

The County Times

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Chopticon Outlasts Calvert

Story Pg. B-1

"We take it game by game."

- Chopticon Head Coach Judy Evans

Parents To Be Honored By Maryland State Department of Education

The first annual Comcast Parent Involvement Matters Awards has been set up to honor Maryland parents who have made significant contributions to their children's schools. Lynn Cullins of St. Mary's County will be honored at a ceremony in Annapolis on April 17th, during which six semi-finalists and one state winner will be announced.

Cullins has spearheaded a number of projects at Dynard Elementary, including providing safety information for "latch-key" students, designing a Family Safety and Wellness communication program for over 400 families, and donating funds from her family business to purchase summer workbooks and improve student reading skills.

The state winner will receive a cash prize of \$1,000, and the five remaining finalists will receive \$250 each. All county representatives will be recognized at the ceremony by State Superintendent Nancy S. Grasmick.

St. Mary's College Capital Design Committee To Meet Next Week

The newly formed Capital Design Advisory committee for St. Mary's College of Maryland will hold an organizational meeting April 16 at 6 p.m.

The meeting will take place at the State House in St. Mary's City.

During the meeting officials from both the college and St. Mary's City will gather community ideas about the structure and membership of the group.

Members will come from the college, St. Mary's City and community groups.

The group's job will be to gather community reaction and input to plans for construction in and near the college and St. Mary's City. The CDA would then make recommendations to the college's board of trustees about accepting, modifying or rejecting projects that would affect the college campus or surrounding St. Mary's City.

The CDA was formed last year after some in the community protested the college's moving ahead with the construction of a new boat launch and research center on Route 5, which some said disputed the scenic view of the river and detracted from the overall appearance of the college and St. Mary's City.

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72° 73° 75°



MCKAY'S
Fine Foods & Pharmacy

Weekly Specials Inside!

Bus Crash Injures Three

Story Pg. A-5



Local Economy Coping With Slowdown

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Gas prices are starting to rise again, the federal government just announced that the economy lost 80,000 jobs in March and Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke fears a recession, a contraction of the economy's growth over two consecutive quarters, may be possible.

But, in St. Mary's County at least, the local economy may be able to weather the feared economic storm a little bit better than most of the nation, according to economic development officials.

"Locally we're in pretty good stead," said Robert Schaller, director of the county's Department of Econo-

ic and Community Development. "It's mostly psychological... how people perceive the economy."

Schaller said that most recent figures researched by his department show that St. Mary's County has a 3.1 percent unemployment rate, down slightly from last year. Maryland's overall employment rate is 3.4 percent also down from last year's rate of 3.9 percent.

"We're better than the nation, and we're going the other way," Schaller told The County Times, adding that the presence of the U.S. Navy at Patuxent River Naval Air Station helped buffer the local economy from many of the impacts felt elsewhere.

See *Economy* page A-6

Fears Of Drought, Poor Harvest Growing

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Farmers in St. Mary's County and Southern Maryland in general are either buying new crop insurance policies or adjusting the ones they have, according to insurance agents who do business here, in fear that crops will suffer again this year as they did in last year's drought.

"We've seen about a 10 to 15 percent increase in farmers coming in to buy crop insurance," said Sharon Ambrose, a customer service representative with Riverland Insurance in Tappahannock, Va., which sells crop insurance locally. "It's

St. Mary's County and it's everywhere else."

Ambrose said the increase is atypical because farmers who buy the crop insurance do not have to renew it year after year.

The 2007 drought that hit hard last summer caused Gov. Martin O'Malley to ask the federal government to declare 22 of the state's 23 jurisdictions agriculture disaster zones.

The federal government honored the request and initiated crop disaster damage awards to farmers who owned

See *Drought* page A-8

Perfect Score For Detention Center

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Despite being overcrowded and understaffed, with corrections officers working plenty of overtime the St. Mary's County Adult Detention Center has received 100 percent compliance marks from the state Commission on Correctional Standards.

And that distinction has been awarded for the last two consecutive years.

See *Detention Center* page A-10

Illegal Alien Sentenced To Federal Prison

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

A federal judge sentenced an illegal alien to three years in federal prison for orchestrating a theft scheme in St. Mary's County and throughout Maryland in which he and accomplices stole government issued checks from mailboxes to cash them using fake identification documents.

Elmin Uliser-Reyes, 22, will be deported from the United States upon completion of his prison term, according to information from U.S. Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein's office.

The sentence stemmed from Uliser-Reyes' guilty plea in which he admitted to the theft scheme taking place from at least February to March of 2006.

According to information from the U.S. District Attorney's office, Uliser-Reyes and his associates followed

postal carriers on their mail routes and once they had finished their work, stole U.S. Treasury checks from residents' mailboxes.

Those checks included tax refunds and other government benefits, federal authorities stated.

After cashing a check at a liquor store in Baltimore using a fake employment authorization document and at least seven others, one at a similar store in Frederick, Reyes was arrested in June of 2006 by sheriff's deputies in St. Mary's after attempting to cash a stolen treasury check with a fake identity card at a local liquor store.

He was convicted of state offenses for the local crime, according to federal documents, and was deported in November of 2006.

Federal investigators arrested him for the other crimes and illegally re-entering the country back in December of last year.

See *Immigrant* page A-6

Activists, Scouts Help Clean Up Their Corner Of The Patuxent River

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

bottles, portable charcoal grills, coolers, tires and even discarded wooden doors, the likes of which are normally seen on gates in back



Dave Thompson, carrying discarded door, looks back to watch his son Robert Thompson of Cub Scout Pack 1203 attempt to roll an old tire away for disposal as part to the Patuxent River Cleanup day April 5.

It is no easy chore picking up other people's trash, even if it's for a good cause and especially if it is on a rainy Saturday morning.

But activists with the Friends of Myrtle Point and about 20 children and parents attached to Cub Scout Pack 1203 in Hollywood suited up anyway to make Myrtle Point Park, and its portion of the Patuxent River, a better place.

It was all part of the annual Patuxent River Cleanup, a grassroots project that allows ordinary citizens to clean up one of the state's, and the county's, most vital waterways.

Volunteers picked up all kinds of refuse April 5, including beer cans, beer and liquor

yards.

This was all in just a couple of hours work combing the shoreline at the park. Volunteers often had to slog back in thickets and tall grass to pull out the trash, thought to be the remains of many a party on the park's nature trails.

"That shows you how much people use the park," said Bob Boxwell, a member of the Friends of Myrtle Point and the organizer of the local cleanup.

While it was good to see the park so well attended, that kind of attention could have a less desirable side, too, Boxwell said, if people did not pick up after themselves.

"They just don't have the ethical conscious-



Photo by Guy Leonard

Connie Pennington and her grandson Christopher Harrington help pick up garbage left along the Patuxent River at Myrtle Point Park.

ness I guess," Boxwell said. "It's a shame."

According to the Patuxent River Keeper, the non-profit organization that watchdogs the health of the river, its name means "good waters" in the Native American Algonquin tongue.

For the past several decades, however, the condition of the river has not exactly lived up to its name, according to those concerned about its health.

Trash is often found strewn throughout the river's flow by volunteers cleaning it up and scientific studies suggest that sedimentation and pollution are rapidly degrading the water quality, choking off oxygen levels in the water and killing off important marine life and vegetation.

Scientists and activists also consider the health of the Patuxent to be a major factor in the Chesapeake Bay's health.

The volunteers at Myrtle Point joined other teams working to turn the tide of the river's

condition throughout the state.

"I like making the environment better," said Robert Thompson, 9, of pack 1203.

Thompson found all kinds of trash, including "really old Budweiser beer cans." The cans were so old that they had the pull tabs and not pop tops.

His father Dave Thompson, an aviator with the United States Marine Corp stationed at Patuxent River Naval Air Station, was surprised to find trash that had lingered there so long.

He labored bringing an old wooden door up the steep trails from the beach while his son tried to roll an old tire along behind.

Despite the wet toil he and his son endured, there were at least cookies and candy waiting for them at the top of the hill to ease the pain.

"It's a well organized activity that's not just for the community, but for the boys, to show them what they can do to give back," Dave Thompson said.

Neighbors Issue Alerts About Rabid Animals

Andrea Shiell
Staff Writer

Jennifer Hurry was enjoying a mild spring afternoon, planting daffodils in the flowerbed at her home in the Laurel Ridge Subdivision of Mechanicsville. She was chatting with her son Nathan when she noticed a skunk "traveling at a pretty rapid rate across the neighbor's yard towards our yard." She said that once the skunk spotted her trying to warn the next-door neighbors, whose children would have typically been playing in the yard (they were not home), the skunk started chasing her.

