

# Woodsboro - Walkersville NEWS-JOURNAL

VOLUME 4, NO. 8

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

AUGUST 2024

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#### The Book of Days

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## Woodsboro hires contractor for lead pipe survey

What was quickly becoming a festering issue for the town of Woodsboro – developing a path forward to address the State mandate to conduct an assessment of all the homes in the town to determine which ones may be connected to the town's water system by lead pipes – was resolved with little fanfare and little expense, thanks to the town staff jumping onto a recommendation provided by the State's Office of Environmental Management.

The recommendation was an outgrowth of a meeting between Burgess Heath Barnes, the town staff, and representatives from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE).

Barnes said that he turned to the MDE to solicit their advice on how best to accomplish the required inventory of piping to the town's 460+ homes. If the town followed the methods being unutilized in other local towns, which involved either physically going into homes to check the piping in the house or requesting homeowners to take photos of their water pipes and send them to the town staff for their evaluation, would prove not

only time consuming but extremely expensive.

Barnes said that the state was requiring the town to submit over 42 different data points for each of the town's 460 connections to the water system. "Either way," Barnes said, "this was going to take up a lot of the town staff's time, not to mention burn up a lot of money and inconvenience a lot of homeowners."

In response to the concerns raised by the staff, MDE recommended a contractor they had confidence in and who developed a reputation for effectively and systemically conducting the inventory. Best of all, "the price was too low to pass up," Barnes said.

"We had been bracing ourselves for a high five figure, if not six figure cost, so when the contractor came in with a cost of \$9,500, I immediately got all the Town Council on the phone and got their approval to sign a contract."

The contractor will use a recent EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) approved process that passes a probe down the water connection pipe from its connection to the town water system at the "shut



Thanks to the technology used, the survey will be done without the need to enter any homes.

off valve" to the water meter inside the house that will measure the electrical resistance in the water line using a low resistance ohmmeter. The detector is sensitive enough to distinguish between a lead pipe and a copper pipe.

The benefits of using this process, which no other municipality in Frederick County is using, is that no action is required by homeowners, nor is entry required into homes. In addition, no excavation of exterior piping is necessary and there will be no interruption of water supply to the home.

Barnes said that the work on evaluating all the water connec-

tions will be completed and the required report documenting the type of pipes used by every property to connect to the town's water system will be submitted prior to the October 16th deadline. "What happens after that is anyone's guess," Barnes said.

"While lead pipes inside a home (after the water meter) is the homeowner's responsibility, the responsibility of replacement of lead pipes within a connection to the town's water system has yet to be determined. All we have been told is that if the lead pipe is under 23 in length, more than likely, nothing

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## New Midway VFC to host music festival

Gracie Smith  
MSMU Class of 2027

Summer is filled with hot days, Spool parties, beach trips, picnics, carnivals, fireworks, family, and friends. All things that would be a part of one's summer bucket list. Well, let's add one more thing to that summer bucket list... Music Festivals! On Friday, August 23rd, New Midway Volunteer Fire Company (VFC) will host its first music festival! The event will feature food trucks, drinks, and a well-known local band from 6 to 11:30 p.m. Dance and sing the night away with your favorite 80s tunes! And embrace the warm summer nights with your family, friends, and neighbors.

New Midway VFC has a long and proud tradition. It was founded in 1926, becoming the 9th fire company organized in Frederick County. In 1931 the company members bought Castle Creamery, which they converted into their fire hall. In 1985, the dedication to their present fire hall was held. In 1927 the company purchased their first fire pumper for \$2,700. Over the years they updated their equipment to ensure they could serve the community. Their newest purchase, a

Mini rescue, was added in 2024 to provide non-transport EMS and rescue services.

That said, why is it important to support our local volunteer fire companies like New Midway? For starters, they help maintain the safety and well-being of our communities. They play a vital role in protecting the lives, environment, and property within our communities. They provide a huge amount of influence on the kids being raised in the communities and teach them what is right and wrong when it comes to their safety and the safety of others. Local volunteer fire companies have such a greater impact than what meets the eye.

New Midway VFC has more than enough ways to support them aside from their upcoming music festival this month. One Wednesday a month, they have food trucks with alcohol and indoor seating available so you can connect with neighbors and friends in the cool comfort of air conditioning. The last food truck Wednesday of the season is tentatively planned for October. In addition to food trucks, they have monthly bingos, which typically take place on the last Friday of every month.

New Midway VFC is 100%



New Midway may be a small volunteer fire company, but they are a fiercely proud one.

volunteer with a large amount of community funding. Your support is essential for them to continue doing all the work that they do to protect, support, and care for the community. By attending the events they host or simply donating, you are impacting them and your community.

In addition to all their community events, New Midway offers programs for juniors ages 12-15, and a fire prevention program. Interested in more than just

donating to the New Midway Volunteer Fire Company? They are always accepting new members! For more information regarding the programs offered, events discussed, Volunteer opportunities, or to simply learn more about the company, visit their website at [newmidwayvfc.org](http://newmidwayvfc.org), or call the station at 301-898-0543.

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# WOODSBORO NEWS

## Town Hall contract signed

“The Town has officially signed the contract with Sanbower Builders of Myersville to construct the town’s first Town Hall,” Burgess Barnes told the Council at its July meeting. The decision to move forward with the 1.4-million-dollar project was approved during the June Town Council meeting in a 3 to 2 vote, with Barnes casting the deciding vote.

Barnes told the Council that before work on grading the property could begin the Town would need to pay \$2,000 to acquire the necessary County stormwater and forestry permits. Once we have them, work will quickly begin.

The Town signed the contract after successfully working closely with Sanbower to get the cost of the actual building down to \$1,040,000. Not included in this figure was \$356,000 for site work, i.e. grading, paving, driveways, &c., for a total of \$1,396,000.

The final figure, which was

revealed at the June meeting, stunned the Council, who expressed concern over spending that sum of money while the Town was facing unknown costs associated with upgrading the town’s water and sewer systems.

Barnes, however, made an impassioned case for moving forward, citing Town Councils had been talking about the need for its own Town Hall for years, asking the Council, “if not now, when?” Barnes noted that prices are not going to go down and if the vote was delayed, “who knows what it will cost us in a year or two?”

To help fund the project, the Town will draw \$200,000 from its General Fund to reduce the amount of money the Town will have to borrow. “Between the \$400K in state grant money and \$200K from the General Fund, we’ll only have to borrow \$800K, which will result in a monthly mortgage of \$4,600,” he said.

Barnes walked the Council through the financing of the Hall, stating that thanks to the

Council’s decision to increase the Town’s property tax rate, the Town would be receiving \$60,000 more in property tax revenue, more than enough to pay for the mortgage on the building, he said.

The 2,960 square-foot building will include a conference room on the right immediately upon entrance, with the town manager’s office on the left, adjoining the file room. The Burgess office will be adjacent to the front conference hall. The middle of the building will consist of a “kitchenette” and bathrooms, with the back part of the Hall set aside as a large conference room with the ability to seat 40.

Barnes noted that one of the nicest revisions to the plans was the segmentation of the Hall into two parts, which will allow the front section to be locked while allowing the back section, including the bathrooms, to be used by groups like the Lions Club without worrying about the security of Town offices or records.

## Woodsboro News-Briefs...

### Town To Explore Dredging Park Pond

Commissioner Bill Rittlemeyer suggested that the Town dredge the pond in the town’s park before it’s filled with silt to such an extent that it would no longer be considered a pond, “but a marsh.”

Rittlemeyer noted that over the years silt had been building up in the pond, to the point that during last year’s drought, Israel Creek, which feeds the pond, stopped running, resulting in the pond level dropping to the point that it was, less than 12 inches deep in some spots.

The pond, which serves as a “fill buffer” to prevent the creek from overflowing its banks and running onto Route 550 or into the back yards of homes along Copper Oaks Court, is no longer performing that task, Rittlemeyer said. During heavy rains last fall and this spring, the creek routinely rose to the level of the street and into back yards. While it didn’t block the street or flood a yard, it’s only a matter of

time before it does.

Rittlemeyer told the Council that he had reached out to a specialist who would be willing to come look at the pond and give the Town an estimate for what it would cost to dredge out all the accumulated silt and restore the pond to its initial state.

“It’s not going to be cheap,” Rittlemeyer said, “but the Town can apply for a State sponsored CPP (Community Parks and Playground) grant that will pay for 100% of the cost.

“Unlike POS (Project Open Space) grants, which can only be used for new projects, and only pay for 90% of out-of-pocket expenses, CPP grants can be used for restoration projects, like dredging the pond, and they pay 100%,” Rittlemeyer said.

Barnes agreed with concern over the status of the pond, and, along with Rittlemeyer’s fellow commissioners, was encouraged to get a cost estimate from the dredging special-

ist so work could begin on submitting the CPP grant paperwork.

### Baseball Field To Be Refurbished

The Town has given the OK to a local resident associated with a 14-and-under and 18-and-under boys traveling baseball team to refurbish the town’s baseball field located next to the new skateboard park.

The field, the smaller of the town’s two ball fields, was originally constructed by the town’s old Recreational Council as a softball field, hence its small size. Later it was converted to a “kids” baseball field and then back to a softball field, said Rittlemeyer.

Following the demise of the Recreational Council, the field has gone unused and unmaintained for at least three years. As a result, the dirt infield has been taken over by grass and weeds and the outfield looks like a pasture.

While Rittlemeyer, who serves as the Park Commissioner for the

### Woodsboro hires contractor for lead pipes

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will have to be done, but if it is over 24 inches ...”

Barnes clarified that the State mandate is limited to only inspecting the pipes up to the water meter: “We are not required to inspect all the piping in the house,” he said.

Because Maryland banned the use of lead water pipes in 1972, the MDE Lead Pipe Inventory criteria calls for Towns to prioritize the inspection of water pipe connections for homes built before 1972. However, the inventory still requires a certification for all homes, which will require the Town to document that homes built after 1972 were built to the updated code.

Rittlemeyer, who raised the alert on the

issue at the March Town Council meeting, said “fortunately, most of the homes in Woodsboro are in developments that were built after 1972 and long after the State had banned the use of lead water pipes; however, almost all of the homes on Main Street, 2nd Street, and Creagerstown Road – the old town portion of the town – were built long before the new codes went into effect, and we have no idea what types of pipes are in use to connect those homes to our water system.”

Up until 1952, when the Town built the present (lead free) water distribution system, each house and building in the town was on its own well and septic system. A majority of these homes used lead water pipes to connect the wells to the homes due to their

ability to withstand corrosion. When the Town installed its water system, it simply connected to the existing pipes carrying water into the houses, whether they were lead or copper.

Once the inspection process gets underway, the Town must notify the homeowner if they discover their connection to the town’s water system is through lead pipes, with a recommendation to replace the pipes. Replacement, however, will be at the expense of the homeowner.

“Every year hereafter, we must notify the owners of homes with lead pipes, as well as the State. How long that will go on before the State takes actions to require the removal of the pipes and deem who will have to pay for it is anyone’s guess,” Barnes said.

## Woodsboro-Walkersville NEWS-JOURNAL

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Town, was supportive of its use by the 14-and-under traveling team, he expressed reservation about its use by 18-year-olds. “18-year-olds can hit a ball harder than 14-year-olds, so with 18-year-olds, we are going to have more foul balls falling into yards of homes adjacent to the field along Copper Oaks Court.”

The resident requesting its use acknowledged Rittlemeyer’s concern, as did Barnes, but the requestor said the issue could be alleviated by a higher back stop fence or fencing along the 3rd base baseline, which the traveling team would pay for.

Despite Rittlemeyer’s concern, the Council gave the resident permission to at least begin restoring the ball field so the younger team can begin to practice on it.

### Town To Explore “No Truck” Signs For Alley Ways

Commissioner Jesse Case once

again raised the issue of how best to limit traffic on the town’s small alleyways.

The case recounted a recent example where a 30-foot box truck, “literally no smaller in width than the alley way,” tried to navigate the alley next to his house. “The truck got stuck and after failing to be able to back out of the alley, eventually managed to drive the full length, only to get stuck while trying to turn around on Main Street,” Case said.

Case asked if there was any way the town could prohibit truck traffic on the alleys or at least trucks over a given weight.

“Unfortunately, no,” said Barnes. “The alleyways are technically state roads, so we can’t limit who or what can use them.” But Barnes was open to putting up signs of some sort to “warn larger trucks about the inadvisability of using an alleyway.”



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## WALKERSVILLE NEWS

## Green Street may become a one-way

The Green Street water line repair project that includes a trenchless structural pipeline repair, sidewalk, curb and gutter installation and repaving is ready for the bidding process. Town Planner Sean Williams said the repairs to Green Street are tricky because the original discovery was due to damage to the road surface. Last year, a brief investigation into a portion of cracked asphalt on Green Street showed a breach to the storm drain. The galvanized pipes in question were installed in the 70's and at over 50 years of wear, they are showing signs of severe deterioration due to the large quantity of water the pipes see.

In 2020, a stormwater study was completed recommending replacing the entire pipe system from Colony Village to George Street. However, a repair of this magnitude would cost an estimated \$1,951,982 million.

Last year, the Council discussed seven options with estimates to fix the issues, ranging from band-aid solutions to full replacement. They eventually opted for a "middle of the road" repair where a lining is applied to the entire length of the Green Street pipe with an original estimate of \$286,357. "Lining the pipe in this section is our best option in terms of cost," said Williams.

Williams also pointed out the Town's desire to not only fix the pipe problems but to improve the walkability of Walkersville. He described plans to add a sidewalk to the corner of Maple Ave and Green Street and to pull the sidewalk in front of No. 3 Green Street out five feet and connect it to Fulton Avenue. "For the first time there will be a walkable sidewalk all the way from Fulton Avenue to Maple Avenue. There are a lot of kids that walk here so we have had to consider the safety factor."

The complication, according to Williams, is that by bumping the sidewalk out by five feet, it narrows

Green Street from Fulton Avenue to the Town Hall (about halfway down Green Street). Williams suggested turning Green Street into a one-way from Fulton Avenue to Maple Avenue for safety reasons. Parking would also be restricted to the second portion of Green Street on the Maple Avenue side.

Although the residents of Green Street supported the changes according to Williams, Commissioner Tom Gilbert was hesitant to lend his support. He questioned the need to make Green Street a one-way road versus making it two-way with no parking. "If it's a question of keeping it a two-

way road and not allowing parking or having a one-way with parking on one side, the one-way option is overall much safer," said Williams. This was confirmed by the engineers who determined the street was safer as a one-way as well.

Commissioner Gary Baker pointed out that during the Maple Avenue project, there were multiple instances of parked cars having the side mirrors knocked off and mailboxes run into. "The idea of this being a one-way makes sense to me," he said.

The Council will debate the merits of making Green Street one-way while the bids for the pipe repair are gathered and will vote on the matter later.

## Ethics Code procedures to be updated

Noting that the Town's Ethics Code was due for an update, the Town Council approved an ordinance to amend Chapter 26 of the Town Code, "The Code of Ethics."

The Code of Ethics sets forth values, ethical principles, and ethical standards to which professionals aspire and by which their actions can be judged, as defined by the National Association of Social Workers.

Walkersville Ethics Committee

is comprised of three members: Chairman Ronald Layman, Ralph Whitmore, and Daniel Yeeles, as well as a vacant alternate position who each serve two years.

Members of the Ethics Committee are required to meet at least once a year. Their duties include, among other things, enforcement and administration of the Code of Ethics, the development of associated procedures and policies, and the processing of complaints filed by the public or Town staff

alleging ethics violations by Town officials.

Town Manager Sean Williams said that the Ethics Committee is a unique committee because they are volunteers receiving no monetary compensation, unlike the Town's other committees.

Williams explained that, in the past, the discussion to pay said members has occurred; however, it was determined that "it would be unethical to pay Ethics Committee members. The three members

aren't too put out by not being paid," he said with a smile.

According to Williams, most of the changes to the current Ethics Code are centered around forms that the Town staff and other elected officials must complete each year. These include both financial disclosures and reporting the receipt of gifts.

Williams also said that some of the changes restrict the information an Ethics Committee member may share if information is

asked about a Town staff member or official. Specifically, information is restricted from "medical providers, state governmental entities, or local neighboring municipalities or a quasi-governmental entity which performs a public function and that is supported in whole or in part by the State but is managed privately."

The motion to amend the ordinance was approved unanimously and a public hearing will be scheduled to gather public input on the proposed changes, as well as to solicit additional changes.

## Walkersville News-Briefs...

## Sidewalk Repairs Continue

Sidewalk repairs continue throughout Walkersville with Challedon Drive and Spring Drive in Glade Towne being the latest, according to Joe Birch, Director of Public Works.

The sidewalk repair ordinance, which was approved last year, holds the Town responsible for all sidewalk maintenance, whereas previously a property owner had full responsibility.

Birch also mentioned that the repairs involved replacing the entire slab of concrete instead of shaving the pads down. Gilbert questioned why the Town decided against shaving the pads, "Shaving is quicker and less expensive, it gets the job done," he said. Birch explained that shaving removes the strength from the concrete pad, causing the concrete to be brittle and lose the thickness it needs for durability.

Commissioner Brodie-Ennis pointed out that several of the already repaired slabs would not have been suitable candidates for shaving anyway because they were pushed up too far from tree roots. Replacement was the only option.

Commissioner Tom Gilbert asked what the Town's plan was for the rest of the town's sidewalks. Birch said the work was based on the Town's yearly budget and they would use the road study to determine which sidewalks were in the worst condition and do those first.

Sandstone Drive will see the

next round of repairs beginning mid-July.

## Town Votes To Join Urban County Designation Program

The Town Council voted to join the "Frederick County Urban County Designation Program," where Frederick County applies to become an urban county through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

This will be a new program for Walkersville and if successful, the County would administer the program and allocate funds directly to the municipalities that have chosen to join, including Walkersville. Walkersville will also fall under Frederick County's "umbrella" status of being deemed an urban county.

Town Manager Sean Williams said the hope was for the program to benefit both the Town and the County in the future.

## Comprehensive Plan Updates

As of June, the Staley property continues to be at the center of a tug-of-war between the Planning and Zoning Commission and Town Council when reviewing the Town's Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is a long-term project that takes months to review and edit every 10 years.

The 110-acre farm has a current designation of agricultural/light industrial per the 2011 Plan. For the 2024 version of the Plan, the farm has been changed to a residential designation by the Planning Commission, much to the frustration of Walkersville residents. At a recent public work-

shop, residents showed up in force to persuade the Council and Commission to limit the Plan to a "slow-growth" philosophy.

With that in consideration, the Town Council has requested the Planning Commission to change the Staley property designation back to its original designation: agricultural/light industrial; however, the Commission expressed concerns over limiting Walkersville's future if there is no development in the Comprehensive Plan at all, so they changed the prop-

erty to low-density residential on the light industrial half of the property and left the other half agricultural as a compromise.

Planning and Zoning Administrator Susan Hauer outlined the potential of 60 townhomes on the property versus the original 100 plus houses residential zoning would deliver. She recommended the Council schedule a workshop with the town attorney to discuss their options before voting to accept the Comprehensive Plan as is.



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# FROM THE DESK OF...

## Woodsboro Burgess Heath Barnes

Greetings, I hope everyone is staying cool during this hot summer. It seems like summer has flown by, and I know the school children feel this way as they will be returning to the classrooms this month. I hope each of you students and teachers have a good and safe return to the classrooms and a great school year.

At our July 9th meeting we had a quiet meeting as there was not much on the agenda. We discussed the Community Parks and Playgrounds grant that is available from the county. Unlike the Program Open Spaces grant that can only be used for new projects such as the skate park, the stage, and the bathroom that is about to be built on the east side of the park, this grant can be used for repair. We plan to submit for a grant to get our pond dredged so hopefully, we get the grant so that we can clean the pond well and keep it for years to come, and possibly even get the fish stocked in it again each year.

Our August meeting will take place on Monday, August 12th at 7 instead of the typical second Tuesday of the month so anyone interested in attending mark your calendars accordingly. We are also working on getting some estimates for additional streetlights in town where there are some very dark areas, particularly the upper Copper Oaks neighborhood.

Believe it or not, Woodsboro Days is just over two months away. Look for the ad here in the papers in the September and October additions.

It will be held on October 19th this year and the plans are for it to be even bigger and better than ever. If you would like to be a vendor please reach out me at [hbarnes@woodsboro.org](mailto:hbarnes@woodsboro.org) or 301-401-7164.

The July 4th music event that is put on by Joe Williams in the park was once again a success. I have heard nothing but good things about it. I was not able to attend myself, but I have heard good things. Thank you, Joe, for putting on this community event each year and utilizing the stage that was built for these things.

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

If you have any questions, concerns, complaints, or compliments please feel free to reach out to me at [hbarnes@woodsboro.org](mailto:hbarnes@woodsboro.org) or by phone at 301-401-7164.

Woodsboro Town meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday evening of each month at 7. 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. The public is encouraged to attend.

### Regional Drought Watch Declared by Council of Governments

On Monday, July 29<sup>th</sup>, the Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments (COG) put into effect a drought watch for the region, including Frederick County. This precautionary measure comes as the region continues to experience unusually dry conditions that are expected to persist despite recent rainfall. Residents are urged to take voluntary measures to conserve water and reduce demand on the region's water supply systems.

This is the first drought watch issued in the region since 2010. A drought watch is the level in the regional drought response plan before drought warning, which is when water restrictions could become mandatory. While there is currently an adequate supply of water in the Potomac River and back-up reservoirs, implementing voluntary water conservation practices will help reduce water demand and environmental needs of the river.

"As officials continue to closely monitor drought conditions in the region, it is important for the public to use water wisely," said Clark Mercer, COG executive director, adding that "with a few simple measures, we can all aid in water conservation efforts and help ensure an adequate water supply for our region."

Residents and businesses are



Even with the rain storms of last week, for many farmers this year's corn crop will be a total loss.

encouraged to use water wisely as part of their daily routines to optimize the use of water resources, especially if dry conditions persist. Residents who rely on wells without a backup water supply should take particular care to use water wisely.

Here are some simple tips residents can use to limit indoor and outdoor water use:

- Monitor watering lawns, plants and shrubs
- Sweep sidewalks and driveways (instead of using a hose)
- Avoid washing your car, or instead use a commercial car wash that recycles water
- Fix any plumbing leaks—especially toilets and faucets
- Reduce shower length to under 5 minutes
- Turn off water while brushing your teeth
- Wash fewer but fuller loads of dishes and clothes

While the region is currently at a low to moderate risk for wildfires, fire safety and protection is a concern due to dry conditions. Residents should use extra caution when smoking outside, using

outdoor grills or engaging in other activities that involve flammable materials.

The area is well prepared to withstand a drought thanks to three water supply reservoirs constructed in the 1980s to provide water during droughts. These reservoirs are currently full and will be utilized if needed.

"Due to years of planning and preparation, our water supply infrastructure is well-equipped to handle drought. Nevertheless, it makes sense for all of us to use water wisely and not waste this precious resource," stated Michael Nardolilli, the Executive Director of the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin (ICPRB).

Frederick County is not seeing any drought watch impacts on operations at this present time. Officials continue to closely monitor drought conditions in the region, including both the Potomac and groundwater levels. Water conservation is encouraged as a precautionary effort while the situation continues to be assessed. For additional water conservation tips, visit COG's Wise Water Use Campaign website.

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## County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

With the first day of school a few short weeks away, it's a good time to look at how our growing community is tackling the issue of school overcrowding.

Because Frederick County is such a great place to live, more families are moving here. That means we need more classroom space. At the same time, many of our older schools need updates. My Administration is looking at ways to address both challenges at the same time.

For the first time in Frederick County's history, I established a dedicated, ongoing source of funding to help the County address the needs of our existing and aging schools more quickly.

And just last week, I announced several steps to bring us closer to solving the school construction challenges. These steps will add new capacity sooner than anticipated, create extra space at our most overcrowded school, and add more sites for future schools.

### How we got here

Growth has been an issue here for

many years. Between 2011-2014 – more than 10 years ago – 44 residential housing developments were approved. You see the new houses being built, and there are several of these developments that are still being built out.

Because of this, over the last 10 years the County has constructed new schools and expanded others. More than 5,000 seats have been added to accommodate the increase in students who come from these new homes.

