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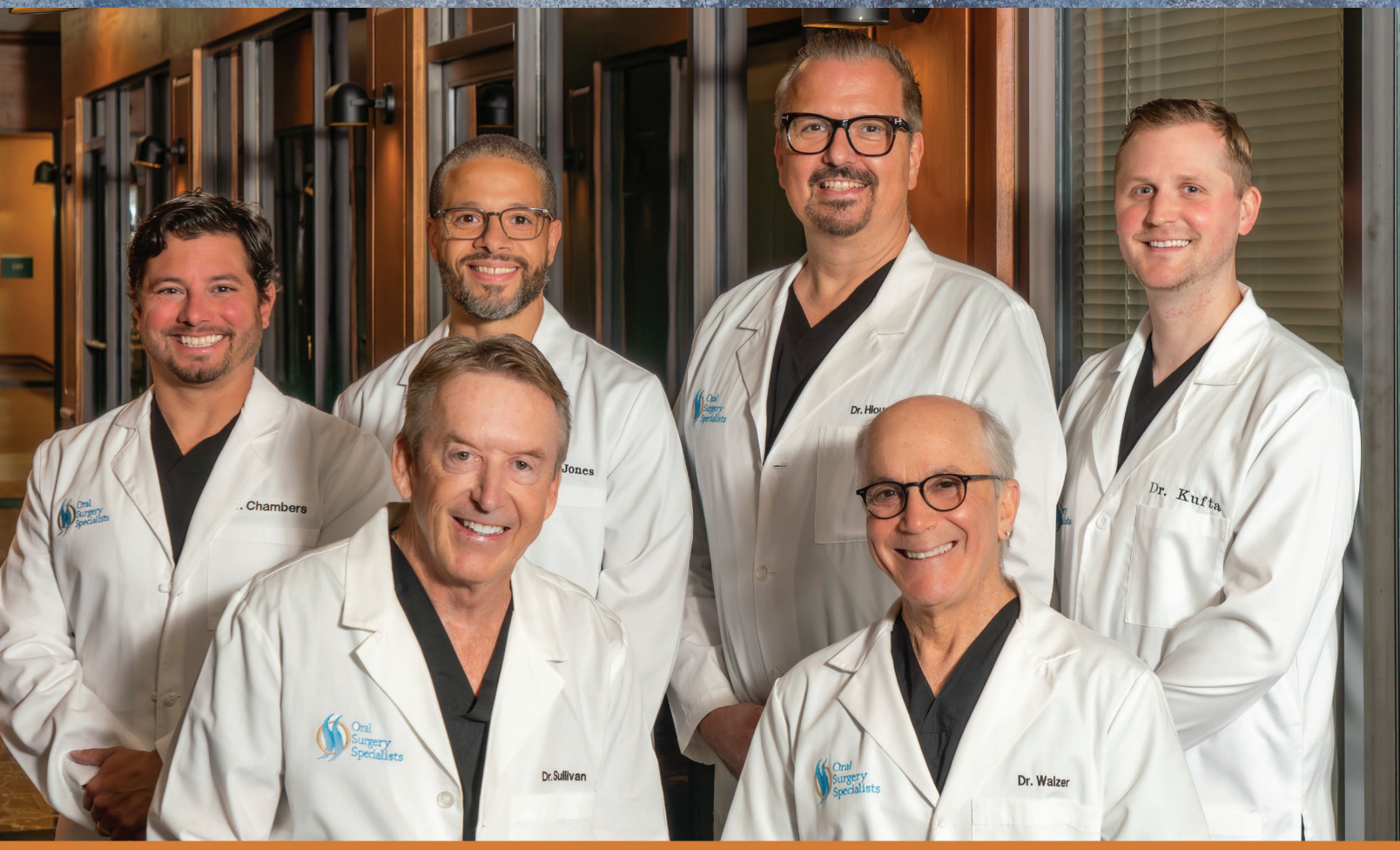

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What's Up? Annapolis online at whatsupmag.com.
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WHAT'S UP? MEDIA'S 2026

EXCELLENCE IN NURSING

The 2026 Excellence in Nursing Campaign starts this month! A peer-survey project that celebrates exemplary nurses practicing in the Greater Chesapeake Bay Region. We are calling for licensed nurses and medical professionals to nominate your fellow nurses in several fields of practice. This campaign runs May 1st - June 30th.

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It's been quite a while since my last publisher's letter. I have enjoyed watching James Houck's interesting editor's letters, yet I have sometimes missed communicating directly with our readers.

It was 29 years ago with this May issue that I introduced *What's Up?* magazine to Annapolis. Microsoft Windows was only 10 years old at the time; Google hadn't even begun yet, and how many of you can remember the dial-up squeal of starting AOL on a home computer?

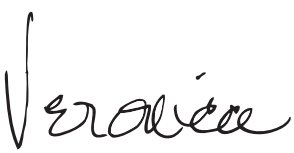
Seeing how tempting it was for us to become disconnected, especially as computers and the Internet began to take hold of our attention, I worried that we would retreat into our own silos, interacting more with screens than with each other. My belief is that a strong community depends on shared experiences. I call it "bumping into each other," meaning that by attending local events, places, and groups, we communicate and hopefully understand each other a little better. I know, I'm an optimist!

What's Up? Media was my way of pushing back against that trend of falling into our isolated silos—by highlighting local events, stories, and happenings that bring people together, spark conversations, and foster a sense of belonging.

Certainly, the world has changed since 1997 and we, too, have grown. We now produce six different publications: *Annapolis*, *Eastern Shore*, *Central Maryland*, *Weddings*, *The Guide to the Naval Academy*, and *The Directory* for seniors and those with disabilities. We also publish digital versions of our magazines, all available at *magazine.whatsupmag.com*, which makes it easy to continue reading them on your phone.

Digital content is ubiquitous, and we do it all now, yet through all the changes my goal was, and still is, to help our communities stay informed, engaged, and truly connected. I would love to hear from you. I always respond.

Veronica Tovey,
Publisher & President
veronica@whatsupmag.com



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HIGHLIGHTING ENTERTAINMENT, COMMUNITY, AND EVENTS

24 EVENTS | 30 ARTS | 32 BOOKS

34 ATTRACTIONS | 36 SOCIAL | 40 INTERVIEW



May Day in Downtown

PG. 26



ANNAPOLIS IRISH FESTIVAL 2026

Experience a high-energy weekend of live music as bands like Gaelic Storm take the stage at the Anne Arundel County Fairgrounds on May 29 from 5 p.m. to midnight and May 30 from noon to midnight in Crownsville. Known for their dynamic blend of traditional Irish sounds with modern influences, the internationally acclaimed band delivers a lively performance filled with spirited instrumentals, sing-along favorites, and genre-crossing hits. With a reputation built over decades of touring and festival appearances, Gaelic Storm brings an unforgettable atmosphere that appeals to fans of all musical styles. It's a must-attend event for anyone looking to enjoy great music, vibrant energy, and a one-of-a-kind live show experience. More info: abceventsinc.com

SPRING GARDEN RAMBLE

Welcome the season in bloom at the Spring Garden Ramble on May 8 from 5 to 7:30 p.m. at Historic London Town & Gardens in Edgewater. This 21+ evening event invites guests to stroll through beautifully landscaped grounds while enjoying live music, festive drinks, and themed cocktails inspired by the gardens. With camellias in full bloom and a relaxed, scenic atmosphere, it's a perfect way to unwind and take in the beauty of spring. Blending nature, music, and a touch of elegance, the event offers a refreshing and memorable outdoor experience. More info: historiclondontown.org



