

Woodsboro - Walkersville NEWS-JOURNAL

VOLUME 4, NO. 3

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

MARCH 2024

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Woodsboro VFC Recognizes Donnie Shaffer

On February 17, members of the Woodsboro Volunteer Fire Company gathered in fellowship to recognize members who have gone above and beyond to serve the community of Woodsboro of Woodsboro.

Members of the Company spent the evening reminiscing about the days of old. Earl Powell, 81, reflected upon his 61 years with the fire company, recounting in detail the harrowing night he and a fellow firefighter fell through a porch roof when the beam supporting the roof gave way. "Once we realized we were OK, we got up and went back to fighting the fire."

When asked about his most memorable and happiest memory, Powell didn't hesitate. His answer, "delivering babies," drew smiling head nods from all the surrounding firemen. "I love being a fireman," Powell said.

The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the President's Award to Donnie Shaffer. Shaffer, a 16-year member of the Company, was recognized for his continued

and dedicated service in supporting all the fundraising activities of the Woodsboro Volunteer Fire Company.

In presenting the award to a thoroughly surprised Shaffer, President Bob Lind said that Shaffer could always be counted on to lend a hand be it commanding the kitchen during the monthly meetings to stepping forward to repair broken items around the fire hall. His presence, Lind said, was invaluable to ensuring the smooth day-to-day operation of the Company.

Shaffer, who grew up in Thurmont but now resides in Frederick, said he joined the Company at his mother's suggestion after the passing of the Company's former cook 18 years ago. "My mother, who was a member of the Company, knew I liked to cook, and asked if I could help out for a little while after the prior cook died. That 'little while' turned into years, years that I have thoroughly enjoyed," said Shaffer.

"I've never served as a firefighter," Shaffer said. "Instead, I've focused my 16 years on the support side of



President Bob Lind presents Donnie Shaffer with this year's President's Award.

the house. When I joined, I initially served in the Women's Auxiliary, as the Auxiliary handled the affairs of the kitchen. But as the membership of the Company has decreased, the traditional division of labor has gone by the wayside." The Auxiliary was disbanded several years ago.

Company Treasurer Jim Writer said Shaffer's recognition was well deserved. Writer described Shaffer as a person akin to oil in an engine. "Shaffer keeps everything running smoothly. You just know that if he is working on it, it's going to get done right, on time, the first time."

Chief Lind took the opportunity to thank the members of the

Company for their continued support. "Your support is critical to the continued success of the Company. Be it supporting bingo and any of the other public education events we do, the financial contributions that resulted from these efforts allow us to keep our vehicles in a constant state of readiness, and the people that man them some of the most equipped and qualified in the County. For that, I thank you from the bottom of my heart."

President Lind also recognized the loss of three of the Company members last year, Naomi Williams, Gloria Gladhill and past president Sue Mosholder.

Comprehensive Plan promotes slow growth

In January, the Planning Commission voted 6-1 to approve the draft of the Comprehensive Plan and sent it to the Burgess and Commissioners for final approval.

The Comprehensive Plan is a long-term project, having been on the Commission's agenda multiple times over the last year. It is defined on the Walkersville website as "an official document that provides direction for public decisions regarding land use, development, zoning, infrastructure, transportation, water resources, community facilities and services, capital improvements and municipal growth." It is reviewed and updated, if necessary, every 10 years and lasts for 20 years.

The Plan includes land-use maps reflecting existing development and plans for new development, recommended changes to the zoning map, zoning ordinance, and other parts of the Town Code, and road improvement recommendations and community facility recommendations, including proposals for future parks. All the maps are available to view on the Town's website.

One map specifically emphasized the Town's desire to establish a permanent agricultural buffer between the Town, surrounding municipalities, and growth areas in the future. Properties sur-

rounding the Town are designated as an agricultural buffer on the Plan map. The agricultural buffer accounts for 4,220 acres on the Plan, which is over half of the area on the Plan map.

One map shows proposed connector roads: one through the Staley property and the realignment of Dublin Road and Fountain Rock Road. The railroad is shown as a future bike path and the Commission also discussed a connection between Utica Park and the Rail Trail that will be discussed at a future meeting.

The Plan focuses on slow growth after years of heavy development, including the Bell and Grant properties as well as the townhouses at Longley Green. Some zoning remains available for industrial growth and a smaller amount for commercial development.

The Plan is dependent on the development of the Staley property. The 110-acre farm should provide the same amount of growth over the next 20 years as the last 10 years have seen.

Another property considered over and over in the past for residential development is the Stone property. Member Richard Brady said the property had been zoned for mixed use or low density resi-

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LAND USE DESIGNATIONS		
TOWN BOUNDARY	INSTITUTIONAL	NEIGHBORHOOD OPEN SPACE (NON)
AREA OF PLANNING INFLUENCE	PARK	NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS
2023 FEMA FLOODPLAIN	LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL	GENERAL COMMERCIAL
AGRICULTURAL / RURAL	MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL	OFFICE COMMERCIAL
ROADWAY RIGHT OF WAY	HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL	LIMITED INDUSTRIAL
AGRICULTURAL BUFFER	OLD TOWN	

After months of work the Walkersville Comprehensive Plan is now in the hands of the Town Council

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WOODSBORO NEWS

On-line payment process canceled

As a result of changes in banking fees and lack of use by the public, the Town Council voted unanimously to cancel the ability of residents to pay their water/sewer payments on-line via a button on the Town's website and cancel the yearly contract with the credit card processing company that handled the payments.

The ability of residents to pay on-line, an option several residents had asked for, was part of the much anticipated rollout of the new, state of the art remote meter reading system that was implemented in September of last year.

Town staff informed Burgess Heath Barnes and the Council that they had been notified by the credit card processing company that processes the water/sewer payments on-line for the Town that they are changing the allowable process used by the Town to "recoup" the cost of processing credit cards.

The town pays the credit card processor a flat rate of \$1,440 a year for

an unlimited number of "swipes." Based upon the initial assumption that 25% of the Town's residents would opt to pay their water bills on-line, the Town set the on-line payment fee at a flat rate of \$3.

The credit card processor however, has notified the Town that they will no longer allow the Town to set a flat rate, but instead, that the Town must charge 3% of the total payment. So, residents with a \$300 quarterly water bill using the on-line payment option could find their bills increased by \$9 just to pay on-line.

"We were hoping at least to recoup that \$1,440 with the \$3 fee tacked onto the water bills of people paying on-line. But so far in this most recent billing cycle, only 15 residents have used the on-line payment option, resulting in a collection of only \$45 in on-line fees, far short of what was needed to cover the yearly \$1,440.

"So even before the credit card company changed to a percentage rate charge, the Town was losing money by accepting payments

on-line; with this additional charge, even fewer people will opt to pay on-line, so the Town's losses will only increase," said Town staff.

Commissioner Cutshall noted that for years, "the Town never had any problem with residents dropping payments into the mail or swinging by the office. Residents can always set up an automatic payment at their bank that will cost the Town nothing. People are going out of their way to try to avoid paying fees, and I can't see anyone opting to pay an additional \$15 to \$20 on their water bill when they can simply mail it to us for the price of a simple stamp."

Staff noted that they process envelopes with checks for payments almost daily from residents. "Every dollar in them is going into the Town's account, not to some credit card processing company."

Barnes, shook his head, noting the Town "was in no position to be needlessly losing money. Every penny counts."

Town Hall plan being redrawn

"We had a great meeting with the builder and architect, and we were able to scrub the original plans down to get us closer to what we can afford," Burgess Heath Barnes told the Town Council on what is now a monthly update on the new Town Hall. "The architect has taken everything we have told him and is basically redrawing the plans.

When the Town began the process several years back to build the Town's first Town Hall, the Town was prepared to spend \$800,000. That estimate, however, was blown out of the water when the bids came in, the low-

est bid being \$1.6 million. As a result, Barnes and the Council have been actively reevaluating what amenities are needed to create the type of Town Hall they envisioned while reducing the price tag down to a level the Town can afford.

Barnes noted that the builder and architect had recommended several major cost savings that will help get the total down to its \$1.1 million goal.

Besides eliminating the basement and attic, which will shave at least \$200K off the projected cost, the Town was able to eliminate the front handicap ramp, for a savings of \$70,000 (handicapped residents will be able to

access the Town Hall via the Hall's back door). "We also saved a boatload of money by reducing the ceiling heights from 9 to 8 feet. And we replaced the planned flooring, which, while beautiful, was very expensive, with much more durable flooring. Someday down the road, the Town can always replace it, but the flooring we chose still looks nice, and, more importantly, will better withstand day-to-day use."

"We also saved a big chunk of money by simply changing out things like light fixtures. The bottom line is," Barnes said, "I think we'll get the price tag down to where we can afford it."

Union Bridge News Briefs...

At its February workshop meeting, the Union Bridge Town Council discussed housekeeping items and community news.

According to Town Councilman Bret Grossnickle who is responsible for the

town's water and sewer systems, Union Bridge water department will soon be investigating for lead service lines.

Through an unfunded mandate from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), municipalities

are required to identify and verify lines, what material it is, and when it was put into service. Every property must be verified and checked for lead service lines as part of the mandate, he said.

Homeowners will be asked to look at the water pipes coming into their house, take a picture of it and stick a magnet on it. "If it sticks to it its galvanized, if it doesn't stick to it, it is either lead or copper," Grossnickle said, noting homeowners will be able to distinguish the difference between lead, copper and even plastic lines.

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Barnes also told the Council that the Town didn't have to wait until the Town Hall was complete to "draw" from the \$400K grant the Town has been given by the State for the Hall. "As soon as we have \$400K in bills, we can submit them to the State and they will reimburse us. We don't have to wait until the Hall is completed."

Commissioner Cutshall said that would greatly ease the ability of the Town to finance the Hall using "cash flow." "We can tap into the General Fund as planned, but will not have to draw it down that much or for that

long," he said. "That way, if anything critical comes up somewhere else in the Town where money is needed, we be able to handle it."

Barnes said his only concern/regret is the lack of movement on the interest rate front. "I was hoping that interest rates would be dropping, which would reduce the cost of the loan we will have to eventually take out this year, but it doesn't look like that is going to happen before we have to lock in on the construction loan. But the ability to draw early on the state grant money more than makes up for that."

"I doubt seriously if we'll find any lead service lines," he said.

The department does not even have to evaluate any houses built after 1986, as that is when the Carroll County plumbing code was changed to forbid lead as a water service line, he said.

"Unfortunately, we have very few homes that were built that late," he said. Still, Grossnickle was confident the town wouldn't find lead lines.

The Sewer System Evaluation and Rehabilitation Program will also be assisting the town with the project. This program helps municipalities identify and address structural and

mechanical deficiencies in the wastewater collection system and to ensure adequate system capacity.

With residents' assistance, the water department can then send the collected data and recording of service lines off to the MDE, he said.

The more cooperation from the community the easier and quicker the process will go, Grossnickle said. The mandate requires completed evaluation of municipality systems by October 2024.

The town is in the process of collaborating talking points to help make residents aware and encourage questions. More information is expected to be presented at a later date.

In other news, Mayor Perry Jones informed the Council that Potomac Edison will be doing major work at the power plant. The work is expected to last approximately three months.

Jones was not sure about the exact extent of the work.

The fire company will be sending official letters not to park in the lot, he said, as the area from Stoner Street halfway down to the parking lot will be fenced in to house equipment and

The fire company is hopeful the work will be done by the time carnival rolls around, Jones said.

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WALKERSVILLE NEWS

Commissioners pass changes to term lengths

Two resolutions to the Town Charter were approved at the February Burgess and Commissioners meeting. Commissioner Betsy Brannen introduced staggering terms for elected officials in January to help alleviate the issue of a full council turnover due to the current practice of electing all its members on the same date and for the same length of time.

Brannen explained that when she ran in 2018, she noticed the stress that a full turnover of the Council and the Burgess could have on the Town staff.

It would also give the incoming council members the chance to learn from already established council members. Brannen said she was still learning about government processes and has been in office since May.

The first resolution she introduced changed the Town Charter to increase the terms for each commissioner from three years to four years. This change also lengthens the Burgess' term from a three-year term to a four-year term. With this change, the election day will also be changed from the second

Monday every three years to the second Monday every two years. Polls will return to being open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., because in 2023's special election to fill a vacant commissioner seat, they were changed to 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

The second resolution specifically impacts the upcoming 2024 elections and staggers the terms. The elected Burgess will hold a four-year term expiring in 2028 and the two commissioners with the highest vote count will serve four-year terms also expiring in 2028. The three commissioners

with the lowest votes will serve terms of two years that will expire in 2026. Currently both the Burgess and the commissioners serve three-year terms which will change to four-year terms indefinitely with the new resolutions.

Elections will be held every two years, as opposed to the typical three years, until the new code is back on track in 2026. This change will create the desired staggered effect of commissioners beginning their terms every two years and holding office for four years. Middletown and Thurmont both

have the same schedule of staggered elections for their commissioners' terms. Emmitsburg, Woodsboro and Taneytown hold an election every year in which at least one commissioner is put up for re-election so there is always a changeover in their Town Council's makeup.

Both resolutions passed with the required minimum of three votes from Commissioners Tom Gilbert, Mary Ann Ennis and Betsy Brannen. Commissioner Gary Baker and Commissioner Mike McNish were not present. A public hearing to review the changes to the Town Code will be planned for March.

Updates on Public Works projects

Director of Public Works Joseph Birch updated the Burgess and Commissioners on the status of multiple projects in town.

The Green Street project is waiting on bids from Wilson T. Ballard, an engineering and consulting firm specializing in the planning and design of public works projects. Last spring a brief investigation of a portion of cracked asphalt about 40 feet from Maple Avenue on Green Street showed a breach to the storm drain underneath. The town hired a company to send a camera into

the drain along Green Street from Fulton Street to Maple Avenue to inspect the 50-year-old galvanized pipes and found them to be severely deteriorated.

Last year Town Planner Sean Williams explained that an estimate of \$25,482 would patch the breach on George Street. However, in 2020 the Town had a stormwater survey done and the conclusion was that everything from the Colony Village to George Street would need to be replaced at an estimated cost of \$1,951,982 million.

The town is waiting for updated bids from Wilson T. Ballard before deciding on their next steps.

The Department of Public Works has been upgrading the town's water meters in the Automatic Meter Reading project. The new technology automatically collects data pertaining to consumption, diagnostic and meter status without needing a physical presence to collect it. The data will be used for billing, troubleshooting, and analyzing the meters for town staff as well as customers via a special portal.

DPW Staff are going door to door to talk to residents about upgrading their meters. An estimated 1500 water meters throughout the town will require the upgrade. Glade Manor 1 and 2 have just finished their first round of upgrades totaling 50 meters and Glade Towne will be next, followed by Old Town, Westfield, Colony Village and Fountain Rock Manor in no particular order. DPW will be utilizing the town website and Facebook page to communicate the development they are working in.

Recently Commissioner Gary Baker and Town Planner Sean Wil-

liams attended a meeting to kick off a feasibility study surrounding the construction of a micro sewer plant. The plant would treat discharged water coming from the water plant. Currently Walkersville pays Frederick County an expensive sewer discharge fee and this project would help in reducing that expense. A few years ago, when the town was awarded ARPA funds the concept of a micro sewer plant was discussed but no action was taken. This was also before the construction of the new water plant. Currently only a feasibility study will be done to determine if the project is needed.

Comprehensive plan promotes slow growth

continued from page 1

dential at one time but was rezoned agricultural. "I think from a planning standpoint, the Stone property should be actively considered in some form for low-density residential development."

Chair David Ennis pointed out that multiple motions have failed three or four times already. Member Russ Winch objected to Brady's motion saying, "This is vote shopping. We keep voting over and over again, trying to get a result that no one wants."

Vice-Chair Mike Kuster was adamant in his vote against developing the Stone property stating he felt the roads and the schools would not be able to handle the additional numbers. "If we look at the school system, our APFO will not allow development until we are back here writing the next Plan in a decade." APFO, or Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, is a tool used to manage growth by analyzing a development's impact on public infrastructure. "We are being inundated by development north of us as it is," he said.

Commissioner Liaison Gary Baker concurred with Kuster that the Stone property is the wrong location for development. "There's too much going on in that area and that specific property is in the wrong spot," he said.

Winch, who is adamantly against adding any development, explained that schools should not be a consideration for adding development. "We cannot put in thousands of acres of housing so the Board of Education can decide to add a new school to the budget 20 years from now because there isn't funding available now. I understand your concerns, but it doesn't happen that quickly."

He described a thriving community of vibrant farmland and residents loudly proclaiming they do not want any more growth.

Member Jeremy Peterson has been opposed to the development of the Stone property in the past, however this time he was on the fence. He asked if putting the property on the Plan guaranteed its development. "If we vote yes to this, we are giving the elected commissioners a chance to say yes or no to it. But if we say no, we are not giving them an opportunity at all," he said.

Member Nathan Shatto felt it would be shortsighted to not consider some development on that property.

Ennis added that the Plan is a 10-20 year Plan and nothing would happen overnight, pointing out that there are APFOs in zoning to prevent development if the school system is overcrowded and there will be sewer and traffic APFOs added to the current Plan as well. "A lot of the farmland outside of the town limits is in easements right now, so there really isn't a lot of development potential available," he said.

Brady's motion to add the Stone property for development was not

approved by a 3-4 vote.

Ennis also spoke of the City of Frederick's recent review of how to spend impact fees to support local schools. Impact fees are fees paid by developers for infrastructure that must be built to accommodate new development. Since a "good portion" of children from northern Frederick attend Walkersville schools, Ennis suggested the Burgess and Commissioners ask the City to apply the fees to Walkersville Elementary, Middle and High Schools.

Vice-Chair Mike Kuster agreed with Ennis that the Burgess and Commissioners should make the request to the City, or to involve the Board of Education, to ascertain the funds for upgrades to Walkersville schools.

Ennis also asked to include in the Plan a prompt to begin looking at zoning requirements for alternative energy production in town. "This would be something we can begin to look into for the next 10 years," he said.

The Plan will be presented to the Burgess and Commissioners for final approval and will also be available for public comment.

Senior Tax Credit Seminar

Qualified homeowners age 65 and over of Walkersville that are interested in learning about the senior tax credit can attend a free seminar on Tuesday March 5 at 10am in the Walkersville Town Hall Meeting Room. The tax credit is 50% of

the net Town tax and is a supplement to the State's Homeowner Tax Credit and County's Senior Tax Credit with appropriate applications completed. There will be a presentation as well as the opportunity to ask questions at the seminar.



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Wed., Mar. 13 - 7 p.m. - Town Meeting
Mon., Mar. 25 - 7 p.m. - EDC Meeting
Tues., Mar. 26 - 7 p.m. - Planning Meeting
Wed., Mar. 27 - 7 p.m. - Town Meeting
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FROM THE DESK OF...

Congressman David Trone

If you ask any Marylander about their childhood, chances are they'll have a story or two about the water. Folks in Western Maryland often talk about their time floating down the Potomac or visiting the C&O Canal and its towpaths. Many on the Eastern Shore talk about fishing on the Choptank or going out boating on the Bay. And almost every Marylander can tell you a story about going 'down the ocean' and spending a few summer days in Ocean City. The same is true of my life.

I caught my first fish on the Choptank River. Funny enough, my Mom was even crowned Miss Choptank back in the day. To me, it was about more than just a fish. It was a memory created alongside my father, who often traveled for work as a salesman for TWA. It was a lesson in patience, determination,

and a little bit of balance to stay in the boat. Most importantly, it was an early reminder of just how much Maryland's waterways — and our environment as a whole — matter to our state.

Our waterways — the Chesapeake Bay, the Potomac River, and the countless other rivers and creeks that make up our beautiful state — are essential not just to our environmental health but to our economic health as well. Thousands of crabbers, fishermen, and long-shoremen rely on the water to make a living and provide for their families. Thousands more visit our beautiful state parks and waterways to relax and make memories, just like I did with my Dad 60 years ago.

Year after year and generation after generation, Marylanders show that our commitment to the environment is not a political issue. It is a defining char-

acteristic of what it means to be a Marylander — a deep respect, admiration, and commitment to protecting our environment. This begs the question, then: if we acknowledge that we care so much about our environment, why haven't we done more to protect it?

When thinking about addressing the risks our environment faces, the simple debate over whether climate change is real is a waste of time. The science is settled: climate change is real, and it is one of the most urgent threats to our future that exists. While there are a handful of very vocal critics and skeptics, a vast majority — 85% — of Americans acknowledge the reality of climate change.

The more likely cause of our failure to act is the same as the reason for much of our gridlock and lack of progress. Our leaders simply aren't willing to

think long-term. This is a symptom of a fundamentally broken system. Some leaders are too focused on winning their next election to care about the next generation. Some are bankrolled by special interests like big oil in order to pay for their inaction. Unfortunately, for many leaders in Washington, both are true.

We need to elect leaders with the courage to put people over politics and put the interests of Marylanders over their own self-interest. 75% of Marylanders support government taking action to protect the environment. This means passing meaningful legislation to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, invest in new green technologies, and create good-paying jobs focused on sustainability and environmental clean-up.

But the responsibility doesn't fall solely on our government leaders. It's on all of us to make a change if we want to combat the deadly effects of climate change that loom ahead of

us. First and foremost, voters need to make this effort a priority and elect leaders who are willing to think long-term and bring new ideas to the table. We also need to all take part in reducing our own personal consumption and promoting responsibility with the way we use our natural resources and manage our waste.

Most importantly, we need to educate the next generation on just how much our environment matters in our state. We can teach our kids about the damage that has been caused throughout our lives and generations before us. We can teach them about sustainability and the role that they can play in the solution. And we can teach them how deeply ingrained our waterways are in our state's culture. If you ask me, the best way to learn this lesson is with a boat, a fishing pole, some bait, and a kid who desperately wants to catch his first fish.

County Councilman Brad Young

The Frederick County Council meets regularly on Tuesday evenings at 5:30 at Winchester Hall. Located at 12 East Church Street in Frederick. All meetings are open to the public.

On January 2, the Frederick County Council approved several Bills. Bill 23-22 establishes a Tax Credit for Daycare Providers, sponsored by Council Member Renee Knapp and

myself. This Bill provides a tax credit to homeowners that designate a portion of their home to a daycare facility. If a homeowner increases the assessed value of their property as a result of additions or improvements in the creation of a designated daycare space, that homeowner is eligible for a property tax credit in the amount of the increased tax. Bills 23-23

and 23-24 Amend the Frederick County Employee and Uniformed Employee Retirement Plan. These Bills, sponsored by me, on behalf of the County Executive, reduces the full vesting period from ten years to five years of eligible service. Full text of these Bills can be found on our website.

On January 23, the Council approved Bill 23-25, Establishing a Residency Requirement for Planning Commission Members. This Bill, sponsored by Council Vice President Kavonté Duckett, requires Planning Commission Members to be residents of Frederick County. Bill 23-26 is similar to Bill 23-26 and Establishes a Residency Requirement for Members of the Board of Appeals. This Bill, sponsored by Council Vice President Kavonté Duckett, requires Board of Appeals Members to be residents of Frederick County. Full text of this legislation can be found on our website.

Upcoming legislation includes Bill 24-01. This Bill, that I am sponsoring on behalf of the County Executive, makes Updates and Additions to the Historic Preservation Ordinance. A Public Hearing for this Bill was held on February 27. Documentation and text for this Bill is linked to our agenda for that evening. All documentation can be found on our website. It will come back to the council for a vote at a future meeting.

One of the most important responsibilities of the County Council is upon us. Under the County Charter, the County Executive must deliver the proposed Fiscal Year 2025 budget to the Council for review, public hearing, and action. This is the funding of all County operations for the next fiscal year. This year's budget will be approaching \$1 billion.

The Council by the Charter only has until May 31, to review, amend, and act on this all-important financial plan. The Council will have a public hear-

ing and we want and need to hear from you. The public hearing is set for Tuesday, April 23, at 7 p.m., at Winchester Hall. Please come out to the hearing, write, or call the Council with your opinion. I want to hear from you!

The Frederick County Council encourages public involvement at every stage of the legislative process. We welcome public comment at every Council meeting on Tuesday evenings. Members of the public are welcome to attend and give comment in person, leave a voicemail to be forwarded to each Council Member, or email us any time at councilmembers@frederickcountymd.gov. Please visit our website at www.frederickcountymd.gov/countycouncil to view our latest agendas, legislation, and upcoming calendar of events.

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



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County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

From the first signs of Spring to the start of Daylight Savings Time, March is full of new beginnings. As we transition from winter to spring this month, I look forward to celebrating Women's History Month with Frederick County Commission for Women's annual Raving About Women event and following the excitement of March Madness. (Go, Mount!)

During my State of the County address, I was excited to announce several developments underway to strengthen our local economy and essential industries. Those programs are now rolling out. In February, we announced our newly created Office of Agriculture, an apprenticeship program in county government, and our plans for sustainable transportation.