My Administration has been working hard with Frederick County Public Schools to find even more space. Last September, I announced the purchase of a 100-acre site in the Monrovia area. We expect that site will be home to the County's 11th high school. And in April, I added a new Brunswick High School to the County's Capital Improvement Plan.

We also need space at the elementary level. I am happy to report we have identified a property near Mussetter Road and MD Rt. 144, in the Greenview neighborhood of

New Market. This will be the location for Elementary School #41, an 881-seat elementary school.

### Paying for Construction

My FY-25 budget includes over \$680M in for school construction projects. With the County's support, I also put in place an ongoing, dedicated revenue stream to help with our aging school buildings. This new funding, along with existing fees developers pay to build new capacity, will help us address school construction needs.

The cost to build a school is a shared responsibility between the State and the County. The Board of Education sets the priority for the order schools are built. Elementary School #41 was the top priority in this year's BOE request. While the State Interagency Commission on School Construction approved the location for the school, they did not approve any funding or give local planning approval this year. Local planning approval is the State's assurance that they will share in the cost to build a school.

### Creative Solutions

Frederick County can no longer wait for the State. Oakdale Elementary School is projected to be over 170% of its capacity when it reopens for the new school year later this month.

I have a plan to lessen the impact of school overcrowding and new residential growth. This plan includes three new components.

First, I will commit \$3 million to begin the design of School #41. The money will come from fees the developers have already paid to the County in the form of school mitigation fees. I want to be clear – this is 100% developer-funded and not taxpayer dollars. The County Council would need to approve this as a supplemental budget. By starting the design work now, the school could open a year sooner than planned, in August 2027, assuming the State grants planning approval for construction to begin in FY-26.

The second step will help relieve crowding at Oakdale Elementary until the new school is built. There isn't enough space at Oakdale for the portable classrooms that are needed. So I directed staff to work

with the school system on a creative solution. Next to the school is land where a library will be built in four years. For the next few years, until Elementary School #41 is built, that site can be used for field space for Oakdale students. That allows FCPS to use land next to the main building for extra indoor space for core uses, like a cafeteria or gymnasium. This plan would still allow the library to open on time.

Finally, we know Oakdale isn't the only school facing overcrowding. The County and FCPS are always anticipating future needs. School sites are extremely hard to find, and they are growing more expensive. So I am excited that we have purchased almost 20 acres of land on Gas House Pike for a future school. The land was paid for by developers, not taxpayers. It's a real win!

We aren't stopping there. Two other developers are in the process of donating land for school sites, one for a middle school in Gordon Mills, and the other or an elementary school on the Casey property. My staff and FCPS are working together every day to find the best solutions for our students, our families, and our community.

## County Councilman Brad Young

The Frederick County Council meets regularly on Tuesday evenings at 5:30 at Winchester Hall, located at 12 East Church Street in downtown Frederick. All meetings are open to the public, and we welcome participation. The Council is currently on summer recess. The next Council meeting will be Tuesday, August 20.

On July 16, the Council passed Bill 24-10 by 7-0 vote. This bill, sponsored by Council Member M.C. Keegan-Ayer, provides new design criteria for Commercial Solar Facilities in the Agricultural Zoning District. Amended Bill 24-09, sponsored by Council Member Mason Carter, was withdrawn on July 23. The full text of our bills can be found on our website and are also linked to each corresponding agenda.

The Council has two bills that will advance through our legislative process after the summer recess. Bill 24-11, sponsored by

Renee Knapp on behalf of the County Executive, Establishes a Historic Preservation Tax Credit. Bill 24-12, sponsored by Council Member Steve McKay, creates a new section in Frederick County Code that defines the conditions upon which a temporary residential growth moratorium may be declared, as well as the conditions upon which such moratorium would end. Both of these bills are scheduled for a public hearing on August 27, 2024, at 7pm. We welcome public participation at all public hearings. For the most up to date agendas and bill schedules, please visit our website.

On a final note, there is great concern regarding the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project and the impact it may have on the community. Recently the Council became aware of a proposed large-scale power line project and has been reviewing the details alongside with the public.

As this project moves through

the process the Council will closely follow and monitor this state project. We also strongly encourage the public to diligently review and participate in the process.

I want to share with everyone the following links for information on the project as well as ways to make the citizens voices heard.

The Frederick County Council encourages public involve-

ment 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@frederick-countymd.gov](mailto:councilmembers@frederick-countymd.gov).

Please visit our website at [www.frederickcountymd.gov/council](http://www.frederickcountymd.gov/council) to view our latest

agendas, legislation, and upcoming calendar of events.

As a reminder, the Council will be taking its summer recess in the coming weeks and will not be meeting on July 30, August 6, or August 13.

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@Frederick-CountyMD.gov](mailto:BYoung@Frederick-CountyMD.gov), or you can call my office at 301-600-1108.

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## COUNTY NOTES

# Power line events draw in big crowds

Julie Gourley  
Brunswick News-Journal

The Brunswick Volunteer Fire Company hosted two open house-style public information sessions by the Public Service Enterprise Group (PSEG), a New Jersey utility, on July 10.

The purpose was to get public input on the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP), a new 70-mile, 500 kV (500,000 volt) transmission line running from north of Baltimore through Carroll County and ending at the Doubs power substation near Adamstown.

Citizens from all over Frederick County attended one of the sessions; both were crowded and nearly filled the parking lot.

Five stations were set up to answer people's questions: project overview; engineering and construction; environmental issues; routing methodology and process; and public comments via a survey.

There are ten possible routes between the two endpoints, several of which run through Frederick County. None are close to or in Brunswick, or for readers of our sister publications – Emmitsburg, Thurmont, Taneytown, Woodsboro or Walkersville, although it will skirt Union Bridge

### How we got to this point

The Brunswick News-Journal asked a PSEG representative

whether upgrading existing power lines and using existing pathways had been considered. The response was that PSEG tried to avoid housing as much as possible, but that doing so is difficult in Frederick County as opposed to Carroll County. She noted that the proposed corridors do follow existing power lines in some segments. She did not know why the current power lines going through Lilypons Water Gardens were not part of the proposed corridor which diverts around Lilypons to the north and west.

This process began in 2022 with PJM Interconnection, the grid operator for all or part of 13 states and Washington, D.C. It is regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and is responsible for assessing the power needs within its jurisdiction. In 2022, PJM determined that, due to significant system overloads in our region, largely due to existing and proposed data centers, reinforcements were necessary and that a new overhead transmission line was required in the Piedmont Plateau region of Maryland.

In 2023, PJM put out a call for bids from transmission infrastructure developers and awarded the contract to PSEG in August 2023. Following preparations, PSEG held two public information open houses in each of the three affected counties.

### The way ahead

PSEG will select its preferred route by September 2024, then it will apply to the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) for a "certificate of public convenience and necessity" or CPCN. A CPCN provides authority to construct or modify a new power generating station or high-voltage transmission line and is required before construction can begin. The PSC holds a public process in which citizens can attend and testify at a public hearing (at least one must be held near the proposed route) or provide written comments separately, or both.

Sometime after the CPCN is approved, PSEG will again conduct public listening sessions in the three counties to gather further input.

Other hurdles to overcome before PSEG can begin constructing the line include obtaining rights-of-way, easements, permissions and surveys. It expects to begin building by PJM's deadline of June 2025 and deliver power by June 2027.

### Public reaction

Reactions to what people learned in the two Brunswick sessions were mixed. Some people were upset that PJM and PSEG did not, in their view, do enough public outreach from the beginning in 2022. They felt "caught off guard"

by the progression and complained that this was the first time they learned that power lines were either coming close to or proposed to cross their properties.

Concern about property values and the health effects of high-power voltage were raised. Other people felt strongly that the proposed corridors should follow existing power line corridors as much as possible to avoid disturbing new areas. Still others were sanguine about the MPRP, saying that society needs more and more power—including to support artificial intelligence and the internet—and seemed to accept that the MPRP is inevitable.

### What is driving the need for more power?

Although the PSEG officials at the Brunswick meetings did not know specifics about the increased power needs in our area, electricity industry experts have said that the primary reason for the MPRP is to support "data center alley" in Northern Virginia.

The MARL (Mid-Atlantic Resiliency Link) proposed transmission lines in Loudoun County and southwestern Frederick County will link up with the MPRP at the Doubs station. This linkage will provide additional power for data center alley in Ashburn as well as for the data centers coming to the Quantum Loophole campus near Adamstown. Quantum Loophole intends to draw power from

Doubs via connecting distribution lines that will carry the lower voltage needed for its data centers. Potomac Edison will provide the distribution lines.

Unlike the MARL, "the PSEG line is not even important enough to be designated in the U.S. Department of Energy's National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor (NIETC) for the mid-Atlantic region," says Jim Ballard, a former electrical engineer with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, saying this is evidence that the need for the MPRP is primarily driven by data centers. "This (MPRP) is only enough new transmission to power 1500 MW of Quantum Loophole's total build-out plan of 5000 MW. Maryland will need three to four times more new transmission infrastructure to achieve the estimated \$41 million of annual state-wide tax benefits" that the Maryland Tech Council estimates will come from the data center industry, according to Ballard.

### Who pays?

Who will pay for all of this new infrastructure? If the current model holds, we all will pay for it through higher residential electricity bills. How much higher is not yet clear.

Some groups argue that because the new transmission infrastructure is driven primarily by the data center industry, it should pay for most or all of the costs.



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# COUNTY NOTES

## The Piedmont Reliability project

*Editor's note: We got a heads up on this project from our sister paper – The Brunswick News-Journal, which given the proposed new power line will end Brunswick, they are closely following and reporting on it.*

*But when we saw the map of the route of the proposed transmission line, we were not going to do a story on it as the route is fairly outside our distribution area. But we opted to run something when we got a heads up that the Taneytown Facebook page was lit up with false claims about the PSEG coming in and ceasing land under the guise of eminent domain.*

*To address some of the misconceptions about the project we pulled the following information and map off PSEG's website. To address some of the more nuanced questions behind the project and its implications we're also publishing the Brunswick News-Journal's story on the subject.*

### What is the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project

The Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (MPRP) is a critical system (grid) enhancement (update) that has been awarded to PSEG by PJM, the Regional Transmission Organization (RTO) responsible for operating and planning the regional electric grid in all or parts of thirteen states, including Maryland.

The MPRP is a 500,000-volt (500 kV) transmission line designed to respond to growing electric needs in Maryland and the surrounding region. Transmission reliability is key to supporting Maryland's energy future.

The approximately 70-mile proposed transmission route spans three counties, westward from the connection point within the existing Baltimore Gas & Electric transmission line right-of-way in northern Baltimore County, through Carroll County, and into the existing Doubs 500kV Station

in Brunswick, Frederick County.

Due to significant system overloads in the region, PJM determined that system reinforcements are necessary and that a new overhead transmission line is required in the Piedmont Plateau region of Maryland. PJM opened the 2023 competitive window seeking solutions to address this need.

In determining the proposed project route and scope to respond to the PJM competitive window, PSEG evaluated paralleling existing rights-of-way (ROW) in the PJM defined area of concern to the extent feasible. However, existing ROWs can traverse through populated areas and developed neighborhoods, as well as environmentally sensitive areas (i.e. wetlands, waterways) and established parkland, which PSEG attempted to avoid in its initial proposed routing.

Subsequent to being awarded the project in late 2023, PSEG began an in-depth routing analysis to further define the study area and to determine routing alternatives that would refine a viable route that considers and minimizes potential impacts to the built and natural environment.

A preferred route will be selected after critical meetings with interested stakeholders and public information sessions. The project team will consider information gathered from public information sessions, meetings with elected officials and agencies, and comments submitted to the project website. View Route Alternatives.

The project will be subject to the Maryland Public Service Commission's Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) process. PSEG plans to submit the Maryland CPCN application in the fourth quarter of 2024. The project is expected to go into service (when the project delivers power) in June 2027.

### Who is PSEG?

Public Service Enterprise Group is a predominantly regulated infrastructure company focused on a clean energy future with a more than 120-year track record of service. Based in New Jersey, PSEG is an award-winning energy company comprising an electric and gas utility and a nuclear generation business. PSEG has a vision of a future where people use less energy, and it's cleaner, safer and delivered more reliably than ever.

PSEG has a successful history of completing large, cost-effective transmission projects that provide reliable electricity. 500kV transmission is the backbone of the electric grid that provides energy to our homes and businesses. It is not a generator but rather a means to transfer electricity via an electric "superhighway." PSEG has an extensive transmission team that is made up of transmission planners, engineers, permitting and environmental specialists, real estate professionals, outreach professionals and more. The team works together to design and execute transmission projects, while being socially responsible to the communities in which they are built and maintained. PSEG brings its expertise and experience to this project.

### Why is the project needed?

According to PJM, the FERC-approved independent regional transmission organization that oversees the flow of electricity in the region, the need for this transmission project is twofold: system reliability amid a higher demand for electricity in the region and generator retirements. PSEG is building a new power line to keep electricity reliable, resilient and



The proposed new power line will run well east of Taneytown, Keymar and Woodsboro.

accessible in Maryland and the surrounding region.

### What is PJM and how does it fit into the process?

PJM Interconnection is what is known as a Regional Transmission Organization (RTO), an independent organization that is authorized by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to plan the regional transmission grid and coordinate the sale and movement of electricity in all or parts of 13 states and the District of Columbia. One of PJM's primary jobs is to ensure that the electric grid remains safe, reliable and secure.

Planning for the future needs of the regional electric system is an integral part of PJM's role. PJM conducts a Regional Transmission Expansion Plan (RTEP) process that regularly identifies what upgrades to the regional transmis-

sion grid are needed to ensure reliability – meaning the uninterrupted flow of electricity at all times.

When needs are identified, PJM, in some circumstances, will open up a competitive "window" to procure regulated transmission solutions to identified needs.

The award of this project to PSEG is one of those solutions.

### Do Maryland regulations on siting, permitting and environmental issues apply?

Yes. The final route of the transmission line is subject to the Maryland Public Service Commission's Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) process. Obtaining feedback from stakeholders and outreach meetings are an important part in this process. The project is also subject to other federal, state, and local environmental and land use permitting requirements.

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# COMMENTARY

## Words from Winterbilt

### Unprecedented?

Shannon Bohrer

The word “unprecedented” has been used frequently since 2015. When running for office, the former president disparaged John McCain, disrespected a Gold Star family, and bragged about molesting women. The press would describe his behaviors and words each time as “unprecedented.” The press also believed each deed would prohibit him from being elected. The press was wrong.

After being elected, his abnormal behavior became the norm. During his entire time in office, the word “unprecedented” was commonly used to describe his actions. His words and actions, friendships with dictators and authoritarian leaders, while verbally disapproving of our allies, were puzzling. His attempted interference with Ukrainian politics, to interfere with our election, and his attempts to stay in power were routinely described as unprecedented. News reporters often said the word unprecedented was an overused term, yet it accurately described the administration. They were wrong again.

After losing the election in 2019, and before leaving office, the former president created schemes, many of which were illegal, to stay in office. Reporters continued to describe his behavior as unprecedented. It could be helpful if the press stopped using the word unprecedented, yet they

continue to say it best describes his actions and words. While many of the words and actions during his administration, and since then, were immoral, unprincipled, unscrupulous, deceitful, and just plain dishonest, the word unprecedented does not always apply.

The actions of planning to overthrow the government, subverting Democracy, and having a ruler that reflects fascism occurred before and occurred here on January 6, 2020. The idea that we should be a Christian nation, eliminating other faiths and religions, has occurred before. Of course, the idea that white Anglo-Saxon males should rule not just our country but the world has also occurred before. The reported interference from foreign governments, which occurred in the last two elections and is predicted to reappear, has also happened before. While many politicians deny foreign influence, that has also occurred before. Additionally, as before, we have politicians that are supportive of these undertakings. Therefore, the words and actions they use - are not totally unprecedented.

In the 1930s, when Hitler was in the initial stages of becoming a fascist leader, he had many admirers and groups in his country. They believed the United States needed a strong leader, not unlike Hitler. An American fascist organization, the German American Bund, was founded in 1936. Their objective was to create an American Nazi party, like the

German Nazi Party. The Bund's even duplicated Hitler's youth camps, creating twenty youth training centers. Camp Siegfried, on Long Island, hosted 40,000 people in one year. The Bunds revered Hitler and believed that the Jews were responsible for the world's problems.

In February 1939, the Bunds held a rally at Madison Square Garden in New York. The group's leader, Fritz Kuhn, was well known for praising Hitler and the degrading of Jews, which was their unofficial platform. The leaders at the event described it as a “mass demonstration for the Americanism.” Banner and signs included “Wake up America! Smash Jewish Communism and Stop Jewish Domination of Christian Americans.” Part of Kuhn's address was for the “government [to] be returned to the American People Who Founded it.” It was reported that twenty-two thousand people attended the rally. The hall was decorated with Nazi swastikas, and attendees openly performed gave Nazi salutes, many while wearing Nazi uniforms.

An influential individual who despised Jews and believed in fascism was Father Coughlin. A Catholic priest, born in Canada but living in Michigan. Father Coughlin was known as the “Radio Priest” because he had a weekly radio program that reached an estimated thirty million people, about a quarter of the population then.

Father Coughlin preached more politics than religion. He began as a supporter of President Roosevelt but later accused him of being Jewish and collaborating with Jewish

bankers. He established the National Union for Social Justice, which called for reforms, including the nationalization of industries and railroads. Sounds like socialism.

He praised Hitler and fascism on his radio programs.” He said, “When we get through with the Jews in America, they'll think the treatment they received in Germany was Nothing.” He believed democracy was doomed and fascism would replace it. Oddly, while he spoke highly of Hitler and Mussolini, he distanced himself from the German American Bund. He also insisted he was not an antisemite.

In 1938, a House Committee on Un-American Activities was created to investigate disloyal and subversion activities in the U.S. It was reported that the German Library of Information, titled “The Facts in Review,” was responsible for mailing pro-German weekly digest to nearly 100,000 Americans teachers, elected officials, priest, and others. “The Facts in Review” explained why Germany was a victim and why Hitler was right to disregard treaties and invade other countries. The Committee stated that the German Government was targeting the American Public with propaganda, trying to influence our government and our elections, not unlike Russia and China today.

The politics of today, along with private organizations attempting to influence our government and our elections, is not unprecedented. Project 2025, the Republican plan for governing the country, outlines imparting Christian values into the government and society. The plan called for more executive power,

resembling an authoritarian government, not unlike an autocracy. There would be no separation of church and state. Of course, to implement the plan, at least parts of our constitution would be suspended. Many of the authors in the plan are former government employees.

As William Falkner once said, “The past is never dead, It's not even past.”

Even the hatred of Jews still exists. In today's environment, there continue to be antisemite sentiments ostensibly related to the conditions in Palestine. There is certainly some mistrust with the Israeli government as to how the war in Palestine is being waged. However, why do we not see protests against Putin, for an estimated 500,000 casualties (killed and injured) Ukrainians? President of Syria, Bashar al-Assad, has killed and injured over one1,000,000 Syrians, both Muslim and Christian, and no one has protested.

As in the 1930's, we are at another inflection point, where a large segment of our society is not interested in maintaining a democracy, instead they believe an autocracy would be a better form of government. In a Democracy, the majority does not have a right to take away the rights of the minority, nor does the minority have a right to take away the rights of the majority.

It could be said that in our history, these are not ordinary times, but they are not “unprecedented.”

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

## The Bulwark

### Seven lessons from Joe Biden's candidacy

Jonathan Last

1. The Democratic Party is a healthy institution.

On the night of June 27, the various power centers within the Democratic Party began a difficult conversation: Was Joe Biden still capable of running a vigorous campaign?

Over three weeks the party reached a diffuse—if not unanimous—consensus: He was not. This consensus was the product of all levels of the party: Elder statesmen such as Nancy Pelosi, elected Democrats analyzing their own future prospects, donors making decisions about spending, and the main body of public opinion among Democratic voters.

Once this consensus was reached, the various power centers began a dialogue with the party's leader, President Biden. The party expressed its choice. Biden pushed back. The party took up the question again and, after due consideration, held firm.

Joe Biden then stepped aside for the good of the nation. This is how healthy institutions are supposed to work.

At The Bulwark there has been a lot of drama over the last three weeks. We told you what we really thought, even though it meant making some people mad. Our mission is to have honest and real conversations. Because that's what healthy institutions do.

2. The process which elevated Kamala Harris was sensible.

The Democratic party made another institutional decision in parallel with the Biden question: It vetted Kamala Harris.

This subroutine executed in the background, but it was active. Democratic voters began to consider her as the nominee and polling showed that they were comfortable with her. Party elders evaluated her fitness. Donors and elected Democrats took her measure. The fact that no anti-Harris groundswell—or even boomlet—emerged is proof that the party decided that Harris was an acceptable nominee.

After Biden blessed Harris on Sunday afternoon, the party coalesced around her in much the way it did Biden after the New Hampshire primary in 2020. The Democratic party will enter the election more unified than it had been pre-debate.

3. Kamala Harris can run as an insurgent, but with the advantages of an incumbent.

The largest advantage of incumbency is that a candidate does not have to take base-pleasing positions during a primary campaign that can hurt him during a general election.

Because of the extraordinary nature of her ascendance, Harris possesses this advantage. She will carry nearly every advantage of incumbency and yet she can credibly position herself as this elec-

tion's change agent.

4. Trump is holding the age bomb.

The Trump campaign spent two years creating a political bomb concerning old age. They assumed that they could plant this bomb at the feet of Joe Biden.

Trump is now the one holding the age bomb. He is not only a full generation older than Harris—everything about him looks geriatric by comparison. From his gait to his bronzed-over pallor; from the way he rambles and gets lost in sentences to his inability to keep facts straight.

Every split screen now makes Trump look old and decrepit by comparison.

5. There was enormous pent-up demand among Democrats for a younger leader.

In the first 24 hours, Kamala Harris raised over \$100 million from small-dollar donors. Sit with that for a moment. \$100 million.

That's more money than any Democrat has ever raised in a single day. It's twice as much as Trump raised following his felony conviction. If this doesn't snap your head back, it should. Because it's as good a proxy as you'll find for excitement.

It will be several days until we have polling with a more detailed view of Harris's support from Democratic voters, but it is already clear that she will perform much better than Biden has within her party.

Here's my advice: You should be open to the idea that Harris could

ride a wave of excitement and passion that absolutely no one was seeing until Biden stepped aside. I'm talking Obama '08-levels of energy.

It's not a given. But it's in the realm of the possible. Keep your eyes peeled for it.

6. The Republican party is a failed state.

At the debate, Donald Trump also demonstrated (again) that he is unfit for office. He rambled and lied incoherently. He is a convicted felon. A jury found him guilty of sexual assault. He has said he wants to be a “dictator” and that he wants to “terminate” parts of the Constitution. He selected as his running mate a man who advised disobeying orders from the Supreme Court and forcing a constitutional crisis.

Until last week there was nothing stopping the Republican party from forcing Trump off the ticket. The party elders and elected officials could have demanded that Trump step aside. Republican voters could have said that they had no confidence in his ability to govern. Donors could have closed their wallets.

But the plain fact is that not one single Republican called on Trump to step aside. Not one. Why? Because the various precincts of the Republican party understand that they hold no power—at all—over Trump. They could not ask him to withdraw from the race. Even broaching the subject would be grounds for excommunication from the party.

The Democratic party is a functioning institution, with checks and balances; constituencies and power

structures. Like any institution, it is amorphous and its decision making is mostly organic.

The Republican party is an autocracy where the only thing that matters is the will of the leader. All power flows through him. All decisions are made by him. There are no competing power centers—only vassal states overseen by his noblemen.

7. Harris is an underdog.

One of the reasons the last three weeks have been so difficult is because Democrats were not choosing between a “good” outcome and a “bad” outcome. Those sorts of choices are easy.

Instead, Democrats were tasked with deciding between least-bad options. Humans rebel against the idea of “least-bad.” When faced with choices, we want to believe that at least one of them is “good.”

When the first real Harris-vs.-Trump polling comes out next week we'll see how big of a hole she's in. But unlike Biden, Harris has the ability to spend the next three months on offense, all day, every day. If she can deliver the goods, she has a puncher's chance.