Photo by Heather Meadows of Jackalope Photography)



ASA Day

Inspire a love of music at ASA Day on May 17 from 1 to 7 p.m. at Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts in Annapolis. Hosted by the Annapolis Symphony Academy, this free, family-friendly event invites children and parents to explore music through live performances, hands-on activities, and interactive experiences. Guests can enjoy concerts by youth ensembles, try instruments at a musical "petting zoo," participate in beginner classes, and connect with professional musicians and educators. It's an engaging and educational afternoon designed to spark creativity and introduce the joy of making music. More info: tunedtoyouth.org



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ANNAPOLIS RUN CLUB + ASICS BLUE JEAN MILE CHALLENGE

Support a meaningful cause while staying active at this special Annapolis Run Club event on May 18 at 6:30 p.m. at Chessie's Wharf in Annapolis. In honor of Mental Health Awareness Month, participants are invited to take part in a Blue Jean Mile run or walk, choosing between a 5K course or a shorter walking route. The evening also features opportunities to connect with local partners, try on running shoes, and learn more about mental health initiatives supporting the community. It's a powerful way to come together, get moving, and make a positive impact. More info: instagram.com/annapolissocial





May Day in Downtown

Celebrate a beloved Annapolis tradition as the 71st annual May Basket Competition returns on May 1 throughout downtown Annapolis and surrounding historic neighborhoods. Hosted by the Garden Club of Old Annapolis Towne, this charming event invites residents and merchants to adorn homes and storefronts with beautifully arranged fresh-cut flower baskets, transforming the streets into a vibrant springtime display. Visitors are encouraged to stroll along Main Street, Maryland Avenue, West Street, and beyond to discover the creative designs, while enjoying local shopping and dining along the way. Rain or shine, it's a picturesque way to experience the city in full bloom and take part in a long-standing community celebration. More info: downtownannapolispartnership.org

SONGBIRD FESTIVAL 2026

Celebrate creativity and community at the Songbird Festival, taking place on May 3 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts. Founded by four local musicians, the Songbird Collective has grown into a vibrant movement supporting women and non-binary artists, offering an inclusive space for connection and expression. The festival brings this mission to life with a day of live performances and artistic collaboration, highlighting diverse voices across the music community. It's an inspiring event that champions creativity, empowerment, and the power of coming together through music. More info: wearesongbirdcollective.com



Photo courtesy of Songbird Festival

3rd Anne Arundel Asian American Festival

Celebrate culture, community, and tradition at the 3rd Annual Anne Arundel Asian American Festival on May 31 at 11 a.m. at the Anne Arundel County Fairgrounds in Crownsville. Held in honor of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, this vibrant event brings together a dynamic lineup of cultural performances, live music, and a wide variety of food vendors showcasing authentic flavors. Guests can explore interactive experiences and enjoy a lively atmosphere that highlights the richness and diversity of Asian American cultures. It's a festive and meaningful way to come together, learn, and celebrate. More info: abceventsinc.com



THE BLUE RIBBON PROJECT'S 2026 BASH!

Enjoy an evening of celebration and community at the Blue Ribbon Bash on May 16 from 6 to 9:30 p.m. at the Severna Park Elks Lodge in Severna Park. This festive night features a full dinner with hors d'oeuvres and dessert, live music by Pretty Big Deal, and plenty of time to dance and connect. Guests can also take part in an online auction while enjoying a lively atmosphere with drinks and entertainment throughout the evening. It's a fun and spirited event perfect for a night out with a purpose. More info: Blueribbonproject.org





Put It In The Pock3t A Night To Remember

Experience the energy of go-go music at a dynamic live performance at Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts in Annapolis. This high-energy event, starting at 6 p.m., showcases youth-led band Pock3t alongside an opening act, celebrating the vibrant and evolving sound rooted in DMV culture. Hosted by local talent and featuring live DJs throughout the evening, the event also includes on-site food vendors and a lively, community-driven atmosphere. It's a powerful night of music, creativity, and culture that brings people together through sound and rhythm. More info: marylandhall.org





FRIENDS FOR FRIENDS

Enjoy a memorable evening of connection and purpose at Friends for Friends, taking place on May 14 from 6 to 9:30 p.m. at the USNA Fluegel Alumni Center in Annapolis. This lively Ladies Night Out brings together an open bar, live music, and light fare alongside a curated showcase of women-focused businesses and gourmet offerings from local restaurants. Designed to celebrate community and empowerment, the event also supports The Light House, a nonprofit dedicated to preventing homelessness and providing critical services to those in need. It's a meaningful and festive night where coming together truly makes a difference. More info: friendslhs.org

TASTE OF SPRING ON WEST STREET

Celebrate the flavors of spring at this lively outdoor event on May 17 from 1 to 5 p.m. along historic West Street in Annapolis. Guests will be welcomed with a signature cocktail or mocktail before sampling delicious bites and desserts from a variety of local restaurants, all set to the sounds of live music. With interactive activities, local vendors, and even special appearances from furry friends, the afternoon offers something for everyone. It's a festive way to enjoy great food, community spirit, and a vibrant downtown atmosphere while supporting a beloved local tradition. More info: iwsannapolis.com





Annapolis First Sunday Arts Festival

Experience the vibrant energy of Annapolis at the First Sunday Arts Festival on May 3 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. along Calvert and West Streets. This free outdoor event transforms the Arts District and historic downtown into a lively marketplace filled with local and regional artists showcasing everything from paintings and pottery to jewelry, glasswork, and more. Visitors can enjoy live music, explore a wide variety of handcrafted goods, and dine at nearby restaurants offering everything from Maryland favorites to global flavors. With something around every corner, it's a perfect way to spend a spring day supporting local creativity and soaking in the city's artistic spirit. More info: IWSAnnapolis.com



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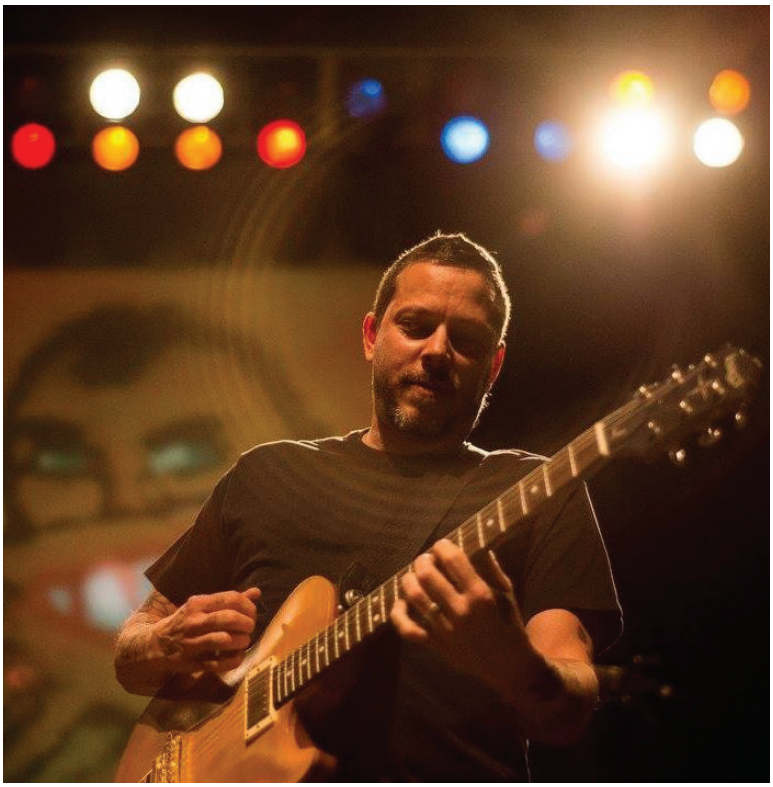
GRUBHUB DOORDASH

Annapolis Musicians Mix It Up in *The Sound We Make*

By Carol Denny



Jimi Haha Davies helped organize and will perform at *The Sound We Make*.