Office of Agriculture

I was thrilled to celebrate the launch of Frederick County's first-ever Office of Agriculture last month. We are strengthening support for our rich and essential agriculture industry by combining the County's agriculture land preservation and economic development functions.

Through the creation of the Office of Agriculture, we are

making services easier to access and creating more opportunities for collaboration with our farms and our farmers. We have more young producers than any other county in Maryland, and it is my goal to ensure farming remains an important part of Frederick County's bright future.

I am excited to share that the Office of Agriculture is being led by Katie Stevens, who provides tremendous support to the farming community and is deeply dedicated to its future. Katie leads a team of existing employees to manage our award-winning Agriculture Innovation Grants initiative, the agriculture land preservation programs, and the HomegrownFrederick.com website. One of the first tasks for the new office will be to update the County's Agricultural Strategic Plan, which was last published in 2008. To learn more about the Office of Agriculture, visit FrederickCountyMD.gov/Agriculture.

County Apprenticeship Program

Youth apprenticeships have been part of a national conversation because of the need to build talent pipelines. I am proud that Frederick County Government

has recognized the importance of bringing our youth into county government by creating opportunities with our County-wide youth apprenticeship program.

The program incorporates a diverse range of industries in multiple divisions, with opportunities for students in many of our career pathways. Apprenticeships are being utilized in customer assistance; trades such as carpentry, HVAC, and vehicle repair; and specialized County services. Participating divisions include Public Works, Transit, Animal Control, Procurement and Contracting, Economic Opportunity, Human Resources, Planning and Permitting, Family Services, Water and Sewer Utilities, and Parks and Recreation.

The County's apprenticeship program helps us to meet requirements of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future education reform plan, which emphasizes the importance of college and career readiness. Statewide, apprenticeship programs continue to receive praise for ushering new talent to the job market, affirming the opportunities ahead for Frederick County Government.

The county-wide apprenticeship program presents Frederick

County students the opportunity to serve their community and get paid while refining employment skills.

Sustainable Transportation

As our transportation infrastructure evolves, it is imperative that we accelerate our climate resiliency. During Mobilize Frederick County's Annual Climate Summit, I announced two new initiatives by the Division of Energy and Environment to speed up the use of electric vehicles by the County and the public. The Alternative Fuel Vehicle Fleet Transition Plan for County Government and the Community-wide Electric Vehicle Readiness Plan will guide the County as we transition toward sustainable transportation.

Our goal is to ensure a resilient future for Frederick County's businesses and residents. Transportation accounts for about 48% of all greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change, according to data from across Frederick County. We heard from our Transition Team and from the broader community as part of the Livable Frederick Master Plan that residents want to create more sustainable ways of moving people and goods. These new plans will guide us as we shape our future

transportation system.

The need for action was accentuated when Governor Wes Moore announced that car manufacturers would be required to increase the share of electric vehicles they sell, reaching 100% of passenger car and light truck sales by 2035. By preparing now for a shift to EVs, Frederick County will be well-positioned to leverage federal and state funding to invest in infrastructure and resilience projects.

This work has already begun within Frederick County Government's operations. Staff from across our divisions assessed which county vehicles were suitable for replacement with EVs or adoption of biodiesel. The process examined existing vehicle technology, the kinds of tasks each vehicle performs, and the total cost of vehicle ownership. The resulting Alternative Fuel Vehicle Fleet Transition Plan shows it is possible to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector while lowering long-term fleet costs. To learn more about the Division of Energy and Environment's diverse array of programs and their commitment to balancing social justice, economic growth, and environmental care, please follow their work on Facebook and Instagram @ SustainableFCMD.

Woodsboro Burgess Heath Barnes

Happy March, the first month of Spring has arrived and hopefully, this brings more sunshine and warmth. As they say, March winds and April showers will bring May flowers and I am ready for them, and warmer weather.

I attended the annual Maryland Mayors Conference last month in Annapolis. I always enjoy this conference as we often hear details of how pending legislation in Annapolis will affect us municipalities in either a positive or sometimes not-so-positive way. Last month

we had to change our monthly town meeting to February 20th instead of the typical second Tuesday of the month due to some unforeseen circumstances.

The February 20th meeting was quiet as we are still awaiting the new bid proposal from the town hall builder to see if we can get the bid down to the amount the town can afford easily. We are very confident with some cuts that we have made that we will get it down to the dollar amount we are looking for. We did discuss the next event in town which will be the

annual Easter Egg Hunt that is hosted by the town of Woodsboro and the Woodsboro Volunteer Fire Department which will be held this year on March 30th at 2 in the town park. All children are invited to attend the free community event.

There were some issues with the lights at the basketball and tennis courts as the line was accidentally cut off when the lights for the skating park were installed. They have been repaired and all is working well over there now. Thank you to the Woodsboro Volunteer Fire Department for

adding water to the pond while it was frozen to smooth it out. It was so nice seeing the frozen pond and the sledding hill being used so much this winter with the snowfalls that we have had and the cold temperatures that froze the pond.

As always, I encourage everyone to support Glade Valley Community Services (GVCS) if you have clothes or food donations as they are always in need of items for members of the community. For more information, please contact GVCS by email at gvcs.inc@verizon.net, or call 301-845-0213.

If you have any questions, concerns, complaints, or com-

plaints please feel free to reach out to me at hbarnes@woodsboro.org or by phone at 301-401-7164.

Woodsboro Town meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. In addition, Planning and Zoning meetings are at 6pm on the First Monday of the month as needed. If you have an item for the agenda, it needs to be submitted 14 days before the P&Z meeting. The current location for meetings is the St. Johns United Church of Christ located at 8 N 2nd Street Woodsboro. The public is always invited to attend.



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FROM THE DESK OF CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES

Brenda Thiam (R)

We're a few weeks away from the primary election and our campaign is full speed ahead! Team Thiam is working to connect with voters, hear your concerns, and win this election to get to Congress to champion common sense policies. Though the journey to victory is paved with rocks, broken glass, and other debris, we're up for the work to claim victory as the Republican nominee after the primary election. Then, we're off to the general election in November to be elected as your representative in Congress for District 6. Will you join us to help get us across the finish line? We need many hands to get the work done.

Our current administration and the extreme policies they're

pushing have us in a chokehold with the border crisis, parental rights regarding education, wars in foreign lands, etc. Many have stated they can hardly believe this is where we are today. President Ronald Reagan asked a very important question during the debate of 1980. He asked, "Are you better off today than you were four years ago?" He also asked voters if they felt America was as safe as it was four years prior. We must ask ourselves these same questions today that President Reagan asked Americans to answer.

Many people must admit we were not in this place four years ago. As a special educator, I left the public school system in 2019 after nearly thirteen years.

I spent time working alongside general education teachers in the inclusive classroom to successfully educate students with autism and to ensure they were actively engaged during instruction. Parents trust their child's teacher and the school system to provide research-based instruction that focuses on reading, writing, math, science, and history. Before Covid, parents didn't worry about sensitive topics being addressed in the walls of their child's classroom. Since Covid and experiencing the lockdowns that were forced on us, education has turned upside down on its head and the far-left democrat agenda has taken the lead in classroom discussions, which catapulted education to a place we never imagined we'd be.

Parents must be partners with the teachers and the school sys-

tem to properly educate students and prepare them for life after k-12 education. Schools cannot leave parents in the wind when delicate and sensitive topics are presented in the classroom. Parents should be allowed to opt their child out of sensitive topics such as LGBTQ+ material and literature. In Montgomery County Public Schools, parents fought tooth and nail for their children to opt out of such content. A court issued a decision during the summer of 2023 that struck down a motion for families opting their child out of engaging in literature discussing LGBTQ+. I've been in the classroom and teachers often bring their own "flavor" to content that they're required to teach. This is when things can often go awry when personal beliefs are interjected into instruction.

Teachers must get back to the basics of teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic and let parents deal with pronoun usage, gender-affirming discussions, and other sensitive topics that seem to have monopolized education. Most teachers simply want to teach and go home at the end of the day. They have a sincere desire to invest in a child's education and prepare them for post-secondary outcomes. Help me get to Congress to champion common-sense policies in education, such as protecting parental rights in education. With my experience in education and my doctorate in special education, I have a wealth of knowledge to lend as your next representative and I will work fervently on your behalf. I humbly ask for your vote on May 14th. Go to my website to learn more about me @ brendathiam.com.

Lesley Lopes (D)

The opioid crisis has hit our state hard. The rise in fatalities is primarily driven by fentanyl, which is incredibly potent and was responsible for over 80% of fatal overdoses. Throughout our state, but especially in the 6th Congressional district, we need leadership on all levels of government to mitigate harm, reduce deaths, and hold those distributing these deadly drugs accountable.

As someone from a family with a history of addiction and over-

dose, I know the pain of losing loved ones to overdose fatalities and experienced the long good-byes of slowly seeing a family member get lost in their addiction. That personal experience guides my work as a legislator, where I've prioritized treatment for substance users and gone after high-level drug traffickers who have created the illegal pipeline for drugs in our communities.

This session in Annapolis, I've introduced several pieces of leg-

islation intended to address the urgent crisis. The first is a change to our criminal law that will allow law enforcement to more easily target drug traffickers. Currently, our criminal penalties for money laundering requires evidence of proceeds of at least \$10,000 and illegal drugs. HB797, which I'm proud to introduce with broad bipartisan support, would allow for easier prosecution of fentanyl dealers. It gives law enforcement and prosecutors special powers to charge drug dealers under that \$10,000 proceed limit with misdemeanor penalties if they are trafficking in fentanyl or similar products. It would also update Maryland's money laundering statute to allow for non-drug related crimes to be prosecuted if the proceeds exceed \$10,000 - not only stopping opioids but strengthening prosecution of

other large scale criminal operations including human trafficking and financial crimes.

I am also proud to be leading on harm-reduction strategies. We know that addiction is a devastating disease, and we would like to help those suffering to get the support they need and reduce death. Our state has already led on numerous harm reduction strategies, including making naloxone (also known as Narcan) more available. My bill HB1094 would continue this harm reduction work, allowing for testing strips to be available everywhere you can pick up Narcan. In this tough budget season, we can fund this program by using the money that big pharmaceutical companies were forced to pay our state in the Opioid Restitution Fund. The opioid crisis continues to adapt as the landscape changes, and it is imperative

that we continue to adapt with it. Funding new strategies to prevent death is a vital part of this effort.

Our community health workers and first responders have been faced with a crisis that continues to take away our friends and family, even as new strategies and response tools are developed. I've been working with lawmakers from every corner of Maryland who have seen the devastating consequences of fentanyl and opioids on our communities. However, to truly address the crisis, we need to do more. We need continued cooperation on all levels of government to ensure that those on the ground have the support they need to eliminate opioid overdoses. I've been proud to work with my colleagues, and with advocates and law enforcement across the state, to find solutions to this challenge, but the work is far from over.

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FROM THE DESK OF SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES

Celia Reidler

With more than 25 years of public school teaching experience and having raised three children who attended Frederick County public schools, long-time county resident Cecelia Reidler wants to put her knowledge of the education system to work in support of the changing academic and social needs of Frederick County students.

"I am committed to closing the achievement gap among all our students," said Reidler, who recently launched her campaign to be elected to the Frederick County Public Schools Board of Education. "Closing the achievement gap means that all students demonstrate academic progress throughout their school career.

"Frederick County has an increasingly diverse student population, and

it is essential to foster a school culture where all students are served," Reidler explained. "The achievement gap is the difference between the academic performance of different social and economic student groups."

According to Reidler, the Maryland State Department of Education designed a School Report Card that measures every child's growth in math, reading, language arts, English Language proficiency and the sciences. These report cards help ensure that all children are being served and are making academic progress. "We want all of our children to be prepared to succeed in college and a career regardless of race and family income," said Reidler.

As both a classroom teacher and a department head, she fostered equity,

inclusion and excellence in teaching and as a department head challenged all educators she worked with to do the same. The Maryland Blueprint for Education, a world-class piece of legislation passed in 2021, serves as a master plan for administrators, teachers, staff and board members to ensure that all children have an excellent education. "I am excited to be part of this innovative initiative for Frederick County," said Reidler.

"I have taught for many years on the front lines of our public schools, working with both students, teachers, administrators and parents alike," said Reidler. She believes this firsthand experience will serve her well on the Board of Education as it navigates the many opportunities and decisions that lie ahead, especially with the implementation of the Maryland Blueprint for Education and all future

Board decisions and issues.

"There is always room for improvement, but Frederick County Schools are doing well and will continue to improve with dedicated teachers, administrators, staff and board members," Reidler said. "I would love to be part of a premier school system and contribute in a different way from what I did as a teacher. I believe in public education, and I believe in the potential of all children to grow and achieve."

Reidler has been a teacher in Frederick, Howard and Montgomery Counties, giving her a wide range of experience with different school systems and diverse student and parent populations. "I understand that truth and transparency are critical to attaining the best outcomes and a working relationship with all the stakeholders in a school system," said Reidler. "I would

include more community listening sessions and also go to the schools to hear from school personnel. Parents, teachers, administrators and staff are all partners in our children's education."

Reidler has received numerous awards during her teaching career, including the U.S. Dept. of Education Green Ribbon award, a Montgomery County service award, and acclaim by having her students reach the Science Olympiad as State Finalist. She has a B.A. and M.S. and holds additional teaching and leadership certificates. Her volunteer activities include Be Smart For Kids, St. Katherine Drexel, the Frederick Police Department Chief's Community Advisory Board, and Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America.

For more information, visit www.celiareidler.com.

Jaime Brennan

My name is Jaime Brennan, and I'm running as a common sense conservative for Board of Education. I'm a Certified Public Accountant with 22 years of experience and served on the Board of Directors of the Frederick Classical Charter School, the #1 charter elementary school in Maryland, according to US News and World Report and Niche.com.

FCPS has a total budget of almost \$1 billion per year, and I aim to use my experience to help get more money to teachers and into classrooms. If we're being honest, we need to acknowledge our schools are struggling. Despite nearly \$1 billion in

spending, student achievement has declined for years.

Imagine a class of 20 tenth graders. One of them could be yours. Only one in twenty are proficient in both math and English. The other 19 will have limited opportunities with such limited skills. Even in lower grade levels, only roughly half our students or less are proficient.

Being asked to take on duties that fall far outside of teaching, educators are increasingly frustrated and overwhelmed and must respond to an epidemic of mental illness among students. These kids aren't statistics. They are our sons and daughters. We must ask the question: Is this the best our

schools can do to equip our children for the future?

Imagine a school system with higher standards and a healthier environment—a school system in which students were excited to attend and teachers were empowered to do what they do best. Imagine if Frederick County's public schools collaborated with parents, students, teachers, and the entire community to rally around a mission to make our schools truly world class. That's exactly what I want to accomplish if elected.

What does it mean to be world class? Take our best math students, those in the top 14%. If they went to school in Singapore, they'd be considered average there. Becoming world-class is possible. It has been done

before. Singapore wasn't always world class. They worked for it. We can do the hard work, too, not just in math but in all subjects.

I'm proposing that FCPS adopt a simpler, more rigorous curriculum, one that emphasizes the academic fundamentals of reading, writing, and mathematics. A simpler, more focused curriculum means students can achieve mastery and meet higher standards. We need to use proven programs in every subject, such as scientifically based reading instruction.

I believe our teacher salaries could be the highest in the state, but only if we pursue a fiscally responsible path that gets more money to teachers and classrooms.

Less than half of our staff are teachers. Over the last four years, FCPS over-hired relative to enrollment, increasing central office by 37% at a time when enrollment only increased 7.7%. FCPS hired over 1,100 full time equivalent positions, yet class sizes have not decreased. This misallocated hiring reduced the money available for raises, which I will prioritize.

In this short article, I can't cover all of my platform, but want to thank the Emmitsburg-Thurmont News-Journal and the Woodsboro-Walkersville News-Journal for giving me the opportunity to introduce myself to you through a series of articles starting now and continuing up until the primary election on May 14th.



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COMMENTARY

The Bulwark

How Biden can defuse the age problem

Jonathan Last

My title probably oversells it: Biden can't defuse the political problems his age creates for him. But he can mitigate them. We'll talk about morality and justice and all of that in a minute—and also about whether or not Biden should pull out of the race.

But first I want to lay out the strategy Biden's team should be using. It has three components:

- Hang a lantern on his age.
- Make it relatable.
- Put it in context.

Contra the conventional wisdom, I think Biden's hasty press conference last Thursday was a good idea that was executed fairly well. It's important that Biden takes ownership of "elderly."

In fact, I'd have him go further. He ought to mention it every time he speaks in public. He ought to joke about it. He should have a handful of stock lines ready at all times: People talk about life before the internet? I remember what it was like before we had electricity!

The cornier the better.

Biden should set the expectation that he's going to have senior moments in every appearance. Hell—he should flub things on

purpose sometimes and then wink at the audience and razz them if they don't catch it.

If we've learned anything from the Trump years, it's that one problem is a tragedy, but a thousand problems are just white noise. So don't be defensive about the age and don't complain about the media fixating on it.¹ Lean all the way in. Make it a part of the candidate's identity.

Next: Make it relatable.

Nick Grossman mentioned this today and it ought to be said constantly: We all get mixed up. I call my kids by the wrong names probably a dozen times a day. When I go to the pharmacy to pick up a prescription for one of them and have to give their birthdate, I always get the month and day right. But the year? I have to stop and think about that every damn time.

Sitting here typing I could not even tell you without looking it up what year we started The Bulwark. I think it was 2018, but it could have been 2019.

Our brains are set up to have amazing recall and processing speed that generally peaks in our 20s and declines every year after. It is not an accident that Einstein did his most important work at age 26.

Finally, there's the context: We don't choose our leaders based on recall and processing speed.

What does it mean to grow old? It means that you're not as quick on your feet as you used to be. Old people, in general, don't want to get dragged into real-time debates with 45-year-olds. The synapses don't fire as quickly; the gift of gab wanes. You very rarely look at an old guy and think, "That dude is slick."

But slick isn't what we want in our leaders. We want wisdom.

There is a reason that we have a minimum age for voting in this country and not a maximum age—it's because we don't trust young people, with all of their rapid recall memory and synaptic lightning, to be wise enough to vote.

By the same token, we don't have a maximum voting age, because we recognize that the losses elderly people experience in the ability to rapidly process are over-balanced by the accumulated wisdom of years and experience.

Especially in a president, we value wisdom over speed.

And Joe Biden has demonstrated the power of wisdom throughout his term. It allowed him to reach deals with Republicans in Congress. It led him to focus like a laser on the economy and get America back on its feet.

It was wisdom that let Biden understand the stakes in Ukraine and wisdom that helped him navigate the maintenance of our alliance against Vladimir Putin. It is wisdom that allows Biden to see the incalculable benefits America receives from leading the global order.

Just as it was wisdom that made Biden cooperate with the special counsel and respect the rule of law.

President Biden is the wisest guy to sit in the Oval Office since Reagan and that's not in spite of his age—it's because of it.

Meanwhile, the problem with Donald Trump is NOT that he, too, is old. The problem with Trump is NOT that he sometimes forgets what day it is, or who he's running against.

The problem with Trump is that he's a madman who wants dangerous things.

He is on Putin's side. He sees NATO as a threat to American prosperity. He thinks laws must not apply to him. He believes that democracy is only useful to the extent that it provides him advantage. He thinks that dictatorship would be preferable—so long as he gets to be the tyrant.

If I were Biden's speechwriter, I might put it like this:

Am I elderly? You betcha. Don't move like I used to. And I have the occasional senior moment. I'll probably have one during this speech, just so folks from the New York Times have something to write about.

But I know what the hell I'm doing.

Let me tell you about getting older. You aren't as fast on your feet. You have to think a moment before you remember stuff.

But also: As you get older, you're able to see what really matters. You're able to let go of your ego and focus on what's important.

That's why I was able to work with the Republicans in Congress even while they said nasty things about me in public: Because I didn't care what they said—I'm too old for that. What I did care about was passing gun reform laws that both parties knew we needed.

I cared about lowering the costs of medicine for seniors and capping the price of insulin. I cared about infrastructure—getting roads and bridges fixed and new semi-conductor factories built so that young people could get good jobs and provide for their families.

And let me tell you what else age has done for me: It made me realize that I'm the president of all Americans. Not just the people who voted for me. Because I'm old, I understand that it's my duty to make sure that even the people who run around saying that I'm part of a crime family—God love 'em—are able to get good jobs, and have broadband internet, and have more and better police keeping their communities safe.

So am I old? You bet. I'm 87. No, wait, 78. I forget. Whatever—I'm old. Older than you. And that's why America is prospering, everyone who wants a job has one, crime is coming down, more people have health insurance, and the Russians and the Chinese understand that there's a united West, led by America, opposing them and holding them to account.

To read other articles from the Bulwark, visit www.thebulwark.com.

The Triad

American credibility is on the line in Ukraine

Will Selber

Muhammad took one last pull off his cigarette before putting it out next to the other three he'd smoked in our hour-long meeting. He was a middle-aged Sons of Iraq commander from Diyala, the governate between Baghdad and the Iranian border, and he was responsible for security in a few critical towns near Forward Operating Base Warhorse.

"What will happen to us when you leave?" Muhammad asked. He had good reason to worry. Iraq's prime minister, a Shia, had the security apparatus under his thumb and was using them to target Sunni leaders like Muhammad. "We're not going anywhere, sir," I responded.

Muhammad laughed dismissively. "In 1991, you told the Kurds to rise up against Hussein. And they were slaughtered when they did. But where were you?"

I did not have a good response.

"Captain, this has been a good conversation. I know you have reports to write. You Americans are always writing reports. Please write this down: If you leave us to fend for ourselves, we will remember it," he warned.

The next year, as American troops left Iraq, Muhammad's Sons

of Iraq were targeted not only by Shia henchmen, but also eventually by a new group, the Islamic State.

Two years later, I had an eerily similar conversation in Kandahar—one of the most remote, rural, and conservative spots in the entire country. I lived in a village stability platform—a tiny outpost about the size of a football field with a few buildings and a fuel tank—with a group of Green Berets conducting village stability operations (VSO). VSOs were part of an effort to replicate the Sunni Awakening in Afghanistan, with the Afghan Local Police playing the role of the Sons of Iraq.

My main job was advising a district governor—the Afghan analogue of a county commissioner. Over thousands of cups of tea and Pine cigarettes, we tried to devise ways to extend the reach of the Afghan government into regions that were lukewarm—to say the least—about the United States and the Afghan government. Most of the village elders kept their distance from us, correctly deducing that we wouldn't stay for long and it wasn't worth risking their lives for us.

I remained undeterred and tried to convince the district governor to press the elders to change their minds. Finally, after growing tired of my American persistence, he grabbed a dried apricot and, tossing it into his mouth, said, "Brother, I'm going to let you know the truth.

"These elders, they aren't dumb," he told me. "They know what happened to a lot of the Sons of Iraq. They see that Obama's surge has dipped, and you're closing bases. They've heard from other elders that you make a lot of promises but don't always keep them."

His response stopped me dead cold. How was I supposed to reply to that?

"Fair enough, brother," was all I could say. "Fair enough."

Nine years later, I was suited up as a military diplomat at the U.S. embassy in Kabul for my final year in country. I routinely met with some of the most senior Afghan government officials.

After President Biden announced his decision to withdraw in April 2021, the mood among my contacts grew dark. I tried my best to reassure them. Many asked for visas to get their families out. They were willing to stay and fight—but they wanted their families protected. I assured them they wouldn't need it.

Then an Afghan pilot, whose family had been in hiding because of a ruthless Taliban assassination campaign, looked at me with tears in his eyes and pleaded, "Don't forget about me, brother. I don't want to be left behind like all of those South Vietnamese."

That pilot made it to America and is thriving. Most were not so lucky.

We Americans like to think of ourselves as reliable allies. The World War II narrative remains

our dominant story. We freed Europe and punished the Japanese for their sneak attack. But that's not the story our allies remember about us.

Ask the South Vietnamese how they feel about our reliability. Or ask the Kurds.

American untrustworthiness has been a bipartisan affair. Ask the Afghans what they think about former President Trump's Doha Agreement—the surrender we signed behind their backs after forcing them to release 5,000 Taliban fighters who immediately re-armed and slaughtered our allies. There are plenty of voices strongly supportive of Ukraine today who waved away our retreat from Afghanistan because it "was always going to be messy."

Let's be honest with ourselves. Our record isn't great. Our diplomats advocating for our interests and values around the world, and our service members training our allies so they can fight our shared enemies without us directly intervening have to contend with this record daily.

But despite all the past missteps, the United States has a fleeting chance to resume its leadership and restore its reputation. Ukraine is infinitely more strategically important than those previous alliances.

We abandoned the South Vietnamese, the Iraqis, and the Afghans because we decided they were peripheral to our core inter-

ests. Europe is not. The post-World War II liberal international order started with the aim of keeping Europe whole, free, and at peace. For an indication of how important European stability is for global security, just look at how seriously Pacific countries like South Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and Australia are taking Russia's war against Ukraine.