Nothing about Joe Biden's presidency was inevitable. Not his candidacy. Not his victory over Trump. Not his withdrawal from reelection. At nearly every turn, Biden did the right thing for America. His legacy is assured. He will be remembered as one of the great modern presidents.

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

# The Liberal Patriot

Teaching what it means to be an American

Richard Kahlenberg

The U.S. is celebrating its 248th birthday at a moment when people across the political spectrum agree that the country's experiment in liberal democracy is in deep trouble.

A decade ago, it would have been unthinkable that the Republican candidate for president would be someone who had tried to thwart the peaceful transfer of power and speaks of suspending the Constitution. The threat to liberal democracy on the left is less stark, fueled by the power of culture, rather than the power of the state. But it too is chilling. More than half of very liberal college students say it's acceptable to block fellow students from hearing speakers. College campuses have become deeply corrosive cultures, in which eight in ten students surveyed feel they can't speak their minds. Illiberalism on the left rises as people become more educated.

It is especially worrisome that the willingness to give up on democracy is much greater among young people than those who are older. Whereas only 5 percent of those over 65 said, "Democracy is no longer a viable system, and America should explore alternative forms of government," a shocking 31 percent of youth ages 18-29 agreed.

A central driver is the loss of a common American identity. White identity politics on the right is more openly embraced than at any time since the presidential candidacy of George Wallace. And racial identity politics on the left, driven by once-fringe academic theories such as Critical Race Theory, have moved into the mainstream in teacher education schools left leaning

nonprofits, and even portions of corporate America. When policy fights are seen as proxies for identity wars, those disputes become existential, which justifies cutting corners on democratic norms. White voters on the right who worry that they are losing majority control of the country are more likely to excuse authoritarian actions. Likewise, left-wing activists shout down speakers not on issues related to taxes or labor law reform but invariably on matters that touch on racial, ethnic, or gender identity.

As a result, an eerie consensus has emerged on the hard left and hard right that long-standing liberal democratic norms should be bent or broken to advance various ideological causes. In a multiracial democracy, people should be judged as individuals, while race essentialists feel confident that knowing the racial or ethnic identity of participants in a dispute is a pretty good guide to who is right.

The hard right speaks of "alterative facts" and the hard left about "my truth." The right questions the expertise of the "deep state," and openly relies on nepotism to fill positions of public trust, while parts of the left see selection based on merit as a smokescreen for white supremacy and claim someone saying the most qualified person should get the job is committing a "microaggression."

Critical race theorists, so deeply pessimistic about the permanence of racism, are no more enthusiastic about school integration than skeptics on the political right. Anti-racists, who think all racial and ethnic disparities are the result of racism, take a distrustful view of the academic success of Asians and Jews, while extremists on the right consider these groups less fully American than white Christians.

The hard right labels the press the

"enemy of the people" while campus activists protesting the war in Gaza hold signs calling for "death to mainstream media." Both extremes would ban books, some for offending the sensibilities of whites, others because they represent "cultural appropriation." On issues of academic freedom, the right calls for stripping professors of their tenure protections, while the left insists on loyalty oaths in the form of DEI statements.

What is to be done?

The fundamental purpose of public schools is to teach kids what it means to be an American, the shared history and values that derive from the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. By doing so public schools accomplished two miraculous objectives: they helped sustain a system self-governance, grounded in individual rights, for over two centuries; and they instilled a shared national ethos and identity that provided the glue necessary to hold together people whose ancestors came from all corners of the world.

In recent decades, K-12 schools and colleges have moved dramatically away from this vision. Out of an understandable but false sense of security, they have placed far more emphasis on economic competitiveness than democratic citizenship. Teacher education programs, out of a genuine concern about racial achievement gaps, also took a wrong turn on issues of social cohesion. Rather than teaching a common American identity, they encouraged young teachers to believe that racism is pervasive and unceasing, so public schools needed to strengthen student racial identities to steel them against inevitable discrimination. These education schools emphasized the terrible history of slavery and segregation, and left out the redemption part of the story.

In red states, conservatives capitalized on the cultural disconnect between public schools and the general public to advance privatization efforts with more



success in the last few years than in the previous fifty. Tragically, these schemes, which send students of different religions to different types of schools, only Balkanize the country further.

It is time to teach students what it means to be American today. For young people who might understandably be frustrated with America, embarrassed by its leaders, it is important to devote more time to teaching them the tremendous contributions America has made to the world as a beacon of liberty. Policymakers should provide more time, resources, and accountability for students to learn their civic inheritance and shared American history. All states should require civics in high school and require students to pass a rigorous exam in order to graduate.

Schools should teach that America is exceptional—not because Americans are better people than others—but because we have set up a system of rights that, over time, have become available to people who come to this country from all parts of the world. To get at the core of American identity, students should ask: if a foreign country invaded the United States, what monuments and artifacts would be most important to try to preserve because they go to the essence of what it means to be an American?

For me personally, the most important monuments to our nation's values start with the National Archives, home of the essential documents of our liberal democracy—the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the Emancipation Proclamation. I would also include the Statue of Liberty, symbolizing America's openness to legal immigrants from across the world no matter their racial or ethnic origin.

The stakes of teaching American identity are enormous. Human beings have a natural yearning to identify with groups that pursue a larger purpose. If educators don't help students develop a reflective patriotism, extremists will offer false alternatives centered around race or ethnic identities.

The good news is that the public supports a better path. Instilling a renewed sense of American identity could inspire a "patriotism dividend," a strong sense of national community that has provided the precondition for all this country's great movements for social change over time. Best of all, it could help put America on better footing to sustain its grand experiment in liberal democratic governance for another 250 years.

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

# Good Day Neighbor

Circular debates

Dorothea Mordan

Friends of mine, a married couple, had an argument about immigration. It was a testy back and forth, one spouse fiercely opposed to any form of illegal immigration. The other spouse argued as passionately for asylum. Both used common rationales. They come wanting our resources, they come for help, they take up space, there are too many of them.

Until one spouse asks the other, "What would it take for you to leave me and the kids here to go to another country to find work? How bad would our lives have to be? Answer that question for yourself. Do you think people want to walk thousands of miles to America?"

The argument ended there. The circle had spun around the symptoms and repercussions of a problem, not the cause. Circular arguments about immigration are often about loss suffered by the host country. Immigrants actually give us in the USA more of our first world conveniences. A rising workforce supports a wide economy.

Are we arguing about how to solve a problem, or is it about convenience?

Any solution is best applied to the root cause of a problem. The reasons people emigrate include poverty and/or safety. One factor in safety is gang related violence in the world of illegal, addictive drugs. We could take more care of our own citizens before they become part of the drug trafficking equation. As an economic partner to foreign countries, the USA can use investment power to create economic strength outside our borders.

Poverty is a tangible problem for which we as a society can find solutions. We can advocate for solutions to poverty. Choose wisely when electing leaders. They are our friends and neighbors who can put in place or impede solutions.

A recent episode, The Roots of Poverty in America, on the podcast Throughline (7/11/24) explains some of the revolving door of poverty. One circular argument is that poverty and welfare create a revolving door of dependence on monthly support. Conventions in our financial system create barriers to rising out of poverty. The working poor have the threat of fees for handling the bit of money they receive from minimum wage jobs. Financial exploitation from overdraft fees, check-cashing fees, pay-

day loan fees - accumulating some \$61 million in fines and fees every day. This is money that could lift families above the poverty line.

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, or TANF is a federal funding program to aid Americans living below the poverty line. For Maryland Benefits <https://www.benefits.gov/benefit/1277>. Many states withhold money from citizens, for a variety of reasons. Some state have a reserve of hundreds of millions of dollars. This money could be used to change the bottom tier of our economy.

Government subsidies are available in every income bracket. For lower incomes there is the earned income tax credit. Homeowners with a mortgage can take a tax deduction for the interest paid on their mortgage. Wealthier homeowners with a second home, can take a tax deduction for the interest on the mortgage on their second home. Second homes include boats, RVs, and vacation houses.

Do subsidies of mortgage interest, tax deductions create a revolving door of support for wealthy people? Does this create a revolving door of dependence on acquiring more stuff?

The point is that we can solve poverty, and we can solve some underlying causes of drug addiction. We could disrupt the supply and demand for illegal

drugs. This can happen when we commit to solving problems, not continuing circular arguments. To be committed to solving a problem means learning the root causes. To learn the difference between a circular argument and the components of a real life situation, one has to be willing to look at them from different perspectives.

An example of a circular argument:

"If the king said it then it is true, and it is true because the king said it." — Douglas Neil Walton

Another circular debate scenario in our contemporary public square, aka the internet: If my opponent says it, it must not be true.

Get off the circle at the local level, step into our library, and find a different perspective. At the library each of us can pursue a topic for a better understanding of how we are connected to the world around us. Start at the local level at our Walkersville Library.

Read and research on your own or meet as a group in one of the study rooms. Get out of circular arguments and get your mind into circulation. Having conversations is a huge step towards understanding our community. Please come to the conversation informed, rather than accumulating repetitive details on the news, in your headphones, on your smart phone, on bumper stickers, graffiti, yard signs.

These are endless ways we communicate without really talking to each other.

Support our library with the Friends of the library group. Go to [FCPL.org](http://FCPL.org) and search Friends of the Library: Walkersville Branch Library.

Find community activities on the Walkersville Library Events Calendar. Story hour for kids, Youth Summer Lunch, and Discovery Days, to name a few. Go to [frederick.librarycalendar.com/events/](http://frederick.librarycalendar.com/events/). Search the Library Branch List to find your closest FCPL Branch Library.

You know the adage "For want of a nail...the war was lost." How about, "For want of a book perspective was lost. For want of perspective the solution was lost."

Reframe an argument, look at a topic from multiple points of view, and take a broader look at who is part of your community. There are circular arguments all over the place this election cycle. Topics that are calculated to raise fears, fears of others. Being circles doesn't make them steering wheels. They can't bring direction to our lives.

2024 is the Year of the Vote. Please make yours count.

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

# PASTOR'S DESK

## Understanding

Pastor Neil Acheampong  
Covenant Family Chapel

Understanding something is having a complete or proper knowledge of a subject matter. This is very crucial because understanding is at the very core of the decisions, we make daily. Understanding correctly helps a person to make decisions correctly. The current "political climate" or the state of things fueled by the flow of information in the country regarding our political discourse is very confusing, so it is very difficult to fully grasp anything that is being said. These days when you turn on the TV set or radio or any source of news, we hear conflicting information that leaves us in a state of confusion. As a result, many people are confused and don't know what to do.

Understanding is crucial to one's cause of action. Until we understand the times in which we live, we will be confused and not know what to do. This is also true in a biblical sense. In the bible, understanding is defined as one's perception which helps one to judge issues accurately.

One story in the bible that helps us to grasp this principle of "understanding" is the story about the prophet Samuel who was praying for King Saul in First Samuel chapter sixteen and verse one. God tells Samuel to stop praying for King Saul because He has rejected him and has found himself a new king. Samuel is commanded by God to go and anoint David as the new king.

After David is anointed, he does not ascend the throne because Saul is still king and occupying the throne. After several years, many people gathered together to make sure David ascended

the throne - according to the biblical account in the first Chronicle chapter twelve from the twenty-third verse to the thirty-second verse.

Here is a list of citizens who gathered to make David King. The sons of Judah came, the sons of Simeon came, the sons of Levi came, the sons of Benjamin came, the sons of Ephraim came, the tribe of Manasseh came, the sons of Issachar came, Zebulon came, Naphtali came, Danites came, those of Asher and the Reubenites came. One of the tribes that came to make David king were "sons of Issachar" who we are told was distinct from the rest of the tribes.

What set them apart was the fact that they understood the time in which they lived. In other words, the sons of Issachar had a complete or proper knowledge of the current climate they lived in. The Bible calls it 'discernment' or "understanding of the times". And because of their understanding of the times they lived in, the sons of Issachar we are told knew what Israel as a nation had to do. The rest of the Israelites allowed Saul to rule even though God had rejected him because they did not understand the times in which they lived. Those who knew what Israel had to do were those who had an understanding of the times.

When you observe our world and the things that are happening in various communities, if you don't understand these times in which we live both politically and otherwise, you would not know what needs to be done, who needs to govern, and what public policies we need to encourage or discourage.

As you read this article my prayer is that you will become like the "sons of Issachar", understanding the times in

which we live knowing what needs to be done, and having the guts to do it.

We are living at a time when there is an "epidemic of self-indulgence" all across the nations of the world and America is no different. Families, politics, governance, and communities are all about individuals and self and we have forgotten that what makes us a thriving society is our ability to support "good policies" for all people. When I say, "good policies", I am talking about policies that promote not just unity but good morals and do not only look into the here and now but the future. There is so much focus on individuals that we forget the collective good. Often one social group wants recognition so bad to the detriment of the rest. There was a time in America when we could disagree to agree without demonization. It is like an infectious disease epidemic like coronavirus which plagued the entire world in 2020, and America was not any different.

In a Pew Research Center article published on September 19, 2023, titled "Americans' Dismal Views of the Nation's Politics", 65% of those surveyed said this about the current political climate: "We are always or often feel exhausted when thinking about politics". When those surveyed (8,480 adults on July 10-16, 2023, and 5,115 adults on June 5-11, 2023) were asked to sum up their feelings about politics in a word or phrase, 79% used negative or critical words such as "divisive", "corrupt", "polarized", "chaos", "sad", "bad" and "dysfunctional".

It is important then to understand what is going on so we (Americans) like the sons of Issachar will know what to do in such a political climate. I believe that we can learn from the scriptures how to gain perceptive insight with the ability to judge correctly our current political climate.



First, we need to review our political system. Most people will agree that any structure built without maintenance will deteriorate over time. In the same way, it is time to review our system of government and revise the checks and balances set up by the Founding Fathers. In the same survey referenced above when those surveyed were asked to identify the strengths and weaknesses, of the American Political System, their responses were telling. A third gave "no answer", and 22% wrote "nothing" - meaning that in their view, the political system does not have any strengths. Among those who gave positive responses - 12% said something good about the structure of governance with its system of checks and balances.

It is obvious that since a greater number of those surveyed were unable or unwilling to identify strong points of the nation's political system, it is important to start a debate to review our structures of governance and other related areas. Let me caution that,

we begin our review based on scriptural principles. The Bible teaches that understanding is a gift of God, and it is to be prayed for according to Daniel 2:21 & Psalm 119:34. This will help us as a Nation to review using the scriptures as a guide.

Secondly, we must study the political climate without our political party lenses and adjust our attitude as citizens looking at the collective good and not just what our political party wants. His must also be done with future generations of Americans in mind so the ideology of "self-indulgence" will be relegated to the background.

Thirdly, I believe each citizen must also remember they have a part to play towards the national good and do so without demonizing others in the process.

Fourthly, immigrants who are here must seek the good of the country by doing their fair share and also fulfilling their civic duties, and cultivating good work ethics. God told the Israelites who were in exile in Babylon, "And work for the peace and prosperity of the city where I sent you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, for its welfare will determine your welfare." (Jeremiah 29:7, New Living Translation).

Fifthly, pray for America seriously and ask for God's mercy because righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is detrimental to any nation.

With that, let me say that God bless America now and, in the future, as we seek a proper political climate and do what it takes to make things better.

To learn more about Covenant Family Chapel, visit them online at [www.covenantfamilychapel.org](http://www.covenantfamilychapel.org) or better yet, join them for Sunday service.

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John 14:27

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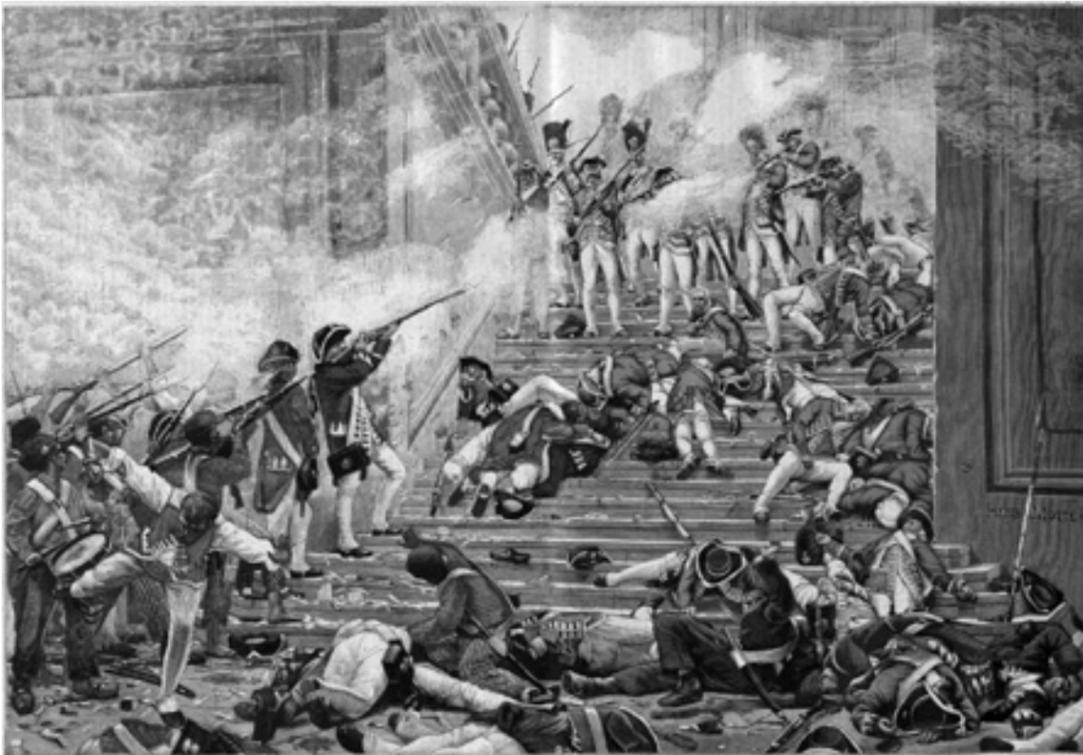
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## THE BOOK OF DAYS

## 'The tenth of August'



The 10th of August 1792 is memorable in modern European history, as the day which saw the abolition of the ancient monarchy of France in the person of the unfortunate Louis XVI. The measures entered upon by prince and people for constitutionalising this monarchy had been confounded by a mutual distrust which was almost inevitable. When the leading reformers, and the populace which gave them their strength, found at length that Austria and Prussia were to break in upon them with a reaction, they grew desperate; and the position of the king became seriously dangerous. In our day, such attempts at intervention are discouraged, for we know how apt they are to produce fatal effects. In 1792, there was no such wisdom in the world.

It was at the end of July that the celebrated manifesto announcing the plans of Austria and Prussia reached Paris. The people broke out in fury at the idea of such insulting menaces. Louis himself was in dismay at this manifesto, for it went far beyond anything that he had himself wished or expected. But his people would not believe him. An indescribable madness seized the nation; and 'Death to the aristocrats!' was everywhere the cry.

During the night between the 9th and 10th of August, the tocsin sounded all over Paris, and the rabble were invited to scenes of violence by the more unscrupulous leaders—against the wish of many who would even have gone so far as to dethrone the king.

The danger to the royal family being now imminent, numbers of loyal men hastened to the Tuileries with an offer of their swords and lives. There were also at the palace several hundred Swiss Guards, national guards, and gens d'armes. The commandant, Mandat, placed detachments to guard the approaches to the palace as best he could. When, at six o'clock in the morning, the insurgent mob, armed with cannon as well as other weapons, came near the Tuileries, the unfortunate Louis found that none of his troops were trustworthy save the Swiss Guards: the rest betrayed their trust at the critical moment. A day of horror then commenced.

The lives of the unhappy royal family were placed in such peril, that they were compelled to take refuge within the

walls of the Legislative Assembly, hostile as that assembly was to the king. Louis, his queen, and their children walked the short distance from the palace-doors to the assembly-doors; but even in this short distance the king had to bear the jeers and hisses of the populace; while the queen, who was an object of intense national hatred, was met with a torrent of loathsome epithets.

All through the remainder of that distressing day, the royal family remained ignobly cooped up in a reporter's box at the Legislative Assembly, where, without being seen, they had to listen to speeches and resolutions levelled against kingly power in all its forms; for the assembly, though at this moment protecting the king, was on the eve of dethroning him. Meanwhile blood was flowing at the Tuileries. None of the troops remained faithful to the royal cause except the Swiss Guards, who defended the palace with undaunted resolution, and laid more than a thousand of the insurgents in the dust. A young man, destined to worldwide notoriety, Napoleon Bonaparte, who was in the crowd, declared that the Swiss Guards would have gained the day had they been well commanded. But a fatal indecision ruined all.

The poor king was persuaded to send an order to them, commanding them to desist from firing upon 'his faithful people,' as the insurgents were called. The end soon arrived. The rabble forced an entrance into the palace and the Swiss Guards were butchered almost to a man. This terrible day inaugurated the French Revolution. The king and queen were never again free.

#### Napoleon Bonaparte August 15

After all that has been said and written on the subject of Napoleon Bonaparte, the conclusion is forced upon us, that he had few of the elements in his composition which go to make up the character of a true hero. Of unbounded ambition, perfectly unscrupulous as to the means by which he might accomplish his ends, and tinged throughout by an utter selfishness and regardlessness of others, we can deem him no more entitled to a real and intelligent admiration, than a previous occupant of the French throne, Louis XIV, brilliant in many respects though the reigns of both these men undoubtedly were.

That the first Napoleon was in many ways a benefactor to France, cannot reasonably be denied. By his military and administrative abilities he raised himself to supreme power at a time when the country was emerging from the lawlessness and terrorism to which she had been subjected after the death of Louis XVI. The divided and profligate government of the Directorate had succeeded the anarchy and violence of the leaders of the Convention. Some powerful hand was required as a dictator to hold the reins of state, and arrange in a harmonious and well-adjusted train the various jarring and unstable systems of government.

Regardless of the warnings addressed to him by the most sagacious of his counsellors, contemptuously defiant of the coalitions formed to impede his progress, and careless, lastly, of the odium which his tyrannical

sway in the end excited among his own subjects, he found himself at length left utterly destitute of resources, and obliged to submit to such terms as his enemies chose to impose. His career presents one of the most melancholy and impressive lessons that history affords. And yet how eagerly would a large portion of the French nation revert to a policy which, in his hands, overwhelmed it only with vexation and disaster!

Napoleon's character may be contemplated in three phases—as a statesman, as a commander, and as a private individual. In the first of these capacities, he displayed, as regards France, much that was worthy of commendation in point of political and social reform. A vigorous administration of the laws, a simplification of legal ordinances and forms, a wise and tolerating system in religious matters, many important and judicious sanitary measures, the embellishment of the capital, and patronage afforded to art and science, must all be allowed to have been distinguishing attributes of his sway.

But how little did he understand the art of conciliating and securing the allegiance of the countries which he had conquered! A total ignoring of all national predilections and tendencies seems to have been here habitually practiced by him, and nowhere was this more conspicuous than in his treatment of Germany. That system of centralization, by which he sought to render Paris the capital of a vast empire, at the expense of the dignity and treasures of other cities and kingdoms, might flatter very sensibly the national vanity of France, but was certain, at the same time, to exasperate the degraded and plundered countries beyond all hopes of forgiveness.

The military genius of Bonaparte has been, and still is, a fruitful theme for discussion. In the early part of his career, he achieved such successes as rendered his

name a terror to Europe, and gained for him a prestige which a series of continuous and overwhelming defeats in the latter period of his history was unable to destroy. But in the game of war, results alone can form the criterion, and the victories of Marengo, of Austerlitz, and of Wagram can scarcely be admitted in compensation for the blunders of the Russian campaign and the overthrow at Waterloo.

One qualification, however, of a great general, the capacity of recognising and rewarding merit, in whatever position it might be found, was eminently conspicuous in Napoleon. Favouritism, and the influence of rank or fortune, were almost entirely unknown in his army. Few of his generals could boast much of family descent, and the circumstance that bravery and military talent were certain to receive their due reward in promotion or otherwise, gave every man a personal interest in the triumph of the emperor's arms.