Some of Annapolis's top local performers—four artists known for their frequent gigs around town and beyond—will shape-shift this month as part of a unique collaboration. In *The Sound We Make*, taking the stage on May 31, they'll get to perform some of their original songs in full concert mode, with live orchestral backing.

The evening promises to be a rich mix for both the musicians and their listeners. It takes place in the Live Arts Maryland Studio at the Annapolis Mall, a 200-seat venue that offers a dynamic setting for performances and is fast becoming an integral part of the Annapolis arts scene.

"*The Sound We Make* is exactly the kind of project Live Arts Maryland is excited to support," says General Manager Dane Krich. "One of our core goals is to help create new opportunities for local artists and connect them with broader audiences. By bringing together Live Arts Maryland, the Annapolis Chamber Orchestra, members of the Chesapeake Youth Symphony Orchestra, and four outstanding local singer-songwriters, this concert creates a unique artistic collaboration that simply wouldn't exist otherwise. It reflects our commitment to expanding performance opportunities in our community and making a space where new artistic ideas can come to life."

"IT'S AN OPPORTUNITY TO MELD CLASSICAL MUSIC, WHICH HAS ALWAYS BEEN SORT OF A SUIT-AND-TIE GENRE, WITH THE JEANS-AND-T-SHIRT STYLE OF LOCAL ROCK, FOLK, BLUES, FUNK OR HIP HOP MUSIC."—JIMI HAHA DAVIES

Jimi Haha Davies, a multi-faceted musician, songwriter, publisher, and visual artist, provided the creative impetus for the show. The lead singer/guitarist/songwriter for the nationally known band Jimmie's Chicken Shack, says that *The Sound We Make* is the realization of a long-held dream.

"I came up with the concept close to a decade ago," Davies explains. "I kept seeing classical orchestras inviting national artists to perform with them, and thought it would be a great idea to do it here with Annapolis artists, to help broaden the audience and highlight local songwriters. It's an opportunity to meld classical music, which has always been sort of a suit-and-tie genre, with the jeans-and-t-shirt style of local rock, folk, blues, funk, or hip hop music."

Davies invited three other local musicians—Rahsaan "Wordslave" Eldridge, Madisun Bailey, and Dean Rosenthal—to join him for *The Sound We Make* project, and asked each to send a few of their songs to arranger Daniel Capelletti, who will score them for the concert. Selecting which works to feature was the artists' first challenge.

For one of his numbers, Eldridge chose "The Perfect Work of Art," a song he wrote almost two decades ago. "I had performed it *a cappella* in open mic sessions in Baltimore for years, but I always heard the orchestral sound of it in my mind," he recalls. "I was hearing strings, a big sound. This (new version) is close to what I was originally thinking, and made me excited about what it could be."

Songwriter Madisun Bailey says she also had strings in mind when she envisioned the score for her "Forest Green," the title track on her upcoming album. "It's a song with a very open feel, with lots of room for instrumentation," she explains. "I want to transport the listener to a forest, and I think the strings will help take them there. There will be more space, more layers. In another song, 'Glass'—also on the new album—there's a bridge that could lend itself to instrumentation. I hear it, a bit."

Dean Rosenthal, a fixture on the local performing arts scene, writes songs in the tradition of Bob Dylan and Tom Waits. "Once, I sang blues songs about places I'd never been, but then I had an epiphany and started singing about the places that I know," he says. "'Left into Galesville,' one of the songs I sent to the arranger for the concert, is actually based on Mapquest directions. When I sing it, I can see that 'hey, I've been there' look on people's faces. Next thing I know, they're singing along." The audience for *The Sound We Make* just might be, too.



Madisun Bailey will perform with a live orchestra in T*he Sound We Make* on May 31.



Blues artist Dean Rosenthal will bring his home-grown songs to the celebration of local musicians



Poet and musician Rahsaan "Wordslave" Eldridge once imagined his songs with an orchestra behind them.

One of the numbers Jimi Davies will contribute is a song called "Balancing Act" which he's performed with his other band, Jarflys. It also appeared on a solo recording project, *Mend The Hollow*. Another offering will be a track from his latest Jimmie's Chicken Shack studio album, *2econds*.

"That's a song I started writing in 2002 but didn't finish until 2022," he explains, "and it's called 'The Sound You Make.'" More than two decades later, the composer will get to hear his work burnished and expanded with a live orchestral accompaniment. Says Davies of his involvement in the project, "I just thought it would be great to feature our local artists and incorporate some members of the youth orchestra with seasoned musicians, so we can bridge the age gaps in our audiences."

"Jimi has such energy," Rosenthal says, admiringly. "For him, it's all about taking care of the local music scene."

***The Sound We Make* will be performed on Sunday, May 31 at 8 p.m. at Live Arts Maryland Studio at the Annapolis Mall. For tickets, visit liveartsmd.org or call 443-771-5198.**

Remembering The Ladies

LOCAL AUTHORS LAURA KAMOIE AND STEPHANIE DRAY RELEASE A FOUNDING MOTHER, A NOVEL ABOUT ABIGAIL ADAMS

By Cali Schwerdtfeger



Stephanie Dray
(Photo by Kelsey Edwards)



Laura Kamoie
(Photo by Renee Hollingshead)

On May 10, we celebrate mothers past, present, and future. And in doing so, we remember women who helped shape what motherhood looks like today.

New York Times bestselling authors, and local Annapolis-area writers, Stephanie Dray and Laura Kamoie are bringing one such story to life in their new novel, *A Founding Mother*, which centers on Abigail Adams, one of history's original "founding mothers."

This marks the duo's third collaboration, each of their books dedicated to illuminating the lives of historical women whose voices have often been overlooked. Where history has traditionally cast women as supporting characters, Dray and Kamoie use research and storytelling to place them back at the center.

We spoke with Dray and Kamoie about their upcoming release, their continued focus on women's stories, and why Abigail Adams feels more relevant than ever. At first, Abigail Adams didn't feel like an obvious choice for the duo to write about. With HBO's *John Adams* bringing her story to the screen, it seemed like one that had already been told. But the closer they looked, they realized something important was missing.

"Though we do see some of Abigail's life at home while he's away [in the HBO series], it's mostly in snippets," they explained. "It was at least a decade that they are apart [John and Abigail Adams] and she's living a harrowing and really heroic life without him."

That realization became the foundation of *A Founding Mother*—not Abigail as a supporting figure, but as a woman navigating war, motherhood, and survival largely on her own.

"We think of Abigail as the quintessential American mother," they shared. But for Abigail, motherhood was never passive. It wasn't just about raising children, it was also about shaping the world they would inherit. "Abigail believes that part of being a good mother is having an impact on the world that her children are going to live in." It's a sentiment that feels strikingly modern.