If we abandon Ukraine, we would be signaling that it doesn't even take the shedding of American blood for us to retreat and betray our allies. Sure, Ukraine wouldn't vanish overnight, and NATO would survive in the short term. But it would embolden Putin to try his luck in other areas.

An American betrayal of Ukraine would also embolden China. And not just against Taiwan. The Chinese would use this narrative to press their interests in Africa, the Middle East, and South America.

Gen. Philip Breedlove, a former Supreme Allied Commander Europe, put it succinctly: We hold the future of Ukraine in our hands. We can renew our support, arming the Ukrainians and help them to defeat a geopolitical rival without the loss of a single American soldier's life. Or we can cede the battleground.

We can reassure the world that America can be trusted. Or we can confirm for the world that we can't.

To read other articles from the Triad, visit www.thebulwark.com.

Words from Winterbilt

The strategy of the delay defense

Shannon Bohrer

Our former President is facing numerous criminal charges and civil cases while also running for President – again. One might think that the civil cases against him, which could cost him hundreds of millions of dollars, could be disastrous, especially for his reputation as a billionaire businessman. However, the criminal cases could result in his incarceration. The charges against him include ninety-one felony charges from four different cases. There are forty-four federal charges and forty-seven state charges that all total carry possible incarceration of 641 years. Obviously, if he is found guilty in just a few cases, he could be incarcerated for the remainder of his life. I do not know of anyone in our county's history who ran for the presidency or any other office while facing such a volume of civil and criminal charges. Even more extraordinarily incredible is the support he still enjoys.

There has been broad reporting on the topic of why the former President is running again for the office of President. Most of the thoughts are that if he were to be successful in winning the office, once sworn in, he could then pardon himself. Also reported is the potential argument against this strategy. The President can only pardon federal crimes, not state crimes. So, if he were to be successful and win the presidency, what would happen if he were convicted in state courts for state crimes? Would he be immune from incarceration while in the office? If so, could he be incarcerated after leaving

the office? That raises another question: if elected, would he try to remain in office - again?

The civil cases against him are well known, with two already resolved - not in his favor. The numbers are not good. In a recent case he was ordered to pay 454 million dollars in fines and interest. He already owes E. Jean Carroll 83 million and it was reported that he owes "400 thousand to the New York Times." He sued them and was unsuccessful and has been ordered to pay their legal fees. These numbers do not include his own legal fees.

In the civil case, where he overvalued his properties, he could lose business and properties in New York. In this case his defense was that he and his family relied on accountants for evaluations of the properties. However, testimony demonstrated that the accounts used the numbers given to them by the Trump organization. Testimony also included "I don't remember" and "I don't recall." Placing the blame on others when they use the information that you provide does not sound like a good strategy.

While the civil cases have the potential to break the bank and dissolve the Trump organization, it is the criminal charges that could take his freedom. Of course, when someone is charged with a crime, there is a presumption of innocence. The former President himself has repeatedly described the charges as "witch hunts" as if there are no foundations for the charges. He has also accused the current administration of collusion with the justice department in bringing the charges. His principal reasoning is that he is running for President, and since he is the presumptive nominee of his party, the charges

are, therefore, "political."

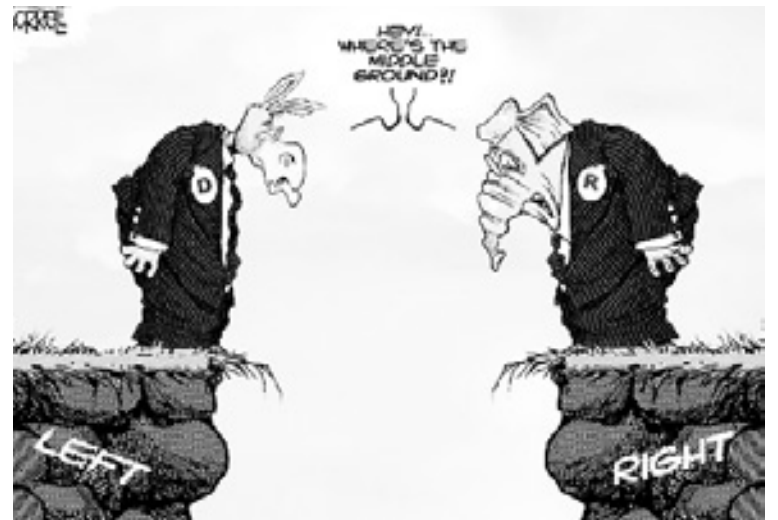
The former President and his lawyers have been busy responding to the criminal courts on a variety of issues related to the charges, like potential witnesses, the discovery of evidence, pleadings, and appeals. Strangely, the defenses that he has offered do not include "witch hunts" or "political motives," but they do offer some peculiar arguments.

The documents case, where the former President has been charged with possessing classified documents, was considered by many experts to be a slam-dunk for the prosecution. Documents found in his Florida home while executing a search warrant were clearly marked as classified. His first defense was that he declassified all the documents. When that did not work, his lawyers requested an assessment of any damage to national security, as if damage to national security must be demonstrated. It does not.

Since then, the lawyers have requested information on why and how the documents are related to national security, which is a requirement of the Espionage Act. Continuing to request more information about the charges and documents is a right of any defendant, but the argument that is offered is that since there was no damage to national security, the charges should be dropped.

If an individual is charged with an attempted crime and the crime was not successful, that does not constitute a defense. Saying I committed the acts that I was charged with, but no harm was found, is not a defense. It does offer other insights. What it does say is that he is admitting to the actions that he took and concealed the documents. So, in essence, he is admitting guilt. So, why go in this direction?

In Washington, D.C., the former



President has been charged with election subversion or trying to overthrow the government. During a hearing by the court of appeals, Trump's lawyers argued that "he can't be prosecuted for trying to overturn the 2020 election, raising the potentially extreme implications of absolute Presidential immunity". Accordingly, his lawyers believe any charges should be dismissed because he should be afforded total immunity. When proffered, the Trump lawyers were questioned if the total immunity included "... selling [of] pardons or even assassinating political opponents."

The prosecution countered that if a President has total immunity for any acts committed, any sitting President could do anything they deemed necessary to remain in office, not unlike having an insurrection. As stated above, one Judge on the panel expressed the idea that unlimited immunity would allow Presidents to kill their opponents.

While that position did appear extreme, to help his cause, Donald Trump posted (in all caps) on his Truth Social post, "A president of the United States must have full immunity, without which it would be impossible for him/her to properly function,"... "Any mis-

take, even if well intended, would be me with almost certain indictment by the opposing party at term end. Even events that 'cross the line.' Must fall under total immunity, or it will be years for trauma trying to determine good from bad. There must be certainty."

Again, Trump was not offering a defense for the criminal acts he is charged with; instead he in essence is saying yes, that if he committed the acts, he should not be charged. According to Trump's position, President Biden, while in office, could order the assassination of Trump. Again, his pleading does not offer a defense, and they never mentioned "witch hunts," or "political motives."

Because "witch hunts" and "political motives" have never been offered in the courts, are they only being used to sway public opinion? Maybe the obvious tactic is the use of motions and appeals, whenever possible, to delay the trials until after the election.

Distractions are often used when you want to prevent someone from looking behind the curtain.

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

Good Day, Neighbor

Taxation with representation

Dorothea Mordan

It happened at rehab. A daughter-in-law checking on our mutual mother-in-law at the rehab facility found, to everyone's astonishment, that Medicaid had been cancelled for our beloved ninety-two year old matriarch. This past year the Medicaid system required recipients of Medicaid to reapply for their benefits. Our social safety net expanded during the pandemic to provide resources to people struggling with little or no income, while we as a society figured out how to move forward. Forward came. Government assistance needed to reduce back to more or less normal amounts. The misstep was how to get the word out. The answer was to have everyone reapply for Medicaid.

Would you expect a ninety-two year old person with spotty cell phone service, no affordable hi-speed internet service, little or no understanding of the internet and no computer, to be able to renew a vital government service online? Like it or not, the internet is how many mandatory tasks are com-

pleted. Hi-speed internet is a necessity, not a luxury.

This happened to my mother-in-law, Marge. Ninety-two years young, she didn't have a lazy day in her life, never ran up a debt, credit card or otherwise. She and her first husband built their own house when they were nineteen and twenty. Not with contractors, with a hammer and saw. As you might expect, there were a few rough spots and maintenance snafus over the years. But at seventy three the house still stands.

After her husband died at the age of forty-two, Marge raised their five children. She earned a modest income through her working life. Because the house was long paid for, with no debts, she comfortably lived a long and interesting life. There was never much in savings, or other financial resources. After retiring, she lived on Social Security, with a monthly income of \$1400.00 at the time of her death.

Marge didn't slow down. She found time for every family member, and activities in her community. When she wasn't working, her time was spent on church activities, community events like working at the annual Bloomsburg Fair as a docent

in the garden building, or hitching a ride with any friend or family member taking a trip. We took her with us to Australia when she was in her eighties. It is quite impossible to write about Marge without using run-on sentences for their secret purpose—capturing a life story that flowed with grace from one friend and event to another.

The decision to require reapplying for Medicaid was a follow up to the funds sent through the Medicaid system during Covid. The Federal government stepping in to stabilize our economy and help many Americans ride out a storm of unknowns is what our country is good at. Reverting the system back to its original purpose with the burden of everyone reapplying was a bad idea. Does anyone really think that the finances of a ninety-two year old got better during the COVID years?

As luck would have it Marge died before the cost of end of life care went over the value of her modest house in the Pennsylvania hills.

Marge lived in Bloomsburg, PA all of her life. Bloomsburg is north of Harrisburg, along the Susquehanna River, a good bit farther from Frederick County Maryland than just over the state line. While state laws differ, and state uses of Federal funds differ, the day to day landscape for Pennsylvanian and Marylander Ameri-

cans is pretty similar. Generations of church going folk living side by side with people—their children—with changing, modern perspectives.

This is not good or bad, just a way of organizing our lifetime of energy. That is, until we start debating how to help those in need. There's a thing we do in church sometimes. The minister asks us to turn to our neighbor in the seat next to us, greet them and have a moment of connection. Connection we often miss, living in the whirlwind of daily responsibilities. If we can take a moment in our actual daily life to connect with someone and see their situation, we might start to see what we really need to ask of our leaders.

Any study of the history of European and in turn North American society shows an emphasis on personal responsibility as a cultural norm. Pulling yourself up by your bootstraps, take it on the chin, fend for yourself, are ways of saying "don't take handouts." Caring for yourself and your family is a source of pride for many of us. Then life happens and we can't be everything to everyone all of the time. Right now, there are many gaps in the work force for caregiving and other support for at-risk people. There are people living within their means on only the government support they are receiving. This part of the population is

almost by definition living on thin ice, but making it work. It is a failing of our system that anyone should lose their life sustaining support over a bureaucratic detail.

Our leaders shouldn't be slamming the doors of accessibility in our faces simply in service to a claim of saving money. Some doors left open don't cost a thing. We need leaders who can identify actual problems and find solutions that benefit the most people.

State Representative Lesley Lopez, running for Maryland's 6th District, and our current District 6 Representative David Trone, running for Senate in Maryland, are two candidates who have a record of legislation that meets the needs of constituents. In Rep. Trone's tenure he has cosponsored bi-partisan bills such as H.R. 4334 - Supporting Older Americans Act of 2020. This supports social services and activities for individuals aged 60 years and older, with additional focus on social isolation.

We the People sometimes need support. Choose wisely the Representatives who can and will respond to those needs.

2024 is the the year of the vote. Please make yours count.

To read past editions of *Good Day Neighbor*, visit the Authors section of *Walkersville.net*.

PASTOR'S DESK

The relevance of Easter

Rev. Dr. Neil Acheampong
Covenant Family Chapel

Easter is one of the holidays on our national calendar which seem to have a religious overtone but others do not see it as such.

Over the years American society has become more diverse when it comes to religion. As a result, defining the national holidays and celebrations has also been affected by these religious changes in a very drastic way.

In a survey conducted by the BARN A Group, in February of 2010, researchers explored Americans' definition of the Easter holiday. They asked citizens how they would describe what Easter means to them, personally. The results show that 67% of Americans consider Easter to be a religious holiday, but 42% identify the resurrection of Jesus as the underlying meaning.

For most people, Easter validates everything Jesus said; that He will die, be buried, and rise from the dead. For others, Easter is seen as a guarantee for

the resurrection of the human body on judgment day. Yet for quite a significant number of people, Easter is a time of bunnies, eggs, and other traditions. But is that all that Easter is about? We must understand how Easter affects us in the here and now. If Jesus was raised from the dead, how does it relate to you and me? What is its relevance for us today?

Let us begin examining these questions using a scripture text as a reference because of the religious nature of the holiday. In the bible book of Ephesians chapter one and verses nineteen to twenty-three. Here Paul the Apostle writes to the church in Ephesus, and he tells them he is praying for them. His prayer reveals his concern for these Ephesians believers. That they will keep the resurrection of Jesus or Easter front and center. He says...

19 I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power 20 that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand

in the heavenly realms. 21 Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else—not only in this world but also in the world to come. 22 God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church. 23 And the church is his body; it is made complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself. (Ephesians 1:19-23, New Living Translation)

In the same letter Paul admonishes not only the Ephesian believers but also us today, that even though we were dead in our sins before we became Christians, when we received Christ into our hearts, Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, that is Easter ought to mean something different to us. Notice what Paul says in the first to the sixth verse of the second chapter of Ephesians...

1 Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins. 2 You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. 3 All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature, we were subject to God's anger, just like everyone else. 4 But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, 5 that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is



only by God's grace that you have been saved!) 6 For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 2:1-6, New Living Translation)

From these two scripture texts, we can infer several things.

First, God demonstrated a level of power to raise Jesus from the dead. Secondly, when Jesus was raised from the dead, He was seated in the heavenly realms. Thirdly, Jesus was raised (as a position of honor) far above principalities, powers, might, and dominion. Fourthly, when Jesus was raised for the dead, we (humans) were raised spiritually. Fifthly, we were raised (positionally) to sit with Christ in the heavenly realms. How do these principles relate to Easter? Plain and simple.

If God can raise Christ Jesus from the dead, then He can raise anything including your dead marriage, your terminal sickness, your dead business, etc. But you will agree with me that this is not the case in the life of many

Christians. Why? Because we have a wrong mindset about why Jesus came. We think Jesus came to exempt us from our problems, perfect things, and prevent Satan from attacking us. But Jesus did not come to exempt us from problems but to empower us to handle our problems. Secondly, Jesus did not come to make things perfect, but to make things possible. Thirdly, Jesus did not come to prevent Satan from attacking us but to protect us from Satanic attacks as we live in obedience to His word, the bible. This means that we should look to God for empowerment to handle our issues. So in a nutshell, Easter means if God raised Jesus with a level of power, He (God) could do the same with our predicaments. To experience this empowerment, we must be filled with the Holy Spirit, and also we must tap into this power by cultivating a relationship with the Holy Spirit who is resident in us as Christians.

Let me tie all this together with a story of a Pike fish. Researchers put a glass block separation between a pike fish and the baitfish in the same fish tank. The pike fish tried several times to get to the baitfish but could not because of the glass barrier. After a while, the researchers removed the glass barrier, and the pike fish did not make any attempt to catch the bait fish because in its mind the barrier was still there even though it was removed. Like the Pike fish, many people are so used to problems and bondage that when there is available power to set them free, they tend not to even see it. I pray that as we celebrate Easter we rise and begin to appropriate the resurrection power into our lives. So the relevance of Easter is that we can deal with life challenges because the power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead is also available to us through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

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He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 'The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.' Luke 24:6-7

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THE BOOK OF DAYS

The Victoria Cross



the ‘consideration’ led to any results. At length on the 8th of February 1856, the London Gazette announced that Her Majesty had under her Royal Sign Manual been pleased to institute a new naval and military decoration entitled the ‘Victoria Cross.’ Unlike any other decoration recognised in our army and navy, this order is to be conferred for valour only—irrespective of rank or station; and the recipient becomes also entitled to a pension of £10 a year for life. The Victoria Cross is a simple affair as a work of art.

It consists of a bronze Maltese cross with the royal crest in the centre, and underneath it a scroll bearing the words ‘FOR VALOUR;’ it is suspended by a red ribbon if worn on the breast of a soldier, and by a blue ribbon if worn by a sailor. Trifling as it is, however, the men highly prize it, for hitherto it has been honestly bestowed. The reader will call to mind that remarkable ceremony in the summer of 1857, when the Queen bestowed the Victoria Cross, with her own hand, on sixty-one noble fellows in Hyde-park. Of those thus honoured, twenty-five were commissioned officers, fifteen were warrant and non-commissioned officers, and the remaining twenty-one were private soldiers and common seamen.

In every instance there was a distinct

recognition in the Official Gazette of the specific act of valour for which the cross was bestowed—whether arising out of the Crimean, the Chinese, or the Indian wars—in order to afford proof that merit, not favour, won the reward. Here we are told that Joseph Treweyas, seaman, ‘cut the hawsers of the floating-bridge in the Straits of Genitchi under a heavy fire of musketry;’ on which occasion he was wounded. ‘The late gallant Captain Sir William Peel,’ we are told, ‘took up alive shell that fell among some powder cases; the fuse was still burning, and the shell burst as he threw it over the parapet.’

Here is an incident which warms one’s blood while we read it: ‘In the charge of the Light Cavalry Brigade at Balakava, Trumpet-Major Crawford’s horse fell and dismounted him, and he lost his sword; he was attacked by two Cossacks, when private Samuel Parkes (whose horse had been shot) saved his life by placing himself between them and the Trumpet-Major, and drove them away by his sword. In the attempt to follow the Light Cavalry Brigade in the retreat, they were attacked by six Russians, whom Parkes kept at bay, and retired slowly fighting, and defending the Trumpet-Major for some time.’

In spite of the wretched official

English of this description (in which ‘he’ and ‘his,’ ‘they’ and ‘whose’ are hopelessly wandering to find their proper verbs), we cannot fail to take a liking for the gallant trooper Parkes. Then there was Serjeant-Maj or Henry, of the Artillery, who at the terrible battle of Inkermann, ‘defended the guns of his battery until he had received twelve bayonet wounds.’ During the siege of Sebastopol, a rifle-pit was occupied by two Russians, who annoyed our troops by their fire, whereupon ‘Private M’Gregor, of the Rifles, crossed the open space under fire, and taking cover under a rock, dislodged them, and occupied the pit.’

In India some of the Victoria Crosses were given to the gallant fellows by their commanding officers, in the Queen’s name; and when those officers were men of tact and good feeling, they contrived to enhance the value of the reward by a few well-chosen remarks. Thus, Brigadier Stidste, in giving Crosses to two men of the 52nd Foot, pointed out to them the difference between the Order of the Bath and the Order of Valour, adding, in reference to the latter, ‘I only wish I had it myself.’

To read other selections from Robert Chamber’s 1864 *The Book of Days*, visit thebookofdays.com.

March 1

The 1st of March 1857, is one among many days associated with the bestowal of the Victoria Cross upon heroic soldiers and sailors. The affair is in itself a trifle; yet it involves a principle of some importance. England cannot be said to be altogether happy in her modes of rewarding merit. The friendless and the unobtrusive are apt to be pushed aside, and to be supplanted by those who can call boldness and influence to their aid. Such at any rate has been the case in

the army and navy; the humble soldiers and sailors have always received their full share of hard knocks, while the officers have carried off the honours and rewards.

The nation has often felt and said that this was wrong; and the authorities of the War Office have judiciously yielded to the public sentiment in this among many other matters. It was in the middle of the Crimean war that the War Office undertook to ‘consider’ the subject; but a period of many months passed before



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ECOLOGY

Celebrating spring & Women's History Month

Anne Gageby
 Director of Environmental Education

Daffodils are starting to pop up around the office and as I walk the paths and hiking trails, more and more signs of spring are making their debut. Winter is becoming a memory even though the daily temperatures can be a biting reminder. There's a sense of possibilities that comes with seeing green edging into the vast brown and white canvas of a winter backyard. The coming of spring makes me kind of nostalgic, especially at the beginning of March and Women's History Month.

I look back on my childhood here at Strawberry Hill and I'm amazed at the number of female influences and role models I had around me - from naturalist educators and volunteers to board members and directors. Strawberry Hill has never lacked female leadership and it made an impact on me as a small child attending programs and events here. Perhaps one day I could be a leader, too. That's a powerful message for a child to learn.

Strawberry Hill was founded by a woman, Dr. Francis Morton Froelicher. Francis was a social worker and housing advocate in Baltimore who fought for tenants' rights. She came to our area of Pennsylvania seeking weekend refuge from busy city life and ended up creating a foundation that teaches and inspires thousands of visitors every year. A life-long environmentalist, Francis was never afraid to dream big and envisioned a cleaner, healthier world.

Francis and her husband, Hans, began purchasing property along Swamp Creek in the 1960s. Eventually, they purchased over 600 acres of land surrounding Swamp Creek and part of Middle Creek. They built Strawberry Hill's pond which is fed by Swamp Creek. After some time on the mountain, the Froelichers noticed neighbors were dumping trash such as paint cans, tires, and household garbage in the creeks. Francis was determined to clean up the streams. After all, Swamp Creek and Middle Creek are part of the greater Chesapeake Bay watershed, which had always held a special piece of Francis' and Hans' heart.

She accomplished this clean-up by working with Strawberry Hill's neighbors. Over the years, Francis built a community that prided itself on cleaning up and maintaining clean streams. Today, Swamp Creek and Middle Creek are designated Exceptional Value Streams by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. We've come a long way, for sure.

Throughout her time at Strawberry Hill, Francis won several awards including the impressive Take Pride in America Award, given to those who increased awareness for natural resources. She had a personal philosophy when it came to environmental education: "I believe environmental education should run from the cradle to the grave. The only way you can preserve open space like this is by having a spirit involved - a community spirit. Having people who really care. The community has to take an interest to make something like this work."

Through that sense of community,

Francis was able to build a program that thrives even today. Strawberry Hill provides education opportunities for public and private schools, homeschool groups, and adults alike. And we're continually growing our programs. This spring, for example, we're bringing back our popular WILDlife program. WILDlife is our first ever homeschool drop-off program and is built on the ideas of Wonder, Imagination Liberty, and Discovery. We also have several Homeschool Days on the calendar. Homeschool Days are full-day programs for homeschool families to come out and learn about a variety of environmental education topics from frogs and toads, citizen science and butterflies, to birds.

We've also revamped our adult programs for spring and summer. For the first time ever, Strawberry Hill is hosting a murder mystery. On Saturday, March 23rd from 7-9pm, we'll explore the clues and unravel the mystery behind a shocking tale of love, betrayal, and prejudice. Put on your best thinking cap and join us as we dig through the evidence and explore a slew of remarkable secondary suspects - animals of the night. The evening's story is inspired by real events and sure to be a hoot!

Our wild foraging series, the ever-popular Wild Edibles with Debbie Naha-Koretzky, sold out last year. Debbie, "The Wild Edibles Lady", has put together a three-part foraging adventure for 2024 to discover the edible plants of our area. The program will include a slide show followed by a foraging walk, and a taste of wild tea. Signed copies of her book, Foraging Pennsylvania and New Jersey (2021, Falcon Guides), will be available after each presentation. Debbie is a registered



Strawberry Hill was founded by a woman, Dr. Francis Froelicher, pictured here with her husband Hans. A life-long environmentalist, Francis was never afraid to dream big and envisioned a cleaner, healthier world.

dietitian/nutritionist, Rutgers Master Gardener, Pennsylvania Master Naturalist, and a certified science teacher.

This spring we're also hosting a new series that connects mysticism and conservationism. This 3-part series is taught by Rev. Monika Kojote. The first program, The Language of the Land, will explore how humans connect and communicate with the lands near us. The program will explore the data, both repeatable and observable (via omens, the behavior of flora and fauna, etc.). Discussion of the evolution of a land area will also be included, as well as the careful debate of what really is an "invasive" species. Monika is a Druid shaman serving the North American, Ireland, European Union, and United Kingdom. Monika received her master's degree in forensic psychology in 2005, and has over 20 years' experience working in the public domain of health & human services.

If your interests are gardening, check out our PA Master Gardner Presents series. Each program focuses on a different topic - Native Bees, Subur-

ban Gardening, Pennsylvania Dutch Kitchen Gardens, and Ticks and Lyme Disease. Each program is taught by a different PA Master Gardener and will be about 45 minutes. Check out our web calendar at www.strawberryhill.org/new-events to learn more.

Sometimes I look around our campus and I'm left in awe of all we've been able to accomplish here at Strawberry Hill since our founding in 1986. I believe Francis would be proud to see her years of hard work culminating in what Strawberry Hill is today. Our creeks are clean and healthy, our community is strong and thriving. And we have incredible women leading our programs. I hope the kids and teens who come to our programs look around and see themselves represented in some way. After all, they are the next generation of environmental stewards. Just like the budding daffodils outside my window are reaching toward the sun, the upcoming generation will accomplish incredible things and I can't wait to see what the future brings.

To read other Ecology articles visit the Authors section of Walkersville.net.