An inquiry into the personal character of Bonaparte exhibits him perhaps in a still less favourable sight than that in, which we have hitherto been considering him. Of a cold-blooded and impassible temperament, and engrossed exclusively by the master-passion, ambition, he betrayed no tendencies towards any of those aberrations by which the characters of so many other great men have been stained. But the very cause that kept his moral purity inviolate, rendered him totally insensible to the promptings of love and affection when his interest seemed to require that they should be disregarded. The insensibility with which he appears to have regarded the sacrifice of myriads of Frenchmen to his lust for power, leads us to form a very low estimate of the kindness or goodness of his heart.

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

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# ECOLOGY

## Snail teeth and other nature oddities

**Anne Gageby**  
 Director of Environmental Education  
 Strawberry Hill Foundation

I recently saw a meme with an image of a snail superimposed with fake teeth. The picture was meant to be funny and clownish. A moment of silliness as I doom-scrolled the internet. As I studied the grinning snail a question popped into my mind: do snails have teeth?

It turns out they do though their teeth are quite different from ours. Snails' mouths contain a radula, a membrane similar to a tongue. The radula is covered in thousands of tiny teeth and used to scrape away at their food. Snail teeth are extremely durable though they do get worn down by eating. Like sharks, snails replace their teeth regularly. This was an interesting discovery considering snails' diets consist of plant matter and fungi. Not exactly the type of meal that wears down teeth. It turns out my understanding of snails was incorrect.

Most land snails are generalist feeders, meaning they eat a wide variety of organic and inorganic material beyond fungi and green and decaying plants. They consume animal carcasses and scat, rotting wood, empty snail shells, and even certain rocks such as limestone. Snails and their shell-less relatives, slugs, are technically classified as decomposers though their role is significantly smaller than other decomposers like worms and fungi.

Some snail species will even feed on others of their kind. The assassin snail is well-known for feeding on smaller snails no matter their species. Though they generally avoid single-handedly attacking larger snails, the assassin snail has been known to gang up on larger snails and make a meal out of them. The notion of a snail's existence as gentle is just a mirage. It's a snail-eat-snail world after all, and those teeth are designed for destruction.

Mother Nature is full of wonderful contradictions and oddities that keep nature enthusiasts on their toes. A personal favorite of mine is jewelweed. This lovely plant grows all over Strawberry Hill's campus and is a destination for hummingbirds as well as pollinating insects such as bees and butterflies. Its beautiful orange flowers provide a delightful pop of color against a sea of green in summer and fall. But the most fascinating aspect of this plant is its hydrophobic leaves. Water droplets bead on top of the leaves and sparkle with a jewel-like appearance. While this is quite fascinating and beautiful to witness, it's contradictory because jewelweed occurs in moist areas such as floodplain forests, marshes, and bogs. In other words, it only grows in wetlands. A water-based plant with hydrophobic leaves is a conundrum, for sure.

Another fun puzzle is the hydrophobic nature of water skippers. These aquatic insects are known for their ability to "walk" on water and

the dimples their feet make on the water's surface. Water skippers are found in creeks, ponds, rivers, and marshes and yet have hydrophobic bodies that make them uniquely adapted to their watery habitat.

Scientists have been studying the reason behind water skippers' buoyancy to better understand and hopefully replicate this phenomenon. By using the latest technology, they've discovered that water skippers have microscopic hairs covering their bodies. These hairs repel water and capture air creating a perfect adaptation for flotation and quick movement across the water's surface. This adaptation takes advantage of a very basic scientific concept: the surface tension of water. You see, water behaves differently on the surface. Water molecules are highly attracted to each other, and they stick together. This cohesion creates a dense molecular membrane at the surface level. Water skippers walk on this membrane, avoiding breaking the surface tension of the water. It's a pretty cool adaptation that allows water skippers to exist in aquatic environments while not actually living in the water.

Another oddity that boggles the mind is the dragonfly. They're dainty and lovely summer insects that shimmer with an ethereal iridescence. They're also the most efficient and effective hunters in the world. Dragonflies have an estimated 95% success rate and can consume hundreds of insects per day, including mosquitoes and other biting insects. In a world of apex predators with powerful claws and terrifying teeth such as wolves, lions, and tigers, dragonflies are, by



Snails can have up to 20,000 teeth, though, most of these species have between 2,000 and 14,000. Imagine, 120 rows of 100 teeth each!

comparison, tiny and seemingly delicate. The smallest dragonfly's wingspan is less than an inch and even the largest only spans about six inches. Size is a deceptive ruler by which to measure a hunter's ability, however. Dragonflies are beautiful and deadly.

There are more than 5,000 species of dragonflies and related damselflies worldwide. Both belong to the order Odonata, meaning "the toothed one." Dragonflies and damselflies have powerful serrated mandibles that can crush prey. And yet that's not their most impressive adaptation. Dragonfly wing muscles are attached to a hinge at the base of each wing. Most insects' four wings are coupled and can only move as part of their pair, but dragonflies' four wings can move independently. This gives dragonflies the ability to fly in all directions – even backward. This adaptation allows them to change their speed and direction faster than most insects. Many dragonfly species even make their kills mid-flight.

Dragonflies' flight isn't the only key to their hunting success rate, however. Recent studies have dis-

covered dragonflies' brains have the ability to predict their prey's movements by anticipating the prey's trajectory. Think of a human watching a ball thrown in the air. We're able to track the ball's location and anticipate where it will land by using a complex system of visual calculations. Until recently, it was believed this ability only existed in mammals. It turns out that dragonflies can do something similar. No wonder they're able to snatch a meal mid-flight. All of these adaptations have made dragonflies the world's deadliest hunter. Fortunately for humans, they're a fraction of our size and prefer mosquitoes to people.

Nature is full of incredible contradictions and puzzling truths. I love hearing about new discoveries that put a question mark on my previous notions and fill in the gaps in my knowledge. The world outside is truly fascinating and ever-changing. It makes me wonder what oddities we have yet to discover.

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## THE RETIRED ECOLOGIST

## Mayflies in August

Bill Meredith

*"And God said, 'Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life....'"*

—Genesis 1:20.

*"When the wind is in the south, it blows your bait into a fish's mouth."*

—Izaak Walton,

*The Compleat Angler, 1653.*

The Editor's deadline was fast approaching, and I was sitting in front of my computer with a completely blank mind and a growing sense of desperation when a barely audible beep informed me that an e-mail message had arrived. It was from my daughter, who shares my love of the odd and arcane aspects of life and often sends me articles from the Minnesota newspapers when such things occur. This time it was a report about a swarm of mayflies that emerged from the upper Mississippi River. There were literally billions of them; they started coming out of the water around 8:30 one morning and continued until nearly ten o'clock that evening, and the air was so full of them that they were mistaken for a rainstorm by the radar at a local weather station. Visibility on local highways was cut nearly to zero, and the roads became slippery from the bodies of the insects. At least one collision, involving three vehicles, occurred.

For the past several decades, mayflies were rarely seen by anyone except ecologists, trout fishermen, and readers of Izaak Walton's 1653 classic, *The Compleat Angler*, but there was a time when most people were aware of them. Back when nearly half of the population still lived in the country and there was no television or air conditioning, we used to spend evenings playing in the yard while our parents sat on the porch; and one of our favorite things to do was to keep an eye on the window screens. Most of the lights in the house would be off, but there were always a couple of 20-watt lamps left on so we wouldn't trip over things when we came in, and as the dusk deepened an amazing variety of insects would accumulate around any source of light.

In those days the term, "insect," was rarely used; most folks just called them bugs. Window screens and spider webs would be full of them, and

we would catch the most colorful or bizarrely shaped ones in Mason jars. Moths were the favorite prizes; they varied from tiny brown "millers" to giant Lunas and Cecropias, but there were also hordes of beetles, horseflies, craneflies (which everyone thought were giant mosquitoes), crickets, katydids... and, occasionally, mayflies.

I remember the first one I saw; it was over an inch long, and so beautifully fragile that it looked as if it would fall apart. Unlike the other insects, it did not try to get away; it sat on my finger and allowed me to look at it. I was anxious to see it in daylight, and carefully put it in my jar; but it was dead the next morning. My father had grown up on the bank of Prickett's Creek in the days before it became polluted, and he knew what mayflies were. So my knowledge of insects began early.

In my first college Zoology course, Prof. Davison began his lecture about mayflies by telling us the word "ephemeral" meant "short-lived." He then explained the irony that while immature mayflies live in streams for one or two years, they are called Ephemeroptera because the adults of most species live less than a day. They develop wings at their last molt, emerge from the water, mate, lay their eggs, and die. I dutifully made drawings of them and memorized their general features, but it wasn't until I started graduate school that I really got to know them.

At West Virginia University, my major professor was a specialist in the ecological distribution of fish. Although we were in Morgantown, he had somehow become interested in the Roanoke River in Virginia, and every two weeks he took a carload of his students there to collect samples of their populations. He assigned me

to study the life cycle and food habits of a minnow called the rosy-faced shiner; it was a small fish, no more than four inches long, and abundant in that area.

In the course of the next two years I examined and dissected some 750 individuals, and determined their age, the numbers of eggs produced, and what they had eaten. It was tedious work, but the result was that most of the food these minnows ate was insects that were caught at the surface of the stream. About 8% of them were adult mayflies. This surprised me, because I knew that the immature mayflies (naiads) were among the most abundant insects in the stream. Where the water flowed rapidly, they lived under rocks; in quiet water, they dug shallow burrows into the sand or mud. I was amazed to learn that there were over 30 species of fish living in that stream, and they were able to reduce the competition among themselves by living in different zones and eating different things.

My minnow was a "top-feeder;" it stayed up near the surface and fed on small insects that fell into the water from surrounding trees. That included adult mayflies, but not the naiads. Naiads were eaten by other species of fish which stayed near the bottom of the stream. So I finished my Thesis and got my Master's degree. But as I look back on it, I am embarrassed to admit that it was years later before I came to understand that this pattern of dividing the habitat into different zones is the basis of biodiversity, and my work had contributed part of the evidence for why ecosystems are able to support so many different animals and plants.

The recent outbreak of mayflies in Minnesota and Wisconsin provides an interesting case study. The species that live in lakes can reproduce in unbelievable numbers, and in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when street lights became common in



cities like Chicago, the mayflies that emerged each summer would accumulate around lampposts in piles four or five feet high every night.

The old biology books had photos of workers shoveling them into horse-drawn wagons to be carried away; it was noted that if they were not removed every day, the stench of their rotting carcasses became unbearable. But the naiads require clean water, and as lakes and streams became more polluted, their numbers decreased. By the mid-1900s, the great swarms became less common, and disappeared completely in many areas. The general public were not much concerned about losing mayflies, but they did demand clean drinking water, and when Environmentalism became popular in the 1960s and '70s, both local and federal laws began to restrict the release of pollutants into streams.

Today, our streams are not pristine

by any means, but progress has been made; pollution levels have dropped, and populations of "indicator species" like mayflies have rebounded in many areas. In recent years several localities in the Midwest have noticed increasing swarms of mayflies; two years ago they came in such numbers that the highway department had to bring out snowplows to clean the roads.

Ecologists don't see many victories, so we like to celebrate when the chance arises. So as soon as I can find the time, I will dig out the fly-tying kit a friend left to me several years ago, and spend an afternoon with it. And if my hands are too unsteady for fly-tying, I can still spend an evening or two with old Izaak Walton. It matters less whether I catch any fish with my ersatz mayflies; it's the thought that counts.

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



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## IN THE COUNTRY

# Butterfly blitz

Tim Iverson  
Naturalist

When you conjure up images of a butterfly you may think of one listlessly flapping its wings and gently gliding through the air, or perhaps it's resting elegantly on a surface nearby. Chances are though the archetype you imagine is one with orange wings and black stripes. That butterfly would be the Monarch Butterfly. This proverbial king of the butterflies once reigned supreme, but troubled times rest at the throne for this regal insect. The Monarch Butterfly has an incredible life cycle and journey every year, and has proven its chops to the natural world through and through.

Monarchs will begin their annual life cycle in their overwintering sites in central Mexico. They spend their winters hibernating in fir forests. In February they'll awaken and shake off that groggy feeling and immediately begin to seek out a suitable mate. Shortly thereafter they'll begin their wayward journey to points north. Some will fly as far north as Canada and the adjacent border states. This will be the first of four generations in a calendar year. Sometime in March or April these butterflies will lay their eggs on milkweed plants in the northern latitudes they've journeyed towards. It will only take a few days for these eggs to hatch and this will begin the second generation.

This newly hatched caterpillar will spend approximately the next

two weeks doing nothing but eating milkweed plants and seeking out more milkweeds to eat. Over the course of this time the toxins from the milkweeds will accumulate in the caterpillar causing them to taste foul to would be predators. After this 14 day gluttony binge the corpulent caterpillar will be ready to enter its next stage of development – the chrysalis stage! The caterpillar will attach itself to the plant leaf or stem using silk and transform into a chrysalis. From the outside things seem pretty lackluster, dull, or even stagnant. On the inside, however, there is a whole lot of change going on. Over the next 10 days rapid growth and development is underway! At the end a newly changed insect will emerge as a beautiful butterfly.

This second generation, born in May or June, will begin the process anew and will live its short life over a period of about two to six weeks. The third generation will be born in July or August and will go through the same life cycle and stages as the previous generation, while the fourth will be born in September or October. The fourth generation of the year is unique compared to the previous generations. This final generation will live considerably longer than the second and third generations. While the second and third live only a few short weeks, this last generation will become the first generation for the next year. Unlike the previous generations that die off after about two months this one can

live for six to eight months. This generation is responsible for retracing the route south that their great-grandparents followed north. They instinctively know to begin moving south when the weather begins to cool, and many even find the very same forests and trees that were used by their very own progenitors. The migratory instinct is poorly understood at the moment. There are a few theories about how it most likely works though.

Scientists believe that Monarch Butterflies, like turtles and birds, possess an inherited geomagnetic compass. This compass relies on the magnetic field generated by the earth which works like a built-in GPS to tell them where to go. It is also reported that within their antennae there is a special protein that reacts with UV light emitted from the sun. When the sunlight reaches a certain wavelength it sets off an internal alarm clock that tells them it's time to move south. It's at this point that their internal GPS, aided by the earth's magnetic field, guides them to the overwintering sites that have been used by generations of ancestors before them.

There is some trouble in the kingdom though. All indicators point to steep population decline. Monarchs historically covered approximately 50 acres worth of fir forests at wintering sites in Mexico. Based on recent research conducted during 2011-2012 winter by the WWF-Telcel Alliance and the Mexican National Commission of Protected Areas it appears a total of nine colonies occupied about seven acres of total forest. A similar study conducted over the 2012-2013 winter showed a sharp decrease of Monarchs occupying just less than 3 acres of total for-



The alarming rate at which Monarchs are disappearing has raised many to action. You too can rally to the cause by joining Monarch Watch, a nonprofit education & conservation program focused on a Monarch's life cycle.

est. These are drastic decreases, and there are several factors contributing to these heavy losses.

Habitat loss is the leading contributing factor in the sharp drop in population. Milkweed is exclusively what the Monarch caterpillar feeds on. Increased use of pesticides at farms, along roadsides, and at home has taken its toll. Milkweed tends to grow on roadsides, fields, and prairies. Development over decades has destroyed much of this valuable land. The use of new genetically modified crops allows farmers to use new pesticides that have destroyed millions of acres of milkweed.

Another issue causing problems is a plant known as the Black Swallow-Wort. The introduction of this non-native European plant is taking its toll. This plant is a relative of the milkweed, and has similar features which attract Monarchs to lay their eggs on this plant. However, even though it is in the same family it is actually toxic for monarch caterpillars and poison these newly hatched larvae. They say that imita-

tion is the sincerest form of flattery, but this imposter is wreaking havoc on an already unstable population. These two compounding factors, along with some natural disasters along migratory routes have attributed to the spiraling population size for this royal butterfly.

The alarming rate that this butterfly is disappearing has raised some to action, and you too can rally to the cause. Monarch Watch, based out of the University of Kansas, is a nonprofit education, conservation, and research program that focuses on the monarch butterfly, its habitat, and its spectacular fall migration. They host a citizen scientist project that allows interested people to sign up for population monitoring. They also provide tiny little stickers that are placed on the wings of the butterfly (when done correctly will not cause any harm or detriment to the bug). These stickers allow researchers in Mexico to see where these butterflies are migrating from, and they will update a website so you can see if your butterflies made it all the way there!

Milkweeds are the host plant for the Monarch butterfly and occur naturally throughout the continent. Planting more of these in our area and yards will greatly increase the likelihood of regional success. By planting areas of milkweeds you can create "way stations" that will provide necessary resources for their long term survival. These habitats can be planted in home gardens, schools, along roadways, and any where there is open and available land. The greater number of way stations that are created and maintained the greater the chance of survival Monarch Butterflies will have.

For most people the quintessential image when we conjure up a butterfly in our heads is the Monarch. With a little help from us it may be able to continue to flutter and fly through the sky, but that will require some leg work from us. Seek out opportunities at state and local parks to get involved and learn about projects that can have a positive impact on our natural world. This king of the butterflies needs some help to restore the throne, and with some small tangible gestures we just may be able to do so.

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# SCIENCE MATTERS

## When a black hole feeds on its solar system

Boyce Rensberger

The beautiful expanse of the night sky, with its silent stars and timeless constellations, can deceive us into thinking the universe is a realm of peaceful persistence. But hidden amid the celestial wonders are scenes of unimaginable violence.

We've all heard of supernovas, those events in which a star explodes and briefly blasts out more energy than an entire galaxy. That involves just one star. A very different kind of violence is happening in some galaxies. It involves the black hole that lives at the center of each galaxy. It's called the galactic nucleus. In about 10 percent of galaxies, the nucleus is on a rampage, pulling in huge regions of the solar system orbiting it. The rest are like our Milky Way with its well-behaved black hole resting quietly, its gravitational force peacefully holding together the hundreds of billions of stars in its orbit. That includes, of course, our favorite star, the sun.

But here's the surprising part: Based on a complex body of research that I won't go into here, astrophysicists have seen evidence that the rampaging black holes, which they call active galactic nuclei, or AGNs, turn themselves on and off over intervals of time ranging from 10,000 years to 10 million years. During the few decades since astronomers discovered evidence of this, however, they had never actually seen a black hole emerge from its slumber and begin feeding on nearby matter. Now they have done so.

For the first time, scientists believe they have witnessed the birth of an AGN, and it happened while they were watching. Or, at least, while their telescopes were watching and recording the pictures. When researchers saw hints of this, they went back into the archive of images, and found the "before" images to compare with current "after" pictures.

After lining up the images, what scientists saw was the quiet heart of a distant galaxy, 300 million light years away, explode into action. It began pulling in vast quantities of gas and dust that had been quietly orbiting the black hole. As these particles of matter fall into the black hole, they move so

fast and rub together with so much friction that they turn white hot and even hotter, emitting the full spectrum of electromagnetic energy. For a few years, these monsters become the brightest steady light source in the universe. Once the particles cross the "event horizon," the bits of matter disappear as they add their mass to that of the black hole. The hole itself is, of course, black, emitting no light. It is an infinitesimal point containing the mass (and gravitational force) of everything that ever fell into it.

The first clue to this event came from a telescope called the Zwicky Transient Facility at the Palomar Observatory near San Diego, California. (Fritz Zwicky was an astronomer at nearby Cal Tech who first suggested the existence of dark matter.) This is a conventional telescope built in 1948 but recently modified to produce instant digital images. The new upgrades, including computer-controlled pointing, allow it to sweep and swivel to see and photograph the entire northern hemisphere night sky every night. Computers compare each night's output with the previous night's to see if anything has changed.

Then the researchers cross matched those findings with a catalog of 2.4 million quiet galaxies maintained by the Sloan Digital Sky Survey. That's a huge program involving some 300 scientists at 25 universities around the world who combine their data into the world's biggest and most detailed map of the universe. The survey found one that showed the biggest change from its first sighting in 2003 and the group's new observation in 2022. The change suggested it was a rapidly developing AGN.

"We could not see the activation of the black hole in real time," team member Paula Sánchez Sáez of the European Southern Observatory told the journal Science. "We just know that the galaxy was not active 18 years ago, and now it is active."

But that's still not capturing the beginning of the process.



The Milky Way, our home galaxy, with a laser pointing toward the galactic center from a telescope at the European Southern Observatory high in the Chilean Andes. The center is hidden within clouds of dust and stars.

Then the researchers noticed that in 2019 the Zwicky computers had spotted one particular galactic nucleus, some 300 million light years away, that showed the first hint of brightening. That was one catalogued as SDSS1335+0728. The first follow-up observations didn't show much change, but in 2022, it could be seen brightening suddenly and spectacularly. It showed all the signs of becoming an AGN. They estimated its mass at roughly one million times greater than that of our sun.

But had the black hole actually been totally dormant before researchers saw those early signs of brightening? That question sent them deeper into the astronomy archives, looking for even older pictures to see if they showed this galaxy as normal, lacking an active nucleus. Sure enough, they found their galaxy, and it looked as normal as the Milky Way. They were able to gather data on it in all the usual electromagnetic spectra from x-rays and ultraviolet to optical and infrared.

That's something like having a sick adult human with totally mysteri-

ous symptoms but also having access to all that person's lab records going back to prenatal time. With that data, it might be possible to trace findings and phenomena over the course of a lifetime.

Philip Best, an astronomer at the University of Edinburgh, told Science that it was only a matter of time before researchers saw an AGN in its formative years.

"It's interesting that we are now beginning to identify these objects," says Best, who was not involved in this research. He says, "studying how the nature of the active nucleus changes across its lifetime can help to reveal the physical processes that lead to the fueling of the AGN."

With that new knowledge, he says,

it might be possible to say whether the black hole at the center of our own Milky Way might one day rise up and begin swallowing its galaxy.

If you made it this far in the column, you may be an astronomy nerd. If so, you would enjoy NASA's Astronomy Picture of the Day. It's at apod.nasa.gov. Have a look.

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

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# THE MASTER GARDENER

## Ten best practices for gardening in a drought

Maritta Perry Grau  
Frederick County Master Gardener

How many times this summer have you watched rainstorms evaporate into nothing? What have you tried to do to ensure that your flowers, vegetables, trees, and shrubs are getting enough water?

My husband and I have been gardening on the same plot of land since 1973, and we've tried many ways to water our gardens. We've watered by hand with a hose, used sprinklers of various kinds, threaded irrigation hoses throughout gardens, and even saved "gray" water from dishwashing and dehumidifiers to carefully pour out onto the soil around the plants (caution: don't pour on plants you'll later eat).

Despite our efforts, some of our plants have died from stress, pests, or diseases due to lack of water; others wilt; grasses brown; leaves drop early, or curl up in the high temperatures. Vegetable and fruit production lowers.

Such plant damage may just be temporary, but it also can be permanent—a young tree or shrub, for example, suffering from lack of water, is certainly more susceptible to pests or diseases. These stresses may carry over into the following year. In fact, if you notice that new leaf growth or young twigs are dying back next spring, those die-backs may be due to this year's drought.

The University of Maryland Extension Service has some wonderful suggestions to help us do our best gardening during drought. In the article, "Conserve Water in Your Landscape" Christa Carignan, horticulturist and coordinator

for the UMD Home & Garden Information Center, has compiled a number of suggestions to help us continue to garden successfully during this summer's drought. I've distilled her suggestions into 10 practices that will help all of us in conserving water during droughts.

#1 - Good soil management: Ms. Carignan suggests we "reduce the need for watering [by using] good soil management practices to hold rainwater in the soil longer, thoughtful selection of drought-tolerant plants, management of runoff, and capturing and holding rainwater on-site for later use." She also explains that we can minimize water usage by "monitoring soil moisture level, mulching [usually, no more than three inches deep], timing and targeting...watering to top-priority plants," and minimizing irrigation. An added advantage of adopting these practices is that one often affects another and they all work together to improve your soil and the plants that grow there.

#2 - Hold water in the soil/management runoff: Many things you can do to hold water in the soil will help in other ways, as we'll note below. Regularly adding organic matter, such as compost, manure, and even cover crops, to your garden will increase the soil's water-holding capacity because soils with more organic matter are not as compacted, allowing rainwater and irrigation water to soak in more gradually.

#3 - Plant drought-tolerant plants: Include native plants in your gardens; experts usually recommend that you

aim for at least 50 percent native flowers, trees, and shrubs. And they fit right in with this article's focus on gardening during the drought: many natives are drought-tolerant because they usually have deep root systems.