While Abigail lived in a time of revolution, uncertainty, and war, her daily life reflected challenges many women still face today. For long stretches, she functioned as what the authors describe as "essentially a single mom," balancing the responsibilities of raising children, managing finances, and even running a business. "She's juggling not just being a mother, but also being an entrepreneur," they said. "When we think about how women take on all sorts of tasks now, including all the emotional labor… that's Abigail." Abigail wasn't the type of character who needed to be modernized or rewritten to still resonate with today's readers. "Readers are going to think that we modernized her," they said. "But we didn't. This is just who she was." Her words and her beliefs were ahead of her time.

Famously urging her husband to "remember the ladies," Abigail advocated for women's rights in a way that still feels bold today.

It's a reminder that strong, outspoken women have always existed even if history didn't always give them the spotlight. Of course, telling a story like Abigail's comes with its challenges. Through careful research and a deep understanding of their subject, Dray and Kamoie work to fill in those gaps that still feel true to Abigail. And in doing so, they also bring to life one of history's most compelling love stories.

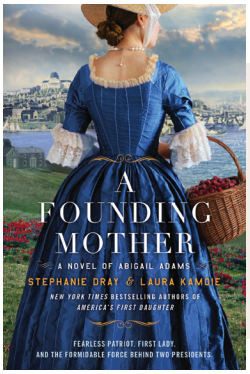
Often, women connected to powerful men are remembered only in relation to them. But in *A Founding Mother*, the relationship between Abigail and John Adams is something more; a partnership that evolves over time. "They were an unusual couple for the time," they said. "A great American love story." While their marriage wasn't without its challenges, it was built on mutual respect, growth, and, ultimately, support on both sides. It's a portrayal that feels refreshingly balanced. Still, it is Abigail's strength as a mother that leaves the most lasting impression.

One of the most striking examples comes in a decision that would be unimaginable for many parents today: sending her young son across the ocean during a time of war, believing it would secure his future. "She said that she did not want to fasten a padlock on his mind," they shared. It's a powerful image of motherhood, not just as protection, but as letting go. Trusting that what is best for a child may also be the hardest choice to make. And that, perhaps, is what makes Abigail Adams's story so timeless. Her story, though rooted in history, continues to shape the way we understand motherhood today.

For Dray and Kamoie, bringing this story to life feels especially meaningful as local authors in a place as rich in history as Annapolis.

"The Maryland and Annapolis audience has been hugely supportive of us over the years," they shared. "We're always so excited to celebrate with our local libraries and bookstores." And the area's rich revolutionary history serves as a reminder that while Abigail's story may be centuries old, it is very much rooted in the present in communities like our own.

This Mother's Day, as we celebrate the women in our lives, *A Founding Mother* offers a powerful opportunity to reflect on the generations of women who came before us, those who raised families, built futures, and quietly helped shape the world we live in today. Because long before we celebrated mothers, they were already making history.



A Founding Mother releases May 5, with a local author event at Park Books in Severna Park on May 2.

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Exploring the Chesapeake Bay by Kayak

By Tyler Ingle

The Chesapeake Bay continually draws wonder from locals and tourists alike. The Bay itself covers 4,480 square miles from its mouth near Virginia Beach, Virginia, to its head near Havre De Grace, Maryland. While it would be quite the challenge to visit its vast entirety, there are fortunately several featured "water trails" that make up the Chesapeake Water Trail group, offering glimpses to the Bay's natural beauty. These trails weave through wetlands, marshlands, rivers, around islands, and more habitat, all of which nestle up to the shore, creating a prime experience for both seasoned and beginner kayakers, paddleboarders, sailors, and boaters alike. Let's review a few water trails!

The Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail spans—believe or not—3,000 miles across five states and Washington, D.C. The route was established by the National Park Service as a National Historic Trail, from the Bay's Susquehanna headwaters in Cooperstown, New York, south through Pennsylvania, D.C., Delaware, and Maryland onward to Jamestown Colony in Virginia. An Englishman, Captain John Smith was the first European to explore the bay, beginning in 1608, creating maps which documented locations and information about different Native American tribes and communities. Whether you want to sail, powerboat, kayak or canoe, these Maryland portion of this water trail allows you to relive Smith's voyages while learning more about the historical significance of the bay. Many historic lighthouses, maritime centers, and small towns that dot the Bay's shores serve as starting and stopping points along the expansive trail network. For more details about this water trail, visit: nps.gov/cajo

For both paddleboard beginners and seasoned lovers, the **Janes Island State Park Water Trails** system offers seven different journeys, all in one location. Spanning a large portion of the lower Eastern Shore, Janes Island (near Crisfield, Maryland) includes renown saltmarshes, creating a safe haven for wildlife of the bay, such as birds, crabs, fish, and more. Visitors can also powerboat, fish, and crab at the state park, with no fee required to enter. For more information, visit: dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/pages/eastern/janesisland

The **Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge** was established in 1933 as a sanctuary for the migratory birds that travel along the Atlantic Flyway. For those looking to explore on foot, the refuge offers five miles of hiking trails, with an additional 17 miles of paddling trails for water fans. Looking to stay in the comfort of your own car? There is also a 3.6-mile Wildlife Drive, giving you all the sights and sounds while staying in air conditioning. Blackwater is highlighted by its pine forests, tidal marsh, and freshwater wetlands, serving as a critical spot for birds to both rest and feed before migrating further. In the wintertime, the refuge also serves as a primary spot for Canadian geese, while consistently offering a home to one of the highest amounts of nesting bald eagles on the Atlantic coast. More information: fws.gov/refuge/blackwater





Located in Dorchester County, the **Fishing Bay Trail** offers a river loop alongside several Island Creek trails, perfect for kayaking and paddling. This trail is the largest parcel of publicly owned tidal wetlands in the state, offering a remote experience across 28,500 acres. The marsh is home to a host of animals, such as herons, egrets, ibises, raptors, rails, and waterfowl. Camping at this site is only open to educational groups and Nause-Waiwash tribe members, however, there are overnight accommodations of both hotels and campgrounds close by. More information: dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/pages/publiclands/eastern/fishingbay

A former Civil War prison camp, the **Point Lookout Water Trails** system sits at the intersection of the Chesapeake Bay and Potomac River, creating an immersive spot with different wildlife and gorgeous views. Offering three trails/routes of about three miles, it's the perfect way to spend an hour on the paddleboard. Point Lookout State Park also offers overnight camping in the park, for those looking for a weekend getaway. More information: dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands/pages/southern/pointlookout.aspx

The **Nanticoke Water Trail**, a U.S. National Park, holds over 25 public boat launches and piers. Whether you're boating, paddling, or kayaking and canoeing, this trail will take you along the historic routes of the Nanticoke tribe, with a visit to the chief's town, formerly called "Kuskarawaok"—today known as Vienna. This trail is part of the formerly mentioned Captain John Smith Historic Trail group. Specific information here: nps.gov/thingstodo/nanticoke-water-trail.htm

Another U.S. National Park, the **Corsica River Water Trails** are an easily accessible group of trails that create opportunities to observe wildlife, take in history, and kayak/canoe to your heart's desire. All of the trails connect to the Centreville Wharf, an 18th and 19th centuries hub for trading. The park features three different trails that are considered beginner level. All trails can be done in one day, with an expected four-hour timeframe to complete the trio. More information: nps.gov/articles/000/paddling-the-corsica-river-water-trails.htm

The **Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center (CBEC)** in Grasonville has three water trails spanning distances from one mile to 2.8 miles, which offer the chance to kayak, canoe, or paddleboard. The three-plus miles of shoreline along the routes hosts 259 different species of birds. CBEC has also restored 445 acres of marsh, 55 acres of forestland, and 13 million oysters. For those looking to explore via walking, the property also offers six miles of hiking trails. More information: bayrestoration.org

Six separate water trail routes combine to form the **Kent Island Water Trails**. These trails range from larger waters to smaller, more concealed trails. Creating views of wildlife, nature, and more, these waterways are perfect for beginner explorers, while also being a relaxing journey for the more experienced. More information: visitqueenannes.com/business/kent-island-water-trails

While Smith Island may be known for its infamous cake, the **Smith Island Water Trails** are also well loved in the community. The seven marked water trails, which range from one mile to 4.4 miles cover over 8,000 acres of marshland, while also accessing the island's three villages. More information: visitsomerset.com/listing/smith-island-water-trails

There are so many different trails, routes, parks, and wildlife refuges throughout the Chesapeake Bay to explore. The only thing left is to pick where to start your adventure!





