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THE RETIRED ECOLOGIST

The 800-pound Gorilla in the plum tree

Bill Meredith

Question: "If an 800-pound gorilla comes into a room, where does he sit?" Answer: "Anywhere he likes." ...from A Compendium of the Oldest Known Jokes on Every Topic. - Marquis deLafayette Meredith, Second Edition, 1896.

We moved into our new house in the fall of 1989, and began landscaping the yard as early as possible the next spring. We wanted color, so we planted two flowering plum trees in front of the house. They lived up to their billing as far as color was concerned; they produced clouds of pink blossoms early each spring, and highlighted the area with purple leaves through the following summers. But the old saying, "Nobody's perfect," applies to trees as well as people; they proved to be incurably shallow-rooted, and both blew over when the March winds arrived the next year. At that time they were still small enough to lift, so I straightened them up and supported them with guy-wires; but as they grew they began to lean again, eventually pulling the wires out of the ground. Each year thereafter, as they got bigger I tried to move their center of gravity back to the mid-point by pruning off branches on the leeward side; but it was a losing battle. The pruning made the remaining branches on that side grow faster, and I knew their days were numbered. So I was not surprised when one of them fell over in an ice storm last month.

During the night the freezing rain had coated each twig on the tree with about a quarter of an inch of ice. It had then changed to snow, which was still falling when I got up, so there was nothing to do except sit at the kitchen table and think about it. Naturally, I began to wonder how much weight it took to bring down the tree. Collecting the information to make such a calculation was simple enough: I brought in the tin can that serves as my rain gauge in winter and warmed it; the ice and snow it contained converted into about an inch of water. The branches of the tree extended

about ten feet on each side of the trunk, and the formula for the area of a circle has not changed since I learned it in the fourth grade. The weight of a cubic foot of water (62.4 lb.) was easy to look up. Doing the calculations there at the table took longer than I expected... I can't remember the last time I did long division by hand... but eventually it came out that the water required to cover a 20-foot circle one inch deep would weigh 1,634 pounds. If half of that water stuck to the tree as ice, it would amount to about 800 pounds.

Looking at that number on the scrap of paper, it was hard to visualize what 800 pounds of ice would look like. My wife, who usually doesn't show much interest in mathematical problems, suggested that maybe a partridge had flown into the tree; but on reflection, she realized that an 800-pound partridge defied even her imagination, and besides, they never go into plum trees. However, everyone has heard the old joke about the 800-pound gorilla, and it was not long before the image of a gorilla sitting in the plum tree popped into my mind. It was an intriguing idea, so I went out to look for signs of it. I found the tracks of a dog, a couple of cats, and an indeterminate number of rabbits, but there were no gorilla tracks in sight. At that point, I realized that I really don't know much about gorillas... the image I had in mind was King Kong hanging to the top of the Empire State Building with Fay Wray in one hand and swatting at a passing biplane with the other. Being a biologist for 60 years has taught me not to take things for granted. So I

went to "Google" on my computer and typed in my question: "How much does an 800-pound gorilla weigh?" As I had suspected, the computer had no sense of humor and took the question literally. It sent me to a whole screen full of articles that explained the origin of the joke, and it also informed me that the heaviest gorilla ever recorded was an old male that weighed about 600 pounds. He lived in a zoo where there were no females to chase and no territories to defend, so he had nothing to do but sit around and eat. In the wild, male gorillas rarely reach 500 pounds, and females, a couple hundred less.

It had been rather exciting to imagine the expression on the face of an 800-pound gorilla when the tree he was in collapsed, so it was something of a let-down to learn that such a creature didn't exist. It was even more depressing to realize that when it came to practical examples, I had no real experience that would allow me to visualize whether the weight of even a teenage female gorilla would tip the tree over. So I was stumped for a while, until a down-home example came to mind. When I was a teen-ager, it was a day to be proud of when a boy was able to carry a 100-pound sack of feed from the pickup truck to the barn. I suppose I was probably 12 or 13 years old when I made that rite of passage, and after that it became a regular chore, so I have a pretty clear idea of what 100 pounds of cow feed looks like. Thus it was easy to visualize various numbers of feed-sacks perched in strategic positions in the tree, and although they didn't have the lasting visual impact that gorillas



A Red Tail Hawk swooping down to catch its prey. According to the Frederick Bird Club, while the Red-shouldered Hawk population increased by 55% last year, Red Tail Hawks saw their numbers decrease significantly, as did the Northern Harrier and sharp-shinned Hawk.

would have, I was convinced that no more than 200 pounds of either cow feed, gorillas or ice would have been sufficient to bring it down.

My wife was not thrilled by the prospect of having a fallen tree in front of the house for the rest of the winter, but I was able to convince her that wood gets harder when it is cold, and my chain-saw is balky even in warm weather, so surely it would not be possible to remove the tree when noon-day temperatures are below freezing. So the tree is still lying there; and as weeks have passed, she has become rather intrigued by it. The small birds that patronize the nearby feeder use the fallen tree for shelter whenever a marauding cat comes by, and the drama is easily visible from her chair by the window while she has her morning coffee. It has actually been educational; she has added house finches to the list of species she can recognize (the other species on the list is the cardinal), and she was

quite excited the other day when a hawk swooped down and snatched a sparrow from a twig while she was watching... a practical example of the nearness of the food chain. She may yet become an ecologist.

As I write this, there is still snow on the ground, but time is drifting by, and the equinox will be here in less than a month. Days are getting longer, and I have already seen a bluebird and two robins in the yard. A great horned owl was hooting in the Great Forest behind our house last week; its mate is already sitting on her eggs, and by the time they hatch perhaps the snow will be melted, exposing the tunnels where field mice have been breeding all winter. The food chain will go on; and believe it or not, spring will come. We ecologists know these things. Trust me.

To read past editions of *The Retired Ecologist*, visit the Authors section of Walkersville.net.

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IN THE COUNTRY

How to prevent an alien invasion: the amateur's guide

Tim Iverson
Naturalist

Soon the seasons will begin to change, and the weather will become more favorable. Warmer weather and spring showers will cause the plants to bloom. For those of us with a green thumb this is the time of year when we start planning our gardens. Most of us choose what to put in our gardens based on popular trends, appearance, and ease of care. While these are important factors when choosing flowers or plants there are more important factors to consider when selecting what or what not to plant. Before purchasing and planting you should be asking yourself one thing before everything else: Is it native?

The importance of selecting native plants over non-native plants is paramount. Non-native, or exotic, plants often become invasive species. Now you might be getting confused by throwing all these terms around, so I'll attempt to clarify. Native species are plants, animals, or any organism found in an ecosystem that is supposed to be there. Exotic or non-native species are any plants, animals, or organisms that

are found in a given ecosystem that are not supposed to be there. For instance, I'm sure by now you're familiar with those pesky little brown stink bugs that can be found literally everywhere in our area these days. Prior to about 2008 you couldn't find them in Maryland. They weren't even documented to be in the United States prior to 1998. With this example we can clearly identify that these Brown Marmorated Stink Bugs are exotic or non-native. They originally hail from Japan, and are most certainly not supposed to be here. As a result of their introduction and rapid expansion they are now considered invasive.

For a species to be invasive it must aggressively invade and establish itself in an ecosystem at the expense of other species. Invasive species thrive while others suffer. Invasive aren't necessarily always exotic. Even natives can be considered invasive, certain kinds of weeds for example. The problem with invasive species is that they can cause ecological and/or economic damage on a large scale. When dealing with non-native species they can quickly become invasive because they have been pulled out of their natural ecosystem where natu-

ral checks and balances like predators or diseases can help keep population numbers in check. When those bars are removed damage caused by these species can be dramatic. In order to help curb this issue we can combat it before it even becomes a problem.

There are many natural advantages to planting native species over exotic ones. For starters because they are native they will generally be much easier to care for. They evolved to live right here for these exact conditions, and will require little attention. They've spent thousands of years figuring out how to best survive right here, and are uniquely capable of flourishing on their own. They can handle variable weather conditions, and outside of drought conditions should not need to be watered. Natives are heartier and can last for two to four seasons depending on the species allowing for longer enjoyment. Native plants usually don't require the use of pesticides or fertilizers either. Birds, bugs, and other wildlife have all developed a relationship and dependence on native plants.

Native flowers, trees, shrubs, and other plants all provide valuable food and habitat for our local wildlife. By



At one time, Bradford Pear trees were embraced by towns and homeowners in search of fast growing, flowering trees. Unfortunately, while sold as non-self pollinating, they are now crowding out native pear trees. To see the extent of the invasion all you have to do is drive along any major road in the earlyspring and look for the white blossoms of the non-native pear tree.

planting things they recognize and depend on you can help cultivate a thriving habitat to observe nature up close and personal. You can even try to cater to the wildlife you wish to see. If you want to see specific birds or butterflies do a little research to find out the types of native plants they like best. If you can plant what they like you will be more likely to attract those species. For example, in the spring and fall many birds will seek out insects hiding in the leaves and bark of oak trees or poplars. Once the summer has set in they switch their diet to fruits and berries. Monarch Butterflies rely almost solely on Milkweed for nutrition during reproduction and migration times. It's all about catering to the needs of the animals or insects you would like most to see. Do a quick internet search to identify the types of habitat and food that a specific species will need.


Any experienced or novice gardener should know there are other important factors to consider ensuring you have a successful garden. Once you've selected the type of flower, shrub, tree, or plant you wish to plant consider where and how you place it. Light conditions are very, very, very important. A shade loving plant will just not survive in the hot summer sun, so pay close attention to the location you place your plants for their specific needs. Also, consider the

proximity the plant is with other surrounding plants. You want to ensure that when they all reach full growth maturity they will have plenty of room. While densely packed plants may help prevent the growth of weeds, it will also hinder the growth of some or all of your new plants too! Lastly, be sure to know when the best time to plant your new plant is. Generally, after the last frost of the spring season is likely to occur is a good time to begin that endeavor.

By planting only native species you will be doing your part to significantly reduce the chances of and prevent the spread of exotic or invasive species. Many of the invasive plant species in the southern United States were originally introduced and used for gardening and landscaping purposes. Continuing to introduce exotic species into local areas will only further the spread of newer invasive species. Valuable habitat is lost daily to development. By planting only native plants you can provide wildlife an oasis with necessary food and shelter.

To learn more about local native plants visit the Maryland Native Plant Society at www.mdflora.org or the Pennsylvania Native Plant Society at www.pannativeplantsociety.org.


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



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SCIENCE MATTERS

Forget two Amazon rainforest myths

Boyce Rensberger

The vast and forbidding Amazon rainforest holds not just exotic wildlife but two common myths. I'll tell you both right now and then go into the details.

One, it is wrong to call the forest "the lungs of the Earth." It is the opposite.

Two, the Amazon has not been a tropical wilderness since time immemorial. What we have today is only about 400 years old.

First, the "lungs" bit. This line misunderstands what lungs do. Lungs take in oxygen and give off carbon dioxide. The Amazon does the opposite. All green plants take in carbon dioxide and give off oxygen. That's during the daytime.

At night the process reverses as plants switch over to doing what animals do—consume oxygen and give off carbon dioxide. This is when plants do most of their growing. In the process the Amazon consumes almost all the oxygen it produces, leaving only 6 percent to 9 percent to go into the global atmosphere. So, the Amazon is not the lungs of anything and not even a significant contributor to the world's oxygen.

The much bigger source of "new" atmospheric oxygen is algae in the oceans, which produce about three-quarters of the oxygen released to the atmosphere. Amazingly, there is way more plant biomass in the world's oceans than in all land plants put together.

Let's step back and examine that daily reversal in how plants handle oxygen and carbon dioxide. In sunlight all green plants take in carbon dioxide and water to make a sugar called glucose. Solar energy drives the chemical reactions. Glucose stores the energy in its bonds between atoms.

Plants then use sugar's energy to carry out processes needed to grow. Also, some sugars are linked to make starch and, with still more linkage, cellulose. This process, called respiration, consumes oxygen and gives off carbon dioxide—just as we animals do.

Now for that second myth. The truth is that the Amazon forest has not been a "pristine" ecosystem since time immemorial. Studies in recent decades have found that centuries ago much of the region had a drier climate with a more open landscape, home to cities with ceremonial centers containing large pyramids. Around the cities were farms with canals for drainage or irrigation. In one small part of the forest two more such cities have recently been found, each linked to suburbs by raised causeways that run for miles. In the same region scientists found at least 79 smaller villages and hamlets.

To be clear, the scientists are not referring to the small tribal bands that inhabit parts of the Amazon today such as the Yanomami or the Xingu. Today's rainforest tribes haven't built large earthworks or ceremonial centers, though they are probably descended from the ancient peoples.

Legends of "lost cities" in the Amazon have been around for a long time. The earliest evidence that some may exist began to emerge in the 1970s. In

the decades since, more and more clues have emerged.

"The civic-ceremonial architecture of these large settlement sites includes stepped platforms, on top of which lie U-shaped structures, rectangular platform mounds and conical pyramids," a German-British team of archaeologists wrote in their report in a recent issue of the international journal *Nature*. The tallest pyramids are more than 70 feet high. The central plaza in one city was a tenth of a mile across.

The archaeologists who found these two cities searched only a tiny fraction of the forest. They believe many more wait to be found.

The discovery of these earthworks, now covered with tall trees and many other kinds of tropical vegetation, was made possible by an aerial survey using instruments that can see through the jungle. The instruments use LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging), which sends wavelengths of laser light that penetrate vegetation but bounce back from hard surfaces hundreds of thousands of times per second. The timing of the returned light pulses is a measure of the distance below the aircraft as it flies back and forth in a pattern called "mowing the lawn." A computer assembles the data points into an image. (The picture above is one example.)

Archaeologists will now try to visit the newly discovered sites. A few have already yielded pottery containing residues of corn, beans, manioc, and sweet potatoes.

LiDAR studies in the Ecuadorian part of the forest have found the ruins of cities that once were home to

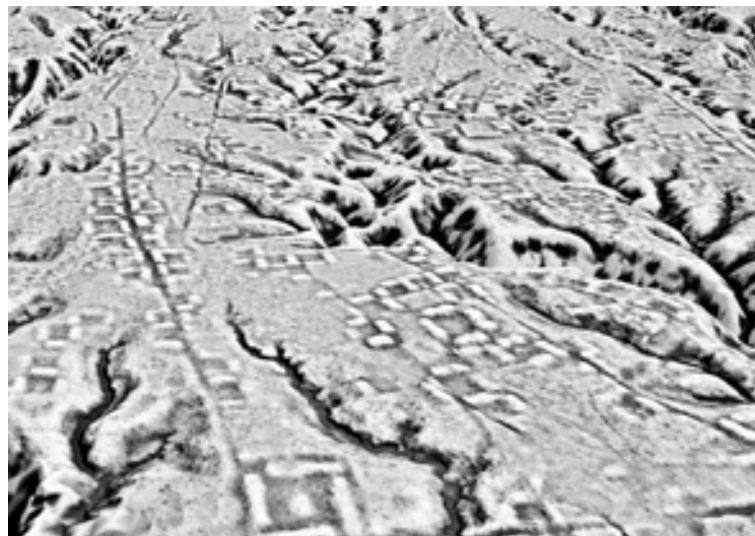
tens of thousands of people, beginning around 2,500 years ago.

After studying another part of the Amazon, an American and Brazilian team wrote in *Nature*: "Evidence of large, well-engineered public works (such as plazas, roads, moats, and bridges) in and between pre-Columbian settlements suggests a highly elaborate built environment, rivaling that of many contemporary complex societies of the Americas and elsewhere."

The researchers estimate that walled towns they found were each home to about 2,500 people with outlying settlements of 100 to 250. The people went to great lengths to build roads kept straight by cutting as much as 15 feet into a hillside when it would have been easier to go around the hill. The longest road found so far runs at least 15 miles.

Taken together, the evidence shows that much of the Amazon forest is far younger than once believed. Over thousands of square miles, there were not only small cities but networks of reservoirs, canals, farms, and roads across raised causeways. Evidence shows that the cultures that built the cities existed for nearly a thousand years, dying out by the year 1600. That was before Europeans reached the area.

What we learn from this research is not only that such ancient cultures existed, perhaps rivaling the well-known Maya or Inca societies. In just 400 years the local climate can turn wetter, causing the rainforest to expand and hide the cities. That's a long time in human years, but of course a mere blip in nature's lifespan. The damage being done to the Amazon rainforest



Jungle-penetrating LiDAR reveals ruins of ancient towns now covered by vegetation

today by modern agriculture and mining may not cause a permanent erasure of the ecosystem. If Brazil and the eight other countries that share pieces of the forest can get their act together, nature should be able to reclaim lands that are now barren.

More questionable is what condition human society will be in 400 years from now.

Boyce Rensberger retired to New Midway after more than 40 years as a science writer and editor, mostly for *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. Write to him at boycerensberger@gmail.com.

To read past editions of *Science Matters*, visit the *Authors* section of Walkersville.com



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Master Gardener

Ah, finally, it's March. My fingers are itching to get out that trowel, soil, and the seed pots. As I write this, I have a big container of seeds and roots that I am eager to start planting, everything from canna lilies to zinnias. Although not all the seeds I am planting will be heirlooms, passing on seeds from person to person, year to year, is a long-honored tradition in my family. I know that my grandmother and my mother kept seeds from season to season, and it must have also been true of generations before them, when people were as likely to save seeds as to order seeds from catalogs.

Experts differ in their approach to defining heirloom plants. Some say it has to be a plant that is unchanged genetically since before World War II, while others think the plant should be unchanged for even longer than that.

As I wander around our gardens and lawn, I see some of those heirlooms popping up, signalling that spring is well on its way, despite gusty winds and cold temps. Irises, peonies, and various bulbs remind me of the friends and family members who've given me those plants or progenitors of them over the years. I really look forward to seeing the blooms of bright yellow, white, and apricot blooms in a

few more weeks, as they join the bright purples, deep yellows, and crisp whites of pansies, crocuses, and snowdrops, soon to be followed by the various species of peonies—pale and dark pinks, pure whites. They all make me eager for spring.

According to the Chinese New Year, this is the year of the wood dragon, the fifth animal/year in the 12-year cycle. And the Chinese New Year tradition isn't the only one that celebrates a specific entity as part of the new year. You may be seeing articles from various gardening organizations, each trumpeting a particular plant as its favorite of the year.

For example, each year, the National Garden Bureau, a 175-year-old non-profit organization, selects one each of annuals, perennials, bulbs, edibles, houseplants, and shrubs as its "year of the..." crops. The choice is based on each plant's popularity, on how easy it is to grow in various climates, and whether it is genetically diverse. You can explore more about its various choices for the "year of ..." at 2024 Year of Plants - National Garden Bureau (ngb.org).

Many other garden-related universities and organizations select their own plants of the year. Frederick County master gardeners follow the University of Maryland Extension Office's selections. The Home and Garden Information Center's Grow It—Eat It program has selected the heirloom



Most people know that heirloom vegetables, a.k.a heritage vegetables, are plants that have been passed down from generation to generation without any human intervention or modification. But hybrid vegetables, on the other hand, are created by cross-breeding different varieties to produce a new one with supposed wonderful traits such as hybrid vigor, or at least that's the story. But increasing studies have shown that heirloom vegetables generally have far more nutrients than their hybrid counterparts.

tomato for 2024. This tomato comes in many sizes, shapes, and colors, and seeds have often been passed down from generation to generation.

I know you've read in this column suggestions to include native plants in your gardens. One of the many ways you can add native plants to your garden these days is by gaining seeds through heirloom seed organizations. Often, it's the ultimate BOGO—you get some seeds from your favored group or nursery to start your plants, then save seeds not only for yourself, friends, and family, but also to contribute seeds to the group the following year.

Wildlife scientists suggest using native plants for various reasons, including that they provide much-needed food sources for our native bees, butterflies, birds, and other creatures. While the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) would love to see 100

percent native plants in everyone's gardens, the organization realizes that most of us have already-established gardens of trees, shrubs, lawns, etc., that probably are not fully native. So NWF recommends that you at least aim for 50 to 70 percent native plants "to provide multi-season bloom, including flowers, shrubs, grasses, and ground-covers and trees."

Wildlife scientists also note that Maryland is home to approximately 400 of the 4,000 North American native bee species. Many of these native bee species "are pollen specialists who can only feed their young the protein-rich pollen of native plants. And [the native plant pollen is] important not only to the bees' young but also to the adult bees. Adults consume the nectar for energy and for the health of their hives. In fact, these pollen specialist bees often have body shapes and structures

that are aligned to the shape and structures of the native plants they rely on," according to the NWF web site.

Bunny LaDouceur, a fellow master gardener, noted recently in an e-mail that propagating plants from seeds can also help you fill out three-season color in your beds. You can't go wrong with native annuals and perennials. An added plus of annuals is that they can fill in any gaps between masses of perennials; plus, seeds are often easy to gather from annuals, while perennials and bulbs usually are easily divided in spring or fall to create even more plants. Bloom periods may vary, depending on micro-climates in your gardens, on your elevation, and on weather conditions.

Three-season bloomers include our native honeysuckle vine (various Lonicera species) beloved by hummingbirds, which often flowers May through October. As I write this column in mid-February, the vine outside my dining area window is still sprinkled with broad, flat opposite leaves. Throughout the late spring and until nearly frost, sweet coral trumpet-like blossoms will cluster at the junctions of these leaves. Another three-season bloomer is the black-eyed Susan (Rudbeckia hirta), which also comes in many varieties. These are long-lasting as cut flowers, and may even bloom up until early snows in the fall.

Whatever your favorite nursery or big box store recommends, you'll want to research these plants a bit or talk with local master gardeners, or your nursery person to check colors, height, bloom

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THE MASTER GARDENER

times; whether they prefer sun, shade, or both; and whether they like moist or dry conditions. Look for some native species such as the yellow wood poppies (*Stylophorum diphyllum*), Virginia blue bells (*Mertensia virginica*), red or pink native columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*), golden Alexander (*Zizia aurea*), wild pink geraniums (*Geranium maculatum*), blue or yellow false indigo/baptisia (*Amorpha fruticosa*), yellow sundrops (*Oenothera fruticosa*), and red or pink coral bells (*Heuchera sanguinea*).

But while you are plotting where to put those colorful harbingers of spring, you may also want to make a list of the plants to add for summer and fall color: blue larkspur (*Delphinium*, yellow threadleaf coreopsis (*Coreopsis verticillata*); pink or red bee balm (*Monarda fistulata*); white or pink phlox (*Phlox divaricata*); pink swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*); orange butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*); black Cohosh

(produces white flowers; *Actaea racemosa*); cone flowers (*Echinacea* species; like black-eyed Susans, cone flowers come in several varieties and colors); Joe Pye weed/obedient plant (*Eutrochium purpureum*); Turtlehead (*Chelone glabra*; white or dark pink), asters (*Symphotrichum novae-angliae*), and ironweed (*Vernonia gigantea*), and Blazing Star (*Liatris*)—but be careful, some species of *liatris* are considered invasive.

Your nursery person or a local seed preservation organization can also suggest native plants that you can use for propagating seeds or dividing plants. Armed with that info, you can continue the tradition of heirloom plants, the real hand-me-downs!

Some changes have taken place in the University of Maryland Extension Service website. The state Master Gardener program has been moved to the Home and Garden Information Center. In addition, some links

from the county Master Gardener pages to the state Master Gardener Program are being revised. You will

still be able to use quick links to the Master Gardener home page: www.go.umd.edu/MG.

To read other gardening articles, visit the Gardening section of Walkersville.net.

Small Town Gardener

No interest in 'Winter interest'

Marianne Willburn

Rose colored glasses and a heavy coat are still standard issue for most fair-weather gardeners in the last weeks of March. As winter reluctantly gives up its hold on soil, root and sanity, there is as much to ignore as to celebrate, and there's never enough color – no matter how many bulbs were roughly planted by flashlight and drill auger in the closing moments of December.

The relative nakedness of daffodils, crocus and snowdrops against a still apocalyptic tundra is certainly cheering; but when glasses are removed, it becomes apparent that what's needed to tie them all together is a freshness and vigor that evergreen foundation shrubs can't provide.

Solving problems one garden at a time

For decades, the presence of a few hellebores in a garden signified either competence or inheritance. They were your gardening grandmother's secret – a deer resistant (not deer-proof!), shade-tolerant, evergreen perennial with solid hardiness in USDA Zones 4-8 (and a little wiggle room on both ends for some species). Those in the know,

knew. Others grew hosta and wept when the deer showed up.

Even the most down-market of hellebore species with a penchant for promiscuity – *H. orientalis* – is a charming and versatile plant. Bitter winds might burn the clumps of leathery, palmate foliage; but vibrant green leaves will unfurl in late winter to replace them, while copious flowers open in colors from white-green to plum-charcoal, depending on the subspecies.

A secret weapon in the early spring garden

I couldn't tell you the parentage of those that fill in the gaps under my winter berries and continue to proliferate without shame, but I know that I love them.