"The skunk was acting like it wanted to be friends," said Jennifer, who also explained her misgivings about the situation. "I may live in a subdivision," she said, "but I'm a country girl. One thing I thought

was that animal could be rabid." Since skunks are typically nocturnal animals, she felt safe assuming that something was amiss.

What followed was a harrowing, hour-long ordeal of chasing, fleeing, phone calls, panic and confusion as Jennifer and Nathan tried to deal with the animal while warning others to keep their children and pets away.

Once the skunk started charging her three beagles, who were barking wildly, Jennifer described her panic as she fled to their side. "My male beagle isn't the brightest crayon in the box," she said, explaining that the beagles had managed to all get themselves tangled as the skunk approached.

"Surprisingly, the skunk did not spray," Jennifer said, but the animal's behavior was alarming enough, she said. When

All of this peculiar ac-

tivity from a traditionally reclusive, nocturnal animal in the middle of the afternoon spelled dire warnings to Jennifer, who instructed her sister to call 911.

"I cannot remember the exact conversation...but they told us not to worry about the skunk and I demanded, not so nicely, for them to get animal control out there NOW to get this animal." Jennifer and Nathan spent the next hour waiting for animal control and dodging the skunk, running from door to door to warn their neighbors to keep their kids and pets in the house.

"That little skunk ran us to death," she exclaimed, adding that the chase finally ended when her neighbor's beagle managed to capture the animal and kill it before animal control arrived.

Test results confirmed on Tuesday what the family had suspected all along, that the animal was rabid.

Leslie Payne of the St. Mary's County Health Department said that since July 2007, there have been

nine confirmed cases of rabies in St. Mary's County, including two foxes, four raccoons, and three skunks.

Rabies is actually a virus that is transmitted through infected saliva between mammals. One cannot contract the disease from birds, amphibians, or reptiles. The most common carriers are raccoons, skunks, foxes, bats, coyotes, and woodchucks, but dogs and cats are also common victims, and all mammalian pets should be inoculated regularly.

There are several warning signs that an animal may be rabid. Domestic animals may become unusually aggressive, or wild animals may shed their fear of humans and become unusually friendly. Other signs of infection are if the animal stumbles, foams at the mouth, or acts generally strange, as would be the case of a nocturnal animal coming out in the daytime.

One myth about the disease is that bites are the only way the disease can spread. Any contact between in-

fected saliva and an opening in the body, whether by a mucus membrane or an open wound, can spread the disease. Human beings who have had any contact with a potentially rabid animal, to include having been scratched or having touched the animal's fur, are encouraged to get shots to prevent infection. Payne said that owners who are caring for their pets after they have been in contact with a potentially rabid animal should avoid contact with the pets while they are quarantined.

Payne said that inoculation is the most important step that pet owners can take to guard against rabies. "The most important thing to know is our pets are the first line of defense between humans and rabies," said Payne.

Even after her ordeal, Jennifer seemed compassionate when talking about the "stupid skunk" that had caused her so much trouble, laughing as she described the incident. "It was an adventure to say the least," she said.

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Editorial & Opinion

Ehrlich's Return To St. Mary's County Should Receive Warm Welcome.

This Thursday evening former Maryland Governor Robert L. Ehrlich will be returning to St. Mary's, a place he visited often while Governor. Ehrlich will be the keynote speaker at the annual Lincoln/Reagan Dinner held at the Crystal Room in Callaway.

Ehrlich's record as Governor is one all Maryland residents should be proud of, most particularly, Southern Maryland residents. Arguably, Ehrlich did as much for Southern Maryland in his short 4 years as most Governors have done in 8 long years.

For close to 30 years, Maryland Governor's, along with local Senators and Delegates talked about the need for a bypass around Hughesville.

Unlike Governor's before him, Ehrlich made it happen. Despite limited transportation dollars, and larger counties screaming for projects, Ehrlich placed Southern Maryland high on his priority list.

Only months after committing more than \$55 million needed for the Hughesville bypass, Ehrlich committed to funding St. Mary's most important road project, Chancellors Run Road expansion. This committed another \$50 plus million out of a very limited transportation fund.

Shortly thereafter, Ehrlich committed even more transportation dollars to St. Mary's by agreeing to fund the Streetscape project in Leonardtown. While the Legislature attempted to remove this proj-

ect from funding, the Ehrlich administration found a way to keep the project moving.

Shortly before losing his re-election bid, Ehrlich announced his commitment to another major transportation need, expansion of the Thomas Johnson Bridge. Ehrlich committed funds to begin the planning process and stated his understanding of the importance of moving the project forward.

While the Hughesville Bypass is complete, the Chancellors Run Road expansion and the Leonardtown Streetscape project will be getting underway soon because of Ehrlich.

With another Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) set to take place in

2006, Ehrlich and his team were aggressively doing what was necessary to assure the long-term future of Patuxent River Naval Air Station was protected.

Encroachment around the Naval base was the community's number one concern facing the BRAC process. With plans to redevelop the old Lexington Manor property (commonly called the "Flat Tops") having been presented to the county for development approval, the county decided to purchase the approximately 80 acres to protect the base from more than 300 new homes just outside the base gate and in the flight zone.

Ehrlich was quick to assist the county by providing nearly \$8 million in Commu-

nity Development Grants that allowed the county to purchase the property and relocate the existing residents of the Flat Tops to better living conditions and protecting the base from development.

This committed all of Maryland's Community Development Grant funds for nearly two years, leaving Maryland's 23 other local jurisdictions with no funds.

A second concern of the community facing the impending BRAC was lack of school capacity in St. Mary's. The Ehrlich administration approved funding for the new Carver Elementary School, expansion of Margaret Brent Middle School, expansion of the James A. Forest Career and Technology Center, expansion of Leonardtown Elementary School, as well as numerous kindergarten classroom additions throughout St.

Mary's.

Ehrlich also approved the planning of the new Evergreen Elementary School, which is now under construction.

There were many other much need projects which Governor Ehrlich bought to St. Mary's, such as the new Senior Center in Charlotte Hall, and quick state assistance during and after Hurricane Isabelle.

Not only were Ehrlich and his Lieutenant Governor Michael Steele frequent visitors to the area, Ehrlich appointed three Southern Maryland's to important positions within his cabinet and his administration. Current Governor O'Malley has no Southern Marylander's in his cabinet.

Thursday evening, Ehrlich will once again show his affection for our County as he makes one of his few public appearances since being Governor, we should all return the affection.

Arm Yourself Against Ants

Spring has finally sprung, and people across the country are gearing up for a season of outdoor fun. Whether you're picnicking, barbecuing or simply soaking up some rays, nothing crashes a party like an army of ants. However, with the proper tools, getting rid of ants is safe, easy and effective, indoors and out.

"There are two basic ways to deal with ants," says Stewart Clark, technical director of TERRO, the country's leading pest control manufacturer. "Aerosol sprays offer immediate, short-term results. If you're sitting down to eat, and ants come crawling up the table, spraying them with an aerosol product will provide temporary relief by killing the ants you see. However, there are thousands of additional ants in the colony that will soon find their way to your food. For a longer-term solution, turn to an ant bait product. This will actually get rid of the entire colony."

Ant bait is the best way to eradicate entire colonies of ants. TERRO's

liquid and granular ant baits are made with borax. This natural ingredient has a very low level of toxicity for humans but is deadly to ants. As the ant foragers from the colony look for food, they are attracted to the sweet food in the bait. Unwittingly, the ants consume the food and carry it back to the colony to share. The result is the elimination of the colony - and your ant problems.

Clark offers the following tips to help control these pesky invaders:

Track Down the Problem

First, find one of your pesky invaders. Instead of killing the ant, follow it. Since worker ants are sent out from the main colony in search of moisture and food to bring back, following an ant is a sure way to find out how they are entering the area. Look for ants that are carrying small bits of food - for this, a bright flashlight and patience are needed.

Set Liquid Bait Inside

The first and often only treatment step needed to control ants inside is to bait the ants with liquid ant bait (available at hardware, home improvement and lawn and garden retailers.) The sweet liquid attracts ants quickly. The ants carry the bait to the colony, and this liquid is then distributed to other ants, including the queen. Baiting is the best way to control ants - the ants do the work, and there is no need for exposure to harsh chemical insecticides.

Place a liquid ant bait station close to where ants are located indoors. Using the bait station eliminates the problem of the bait drying out and gives the ants a continuous supply of liquid, day and night. Liquid ant baits are specifically designed to kill the worker ant in two or three days. This slow kill is needed to allow time for the foraging ants to make several trips to the bait, and deliver enough bait to

the rest of the colony. On days four and five, there should be a significant decrease in the number of ants visiting the bait.