#4 - Mulching: When spread in a garden or on bare soil, mulch moderates soil temperature and slows water evaporation. Consider using organic mulches made from wood chips, shredded bark, pine needles, straw, or grass clippings. Thick layers of biodegradable newspapers or paper rolls, or reusable weed barriers are also options, especially for vegetable gardens. As these mulches decompose over time, they return nutrients to the soil, thus improving the friability of the soil and its water-holding capacity.

Remember, too, not to build a mulch volcano around trees or shrubs. Instead, spread the mulch evenly to the dripline of the tree/shrub, then build a sort of dike around the edge of the mulch to help the water seep in slowly into the soil, rather than run off.

#5 - Group together plants that have similar watering needs: By grouping together those plants with similar watering needs, you can more easily control where you need to direct the water to the plants. For example, along one edge of our woodland garden, we have a few Japanese painted ferns interspersed with impatiens (I know, I know; they aren't natives). All need a fair amount of water every few days. On the other hand, the native ostrich ferns (*Matteuccia struthiopteris*), deeper into the wooded, shady area, haven't been watered at all, and they look great! And, of course, you'll want to try to keep weeds under control. Weeds compete with your beloved flowers and vegetables and shrubs for that desired water. Despite the lack of water in these summer months, those darn bindweeds, Morning glory vines, and thistles grow rapidly—because, like other natives, they have deep, deep roots. And that's why they grow back so fast—when you dig up the plant, you are breaking off the root below the ground, which just encourages its regrowth.

#6 - Minimize size of lawns: As for your lawn, the trend these days, based on research, is to reduce the lawn's over-



Frustrated with watering around the clock to keep your plants alive during the hot, dry days of summer? Trust us, you're not alone.

all size. Ms. Carignan points out that keeping the lawn a vibrant green often demands "more watering than other landscape plants." That doesn't mean you have to give up all the grass. In our half-acre of heaven, our gardens surround our house and run along all sides of the yard, leaving lawn across the front and the back. After all, we need room for dogs to run and grandkids to play badminton or toss a football!

#7 - Replace lawn with groundcovers, &c.: In areas where you're already having trouble growing grass, such as in heavy shade or on a slope, you might try replacing the grass with groundcovers, perennials and native plants, shrubs, or trees. In those areas where you do need lawn, consider putting in a turf-type tall fescue or Kentucky blue grass, both of which are more drought-tolerant than other grasses. According to Ms. Carignan, they

do go dormant during the drought but usually recover in cooler weather. The UMD Home & Garden site can offer you a number of other suggestions for replacing lawn.

#8 - Mow high: As we've recommended in the past, mow to a height of about 3-4 inches, rather than leaving the lawn looking as though it has been scalped. The higher level reduces a lot of the moisture evaporation and also helps shade the soil so that weeds don't grow as easily.

#9 - Water less often, more deeply: One suggestion that I've heard for years, whether you're watering the lawn or the garden, is that it's better to water deeply every few days, rather than to water shallowly every day. Ms. Carignan suggests watering the lawn only on

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# THE MASTER GARDENER

an as-needed basis, such as when you've seeded it or have put down sod. She explains that watering slowly helps prevent runoff and watering in the morning reduces leaf wetness that can otherwise lead to disease.

#10 - Know how much water you're giving your plants. The UMD Extension Service's website on watering trees and shrubs notes that first, you should dig down at least six inches to see how moist or dry the soil is. "Wetting the soil at least six inches deep requires one to two inches of surface water... The amount of water depends on soil type, weather, and types of plants growing." The article goes on to explain that when using a sprinkler, for example, you can place

a container within range of the sprinkler. "When one inch of water accumulates in the can, one inch of water has been distributed in the soil. This is enough to penetrate six inches of soil."

But wait! You aren't finished yet. The article says that you should wait for four hours, until the water has had time to seep throughout the soil, and then dig to check the moisture level at six inches deep in several locations.

So, as you assess your current water conservation practices, consider which of the practices above you may already be employing and which others you might want to adopt. And explore further: At the University of Maryland Extension Service's Home & Gardening web site, you can find much more detailed information than we were able to present in this article.

## Small Town Gardener

A deeper dive on drought

Marianne Willburn

A late spring, early summer drought in many parts of the Mid-Atlantic crushed a lot of dreams this year.

In Lovettsville, Virginia, just over the Potomac River from Frederick County, Maryland, we ticked up to 'severe drought' status at the time of sending this off to my hard-working editor, Mike Hillman. (Who is managing thirsty horses as well as newspapers and plants!).

'Severe' is better than 'extreme,' and not as good as 'moderate,' but most of us are just referring to it as the summer we decided to give up and pray for the onset of winter.

And as it's the election year – possibly The Sweet Meteor of Death too.

High temperatures in the region for weeks have also contributed to many hissy-fits in the garden. If you have friends or relatives who work outside professionally, it may be best to avoid them until you see the first Pumpkin Latte in your Instagram feed.

Curious to see if what I was feeling matched what was actually happening, I got up close and personal this week with the U.S. Drought Portal at [www.drought.gov](http://www.drought.gov) to get some stats on this drought and our historical episodes of drought. The website is managed by NOAA's National Integrated Drought Information System (NIDIS) and is a treasure trove of information and easily accessible stats. It was a fascinating dive – no pun intended.

As a native born Californian, I've been snickering over definitions of drought on the East Coast for years; but the fact is,

we plant for the conditions we usually have. As they so wisely write on the site "Drought in Maine looks very different than drought in New Mexico."

### Making Sense of Terms

Drought is more complicated than 'Has it rained, and how much?' That's meteorological drought, and the number we instinctively look up while surveying our crispy hostas, but a better definition of drought is the imbalance between water supply (precipitation) and water demand (evapotranspiration). On a very basic level, as temperatures increase, so does demand.

In terms of meteorological drought and rainfall, the words 'normal' and 'abnormal' are also difficult terms to wrestle with as a layperson. The latter is not only a matter of scientific fact (how many hundredths of an inch we are deviating from mean precipitation, i.e. 'normal'), but an instant pejorative.

'Abnormal' feels frightening and foreboding, even if we realize somewhere in the back of our minds that we are dealing with precipitation averages – and averages need ranges to be calculated in the first place.

The Standard Precipitation Index (SPI) was developed in the early nineties to more accurately quantify that number for various regions over specific time periods using data going back to 1895. This gives us rankings such as "driest (or wettest) on record" or the words "record breaking" – which are eagerly pounced upon by news platforms looking for stories to keep us up at night, but it is not without its weaknesses as it is a indexed measurement of precipitation only.

### Swimming Through Statistics

You can break a record by one one-hundredths of an inch that stretches back to records set 100 years ago – or merely 5. Which is not to downplay how valuable these data

are, but to help us accurately and calmly navigate them.

For instance, June was our driest June in the state of Virginia since precipitation was first recorded in 1895. Conversely, May only ranked 105th driest in the same 129 years. The driest May happened in 1911. The driest April in 1942. And in the period between January and our driest June ever, the state of Virginia is actually up in measurable rainfall by seven tenths of an inch.

That doesn't make us feel better about our hostas of course, because it's also not the whole story.

What these data can't show you is all the other variables such as "rainfall, streamflow, groundwater levels, regional climate, soil moisture, water storage in reservoirs, ecological conditions, municipal water restrictions, and the time of year" (according to NIDIS). These are evaluated on a weekly basis to come up with the US Drought Monitor Map.

That's an incredibly handy tool to more accurately assess what we're dealing with; but sadly, that number crunching only goes back 24 years to 2000 when scientists got together and began to gather the same data in the same way across agreed upon geographical points.

### Patterns of Drought Encourage Adaptable Plants – And Gardeners

Beyond statistics (which you can very quickly find yourself clicking through for hours) I very much appreciate the neutral but specific language that much of this site employs.

"Drought is a normal climate pattern that has occurred in varying degrees of length, severity, and size throughout history," says the NIDIS, and boy they're not kidding. Examining the handily graphed SPI data for Virginia going back to 1895, it looks as if our major issues of precipitation often have more to do with too much rain than too little.

Regardless, it was a very good dive, and I heartily recommend you have a look for your state. You can view 24 years of the Drought Monitor Map, or 129 of the SPI. Or you can even look at Paleoclimate data reconstructed from tree ring studies.

I did not come away feeling happy about crispy hostas and crispier tempers, but more capable of putting it all into historical perspective. That energizes me to be adaptable and plant for new patterns, rather than give up the ghost and shake my fist at the sky. I'll save that for the election.

*Marianne is the author of Tropical Plants and How To Love Them, and Big Dreams, Small Garden. She gardens from her home in Lovettsville, VA.*

### Frederick County Master Gardeners August Seminars

**August 3 (10 to noon):** "Growing Up Wild" (For educators who work with children from 3 to 7 years old. Adults only. Limited to 25 participants.) Growing Up Wild prepares educators to teach young children by building on their sense of wonder about nature through a wide range of activities and experiences. For more info see <https://bit.ly/FishWildlifeGrowingWild> for details. Participants will receive a certificate, a guide, and (if needed) approved credits. Pre-registration is required.

**August 10 (10 to noon):** "Make & Take Mini-Garden" (For 1st to 12th graders) Design and plant a decorated miniature garden to take home! . Plants and decorations will be provided but bring your gardening gloves. Pre-registration is required since class is

limited to 15 children. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Free for children. Adults may plant their own mini garden for \$5; note it on the registration and pay (cash or check) at class.

**August 10 (1 to 3):** "Fall Season Vegetable Gardening" Begin to plant now for a harvest in the fall. Find out what to plant and when to plant it. Discover the benefits of making and using row covers.

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

For more information and sign-up links, visit the Events section of the Master Gardeners Frederick County Maryland website or call the extension office at 301-600-1595.



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# PETS

## Chunky

Jennifer Vanderau  
Cumberland Valley Animal Shelter

He doesn't understand what has happened to him. Just a few days ago, he and Mom were at home and she was knitting something for the church bazaar next week and he was purring and chasing the end of her yarn and now he's here.

At an animal shelter.  
Mom was always so good with her hands. She would knit and crochet all kinds of wonderful scarves and blankets and wash cloths. She even made him a bed one time that he used for years. It was so soft!

The family loved the presents she would give them every Christmas because they knew it came from her and it meant something.

The last few years, Mom complained about her arthritis and how she wasn't as nimble as she used to be, but it didn't stop her from working on her creations.

Mom was acting a little funny the last few days and a neighbor had come to take her to the doctor to see what was going on, but she never came home.

When the neighbor came back, Mom wasn't with her and he ended up in his carrier and that night, he was in a cage at the Cumberland Valley Animal Shelter.

He's an 8-year-old gray tabby cat and he's a little shy because he doesn't really understand what's going on. He really just wants to go back home and watch Mom knit while he sits on the couch above her.

It was his favorite spot, you see.  
He could watch Mom and maybe jump at the yarn from time to time as it came out of the spool and the couch was situated right across from the window in the living room, so he could also keep an



Chunky

eye on what was going on outside.  
You never knew when a bird might fly by and he wanted to make sure to witness that.

But now, all he can see are the cats across from him in the other cages.

They talk to him at night, some of them. They tell him how long they've been here and what they've seen and how the kittens are the ones everyone is drawn to and how the older cats often get overlooked.

They tell him the best part of the day is the staff who works here. The older cats tell him that the staff loves every cat in the building and after that first night, he realizes they're right.

When his cage gets cleaned each day, the staff talk to him and pet him and make sure he doesn't feel all that alone.

At night, they make sure he has a full water dish and that his litter is clean before they all go home and he usually gets a kiss on his head.

It's almost like being with Mom. Almost.

He's moved over into the adoption area and he sees families come in and the volunteers play with him and he hopes that maybe one day, someone might consider adopting him.

He knows what happened to his mom. He heard the staff talking about how she had passed away and he had to come here because no one else could take him. He misses her every day and hopes that she'll be waiting for him when he can see her again.

Until then, he'll watch for that person – the other cats say it's a special person – who sees what his Mom saw in him and takes that chance.

His name is Chunky. He's in the cat adoption area at CVAS right now. Could he be waiting for you?

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



Roscoe is a 5-year-old mixed breed dog who came into the shelter as a stray. He is a bit on the shy side, but once he has time to adjust becomes a really nice guy. He may require his potential adopters to meet him several times before he goes home with them to establish a relationship. He loves getting treats! Roscoe enjoys going out to the play yard. Due to Roscoe's shyness with new people and no past history, an age restriction for children in the home may apply, so please discuss this with the shelter staff. Roscoe would love to find his loving forever home soon!



Aries was surrendered to the shelter when his owner could no longer keep him due to landlord issues. He's a 1-year-old terrier mix who needed some time to adjust to shelter life, but has come out of his shell and enjoys treats and going on walks! He can be shy at first with new people, but treats are the key to his heart! Aries knows to sit but will need some work on other commands. Aries has lived with children but may be too much for small children so an age restriction for children in the home may apply, please discuss this with shelter staff. He is a sweet guy who would love to have a second chance at finding a loving forever home!



Carter is a happy guy who loves to run and play! He is a 1-year-old Lab/terrier mix who really enjoys treats. Carter does know to sit, but we have yet to find any other commands that he may know at this point. At 57 pounds, he is a big guy and may be too much for smaller children. He would love to find his forever home soon.



Abby was surrendered to the shelter when her owner could no longer care for her. She is a 2-year-old gray girl who is super sweet. Just look at those eyes! Abby would love to find a home where she could have a warm spot for her afternoon nap. Do you have a place like that?

For more information about Roscoe, Aries, Carter, Abby, or Chunky call the Cumberland Valley Animal Shelter at 717-263-5791, or visit them online at [www.cvaspets.org](http://www.cvaspets.org) or better yet, visit them in person at the shelter.

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# Underestimating the little things



Mentos

Sometimes very little things can make a big difference. For animals that arrive at the Frederick County Division of Animal Control and Pet Adoption Center, those little things can be toys, a place to hide, or a kind voice. To pets who have never been exposed to a large population of other pets, the shelter can be scary. Pets who have never been away from home must now acclimate to the shelter's schedule. The shelter has protocols in place to minimize some of the stressors we know are inherent in any animal shelter. Those protocols include some very little—but very significant—measures.

At the point of animal intake, shelter staff collect information about the pet regarding food, litter, familiarity with other animals, experience with people of different age groups and other basics. Having information on preferred food, routines, and previous veterinary care allows us to house them appropriately—keeping staff and other animals safe as needed. While it may seem we are at a bit of a disadvantage with stray animals, we are still able to employ observations made at the point of intake regarding overall health, temperament, and potential likes and dislikes.

When it is safe and appropriate to do so, pets are vaccinated and preventatives are applied to protect their health and the health of other shelter residents. Flea prevention may seem like one of those small, possibly unnecessary measures. However, for an animal that has experienced discomfort from scratching and a secondary infection as a result, a few drops of a product containing fipronil or selamectin (active ingredients in flea/tick prevention) can make their life significantly better almost immediately.

Once an animal is housed at the shelter, staff continue to diligently observe and document patterns of overall behavior and health. Animals are provided bedding, toys, good nutrition, and a clean environment. Shy or frightened animals are provided covered kennels, or other types of “hideaways” that allow them a choice of when to interact with the people caring for them.

Respecting an animal's body language may seem like a little thing, but it is one thing that can facilitate trust, as it did with Mentos. When he arrived at FCAC, Mentos was offered a privacy box. He was scared and overwhelmed by all the busyness at the shelter. He is a bit shy at first, but warms up quickly with patience and understanding—qualities we are seeking in finding the right family for him.



Joyce arrived at the shelter with her kittens and will be one of many momma cats that patiently wait their turn to be adopted. Not much is known about her past since she arrived as a stray. At the shelter, she has been friendly and affectionate, therefore, shelter staff has recommended her for families with kids of any age. Joyce's adoption fee of \$97.50 includes spaying, microchipping, routine vaccinations/preventatives, a veterinarian wellness visit, and a Frederick County cat license.



Kitty is a handsome guy with long, white whiskers. He was living primarily outdoors and it appears he was suffering from a flea allergy. Shelter staff treated him and now he feels more comfortable and less itchy. Kitty is very social and can often be found at the front of his cage, politely asking for attention. Kitty's easy-going personality will make him a great fit for almost any family.



Scampi is a one-year-old terrier mix, who was found as a stray. Scampi is a young, energetic, and friendly guy. When he first arrived, he was a bit apprehensive but who can blame him? The shelter can overwhelm any new arrival pet. He has acclimated to the shelter routine and his behavior report indicates that he reacts favorably to other dogs and he leans in when being pet.



Miriam is a staff and volunteer favorite! She currently enjoys being the shelter's front desk dog and has been given the privilege because of her good manners and laidback personality. Miriam can be overwhelmed by loud noises and/or quick movement. She will need a family that is patient and willing to show her the world isn't a scary place. At six-years-old, Miriam enjoys leisurely walks and relaxing on a comfortable bed.

For more information about Scampi, Joyce, Kitty, Mentos, or Miriam, call the Frederick County Animal Shelter at 301-600-1319 or visit them online at [www.frederickcountymd.gov/fcac](http://www.frederickcountymd.gov/fcac).

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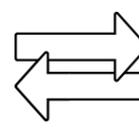
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# Woodsboro-Walkersville NEWS-JOURNAL SECTION 2

## Family fun at the Rocky Ridge VFC carnival

Kathryn Franke  
MSMU Class of 2013

What do you get when you combine family, friends, good food, games, lots of fire engines, and fun? The Rocky Ridge Volunteer Fire Company carnival!

I had the pleasure of attending this small-town event and I was amazed at just how community-oriented it was. The carnival was held at Mount Tabor Park, the location of the renowned "Big Slide" for all of you who have taken a ride on that before. If you haven't gone down "Big Slide" before, you really should add that to your to-do list!

While I was at the carnival, I could sense the feeling of excitement and the sense of tradition that this event brought forth in the community. The Rocky Ridge Volunteer Fire Company has been organizing this carnival for years, and it is obvious that the community looks forward to it every year. But this is no typical carnival. It's not just a day... it goes on all week long! Who says fun has to be contained to just a single day? Rocky Ridge knows that there is just far too much fun to be had for it to be a fleeting daylong event. So, they make it an entire week of fun for the family.

As soon as I turned into the parking lot (the very full parking lot!), I saw dozens of people lining the street, lawn chairs in tote, anxiously awaiting the parade that was to happen later in the evening. Their excitement was so evident because they were staking claim along the road with their chairs over an hour before the parade was even scheduled to start! But after seeing the parade, I can see why they did this. The parade was an amazing experience and it was definitely good to have a front-row, up-close view.

As I heard the sirens off in the distance and the parade staff began to block off the road, I could sense the anticipation of the audience because we all knew the parade was about to begin. People from ages 7 to 70 took part in the parade. And who could forget the vintage cars or candy thrown out to all the children lining the streets watching in awe as the parade passed them by?

Countless fire stations were in attendance as well. Firefighters from Rocky Ridge, Emmitsburg, Thurmont, Graceham, New Midway, Woodsboro, Walkersville, Greenmount, Lewistown, and Carroll County, Maryland were all a part of this incredible parade. Who would have thought a small-town parade would have participants from so many different places?

Well, Rocky Ridge is a small town with big plans. And they certainly carry out those plans!

Aside from the parade, there were so many fun activities for people of every age group. There was, of course, the "Big Slide" and there were also many games, like Crazy Ball, Dime Pitch, Doug's Turtle Race, Ring Toss, Fish Pond, and good ol' BINGO. There was a money wheel and also a stand to purchase raffle tickets. To top it all off, the carnival boasted a hayride for the carnival-goers to take.

And what is a carnival without amazing food and live music? The Rocky Ridge carnival offered a wide variety of foods that would satisfy any palette and there was a fantastic lineup of bands throughout the entire week of the carnival. Monday was the cake auction and throughout the rest of the week, bands brought the carnival to life with their music.

Linda Northrup, someone who really helps make this annual carniva-



Adult carnival goers line the street to applaud representatives of local fire companies during the parade of fire trucks. Kids, of course, line up to grab candy thrown by firemen in the trucks.

val a reality, mentioned how much she loves this hometown tradition. She explained, "We are a close-knit community and this unique carnival really shows the fellowship that is present throughout our town."

This carnival is not only a way to bring the Rocky Ridge community together, but it is also a way to meet new people in the area or even people from a bit farther away who heard about just how wonderful this carnival is.

Tyler Gray of Hanover, Pennsylvania made his way to the carnival this year and he too really enjoyed the strong sense of community at the event. "The food was great, the atmosphere was homey, and the people were very welcoming," he

said. Tyler is not from the immediate area, but when he came to visit, he immediately felt like he was a part of their community.

For those of you who have already made it a tradition to attend the Rocky Ridge carnival, I am now right there with you! I will definitely be attending this event for years to come. For those of you who haven't experienced it yet, I strongly recommend that you attend the carnival and see for yourself just how community-oriented and welcoming it is. You will have an amazing time with family and friends and you will surely meet many incredible people from Rocky Ridge, the surrounding areas, and perhaps even farther away.

Rocky Ridge is a small town, but we at the Woodsboro-Walkersville News-Journal want to give a voice to it and encourage our readers to explore the town and its events. As a local newspaper, we have a strong appreciation for towns and events like this one. They represent the very thing that we hope to convey to our readers: a strong sense of community.

This year's carnival will run from August 12 through the 17th. For more information about the Rocky Ridge carnival, visit [www.rockyridgevfc.com](http://www.rockyridgevfc.com).

For more information about the Rocky Ridge Carnival, visit [www.rockyridgevfc.com](http://www.rockyridgevfc.com).

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# HISTORY

## The Wood family of Woodsboro

Dahl Drenning  
Fifth great-grandson of  
Colonel Joseph Wood, 2024

Continued from last month

### The Sixth Generation

Colonel Joseph Wood was survived by five children ages 12 to 21 the youngest being his only son Joseph (1781-1849) who would remain in Woodsboro throughout his life and who in 1813-14 would serve in two separate militia companies in the call up of the Maryland Militia in response to the British invasion in the War of 1812 initially serving as 1st Lt. in the Company of Captain Philip Smith. The second of the two companies in which he served was in the First Regiment, commanded by Colonel John Ragan as Captain of Co. I, participating in the ill-fated Battle of Bladensburg and later in the successful defense of Baltimore. Captain Joseph Wood married Nancy Graybill (1785- ) in 1804 and was a property owner (lot 55) in the town his father founded. It appears that Joseph Wood (son of Colonel Wood) was one of the founding members and a benefactor of a Universalist Church (ca. 1837) in the town of Woodsborough (sic).

[Appearing in the "Universalist Union" of 15, April 1837, there is mention of the comple-

tion of a Universalist meeting house in Woodsborough (sic). It was further mentioned that it was the "first house of the kind ever erected exclusively by Universalists in this state". (Maryland). On the Bond Map of 1858 the Universalist Church is located on Woodsboro Lot #55. In the last Will and Testament of Joseph Wood (March 1849) Wood bequeathed to the Universalist Society of Baltimore, "the Universalist Church and all such ground as is enclosed for a burying ground". Thus, it seems likely that Joseph Wood may have been one of the founders of this congregation as well as providing the land for the location of the Meeting House and cemetery being part of Lot 55. It is also possible that the cemetery referenced here appears in Jacob Holdcraft's landmark publication, "Names in Stone" as the "Harlan Cemetery," which Holdcraft further identifies (perhaps erroneously) as having been associated with a Methodist Episcopal congregation that the Bond Map places at the rear of Lot# 52. Four of the seven tombstones that are listed for that cemetery were for members of the Harlan Family thus the identification as such. It is then entirely possible that Joseph Wood the veteran of 1812 the son of the town founder is interred there but there is no positive evidence to that end. Two of

Colonel Wood's daughters were married to members of the Harlan family. The Harlan cemetery is no longer extant.]