Their foliage fills the tragedy of empty, ravaged soil in part sun or shade, and provides a stunning backdrop to bulbs and emerging perennials. Later, the hellebore's shade tolerance and relative strength allows it to transition to groundcover as surrounding deciduous shrubs and trees put on leaves and spring turns into summer. Seedlings emerge in late winter as numerous as stars.

For those that have had a hillside of *H. x hybridus* for years, it becomes second nature to pull out drab seedlings (they can take three years to flower), and select for new and interesting colors and flower forms. But for the newbie with

only a few plants, a hellebore seedling is a present to be unwrapped – a treasured and precious surprise. I'm still in the save-and-sift-seedlings stage of my gardening life.

But there is a caveat, as there often is with most things that seem too good to be true. Though the flowers of many hellebore species age slowly with the strength and grace of Paulina Porizkova, they don't share her posture, nodding towards the soil and forcing the gardener to bend over to fully view them.

For this reason, gardeners often float the sturdy blossoms in bowls or trays to create exquisite winter tablescapes and establish instant horticultural credentials over dinner.

Enter the Cover Girls

Over the last decades, excellent breeding programs in the U.K, Europe and the United States have expanded the gardener's palette with delicate, beautiful flowers on strong plants that tickle the collector's spirit. Doubles, freckles, picotees, reverse picotees, suffusions of gold... the cultivars are astonishing, and captivating.

In 2010 the patent for a new kind of hellebore was filed by German breeder Josef Heuger – a plant that held its deep rose-pink blooms outward on strong, dark stems. Its name eventually became 'Pink Frost', and it was a game changer – particularly in the florist world. Many others followed, florists swooned; and consumers began to pay more attention to their grandmother's flower.

Don't Break the Bank

Do you have to grow the expensive hybrids to grow hellebores? Absolutely not. Thanks to the promiscuity of the afore mentioned *H. x hybridus* (*H. orientalis*) hellebores and the dissected leaf *H. foetidus* seedlings, I have a hillside of wonderful no named cultivars.

If you care what color/form is coming into your garden, it's important to always buy a plant with at least one bloom as seedlings are incredibly variable. If you don't care, you're liable to score some amazing tiny plants with great potential – and some free plants from friends that will still delight you.

It is a beautiful bridge between seasons that will be decorating my house and garden for the next five to six weeks, and I wouldn't be without them. Don't let another year go by in your garden without cultivating this kind of joy. -MW

Marianne is the author of *Big Dreams, Small Garden*. You can read more at www.smalltowngardener.com.

Frederick County Master Gardeners March Seminars

March 9: "Bee Habitats" A successful pollinator garden consists of more than pretty flowers. Shelter is a necessary element in supporting our critical insects. Join us in learning about native bee habitats, and learn how to make a bee hotel you can hang in your garden.

March 23: "Creating a Flower Cutting Garden & Flower Arrangements" Learn how to design, plant, and harvest flowers from your own cutting garden. Discover the best sun and shade annuals for cutting

and how to maintain the garden for maximum production. We will also demonstrate techniques for creating arrangements.

All seminars are free unless otherwise stated. Seminars are held at the University of Maryland Extension office at 330 Montevue Lane, (off Rosemont Avenue) in Frederick, from 10 to 12 noon. For more information and sign-up links, visit the Events section of the Master Gardeners Frederick County Maryland Facebook page, or call the extension office at 301-600-1595.



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PETS

Boomer and Bitzy

Jennifer Vanderau
Cumberland Valley
Animal Shelter

My name is Bitzy. I didn't get the name when I was made. I only got it once I came into the home where I live with my best friend, Boomer. He's a Golden Retriever and we are inseparable.

Yes, I'm a dog toy named Bitzy. It was tough for me to wrap my stuffed head around at first, too.

I was made to be a dog's best friend, but in the factory and then in the store, I had heard a lot of awful stories about how many dog toys don't make it or don't last. They maybe get played with for a little bit, but then they're forgotten, like the joy they brought didn't matter.

But see the thing I've learned about joy is that it's important, no matter how long you know it or where you find it.

I'm so grateful for Boomer. He carries me with him just about everywhere he goes.

We're kind of like a couple. People actually call us Bitzy and Boomer when they see us coming, especially on our nightly walks with Mom and Dad through the neighborhood. The lady next doors actually laughs out loud when she sees Boomer carrying me in his mouth.

I think we both get a kick out of it.

Boomer sleeps with me each night on the fluffy part of his dog bed.

I'm not sure how I got this lucky, but I've been with Boomer since he was a puppy. When Mom first found me in the store, I couldn't believe she picked me for the little Golden puppy at her feet. Some of the other toys kind of sneered at me when Mom put me in the cart.

I know they were just jealous.

Some of them even told me as we walked away that it wouldn't last. I'd be garbage in a week, something for mice and rats to shred.

That made me shiver a little bit because I wasn't sure. The toys that told those stories just seemed so certain. How could things be different for me?

But they were different. Boomer and I bonded that first night. Oh, how he would chase me around the house and toss me in the air and chew on my legs and his sharp little puppy teeth would dig into my stuffing and I knew I was helping keep them clean as they were developing in his mouth.

I know a lot of people think toys are just a joke, but we're really not. We do a lot to help the animals we are made for. There are probably some humans who get that, but a lot don't.

Boomer and I know what we are to each other and that's what matters.

I can't tell you how happy I was to be there for Boomer as he grew up and became the amazing dog he is today. See, that's a toy's job. We get made to provide companionship and activity for a four-legged friend, so to be able to supply that makes me feel complete.

Sometimes I wish I could go back to the store where Mom bought me just to tell the other toys that life can work out exactly the way you want it to. But then I wonder what became of those toys that were with me on the shelves and I stop thinking about that in favor of being dragged into the kitchen with Boomer for dinner.

Mom takes care of me. She washes me up and makes sure I'm as clean as I can be for Boomer. She reattaches my legs when Boomer gets a little too excited and pulls on my stuffing.

See, Golden Retrievers are good when hunting fowl. They don't grab all that hard onto the prey. Instead, they carry it in what's called a soft mouth, so it's not completely destroyed for the hunter. That's why Boomer loves to carry me in his mouth. He's doing what he was bred to do.

Goldens also make good guide dogs and I can totally see that in Boomer. He's always looking out for the people in his life: Mom, Dad, the kids, the neighbors.

He's really an amazing dog.

I've noticed recently, though, that Boomer seems to be slowing down a bit. It's hard for me to

remember how long we've been together, but I do know when I first got here, the kids were little and the oldest is going off to college next fall.

So we've been together a long while.

There's some grey hair around Boomer's muzzle now and our walks through the neighborhood are a lot slower than they once were. If I could talk, I'd probably tease Boomer a little about his advancing years.

It's the middle of the night a day or two later and it dawns on me, rather abruptly, that Boomer won't be around forever. Living beings age. I never fully understood the reasons behind it. It's just one of life's certainties. As I watch him sleep next to me on the dog bed, I wonder how much time we have left. I wonder what will become of me when he's gone.

A shiver runs along my legs and as though sensing something, Boomer snuffles and tosses a paw across my stomach.

I hope he somehow can remember what we are to each other, what we mean to each other. When he jams his cold doggie nose into my neck, I truly think he gets it.

In that moment, under the moonlight, next to Mom and Dad's bed, I decide to love this beautiful dog for exactly how long I get to and be grateful and happy and proud for what I've been given and what I've been able to give in return.

The Boomer and Bitzy story won't end just because we do. That's the thing about real love – it can never truly be destroyed.

And it's so very, very special – no matter where you find it.

Jennifer Vanderau is the Publications and Promotions Consultant for the Cumberland Valley Animal Shelter and can be reached at cvascomm@cvas-pets.org. The shelter accepts both monetary and pet supply donations. For more information, call the shelter at 717-263-5791 or visit the website www.cvas-pets.org. CVAS also operates a thrift store in Chambersburg. Help support the animals at the shelter by donating to or shopping at the store.



Cameron is a sweet dilute calico girl who arrived at the shelter as a stray. She is 4-year-old and would love to find her loving forever home soon! Cameron likes napping in a soft bed and getting treats. Could she be the one for you?



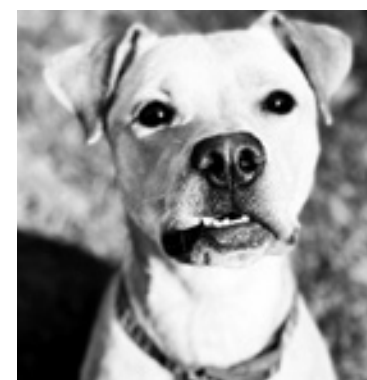
Goji Berry came into the shelter after being found abandoned in a house with 20 other cats. He was covered in fleas, skinny, and was missing a lot of fur. Since his arrival at the shelter over the summer, he's gotten in shape and is a good looking boy who actually likes to jump on shoulders! Goji Berry would love to find out what it means to have a loving forever home and have someone that would never leave him behind again. Could that be you?



Angel was surrendered to the shelter when her owner could no longer care for her. She is a 3-year-old labradoodle, or Lab/Poodle mix and will need someone who can make sure that she gets groomed regularly to prevent her fur from matting. She does jump up and can be too much for small children. Angel would do best in a home where she is the only pet. An active family would be best for her. Can you help Angel out? CVAS, 5051 Letterkenny Road West, Chambersburg, PA 17201, Kennel License# 2090.



Nino was surrendered to the shelter because someone in the home was allergic to him. He is an 8-month-old pug/beagle mix who will need someone to have patience with him. Nino is a sweet guy, but can be shy when he first meets you. He loves to play with toys and enjoys getting treats! He does know sit but does need some work on reinforcing the command. Nino would love to find his second chance at a loving forever home soon! CVAS, 5051 Letterkenny Road West, Chambersburg, PA 17201 Kennel License# 2090.



Olivia is a smart, fun-loving girl that will need a strong leader. Due to this an age restriction for children in the home may apply, please discuss this with shelter staff. Olivia does have a high chase drive and does not seem to care for the company of other dogs so being the only pet in the home may be best for Olivia. A fenced in yard is highly recommended for Olivia. Do you have the right place for this cute girl? CVAS, 5051 Letterkenny Road West, Chambersburg, PA 17201, Kennel License# 2090

For more information about Cameron, Goji, Angel, Nino, or Olivia call the Cumberland Valley Animal Shelter at 717-263-5791, or visit them online at www.cvaspets.org or better yet, visit them in person at the shelter.

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

To a poor and lonely stray I'd give:

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

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

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

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

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

-- Author Unknown

petco foundation

Michelob

Shawn Snyder
Frederick County Animal Shelter

Frederick County Animal Control and Pet Adoption Center currently has approximately 100 animals in our care. All will make wonderful four-legged friends for the right families, well, all except for two. It's not because they aren't friendly animals with unique personalities. Nope. It's simply because they are three-legged. That's right, FCAC currently has two special tripod cats available for adoption.

The first is our senior tripod, Michelob. This handsome black and white domestic shorthair came to us as a stray after being found in a Michelob Ultra box at a local store. Shelter staff have estimated him to be about eight years old. He has quickly proven himself to be a laid back and affectionate guy with an affinity for

sitting on laps and purring. The fact that he's missing a portion of his right front leg doesn't keep him down one bit. Michelob moves around with ease and is quite playful when the mood strikes. While our shelter veterinarian states that he seems comfortable and that amputating the remainder of his leg is not necessary, she has recommended blood work and a dental for this senior.

Our second tripod cat is five-to-six-month-old Prada. Apart from her missing left hind foot, this gorgeous tortie and white girl is your typical kitten. She can be a little shy in new environments, but she quickly warms up. She is incredibly affectionate and playful. She's a champion biscuit maker and purrs nonstop. Prada moves around without issue but does use her stump to balance which can cause her to list to the left. Like Michelob, the shelter vet does not believe amputation of the remaining limb is necessary for

Prada at this time, but if it were to become painful or she uses it to the point that it causes her to fall over to the left frequently, it may be considered. As a bonus, Prada has an equally adorable four-legged sister named Dior. The pair are bonded and need to be adopted together.

Adopting a three-legged cat is pretty much the same as adopting their four-legged counterparts. Very few modifications need to be made for them because like Michelob and Prada, they adapt quickly. If needed some owners provide rugs or carpet as added traction for their furry family members. Ramps or landings can be helpful aids as cats move to and from higher surfaces as jumping can be more of a challenge. Minor adjustments to litter boxes may also need to be made and three-legged cats sometimes have issues entering boxes or need taller boxes to keep everything inside the litter box if they are unable to squat to go to the bathroom.



The most important thing to remember when adding a tripod cat to your home is to keep them at a healthy weight. While it's recommended that every pet maintain a healthy physique it is more important for those with three legs. Additional weight can increase the stress on the existing limbs causing arthritis and other mobility problems. Con-

sult your vet about proper nutrition and make sure your tripod gets plenty of exercise. Joint supplements may also be recommended.

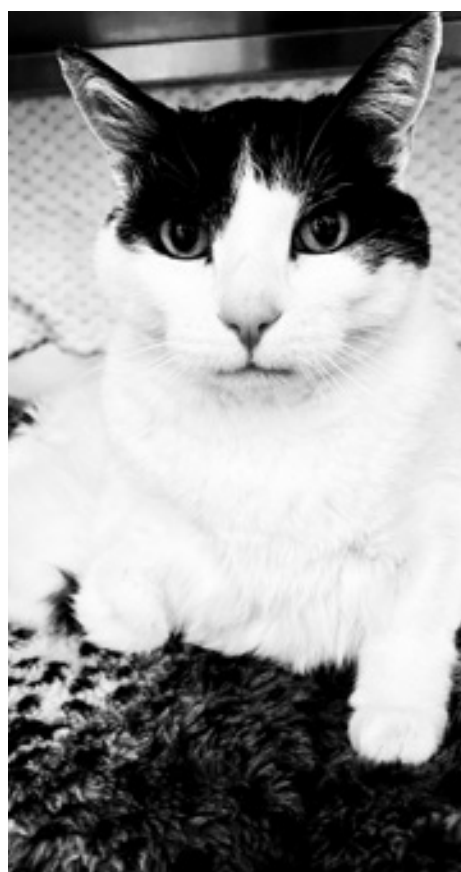
Prada and Dior have been placed with one of the shelter's rescue partners. However, if you're interested in making Michelob the newest addition to your family, go to visitfcac.as.me to book your appointment to meet him.



Angel shares a common story with many shelter residents. Her family moved and their new home did not allow pets. Angel is seven years old and lived with the same family her entire life. She shared her previous home with a cat but prefers to be an only dog. Angel's adoption fee is \$72.50 and includes spaying, microchipping, routine vaccinations, a veterinarian wellness visit and Frederick County dog license.



Ms. Bellatrix is a little shy when meeting new people but warms up quickly with patience. At only eight months old, she is energetic and loves to play outside. She was part of an unplanned litter, however, her owner decided not to keep her. Bellatrix hopes to find a family that is willing provide her proper training and socialization. Do you have what it takes to commit to Bellatrix?



Michelob was given his name because he was found at a beer store in Urbana. Without a doubt, he was someone's beloved pet. Michelob is confident, laid-back, friendly and doesn't appear to have missed a meal. Also, he is missing part of his right front leg, which would make it difficult for him to survive outdoors. Michelob's easy-going personality will make him a great fit for almost any family.



Shelter cat population decreases during the winter months and Andre is currently one of eight cats available for adoption. He willingly greets visitors who stop by his cage and does not object to being held.

For more information about Julia, Angel, Ms. Bellatrix, Michelob, or, Andre call the Frederick County Animal Shelter at 301-600-1319 or visit them online at www.frederickcountymd.gov/fcac.

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“Our waterways — the Chesapeake Bay, the Potomac River, and the countless other rivers and creeks — are essential to a healthy environment and our economy.”

DAVID TRONE

DEMOCRAT FOR U.S. SENATE

If you ask any Marylander about their childhood, chances are they'll have a story or two about the water. Fishing, crabbing, sailing, or swimming - our state's environmental health and economy depend on our waterways.

Our Economy and Health Depend on Clean Water and Air

Marylanders know our commitment to the environment should not be a political issue. It is a defining characteristic of what it means to be a Marylander — a deep respect, admiration, and commitment to protecting our environment. This begs the question: if we acknowledge that we care so much about our environment, why haven't we done more to protect it?

We Must Take Action and Get the Job Done

I'm proud of my voting record to protect our environment. I don't take a penny in contributions from any PAC, Lobbyist, or Corporation - and that gives me the independence to crack down on corporate polluters and vote for measures to turn back climate change. In the U.S. Senate, I'll vote to encourage more electric vehicles, for a 50% reduction in greenhouse gases by 2030, to hold corporate polluters responsible, and to ban new drilling for fossil fuels on public lands.

Teaching Our Children That Our Environment Matters

Most importantly, we need to educate our children about how much our environment matters. We can teach our kids about the damage that has been caused throughout our lives and generations before us. We can teach them about sustainability and the role that they can play in the solution. And we can teach them how deeply ingrained our waterways are in our state's culture.

DAVID TRONE
U.S. SENATE

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Woodsboro-Walkersville NEWS-JOURNAL SECTION 2

Girl Scouts: behind the cookies

Mia Ferraro
UMD Class of 2026

We're at the point in the season when those Thin Mints you ordered should be arriving at your doorstep and cookie booths are beginning to make appearances around local businesses to satisfy your year-long cravings. It's official – Girl Scout cookie season is here, and these savory cookies have more to offer than taste alone.

The Frederick County Girl Scouts – Association 37 – have started filling pre-orders after receiving the goods mid-January, said Jennie Mettert-Young, the Frederick County Association Chair. The Girl Scouts begin setting up cookie booths this month and will continue through March, Mettert-Young said.

Entrepreneurship is just one of the four key focuses of Girl Scout leadership activities, according to the official Girl Scouts Nation's Capital website, along with the outdoors, STEM and life skills.

The Girl Scout Cookie Program in itself teaches all sorts of life skills. As the largest girl-run business in the world, the cookie program enables girls to engage with customers and handle transactions. This teaches them life lessons like people skills and business ethics, according to the website.

"The girls don't even realize half the time that they're learning these things, because they're just having fun," Mettert-Young said.

The profit proceeds benefit the girls to provide support for experiences, learning opportunities, girl-led programs, service work and campgrounds.

"It also gives them a chance to make decisions and create budgets and decide how they want to spend the money that they've earned," said Victoria Pnacek, the Walkersville Service Unit Manager.

The cookie program teaches goal-setting, decision-making and money management, according to the website. The Girl Scouts work together to decide how to spend the funds towards opportunities for a troop, regional division – called a service unit – association or council.

Camping is one of the outdoors activities that the Girl Scouts often like to plan, said Allison Wack, the Brunswick Service Unit Manager.

"We love going camping," Wack said. "We have some of the best council camps in the country. I mean, we have beautiful facilities for the troops to use."

Staying true to the guarantee of STEM-focused activities, the association has been working with Hood College for months to form a STEM program for Girl Scouts across the county in seventh grade and up, Mettert-Young said. They are hosting the first session in February and a robotics event will take place in March where the members will have a chance to create robots.

The association also runs a program called Frederick Older Girls (FROG) in which Girl Scouts from middle and high school – Cadettes, Seniors and Ambassadors – across the county get together once a month and plan activities. These activities sometimes include escape rooms, roller skating and whitewater rafting, said Wack.

This past year, the association began FROG's sister program, Traveling FROGs, in which the Girl Scouts take trips to the travel destination of their choice. The Girl Scouts have a trip planned for London next year and are also planning trips to Hawaii and Iceland.

The Traveling FROGs took their first trip in September to visit Savannah, Georgia, the birthplace of the Girl Scouts' founder, Juliette Gordon Low. The group visited Low's house and took a tour of the first Girl Scouts headquarters.

Low founded the Girl Scouts in 1912. 11 years later, the first troop in Frederick County began at the Maryland School for the Deaf. Today the Frederick County association is a part of the Girl Scout Council of the Nation's Capital, the largest Girl Scout council in the country. There are 167 troops in Frederick County, which makes up 2,063 Girl Scouts and 1,142 volunteers, Mettert-Young said.

There is always room for more girls to join a troop, Mettert-Young said. The association hosts multiple recruitment events throughout the year where girls who may be interested in joining can speak to Girl Scouts about what it would be like to join. Eighty-eight girls attended the last recruitment event this past month, Mettert-Young said, and 55 of them were put into troops that day.

"The rest of them we need to form new troops for, which is fabulous," she said.

But getting the word out about recruitment to families isn't easy. Until recently, the Girl Scouts used to be able to occasionally send out flyers in the weekly folders that would be sent home with Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS) students.

"It's a challenge to get flyers into the school system," Mettert-Young said. "There's a process in place and you can only submit so many times a year, so if a parent misses a flyer at the beginning of the year, they may not know that there are troops being formed."

In January, however, FCPS implemented a new system to replace the weekly folders in all public schools. Instead of sending home paper copies, Mettert-Young said the public schools are now uploading the flyers online with a fee of \$25 per flyer, per school. The flyers are taken off of the website after 30 days, she said.

"It's quite an expense when you run a non-profit organization, you know?" Mettert-Young said. "25 dollars would be close to covering the membership for a girl for a year." She also discussed the concern that some families "don't necessarily have that technology readily available at home."

"We're not really sure how we're gonna navigate it yet but we're gonna try to come up with some strategies," Mettert-Young said.

The lack of needed adult volun-



The first troop in Frederick County began at the Maryland School for the Deaf. Today there are 167 troops in Frederick County, with 2,063 Girl Scouts and 1,142 volunteers.

teers is another issue the association faces. Wack said there are typically more girls who want to join than there are troops available for them. While she would love to have a troop for each level at every elementary school in the area, Wack said, the Girl Scouts typically have multi-level troops or troops that take girls from several different schools because of the lack of volunteers.

"I think the fear of the time commitment and the lack of experience working with kids intimidates many people," Wack said. "I think people also don't consider that there are positions besides being a leader that are integral to troops' success."

To have a troop, at least four adults need to volunteer. There are always two leaders, a money manager and a cookie manager, so it should never be one volunteer's responsibility to lead the troop on their own, Wack said. All volunteers receive free training through the council.

"I think most adults, once they get in it, their blood gets green like mine," Mettert-Young said.

Anyone interested in volunteering or joining a troop can find more information and register through the Girl Scouts of Nation's Capital website. www.gscnc.org.

Being a Girl Scout "really empowers the girls in ways that they may not get anywhere else," Pnacek said. She spoke of her own experiences watching her daughter, a Girl Scout, speak up for herself and display confidence in situations "as simple as going up to a counter and ordering food," she said.

"It teaches you how to respect nature. It teaches you how to get along with people," Mettert-Young said. "It teaches you how to be organized and how to set goals, how to follow through on these goals. I mean, there are just so many life lessons that you learn from being a Girl Scout."



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HISTORY

Woodsboro Remembers

Francis Meehan Smith

Continued from last month

Reminiscences

Barbara Dorcus Kreh remembers the Dorcus Store

The property known as Dorcus Store stands in the center of Woodsboro. It is an old and interesting landmark which time put to varied uses.

The original house was built of stone. Added later was an adjoining front room and store building of wooden construction.

Sometime before 1900 it was used as a residence and carriage shop by Marshall Gilbert and his family.

It was then bought by Dr. George F. Smith and his family who lived there and conducted a Drug Store in which he operated a soda fountain. It was here I am told by his daughter Mrs. Lillian Bair, that Dr. Smith the owner of fine phonograph, invited his friends and neighbors for an evening of music every week.

In 1927, Harry Dorcus acquired the property from Dr. Smith. In 1922 Mr. and Mrs.

Dorcus moved into the big, old house and settled down to raise a family of five children and run a general store which was to become "more general" as the years went by. Mr. Charles Hahn was employed-as one of the first clerks. At that time he was courting Miss Frances Donsife who soon became Mrs. Hahn.

At this time the second floor over the store became a Pool Parlor. Later, when Mr. Dorcus became a Justice of the Peace for that district. The "pool room" became the courtroom where all kinds of cases were heard, usually, to standing room only. It was often feared the Court would fall into the store below.

As Mr. Dorcus was very enterprising, there was always a "sideline" to the store. A complete shoe repair shop was installed in what was the carriage house. At one time he sold a line of farm machinery. The store boasted a varied inventory, almost anything from penny candy to long winter underwear for both sexes. It was said, "If you can't find it anyplace else Harry could get it."

During almost forty years of "storekeeping" Mr. Heze-

kiah Shank from New Midway, Frank Winebrenner, and lastly, Mr. Harry Nichols who could fix everything from a flashlight to a car, were employed by Mr. Dorcus.

Saturday evening, Woodsboro, especially in the summertime, assumed a holiday atmosphere. Families walked, rode in carriages or buggies, all in their best, and in a gay mood. At the store extra help was called in to fill the large weekly orders and count the large eggs which many customers brought from the country to exchange for groceries.

The soda fountain sent forth servings of ice cream in pint and quart sizes, not to speak of the wondrous banana splits.