Take the Search Outside

When searching for ants outside the home, look for "ant highways" or foraging trails. These trails are simply a line of marching ants that leads from their home to yours. Often, these trails are most active during the morning or evening. Walk around the perimeter of the house and carefully check for ant trails. Pull back the garden mulch, turn over rocks, or look under pieces of wood in order to locate activity. Inspect around all potential entry points including windows, doors, exhaust vents, faucets and sliding glass doors. Also check for ants trailing up the sides of the building or along gutters. Remember: leaves and tree limbs in contact with a house are always special hot spots for larger carpenter ants.

Bait the Outdoor Ants

Since most indoor and outdoor infestations are linked to a colony located underground outside the house, baiting ants outside may help provide a long-lasting ant solution. Products such as TERRO Outdoor Liquid Ant Baits offer an easy solution. Using the same ingredients as indoor Liquid Ant Baits, Outdoor Liquid Ant Baits are specially packaged to be durable and weather-resistant enough for outdoor use.

To bait larger areas, TERRO has created a new granular Multi-Purpose Insect Bait. Packaged in an easy-to-use shaker canister, the Insect Bait uses the same Borax that makes the company's liquid baits highly effective. Simply shake the granules onto the area to be treated, and you're done. Children and pets may enter the treatment area immediately after application, and the granules are weather-resistant. In fact, in addition to regular ants, the Insect Bait is also highly effective against carpenter ants.

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Ramblings of a Country Girl



The Amazing Woman

Terri Bartz Bowles

Women. Amazing creatures. Not that I'm biased or anything. But truly, women are just amazing. We are both strong and weak. Soft and tough. Caring and firm. Serious and humorous. Now

some of you are thinking the same could be said of men. Maybe so. Maybe not. But I'm not considering men, just women. Women are powerful and caring and thoughtful and practical. We can do incredible things when we put our minds to it and band together.

And that's the real magic of women – we bind ourselves together. We are a sisterhood that men could never hope to realize or understand.

It was a very good week for me in the sense of women gathering together. I attended a function one evening that

included a group of about 20 women who get together to socialize, share, chat and laugh. This group of women encompassed an incredible scale of age, profession, interests and sensibilities. But the common thread that pulls us together is that as women, we share a thought process and a need for bonding to other women. And so we reach out to other women and learn and laugh and help and cleave. We shared food we had prepared, wine we had purchased and thoughts that we held in our minds and hearts. We questioned, queried and probed. We sought, answered and pondered. As women, we realized we were all different and yet all the same. We wanted to listen, to learn, to help, to grow.

I spent an entire day with several friends and a roomful of women who shared a common bond of scrapbooking. Now, the eye rolling starts here for some. But it's not a silly pastime that women use as an excuse to gather together and spend money. Scrapbooking is the modern quilt-

ing bee. Women need, at some deep level, to gather together and participate in some sort of creative process. So, it fulfills that primal need. The other thing about scrapbooking is the purpose. The purpose is to preserve memories, of family and friends and personal history. This is important to women. The sense of marking what is important in our lives at a given time and ensuring those thoughts and memories are available to others is important to us. Again, we talk, we share, we ask, we answer. Perfect strangers loaning supplies or equipment to others just because we're all women participating in a common task that is enjoyable to each of us. It was just great.

Women are action figures, too. We all know that breast cancer is a huge problem. Why is everyone aware of this? Because women started realizing that action needed to be taken about this horrible thing that was killing us. So, we started doing something about it. We started educating each other, pushing for research and answers, raising funds

and awareness. Breast cancer is still killing women every day. But we've taken the bull by the horns and we're saving lives every day. Because if it affects us, the sisterhood, then it's something we're going to take action on. Heart disease in women is another killer and it does not yet have the impetus behind it that the breast cancer campaign does. But we are learning and becoming aware and working on this problem, also. Why? Because women share a common bond that pushes and urges and cautions us, somewhere deep inside, to protect each other and take care of each other.

It is a blessing to be a woman, an honor and a privilege. I love being a woman. It's not always easy being a woman. It's not always fun being a woman. But it rocks being a woman and we wouldn't have it any other way.

You can email the Country Girl at countrygirlramblings@gmail.com

Bus Crash Injures Three

Andrea Shiell
Staff Writer

On Friday afternoon, a St. Mary's County Public Schools bus plowed into a tractor-trailer hauling building supplies as the truck was turning into Dean Lumber supplies from northbound Rt. 235 near Mervell Dean Rd. in Hollywood seriously injuring three people.

The tractor's driver, 51 year-old Charles Calvin Holland, Jr., and his aide, 45 year-old Mary Alice Gill, were both transported to St. Mary's Hospital with incapacitating injuries. The bus driver, 35 year-old Kenneth Joseph Garner, was flown to Prince George's General Hospital in serious but stable condition. Garner suffered significant facial injuries in the crash.

A state trooper conducting a routine traffic stop at the time recorded the entire incident on his car camera, according to 1st Sergeant Jack McCauley of the Maryland State Police. He explained that the tractor-trailer had been on the shoulder, slowing down and attempting to turn right while using its turn signal, when it was struck by the bus. He said charges against the bus driver were pending.

SMCPS Chief Operating Officer Brad Clements said this is one of several bus accidents to happen in recent months. There have been less serious accidents this past year, including a minor fender bender involving a bus from Margaret Brent Middle School on March 31. Another fender bender on Flat Iron Road on Feb. 28, and another accident where a bus struck a car that had cut in front of it on southbound

Route 5 on Feb. 7.

Most notable was an accident that occurred in early December, where a student was struck by a school bus while exiting her own bus on St. Andrews Church Road.

"They didn't see it as an accident in the sense of property damage," said Clements. "But the student was in the hospital for several days with a broken leg and some serious internal injuries...so we're very concerned with that."

As far as the frequency of bus accidents this year, Clements had reassuring comments. "I'd say it's been no worse than in other years...this year it's been about normal." He explained that safety reviews for drivers were handled on an individual basis. St. Mary's County Public Schools would review each incident after police investigations were done.

"We have an accident review committee," Clements said, noting that recommendations for more training or administrative discipline for individual drivers would be handled by the committee.

Clements indicated that Garner, the driver involved in Friday's crash, was employed directly by St. Mary's County Public Schools, but that his employment status would not affect any actions taken.

"Many of our drivers work for other contractors," said Clements, "but they are all treated the same way in these situations."

"At this point we'll wait for the full investigation," said Clements, adding that Garner would be placed on administrative leave until pending charges were settled.



A St. Mary's County Public School bus ran into the back end of a tractor-trailer on Friday, injuring three.

Book Reviews

"Water Cooler Diaries" by Joni B. Cole and B.K. Rakhra

c.2008, DaCapo LifeLong \$15.95 / \$17.00 Canada 320 pages, includes index

Review By
Terri Schlichenmeyer

Maybe you like your job, maybe not. Perhaps you throw back the blankets each morning, imagining the wonderful things that will happen at work. Or maybe you slither, grumbling, out of bed and into the shower, wishing you could win the lottery and tell the boss "adios".

Most weeks, it's a combination of the two. But still, you wonder what it would be like to work as a... (fill in the blank).

In the new book "Water Cooler Diaries" by Joni B. Cole and B.K. Rakhra, you'll get a peek into the life of dozens of women and you'll learn about the kind of day they can have at work.

In her introduction, Joni Cole says that she was feeling sorry for herself one morning when she was caring for a sick toddler, experiencing a slump in her freelancing business, and just generally having a bad day. Surely other women in other careers have it better, right? So she asked women from all walks of life and paths of career to diary a 24-hour period of their lives.

This book reflects their experiences on March 27, 2007.

From an executive assistant who relaxes with a new hobby and a plan: if she can sell her product, she'll earn money to furnish her soldier-son the best body armor money can buy. "I've managed to raise a decent human being," she says. "It would be unbearably awful for the world if Tristan were to die because there was a better body armor out there that he wasn't wearing."

From a school custodian: "Kids are so disrespectful these days... I have heard the principal yell at them through closed doors. Still, they don't care."

From the owner of an Avon Beauty Center: "My feet might hurt, but my heart is happy!"

A social worker who cares for her Alzheimer's-stricken mother says, "Most of the time she knows I'm family, but couldn't tell you my name or our relationship. Tonight she doesn't even know that."

A paint tester notes about her temporary gig: "I need a third job because my first two are poorly paid."

Still think your job could be better? Check out the 21-hour day of an orthopedic trauma surgeon or the unimaginably long day of a stay-at-home-mom with a four-year-old and infant twins.

Wow.