Children of Joseph Wood and Nancy Grabill:

- Charles, Dec. 11, 1805- Nov. 4, 1890, married Mary Saylor. Charles Wood operated a Mill on Israel's Creek near the current day Hill Road crossing and is buried in the St. Johns cemetery on Second Street in Woodsboro.
- John, born Aug. 1809, married to Sophia Whenrich.
- Joseph, born October 1811, married Ruth Ann Houck. This Joseph Wood may have relocated to Michigan.
- Sarah, June 5, 1844-March 20, 1875, married John Frederick Lock and lived on Lock's View Farm on present day Coppermine Rd. which includes a portion of the original Wood's Mill Land.
- Moses

### The Seventh Generation

Joseph and Nancy had four sons and a daughter. One son was yet another Joseph the sixth in succession to bear the name but about whom little else is known. It appears however that it may have been through their daughter Sarah who married John Frederick Lock



Memorial marker honoring Joseph Wood located adjacent to the Woodsboro Veterans Memorial.

that two remnants of the estate of Colonel Joseph Wood were passed forward in the family at least for a time. The ownership of a portion of a wooded tract called "Worst of All" near present day Ladiesburg remained in the hands of a Wood descendant as did the right to collect ground rent in the town of Woodsboro both until the 1970s. A portion of the original tract of Wood's Mill Land was purchased by George Lock and is currently owned by descendants of Colonel Wood.

There are some descendants of the Wood family of Israel's Creek still in Frederick County and some still in the Woodsboro area most all of which have descended through families with names other than Wood thus the town of Woodsboro remains the most visible reminder of the rise and fall an American and Frederick County pioneer family.

To read more about Woodsboro history, visit the history section of [www.woodsboro.net](http://www.woodsboro.net), or better yet, join the Woodsboro Historical Society



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# A tale of baseball



**Abner Doubleday (June 26, 1819 - January 26, 1893)[1] was a career United States Army officer and Union major general in the American Civil War. He fired the first shot in defense of Fort Sumter, the opening battle of the war, and had a pivotal role in the early fighting at the Battle of Gettysburg. In 1908, 15 years after his death, the Mills Commission declared that Doubleday had invented the game of baseball, although Doubleday never made such a claim. This claim has been thoroughly debunked by baseball historians.**

**Dahl Drenning**

It was some years ago in the late spring before the sultry dog days of summer had set in when the weather was nearly perfect for baseball that a local raconteur shared with me an astonishing story. In fact, the same story was shared several times over, with the passage of time especially when baseball was in the local news. I am sure he shared it again when minor league baseball came to Frederick as such an event was all that was necessary to remind the venerable sage of the possible connection of our community to the founding of the National Pastime. He would take me aside and in whispered tones as if sharing a state secret or confidential information remind me of the possible relationship that may have existed between Barbara Fritchie the local hero of Civil War days and well-

known glove maker in Fredericktown and General Abner Doubleday the inventor of baseball according to A. G. Spalding.

The local wag claimed that during the Maryland Campaign of September, 1862 Brigadier General Doubleday commander of the First Division of Major General Joseph Hooker's First Union Corp visited the now famous dwelling on West Patrick Street and negotiated an agreement with Widow Fritchie to fashion a special baseball glove that would be suitable for use behind the plate in the fledgling game of Baseball that was becoming increasingly popular in the camps of Civil War soldiers. If there is even a hint of veracity to such a claim it could mean that dame Barbara made famous in the Whittier poem for her devotion to the "Star Spangled Banner" could now possibly be con-

sidered for enshrinement in Cooperstown. That Frederick could be the home of the Catcher's Mitt is indeed something to ponder.

Not wishing to debunk local legends or to cast aspersions upon the reputation of a trusted friend and confidant, it could have been possible for such an historic liaison to have taken place. If Confederate General Thomas Jonathan Jackson saved the "grey head" of the ancient flag waver as he was taking his leave of Frederick it would have been just as easy for Brigadier General Doubleday to momentarily pause in pursuit of the rebel horde to place an order with the venerable glove maker for something designed to limit the number of passed balls which was likely becoming an intolerable occurrence in inter regimental competition in the Union Camps.

We will probably never know the truth about the rumored connection between our beloved patriot Barbara and the alleged progenitor of the National Pastime. Barbara Fritchie died in December of 1862 and considering the frailties of her advanced years in all probability she could not have completed such a project in time for spring training of 1863. General Doubleday did again pass nearby with the First Union Corps in June of that year on his way to Gettysburg, but baseball may not have been a priority on that trip.

The fascinating possibility does exist, however, that lying in some unopened trunk in an ancient Frederick Towne garret is the unfinished prototype Catcher's Mitt, the last work of the arthritic fingers of the First Lady of Frederick or so my late friend would have had us believe.

*To read other articles by Dahl Drenning, visit the Authors section of Walkersville.net.*

## Auxiliary Essay Winners



The Glen W. Eyer American Legion Auxiliary Unit 282 of Woodsboro hosted a reception for their Americanism Essay winners. The winners, their families & their teachers were invited to the Auxiliary meeting to read their winning essays. All the participants were from the Woodsboro/Walkersville school districts. The Essay title for 2024 is "What does Freedom mean to you?"

Each year, The American Legion Auxiliary sponsors an American Essay contest for students in grades 3-12, including students with special needs. The Americanism essay contest was created to teach students the value of patriotism and what it means to be Americans. Thousands of students participate in the program each year. This contest also helps to promote a lifelong respect of our flag and country. It also provides an opportunity for them to learn about the fundamental rights

and freedoms we enjoy today. Each year's contest has a different theme. This year's essay title is "What does Freedom mean to you?"

This year we had a total of twenty-one entrants. John & Ellen Nicodemus of Walkersville judge the essays. Grade levels are divided into six classes. After the winners are determined, Judy sends letters of notification to the student and their teachers. The winners, their families and their teachers are invited to the April Auxiliary meeting at the Legion in Woodsboro. The winners read their essay aloud and received their prize money.

In photo left to right back row is Judy Cramer Chairwoman of Americanism committee, Braxley Parrelli, Deana Amancio De Ca Rosa, Josie Ritchie, Cash Ritchie, Haleigh Colon. Front row: Francis Agyeman-Duah Jr., Wesley Vincent, Clayton Hawk, Ellie Breier.

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# 100 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

## August 1

### Weather And Crop Conditions

This was the third successive dry and sunshiny week in a row, and was favorable for harvesting and thrashing of grains, cultivation, haymaking, and harvesting tomatoes, potatoes, early fruits, etc.

Farmers have about all completed harvesting, and thrashing has begun. Some report fair yields, while other say, the grain is not turning out so good. Early oats seem to be good, while late oats have been hurt by the dry weather.

Corn, generally, is rather common, and if strike weather conditions continue, will be a poor crop. The growth varies generally, owing to the wide range and dates of planting. The early corn planted is tasseling and silking.

Due to the lack of rain, gardens are suffering and vegetables will be scarce. The tomato crop like all others, have been badly affected by weather conditions; early plants have made a fine growth. Early potatoes however are a complete failure.

Pastures and grasses are showing the effects of the long dry spell. They are now but poor to fair. Picking of early apples is now generally in progress. Early peaches and early pears are ripening; picking of those fruits have begun in some localities.

### Fugitive arrested

Ellis Carty, about 21, of near Woodsboro, who escaped from the House Of Corrections last Monday, was arrested early Friday morning by Sheriff Albaugh, at his home, and is being held at the jail pending word from the officials at the penal institution. Carty was sentenced to 18 months in the House Of Corrections on charge of larceny, growing out of the robbery of George Lewis, of LeGore, as the latter was asleep at a local hotel.

### Encouraged Not to Marry Boyfriend

Miss Elizabeth Carpenter was given a shower at the home of Mrs. Harry Reindollare on Thursday evening; about 25 of her friends were there. Miss Carpenter, who is in a 'family way,' was encouraged by all her friends not to marry her dead-beat boyfriend, 'Clyde,' one of the leading boozers in the community. Everyone insisted that she would be better off with just one dependent child, vice two, which would be the case if she married that imbecilic boozier.

Many of her friends said a 20-year-old blind dog with three legs does more work in a day than "Clyde" has done all his life.

"Clyde" is currently in the 'lock-up' after he was found passed out in the gutter on Main Street last week, for the sixth time in the past two months.

### Mount Tabor Park Opened At Rocky Ridge

The new Mount Tabor Park in Rocky Ridge opened officially on Sunday evening, July 20, with Dr. Tombaugh preaching the opening sermon in the large, open air, breezy auditorium to almost 500 people.

Services will continue to be held in the outdoor pavilion every Sunday night up until the first Sunday night in September. Arrangements have been made for Mount Tabor's annual Sunday school and community picnic to be held in the park on Saturday, August 9.

The park offers swings, seesaw, slide boards, and sand pits for the entrainment of the children.

## August 8

### Drought Broken

The drought of the past month was broken early Sunday morning, by a heavy general rain. The downfall was followed by cool, clearing weather. The rain had the effect of breaking the drought and flushing mountain streams from which local water supply is derived.

The drought was beginning to effect crops and vegetation. Corn was particularly in need of moisture and pasture fields were drying up. The precipitation was slightly more than half an inch. The rainfall was steady and soaked into the ground. The fall was the heaviest for the past two months, and covered all sections of the County.

### Bitten By Copperhead

Miss Madeline Lightner, 15, was bitten in two places on the forefinger of her right hand by a copperhead Tuesday morning, while picking huckleberries in the mountains near her home. Madeline, accompany by her mother, had been at work for sometime in the mountains, near her home, where snakes of all kinds are known to exist.

The young girl had just moved from one huckleberry bush to another, and had thrust her hand into the bush to

pick some berries, when the copperhead struck twice in rapid succession. Both bites were close together on the forefinger of the right hand. So quickly did the snake strike that the girl wasn't able to withdraw her hand.

The girl screamed, and her mother, who was picking berries nearby, went to her daughter's side. She saw the copperhead in the bushes and killed it.

The victim was taken to her home and the doctor was summoned. Upon his arrival, he cauterized both wounds and gave the girl other medical treatments. The doctor said he would not know for several days how serious the condition might become. He said if her system is able to throw off the snake's poison, no serious complications would be experienced.

### Work Horses On The Farm

On a farm horses are often given extremes of work and rest that are very hard on them. If they have not been doing a full day's work, they should not be put to the plow for 10 or 12 hours at a stretch. They should be given light work for at least two weeks before being put into steady Spring and Summer heavy work, and they should be grained well.

Even greater care should be taken with horses that have been on pasture. A horse coming in off the grass will go to pieces in a few days of work in hot weather, and easily may be permanently injured. Neither is it a good plan to keep a horse on pasture and working it half days.

In matching up horses, pair those of about the same gate. If a slow horse in a fast one or put together the fast horse will do all the work, besides pulling the slow one along, and will, fret. The slow horse will be hurried out of his natural gate. Both horses will go to pieces. Never hurry a working horse team out of its natural gate.

Horses should be clipped in the Spring when, with their heavy coat, they would sweat, and perhaps become foundered, or get the heaves. If you have a shaggy dog, clip him in hot weather and see how happy he will be.

### Gypsies

Gypsy bands are reported to be more than ever a nuisance this summer, and numerous thefts have been reported, and various other troubles with town authorities. The best plan is to watch them closely, and order them to move on.

If Gypsies weren't bad enough, various kinds of "doctors" are reported traveling through the country, with appliances for sale, reported to cure afflictions, and who do not hesitate, when the opportunity seems favorable, to choose forceful methods to make sales. All such cases should be promptly reported to the authorities. Women and old people, who are alone,

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are said to be especially the victims of such fakes.

### New Road From Woodsboro To Ladiesburg

The proposed highway from Woodsboro to Ladiesburg will be built through Woodsboro, the County covering the expense, it was announced. It had originally been intended that the road should begin at the northern edge of Woodsboro, but this has been reconsidered by the County Commissioners.

The highway will start at the southern edge of town. One mile of road from the southern edge of Woodsboro towards Frederick will be built by the State Road Commission this summer. As soon as the highway is completed, it will be taken over and maintained by the State.

The road will be of macadam surface, 15 feet wide, except that the county has made provisions to widen it to 19 feet within the limits of Woodsboro, provided the people of that town are willing to stand the extra expense.

### Oiling Of Roads In County Almost Ended

The oiling crews of the State Road Commission have started to work on the Walkersville-Woodsboro State Road. This will be the last highway in the County to be oiled this year. When this highway has been treated, the work of oiling roads in Carroll County will be started. It is expected that the oiling of all roads in this district will be completed by the end of next week.

## August 15

### Radio And Baseball

Radio is a subject of such worldwide interest at the present time that experiments being carried out by Wired Radio Inc., in conjunction with the Satan Island Edison Company are of unusual interest.

How to cover the cost of providing suitable radio concerts to listeners, has been a problem. It is agreed that baseball did not reach a high degree of development until it was "fenced in" so that an admission fee could be charged which would provide for the best talent. The "fencing in" of baseball has not interfered with the progress of amateur baseball, but on the contrary, has developed an interest, which has made all kinds of baseball more popular.

It is reasonable to suppose the same principle would apply to radio, and that the highest degree of entertainment can only be provided by "fencing in" radio, so that high-grade broadcasting can be supported. Briefly, that is what Wired Radio Inc. is seeking to perfect.

Wired radio, which will be sent over electrical light wires, will not be a competitor of space radio for which no method has yet appeared of space radio on a paid basis. There is room for such types of radio to grow side-by-side, performing their different functions in the respective ways.

Attachments are being worked out in conjunction with wired radio, which can be attached to the regular vacuum table space set. Thus, by throwing the switch, the space set owner can intercept programs, transmitted over lighting, wires or programs sent through the air.

### Girls Warned About Bobbing Hair

Girls who keep on bobbing their hair, will eventually have to shave it, it is said. By cutting the hair on the head, it is predicted that it will start to grow on the face. No "have too" about it. They can grow mustaches - and "chew tobacco" - if they want to.

### Turkey Gobbler Shows How it's done

Several weeks ago, a turkey gobbler

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blow on his head intended for the animal. The result was a large scalp wound, but fortunately, no worse.

## August 22

### The Mars foolishness

For two weeks past a large amount of newspaper space has been covered with speculation as to what might be discovered by astronomers due to the near approach of the Earth and the planet Mars.

"Signaling" between the two planets has been named as a possibility, and all sorts of fantastic speculation indulged, as if Mars was inhabited by beings as intelligent as on the Earth, and were themselves watching the approach of the Earth with the intent of attacking us — some are even predicting a "war of the worlds," causing some to dig shelters in which to hide from the attack to come.

Considering the fact that nobody knows whether there is either animal or vegetable life on the planet, all of the speculations are mere idle play with the imagination, and such an occurrence as "Signaling" goes quite beyond the bounds of half-sensible intellectual license.

And, suppose there should be life of some kind in there, and some sort of Martians, what would be the information amount to? Largely another new thing to read and talk about for a little while, but nothing to capitalize for future benefit.

### Feds Warn Of Counterfeit \$20 Bills

The Treasury Department has sent out a warning about the circulation of a counterfeit \$20 bill of crude workmanship has to be detected. It is a bank note of the National Commercial Bank And Trust Company Of Albany, New York, bearing charter number 1,301, bank number 26,594 and Treasury number H26079611.

Officials say the bill looks more like an advertising dodger than money, and should be instantly detected by anyone at all familiar with our currency. More detailed description is, therefore, deemed unnecessary, says the notice.

### Accidents

On Monday afternoon, while work-

ing in the bakery, Elwood Bumgardner had his right hand caught in the molding machine, which badly crushed three fingers. Fortunately, the loose fitting drive belt prevented his fingers from being torn off.

George Shipley met with an unavoidable accident, while riding his bicycle, recently purchased, when he and Assistant Postmaster Harry Fraser's auto collided on Tuesday evening at Rifles' Alley. George sustained an ugly wound above the left eye. Fortunately, George was not hurt seriously, and kept his nerve throughout the accident.

Last Wednesday morning, as Lawrence Hon was taking his milk to the processing facility in Keymar, as he got to the crossroads near the plant and began to turn into it, Paul Koons, was coming the other way, and not seeing each other, they had a collision, both cars were damaged, but fortunately, neither of the men was hurt.

## August 29

### Tobacco Growing In Maryland

Tobacco growers of Frederick and Carroll County's are profiting by the advance in the price of this commodity. The price was formally from \$.02-\$.10 a pound; the market price Saturday was from \$.10-\$.60 per pound.

Maryland tobacco is bringing a record price due to the demand for it on the part of cigarette manufacturers. One after another of the most popular brands of cigarettes have turned to a larger and larger proportion of the Maryland leaf.

Changes to meet the demand have been made in methods of selecting and curing. At the same time there has been an organized effort made to prove to manufacturers that the flavor, aroma, and burning quality now in demand are found in the Maryland product.

Ten years ago, practically every pound of Maryland tobacco was sent abroad, most of it to France, but now this proportion has dropped to 50%. The Maryland Tobacco Growers Association, organized in 1919, has had to rebuild the industry on new lines and is not focused on American smokers.

Tobacco is grown by farmers living in sections of Walkersville, Woodsboro, Johnsville, and union Bridge, known as the "tobacco belt".

### Farmers' Urged To Save Old Corn

The spring of 1924 was unusually backward in many sections, the growing conditions were not good, with the result that the bulk of the corn is extremely late throughout the corn belt in the region. It is so late that most of the crop will be unfit for seed, unless frost holds off longer than usual. County agriculture agents are calling attention to this fact in order to prevent, if possible, a serious seed corn situation in the spring.

The higher prices for corn in the last few weeks are drawing much of the old crop from the farms. Farmers not having enough seed corn for 1925 left over from last year supply should save the best of the bulk crib corn from which to obtain seed, if necessary. If this year's corn is killed by frost before it is mature, this old corn will provide a source from which seed corn can be selected for planting in the spring.

### Speed Cops' Pay Raised

Among the examinations advertise to be held in the near future by the State Employment Commission are: parole officers, salary \$1,000-\$1,400 a year; license inspectors, \$1,800 a year; industrial inspectors, \$1,500 a year; district forest wardens, \$1,200 a year; and Maryland State Police patrolman, \$100 a month and expenses.

The salary for the members of the State Police Force is an increase over the previous pay and is announced to become effective October 1. The standard for entrance to the force have also been raised. The minimum height requirement now being 5' 10" instead of 5' 8" as heretofore, and minimum weight is now 145 pounds instead of 135 pounds. Applicants are required to be experienced motorcycle riders, and have in their possession at the time of the examination a valid motorcycle-operating license.

To read other articles related to 100 Years Ago this Month, visit the History section of [Walkersville.net](http://Walkersville.net).

belonging to Bradley Stidley, of Johnsville, strayed away, and in wandering over the farm, came across a guinea hen sitting on 30 of her eggs. Evidently, her method of incubating did not meet with the king gobbler's approval, for when found he was proudly sitting on the eggs and performing the duties in line with his ideas, from which he has since hatched a brood of guineas. He is ready to prove his title — a champion guinea foster mother — in a manner that would make Jack Dempsey blush in his pluralistic championship claim.

deep into the bone of the instep. He was able to drive his car into town, but upon arrival, fainted from loss of blood. After receiving first aid, he was taken to the Frederick Hospital, but is now at home and getting along nicely.

William, son of Mr. and Mrs. Howard, Foreman met with a painful injury on Wednesday, under unusual circumstances. He was helping his father drive a hog into the pen, and just as his father was using a club to hurry matters along, the boy got in the way and received a

### New Library Books

The following books have been purchased for the public library and will be ready for distribution, on Saturday; "Sister Sue", and "The Story Of Mares", Eleanor Pastor; "The Virginian", Owen Wesley; "The Trumpeter Swan", Temple Bailey; "The White Sister", Marion Crawford; "Rainbow Valley", Erwin Montgomery; "The Way Of A Man", Emerson Hoff; "Scaramouche", Rafael Labatini; "The Little Colonel In Arizona", Anna Johnson; "Her Father's Daughter", Jean Porter; "The Way Of An Eagle", Ethel Dell; "Rills Of Ingle-side", Lester Montgomery; and "Under The Country Sky", Grace Richmond.

### Farm Accidents

While engaged in cutting wood on the farm of his son-in-law, Walter Crabster, Claudius Long badly cut his right foot by a glancing below of the ax. The little toe was severed, and the cut extended



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# LIBRARY NEWS

Summer may be winding down, but things are always hot at the Walkersville Library. Stop in to find your next beach read, enjoy a presentation from subject matter experts, or let your kids get immersed in educational, fun programs! When it's too hot to exercise outside, consider a free class in the library's cool air conditioning. If you signed up for the Summer Reading Challenge, don't forget to enter all raffle tickets before the final prize drawing—all tickets must be submitted by August 15 at 11:59 p.m. for your chance to win epic prizes!

Did you know the practice of Acupuncture is over 2,000 years old? Join Ryan Diener with Holistic Health at the Walkersville Library on Sunday, August 4 from 1:30-2:30 to learn more about the history as well as the benefits of Acupuncture.

Don't get scammed by someone 'phishing' for your personal information this summer; learn how to identify and avoid internet scs from a Certified Informa-

tion Systems Security Professional on Thursday, August 8 at 10 at the Walkersville Branch Library. Coffee and tea will be available for those attending the talk.

On Sunday, August 18 at 1:30, members from Stream Link Education will share a presentation about their work planting forests along streams in Frederick County. Learn how you can connect to the environment or volunteer to support their initiative.

A sensory progr for adults with intellectual disabilities takes place at 10 every Wednesday at the Walkersville Branch Library. This month is full of fun! Meet a gentle, four-legged friend when the Go Te Therapy Dogs arrive on August 7. Move and groove with Chair 1 Fitness on August 21 and join us for a dance party with DJ Macrum on August 28!

If you're a fan of hands-on learning, join us at the Walkersville Branch Library for Discovery Days! Engaging, educational fun will take place each Fri-

day at 11. Rock on with geology experts from GTC Rock Shop on August 2, unleash your inner artist to make nature-inspired art on August 9, celebrate STEM with The Science Guys on August 16, and explore all things science with NIH/NCI Education Specialist Tori on August 23. Close out summer with a splash on August 30—but prepare to get wet!

Begin your week with a free yoga class on Monday, August 12 and 26 at 6. Led by instructors from Sol Yoga, this is a great way to wind down and practice self-care on a Monday evening. This class is wonderful for everyone, even first timers! A more intense workout option called Freedom BANG Fitness happens every Saturday at 10 at the Walkersville Branch Library. Join us on Thursday, August 22 at 10 for a Chair Yoga class with Country Meadows. Chairs and extra mats will be available but wear comfy clothes. All exercise classes at the Walkersville Library are free and do not require registration.

If you need help expunging your record from a past conviction but aren't sure where to begin, an attorney from Maryland Legal Aid will be at the Walkersville Branch Library on August 25, from 1 to 4. They will meet with you for free to discuss your options and begin the process.

If you have a middle or high school student, send them over to the Walkersville Branch Library on August 27 at 3:30 to learn about the Teen Library Council. This monthly meeting is for teens interested in being part of the com-

munity and having an impact on activities at the Walkersville Branch Library. Attendees will not only receive volunteer hours, but also develop marketable leadership skills, credentials for future job and college applications and have a fun time with peers.

School may be out for a few more weeks, but the Walkersville Librarians are doing field trip storytimes, rain or shine! Join them for storytime at the park on Wednesdays at 1, and then stay to play at the Walkersville Community Park and playground or take a ride on the nearby Walkersville Southern Railroad!

Prepare for the upcoming school year by reading aloud with a cute and captive audience. Go Te Therapy Dogs will be at the Walkersville Branch Library on Thursday, August 8 from 6:30-7:30, and look forward to hearing a story. Kids (and adults!) of all ages are invited to share their favorite story and make a new four-legged friend at the library.

Our schedule for storytimes is as follows:

- Monday: Infants at 10; Baby Steps Skill Building 10:30; Babies at 11
- Tuesday: Toddlers at 11
- Wednesday: Fily at 6
- Thursday: Preschool at 11

Bilingual Storytime at the Walkersville Branch Library will be on Wednesday, August 7 and 21 at 6. This dynic and engaging storytime is fun for the whole family and will feature songs, rhymes and more in English and other world languages.

## Health Department's back-to-school vaccination clinics

The Frederick County Health Department will be hosting Back to School vaccination clinics from August 6th to September 11th for children who do not have health insurance, have health insurance that does not cover the cost of immunizations, or who are unable to get vaccinated by their healthcare provider. Vaccinations will be free for these children and appointments are required. Call 301-600-1733 to request an appointment or schedule online.

Children who have health insurance that covers vaccinations are encouraged to see their healthcare provider.

