LUFFA SOAP

WITH  
SHELLEY ZIMMERMAN

May 13, 2023  
10a-1p

PLEASE SIGN UP AT  
SOCOARTS.ORG



Contact Carrie Day at 443-614-9926 for help with signing up.

## Somerset County Public Schools 2023 Elementary Summer School Program

**Locations:**

- Princess Anne Elementary School  
(Current students in PreK3-1st Grade)
- Greenwood Elementary School  
(Current students in 2nd-5th Grade)
- Woodson Elementary School  
(Current PreK3-5th Grade)
- DIS students will attend PAES or GES depending on grade level.



Access the summer school application in the PowerSchool Portal or scan the QR code below.

**Hours:** 8:30-1:30

**Dates:** June 26th-July 27th

Monday-Thursday (No Fridays)

**Closed:** July 4th

Free transportation, breakfast and lunch daily!



### SKIPJACK FESTIVAL HELP NEEDED

Planning for the 2023 Skipjack Festival has started. The festival will be held on Sunday, Sept. 3- Monday, Sept. 4. We are actively looking for volunteers to be the Chair (lead) of the following areas: Festival Coordinator, and Silent Auction. Outgoing chairs will be available to advise. If interested, please reach out!



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### FREE LIBRARY BOOKS



Take one, leave one. Check out the Little Free Library outside the Fire House!





SKIPJACK RUN 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

September 9, 2023 7:30am 5K or 10K

Professional chip timing by TCR Event Management. 100% of proceeds support Deal Island Community Thanksgiving Dinner on Thanksgiving Day. Awesome refreshments (got chocolate milk?) Raffles & unique trophies. Race day registration. Simultaneous start for 5K and 10K. Overall Male + Female / Masters Male + Female (over 40) / Age Groups (Male + Female). Long sleeve cotton-feel Tech Tee - first 100 registrations. Multiple water stops. Walkers, jogging strollers & well-mannered canines with leashes welcome. No rain date or refunds. EMT assistance available. See you there! Online registration: <https://runsignup.com/Race/MD/DealIsland/SkipjackRunDealIsland>



**MARYLAND FOOD BANK**  
UNTIL FLINGER ENDS.

Free Food  
Free Resources  
Delivering Hope to Our Neighbors

**SHOP the TRUCK!**

The Maryland Food Bank Eastern Shore's **MOBILE MARKET** is visiting!  
We're inviting ALL to receive healthy foods and resources.  
Hop on board and shop the truck, fresh groceries and dry goods will be offered.

**MONDAY May 1st**  
**11:00pm – 2:00pm (or until done)**  
Deal Island Volunteer Fire Department  
10090 Deal Island Road, Deal Island MD 21821



### CRAB AND SEAFOOD RAFFLE

The Deal Island/Chance Volunteer Fire Company Auxiliary is sponsoring a Crab and Seafood Feast Raffle!



\$10.00 per ticket.

Tickets can be purchased at both the May and June breakfasts OR from an auxiliary member. Drawing July 29, 2023 at Deal Island Firehouse Breakfast at 9 am.

The winner will receive the following:  
Bushel #1 Crabs - 5lbs of Shrimp - Box of Frozen Prime Softshell crabs - 2 dozen ears of corn - Smith Island Cake - Conrads JO Blend of Seafood Seasoning - and Gift Certificates from Food Lion and Walmart. Proceeds to go towards kitchen improvements.

The Deal Island/Chance VFC Auxiliary would like to thank all who purchased geraniums!



### YARD SALE

St. John's Indoor Yard Sale  
Saturday, May 6th from 7:30 am to 2 pm  
Hot dogs, chips and baked goods.  
Lots of bargains to be had!  
Donations of gently used and/or new items accepted.



### AREA CHURCH SERVICES

Church Services for St. John's for the month of May will be at St. Paul's in Wenona at 10 am. Children's Sunday school in the social hall.

Seven area churches combine for First Sunday Church at the Bay 10:00 am at the Deal Island Harbor.

SENIOR BINGO PHOTOS

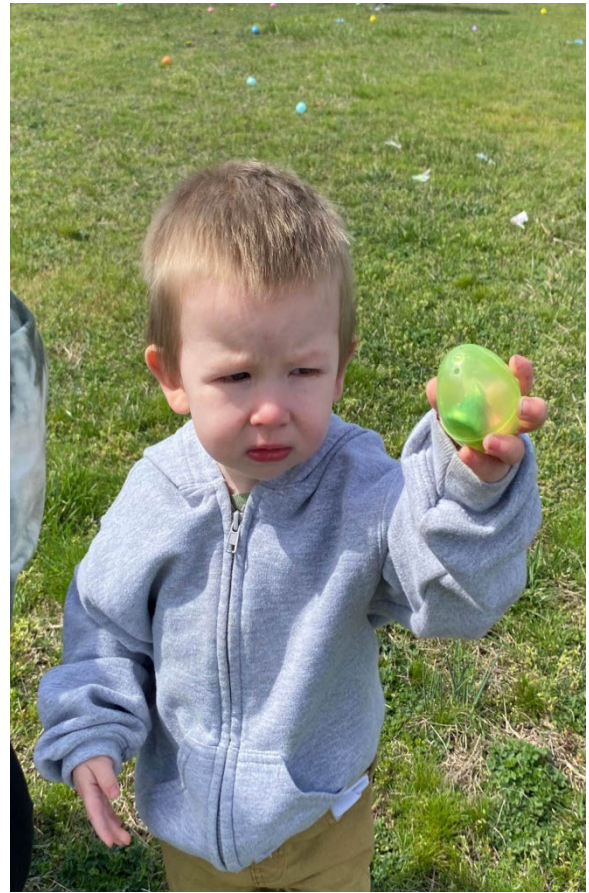


EASTER EGG HUNT PHOTOS

An eggceptional time was had by all!







## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

5/1, 11 am-2 pm	Maryland Food Bank Mobile Market at Fire Department
5/4,11,18,25, 3:45-5:30 pm	4H after school program at Rock Creek Church
5/6, 7:30 am-2 pm	St. John's Indoor Yard Sale
5/8- 5/12	Teacher Appreciation Week at Deal Island School
5/13, 10 am-1 pm	Luffa Soap Workshop at Rock Creek Church Hall
5/27, 7 am-10 am	Auxiliary Breakfast at Fire Department
6/2	Deadline for Summer School Registration
6/3, 7:30 am-2 pm	St. John's Indoor Yard Sale
6/17, 10 am-1pm	Wreath making class at Rock Creek Church Hall
6/26- 7/27	Summer School
7/6	Wicomico AARP trip to see Grease
7/22, 5 pm	Senior Bingo at Fire Department- doors open at 4 pm
7/29, 7 am- 10 am	Auxiliary Breakfast at Fire Department, Seafood Raffle Drawing
8/26	Senior Carnival on Thomas Price Rd. (more info to come)
9/3-9/4	Skipjack Festival
9/9, 7:30 am	Skipjack Run 10 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary
9/10-9/16	Somerset AARP trip to Vermont
11/11, 10 am- 1 pm	Christmas Cookie Decorating Workshop
11/25	Miracle of Christmas Lancaster bus trip
12/09, 10am – 1 pm	Sea Glass Christmas Trees Workshop
12/13	Somerset AARP trip to Toby's Dinner Theater in Columbia, MD