"Water Cooler Diaries" is one of those books that you start reading and can't stop. Each of the diaries is short; most are just a few pages. They're not candy-coated, but they're not filled with "I Hate My Job" cries, either. Some are funny. Others will break your heart in two. You can jump around and read them in any order you want, and this paperback book is perfect for tucking in your purse or briefcase so you have something to read on the commute or on your lunchbreak at work.

Walk in another woman's (steel-toed) shoes for a day by picking up this un-put-downable book. "Water Cooler Diaries" proves that life is definitely not greener on the other side of the cubicle wall.

Tide Report

St. Mary's City

DATE	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
Fri. April 11	12:31 a.m.	6:33 a.m.	1:33 p.m.	7:26 p.m.
Sat. April 12	1:35 a.m.	7:39 a.m.	2:32 p.m.	8:31 p.m.
Sun. April 13	2:41 a.m.	8:50 a.m.	3:30 p.m.	9:36 p.m.
Mon. April 14	3:46 a.m.	9:59 a.m.	4:27 p.m.	10:37 p.m.
Tue. April 15	4:49 a.m.	11:02 a.m.	5:21 p.m.	11:32 p.m.
Wed. April 16	5:48 a.m.	11:58 p.m.	6:10 p.m.	12:23 a.m.
Thu. April 17	6:42 a.m.	12:49 p.m.	6:56 p.m.	1:09 a.m.

LOCATION	HIGH	LOW
Breton Bay	"+31 min."	"+29 min."
Bushwood Wharf	"+45 min."	"+45 min."
Colton's Point	"+50 min."	"+24 min."
Point Lookout	"-12 min."	"-58 min."
Piney Point	"+9 min."	"-8 min."
Wicomico Beach	"+58 min."	"+63 min."
Solomons Island	"+29 min."	"+2 min."

Southern Maryland Trails – Turnbuckle Hop Part 2

Emily Finch
Contributing Writer

Southern Maryland is full of wondrous places to visit and things to see, but some of them are not extremely well known. Expand your knowledge of the area while trekking on the Turnbuckle Hop trail from the Southern Maryland Trails Guidebook.

Last week we explored the first seven stops on the Turnbuckle Hop, which included three art galleries, a garden two farms and a special attraction. This week we will travel the next eight stops from Gambrills, Md. to Brandywine.

Our first stop is Doepkens Farm on Davidsonville Road in Gambrills. Here you can find just about everything from flowers to pumpkins. After seeing the giant mum mural on the hillside, head on in to get some flowers of your own, cut, fresh or dried. You can also order arrangements for all of your special events. Also available at Doepkens are jams, jellies, field corn, soybeans, hay, straw, ornamental squash and gourds, mums, pumpkins and wheat. They open for the summer season soon. Call 410-721-2739 for more information.

Down the road a bit you will come upon Homestead Gardens in Davidsonville. Here, the whole family can get involved in the experience. Check out the landscaping for ideas in your own garden, sip a gourmet coffee from the *Saucy Salamander* snack bar and head on over to say hello to the llamas. On April 19 and 20 this year, Homestead Gardens will kick off their living green campaign with Earth Day celebrations. For hours and more information call 410-798-5000.

You'll have another chance to visit the llamas at Old Maryland Farm in Upper Marlboro. This educational site features agricultural exhibits, beautiful gardens, canning and gardening

demonstrations, and various livestock including traditional farm animals, llamas and peacocks. Call 301-218-6770 for more information or to schedule a tour.

Also in Upper Marlboro, Mount Calvert Historical and Archeological Park is a true wonder. The park is on the site, which was once Charles Town, the county seat of Prince George's until 1721. There, you can participate in ongoing archeological digs on site and explore the cultures of three types of people who shaped the beginnings of America: colonists, Native Americans, and black Americans. Mount Calvert is open year-round seven days a week. Call 301-627-1286 for more information.

Patuxent River Park's Jug Bay Natural Area in Upper Marlboro is the headquarters for all the river's park properties. The marshes of Jug Bay are natural field laboratories. The land offers more than eight miles of scenic woodland trails for hikers, bikers and horseback riders. There are areas for picnics and camping and two boat ramps. Fishing and hunting is allowed on the premises. Be sure to check out the seven museums on site, which are dedicated to preserving the heritage of Southern Prince George's County and include The Duvall Tool Museum, the Blacksmith Shop, the Farrier and Tack Shop, a Tobacco Farming Museum, an 1800's Duckett Log Cabin, its privy, chicken coop and meat house. Call 301-6227-6074 for more information.

Our next stop is the Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary also in Upper Marlboro. Once owned by the Merkle family, it was sold to the state of Maryland. This 1,670-acre tract is dedicated to encouraging Canadian Geese to migrate there for winter. In fact, as many as 5,000 geese can be found there during the winter months! In the summer, however, you can explore the exhibits in

the center that focus on the life and history of Canadian geese. The Discovery Room holds love snakes, turtles, frogs and other animals for viewing. Bird-watchers are welcome to bring binoculars and catch a glimpse of osprey, finches, bluebirds, purple martins and hummingbirds, which frequent the area. The grounds open early and close at sunset. For more information call 301-888-1410.

For a great camping experience visit Cedarville State Forest in Brandywine. There are five trails through the grounds ranging from two to seven miles long for hikers, bikers, horseback riders and anyone else who can appreciate the quiet-time. Birdwatchers will appreciate the extra large owl population, but also the eagles, osprey, ducks, geese, and woodpeckers native to the area. Many rare native plants can also be seen on the grounds. Come for fishing and hunting or just to enjoy nature. Family camping opens April 28. For more information call 301-888-1410.

Our last stop today will be a refreshing one. Ice Cream Factory & Café on Old Brandywine Road will cool you down after a long day of trails and nature. The building, built in 1867, was once Marlow-Hunt General Store and Post Office but was saved from disrepair by Cheryl and Dave Watts in the 1980's. Now the Wattses offer crab cakes, pork ribs and almost 100 flavors of old-fashioned custards, among other menu items. The shop is open seven days a week for lunch, dinner and dessert. Call 301-782-3444 for more information.

Our trip will come to an end after next week's article with the last seven stops along the Turnbuckle Hop trail from the Southern Maryland Trails Guidebook. For more information on this trail or other trails in Southern Maryland, visit www.somdtrails.com or pick up your own copy of the Southern Maryland Trails Guidebook at any community or government building.

Economy

Continued from page A-1

"The government is a great insulator," Schaller said.

Still it's not so easy for everyone trying to do business here in the county, he said.

Smaller, independent businesses are having a tougher time right now, Schaller said, with consumers having to choose between buying enough food and gasoline to drive to work and deciding whether to buy some luxury items.

"It's not a bed of roses," Schaller said. "There are definitely some [local economic] soft spots."

Local retail, restaurants and construction developments accounted for some of those soft spots, Schaller said. Their bottom lines stand to be hurt by rising fuel prices and the nation-wide credit crunch brought on by years of sub-prime lending in the housing market.

Chef Loic Jaffres, owner and op-

erator of Café Des Artistes in Leonardtown, can attest to the effects the economic slowdown has had for foodservice.

"We've seen about a 20 percent decrease in business," the chef said. "We've had to cut the hours of staff by about 30 percent."

His wife Karleen Jaffres said that others in the Leonardtown town square are feeling much the same squeeze.

"There's a definite downturn in business, that's the feedback we've been getting from all the businesses," she said.

She said one of the cost saving measures they use now is going to food suppliers to get a better price rather than having it delivered, which would take a bigger bite out of their pocketbook.

Still their wallet is diminished a little, Karleen Jaffres said, because they are trying to keep menu prices stable.

"This is probably our most difficult year," she said.

But she and the chef are confi-

dent that with a little belt tightening they should be able to weather this lean time.

"We have to be patient," Loic Jaffres said. "Times will tell I guess."

Not everyone says times are tough. Ken Lamb, owner of the Tackle Box in Lexington Park, said fears of a recession are nonsense.

Traditionally, the first three months of operation for just about any business are the leanest, he said, but at one of the county's oldest sporting goods stores business has been unusually strong.

"Business is fine," Lamb told The County Times. "We just had the best first quarter we've ever had."

Firearm and ammunition sales are solid, he said, and people are not slowing down when it comes to buying fishing licenses, things that Lamb said were pretty much luxury items.

"They still want to go fishing and they still want to go shooting," Lamb said. "All this recession [stuff] is just that."

"The economy is still strong."

Immigrant

Continued from page A-1

"It was a serious crime," said Lt. Daniel Alioto, commander of the Bureau of Criminal Investigations Vice/Narcotics unit. "These checks were stolen by someone who shouldn't even have been here."

"Tens of thousands of dollars were stolen." According to federal court documents Uliser-Reyes and his accomplices were responsible for stealing somewhere close to \$70,000.