Later in the evening it was my father's custom to have an auction of bananas (by the bunch) and watermelons that had been trucked from Baltimore earlier in the day. This usually attracted a large crowd, some among them, having finished their "weekly bottle", were ready for a bit of "fighting and feuding." Edward Stitely who was both the auctioneer and local sheriff was a very busy man.

About midnight there was a general exodus and the town would



Late 1950's photo showing houses on Main Street before demolition for Trout's Food Market.

settle back for another week.

During the critical shortages of World War II, Mr. Dorcus, through long experience and contacts, was able to supply some of the scarce commodities.

"Scrounging" for the store became a very challenging game.

Time and progress brought an end to the Dorcus store. Mr. Dorcus retired in 1959.

As I look at one of the old wooden benches that stood in front of the store for so many years, I think of so many who paused there for a while each day. Particularly, I think I hear Pete Donsife laughing loudly at one of Melvin (Tuck) Ander's remarks or I hear James Reddick beating a "rat a tat" on his imaginary drum. Perhaps it is Barber Long (Mr. Lester) giggling happily over the latest ball scores to Arch Stimmel.

I believe that is Baxter Smith smiling very contentedly.

Mae Dorcus

Gross remembers ...

"This must have happened around 1902. I do not know the present day names of the streets, but on the west side of the Back Street in the block corresponding to the block on Main Street, between the home of the late George Huffman and Lillian Baer, there was a two room log house occupied by a dear little old lady known to everyone as Aunt Easter Beck.

"There was a black walnut tree beside the house. Aunt Easter made black walnut taffy and molded it in circles about the size of a teacup. These she sold to the neighborhood children for one penny.

"She also made and sold various healing remedies. One I remember distinctly. It was a salve for boils and carbuncles. My father suffered from these repeatedly.

One day when I was quite small, Mother gave me a little container

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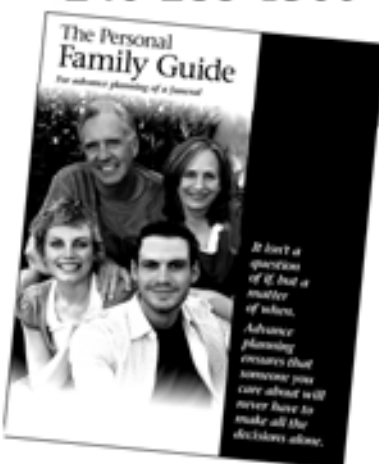
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HISTORY



Maurice Saylor's store

nal state. New occupants inevitably sought to convert the premises to meet family and business needs, adding or removing as deemed necessary or convenient.

Originally each home no doubt had a business housed on the property as the early residents sought out a trade, craft, or service for their livelihood. The village was mainly self sufficient in goods and services, with the exception of some raw materials such as metals, salt, sugar, and molasses. All other products were produced and crafted locally.

Two of the town's older citizens recall some of the former occupants and businesses of many locations in town.

Raleigh Winebrenner remembers the mill operated by Albert Ecker near the Railroad Station. Next to the mill the Holbrunner brothers made flour barrels. On the town side of the station was the printing establishment of the Banner of Liberty operated by

Harry Lewis who employed Charlotte Donsife and Marion Eichelberger. Later the business moved to a new building down the alley from the Lutheran Church. Mr Lewis later committed suicide by hanging himself near the canning factory. The paper was then published by Augustus Clem.

On the top of Statlon Hill, on the north, was the stone building used first by the Methodist Church and later as a schoolhouse. Also there were lime burning kilns on the eastern slope of the hill

At the foot of the hill in the fork of the road was a large stone building (Slagle's Inn), which was destroyed by fire in the early 1900's.

Across the road on the east side of Main Street was the tombstone business of John Lough. Charles Anders operated the National Hotel in the building now owned by Dan the Barber (Lot Number 2).

On down the street, west side. George and Marshall Stimmel operated a confectionery store. Next

was the Drug Store of Dr. George Smith.

The Bank Building was the site of a wooden structure where John Newman had a store. Jacob Adams had an undertaker's establishment on Lot Number 19.

At the corner of Libertytown and Frederick Road (Routes 550 and 194) stood an old log house which was torn down when Otho Donsife and Son. Robert built their blacksmith shop.

A dry goods store was run by Kate Stimmel on Lot Number 33 and an undertaker's business by Mr. and Mrs. Sharets on Lot Number 32.

Dr. Wager and later Dr. Kable had offices in the brick building on the northeast corner of Elizabeth and Frederick Streets, now the home of Mrs. Lillian Bair.

Dr. G.F. Smith built a new home where three homes once stood: one a bakery operated by Mr. Wisotzky, one a barbershop, and one an ice cream parlor.

continued next month

and told me to get some of Aunt Easier Beck's salve. She was out of it said she was too old to make any more. She graciously gave Mother her recipe.

For some reason, before i was married, I copied this recipe, along with several others I wanted, in my cookbook I used when taking Domestic Science at Woman's College or Hood as it is known today. I thought you might appreciate the recipe:

Aunt Easter Beck's Salve

(good for boils)

1 cup fish oil

1 cup sweet oil

1 cup sheep tallow

1 cup bee's wax

Boll the above. Add three table-spoons of turpentine when taken from fire. When slightly cooled,

add one well-beaten egg.

"Also, across the street from our home was a two story, four room frame house. The siding was of boards at least a foot wide, put on perpendicularly and then whitewashed. This was occupied by a Mrs. Hope. In the side yard was a draw well and a large bake oven where Mrs. Hope baked her pies and bread and also dried her fruit. This was located at Main Street and Liberty Road.

"Miss Mae" died shortly after sending the above to the author.

Changes

Through the past two hundred years the buildings in Woodsboro have often times changed hands frequently As a consequence, few structures remain in their origi-

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100 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

March 7

Leap Year Adds Extra Day's Pay

County residents on Friday enjoyed an extra 24 hours of life, a gift which is made them once every four years. Falling on a weekday, February 29th adds an extra day's pay to the envelope of those who work in the factories and industries of this county. Stores did an extra day's business for the year. On the other hand, three extra meals were prepared and served, requiring an expense on the part of the consumer, which he does not have in ordinary years of 365 days.

The extra day is not a free gift on the part of the almanac makers. In allowing us an additional 24 hours every four years they are only paying back the usury, so to speak, which they withhold in ordinary years. Our calendar is based on the solar year, or time it takes for the Earth to revolve about the sun, which is 365 days, five hours and approximately 49 minutes. The extra hours and minutes accumulate and are handed out in the shape of this extra day added to the month of February each fourth year.

The term 'leap' in connection with the year, and day, is derived from the fact that days following February 29 'leap' over a day more than a common year. Thus, in common years, if March 1 is on a Saturday, it will 'leap over' Saturday and fall on Sunday.

Women Versus Woman In Assault Case

Cora Wiles, of Lewistown, was arrested Friday by the County Constable for assault and battery, and also on a peace Warrant, sworn out by Rena Pedro, also of Lewistown.

About six years ago, Mrs. Wiles was divorced from her husband, Jerry Wiles, so the story runs. Wiles mar-

ried again and over course of time, his second wife died. Wiles then began to pay attention to his first wife again, finally remarrying her.

Now another element enters into the story, which caused the case to come within the law. Mrs. Wiles accuses Mrs. Pedro, it is said, a paying attention to her husband. On Friday, Mrs. Wiles, while walking along the road near Lewistown, saw Mrs. Pedro coming along in her automobile. Wiles picked up a handful of stones and threw them at Mrs. Pedro while the latter was passing. One of the stones hit the back of the automobile, making a dent in the body it is said.

Mrs. Pedro then had Wiles arrested. She was brought before the Justice Of The Peace, who held her under \$500 bond on the Peace Warrant, and a future hearing on the assault and battery charge.

March 14

Worst Blizzard In 15 Years

After being visited by a sever storms which struck this section on Monday night and Tuesday morning, Frederick and Adams County are slowly recovering from the effects of its fury, and power and telephone service was being restored gradually. Permanent repairs will not, however, be affected for days, if not weeks.

The blizzard, which reached the proportion of a cyclone, swept over the area on Monday night and increased in intensity during the hours which followed. Towards morning when it abated somewhat and the damage was ascertained it was seen at the telephone, telegraph, & power lines have been severely damaged by the force of nature.

Huge telephone poles were snapped in half like toothpicks. Many of them



were raised completely out of the ground and buried under snow across the road. Arms and wires went hurling through the air and landed a nearby field or along the road. Wires snapped as it was no stronger than a piece of weak string and ends today dangle in mid air or are covered up under the snow along the highway.

When wire service will be resorted is in question. In many areas, entire new lines will be necessary, as very little of the wire can be used again, because of the number of breaks and poles to be replaced. Other poles, still standing, will have to be reset.

Nearly three quarters of a million dollars is the estimated total for repairing the telephone poles, cable and wires destroyed by the devastating storm according to the Chesapeake & Potomac Telephone Co.

Every available repairman in the state has been placed in service, and in addition, repairmen have been brought in from other states, making a total of about 10,000 men working to repair the lines. These men have been working day and night in order that service may be restored as rapidly as possible.

A number of automobiles are reported to have been stranded along the roads and persons in these cars were forced to abandon them, several machines were almost covered with snow.

County roads in the vicinity of Foxville, Woodsboro, Sabillasville, Emmitsburg, Deerfield, Thurmont and Fairfield are reported to still be closed with snowdrifts. State road crews dispatched from Frederick have only been able to open the Emmitsburg Pike as far as Thurmont.

In many homes, lamps and lanterns are being used for lighting purposes; all electric motors are also out of commission. The average snowfall was 12 to 13

inches, but the drifting was limited due to the heavy wet character of the snow.

While Tuesday's snow and wind storm, is unusually severe for March, local records show that at least one storm in a past March had gone at one better, that being the blizzard of 1888, almost 36 years ago to the day, was of three days duration, beginning March 12th and not ending until the 14th.

While there was a heavy snowfall, it was mostly a windstorm as was this past one. The wind, according to the record books, blew incessantly for three days and three nights, toppling over trees. The actual damage done in the storm of '88, however, was not so great as during the late storm, for at that time they were but few telephone polls to be blown over and even fewer telephones to be put out of commission. Also, there were no automobiles to suffer mishaps, nor plants having to shut down for lack of electric current.

In reviewing his weather records, Mr. Quinn, our local weather sharp, grew reflective and said that: "winters of today cannot compare with those of his boyhood". He said that: "the winters today are, in reality, about six weeks in duration, beginning about February 1st and continuing until about the middle of March."

"When I was a boy," he continue, "when we all went out to gather chestnuts on Thanksgiving day, we thought something would happen if there wasn't snow on the ground and we didn't know what it was like to miss a white Christmas."

He added that they didn't need any ice machines in those days, because they had

plenty of ice every winter. "Ice, from 8 to 12 inches thick in the creeks, was of the finest possible quality and that there was a lot of slaying, and skating all winter."

He added that, "where is the local creeks seldom freezes over these days, at that time boys and girls could be seen at any time of the winter skating on the creeks. The water was deeper in the creek then."

Adventurous End to Honeymoon

Mr. and Mrs. Roy Baumgardner returned home last Wednesday evening, and had quite an experience until they got to the journey's end. They were met at the Keymar train station by Joseph Clabaugh in his automobile, so they went on their way rejoicing, until they got as far as T. R. Angeli's, where Clabaugh's Henry skidded into the side drain. Through the kindness of Mr. Angeli, with his pair of mules, they were towed to the road again. They went on until they came to the mud road, when the Henry refused to go, so the called on Maurice Hahn, who came to the rescue with his pair of mules and towed them to the bride's home. Mr. and Mrs. Baumgardner will never forget the return of their wedding trip, as they had to be rescued by faithful horses and mules to get them home. We wish them a happy and prosperous life.

March 21

New Snow Storm Belies Spring

Heavy snow, following within a few hours after the advent of spring at

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100 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

4:20 on Thursday afternoon, buried the County to nearly a foot. While the snow was not accompanied by the heavy wind that marked the blizzard on Tuesday last week, it was the same damp variety, which clung to trees and wires in a heavy coating. It was due to the lack of wind and sleet, that preventive damage to the wire services.

By noon snow have been following continuously for 12 hours, and although it gave some sine of letting up by then, the promise was not consummated. Little progress has been made by employees in the towns in clearing the precipitation from street crossings, although most payments in towns were either completely shoveled or had paths made for pedestrians. Where pavements were not shoveled pedestrians trampled down paths.

Gumboots and galoshes were footwear for the day, although as the pavements began to be cleaned off the only places these articles of footwear were really necessary where at street crossings. In many places the slush at street corners was over the curb and requires skillful maneuvering to navigate these hazards.

The Western Union Telegraphs Co. reported that services was normal, the temporary lines, erected as a result of last week's storm, carried the burden of the present precipitation apparently without effort. Messages are being sent in all directions and received from all points.

200 Chickens Perish in Woodsboro Fire

Two hundred young chicks belonging to James LeGore were roasted alive in a fire in Mr. LeGore's storeroom in what was formally the old Anders' Hotel property on Frederick St. in Woodsboro, Thursday morning.

The fire, it is thought, was caused by a 'flare up' of a coal stove which, it is understood, Mr. LeGore lighted before his departure - he having been out of town at the time of the fire.

Had it not been for the timely discovery of the fire by a passerby who saw smoke pouring from the building, the blaze might have been much more serious. The fire was put out by means of fire extinguishers secured from the Woodsboro Savings Bank.

Mr. LeGore had just finished pur-

chasing the chicks and had stored them preparatory to disposing of them. All of the chicks were burned to death in the boxes they had been placed in. No other damage was done, save a few pieces of furniture.

At noon, while several schoolboys where playing in the vicinity of the fire, a number of the boys climbed up on a stonewall to view the damage done. One of the stones in the wall gave way, throwing James Reddick forcibly to the ground, breaking his leg in two places.

Ex-Farmer Dies

Samuel Cramer, a well-known farmer of Walkersville, died at his home Sunday morning at the age of 71. Mr. Cramer was a retired farmer. He was one of the organizers of the Walkersville Elevator Co. with which organization he was identified for a number of years. He was a member of the Glade Valley Reformed Church. Burial will be in the Fairview cemetery, Libertytown.

Start Drive For Walkersville Community Hall

A move is a foot in Walkersville for a community hall. For the purpose of establishing sentiment along this line a meeting will be held in the school building, Monday evening, to which everyone interested is invited to be present.

The meeting is called under the auspices of the Women's Club of Walkersville and the subject of the community hall will be presented for a free and frank discussion. Whatever action is taken remains to be decided by the meeting.

Walkersville is one of the most progressive and up-to-date towns in the County, and much credit is due the Women's Club for taking the initiative in a community enterprise that will prove to a lasting benefit to the town. Woodsboro and Thurmont have town halls where public meetings and entertainments are held. In recent years Walkersville has become an important center for club meetings and conventions, and a community hall will provide a place in the future for these gatherings.

\$325 Verdict Against Glade Valley Council

A verdict for \$325 was returned by a jury Wednesday afternoon for Mrs.

Ida Mollen, against the Glade Valley Council No. 112, Junior Order United American Mechanics, for the recovery of a death benefit of her husband, the late Wallace Mollen. The original suit, on the face benefit, was \$525, but Mrs. Mullins acknowledged a credit of \$200 in previous payments and the amount returned by the jury made the benefit payment in full.

The late Mr. Mullins, it was shown, was a member in good standing of the Order at the time of his death, having been a member for many years and kept up his regular payments. The defense, however, contended that the deceased was not insured in the Walkersville Council, but was insured in the National Insurance organization of the Order. Another contention was that the local council and the National Insurance organization were separate units and that the local council was not bound by the terms of the national organization.

It was brought out that the local council had paid \$200 on account of the death of Mr. Mullen, direct to the undertaker and physician without the knowledge of the plaintiff. This amount was acknowledged by the plaintiff and deducted from the original sum of \$525.

Petition for Public Road in Creagerstown

The citizens of Creagerstown, will petition the County Commissioners for the opening of a public road at least 30 feet wide, in the Creagerstown District, beginning at or near the point where the lane or road leading from the building now occupied by Charles Kolb and owned by Isaac Hackney where it intersects the public road leading from Creagerstown to Rocky Ridge and running hence in a westerly direction through the lands of Isaac Hankey, Frank Graber, Louis Rockensmith, connecting with the old Woodsboro and Creagerstown Pike at a point a short distance

north of the lane used as an outlet from the John Albert farm.

March 28

Arbor Day

Arbor Day has been observed in Maryland for tree planting since 1884. Lumber in the State is now being cut three times as fast as it is being grown, and we are using it four times as fast as we are cutting it. This means that we must import the bulk of our timber from other states. But if our waste spaces were utilized this would not be necessary. There are thousands of acres of land in the county now growing nothing, which should be growing timber. The watersheds of many towns should be planted, but if no more important places can be found, at least plant a tree on the street, or highway, school or home ground, for the beauty and shaded it affords. Be "Tree Growers" as well as "Tree Users."

Those who wish special information about Arbor Day and its observations may secure the particularities from the State Department of Forestry, as to suitable exercises for the occasion, trees adapted for planting, how they should be planted, where to plant them and their proper care. The state does not furnish trees free, but will give the names and addresses of nurseries from which they can be purchased.

Child Scolded Buried Today

Frances Lemmon, the youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lemmon of Taney-

town, was fatally scolded Monday around 7 o'clock, when the child backed against a bucket of hot water and toppled into the pale. The little girl who was three years, nine months and 14 days of age. She was so severely scolded that she died about six hours later. Besides her father and mother she is survived by five sisters and three brothers.

Union Bridge Man Takes Own Life

William Shockney, about 32 years old, of Union Bridge, committed suicide Thursday afternoon at his home by shooting himself in the head. The bullet, fired from a 32-caliber pistol, entered the right side of his head, above the temple and he died instantly. The only motive that can be ascribed to the act is poor health. It was stated that he had not been well for the past two months, and it is thought his condition prayed on his mind.

He had been employed as a baggage master of the Western Maryland Railroad for some years, and was of quiet disposition. Thursday he did not go to work. About 4 o'clock in the afternoon he went to his room stating that he intended to shave for supper, after being in his room for half an hour, his wife, who was downstairs, heard the report of a pistol and hurried to his room. When she opened the door she found the lifeless body on the floor with the pistol by his side. He is survived by his wife and three children.

To read other articles related to 100 Years Ago this Month, visit the History section of Walkersville.net.



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Sunday, March 10

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\$25 Per Person

28 Games Total ~ 12 Games at \$100
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SCHOOL AND LIBRARY NEWS

March at the Walkersville Library

Jump into spring with Walkersville Branch Library! Stop by the library to pick out a new book and stay for one of our many programs. There are storytimes, events and programs for folks aged one to 101! Whether you come to learn about Native American settlement on Biggs Ford, your teenager meets friends afterschool or the whole family enjoys storytime together, you're bound to have a good day when it includes the Walkersville Library.

Are you interested in local history or archaeology? Join Dr. Lauren Lipiello, Assistant Professor of Global Studies at F.C.C., for a presentation about the findings

from the archaeological excavations at the Native American site at Biggs Ford on Sunday, March 17th from 1 to 2.

Step into a free exercise program like Freedom BANG, a pre-choreographed fusion of boxing, HIIT, hip hop, world dance, optional weighted gloves and just a touch of attitude. There will be a wide range of intensity options to help you customize your workout to fit your needs. Freedom BANG classes will run on Saturday mornings at 10am in March. Looking for something more mellow? Start the week off with a free yoga class on Monday, March 11 or 25 at

6. Led by instructors from Sol Yoga and designed for all agility levels, this is a great way to wind down and practice self-care on a Monday evening. Another gentle and adaptable form of exercise is Senior Fit Chair Yoga, which will take place on March 19 at 10am.

On Wednesdays at 10 in March, programs designed specifically for adults with intellectual disabilities and their caregivers will take place at the Walkersville Branch Library. Learn some dance moves on March 6 with Rhythm Works dance class and bring your singing voice to karaoke on March 13! Make a new furry friend on March 20 at 10 when the pups from Go Team Therapy visit the library. Read your favorite story to one of the dogs, or just enjoy their friendly company. On March 27, there will be an egg hunt at the library and even a visit from the Easter Bunny!

If you're looking for your own cozy companion, come to the "Kitty Cafe" at the library on Sunday, March 24 from 1:30 to 4 to meet some adoptable cats. Tip Me Frederick Tiplings, Friends for Life Cat Rescue and Cuddles Cat Rescue will share information on the animals they bring, adoption, and all things cats!

Head over to the Walkersville Branch Library to see what's happening at Senior Cafe at 10am on Thursdays in March. Mahjong will take place on March 28,

but you don't need to know how to play to have fun. There will be plenty of coffee, conversation and an engaging topic or event at each program so bring a friend or stop by and make a new one!

The Literacy Council of Frederick County will host a guided conversation class for high beginners of ESL from 6:30 to 7:45 on Mondays in March. Students will practice their speaking and listening skills with conversations guided by an instructor. The Literacy Council requests that interested participants register, which can be done via the FCPL Calendar Event for this program, by calling the Walkersville Branch Library at 301-600-8200. Please contact The Literacy Council at info@frederickliteracy.org if you have questions regarding the classes.

Do you need help expunging your record from a past conviction? An attorney from Maryland Legal Aid will be at the Walkersville Branch Library on March 14 from 4 to 7. They will meet with you for free to discuss your options and begin the process.

Take some time and 'Paws 2 Read' with the Go Team Therapy Dogs on Thursday, March 14 from 6:30 to 7:30. Kids (and adults!) of all ages are invited to share their favorite story and make a new four-legged friend at the library.

Dive into art history, music, and new techniques with your elementary aged children right here at

the Walkersville Branch Library. Friday March 1 is all about finding your musical groove with the Sloan School of Music at 1. The following week, March 8 at 1, get smart about the ancient art of block printing, and take home your creation. Round out the series on March 15 at 1, with an exploration of different art techniques and styles. You can even check out a book or two from the collection of arts and crafts books to keep the inspiration flowing at home!

If you have a 'tween' and are looking for something to do after school, look no further than Tween Tech at the library! Monday, March 4 is "Minecraft Monday" at 6. Join like-minded peers to mine, build, and explore in the library Minecraft Server. Learn all about pixelation and stop motion animation on Monday, March 18 at 6, then create your own pixel art! Tween programs are intended for kids ages 10-13.

Each week at the Walkersville Branch Library, there are afterschool programs for teens to connect with peers, learn new skills, and create while being social. Join us on Tuesdays at 3:30 for Teen Innovation Hour, where you'll explore the world of technology, science and more. Go on a wild Goose Chase with friends on March 5; complete missions, score points and capture comical snapshots along the way! Keep up with tech and learn how to generate AI images with Midjourney on March 12, and unleash your inner artist to explore the world of woodburning and pyrography on March 19. The librarians want your help! The last Tuesday of the month is for the Teen Library Council meeting; join peers on March 26 at 3:30 to share ideas for programs you'd like to see take shape at the Walkersville Branch Library. Teens can provide input and assistance with programs in the future and even earn volunteer hours for being involved!

Teen Connect happens on Fridays at 3:30, this is a great opportunity to engage with friends, peer mentors and learn about teen-ori-

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SCHOOL AND LIBRARY NEWS

Frederick County Pubic Schools

Jason Johnson
Board of Education

We are excited to announce the Elementary and Secondary Science & Engineering Fair and the Elementary Social Studies Fair! These fairs will take place on Saturday, March 23 at Tuscarora High School.

Registration closes for the Elementary Science and Social Studies fairs on March 18 and on March 3 for the Secondary Science Fair.

The Elementary Science and Social Studies fairs will occur from 9:30 to 11:30 where students will be interviewed about their projects. The Secondary Science and Engineering fair judging will take place from 9 to noon and is open to visitors from 3 to 4, with an awards ceremony beginning right after. A free STEM Showcase, with hands-on science, technology, engineering and math activities is also open to the public from 9 to 11:30. The STEM Showcase is open to students of all grade levels.

Elijah Steele, a junior at Thomas Johnson High School, has been elected as the next Student Member to the Board of Education (SMOB), his one-year term begins on July 1. Elijah intends to focus on mental health awareness and equitable opportunities for all stu-

dents. The SMOB plays a crucial role in representing the student perspective on educational matters within the Board of Education. Elijah's responsibilities include respecting diverse student viewpoints, enhancing communication between the student body, staff, and Board members, and actively engaging students in discussions about board policies and decisions.

We are excited to announce that applications for new members to join the Citizen's Advisory Council (CAC) will be opening soon. The CAC reports directly to the Board and serves as a channel for public concerns, advice and information as identified by the Board. Responsibilities of the CAC include: seeking ideas from the public to address topics related to the education of students; gauging public opinion on timely topics of concern; preparing information and research on issues as directed by the Board; conducting research within the community, including surveys to gauge public opinion on educational matters; and, presenting information, public opinion, and research to the Board as necessary.