Greater Annapolis Design District Member Appreciation Luncheon

On March 6, the Greater Annapolis Design District hosted a diverse group of local businesses for its annual member appreciation luncheon at the Severn Inn on the Annapolis waterfront. Guests enjoyed connection and conversation as GADD celebrated its membership. The event featured a seated lunch, open bar, and plenty of time to mingle with fellow members in a relaxed, elegant setting. Learn more at greaterannapolisdesigndistrict.com.

1. Britt Collins, Jordan Fox, Karen Fox, and Kayla Collins **2.** Denise Desien and Adam Peck **3.** Christine Fichtner and Olivia McElyea **4.** Megan Reilly, Lisa Tullai, Denise Desien, Andrea Wheeler, and Rick Miller **5.** Josh Stegall, John Peacock, and Katie Stegall **6.** Attendee group photo **7.** Melanie Hartwig-Davis and Jenyne Ward **8.** Jeff Schell and Gretchen Bandy **9.** Sarah Kraus, Megan Reiley, Jennifer Collins, Janet Haddock, and Amy Publicover

Photography by Laura Wiegmann

Expert of the Month



David Orso

David Orso | Owner | Licensed REALTOR® | The ORSO. Team
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A nationally acclaimed real estate agent, David Orso is known for his tireless work ethic, exhaustive market insight, and straightforward, professional, and personable approach. He pairs proven experience with in-depth local knowledge to deliver standout results. Since 2003, Orso has handled more than 2,000 transactions and well over $1 billion in sales.

Known for building lasting relationships, Orso has been repeatedly voted Best Real Estate Agent and Best Customer Service by local publications for more than a decade. He is also the author of Step Inside: The Unfiltered Truth About Listing and Selling Your Home, with proceeds benefiting the Anne Arundel Medical Center Breast Center, and Negotiation IS the Difference, with proceeds supporting head and neck cancer research at the University of Maryland. Deeply committed to giving back, Orso and his family donate 10% of their commissions to local charities while continuing to serve and support the community he calls home.

What market trends are you seeing in 2026?

Condition is KING. Buyers are willing to pay more for homes in premier condition. Conversely, homes that have not been updated are not being well accepted.

What is the biggest mistake that buyers and sellers are making in the current market?

Home sellers are still trying to chase COVID pricing and are failing to recognize a market shift has occurred. With interest rates double what they were in 2021, buyers do not have the same buying power and are more concerned about overpaying. A wise home seller should ask their agent, "What list price will generate competition from buyers?"

Tell us about a memorable transaction you recently closed.

I recently had the opportunity to sell a home that was originally purchased by Nick Saban in 1982. He coached the defensive backs for one year at Navy and then moved on to Michigan State.

David Orso
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Cocktails for a Cause

On October 16th, Seeds 4 Success held its annual Cocktails for a Cause event at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium—an evening of celebration, connection, and community impact. The event honored this year's Helping Hand and Caring Community Award recipients, and raised funding support for the life-changing mentoring programs that help children and families in Annapolis thrive. Learn more about the nonprofit at seeds4success.org.

1. Mary Spencer, former President & CEO of Community Foundation of Anne Arundel County, was awarded the Helping Hand Award by Seeds 4 Success Executive Director Jen Pastrone **2.** Milagros Bounds of Seeds 4 Success enjoys the evening **3.** State Senator Sheneka Henson, center, takes the podium **4.** Seeds 4 Success board members with youth program participants **5, 6 & 7.** Guests mingle at the event **8.** Seeds 4 Success Board Director Markus Moore with Adrian Rich and Janice Davis



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Photography courtesy Seeds 4 Success.

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Pete Alonso

BALTIMORE ORIOLES' DIAMOND-LEVEL ADDITION THIS OFFSEASON BRINGS LOFTY PLAY AND BIG LEAGUE EXPERIENCE TO LINEUP

By Tom Worgo



If Pete Alonso's wish came true, he'd be wearing No. 20 as the Baltimore Orioles' first baseman. Alonso suited up with that number during his seven-year career with the New York Mets. The issue: that number is retired. It belonged to Major League Baseball Hall of Famer Frank Robinson, who led the Orioles to two World Series.

"I thought if they have it available, it's a great number," Alonso explains. Instead, the 31-year-old Alonso will wear No. 25 with his new club. The Orioles won't shy away from likening Alonso to Robinson. Baltimore owner David Rubenstein did just that at Alonso's introductory press conference. Alonso has clubbed 264 home runs in 1,008 career games, while Robinson had 241 in 1,050 games across seven years.



The 6-foot-3, 245-pound Alonso signed the second most lucrative deal (5-year, $155 million) in Orioles' history. (Chris Davis signed the richest—a seven-year, $161 million contract in 1996.) Alonso should give the Orioles' lineup—also led by Gunnar Henderson and Taylor Ward—a boost since he produced one of his best seasons last year, batting .272 with 38 home runs and 126 RBIs.

We talked to Alonso recently about why he came to Baltimore, the Orioles chances for success, his Mets career, and family.

What led you to signing with Baltimore? The talent of the young core here is very promising. Having a new owner had something to do with it. I like the personalities. The vision and blueprint gave me a very detailed outline and plan for what will be happening. I just feel it will be exciting.

You said there is going to be a new Oriole way—a new chapter? What did you mean by that? It's multi-prong. You have the new data and analytics. It's a higher level understanding of the game of baseball. But you have a mix of veterans and young talent. It's a very storied organization when you have the big names from the past like they do. I'm talking about players like Cal Ripken, Jr., Jim Palmer, and Frank Robinson. Doing my research, Cal Ripken, Sr., was an integral part of the organization. Cal, Sr., once said, "This is the way we are going to be doing it. Hard-nosed baseball from top to bottom." It's a reimagining of that old-school mentality with young, exciting talent. And you mix in the overall Baltimore philosophy.

You can't wear No. 20 because Frank Robinson's number is retired. You went with 25. What are your thoughts there? Good gracious. Frank Robinson is a Hall of Famer and one of the all-time greats. Of course, I am not going to take that number or think I have the opportunity. I chose 25 because it was the year my wife and I had our first child. It was a special year as a family.

How has having a baby changed your life? It has just made it better. Being a dad and husband are my biggest honors. I love my family and being around them. I love their support. For me, it's really the best and very warming. It's just been the best.