Maryland State Law requires all students enrolled in pre-kindergarten through Grade 12 to receive age-appropriate immunizations. The Maryland vaccination requirements for the 2024-2025 school year are available here.

School vaccination requirements help protect children by making sure they are protected against vaccine-preventable diseases. Children who are not vaccinated can spread diseases to others, particularly to those who are too young to be vaccinated, or people with weakened immune systems, such as those with cancer. The school must have proof of immunizations before allowing a student to begin school. Students who have not received the required vaccinations may be unable to attend school until proof of vaccination is provided, according to Maryland requirements.

Important information for Parents/Guardians:

Children 17 years of age and younger must be accompanied by an adult 18 years of age or older.

If parent or guardian will not be bringing their child, they must send a written note giving the individual bringing the child authorization to have the child vaccinated.

All vaccinated children are required to remain at the clinic for observation after vaccination.

Only one parent or guardian may accompany children who have an appointment. Additional persons will not be admitted.

Please DO NOT come to the vaccination clinic if child or parent/guardian has any symptoms or are waiting for COVID-19 results.

For more information, visit [Health.FrederickCountyMD.gov/Immunization](http://Health.FrederickCountyMD.gov/Immunization).

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# SCHOOL NEWS

## Walkersville High School Alumni Assoc. awards scholarships

Patty Green

Walkersville High School Alumni Association, Inc. (WHS) presented twenty-two scholarships to WHS graduates. These were presented at the sold out capacity annual meeting/banquet held at the New Midway Volunteer Fire Company Fire-hall on June 22, 2024. Celebrating with a theme “Celebrating The Past, Looking To The Future, Enjoying The Present”, dinner was enjoyed by more than 260 alumni and guests.

Jerry Fouche, President of WHS Alumni, welcomed everyone, and thanked everyone for attending. The New Midway Fire Company members provided the meal for the event. A brief overview of the WHS Alumni activities that had taken place during the past year was presented. The traditional roll call of WHS Alumni classes was taken.

Chad Weddle introduced twenty-two scholarship awardees, with a total amount of \$34,200, to WHS 2024 graduating seniors. Madison Petersen received the WHS Intergenerational Scholarship. She had parents and grandparents and many other family members who graduated from WHS. A William R. Talley scholarship was presented to Luke Daniluck to pursue an athletic career. A scholarship sponsored by Dale Clabaugh – State Farm Agent, for STEM was presented to Kai Kamakaris. A scholarship, in memory of Rich Duncan, was presented to Zachary Clemence. Two scholarships were sponsored by Emily Hoke Robets and presented to Ella Carr and Federico Diaz.

The WHS Class of 1974 sponsored general scholarships that were presented to Rylee Remsburg, Mackenzie Rose, Paige Stickley, Brandon Taylor and Ryan Wells. A vocational trade scholarship, sponsored by WHS Class of 1972 was presented to Hannah Quinn. Four designated Science/Technology/Engineer-

ing/Mathematics (STEM) scholarships were sponsored by WHS Class of 1974 and presented to Caroline Hinkelman, Jessica Muentes, Arabella Rand and Carter Sharpe. The WHS class of 1973 sponsored a scholarship to a senior pursuing a nursing degree and was presented to Trinity-William Nguempjop Ntemi.

WHS Alumni sponsored general scholarships that were presented to Brandon Jeffers and Jonas Nebel; STEM scholarships to Krishna Patel and Mason Worley. Isaac O’Hara was presented a scholarship, sponsored by WHS Alumni as he is attending FCC. A WHS Alumni Continuation Scholarship was presented to Adyn Isemann.

WHS graduates from classes 1938 through 2024 were represented at the meeting/banquet. Everyone was encouraged to invite all classmates to participate in WHS Alumni events and to invite others to reminisce with everyone at a future meeting/banquet. The WHS Alumni 2025 dinner is planned for June 21.

Donna Inskeep presented a program to celebrate the WHS Class of 1974 50th class reunion. She provided a very enlightening program with pictures about the activities of the 1974 class. They brought back many memories and laughs. Special guests at the dinner included former teachers Peggy Trimmer, Tom Ford, Dahl Drenning, Bill Eyer and Dan Garrett.

A special presentation was shared by many former students honoring Coach William Talley. Mrs. Talley and son John were present for the presentation. Many fond memories and pictures were shared to everyone.

The following officers were elected for the upcoming 2024-2025 year. President – Jerry Fouche (class of 1971); Vice President elected – James Crum (class of 1973); Treasurer – Chad Weddle (class of 1987); Asst. Treasurer – Alan Heflin (class of 1964); Recording Secretary –

Marsha Burrier Bruchey (class of 1964); Assistant Recording Secretary Gloria Rollins Long (class of 1973) and Corresponding Secretary – Patty Burrier Green (class of 1970).

Anyone interested in further information about the Walkersville High School Alumni Assoc. should contact current President Jerry Fouche. Info about WHS Alumni, including upcoming meeting dates, can be found at the WHS Alumni section on WHS website: (<http://education.fcps.org/whs/node/756>). Inquiries and updates can also be mailed to WHS Alumni, PO Box 546, Walkersville, MD 21793.



Walkersville High School Alumni Assoc. scholarships award recipients: front row: Ella Carr, Kai Kamakaris, Arabella Rand, Adyn Isemann, Trinity William-Ntemi, Mackenzie Rose, Caroline Hinkelman. Middle row: Madison Petersen, Paige Stickley, Brandon Taylor, Carter Sharpe, Jessica Muentes, Rylee Remsburg, Hannah Quinn, Mason Worley, Ryan Wells, Federico Diaz, Luke Daniluck, Brandon Jeffers. Back row: Zachary Clemence, Jonas Nebel, Isaac O’Hara.

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## FOUR YEARS AT THE MOUNT

*This month we asked our writers to pick and write about one of August's National Days*

### Sophomore

#### National Park Service Founders Day

Gracie Smith  
MSMU Class of 2027

This prompt gave me a lot to think about. This prompt challenged me to do something I first thought was simple until I began writing. That is, to explain to you the importance of our National Parks.

August 25th is National Park Service Founders Day. Wow, that's a mouthful. On this day in 1916, President Woodrow Wilson signed what is now called the Organic Act, establishing the National Park Service. As part of the Department of Interior, the National Park Service protects 400 areas in 50 states, U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia, totaling 84 million acres.

Many of us are not as eager as we should be when visiting national parks, but most of that comes from a lack of knowledge regarding national parks. There are many national parks in our area that I encourage everyone to visit. Some of those parks are Antietam Battlefield, Catoctin Mountain, Harper's Ferry, Fort

McHenry, the Chesapeake Bay, Flight 93, Valley Forge, and Gettysburg. Not only does visiting national parks give us more knowledge about our nation's history, but we can also appreciate the soft beauties within our nation.

Unpopular opinion, I would rather visit a national park than a beach any day. That said, I've visited so many beaches in my life that I am probably just burnt out on them. It's the same routine each time. Set up chairs, put sunscreen on, and sit uncomfortably in your falling-apart chair until an appropriate amount of time has passed before you can leave and call it a "beach day". No, thank you. Every national park is different and has so many activities to offer. From sightseeing to tours, museums, hiking, swimming, and kayaking, there is always something new to try and to see. Who wouldn't be excited about that? The beach was always my mom's thing, however, camping and exploring was always my dad's thing. Safe to say my preferences mirror that of my father's when it comes to things to do.

That said, what do I love most about national parks? Reflecting on this loaded question, it comes down to the memories I have with my dad. Ever since I was little,

my dad would take me camping, and show me all kinds of things my mom would never have done. Not because she didn't want to, but simply because it wasn't her thing. Dad and I used to, and still do, visit Gettysburg every chance we got. Whether it's just to have lunch or walk the battlefield, our passion for knowledge and history drives us to learn more and continue visiting our national parks.

Last summer, I remember going to Gettysburg with my dad to do a bus tour (yet again) and visit some museums. That was easily one of the best days I had that summer. We left bright and early in the morning and didn't leave until close to dinner time. I not only learned so much about something I was passionate about, but I got to geek and nerd out with my dad and my aunt without feeling foolish for doing so. We toured the battlefield, visited museums, had lunch, and visited a bunch of shops, one of which I bought a really nice sweatshirt in. The most amazing part of that day was driving home and realizing how close I was to Gettysburg. I remember thinking to myself, "I could do this all again".

Later that same summer, I moved into college early as part

of a bridge program where we all visited Harper's Ferry. I've never taken so many pictures in my life, and I don't believe my dad received so many text messages in his life. Sorry, dad.

To this day I keep trying to get my dad to go to Harper's Ferry with me. I absolutely loved learning everything about Harper's Ferry and, contrary to most, I loved writing the essay we had to write on John Brown from all the information we learned at Harper's Ferry. I don't think I've ever been more excited to write an essay, and everyone I talked to knew that.

My third National Park story takes place in the Shenandoah Valley when my family and I visited the Luray Caverns. I have to admit, I was a little skeptical about it since we'd be going underground in a very fragile area. However, once we got down far enough, I was able to appreciate the pure and utter beauty of the caverns. It's amazing to think that something so astounding actually exists; looking up at the sparkling rock crystals wondering how on earth they don't fall to the ground. Truly amazing.

I believe that National Park Service Founders Day should be celebrated a little more, and defi-

nately deserves more recognition. The memories that are made within parks all over the country are worth so much to families. Not to mention the lasting impact your visit will have on each member of your family.

The conservation of our National Parks should be advertised so much more than it is. In the past several visits I've made to Gettysburg, I was very happy to see how crowded the parking lots were at the visitor's center and around the battlefield. The idea that people are interested in learning about our nation's history excites me, and I want nothing more than to be a part of it.

This prompt gave me the opportunity to express to you the importance of our national parks and their conservation, as well as my passion for them. I hope that on August 25th you might visit one of our amazing national parks and participate in the fun activities each of them has to offer. I promise they are so much more exciting than they appear. I hope my article will impact you enough to at least check them out. Happy National Park Service Founders Day.

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

### Junior

#### National Book Lovers Day

Devin Owen  
MSMU Class of 2026

There are typically 365 days in a year—aside from leap years of course. This means that there are hundreds and hundreds of National days in a year to celebrate! If you happened to read my article last August, you would have read about National Sister Day, which takes place on August 4th each year. As someone with multiple sisters, it is a day I hold close to my heart. However, there is another day in August that I find to be worth celebrating as well: National Book Lovers Day on August 9th!

Now, not to say that it is obvious that I would be a fan of such a day but, in all fairness, I am

an English major and a writer so books are basically a lifeline for me. I find that books are crucial to our existence though, they just hold so much knowledge! The best part about books is that they don't just carry knowledge, but rather that they open a door to totally new worlds for the readers. There is romance, action, horror, fantasy, history, and so much more. Each genre is a new and different world for the reader to explore.

Since the day is centered on book lovers and not just books in general, I want to focus on book lovers personally! I asked friends, family, and peers to tell me about their favorite books and why they mean so much to each person! The answers that I received from each person allows you to open your mind to different books and genres. There were so many books and authors that I hadn't known of that I can now look into. After reading this article, maybe my fellow book lovers can add a few new

options to their reading lists!

The first person I interviewed was my boyfriend Ayden, who is like me and enjoys reading a good book in his down time. Ayden's favorite book is "The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian" by Sherman Alexie. The novel follows the 'misadventures' of a young teenage boy named Arnold Spirit Jr.—who typically goes by just 'Junior'—as he makes the decision to leave the Spokane Indian Reservation. Ayden read this book while he was still in high school as well and found it to be helpful in adjusting to the changes brought with being a teenager. This is one of his favorite books because it was super easy for him to relate to and connect with. Finding novels that have characters which remind you of yourself is always a comforting experience because there may be aspects of the book where you and this character could relate due to being in a bad place, but the character emphasizes that there is in fact a light at the end of the tunnel and that the problems can be solved. Ayden said he would recommend this novel to "any high schooler who is struggling. It's a great book about a kid who finds himself in all the sticky situations but figured out how to solve his problems to the best of his abilities. It's also really cool to see how life on a reservation differs from life off of a reservation and the cultural differences

that are emphasized."

My second interview is going to be much more familiar to my readers of the Emmitsburg News Journal as it is from our recent Graduate writer Claire Doll! Claire has two books that she finds to be incredibly noteworthy: "The Bell Jar" by Sylvia Plath and "Writers and Lovers" by Lily King. These novels both "fall generally into the genre of women's fiction and portrays the struggles of women becoming someone in the world while faced with internal and external pressures," which is exactly what makes Claire like them as much as she does. Claire made sure to emphasize Sylvia Plath's "The Bell Jar" specifically as a great novel to read as Sylvia Plath is one of her icons and she finds her to be such a lovely writer, which I cannot help but to agree with! Claire stated that both of these novels "have to do with the protagonists as writer while they also face challenges with mental health and societal status!" With all of that in mind I personally can't wait to dive into these novels! "I used to like romance novels, but I've fallen in love with women's fiction as a whole as a 22-year-old college grad just trying to figure things out." Personally, I relate with Claire on this because as a 20-year-old woman, it's hard to figure out where I fit in the world and what my purpose will be. The entire genre of women's fiction again is a form of comfort because it is so relatable. Finally, I would like to tell

you about one of my own favorite novels. This is the first book I can think of when someone asks me for a book recommendation because it is just absolutely riveting! "Where The Crawdads Sing" by Delia Owens is—in my opinion—a work of art. Ironically, I hated it at first but after pushing through the first few chapters, I couldn't put it down. This novel became my pool and beach read for the summer, and even after finishing it I take it with me for travel to reread. The book is a mix of jumping from the past to the present in attempts to solve a suspected murder, so it embraces the theme of a coming-of-age narrative whilst also being a haunting and thrilling mystery novel. I loved this novel so much because it kept me on my toes, I didn't want to put it down because you never knew what would happen next. The whole book takes you by surprise, with every twist and turn that comes in each chapter. The story is incredibly chaotic all of the way through, yet towards the end it becomes more peaceful, which is a nice change of pace. I think this is a novel so good that everyone should read it! Hopefully this will give you the opportunity to expand your reading lists this year and embrace being a book lover! Be sure to celebrate your love for books on August 9th this year!

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



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# LITTLE KNOWN AUGUST NATIONAL DAYS

## Senior

### National Respect for Parents Day

Dolores Hans  
MSMU Class of 2025

When I was little I quickly noticed that the best feeling in the world was knowing my father carried me to bed when I fell asleep in the car or on the couch. As I got a little older, and the end of a movie would approach, I would either force myself asleep or pretend I was, so that he would have to carry me. The older I got however, I started noticing that he would wake me gently so I could walk myself to my bed. This was a rude awakening as I realized I was too big to be carried. Sometimes I would just stay asleep on the couch so I wouldn't have to feel the difference between being carried to bed and walking myself. I know that I will be chasing that feeling for the rest of my life. The feeling of safety, warmth, love, and lightness. Not only was I able to feel light because my father is the strongest person I've ever met (physically and mentally), but because I never needed

to be weighed down by fear or despair. My father was there. To carry me, to protect me, to love me. I grew up with many brothers, but my dad never let me be alone. He showed me that playing in the mud was fun, jumping into the pool wasn't scary, and he lifted me up and ran when I was too little to play baseball in the backyard so that I could be a winner. My dad showed me how to appreciate nature, how to have a sense of adventure, and how to have reverence for the Lord. He gave me his artistic ability. My dad is so talented, even his doodles are impressive. He also created a complex, amazing, summer long treasure hunt that had us reading coordinates, running all over town, finding hidden messages, solving puzzles, even canoeing down a river, to get to the treasure. He made challenges that played to each of my sibling's and I's strengths, and made it inclusive for every age from 20 to 4. He has such a great imagination. He has given me so many wonderful memories. He has instilled in me his sense of humor, his taste in music, and so much more. Because of him, I am both goofy and contemplative.

My Dad has shown me the kind of man I am worthy of, the kind of

man who is strong and makes sacrifices, who provides and protects, who is the head of the household, but also isn't afraid to randomly start dancing in the living room, venture into the woods, or tell a hilarious joke. He is the first man I've ever loved and the first man who ever loved me. There is nothing I wouldn't do for him. I love making him laugh and making him proud.

My mother is a saint. She gives more, and puts more goodness out into the world than anyone I've ever met. She is the epitome of true beauty and grace. My mom has brought eight children into this world, and has raised each one with abundant love and faith. Not only does she nurture us, teach us, heal us, provide for us, and make a home for us, but she teaches full-time, drives us everywhere, prays for us every day, maintains friendships, volunteers, devotes time to children with special needs, and so much more. The list of my mother's capabilities is endless. She does so much that she has to reheat a cup of tea 4 times before drinking it hours later, because she doesn't have the time to sit and drink it the

first time she makes it. My mother has tremendous faith and compassion. She has been through a lot and yet her faith and reliability has never faltered. When I was young I used to think about how she made motherhood look so easy. She could balance everything perfectly, and make even the most mundane things into something exciting. When she had to take all of us with her to the grocery store, she made it into a scavenger hunt for us. She would also pull out all the stops to make our childhood amazing. When my little siblings couldn't do the "Heights Olympics", which was a thing our elementary school did before summer, because of Covid, she organized it right in our backyard. She would make us fun themed breakfasts like snowman pancakes or green eggs and ham, she would show us fun crafts, she would host fun parties, and she would sing us songs when we were babies. One of my favorite things my mom has done is make scrapbooks. She put so much effort into these beautiful handmade books full of photos from our childhood and you can see just how much she loves us and how

motherly she is. I will always cherish those scrapbooks.

Now that I am older, I love having conversations with my mom, planning trips, supporting her like she has always supported me, and laughing with her. My mother has become my friend and it makes me so happy.

August 1st is National Respect for Parents Day. Take a moment to thank your parents for everything they've done for you. They have poured their heart, soul, blood, sweat, tears, their everything into you so that you can have a wonderful life. It may be hard to see it sometimes but you are cherished by them. And if you are a parent, thank you for doing your best. You've taken on a tremendous responsibility and you are doing great. Your child is the most precious thing you'll ever have, and you are the most important part of their life. You are the key to their success. Thank you for looking out for them. It may be hard to see it sometimes, but we are grateful.

To read other articles by Dolores Hans, visit the Authors section of [Walkersville.net](http://Walkersville.net).

## Graduate

### Global Sleep Under the Stars Night Day

Claire Doll  
MSMU Class of 2024

I grew up ten minutes from Baltimore City. My whole life I have looked into the night sky to see just bits and pieces of stars: scattered, twinkling pinpricks of light, floating in the almost-black sky. I say "almost black" because the night sky was never completely dark where I lived. I later learned that this was a result of light pollution, which casts a tinge of unwanted light into the night sky, painting it a grayish black. Skyglow. Growing up, I never saw the full, black night sky.

But until I moved to a more rural home, or until I began college at the Mount, I thought this was normal. I thought that stars were minimal in their appearance, and the sky at night would never be the inky black that we were told it'd be, and I should be thankful to live near a city. I fell asleep to the hum of the highway at night, car engines and tires against pavement and the symphony of vehicles that would crescendo into dawn. I fell asleep to real, human, alive noise. We checked local traffic by looking into the backyard window, and at night we counted few stars.

This is not to say I am not thankful for my childhood spent under a tainted night sky. My fondest memories include midnight swims where the pool water glowed electric, and mornings at the Baltimore farmers market (with the most delicious fried oyster mushrooms), and sunsets that melted into far-away city skyscrapers.

So, why Global Sleep Under

the Stars Night? After all, I've never even camped until I was 19, and the thought of more than fifteen scattered stars in the night sky seemed unthinkable, almost fiction.

When I moved to northern Carroll County after my high school graduation, and then to Mount St. Mary's in August 2020, I realized the importance of space—not even outer space, but real, physical space surrounding me. Or, in better terms, the emptiness encircling me. Landscapes and corn fields and mountains. And deep into the night, when all traces of light vanished, there they were: stars. Lots of them. Constellations, even, trailing across the sky like baby's breath dotting grass. Stars linking and connecting and sparkling—definitely more than fifteen of them—pressed against the black sky.

In college I would grow to be more outdoorsy—from camping trips in Shenandoah backcountry and Assateague Island to midnight drives in Emmitsburg and beyond—I learned just how breathtaking the dark can be.

True darkness is when there is no difference between closing your eyes and opening them. My mind goes to the ultimate form of darkness before the earth as we know it was created: "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, let there be light: and there was light" (Genesis 1:3). Can you imagine—no stars, no moon or sun? Total and complete darkness, everywhere and nowhere, in your waking and sleeping and dreaming states?

While chilling, true darkness can also be beautiful. A Forbes article titled "The Death of Night" focuses

on the downfall of light pollution and the irreversible effects. "Light pollution and its trademark 'skyglow' is getting worse. Much worse. It's getting so serious that stars, beautiful open clusters and even distant galaxies in the night sky there were visible just a decade ago are now impossible to see," writes author Jamie Carter.

This isn't talked about enough. Sources of overlighting—streetlights, floodlights, factory lights, and even indoor lights—all contribute to light pollution. In fact, cities are easily viewable from the International Space Station at night, revealing even from outer space that humans are present.

Do we really need to be that known to the universe?

Remote regions such as Siberia, the Sahara, and the Amazon are blanketed in total darkness, while the night skies in countries like Singapore, Qatar, and Kuwait are soaked in artificial light. In America we are somewhere in between, depending on location. In Emmitsburg I fondly recall stargazing at night, finding galaxies in the dark night sky, as if I had grown up picking out stars all along.

August 8th is Global Sleep Under the Stars Night. I'm not suggesting you pitch a tent in the backyard or book a camping trip in the middle of nowhere. Rather, I urge you to stay up late that night—take a walk or sit on the porch—and look up. Go on a drive and find constellations, trace them with your finger, park and turn your headlights off. Gaze until the darkness grows normal, until the difference between closing your eyes and opening them are sparkling pinpricks of light against outer space. Do you understand that there are galaxies and other worlds out there, millions of stars and planets? That

the universe is far too incomprehensible, but rather something to be marveled? And have you ever recalled something more beautiful?

I chose this day—or night—because I never got to sleep under the stars when I was younger. I wouldn't trade my childhood for anything, and I mean it, but my discovery and fascination of stars has truly shaped me as a person. I have grown to not only love the sky but also cherish it. I desire to preserve the sky for my children, for future generations who are already at risk for a more artificially brightened world.

While light is associated with sym-

bols of knowledge and truth and goodness, you cannot have light without the absence of light. Darkness is not all that it's interpreted to be; in fact, the unknowing, the mystery, the lingering fear is natural, and what shapes our experiences. God used the very fabric of darkness to create day and night. Without darkness we would have never revealed the galaxies embedded in the deep universe, the stars trailing their twinkling dust in a forever black sky.

To read other articles by Claire Doll, visit the Authors section of [Walkersville.net](http://Walkersville.net).



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# ARTS

## Weinberg Center “Sneak Peek” on upcoming season

The Weinberg Center is offering an exclusive “Sneak Peek” and early on sale period for five shows in its upcoming 2024-25 Season at the Weinberg Center and New Spire Arts. The Sneak Peek is new for the Weinberg Center Season reveal. Executive Theater Manager, Stephanie Chaiken, revealed “I decided to introduce a Sneak Peek because I wanted people to get excited about the incredible artists that we’re bringing, as we’re booking them. Folks have been asking me for months ‘what will we be doing differently’ and so I wanted to be able to share news, instead of having to wait all summer.” Chaiken added,

“This is the first full season that I have booked at the Weinberg Center and my aim is to continue the programs that I saw people rave about this spring, while expanding our genre of shows to a wide range of audiences. We are also in the throes of planning incredible professional development workshops for artists and arts organizations that I hope will support a thriving creative economy in the Frederick community.”

The “Sneak Peek” shows include: Tablao Flamenco - New Spire Arts, September 15. Returning this season with two performances, enjoy an show of dynamic perfor-

mance, improvisation, and passionate music delivered by a cast of the most sought-after award-winning flamenco artists. Experience the magnetic energy of flamenco like you’ve never seen before. Tablao Flamenco brings a fresh approach to a night of flamenco, transforming the theatre into an intimate nightclub like those found in Andalusia, Spain. Enjoy an evening of dynamic performance, improvisation, and passionate music delivered by a cast of the most sought-after award-winning flamenco artists in the U.S. & Europe. Tablao Flamenco is as authentic as it gets without renewing your passport.