Some of the checks stolen were altered to denote a higher cash amount to be cashed than what was originally on the check, federal court papers stated.

In a related case, Jose Matires Carranza-Gonzales, age 27, pleaded guilty on March 26 to his participation in the theft scheme with Reyes. Carranza-Gonzales faces a sentence of 10 years in prison for receipt of stolen property as well as two years for aggravated identity theft.

He is scheduled for sentencing June 13 at U.S. District Court in Greenbelt.

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Student Prank Leads to Flooding at Leonardtown High

Andrea Shiell
Staff Writer

At 11:15 a.m. Thursday, the fire alarm went off at Leonardtown High School, prompting responses from local firefighters. Upon investigation, authorities determined that a sprinkler head in one of the upstairs restrooms had discharged, flooding the bathroom, the hallway, and two of the classrooms with a quarter to a half an inch (over 200 gallons) of water.

"The water came up past the bottom of my shoe," said Principal David O'Neill, who described the incident as relatively benign, but still cause for concern in light of the damage inflicted.

Deputy Sheriff Cindy Allen reported that the flood was the result of a student prank.

"Apparently some students put some paper towels around a couple of the sprinkler heads and lit them on fire," she said, "and as a result of the sprinklers going off, of course, there was some flooding."

Students were evacuated from the building, the sprinkler system was secured, and the building was found safe for reentry by the fire department.

By noon it was business as usual as students were led back to their classrooms.

Staff, along with the fire department, cleaned up the water which was in the bathroom, hallway, and several classrooms, and the rest of the day's schedule was reconfigured so that students were provided lunches.

"The faculty and students were very cooperative and patient, so they helped the process move along smoothly," said O'Neill. "And also the fire department did an outstanding job."

A news release from the Maryland State Fire Marshal revealed later that two 14 year-olds and one 15 year-old male student had entered the second floor bathroom, ignited paper, and placed the burning paper up to the sprinkler head. The youths were caught on school surveillance cameras entering and exiting the bathroom.

When confronted, the students admitted setting off the sprinkler head, which caused an estimated \$10,000 in damage, because they "were bored."

The youths were released into the custody of their parents Thursday afternoon, pending further action by the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services.

"This is very uncommon," said Scott Smith, director of secondary instruction, who is also a member of the High School Task Force. He described the incident as a rarity in the county.

"I've been in the system for 18 years and we rarely ever see things like this." He added that because of the infrequency of such pranks, the punishment for this one would be very harsh. He said that expulsion would be the most likely consequence for the three culprits, citing the only passage to mention the offense in the SMCPs student handbook.

"Discharging a fire alarm in such a way counts as arson," Smith said, "and there is only one punishment for arson."

John Parlett, head of CMI General Contractors in Charlotte Hall, said the construction business isn't what it used to be, but, then again, builders had probably been enjoying easier times for too long.

"There are a number of developers, including myself, carrying properties that aren't moving as fast in the other years," Parlett said. "But you have to remember this economy runs in cycles."

Parlett said that for years the housing market had been overpriced, and now, with lenders less willing to hand out credit after the sub-prime lending issue helped create the slowdown, this amounted to a "a huge market correction" on housing prices.

Developers are now having to assess which properties they want to build out, Parlett said, and which ones to hold off on to reduce their costs of doing business.

"Everything's hitting the fan at once," Parlett said.

"But I'm not one to think gloom and doom."

"I think we're past due for a cyclical [economic] change; that's why it's going to hurt a little more."

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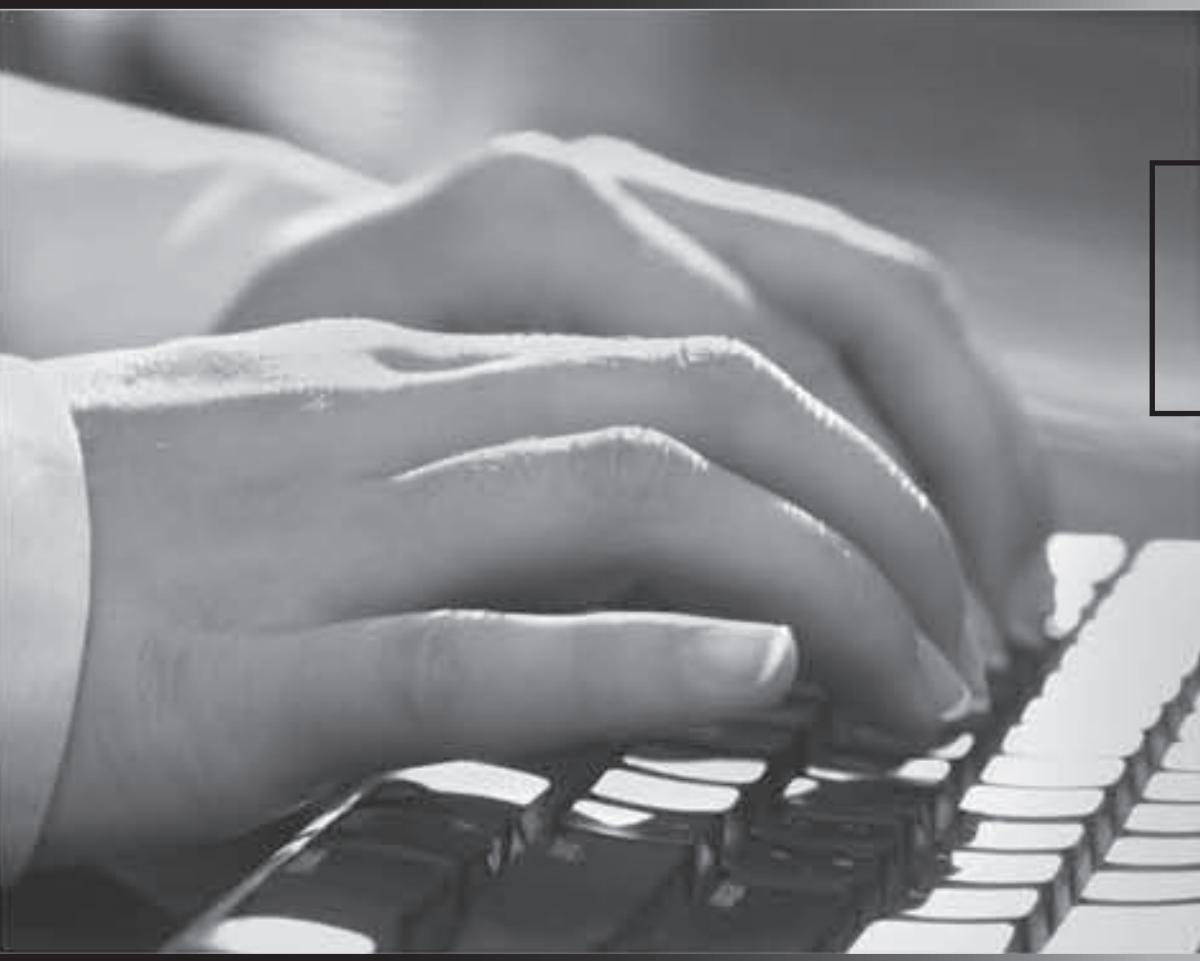
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Odd News

Kiddie Cage-Fighting

Whereas ultimate fighting used to be the domain of large, burly men who beat each other senseless on pay-per-view, the state of Missouri is branching out, allowing cage-fighting, which has often been derided as "human cockfighting" for children, some as young as six years old, whose parents treat the sport as causally as Little League or soccer. The trend, popularized in Missouri by the "Garage Boys Fight Crew" is alarming to medical experts, who are concerned that young children may not be able to withstand constant sucker-punches, body blows, and swift kicks, but parents insist that the sport is no more violent than kids' wrestling, and it teaches self-defense and discipline. Missouri is the only state that allows children to participate in fighting matches. In some states, it is a misdemeanor offense, and in most, there are no regulations specified at all.

How Not to Motivate Your Teaching Staff

In the quest to leave no child behind, at least one educator seems to have cracked under the pressure. Middle school principal John Burks was upset that his school's scores on the Texas benchmark standardized tests were not better, and he was worried that scores for the upcoming Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills tests must show improvement to ensure his position at the school. So during a Jan. 21 meeting with science teachers, Burks threatened to kill the staff if he did not see improvement. Anita White, a science teacher at the school in New Braunfels, said, "he said if the TAKS scores were not as expected he would kill the teachers...he said 'I will kill you all and kill myself...you don't know how ruthless I can be.'" Police recorded the incident as verbal assault, but it is being investigated as a terrorist-like threat.

What's The Matter With These Kids Today?