Photography courtesy Baltimore Orioles





Orioles' owner David Rubenstein compared you to Robinson. Do you welcome those comparisons and pressure? I take it as flattery. It's very high praise for me. Those words are very kind. That just means he believes in me and what I bring to the team. I just want to give everything I possibly can for this team and organization and the City of Baltimore.

Orioles President of Baseball Operations and General Manager Mike Elias said the team has the best lineup in baseball with you in the middle of it. Do you agree? Absolutely. You look at the talent and obviously it has performed well. Overall, if everybody stays healthy for the whole year, then we will have a great chance to be the best offense in baseball. If we can do that, I don't see why not.

You have hit 37 or more home runs five times, including 40 or more three times. Is Camden Yards a place where you feel you can continue putting up those types of numbers? It has a great backdrop and great visuals. It's one of the great ballparks to hit in. It's one of the friendlier hitting environments. I feel if I am making good consistent contact with the baseball, it should complement my game.

Why did you decide to change your walkup song played through the stadium when you are coming up to bat? I change my walk-up song every year. I like classic rock. Whatever song works. If I am hitting really well with one, that will stick. If I am not hitting well or balls aren't falling, and if I don't feel good about the song, I am apt to change it. Hopefully, I am really consistent, and I find the magic one.

What are the keys to staying healthy? You played 162 games in each of the past two years and not less than 152 in a full season. I think the biggest thing is commitment in the weight room and taking care of my body. I have to get my lifting in and do my conditioning work along with my offseason jumping. When I do all of that, it puts me in a really good spot.

How did you get the nickname "Polar Bear?" Todd Frazier was my teammate in 2019. My locker was next to his in the old spring training complex. As camp goes on, one time I am getting changed and he says, "You just look like a big old polar bear." Ever since then, the name has stuck. I don't mind it.

Was it tough leaving the Mets? That's the only team you had played for. I had a lot of great relationships with the players and staff in New York. But being here in Baltimore is just so special. Being presented with this situation at this time. For me, I feel like this is home. To be wanted and appreciated here in Baltimore the way I have. The warmth I have felt from everybody here from the top down. It just feels right. I feel I am very blessed to be here. It's such a good opportunity.

What has your interaction with the fans and community been like? It's been great. Fans have been so receptive and welcoming. My experience has been excellent. (Birdland) Caravan was such a fantastic event. Spring training was exciting. It gets me excited for the year. I am hoping over 162 games and the playoffs, we can give them some amazing memories the fans can carry through the years. They can say, "That 2026 team was really special."

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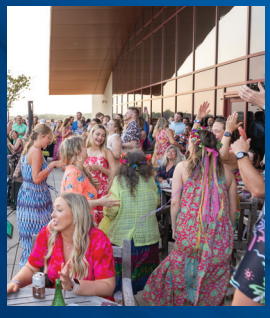





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2026 PHILANTHROPIC EVENT CALENDAR

cheers for charity

BY CALI SCHWERDFEGER

FRIDAY, MAY 1ST

Haven Ministries Golf Tournament for Haven Ministries at Prospect Bay Country Club in Grasonville. Haven-ministries.org; Enjoy a great day of golf at Prospect Bay Country Club while supporting Haven Ministries to provide HOPE through Shelter, Clothing, Food, and Support.

Golfing Fore Gunston for the Gunston School at the Queenstown Harbor Golf Course in Queenstown. Gunston. Org; Join fellow Gunston parents, alumni and community members for another fun-filled day on the links. Continental breakfast will be served in the clubhouse before we tee off with a shotgun start at 9 a.m.

SATURDAY, MAY 2ND

Talisman Derby Day for Talisman Therapeutic Riding at their campus in Grasonville. Talismantherapeuticriding.org; Coming down the home stretch is the event you've been waiting for—the 152st running of the Kentucky Derby celebrated at the organization's annual Derby Day Fundraiser.

The Fuse 1 year Anniversary for the Opportunity Builders, Inc at The Fuse in Millersville as we celebrate the one-year anniversary of THE FUSE at our upcoming fundraiser. It will be a night filled with great food, drink, energy, music, and the unmistakable sense of community that makes THE FUSE so special.

Tri-County Ice Cream Classic for Wounded Warriors and the Harriet Tubman Museum at Talbot County Community Center in Easton. Ridec3.org; Choose your challenge—a 23-, 38-, 64-, or 102-mile race to support Wounded Warriors.

Festival At The Farm for Wellness House of Annapolis at Chesapeake Dressage Institute in Annapolis. Annapoliswellnesshouse.org; The Festival at the Farm is a special fundraiser supporting the Wellness House of Annapolis, where we help cancer patients and their families navigate the emotional, physical and mental challenges of their journey.

Spring Gala: Reflections & Connections for Academy Art Museum at the museum in Easton. Academyartmuseum.org; This year's theme, Connections & Reflections, is inspired by the breathtaking work of renowned hyper-photorealistic painter Richard Estes.

MONDAY, MAY 4TH

25th Annual Tee Up For A Child for CASA Anne Arundel County at Crofton Country Club in Crofton. Aacasa.org; Get on the greens at Crofton Country Club to help raise money for CASA, who believes every child who's been abused or neglected deserves to have a dedicated advocate speaking up for their best interest in court, at school, and in our community.

THURSDAY, MAY 7TH

Treasure the Chesapeake for Chesapeake Bay Trust at the Baltimore Museum of Industry. Cbtrust.org; This annual celebration helps the Chesapeake Bay Trust empower hundreds of community-based organizations every year to restore nature.

FRIDAY, MAY 8TH

Boots & Bling: A Culinary Experience for Hospice of the Chesapeake at Rod 'N' Reel in Chesapeake Beach. Hospicechesapeake.org; Get ready for an unforgettable night of fun and style at Boots and Bling!

Julianne Rosela Memorial Golf Tournament for The Julianne Rosela Foundation. Juliannerosela.org; Enjoy a great day of golf while supporting the Julianne Rosela Foundation; founded to assist in addressing the needs of local families that experience tragic loss as well as to provide scholarships for Kent Island HS and Queen Anne's County HS graduating seniors.

Y'ALL Ball for the YWCA at the Naval Academy's new Fluegel Alumni Center Annapolis. Annapolisywca.org; Celebrate friendship while supporting the work and mission of the YWCA. Music, photo bus, fire pits, and delicious food.

SATURDAY, MAY 9TH

Sultana Education Foundation's Annual Gala for Sultana Education at Clovelly Farm in Chestertown. Sultanagala.org; The Sultana Education Foundation's Annual Gala is a party with a mission–raising $100,000+ each year to underwrite scholarship programs and support specific capital initiatives.

MONDAY MAY 11TH

The Fello Golf Tournament for The Arc Central Chesapeake Region at Queenstown Harbor Golf Course in Queenstown. Fello.org; Tee It Up for The Arc is a day of great food, golf, and of course–a great cause. This event has sold out annually since 2019–so grab your spot today!

THURSDAY, MAY 14TH

Friends for Friends for Friends of the Light House at USNA Fluegel Alumni Center in Annapolis. Friendslhs.org; Join your Friends for a fabulous Night Out to support The Light House, a homeless prevention support center.

Golf Fore Our Girls for Girls on the Run at Renditions Golf Course in Davidsonville. Gotrchesapeake.org; Join us for a great day of "Golf Fore Our Girls" while benefitting Girls on the Run of the Greater Chesapeake girls, ensuring access to our positive, youth development program across our region.