Broadway’s Rock Of Ages Band - Weinberg Center, October 20. Featuring original cast members and rock star musicians, this thrilling performance delivers ’80s hits from Bon Jovi to Motley Crue with unmatched energy. Led by Broadway stars and seasoned rockers, this concert promises an unforgettable journey through the golden era of rock. Don’t miss the real rock experience that rocked Broadway and now rocks stages everywhere!

Vertical Horizon - Weinberg Center, Oct. 23. Vertical Horizon celebrates the 25th anniversary of Everything You Want, a record that changed lives, selling over 2 mil-

lion copies and garnering nearly 500 million streams. It was #1 on Billboard’s Hot 100 and the Most Played Single of the year 2000. Join us for a live performance of this iconic album and other favorites, reliving chart-topping hits like You’re a God and Best I Ever Had.

Sugar Skull - A Día De Muertos Musical Adventure! Weinberg Center, Nov. 2.

This vibrant and enchanting musical transports audiences into the heart of Mexican culture and tradition. Follow twelve-year-old Vita Flores on a magical journey guided by Sugar Skull, a charismatic skeleton with secrets, as they unravel the true meaning of Día de Muertos through music, dance, and mystical encounters. This bilingual/bicultural production celebrates family, heritage, and the power of storytelling in a captivating theatrical experience for all ages.

Lorrie Morgan - Weinberg Center, Nov. 16. The first woman in country music to begin her career with three consecutive Platinum albums, Morgan is known for her lustrous vocal phrasing and the down-to-earth believability of her torchy performances. On records such as A Picture of Me Without You and I Guess You Had to



Lorrie Morgan

Be There, the ache is palpable. On her epic Something in Red she is an honest, struggling everywoman. Whether covering a classic or sharing one of her own songs, Morgan is truly a song stylist in the grandest tradition.

Tickets for the Sneak Peek shows go on sale to Weinberg Center members June 20 and to the public June 27. Tickets 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.

The Weinberg Center for the Arts is one of the region’s premier performing arts presenters, offering film, music, dance, theater, and family-focused programming. Located in the historic Tivoli movie theater in downtown Frederick Maryland, the Weinberg Center strives to ensure that the arts remain accessible and affordable to local and regional audiences alike. Weinberg Center events are made possible with major support from the City of Frederick, the Maryland State Arts Council, Plamondon Hospitality Partners, and other corporate and individual donors.

## Music, Gettysburg! line up for the Dog Days of August

Music Gettysburg! has a stellar line up for the Dog Days of August, beginning with Dearest Home, a favorite of Music, Gettysburg! who will kick off the August season with an outdoor concert of authentic Civil War era music on August 4th.

Expressive vocals with rich harmonies interweave with sprightly dance tunes, as Dearest Home recreates traditional American music—U.S. Civil War era and Appalachian music, especially from the Samuel Bayard

Folk Song Collection, with favorites from Jean Ritchie, the Carter Family, and Appalachia’s stellar fiddlers.

Passion, skill, and resonant, next-of-kin matching of voices bring their music to life in lovingly crafted arrangements: authenticity and originality in perfect balance. And like the band itself, their programming unites the generations. Expect to hear fiddle, concertina, whistles, guitar, mountain dulcimer, bass, keyboards, percussion, auto-

harp, and banjolele. Be ready to join the band in singing, clapping, and even dancing

On August 11, the Carlisle Brass Band will perform. The Carlisle Brass Band performs both traditional and modern brass band literature. Organized as a British brass band, the band performs 15-20 public concerts annually. Since its creation in 1998, the band has performed at numerous local music festivals, holiday ceremonies and multiple Army War College graduations.

And on August 18th, Cormorant’s Fancy will be performing. Cormorant’s Fancy is known for their song and dance traditions of the Ireland and the Celtic Nations. Cormorant’s Fancy wings across generations and oceans with traditional and contemporary music of Ireland, along with Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, and North America. Passion for their heritage



Dearest Home offers the opportunity to hear authentic Civi Ware era music.

pulses in every note! Driving reels, sprightly jigs, haunting airs, beautiful ballads, spirited songs and good-humored sing-alongs feature fancy-full harmonies and soaring instrumentals that blend vocals, concertina, fiddle, penny whistle,

guitar, keyboards and bodhrán. All concerts are free and open to the public, will take place at the performance platform in Schmucker Grove, just north of Springs Avenue on the United Lutheran Seminary campus. Bring a blanket or lawn chairs, and a picnic dinner. In the event of inclement weather, the concert will move next door to the ULS chapel.

Music, Gettysburg! is a premier concert series featuring international, national, regional and local musical artists for the greater south central Pennsylvania region. The United Lutheran Seminary Chapel is at 147 Seminary Ridge in Gettysburg.

For more information about this and other concerts sponsored by Music, Gettysburg! please call 717-339-1334 or visit at [www.music-gettysburg.org](http://www.music-gettysburg.org).

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# August and everything after

Sonya Verlaque  
FCC Culinary Program

I love the Counting Crows. Maybe it reminds me of driving around Baltimore in my friends beat up manual transmission civic in high school, on our way to sports practice or to work our shift at Chuck E Cheese but their debut album, August and Everything After was always near the front of the CD case we kept in her car. Sometimes August feels like the stale end of summer, but I think it starts the beginning of the best part of the year. Herb gardens rocking out, fall harvest is just around the corner, but the sidewalk chalk and freezer pops are still hanging Round Here.

## French Potato Salad

This is a great potato salad that does not use dairy and is served at room temperature, so you don't have to worry about storage and chilling if you are taking it outdoors to the pool or a picnic. It also stores in the fridge and as the dressing settles into the potatoes tastes even better the next day. I just served this recently to a bunch of friends and they thought it was a nice, lighter version for summer. You can also use any herbs that you have fresh available really, just make sure all herbs are chopped well so you don't feel like you are eating leaves with your potatoes.

### Ingredients

1.5 lbs small potatoes (red/gold)  
1 tbsp salt  
3 tbsp olive oil  
3 tbsp champagne vinegar  
1 tbsp dijon mustard  
1 tbsp grainy mustard  
1/4 tsp pepper  
1 shallot, peeled a sliced  
2 tbsp fresh dill, minced  
2 tbsp fresh flat leaf parsley, chopped  
2 tbsp basil, chiffonade

Preparation directions: Bring a large stock pot of water boil, and while waiting to boil chop the potatoes into quarters or bite sized pieces. When boiling, place the potatoes in the pot and cook for 20-25 min until for tender. Strain and place in a bowl with a towel covering it so the potatoes can steam. In the mean time, place the olive oil, champagne vinegar, mustards, and pepper into and whisk or blend until it forms an emulsion. Add herbs and shallots and stir, then pour over the potatoes and toss, and let sit. This can be served warm or at room temperature, or stored in an airtight container for up to 3 days, if it lasts that long.

## Gnocchi alla Romana

This is gnot your normal gnocchi! Its baked as flat discs and is crispy, cheesy and delicious. This recipe is from the James Beard winning chef, David Leite and is from Rome. Made with coarse ground semolina instead of potatoes. It

makes a great base for a ragu or marinara for dipping.

1 quart (4 cups) whole milk  
2 to 3 tsp salt  
7 ounces (just over 1 cup) semolina flour  
1 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese  
2 large eggs, lightly beaten  
1 tbsp butter  
1/2 cup bread crumbs

Preparation directions: To make the semolina gnocchi, heat the milk and salt in a medium saucepan set over medium heat. When the milk starts to simmer, slowly sprinkle the semolina flour over the surface, whisking constantly to make sure that lumps do not form. Once all the semolina has been added, reduce the heat to medium-low. Continue to whisk for 7 to 10 more minutes, until the gnocchi-to-be mixture becomes thick and velvety. The mixture may thicken considerably after just a few minutes, but try to continue to cook it for the full 7 to 10 minutes. This is to make it tender and a nice smooth texture.

Remove the pan from the heat and stir in 1/2 cup of the Parmesan, the eggs, and the butter. Turn the mixture onto a rimmed baking sheet, spreading it evenly into a 1/2 inch thickness. Set aside in the fridge, if there's room, or set aside at room temperature until cool and firm, about an hour. Pre-heat the oven to 400° F (200°C). Using a circle cookie cutter or the mouth of a glass that's about 2 inches wide, cut the cooled sem-

olina into gnocchi. Dip the cutter or glass into water between each press to prevent the dough from sticking. Place the cut gnocchi on a parchment-paper-lined baking sheet, making sure to leave at least 1/2 inch between them so that their edges can caramelize.

Sprinkle the remaining 1/2 cup Parmesan and the bread crumbs on top of the semolina gnocchi. If you don't want them thickly coated, don't use all of the cheese and crumbs. Bake until the semolina gnocchi are golden brown, slightly puffed, and crisp around the edges, 30 to 40 minutes. Serve hot.

## Slow Cooker Ragu

To serve with your polenta we may need a nice beef ragu, however no one wants to have the stove or oven on all day in August. This is made in a crockpot so you can get on with your day and have dinner ready later in the day. This also freezes really well, and can be rewarmed easily for meal prepping or if it makes too much for your household in one sitting.

### Ingredients

3-4 lbs beef roast the cheapest cut, or even stewing meat so its pre-cubed  
2 tbsp olive oil  
2-3 sprigs each fresh rosemary and fresh thyme stems discarded and finely chopped  
1 small red onion peeled and finely chopped  
4 garlic cloves peeled and finely chopped  
1 carrot peeled and finely chopped



1 celery stick finely chopped  
1 1/2 cups red wine such as Chianti  
3, 14 oz cans chopped tomatoes crushed tomatoes  
1 tsp salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preparation directions: Chop onion, carrot and celery, mince garlic and chop rosemary and thyme and put everything on the bottom of a crock pot. Cut roast into 2-3 inch cubes and brown them in olive oil in a frying pan over high heat in stages, don't overcrowd the meat so it browns nicely. Add it to the vegetables. Taking the frying pan off the heat, pour wine into the pan and use wooden spoon to loosen all the delicious bits from the bottom of

the pan, that's where much of the flavor is concentrated.

Pour the wine into the crock pot along with canned tomatoes. Sprinkle barley all over, which will add texture and more flavor to your ragu, not to mention fibre and nutrients. Add a teaspoon of salt and freshly ground pepper. Cook on low for 10-12 hours.

In the last hour take the lid off and shred the beef with two forks, add one more tablespoon of fresh rosemary and thyme and a splash of water or wine if the meat is too dry. Cook for one hour longer. At the end of cooking time stir in butter for more flavor and to add a gloss to your ragu.

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



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# ASTRONOMY

## The night sky of August

Professor Wayne Wooten

For August 2024, the new moon occurs on August 4th. On the 6th, the very slender waxing crescent passes 2 degrees north of brilliant but very low Venus in twilight. Yes, Venus is at least back in the evening sky now. The moon is first quarter on August 12th, which is also the morning peak of the Perseid Meteor Shower. As the moon sets about midnight, anytime between then and dawn should give you about a meteor a minute coming out of the northeast but visible all over the sky. The radiant in Perseus rises about 10 p.m. The darker the site, the more faint meteors will show up.

The Full Moon, the Green Corn Moon, is on August 19th. On the 21st, the moon passes just north of Saturn. The Moon is last quarter on August 26th, and passes five degrees north of the close pairing of reddish Mars and much brighter Jupiter in the dawn on August 28th.

Mercury and Venus both return to the evening, with Mercury six degrees south of much brighter Venus on the evening of August 7th. Mercury will be soon lost in the sun's glare, but Venus will dominate the western twilight through the rest of 2025. Mars and Jupiter have a close encounter in the dawn on August 14, with Mars passing less than a moon's diameter north of Jupiter. Check them both out when you are watching the Perseids!

Saturn rises just after sunset by August's end, and comes to opposi-



The Perseid meteor shower is active every year from mid-July to late August. The next Perseids shooting star display will peak around the night of August 12th and before dawn on August 13th. Though the moon will be 50% illuminated at the time of Perseids' peak, it will set around midnight, so there will be dark skies until dawn—perfect for meteor hunting!

tion, rising at sunset on September 8th. In a telescope, note how narrow the rings now appear; it is at equinox next March, with the rings invisible, oriented edge on for us on Earth. After that, they appear to reopen, 27 degrees wide by solstice in 2032. Since the rings have a huge surface area, Saturn will appear over twice as bright then as it will this year, with the rings almost gone!

Before we head out to the stars, an update on Comet 2023 A3. It is still easily in range of small scopes in Leo, and sports a nice tail as it closes in on the Sun, but it may be starting to fall apart well before reaching perihelion in September. If so, like many other disappointments (Comet ISON comes to mind), it will dash the dreams of those hoping for a great comet this October. But close observation of it will still add

to our understanding of the role these distant dirty snowballs play in making the planet Earth and the critical carbon based organics.

The Big Dipper rides high in the NW at sunset, but falls lower each evening. Good scouts know to take its leading pointers north to Polaris, the famed Pole Star. For us, it sits 30 degrees (our latitude) high in the north, while the rotating earth beneath makes all the other celestial bodies spin around it from east to west.

Taking the arc in the Dipper's handle, we "arc" SE to bright orange Arcturus, the brightest star of Bootes. Cooler than our yellow Sun, and much poorer in heavy elements, some believe its strange motion reveals it to be an invading star from another smaller galaxy, now colliding with the Milky Way in Sagittarius in the summer sky. Moving almost perpendicular to the plane of our Milky Way, Arcturus was the first star in the sky where its proper motion across the historic sky was noted, by Edmund Halley. It is also our guide to check out T Corona Borealis,

the "Blaze Star", just NE of it.

Predicted to appear just to the east (left) of the "C" in Corona Borealis overhead, for several days this recurrent nova is predicted to become almost as bright as Arcturus, but fade in less than a week. Be checking overhead; it is due to flare up by this September!

Spike south from Arcturus to Spica, the hot blue star in Virgo. From Spica curve to Corvus the Crow, a four-sided grouping. It is above Corvus, in the arms of Virgo, where our large scopes will show members of the Virgo Supercluster, a swarm of over a thousand galaxies about 50 million light years away from us.

Hercules is overhead, with the nice globular cluster M-13 marked on your sky map and visible in binocs. It is faintly visible with the naked eye under dark sky conditions, and among the best binoc objects on the map back page.

The brightest star of the northern hemisphere, Vega dominates the NE sky. Binoculars reveal the small star just to the NE of Vega, epsilon Lyrae, as a nice double. Larger telescopes at 150X reveal each of this pair is another close double, hence its nickname, the "double double"... a fine sight under steady sky conditions.

Below Vega are the two bright stars of the Summer Triangle; Deneb (to the north) and Altair. Deneb is at the top of the Northern Cross, known as Cygnus the Swan to the Romans. It is one of the most luminous stars in our Galaxy, about 50,000 times brighter than our Sun. It sits atop the Cross; at the other end is Albireo, a fine orange and blue double star well resolved at 20X by almost any smaller scope. The eastern wing tip of the Swan takes us to the exquisite "Cygnus Loop", remains of a supernova expanding outward which is now six moon diameters across in the sky

To the south is the southernmost member of the Triangle, Altair, the brightest star of Aquila the Eagle. If you scan the Milky Way with binocs or a small spotting scope between Altair and Deneb, you will find many nice open star clusters and also a lot of dark nebulae, the dust clouds from which new stars will be born in the future.

To the southeast, Antares is bright in the heart of Scorpius. It appears reddish (its Greek name means rival of Ares or Mars to the Latins) because it is half as hot as our yellow Sun; it is bright because it is a bloated red supergiant, big enough to swallow up our solar system all the way out to Saturn's orbit! Just above the tail of the Scorpion are two fine naked eye star clusters, M-7 (discovered by Ptolemy and included in his catalog about 200 AD) and M-6, making one of the best binocular views in the sky. Your binoculars are ideally suited to reveal many fine open star clusters and nebulae in this region of our Galaxy. Get a dark sky site, and use the objects listed on the back of the August 2024 SkyMap printout to guide you to the best deep sky wonders for binoculars and small telescopes.

East of the Scorpion's tail is the teapot shape of Sagittarius, which marks the heart of our Milky Way galaxy. Looking like a cloud of steam coming out of the teapot's spout is the fine Lagoon Nebula, M-8, easily visible with the naked eye. Above it is the Trifid Nebula, M-20, another fine and very colorful stellar nursery. Just east of these young star birthplaces is the fine globular cluster M-22, faintly visible to the naked eye and spectacularly resolved in scopes of 8" or larger aperture. Look just east of the top star in the teapot of Sagittarius with binoculars.

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## Farmers' Almanac

*"Whilst August yet wears her golden crown,  
Ripening fields lush-bright with promise;  
Summer waxes long, then wanes, quietly passing  
Her fading green glory on to riotous Autumn."*  
—Michelle L. Thieme (1937-)

**Mid-Atlantic Weather Watch:** Dry, warm and humid (1, 2, 3, 4, 5); rain and thunderstorms followed by cooler temperatures (6, 7, 8, 9, 10); pleasant mornings at first, then dry and turning very hot and humid with scattered late day thunderstorms (11, 12, 13, 14, 15); dry and hot (16, 17, 18, 19, 20); very hot at first, then PM thunderstorms and cooler (21, 22, 23, 24, 25); hot and humid with scattered PM thunderstorms (26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31).

**Severe Weather Watch:** The Town and Country Almanack sees severe thunderstorms in the Mid-Atlantic region (14, 15).

**Full Moon:** August's full moon will occur on Monday, August 19th. Since August 11th marks the end of the 'Dog Days of Sum-

mer', it has been called it Dog Moon. Other Native American tribes referred to it as Fruit Moon or Ripe Moon because of the many fruits and vegetables that ripen during the month.

**Special Notes:** The 229th edition of the Almanack will be available for sale at newsstands and at popular retailers throughout the Mid-Atlantic Region in late August, beating the competition once again! When it is officially available, order your copy of The Almanack at [www.almanack.com/](http://www.almanack.com/) order and have it delivered right to your front door!

**Holidays:** The end of summer is near and Labor Day is a just few weeks. Many are starting school, some for the very first time, and may need special attention. Begin planning now and make a list of the things that need to be done and when they need to be completed. Schedule immunizations and/or physicals, purchase new clothes, and assess school supplies that will be needed with ample lead time to ensure a successful 'first day' for your young students.

**The Summer:** If you choose to water your lawn, do so only when wilted or discolored. Think about potting herbs you plan to move indoors for the winter. Do not move them in just yet, but get them accustomed to their containers early. Rosemary, thyme, and tarragon are the best candidates. Stop feeding trees and shrubs after mid-August. You do not want to promote new growth that will not have time to fully mature before winter sets in.

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

J. Gruber's Thought  
For Today's Living:  
*"Great things are not accomplished by idle dreams, but by years of patient study."*

**Dr. Richard Gough, MD**  
**Frederick Primary**  
**Care Associates**

### How to treat high blood pressure

High Blood Pressure (BP) or Hypertension (HTN) is one of the most common diagnoses in medicine. Keeping one's BP under control can help reduce the risk of heart attack, kidney failure, and stroke. Treatment can easily be done using several different medication options, but also it is important to discuss non-drug alternatives.

Several non-drug options should be considered before starting a medication for hypertension. Weight loss can be important to help reduce an individual's blood pressure. Reducing total salt intake (not adding any extra salt, and limiting higher sodium or salty foods) can be important. Following the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension diet has also shown true benefits - check it out online.

Smoking has been associated with multiple risk factors, and cessation has been helpful in reducing blood pressure. Caffeine is another substance that can be reduced or eliminated that will help lower BP.

Keeping in shape by engaging in a regular exercise program and continuing this over time can help lower an individual's blood pressure (as well as many other health benefits). Avoiding stress, or at least finding a way to minimize its effect on an individual can also help to keep BP down. And finally, stopping (or at least reducing) the amount of alcohol consumed will also have beneficial effects on blood pressure.

Sometimes despite the many things a person does the blood pressure will remain above 140 (systolic or "top" pressure) / 90 (diastolic or "bottom" pressure). A BP of greater than 140/90 (of either number) on at least 3 separate occasions is sufficient to make a diagnosis of hypertension.

Many different drugs classes are available for treating BP issues, and each will have unique potential side effects. Diuretics (such as Hydrochlorothiazide, or HCTZ) can predispose to gout or to low potassium. ACE inhibitors (like lisinopril) may cause cough or throat irritation, while ARBs (like losartan) may increase potassium levels. Calcium channel blockers (like amlodipine) can cause swelling of the ankles. And beta blockers (like metoprolol) can lower heart rate and cause fatigue.

Your health provider will recommend a medication to help lower your high blood pressure to 130/80 or below. Medications that treat hypertension generally only act for up to 24 hours, and do not "cure" the condition, and so MUST be taken every day to maintain their effect. Some people may

need 2 or even 3 medications to help control their blood pressure, especially if it is higher or more resistant to treatment.

Regular monitoring of your blood pressure with either a home blood pressure cuff (a true arm cuff preferred) or a remote patient monitoring device can be important to be sure your blood pressure remains under control. Periodic follow up with your healthcare provider is necessary, and be sure to bring up any particular side effects or questions you may have about your treatment program.

### Leaves of 3 let them be - how to deal with poison ivy

It's summer! A time known for vacations, social gatherings and outdoor pursuits. The earth's flora are blooming including everyone's favorite poisonous plants: poison ivy, poison oak and poison sumac. All are indigenous to Maryland and can be found anywhere from backyards to wooded areas or along wetlands.

Learning to identify poison ivy, poison oak and poison sumac are key elements of prevention. Poison ivy is most often described as a plant with shiny leaves in a grouping of 3 tear shaped leaves. It can grow as a shrub or a creeping vine. Hence the old adage 'leaves of 3, let them be'

Poison oak also grows as shrub or vine and leaves look more like maple leaves mostly in a combination of 3. Poison sumac grows as a bush or shrub with pointed leaves in groups of 7-10 with red stems. All three of these species have an oil on their leaves called urushiol oil.

When humans come in contact with it, the urushiol is transferred to skin causing an itchy, red, bumpy sometimes blistering rash. There is a wide variance of reactions and some individuals will even experience hypersensitivity or allergic reactions.

Common over the counter treatments often center on topical applications like creams or lotions. Calamine lotion and oatmeal baths are soothing to the skin. Hydrocortisone cream applied twice daily to everywhere but the face can help with itching. However, since urushiol does cause a form of allergic reaction, oral treatments tend to be more effective. An over the counter antihistamine like Benedryl or the less sedating antihistamines like Zyrtec, Allegra, Xyzal or Claritin are good options that can be found in almost any pharmacy.

As with any allergy, removing contact or exposure is key to stopping symptoms and, of course, avoidance and prevention is the first measure of defense. Make sure to wear clothing that provides appropriate coverage and gloves if you know you may be exposed. Urushiol oils tend to stick around on skin, clothing, shoes or even your pet's fur. They

can also be transferred under fingernails and can move around with scratching. It is unusual to spread through weeping of blisters unless the urushiol oil is present. Products like Technu or something formulated to break down the oil can be helpful to clean you and your clothes, bedding and linens. If you have a known exposure, make sure to launder clothes that were exposed separately.

It is best to seek care if you have a known moderate to severe allergy or the rash is spreading despite initial treatments. An oral steroid or a higher potency topical steroid may be necessary to reduce and clear symptoms.



Poison ivy

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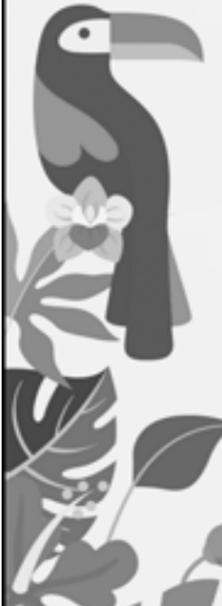


# ART & Wine Stroll



## Aloha! AUGUST 23 5-8 p.m.

Spend an evening strolling Main Street and meet a variety of talented local artists and artisans, while sampling wine from local vineyards & distilleries along with handcrafted beer from Uncle Dirty's Brewery. 4 different genres of live music entertainment throughout your stroll along with 6 food trucks.



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- Uncle Dirty's Brew Works

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