Zachary Booso, a teenager in Brownsburg, Indiana, claimed he was driving to a friend's house when a man flagged him down, demanded his wallet, and then shot him four times. His parents, of course, called the cops, but Booso's story unraveled when medics reported that his wounds might have been self-inflicted. After some intensive questioning, Booso admitted he had shot himself in the cheek, shoulder, and thigh with a pellet gun because he wanted to prove to his friends and girlfriend that he was secretly involved with gangs. Booso was taken to the hospital and then to jail, where he bonded the same day. He will face misdemeanor charges for false informing.

Toddlers Can No Longer Wed In Arkansas

Lawmakers in Little Rock, Arkansas may have wished to establish the legal marriage age as 18, but instead ended up passing a law that mistakenly allowed anyone, even toddlers, to marry with parental consent. The bill read: "In order for a person who is younger than 18 years of age and who is not pregnant to obtain a marriage license, the person must provide the county clerk with evidence of parental consent to the marriage." Lawmakers called for a special session last year, claiming that the bill would make it easy for pedophiles to take advantage of the law, but legislatures did not rectify the situation until last week, repealing the law and establishing the minimum marriage age as 17 for boys and 16 for girls. Representative Will Bond, who sponsored the original bill and its correction, apologized for the error and asked others to "throw me a rope and bail me out here."

Woman Crowned Miss Landmine Survivor

A woman who lost part of her leg when she stepped on a landmine in the African country of Angola has won the Miss Landmine Survivor Contest. The pageant, which was held in the capital city of Luanda, featured 18 women who had been maimed in landmine explosions, and the contest was devised to raise public awareness of their plight. Angola's two-decade civil war ended six years ago, but landmines remain a common hazard, with an estimated eight million cluttering the countryside, claiming over 300 victims a year. The winner, 31 year-old Augusta Urica, was awarded \$2,500, a variety of domestic appliances, and a custom made artificial limb.

Is The Smithsonian Smarter Than A Fifth Grader?

Kenton Stufflebeam, an 11 year-old boy from southwestern Michigan recently schooled the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History in semantics over his winter break, when he had visited the museum's "Tower of Time" exhibit, where he noticed that a boldfaced note at the museum incorrectly identified Precambrian as an era. The word was supposed to represent "a dimensionless unit of time, which embraces all the time between the origin of the Earth and the beginning of the Cambrian period of geologic time," as was affirmed in the letter of thanks that the museum sent to him after he reported the error to museum staff. Kenton had been the only visitor to report the error since the exhibit opened in 1981. Though he was thrilled to receive a letter from museum officials, who had corrected the error by simply blotting out the word "era," he could not help noticing it was addressed to Kenton Stufflebeam.

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Gas Tank Explosion Leads to House Fire

Andrea Shiell
Staff Writer

Kathy Darnall sighed and shook her head as droves of firefighters rushed past her to attend to a still-smoking house off of North Patuxent Beach Road in California.

"I get mad when I come home to dishes in the sink," she said. "I couldn't imagine coming home to this."

At 11:05 a.m. Thursday morning, firefighters from Bay District, Lexington Park, Hollywood, St. Leonard, and Solomon's answered the call for a house that was ablaze. Chief Joe Gould, one of the first on the scene, reported that the house was completely engulfed, with flames coming from the roof.

As details filtered in, it was discovered that the blaze had been ignited by an exploding propane gas tank. Darnell, a neighbor who lives a few doors down, said she had seen workers from the gas

company at the home earlier, and shortly after they filled the gas tank, it exploded.

The owner of the home, Daniel Pease, arrived on the scene as firefighters quelled the flames. He said the gas company called him unexpectedly.

"They were filling the tank and when they went to disconnect the tank, it exploded," Pease said. "Taylor gas called me and they thought I was still in the house," he said, adding that he had been at work at the time, but his primary concern was his dog, a miniature schnauzer named Fred, who had been in his cage near the front closet when the fire started.

Though Pease came home to a smoking shell of a house, firefighters had managed to rescue his dog, much to his relief.

"He's ok, but how I'll never know," he said, adding that his dog was still shaking from the incident.

Pease seemed easygoing about the incident, saying, "I guess there's not

much that could have been done."

When asked about his property, he said, "I'm more worried about the computer in there...I just bought a brand new \$3,000 computer."

Still, Pease has some questions for the gas company about the incident. He said representatives from the Taylor Gas Company had told him the valve to his gas tank fell apart when workers were disconnecting it, leading to the explosion.

"The only thing that bothers me is if that valve was in that bad a shape, why didn't they say something before? Valves don't just fall apart like that," he said.

Pease is planning to stay with his girlfriend until his living situation is resolved. When asked about Fred, who is at a neighbor's house recovering, he smiled and said, "Well she has six other dogs, and Fred's been there before, so I think he'll be ok."



On Thursday, firefighters from Bay District, Lexington Park, Hollywood, St. Leonard, and Solomon's put out a raging house fire that was caused by an exploding propane tank.

Large Development Near Navy Base Can Connect To Water And Sewer

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

A proposed 212-acre, mixed use development near the intersection of Route 235 and Hermanville Road is one step closer to overall approval since the St. Mary's County Board of County Commissioners approved it to connect to county water and sewer.

The Glazed Pine project has been in the development review process since 2005 and must still go before the county Planning Commission for final approval. Guy Curley, of Liberty Home Builder, the developer of

the project, has modified his original plan to just 248 housing units along with 1.2 million square feet of office space.

The original plan, which was rejected by the county, called for 1,100 housing units.

"I'm optimistic the revised plan will get approval in the near future," Curley told The County Times.

Jeff Jackman, senior planner with the Department of Land Use and Growth Management, said that after assessing the limited water and sewage capacity available at the Marley-Taylor treatment fa-

cility, the Glazed Pine development would not take up to much capacity.

"We feel confident we have enough adequate public facilities to support the development," Jackman said.

The Metropolitan Commission is making plans to expand the facility to come into compliance with state mandates for new wastewater treatment technologies to be added as well as to keep up with increasing development demand.

But cost increases have caused the commission to seek ways to trim what was at one point a \$125 million

price tag.

The entire project is expected, according to staff reports from Land Use and Growth Management, to take up 548 equivalent dwelling units of sewer and water usage.

In its original form the development raised the concerns of the U.S. Navy at Patuxent River Naval Air Station that the project was to large and to close to the base's air operations.

Planning staff reports state that the developer's new plan comes into compliance with the AICUZ conditions.

Drought

Continued from page A-1

crop insurance, which is underwritten by the federal government.

So far, according to Amy Farrell, director of the local Farm Service Agency for St. Mary's and Calvert counties, farmers in both counties have received more than

\$900,000 for the crop losses they suffered.

The agency is still paying out benefits for losses farmers suffered from their grazing lands during last year's drought as part of their livestock compensation program, Farrell said, and there is no relief in sight.

"We're still low on rainfall for this year," Farrell said. "And some of the ponds have not filled up."

Additionally, those who went without crop insurance last year and therefore were not eligible to receive any disaster relief payments, did not want to run the risk of losing out this year if the harvest suffered again.

Some individual farmers lost as much as 90 percent of their crop loss last summer, according to county agricultural officials.

"After 2007 it's a whole new ballgame," Ambrose said. "They're just a little scared; looking towards 2008 they're comparing it to 2007."

Brad Reeves, of Reeves Insurance in Leonardtown, said it's too late for farmers without crop insurance to protect their spring crops; the deadline to buy one of those policies was March 15.

But they can still buy a policy for their fall crops. The deadline for that policy is Sept. 30, he said.

Reeves said crop insurance was "fairly expensive" and that farmers often did not elect to pay premiums to cover more than 75 to 80 percent of their crops.

"It becomes prohibitively expensive to go beyond that," Reeves told The County Times.

But crop insurance is not a panacea for farmers because it only covers their operating costs and not any profits they may have lost, Reeves said.

It was just a measure to keep from shutting down completely, he said.

The problem for farmers was compounded, Reeves said, by rapidly increasing

fuel and fertilizer costs, which have shot up by as much as 300 to 400 percent over the past few years, Reeves said.

"If you're a good farmer and you're productive, you'll eliminate risk of going up belly up because you put out money you didn't get back."

But with the high costs of insuring their crops can farmers afford it?

"They're saying the prices are so high, but we can't not do it," Reeves said.

Tom Weller, an independent insurance seller with Weller and Associates LLC in Mechanicsville, Va., confirmed that farmers have to pay higher premiums this year.

"The premiums were about 30 percent higher than last year for the same coverage levels," Weller said, adding that Southern Maryland farmers were either keeping their coverage or raising the level of protection. "They're trying to hedge the volatile market place."