SATURDAY, MAY 16TH

Blue Ribbon Bash for the Blue Ribbon Project at the Elks Lodge in Severna Park. Blueribbonproject.org; Come support the Blue Ribbon Project's Mission to help abused and Neglected Children in our community.

MAY 16TH & 17TH

Bike MS Chesapeake Challenge for National MS Society at Talbot County Community Center in Easton. Events.nationalmssociety.org; You'll ride some of the flattest roads Bike MS has to offer, while cruising through scenic byways.

MONDAY, MAY 18TH

11th Annual Bo's Effort Golf Tournament for Bo's Effort at Queenstown Harbor Golf Course in Queenstown. Boseffort.org; Bo's Effort seeks to assemble community resources to break the stigma of mental illness through education and guidance.

FRIDAY, MAY 29TH

Relay for Life Anne Arundel County for American Cancer Society at Crofton High School; secure.acsevents.org; Relay For Life is a community based non-competitive walking event that brings together more than 3.5 million people worldwide to celebrate the lives of those who have battled cancer, remember those we have lost, and empower individuals and communities to fight back against this terrible disease.

Golf for Life for Nico's Hope for Life Foundation at Queenstown Harbor; nicoshopeforlifefoundation.org; Come out for Nico's 3rd annual Golf 4 Hope Tournament. Get involved, practice your putt, and we will see you at the links!

SATURDAY, MAY 30TH

NAMI Mental Health Gala & Awards Dinner for National Alliance on Mental Illness Anne Arundel County at Crowne Plaza Hotel in Annapolis. Join in being a beacon of hope to families living with mental illness by attending the Gala & Awards Dinner.

Pints 4 Paws for SPCA of Anne Arundel County at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium in Annapolis; annapolishomebrewclub.com; It's time once again for The Annapolis Home Brew Club's Annual Pints 4 Paws Homebrewing and Craft Beer Festival to benefit the SPCA of Anne Arundel County! This year lets celebrate our 9th year of throwing this awesome event!

JUNE 2ND& 3RD

GreenGive for Arundel Rivers Federation, Crownsville Conservancy, Friends of Jug Bay, Scenic Rivers Land Trust, Severn River Association, Spa Creek Conservancy, St. Luke's Restoration of Nature, Unity Gardens, and Watershed Stewards Academy, virtual event. Greengive.org; GreenGive is an online, collaborative initiative to raise funds for and increase awareness of local environmental organizations. We have 9 partner organizations involved and this year's GreenGive.

THURSDAY, JUNE 4TH

Fashion for a Cause for Hospice of the Chesapeake at the Fluegel Alumni Center in Annapolis. hospicechesapeake.org; Watch as models from our community strut the runway in chic daywear, black-tie elegance, and resort-ready looks from beloved local clothiers on Main Street and Town Center.

FRIDAY, JUNE 5TH

Annual Casey Cares Rockfish Tournament for Casey Cares Foundation at Chesapeake Bay Beach Club in Stevensville. Caseycares.org; It will be a great day and evening of fishing, fundraising, and celebrating at the Bay Bridge Marina and The Inn at Chesapeake Bay Beach Club!

SATURDAY, JUNE 6TH

Tour de Talbot for Talbot Thrive at Easton Fire Hall; tourdetalbot.org; Ride the scenic roads of Talbot County Maryland! You'll have a choice of three distances, 31.5, 40 or 61.5 miles which wind through the flat farmland and take you to water views, wooden bridges and friendly faces throughout the Eastern Shore.

11th Annual Chesapeake Children's Book Festival Supporting the Ta;bot County Free Library at the Easton location. Kick off summer reading at the 11th Annual Chesapeake Children's Book Festival! Children who sign up and attend will receive one free book (while supplies last) from the attending author of their choice. Some authors will give readings of their books; there will be crafts, displays and giveaways.

JUNE 6TH & 7TH

Chesapeake Bay Motoring Festival for Queen Anne's County Mental Health Committee at Kent Island Yacht Club in Easton. Chesapeakebaymotoringfestival.org; Support the Queen Anne's County Mental Health Committee, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization established to support those members of our community who need assistance coping with mental illness.

TUESDAY, JUNE 9TH

What's Up? Media's Best Of Party celebrates the best of the area's restaurants, shops, services, entertainment, and businesses all rolled up into one fantastic fundraising event at the Doordan Institute at Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center in Annapolis. Get your tickets at whatsupmag.com.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10TH

18th Annual Paca Girlfriends Party for Historic Annapolis at William Paca Garden in Annapolis. Pacagirlfriends.annapolis.org; Join Historic Annapolis for the social event of the season! Wander the picturesque William Paca Garden as you enjoy a glass of bubbly and indulge in culinary creations prepared by the area's premier chefs.

13th Annual Chip in for the Arts Golf Tournament for Chesapeake Arts at Compass Pointe Golf Course in Pasadena. Chesapeakearts.org; Join us in supporting CAC's arts and education programs as a sponsor, player, foursome, donor, or volunteer for our 12th Annual Chip in for the Arts Golf Tournament

SATURDAY, JUNE 13TH

Bands in the Sand for Chesapeake Bay Foundation at Philip Merrill Environmental Center in Annapolis. Events.cbf.org; Bands in the Sand is the party of the year, and you won't want to miss it! Each summer 1,600 guests gather on the beach, dance the night away to live music, and raise a drink to a saved Bay.

Every Step Counts for Bello Machre at Anne Arundel Community College. Bellomachre.org; Every Step Counts is an annual Walk & Bike Ride to benefit our mission of providing a lifetime of loving care, guidance, and opportunities for people with developmental disabilities.

MONDAY, JUNE 15TH

Casey Cares Golf Tournament for Casey Cares at Hayfields Country Club in Cockeysville. Caseycares.org; Proceeds from the tournament will directly benefit thousands of critically ill children in Casey Cares programs! Don't miss this opportunity to make a meaningful difference while golfing for a great cause!

JUNE 19TH — 21ST

Antique & Classic Boat Festival and Costal Arts Fair for the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum. Cbmm.org; The Antique & Classic Boat Festival is accompanied by a juried Coastal Arts Fair with vendors exhibiting and selling a variety of unique artworks and merchandise that celebrates boating and life on and around the water. The festivities also include a Field of Dreams for those looking to buy, a nautical flea market, and children's activities.

SATURDAY, JUNE 27TH

Solstice Celebration for Shore Rivers at Wilmer Park in Chestertown. Shorerivers.org; Enjoy live music by the Judd Nielsen Band, signature cocktails, delicious food from Occasions Catering, good company, and an exceptional live auction to benefit healthier local waterways.

SUNDAY, JUNE 28TH

Taste for Life for American Cancer Society at The Pendry in Baltimore. Tasteforlifemd.acsgala.org; Indulge in a culinary adventure featuring gourmet delights crafted by the Center Club's renowned chefs, complemented by exceptional wine tastings from prestigious vineyards.

MONDAY, JUNE 29TH

Woodmore Charity Golf Tournament for Benedictine School at The Country Club at Woodmore in Mitchellville. Benschool.org; Your generous contribution can create lasting change. Join our mission and support the cause by making a donation.

JULY 10TH — 19TH

Plein Air Easton for the Avalon Foundation throughout Downtown Easton. Plein Air Easton is the largest and most prestigious juried plein air painting competition in the United States, held annually in July in Easton, Maryland. Artists from across the country and around the world apply for the chance to be among the 58 juried artists selected by a distinguished juror each year.