Please be aware that Board of Education meetings will temporarily switch to a virtual format to accommodate needed construction inside the Board and Control Rooms. The Board will meet virtually, beginning February 28 through May 1. These meetings will still be open for public comment, and as

always you may reach the Board via email at Board@FCPS.org.

As a closing note, I would like to extend a heartfelt invitation to the members of our esteemed agricultural community to make Fair Day a year-round experience for our students. Our local farms play an integral role in our lives, providing us with nutritious food, contributing to our economic growth, and preserving the natural beauty of our county. Together, we can create meaningful partnerships with local schools, offering educational experiences that extend beyond the confines of a single day. From immersive field trips to engaging in-class demonstrations and heartwarming visits with farm animals, these experiences have the power to educate, inspire, and bring out the best in our students.

Frederick County has a rich legacy of collaboration between its education and business communities. I am optimistic that a greater connection to our valued agricultural businesses will only strengthen this bond. Your involvement will not only make a difference in the lives of our students but also inspire generations to come. Let's sow the seeds of knowledge, curiosity, and appreciation for our agricultural heritage, ensuring a brighter future for all. Thank you for considering this opportunity, and I look forward to witnessing the positive impact we can create together.

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ented community resources. If you're wondering what the next steps in your future are, a Life Coach will be available at the Walkersville Branch Library on March 1. This is an informal opportunity to chat about dreams, goals, and more, so just drop in when you can! Wear comfy clothes and join friends for a calm, free yoga class on March 8, or explore the possibilities of 3D Design and printing with our 3D printer on March 15! Close out the month on March 29 with an Egg Hunt at Creamery Park, across the street from the library.

"Let's Get Ready for Kindergarten" is a program on Wednesdays from 11 to 11:45 where preschoolers and their caregivers can build school ready skills like counting, literacy and exploring their social-emotional selves with peers. Our weekly Fri-YAY Program will continue into the spring from 11 to 11:45 on Fridays. Start the month out on March 1 with Puppet Palooza—bring your

imagination and creativity as you try your hand at puppetry. If you have a budding engineer or future architect, bring them to Fri-YAY on March 8 so they can practice building and designing with a variety of materials and blocks for a morning of fun.

Join our special visitors from the Walkersville Division of Fire and Rescue Services on March 15 to learn what they do and the vehicles they use to help people in need! How do we get from here to there? Let children use their creativity to design, build and explore all types of transportation on March 22. Celebrate the start of spring with a variety of flower and nature themed fun on March 29.

The Walkersville Branch Library will host an Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 30 from 10 to 11:30 Join us for a morning of fun and prizes—rain or shine! Photos with the Easter Bunny and children will hunt for eggs in groups based on their age.

St. Patrick's Day - March 17!
Happy Easter - March 31!

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FOUR YEARS AT THE MOUNT

This month, we asked our writers to reflect on the importance of local, ethical journalism as informed by Edward R. Murrow.

Freshman

Ethics in writing

Gracie Smith
MSMU Class of 2027

Ethical journalism is something that is treasured. Although, 40 years ago ethical journalism was far more common than it is now. Ethical journalism, according to the Society of Professional Journalism, can be summed up as the free exchange of information that is accurate, fair, and thorough. Reporters and writers have turned to writing about what is liked and favored rather than sharing the truth. They have turned to reporting drama and altering the news to get more people to read their work. As a result of this, the public cannot trust the news for anything. Edward R. Murrow is the perfect example of what it means to be a reporter. He not only models for us the honesty and integrity desired by all those who seek news, but he shows us what it means to have an unshakeable character with beliefs so firm that nothing can change them. In doing so, Murrow captivates more people by sharing

the much-needed truth.

Ethical journalism is essential in today's society where media is corrupt. People struggle every day to obtain news that is factual and accurate. Having to work to receive news that used to be easily provided is pitiful. The importance of keeping the truth alive is a necessity for a society dependent on the voice of the public. Our democracy cannot live off the lies the media feeds us. The truth is priceless, yet reporters still alter it so that they can get more views on their work. I ask, what is this doing to improve society? How can a reporter so easily feed lies to the public? It's immoral. This makes me wonder something deeper; why don't reporters so freely share the truth? What is stopping them? The truth is something that the public will always desire, and the lies that the media feeds us will never be enough to satisfy us until we know the truth.

Not only is the truth something that our society craves, but it is the basis of all our actions. When we hear something new, we act on it. If we are told something false, whether we are aware of it being false or not, we still act on it. The more we keep react-

ing to the false information—fake news—the more apart we become as a society. Ethical journalism is crucial so that the right decisions, actions, and people can make a difference. Without the truth, we will never be able to prevent, protect, defend, and decide on the right things to better our towns, cities, states, and nation. Murrow understood this and acted on it when he put the betterment of society ahead of his career. Reporters and writers nationwide need to understand the importance of their jobs and their influence on the people who read and depend on their work.

Contrary to Murrow's grasp of influence, I fear that current reporters and writers who provide information to the public are unaware of how much influence they have not only on the people, but on their opinions. This idea is extremely important, if not the most important in journalism. Murrow was aware of the influence his words had on the public and he chose to provide the people with the truth rather than the lies others told him to write. Reporters are seen as credible sources from the public. By this, I mean that the public automatically depends on the reporters to

tell the truth. The amount of power a reporter has is underestimated. It is imperative that reporters do what is morally good and write the truth since the public already puts their faith in them to do so.

To finish, I wanted to talk about why ethical journalism is important to me as a developing writer. Ever since I was a little girl, I dreamed of being a reporter. I loved the idea of people reading my articles and receiving news from me. So much so, that I even had my own typewriter to practice. When writing my articles, I strive to be as accurate, clear, and fair as possible. The importance of unbiased writing goes hand in hand with truthful writing. The ability to write to inform is my job, not the ability to persuade. Reporters all around are writing for the wrong reasons and for that, I think it necessary for them to recall what it means to be a reporter. The importance of writing and reporting ethically is our job. What kind of reporters would we be if all we wrote were lies? How can I be proud of my work when I know that all of it is fake? Edward Murrow stands as a model to all journalists so that we can remember why we do what we do,

and to remind us of the importance our writing has on communities.

With that being said, it makes me proud that I am not one of the reporters Murrow was so highly against. It makes me appreciate the reporters who do tell the truth. They are bettering their communities whether they realize it or not. They are influencing their readers whether they realize it or not. The impact they have on their communities and the people who read their work is something that they will never understand since they cannot physically see it. However, we know it's there. Ethical reporters rest easy knowing that their writings are true, thorough, and fair. Ethical reporters are free from the guilt that other reporters may or may not feel when they write their articles of lies. Taking the opportunity to appreciate those who report the truth when faced with terrible consequences are the heroes of our communities. We never know what kind of backlash they may or may not receive for reporting the truth—as truth is the most powerful weapon. Ethical reporters are the pillars of our future, just as Edward Murrow said they would be.

To read other articles by Gracie Smith, visit the Authors section of Walkersville.com.

Sophomore

The crucial need for ethical journalism

Devin Owen
Mount St. Mary's Class of 2026

Whenever I go home and visit family, I always make a point to stop and see my grandmother. It has become a sort of habit for us to sit in the living room and talk about everything under the sun. Her favorite topic, though, is what she's reading in the news articles on her phone. It's common for her to complain that journalists are writing about all of the bad things that are happening in the world, and she always asks, "Why can't they just talk about the good things?" It's simple: if we only focus on the good, we're creating a blindness to the bad around

us, and while that might be something that makes us feel better, it does us no good in the long run. Edward R. Murrow—every journalist's idol—was an American broadcast journalist and war correspondent who emphasized and advocated for the importance of revealing the facts and following a path of truthfulness in journalism. Yes, it might cause uneasiness, discomfort, and many other negative feelings, but being truthful in our articulation of facts and events is crucial to journalism as a whole. What good would it do us to sugar coat everything?

To start, let me brief you on a crucial definition: ethical journalism is the practice of reporting news and information in a manner that is truthful, accurate, fair, and respects the dignity, privacy, and rights of individuals. Without adhering to the basics of ethical journalism, writers could

report fake news, spread lies, and let rumors circulate in a way that is neither fair nor accurate to any party involved—said parties being written about, the writers themselves, and especially those reading. To thoroughly report on a topic such as this, my boss recommended that I watch the film "Good Night, and Good Luck" which represented the fight Murrow fought for ethical journalism. The film depicted how Murrow challenges Senator Joseph McCarthy's anti-communist crusade—where McCarthy used his political platform to spread hearsay and abuse his power to create restlessness—using his television program "See It Now" to expose McCarthy's tactics and defend the rights of those accused of being communists during a period in which McCarthyism existed and created hysteria. This was a pivotal turning point for American journalism because we were shown just how important it is to tell the truth when reporting!

When asked why it's important to have ethical journalism my brain kind of vomits: every thought about ethics kind of just spills out without any particular clear form. So, going point by point of the mess in my head, I'd like to explain why ethical journalism is super important to society. First, the truth: granted I've already said a little bit on this topic but that's because it is absolutely the biggest part of the concept! Truthfulness goes hand in hand with facts, and as journalists we are asked to report the facts. For a journalist, telling the truth is a form of creating a bond: it is essentially the foundation of trust between the media and the public. Part of Murrow's advocacy for ethical journalism was built on telling the truth. His argument was that truthfulness is essen-

tial for maintaining the integrity of the press and ensuring that citizens are well-informed participants in democracy. By reporting the truth, journalists uphold their responsibility to serve the public interest and hold those in power accountable; we cater to the people because it is only right that they get all the facts in order to make well-informed choices, and they can't do that without the truth. Murrow had famously said, "To be persuasive we must be believable; to be believable we must be credible; to be credible we must be truthful." Another point of ethical journalism is respect. Not only is respect crucial for those and that which we're writing about, but it also applies to those who we are writing to. There is a certain dignity that comes from respect, and it solidifies that foundation of trust I mentioned earlier. Respect in journalism also serves to create credibility for the journalist! For me personally, I know when I'm reading something in the news, I want to be reading it from a credible source/writer. What's the point of reading the news if it isn't going to be accurate? Additionally, respect in journalism helps to ensure fairness and accuracy in reporting, because it encourages journalists to approach their subjects with empathy, understanding, and an open mind. We can't write the facts with bias, so keeping an open mind to new ideas is crucial.

Transitioning from the broader discussion of ethical journalism, let's delve into why journalism holds particular importance in local areas. The significance of journalism in a local area is similar to that of what we've already discussed about the importance of ethical journalism: it provides the facts and creates a foundation of trust and respect. However, most importantly it cre-

ates a voice for those in the community. Local journalism homes in on the issues/events that directly affect those in the area; it is a much more specific form of journalism. Consider if we, as the Emmitsburg News Journal, were to write about the events in Ocean City, Maryland rather than those in Emmitsburg: how does that benefit us as a community, if we aren't hearing of the events of our community in the local newspaper? Journalism in local areas is essential for building informed, connected, and resilient communities. It plays a crucial role in promoting transparency, accountability, civic engagement, and economic vitality at the grassroots level. Without local journalism, communities are denied of crucial information about the current events that directly affect their lives.

Speaking of current events and ethical journalism, accuracy is crucial to the concept. It ties into the basics of ethical journalism: journalists have an ethical responsibility to report the truth as best they can because it creates the foundation of trust between media and audience. Accuracy is a fundamental principle of journalism, so adhering to this principle is essential for upholding professional integrity and serving the public interest. We want to be able to have all the facts and truthful information before we make choices that might be considered a leap in some situations. Ethics are crucial to journalism, the factors of the concept ties into every aspect of journalism we see and without these qualities, journalism would be nothing more than hearsay.

To read other articles by Devin Owen, visit the Authors section of Walkersville.com.



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GOOD NIGHT AND GOOD LUCK

Junior

Ethics in journalism

Dolores Hans
MSMU Class of 2025

For as long as I can remember, I've included some form of religion in most of my journals, speeches, creative writings, essays, etc. Because religion is so important in my life, it is a natural tendency to incorporate it in my writing. However, becoming a journalist for the Emmitsburg News-Journal has brought up concerns for me as a writer. I wondered if it was ethical to include religion in my articles. While I do believe that there is a truth to what is ethical and what isn't, I also know humans to see ethics relatively or subjectively. Even if we know that there is a moral and ethical truth, we still tend to think it should be for everyone what it is for us. When I asked if I could mention God or my faith in the articles I wrote, I was told that I could, and that statistically, most people reading the articles would also come from some sort of faith background. There are certain ethical questions one must ask themselves when writing, specifically when

that writing is supposed to inform the readers. Is what I'm saying accurate and true? This question is not as easy to answer as you may think, because "true" for me may not be "true" for you. For example, I know a person who wrote a song about a situation centered around someone else who caused them a great heartache. While the lyrics do contain many truths about the situation in general, the only truth we hear is that of the writer's. We don't know the heart or intent of the person he was writing about. We only have one perspective.

As writers, we are called to gain as many perspectives and truths as we can about a story, event, person, etc. To speak a truth is a challenge because people may not be receptive to it. Edward R. Murrow, the man whose quote is on the front page on the Emmitsburg News-Journal, felt that he had to be courageous and truthful, which helped expose McCarthyism. There are some people in this world who would say their opinions with no regard for sensitivity or empathy, and others who are not courageous enough to speak the truth that needs to be heard, out of fear of hurting someone. These extremes will isolate us from each other and only make

it harder for us to trust what we are being told. It is hard to find a balance, but if you remember the mission, good things can happen. Murrow was truthful and courageous—he spoke righteously without fear of causing discomfort. Notice that he didn't intend to hurt others with his words; he just had to be firm in his authority and know that the truth hurts sometimes. Murrow said, "To be persuasive we must be believable; to be believable we must be credible; credible we must be truthful".

Truth isn't guaranteed. All we can do is put ourselves in the right positions and get the right information to be factual, unbiased, and inspiring.

Another ethical question a writer must ask themselves: Does their writing show bias? When I write an article, I try to proofread it in someone else's shoes. For example, way back in September, I wrote an article, much like a creative writing story, about a boy and his single mother. After drafting my article, I put myself in the shoes of a single mother, and I read my article and tried to find spots in which there was a stereotype or any other way I could offend someone. I also based a lot of the story on real-life experiences from people and families I

know who have struggled financially. My family struggled for a while growing up, and I remember the days our neighbor would mow the lawn, or various families from my parish donated a hot meal for me and my family. These are experiences that I knew would be okay to use in the article.

Another thing to think about when giving information, or receiving it, is if there is an abuse of power. We rely on the newspapers and news channels to inform us of just about everything going on in the world. I don't typically watch the news anymore, and I never really did when I was younger, but at least then I had to go through it to get to the good channels. In the last five or so years, I have noticed that I don't know who to believe anymore. CNN? FOX? Not a clue. They all seem biased to me. These writers know that they have information we need, so they could twist the truths of it to sway our perspective of it to fit theirs, if they wanted to.

Think about your favorite writer. He or she could be a poet, a playwright, a song lyric writer, a novelist, etc. What about his or her style, message, personal qualities, etc. makes you like them? What are some qualities of his or her writing? Is he or she

truthful, reliable, unbiased, entertaining, deep, personable, etc.? Does he or she abuse their power to sway your perspectives to fit theirs? Does he or she inspire you to enrich your soul with goodness?

All this to say, we should be careful who we listen to or read from. That being said, we shouldn't expect perfection from writers either. Edward R. Murrow says, "It is not, I think, humanly possible for any reporter to be completely objective, for we are all to some degree prisoners of our education, travel, reading—the sum total of our experience."

I am grateful to write for such a beautiful and small, local paper. Being more certain of who I am writing to, and the ideals held in the area, has helped me feel connected to each reader, and has kept me in line. I can't abuse my power, because let's face it, I have none. All that matters is a potentially good read that might reach your hearts or make you think, and that's all I could ask for. So, I say with depth and truth, thank you.

To read other articles by Dolores Hans, visit the Authors section of Walkersville.net.

Senior

Typewriters and dreams

Claire Doll
MSMU Class of 2024

Before you read my article, take a moment to flip to the front of the News-Journal. Just between the title and the first headline is a quote in italics, small enough to be tucked into the paper, and large enough to resonate with you: "Exalting the importance of ideas and information"—Edward R. Murrow.

My first article for the Emmitsburg News-Journal was titled "The Power of Words" and established the truth-seeking, empowering ability of journalism. To write this article, I sought information about Edward R. Murrow and his work as a broadcast journalist. The risks he took to remain truthful no matter the cost. His prominence during the rise of communism, and his strides for journalism. Watching the film that tells his story—"Good Night and Good Luck"—encouraged me to cultivate my own identity as a writer and my consistent pursuit for the truth. In fact, writing for this News-Journal has ensured the validity of my craft and exposed me to a small corner in the world of journalism.

I'll take you through what inspired me to apply to the Emmitsburg News-Journal in the first place. It really traces back to me being around eight years old. All my life I have dreamed of being a writer, but the obsession with words and language began with Kit Kittredge, an American Girl Doll. Cropped, blonde hair parted into a bob and freckles scattered across her cheeks, Kit Kittredge was an aspiring journalist who wrote articles about the Great Depression for her town. She was only ten, and I was a bit younger than her, but I saw myself in this doll, how she carried a journal and ventured through her town and kept a typewriter in her attic bedroom. I wanted to

have a typewriter because of her; to this day, I search antique stores and consignment shops for one.

But as I grew through middle and high school, and as Kit Kittredge found her way to an old bin in my garage, my love for writing narrowed to a concrete, attractive focus: creative writing. I loved novels. I dreamed of being a published author, with bestsellers lined on my shelf and a writing desk overlooking the ocean (or a lake, or a river), and my name, in print, on a hardcover. In college, I began writing for literary magazines, editing my university's publication, and taking all the writing classes I could.

I then received the notification to apply for the Emmitsburg News-Journal, in a schoolwide email.

My curiosity to explore a new form of writing and return to my childhood love of American Girl Dolls ultimately inspired me to apply. I thought about Kit Kittredge in my garage, about my untouched dream of being a writer, about how amazing it might feel to see my name in print. Claire Doll. I realized then how important it was to apply, to branch out. To acknowledge my love for writing in a new field. To take a risk.

Since September of my sophomore year, I have written more than fifty articles for the Emmitsburg News-Journal and Woodsboro-Walkersville News-Journal. Through Four Years at the Mount, I have been asked to reflect on current events, or research lost parts of history, or tell stories from my past. I also began writing feature stories by venturing out into the community and introducing myself to prominent town members of Emmitsburg, Thurmont, Fairfield, Walkersville, and Union Bridge and telling the stories of others: the history of fire departments, cats living in small businesses, the accomplishments of local individuals. When I was asked to do feature assignments—something I had no experience in—I felt obligated and excited to try. I fell in love with

the process and trained myself to report the news and document these stories in authentic, respectable ways.

In my own small way, I have honored Edward R. Murrow's quote. After all, to write for the Emmitsburg and Woodsboro-Walkersville News-Journal means to focus on truth and information and ideas. Journalism—ethical, truth-seeking journalism—requires the heart of a writer, the fight for a story. The lit-up keyboard of a MacBook, or the tapping of a typewriter. The scrawls carved in a notebook, the ink stains on hand. Journalism is commitment. It's different from creative writing, but do not think that it's not as beautiful, as inspiring, as relevant.

Local journalism is especially important in that it fosters an informed, educated community and promises ethical writing. You might notice how our paper is not littered with advertisements, but rather filled with community contributors, astronomy columns, cooking recipes, creative writing, gardening advice—our paper encourages involvement and engagement. It's what I love about this News Journal, and why I handle each article with intention and attention to detail. I know who I am writing to. My professors who read this paper, or any local community members I've ever met (hi, everyone!). My parents, who lovingly read every article, or my roommate Emma, who listens carefully as I read my articles out loud for her. I know my audience; I live in the same wooded mountainside of Emmitsburg, the same backroads meeting Main Street. I feel not only obligated, but also honored to report the most truthful facts, to treat each feature story with the utmost respect. Because, after all, these stories go right from my fingertips to the entire town. There is no in between. No ads blocking my words, no filter. Local journalism protects authenticity and promotes identity.

Edward R. Murrow also said this: "To be persuasive we must be believable; to be believable we must be

credible; to be credible we must be truthful." My journey through journalism has been informed completely by Edward Murrow, tracing back to my very first article. With every feature article, every Four Years at the Mount column, every interview, I find myself thanking the Emmitsburg News-Journal for truly a one-time opportunity. I still write creatively, and it's still my dream, but I've learned more about myself through journal-

ism. I've learned how devoted I am to tell one's story, and I've learned how rewarding this can be. I have a couple months left as a student at Mount St. Mary's, but I hope I've left my own legacy on this paper, hope I can continue to write like this any way I can.

And I hope I can one day find myself a typewriter.

To read other articles by Claire Doll, visit the Authors section of Walkersville.com.



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ARTS

March at the Weinberg Center

Sons of the Pioneers

The Sons of the Pioneers, who galloped onto the music scene in 1934 and forever transformed cowboy music with their thrilling harmonies and poetic images of the West, will be at the Weinberg Center on March 17 at 3.

Celebrating its 90th year of continuous performing, The Sons of the Pioneers is still the standard for Western music today. Originals like Cool Water, Tumbling Tumbleweeds, and The Timber Trail, forever rooted in Western lore, are stirring new audiences. When Roy Rogers and gifted songwriters Bob Nolan and Tim Spencer began developing their trademark 'Pioneer sound' in the early '30s, little did they realize they were launching a juggernaut that would become perhaps the longest-lived group in American music history.

Through the years, gifted singers and instrumentalists have rotated into the group to keep the Pioneers' musical campfire burning brightly. "These songs are masterpieces and are just a part of who we are as Americans," says Tommy Nallie, the current leader and only the fourth 'trail boss' in the group's history. "We stay true to the music, and audiences are hungry for it." In addition to Nallie, who sings the 'middle' part in the Pioneers' vocal trio and

plays lead guitar, the group's other four members are: Ken Lattimore (tenor and lead vocals, fiddle), John Fullerton (baritone and lead vocals, rhythm guitar), Paul Elliott (lead fiddle, harmony vocals), and Chuck Ervin (string bass, harmony vocals).

The Pioneers' songs have been recorded by an astonishing range of performers, including Bing Crosby, the Boston Pops, Diana Ross and the Supremes, Frankie Laine, Johnny Cash, Riders in the Sky, Michael Martin Murphey, and even the Muppets. The Pioneers are the most decorated group in Western music, winning honors such as the Country Music Hall of Fame, the Western Music Association Hall of Fame, the National Cowboy Hall of Fame, the Texas Swing Hall of Fame, and the Hollywood Walk of Fame, to name a few. The group's renditions of Tumbling Tumbleweeds and Cool Water have been inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame, and the Smithsonian Institution has named the group one of America's 'National Treasures.'

Teelin Irish Dance Company

Teelin Irish Dance Company bring their show Celtic Journey to the Weinberg Center for the Arts in Frederick, Maryland on Saturday, March 16 at



7. Teelin is a dynamic dance ensemble renowned for its captivating performances, seamlessly blending traditional Irish dance with contemporary flair.

Based in Columbia, Maryland, the Teelin Irish Dance Company has graced stages locally, nationally, and internationally since 2001 enthralling audiences with their award-winning choreography and world-class Irish step dancers. Teelin Irish Dance Company is well known for its original productions of feature-length stage shows: "Portraits of Ireland" (2006-2011), "Step Dance" (2012-2013), "Sláinte" (2014), and "Celtic Storm" (2016-2019). The Company's innovative style fuses traditional Irish step dance with contemporary dance.

The Teelin Irish Dance Company has performed at The Kennedy Center, Lyric Opera House, Meyerhoff,

Carroll Arts Center, Turning Stone Resort and Casino in New York, and Jacobs Pillow.

The Young Dubliners

The Young Dubliners, renowned for their electrifying performances and unique blend of Celtic and American influences, are set to take the stage at the Weinberg Center Friday, March 22 at 8.

The Young Dubliners are: Keith Roberts (vocals/guitar), Chas Waltz (violin, keys, vocals), Justin Pecot (guitar, vocals), Dave Ingraham (drums), and Ethan Jones (bass guitar). With a career spanning over two decades, the band has become synonymous with energetic live performances and a unique sound that seamlessly merges Irish roots with modern rock influences. With nine albums under their belt, the setlist for the upcoming show will draw from their exten-

sive discography, including unreleased new material. The Young Dubliners' sound, often labeled as 'Celtic Rock,' transcends the traditional Irish influence, incorporating a rich blend of musical backgrounds from each band member.

Lisa Hilton Quartet

Prepare for an evening of enchanting jazz as the Lisa Hilton Quartet graces the stage at New Spire Arts in Frederick on March 13 at 7:30. The renowned American composer and jazz pianist is accompanied by her talented quartet featuring trumpeter Igmarr Thomas, bassist Luques Curtis and drummer Rudy Royston.