Obituaries

Judith Kathleen Asmussen, 54



Judith Kathleen Asmussen, 54, of Lexington Park died March 31 in Georgetown University Hospital.

Born Sept. 22, 1953 in Washington, D.C., she was the daughter of Nellie Kline Mawson and the late Joseph Harvey Mawson.

Judy attended Central High School in Capitol Heights, Md. She enjoyed playing Bingo, cooking, and spending time with her family. Judy also enjoyed playing cards with her family.

Judy is survived by her husband, William L. Asmussen, Jr., her children; William L. Asmussen of Lexington Park, Daniel W. Asmussen of Lexington Park, and Cindy M. Asmussen of Tall Timbers; siblings; Barbara Garrison of Hollywood, Debra Smith of St. Leonard, Patricia Tippett, Mary Trejo, Steven Mawson and Vicky McKissic all of Lexington Park; grandchildren Allen, Andrea, Amber, and Daniel Asmussen. In addition to her father, Judy was preceded in death by siblings; Linda Edge, Thomas Mawson, and John Mawson.

The family received friends Tuesday, April 8 from 5-8 p.m. in the Brinsfield Funeral Home Chapel, Leonardtown. Prayers were recited at 7 p.m. A Funeral Service was conducted Wednesday, April 9 at noon. in the Brinsfield Funeral Home Chapel. Interment followed at 3 p.m. in Maryland Veterans Cemetery, Cheltenham, Md.

Serving as pallbearers were Joseph Tippett, Randy Mays, John Trejo, Jr., Joseph Trejo, Earl Smith, Jr., Richard Garrison and William Garrison.

Condolences to the family may be made at www.brinsfieldfuneral.com.

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.

Ruth T. "Tommi" Baker, 82



Ruth T. "Tommi" Baker, 82 of Great Mills died April 5 in the Bayside Care Center.

Born Aug. 18, 1925 in Kil-len, Ala. she was the daughter of the late Thomas Gibbs and Sarah Peden Segers. She was the loving wife of the late Estil Aaron Baker, Jr. whom she married Nov. 20, 1960 in the Unitarian Church of Annapolis, Md., and who preceded her in death March 4, 2000.

She is survived by her children Joel T. Griggs of Lexington Park, Clyde Griggs of Clinton, Md. and Gloria Greer of Calvert County, Md.; her siblings; Carl and Jimmy Segers of Tenn., George Segers, Ella Myrich, Ruby Pettus and Virginia McMullen, all of Ala. as well as ten grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

The family received

friends Wednesday April 9 from 9:30-11 a.m. in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, where a funeral Service was held at 11 a.m. with Pastor Dennis Harmon officiating. Interment will be in the Maryland Veteran's Cemetery, Cheltenham, Md. Monday, April 14 at 1 p.m.

Arrangements provided by the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, P.A.

Joseph George Bilko, 82

Joseph George Bilko, 82, of Leonardtown died April 3 in St. Mary's Nursing Center.

Born Feb. 1, 1926 in McKeey's Rocks, Pa., he was the son of the late Joseph Bilko and Anna Stec Bilko.

Joseph was a long time resident of Beaver, Pa. where he graduated from high school in 1944, worked for Westinghouse Electric as a tool and die maker for thirty eight years, and was a member of Saints Peter and Paul Parish. He served in the Army Air Corps during World War II. He graduated from the Pittsburgh Institute of Aeronautics in 1947 as a master mechanic. He then served in the Air Force during the Korean War. Joseph moved to Mims, Fla. where he built his retirement home in 1985 and was a member of Holy Spirit Catholic Church. In 2007, he moved with his wife Caroline to Cedar Lane Apartments in Leonardtown, Md. where he was a member of Our Lady's Parish. His favorite pastimes were fishing, gardening and going to Disney World.

Joseph is survived by his wife Caroline Leona Bilko, whom he married May 28, 1948, his sons Joseph of Tall Timbers, John of Waynesboro, Pa., sisters in law, Sallie and Susan, and granddaughter, Sallie. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his sister, Helen Cochran of Monaca, Pa.

The family received friends Monday, April 7 from 5-8 p.m. in the Brinsfield Funeral Home Chapel, Leonardtown. Prayers were recited at 7 p.m. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Tuesday, April 8 at 10 a.m. in Our Lady's Church at Medley's Neck, Leonardtown. Reverend Thomas LaHood was the celebrant.

Condolences to the family may be made at www.brinsfieldfuneral.com.

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A., Leonardtown.

Rose "Rosie" Marie Connelly, 61



Rose "Rosie" Marie Connelly, 61, of Leonardtown died April 6 in her residence.

Born Dec. 23, 1946 in Leonardtown, she was the daughter of the late George Washington and Margaret Theresa Russell Connelly. She was the loving wife of Hershel V. "Jr." McLeod, whom she married Dec. 30, 1988.

She is survived by her brother G. Martin Connelly, Sr. and his wife Fern of Leonardtown, her nephews G.M. Connelly, Jr. of Baltimore, Md. and Michael Connelly of Leonardtown and her niece Michelle Connelly of Leonardtown.

She was preceded in death by her sister Linda Reed Connelly.

Rosie was a lifelong St. Mary's County resident where

she graduated from Leonardtown High School, Class of 1963. She was employed for 33 years at the AT&T Telephone Company as a storekeeper and retired in 1996. At the time of her death, she was employed by Wentworth's Nursery, Prince Frederick, Md., where she was a loyal employee for more than 20 years. Her employees were like her second family with whom she loved to laugh and joke.

Rosie was a fun loving and hard working woman; if you knew her, you loved her. Her laughter was contagious and her house, the "funny farm," described her perfectly. She had dogs, geese, turkeys, goats and over 50 chickens. All of these animals had individual names which Rosie had given them. Perhaps her favorite was her dog Sugar Bear. Since she had no children, Sugar Bear was like her child. She enjoyed gardening, yellow roses, collecting Boyd's Bears, animals, getting pedicures, going to Starbucks, collecting hats and Crown Royal. Rosie truly had a zest for life. Her brother Martin was the apple of her eye; they always had many funny stories to tell on each other. Everything was always about "Marty" and his family. Rosie will be greatly missed and will always be remembered as a great friend, loving sister, crazy aunt, hard worker, true country girl and an angel sent from God. We Love You Rosie!

The family received friends Wednesday, April 9 from 5-7 p.m. in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, where a funeral service was held at 7 p.m. with Deacon Lou Koeniger officiating. Interment will be Private.

Arrangements provided by the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, P.A.

Thomas Carroll "Teddy Bear" Farrell, Sr., 58



Thomas Carroll "Teddy Bear" Farrell, Sr., 58, of Colton's Point, and formerly of Sevierville, Tenn. died April 6 in St. Mary's Hospital.

Born March 19, 1950 in Washington D.C., he was the son of the late Carroll Jenkins Farrell and Agnes Opal Farrell of Colton's Point. He was the beloved husband of Marie Leslie Farrell whom he married Dec. 15, 1991 in La Plata, Md.

He is survived by his children; Thomas Abel, Jr. of Huntingtown, Md., J.R. Farrell and his wife Teresa of Town Creek, Md., Angela Dara and her husband John of Bryans Road, James Cage and Jessica Cage both of Accokeek, Md. as well as seven grandchildren, Marilee, Tommy, Tyler, Marlayna, Ashley, Hollie and Sylvia. He is also survived by his siblings Belinda J. Farrell of Lexington Park and Sandra D. Quade and Ronald L. Farrell, both of Colton's Point.

He attended Suitland High School and moved to St. Mary's County in 1975. He was employed as a plumber for the U.S. Capitol for 36 years, retiring in 2001. He served in the U.S. Army from 1968 to 1970 and was one of the 101st Airborne "Screaming Eagles." He belonged to the American Legion and the VFW. He enjoyed spending time with his family, watching NASCAR racing and had an extensive Dale Earnhardt, Sr. collection.

He inherited what the family calls the "Mattingly's Curse," therefore, he became a perfectionist with cleanliness. Tommy always enjoyed landscaping, from his own yard, to his mother's and others.

The family will receive friends Friday, April 11 from 5-8 p.m. in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, with Prayers being said at 7 p.m. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated Saturday, April 12 at 10 p.m. in Holy Angels Catholic Church, Colton's Point, with Msgr. John B. Brady officiating. Interment will follow in Charles Memorial Gardens, Leonardtown. Pallbearers will be JR Farrell, Jimmy Cage, Benji Quade, Stacey Farrell, Jr., Michael Blackstone and Thomas Abel, Jr. Honorary Pallbearers will be John Daras, Timmy O'Brien, Justin Cheseldine-Gass, Tyler Kidwell, Lewis Quade Jr. and David Goldsborough.

Arrangements provided by the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, P.A.

Thomas William Foyle, 63

Thomas William Foyle, 63, of Lexington Park died March 23 in his residence.

Born Sept. 5, 1944 in Philadelphia, Pa., he was the son of the late Thomas Foyle and Elisabeth "Betty" Jones Foyle. He married Margaret Johnston in 1968 and they had three children.

After serving in the U.S. Army in Berlin from 1968 to 1972, the family moved to Southern Maryland, where he spent his career in engineering for U.S. Navy Defense Contractors. Bill was a man of exceptional character, integrity and conviction. He had an analytical mind, keen intelligence, firm opinions and an intensity that was tempered by creativity and an ebullient wit. Bill's life, decisions and entire outlook was framed by his profound faith in God.

Bill had deep tenderness for and high expectations of his children, and he encouraged them without meddling. He and Margaret were each other's best friends, and they loved to spend time together doing anything or nothing, especially at their shore house in New Jersey. Bill loved music and played the piano effortlessly. He was generous with gifts, hospitality and travel, and also in sharing his interests, experiences, and insights. Bill was fun and funny, and stories of his unpredictable sense of humor, remarks, pranks and jokes have become legend among family and friends.

In addition to his wife Margaret, Bill is survived by his children, Molly Sheehan, Victoria Ledwell and Bill Foyle, grandchild Agnes Ledwell, sons-in-law Michael and Tom, and sister Karen Bogle. He will also be missed by his beloved Golden Retriever Alice.

A Memorial Service was held Saturday, March 29.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Care Net Pregnancy Center of Southern Maryland, P.O. Box 31, Lexington Park, MD 20653.

Condolences to the family may be made at www.brinsfieldfuneral.com.

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A., Leonardtown.

Shelby Anna Lowmiller, 16



Shelby Anna Lowmiller, 16, of California died April 6 in Leonardtown.

Born Aug. 17, 1991 in Leonardtown, she was the daughter of Robert Lowmiller of California and Debi Tinsley of Leonardtown.

She is survived by her siblings Ashley and Dylan Lowmiller, both of California, grandparents Joe and Dot Goodwin of Fla. formerly of Coltons Point, and Bob and Audrey Lowmiller of W.V. formerly of Leonardtown.

Shelby was a lifelong St. Mary's County resident where she was a student.

The family will receive friends Thursday, April 10 from 5-8 p.m. in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, where Prayers will be said at 7 p.m. A Funeral Service will be held Friday, April 11 at 10 a.m. in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home Chapel with Fr. John Mattingly officiating. Interment will follow in St. Francis Xavier Cemetery, Leonardtown.

Arrangements provided by the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, P.A.

Gary "Gates" Maxson, 47



Gary "Gates" Maxson, 47, of Drayden, Md. and formerly of St. George's Island, died March 29 in his residence.

Born April 3, 1960 in Lanham, Md. he was the son of the late Stephen S. Maxson and Mary F. Gates Maxson.

He is survived by his children; Stephen S. Maxson, Jonathan T. Maxson and Albert L. North IV all of Md., Amanda Maxson of W.V. and Jessica A. North of Va. as well as his fiancé Cheryl Cameron of Drayden, Md. and one grandchild. He is also survived by his siblings Frank Maxson of S.D., Robert Maxson of Md., David Wilcox of Ark. and Sharon Wilcox of N.M.

A graduate of Riverdale Baptist High School "Class of 1978," he moved to St. Mary's County in 1998. He was the owner of Maxson's Paint Refinishing. He loved spending time with family and friends, cooking, gardening, fishing, crabbing and walking on the beach at St. George's Island with this dog Max. He was a true lifetime fan of the Dallas Cowboys and loved Rock and Roll. He was very proud of everything he did.

A memorial service was held Thursday, April 3 at 10 a.m. in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, with Rev. Keith Schukraft officiating.

Interment will be private.

Arrangements provided by the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, P.A.

Bruce David Mulno, 69



George's Island, died April 5 in Manor Care Nursing Home, Potomac, Md.

Born May 23, 1938 in Lowell, Mass. he was the son of the late Herbert Lincoln Mulno and Carolyn Bell Mulno. Mr. Mulno worked in real estate.

He is survived by his wife, Eileen Krenzer Mulno of St. George's Island, a sister, Carol M. Colmer and her husband William W. Colmer of Tewksbury, Mass., a brother, H. Lincoln Mulno and his wife Mildred C. Mulno of Tewksbury, Mass., four nieces, Susan Mulno, Sarah Mulno Ambrosio, Amanda Mulno Craig, Leslie Colmer Estrella and a nephew, H. Lincoln Mulno.

A Funeral Service was conducted Wednesday, April 9 at 11 a.m. in St. George Episcopal Church, Valley Lee. Reverend Greg Syler conducted the service. Interment followed in the church cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made to the St. George Island Improvement Association, 16262 Thomas Road, Piney Point, MD 20674.

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A., Leonardtown.

John Leon Trossbach, 80



John Leon Trossbach, 80, of Dameron died April 4 in his residence.

Born Aug. 5, 1927 in Dameron he was the son of the late Francis Leo Trossbach and Mary Andrews Trossbach.

John enjoyed gardening, woodworking, and playing cards, especially pitch. He was a volunteer for Christmas in April, and was a member of the Knights of Columbus.

John is survived by four children; Mary Sanders, Joe Trossbach (Lisa), Leonard Trossbach all of Dameron, and Francis Trossbach (Susan) of Great Mills, nine grandchildren, three great grandchildren, two sisters; Mary F. Peacock of Dameron and Margaret "Bertie" Stone (Charles) of Welcome, Md.

In addition to his parents, John was preceded in death by his wife, Jean Laurel Reynolds, and a son, David Trossbach.

The family received friends Monday, April 7 from 5-8 p.m. in St. Michael's Catholic Church, Ridge. Prayers were recited at 7 p.m. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated by Monsignor Maurice O'Connell Tuesday, April 8 at 11 a.m. in St. Michael's Catholic Church, Ridge. Interment followed in St. Michael's Church Cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Hospice House of St. Mary's, c/o Hospice of St. Mary's, P.O. Box 625, Leonardtown, MD 20650.

Condolences to the family may be made at www.brinsfieldfuneral.com.

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A., Leonardtown.



Detention Center

Continued from page A-1

"You've done a Herculean task with a small number of people," said Sheriff Timothy K. Cameron at an award ceremony at the detention center Tuesday. "The agency has changed a lot in the past couple of years but you lead the way, the most change has happened here."

Corrections officers demonstrated their proficiency in handling the inmates at the facility by meeting 232 separate standards in eight categories during their audit by the state last year, said Lt. Michael R. Merican, commander

County Commissioner Daniel H. Raley (D-Great Mills). "Help is on the way, the money is there."

"You're the unsung heroes of our county workforce. We know you're working under tough conditions."

Currently the detention center only has 245 beds but in recent years rising incarceration rates have strained the facility to its limits. Some inmates have had to sleep on the floor while having to share limited space in cells.

The overall project is estimated to cost about \$30 million and will be a joint funded project between the county and the state to be completed in about three to four years.



Photo by Guy Leonard
County Commissioner Daniel H. Raley (D-Great Mills) talks with Lt. Michael R. Merican, right, and Capt. John S. Horne of the county sheriff's office during a ceremony honoring the detention center's state-recognized operational excellence for the past two years.

of the Division of Corrections.

Merican told the visiting Board of County Commissioners that inmate levels have risen well above what the jail was originally designed and built to hold.

"We're up to about 350 inmates all the time now," Merican told them as he escorted them through the jail's hallways.

Merican said that his corrections officers were able to achieve their perfect rating with a 20 percent vacancy rate and 53 percent inmate overcrowding.

During the ceremony county commissioners and Cameron pledged to the corrections officers that relief was on the way in the form of a long-awaited expansion of the facility.

The state has authorized about \$800,000 in funds for the designing of the new facility. An additional amount of about \$750,000 will come from the county to aid in that process according to county officials.

"The addition is going to happen," said

Merican said the work on construction could start next year. Once finished it will effectively double the capacity of the jail, he said.

"It'll take us to 525 beds and it's projected to take us into the year 2025," Merican said. "I'm very optimistic; things are finally getting off the ground."

Corrections Officer First Class T. Brendlinger said that working at the detention center these days doesn't leave much free time.

"It's easy for us to get multi-tasked," Brendlinger, who currently works transporting prisoners, said. It is tough we do a lot of hours and there's lots of overtime."

Several times Brendlinger said he had had to work three, 12-hour shifts in a four day period to keep up with the duty schedule at the jail.

"It's not normal," he said. "Now that I'm with the transportation section there are times when I don't know when I'll get home."

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