Hilton's West Coast cool jazz music draws inspiration from classic American jazz greats like Duke Ellington, Thelonious Monk, Horace Silver, and Count Basie, as well as blues icons Muddy Waters and Robert Johnson. As a prolific composer, Hilton has recorded over two hundred tracks, collaborating with today's jazz luminaries, and her twenty-six albums consistently top the Jazz Week and other radio/streaming charts. The New Face of Jazz: An Intimate Look at Today's Living Legends and Artists of Tomorrow by Cicily Janus compares Hilton to "some of the best pianists in history," highlighting her piano style.

Tickets and may be purchased online at WeinbergCenter.org, by calling the box office at 301-600-2828, or in person at 20 West Patrick Street. Discounts are available for students, children, military, and seniors.

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7 - \$500	23 - \$500	39 - \$500	55 - \$500
8 - \$500	24 - \$500	40 - \$1000	56 - \$500
9 - \$500	25 - \$500	41 - \$2000	57 - \$500
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16 - \$500	32 - \$500	48 - \$500	64 - \$4000

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The incredible egg

Sonya Verlaque

My best friend from college just got chicks. She lives in Georgia and set up a ring camera in her home so I can watch them from Maryland. She also hates to cook and her daughter does not like eggs, so this article is dedicated to the new chickies: Dottie, Elizabeth, Matilda, Stella and Delilah and the hope for bountiful eggs in the spring. And hopefully her daughter will learn to love eggs someday.

Frittata Recipe

This easy Frittata Recipe is the perfect quick and healthy meal. It can be made vegetarian or, like this version with bacon.

Ingredients

- 4 slices bacon or 2 TBS olive oil for vegetarian version
- ½ cup onion diced
- 1 tsp minced garlic
- 4 cups vegetables of choice bell peppers, broccoli, zucchini, etc.
- 10 eggs
- ¼ cup milk
- ½ tsp sea salt
- ¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper
- ¼ tsp paprika
- 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese

Instructions : Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. In a large bowl, whisk together eggs and then add milk, sea salt, pepper, paprika and whisk until combined. Add cheese and stir to combine and then set aside. In a 10" cast iron skillet over medium heat, cook bacon, onion and garlic until bacon just begins to brown. Add vegetables, cover and cook until vegetables are soft and bacon is browned, stirring occasionally. Turn

heat down to medium, add egg mixture, and quickly stir it into the bacon/vegetables in the skillet until everything is evenly distributed. Cook on medium heat for about 4-5 minutes, until the edges are set. Transfer the frittata to the preheated oven. Bake for 7-10 minutes or until the top is lightly browned and set. Remove from oven, let cool for 10 minutes, serve. The frittata will be very puffy in the oven, but then deflates and is firm when it cools.

Eggs in Purgatory

Eggs in purgatory is a dish made up of eggs poached in tomato sauce. It only takes 20 minutes to make, and can be eaten any time. Get some crusty bread to go with it.

Ingredients

- 2 tbs extra virgin olive oil
- 3 tbs chopped white onion cut into small pieces
- 2 garlic cloves minced
- 1 14 oz can peeled plum tomatoes
- ¼ tps chili flakes
- 1 tbs torn basil
- 4 eggs
- 3 tbs grated parmesan cheese, divided
- salt and pepper to taste

Instructions : In a medium size skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Once the oil is shimmering, add the onion and sauté until soft but not fully cooked, about 1-2 minutes. Add garlic and chili flakes and continue to sauté until garlic is cooked through, another 1 minute. While onion and garlic are sautéing, pour the tomatoes into a bowl and mash them up with a fork. Once onion and garlic are finished cooking, add canned

tomatoes to the skillet. Also rinse out the can of tomatoes, and the bowl where you mashed the tomatoes. Add this tomato water to the sauce (about ½ cup). Season with salt and pepper to taste. Cook the tomato sauce until it has thickened, 10-15 minutes. Add torn basil to sauce and stir. Crack an egg into a small bowl. Form a small well in the sauce and pour the egg into the well. Do this 4 times. Sprinkle the eggs with 1 tbs of the parmesan cheese. Cook the eggs in the tomato sauce, partially covered, until the whites are set, but the yolks still runny, about 5 minutes. Top the eggs with remaining parmesan cheese, additional pepper and basil if desired. Serve with toasted bread and enjoy!

Easy Custard Pie Recipe

This is a creamy custard pie and any milk can be used to make it. It's best for the eggs and milk to be at room temperature, and if you want a richer, creamier pie to use heavy cream or evaporated milk.

Ingredients

- 1 unbaked pie crust
- 1 cup sugar
- 6 large eggs room temperature
- 2 tps vanilla
- ¼ tps nutmeg
- 3 cups whole milk room temperature
- ⅛ tps nutmeg, garnish

Instructions: Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly spray a 9½-inch pie pan with nonstick spray. Place unbaked pie crust in pie pan, press-

A Fave Dining Experience Awaits You

This is your invitation to treat your palate to a special treat. 200 Monroe, Frederick Community College's (FCC) gourmet restaurant opens February 29. The Hospitality, Culinary and Tourism Institute (HCTI) students will once again showcase their impeccable skills in the three-course dinner service. Reservations are now available and open to the public for dine-in or takeout, from 5 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday evenings (except April 4, April 18, and April 25) through May 9.

As part of a unique course called Restaurant Production and Service, FCC HCTI students participate in the running of the restaurant as a capstone learning experience. Under the guidance of the executive chef and instructors, students will prepare food, as well as serve guests in the dining room, to accentuate a quality dining experience for the community.

The menu theme for spring 2024 is "A Taste of New Orleans." Customers choose from selections including a starter, entrée, dessert, and beverage, for an all-inclusive price between \$40 and \$46. Menu items include smoked pork loin chop with stone ground cheddar grits, satsuma glazed chicken confit with whipped sweet potatoes, Chesapeake blue catfish with shrimp étouffée and rice, vegetarian jambalaya with grilled eggplant and creole tomato sauce, bananas foster, doberge cake, and more. All proceeds from the restaurant support student learning in the HCTI program and HCTI student scholarships.

"Each semester, I am both honored and delighted to oversee our students as they complete their capstone learning experience," said Elizabeth DeRose, HCTI manager. "Our students are excited to share the skills and passion they have worked so hard to develop, and our community is excited to support and enjoy the results of their culinary training through our program."

Advance reservations are required and only major credit cards are accepted for payment. The restaurant is located in the Monroe Center at 200 Monroe Avenue in Frederick. To view the full menu, make a reservation, or learn more about the HCTI visit frederick.augusoft.net

ing dough against the sides of the pie pan. Whisk together sugar, eggs, ¼ tps nutmeg, and vanilla for 2 minutes. Add milk and whisk for another 3 minutes until smooth. Pour mixture into pie shell. Sprinkle the remaining ⅛ tps nutmeg lightly on top of the custard. Bake for 1 hour and 15 minutes or until

set. You can tell when it is done by giving the pie a little jiggle or shake, and if the center only slightly jiggles, then it's done. Chill and serve with whipped cream or berries, or all on its own.

To read other cooking articles, visit the Authors section of Walkersville.net.



The Walkersville High School Leos cordially invite you to attend their **Dinner in the Dark** A meal you've never seen to support a cause with a vision!

Fundraiser to support Leader Dog for the Blind Saturday, April 23 - 4 to 9:30 p.m. Madrones Restaurant 7810 Wormans Mill Rd., Frederick

Order from the menu, show your waiter this ad or say you are here for the fundraiser and up to 20% of all receipts will be donated by Madrones to Leader Dog! Make an additional donation (goes to Leader Dog) and receive a blindfold & bib. Leos will come to your table to provide instructions for eating blindfolded. Experience what it's like to be sight-impaired. Meet Lion Bill & Leader Dog Brody. Learn their story and what it's like to be sight-impaired.

Contact Lion Jennifer Smith at 301-788-0526 or jcswhycomply@gmail.com

If you can't make it, donations payable to Glade Valley Lions Club may be mailed to: WHS Leos DITO c/o Glade Valley Lions Club, 9202 Tree Circle, Frederick, MD 21701.



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3/9 - Slippery Ham or Turkey Pot Pic..\$8.99 qt. (Must pre-order)	3/30 - Easter Family Meals (Must pre-order)

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ASTRONOMY

The night sky of March

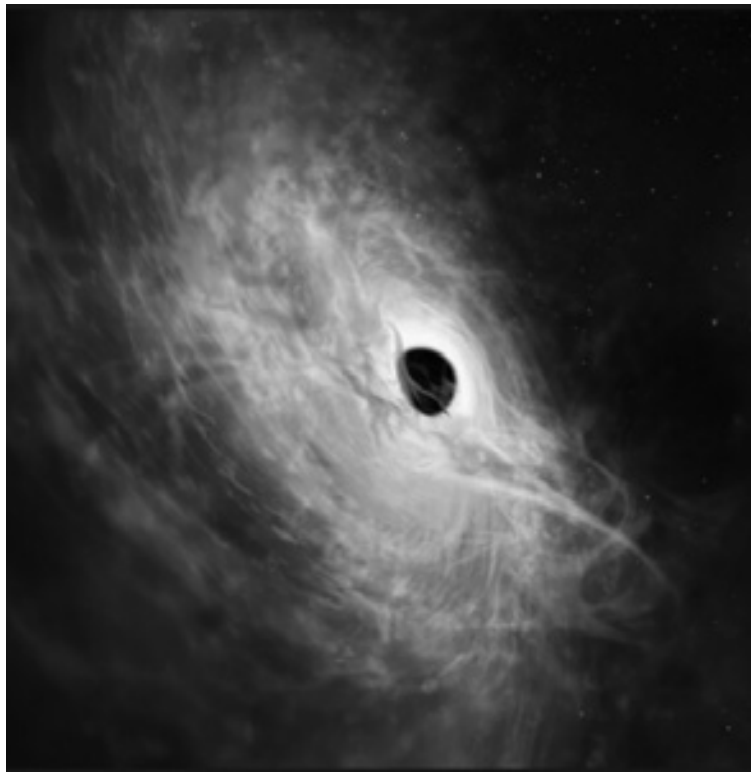
Professor Wayne Wooten

For March 2024, the last quarter moon gives us a real treat on the morning of March 2, when it occults the bright star Antares in Scorpius. For observers, the red supergiant vanishes behind the center of the bright half moon at 12:58 AM, and will reappear at 2:58 a.m., coming out from behind the northwest limb of the dark side of the lunar disk. Long exposure shots showing the dark side lit by earthshine, with a video of the moon's reappearance should be awesome! Also note that Antares is a close binary star, and its fainter greenish companion may stand alone for a second or so before its primary reappears about 2:57 a.m..

The waning crescent makes a nice pairing to the right of bright Venus and much fainter Mars on the morning of March 7th. The new moon is on March 10th, and the next new moon is the total solar eclipse crossing the middle of America. March 10th also is the day we "spring forward". The moon Venus will disappear into the sun's glare in the next week, but Mars climbs higher in the dawn this month.

On the evening of March 11th, look for the waxing crescent moon above Mercury in the twilight. The Moon passes north of Jupiter on March 13th. It is high overhead as first quarter on March 16th. The vernal equinox occurs at 10:06 p.m. on March 19th to begin spring in the northern hemisphere. The full moon moves through our lighter penumbral shadow on the morning of March 25, with the slight darkening most noticeable about 3 a.m.. The waning gibbous moon returns to Antares on March 30th, marking the 27 day sidereal period as the moon revolves through the starry background.

We have a promising comet, named Pons-Brooks, in the western sky heading sunward now. It has already had several unexpected outbursts, once



The record-breaking quasar J059-4351 is the bright core of a distant galaxy. Powered by a supermassive black hole that has a mass 17 billion times that of the Sun and is growing in mass by the equivalent of another Sun per day, making it the fastest-growing black hole ever known.

even developing "horns" telescopically, and may be visible with the naked eye near Jupiter at month's end.

As noted earlier, it is not a good month for seeing the planets. Mercury is in the western twilight, Venus headed behind the Sun, Mars low in the dawn, Jupiter in the SW to disappear behind the Sun next month, and Saturn on the other side of the Sun.

The constellation Cassiopeia makes a striking W in the NW. South of Cassiopeia is Andromeda's hero, Perseus. Between him and Cassiopeia is the fine Double Cluster, faintly visible with the naked eye and two fine binocular objects in the same field. Perseus contains the famed eclipsing binary star Algol, where the Arabs imagined the eye of the gorgon Medusa would lie. It fades to a third its normal brightness for six out of every 70 hours.

At Perseus' feet for the famed Pleiades cluster; they lie about 400 light years distant, and over 250 stars are members of this fine group. East

of the seven sisters is the V of stars marking the face of Taurus the Bull, with bright orange Aldebaran as his eye. The V of stars is the Hyades cluster, older than the blue Pleiades, but about half their distance. Yellow Capella, a giant star the same temperature and color as our much smaller Sun, dominates the overhead sky in the northwest. It is part of the pentagon on stars making up Auriga, the Charioteer (think Ben Hur). Several nice binocular Messier open clusters are found in the winter milky way here. It also contains some faint but beautiful nebulae, and this one is just right for the coming of spring with frogs hopping and crocking. IC 410, nicknamed the Tadpoles, is a region of star birth.

East of Auriga, the twins, Castor and Pollux highlight the Gemini; it is directly above us as darkness falls in early March. Astronomers associated the pair with Jason and the Golden Fleece legend, for they were the first two Argonauts to sign up on his crew of adventurers.

South of Gemini, Orion is the most familiar winter constellation, dominating the southern sky at dusk. The reddish supergiant Betelgeuse marks his eastern shoulder, while blue-white supergiant Rigel stands opposite on his west knee. How bright does Betelgeuse appear to you tonight? In 2019-20, this famed supergiant had expanded and cooled, forming a dust envelope that has darkened much of its southern hemisphere to less than a quarter its normal brightness in visible light. Now the dust has dissipated, and it is back close to its normal brightness as the alpha star of Orion again.

Just south of the belt, hanging like a sword downward, is M-42, the Great Nebula of Orion, an outstanding binocular and telescopic stellar nursery. The bright diamond of four stars that light it up are the trapezium cluster, one of the finest sights in a telescope and among the youngest known stars.

In the east are the hunter's two faithful companions, Canis major and minor. Procyon is the bright star in the little dog, and rises minutes before Sirius, the brightest star in the sky. Sirius dominates the SE sky as darkness falls. At 8 light years distance, Sirius is the closest star we can easily see with the naked eye. When Sirius is highest, along our southern horizon look for the second brightest star, Canopus, getting just above the horizon and sparkling like an exquisite diamond as the turbulent winter air twists and turns this shaft of starlight, after a trip of about 200 years!

To the northeast, look for the bowl of the Big Dipper rising, with the top two stars, the pointers, giving you a line to find Polaris, the Pole Star. It sits unmoving 30 degrees high in on our northern sky.

If you take the pointers of the Big Dipper's bowl to the south, you are guided instead to the head of Leo the Lion rising in the east, looking much like the profile of the famed Sphinx. The bright star at the Lion's heart is Regulus, the "regal star". The folk wisdom that "March comes in like

a Lion" probably refers to the head of Leo rising just after sunset in early March eastern twilight.

The constellation Cancer lies midway between the Gemini to the west and Regulus east of it. Almost directly overhead when darkness falls at month's end, look under dark skies for a faint blur of light in the middle of the four stars that make up the crab's body. This is the Praespe, or Beehive, cluster, M-44, familiar to the ancients. Its blurry appearance led Charles Messier to include it in his catalog of things that look at first like comets, but do not move and are far away among the stars and galaxies. Now check it out with binoculars, and resolve it into dozens of stars, hence the "Beehive"!

If you follow the handle of the Big Dipper to the south, by 9 PM you will be able to "arc to Arcturus", the brightest star of Spring and distinctly orange in color. Its color is an indication of its uniqueness. Its large speed and direction through the Milky Way suggests it was not formed with our Galaxy, but is a recent capture from the Sagittarius Dwarf Galaxy, a smaller satellite galaxy now being assimilated by our huge spiral galaxy. Many of its lost stars, like Arcturus, follow a band across the sky at about a 70 degree angle to our galactic plane.

Arcturus is at the tail of kite shaped Bootes, the celestial bear driver chasing the two bears from his flocks. Spike south then to Spica in Virgo. Here appearance to the Greeks marked the time to plant, for they associated Virgo with Persephone, daughter of Ceres of the Harvest, returning from six months underground with Pluto to now bless the growth and greening of the upperworld. So when Spica rises now at sunset in the SE, it is time to plant your peas! Likewise, when Persephone goes back down to Hades and disappears in the sun's glare in September SW skies, it is time to get your corn in the crib! This cycle goes back to the birth of agriculture.

Farmers' Almanac

"May the Irish hills caress you.
May her lakes and rivers bless
you.
May the luck of the Irish
enfold you.
May the blessings of St. Patrick
behold you."

—Old Irish Blessing

Mid-Atlantic Weather Watch: Seasonable at first with a light wintry mix, then turning mild (1, 2, 3, 4, 5), becoming very warm with rain, then windy, cooler and more seasonable (6, 7, 8, 9, 10); seasonable and dry at first, then milder (11, 12, 13, 14, 15); wintry mix, followed by rain and then turning cooler and dry (16, 17, 18, 19, 20); rain at first, colder with light snow or flurries, then dry (21, 22, 23, 24, 25); turning wet with rain, followed by mild and dry weather

(26, 27, 28, 29).

Severe Weather Watch: No severe weather events are predicted by The Town and Country Almanack for the month of March.

The Garden: March is prime time for feeding shrubs and perennials that bloom in the Summer. Also, begin pruning early-flowering shrubs, roses, fruit trees, grapes, and raspberries. Start an all-purpose spray regimen. Be sure to feed well and use supplementary nitrogen in early Spring, in addition to yearly feeding.

Spray fruit trees with a dormant oil when temperatures exceed 40 degrees and before they leaf out. If you did not do so in February, apply a pre-emergent herbicide (that prevents crabgrass) to established lawns before March 15th. But if you plan to seed fescue lawns, do not apply a pre-emer-

gent. It will prevent the grass seed from germinating. It's also time to start tomatoes, lettuce, and many other vegetable seeds indoors. And do try to plant your peas on St. Patrick's Day!

The Farm: Best days for planting root crops (5, 6); weeding and stirring the soil (15, 16); planting above-ground crops (17, 18, 19); harvesting all crops (3, 4, 30, 31); setting hens and incubators (1, 2, 3, 17, 8, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31); slaughtering/butchering meat (10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15); transplanting (10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15); harvesting and storing grain (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9); the weaning of all small animals and livestock (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 30, 31).

J. Gruber's Thought For Today's Living

"Great things are not accomplished by idle dreams, but by many years of patient study"

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FITNESS & HEALTH

Lactation consultation

Kayte Nusbaum, RN
FPCA-Walkersville
Lactation Consultant

Editors note: This article is the third in the series of different medical topics brought to you by different providers at Frederick Primary Care Associates-Walkersville.

Let's be real... having a baby is no joke! Along with the adjustment of bringing a new baby home, recovery and sleep deprivation, it seems impossible that a mother would have time or the energy to breastfeed. You get home from the hospital and sit down to breastfeed your new baby and it doesn't go as planned; you're in pain, baby and sometimes mom is crying and it's just not working. It's challeng-

ing and exhausting and you're left there feeling defeated.

It usually comes as a surprise to most new moms that breastfeeding doesn't always come easy. Sometimes it's the mother struggling with the concept of breastfeeding. It could be she has a hard time managing a breastfeeding routine, dealing with any discomfort that she may be having or understanding when to feed baby. On the other hand, mom can be doing everything right and it's the baby having a hard time with breastfeeding due to various reasons. Whether it's mom, baby or both struggling to breastfeed, it's a common occurrence.

There is a lot of pressure on mothers to breastfeed and they often find out that it doesn't always come easy. Mothers tend to feel defeated and often give

up during this time. With the right support and guidance, mother and baby can successfully breastfeed as well as enjoy the breastfeeding journey. But where does a mother and baby get this support and guidance? That's where a lactation consultant can help!

Ideally, the first consultation should occur before birth so the mother can be prepared as much as possible. However, many women meet with a lactation consultant while in the hospital. Lactation consultants are also located at primary care offices, pediatric centers, and they also practice privately. The benefits of following up with a lactation consultant post discharge is that mothers can get undivided attention during the

appointment and continue to follow up as needed or as problems arise. Mothers struggling with breastfeeding can utilize these resources as an additional support.

A lactation consultant is a certified health specialist that specializes in breastfeeding. The consultant works with both mother and baby to provide support and guidance during the breastfeeding session. Not only does a lactation consultant provide education about breastfeeding, they also help with certain problems such as nipple pain, decreased supply, engorgement, etc. Lactation consultants can also provide education and guidance on pumping, pumping schedules when returning to work and coming up with

a unique feeding schedule that works for mother and baby.

Whether it's your first baby or second, each breastfeeding experience is different. Just because your first breastfeeding experience did not work well does not necessarily mean the next one won't be smooth sailing. Likewise, the first experience could have been a piece of cake but you could struggle with certain breastfeeding issues with your second baby. Know that your lactation consultant can assist you with concerns during each postpartum/ breastfeeding period. Regardless of the support you have at home, sometimes seeking professional support can help ease the process and guide mother and baby to a happy and healthy breastfeeding experience.

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COMMUNITY NOTES

Walkersville welcomes Beauty Studio by Brittney



On Saturday February 10th, the members of the Walkersville Economic Development Commission accompanied by the Burgess Chad Weddle and Commissioner Michael McNiesh, conducted a ribbon cutting ceremony for Brittney Schutta of Beauty Studio by Brittney.

Her new salon on 2 West Frederick St. will provide clients various services to include a diverse offering of facials, intensed pulse light therapy, brow services and makeup application. As a registered nurse and licensed esthetician, not only can she provide individualized medical grade facials and advanced skin care

treatments, she also promotes education for healthy skin care.

Brittney is a Walkersville native, who has excitedly moved back to raise her two children and live her dream of opening her own salon. She was able to build a client base while renting space from another local stylist, and happily celebrates the transition to her own location.

Because skin care is her passion, Beauty Salon by Brittney is evidence self-care doesn't have to be an impossible luxury, but a welcomed priority. Located next to Corn Crib Boutique, her hours are Monday, Thursday and Friday from 9:30 to 3:30, and Tuesday from 1 to 7.

Stop by to visit the warm and

refreshing new space in town and you'll be greeted by a fresh-faced new friend. (And when you leave, swing by to explore Corn Crib's latest arrivals, followed by a steak and cheese sub at Louie's).

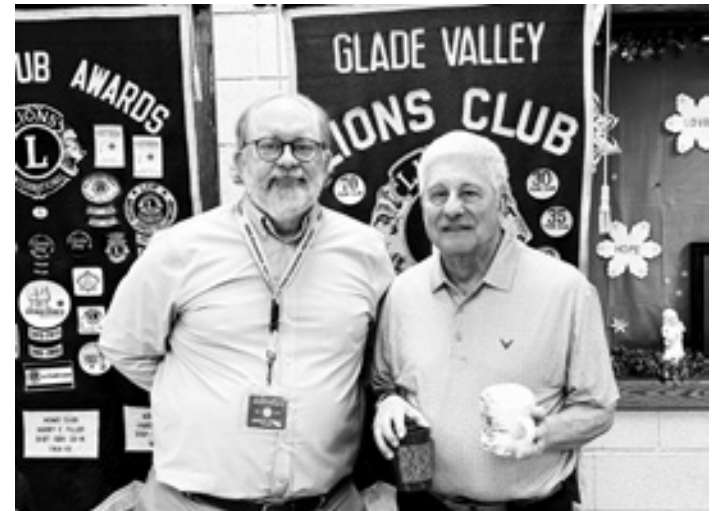
Stay tuned for more local small business activities in 2024, to include the Pop Up on Penn event sponsored by the Walkersville EDC in conjunction with the Walkersville Southern Railroad on Saturday, May 4th. Businesses, artisans and non-profits are invited to showcase their specialty at the opening day of the WSSR. Visit the Town of Walkersville Economic Development Commission website for more information.

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On February 15, The Glade Valley Lions Club (GVLG) held a General Meeting at the St. John's United Church of Christ in Woodsboro. At this meeting the group listened to a presentation by local immunologist, Dr. Jeff Rossio. Dr. Rossio shared information about how vaccinations can prevent the spread of diseases. Also at this meeting, Scout Troop 1070 from Walkersville, which the Glade Valley Lions Club sponsors, was honored.

Pictured above is GVLG President Jim Corley and Dr. Jeff Rossio. Pictured below is (front) Guadalupe Peralita, Katherine Donahue, Matthew Crum, and Andrew Crum. In the back row is Lion Wayne Starkey, Leader Michelle Donahue, Leader Joy Klauder, Leader Jeff Crum, and President Jim Corley.



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Board of Directors; George Nicholson, Sandy Shaffer, Michelle Specht, Donnie Shaffer, and Kenneth Morgan.



Administrative Officers: Mary Ambrose, Joann Shaffer, Jim Winter, Nancy Cornell, Diane Fyock, Karin Lind, and Robert Lind.



61 year member Earl Powell and his wife at this years banquet.

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