SATURDAY, JULY 25TH

Bay Paddle for Oyster Recovery Partnership in the Chesapeake Bay. Baypaddle.org; An epic day of paddle races and a post paddle festival to celebrate and help protect the Chesapeake Bay.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 1ST

Casey Cares Foundation 5K Run/Walk for Casey Cares Foundation at the Maryland Zoo in Baltimore. Caseycares.org; Lace up your sneakers and join Casey Cares for our 17th Annual 5K Run/1-Mile Walk

FRIDAY, AUGUST 7TH

81st Annual Rotary Club of Annapolis Crab Feast for Annapolis Rotary Club at Navy Marine Corps Memorial Stadium. Annapolisrotary.org; This well-known Annapolis event is a major fundraiser for the community, benefiting many nonprofit organizations. This is an all-you-can eat feast, along with other food options, beer, water, and soda.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 9TH

Watermen's Appreciation Day for the Talbot Watermen Association hosted by the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum. Cbmm.org; The high-energy watermen's rodeo embodies the spirit of the festival. This is your chance to join the crowd along CBMM's Miles River waterfront to cheer on the Chesapeake Cowboys, who showcase their skill and precision while maneuvering their deadrise workboats into an assigned slip in a thrilling, timed competition.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5TH

Charity Boat Auction for Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum. Cbmm.org; A Labor Day weekend staple for more than two decades, the Charity Boat Auction is the flagship event of CBMM's Charity Boat Donation Program, which accepts and sells gently used boats year-round. Every sale directly supports CBMM's mission to explore and preserve the history, environment, and culture of the entire Chesapeake Bay region and make this resource available to all.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11TH

Annual Jacob Sloan Memorial Golf Tournament for The Jacob Sloan Foundation at the Queenstown Harbor Golf Course in Queenstown. Jacobsloanfoundation.org; Every dollar raised at our annual golf tournament is a step toward making a positive impact in our community and your support helps continue Jacob's legacy of kindness, generosity, and hope.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH

Lil Amp's Bent Rods Fishing Tournament for Not My children foundation at Red Eye's Dock Bar in Grasonville, MD. Notmychild.org; More details coming soon

St Charles Running Festival for Hospice of the Chesapeake at Regency Furniture Stadium in Waldorf. Hospicechesapeake.org; Join us at Regency Furniture Stadium for a race that supports our Charles County neighbors facing serious illness and loss. After crossing the finish line, stick around for the Taste of Southern Maryland post-race celebration—featuring local food, music, and fun for all ages. It's a family-friendly community event you won't want to miss!

SEPTEMBER 19TH & 20TH

Annapolis Baygrass Music Festival for multiple Maryland based non-profits at Sandy Point State Park in Annapolis. Baygrassfestival.com; Part of all proceeds from ticket, food, beverage, and merchandise sales will go to Maryland-based non-profit organizations including Watershed Stewards Academy, Oyster Recovery Partnership, and Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20TH

Annapolis Run for The Light House for Friends of The Light House at Quiet Waters Park in Annapolis. Annapolisrunforthelighthouse.org; The 17th annual Annapolis Run for The Light House provides scenic half marathon, 5k, and walk routes along the trails of Quiet Waters Park and through the beautiful Chesapeake Bay-front community of Hillsmere Shores.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24TH

Blazers. Bourbon. Cigars. For Historic Annapolis at William Paca Garden in Annapolis. Bbc.annapolis.org; Connect with a wide network of influential leaders-the region's top entrepreneurs, business professionals, and visionaries representing our diverse community-in the picturesque William Paca Garden.

Hospice of the Chesapeake Golf Tournament for Hospice of the Chesapeake at Queenstown Harbor Golf Course in Queenstown. Hospicechesapeake.org; Whether you're a seasoned golfer or a casual player, you'll bring hope and healing to patients, loved ones, and the community at a difficult time. Come for the game, stay for the cause—and make a lasting impact in our community.

SEPTEMBER 25TH — 27TH

St. Michaels Concors d' Elegance for the Student Chapter of Antique Automobile Club of America at Kent Island Yacht Club. Smcde.org.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1ST

End of Summer Luau supporting Partners in Care Inc at Kurtz's Beach in Pasadena. Partnersincare.org; Celebrate and support our 2026 annual fundraiser that allows us to continue offering support to older adults throughout Maryland to age in place and remain in their homes.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3RD

100 Plates Dinner Supporting Haven Ministries at the Four Seasons Community Clubhouse. Haven-ministries.org; More details Please check with the organization for the most up to date information.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4TH

Lifeline 100 Bicycle Event for Anne Arundel County nonprofit organizations at Kinder Farm Park in Millersville. Lifeline100.com; The award-winning Anne Arundel County Lifeline 100 Bicycle Event is pleased to be an inclusive event offering scenic 65- and 100-mile county tours with water views and historic sites, 15-and 30-mile flat, paved trail rides; and a free bike rodeo and family fun ride for children!

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8TH

London Town In Bloom: A Garden Party Soirée For Historic London town at the London Town Gardens. Historiclondontown.org; Step into an unforgettable soirée at Historic London Town and Gardens! Wander through blooming pathways filled with live music stations, hands-on activity stops, and local artisan vendors. Dress in your best colonial attire (costumes encouraged!) as you enjoy a festive evening.

OCTOBER 8TH — 10TH

Chesapeake Film Festival benefits the Chesapeake Film Festival at various locations in Easton. Cheapeakefilmfestival.org; It is the mission of the Chesapeake Film Festival to entertain, empower, educate, and inspire diverse audiences of all ages by presenting exceptional independent films and events.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17TH

Tilghman Island Day Benefits the Tilghman Volunteer Fire Company it's a fun-filled visit to the home of the seafood industry! Enjoy fresh delicious, local Eastern Shore seafood, come for the food and stay for the live music by Bird Dog and the Road Kings, waterman's contests, boat docking, anchor throw, crab picking and oyster shucking and more family fun than any other day of the year- in the beautiful fall weather of an Eastern Shore autumn!

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7TH

CASAblanca Gala for Anne Arundel County's CASA at The Westin Hotel; aacasa.org; More details coming soon. OysterFest Supporting the Chesapeake Bay maritime Museum at their Campus in St Michaels. Cbmm.org. inviting the community to celebrate the Bay's favorite bivalve with a day of fun for the whole family. The OysterFest menu, of course, features fresh oysters served a variety of ways, plus other local fare, craft beer, and spirits. There's also live music on two stages, an oyster stew competition, boat rides, a full schedule of demonstrations and presentations, children's activities, and more.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12TH

Celebration of Philanthropy Awards Luncheon at Live! Casino & Hotel in Hanover for the Community Foundation of Anne Arundel County (CFAAC); cfaac.org; Join CFAAC in honoring the incredible individuals, organizations, and businesses that demonstrate outstanding generosity and community leadership in Anne Arundel County.

NOVEMBER 13TH — 15TH

Waterfowl Festival at Downtown Easton supporting wildlife and habitat conservation, education, scholarships, and research. Waterfowlfestival.org; For three days every November, nearly 35,000 attendees discover the best of local wildlife, nature, art, heritage, food, and FUN at the annual Waterfowl Festival. Over a dozen venues spread throughout the town entice and engage visitors to explore the area and be a part of a tradition that has been going strong for generations.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15TH

Sip & Savor Supporting Hospice of the Chesapeake at The Newton White Mansion in Mitchellville. As you sip and savor your way through curated food and beverage stations, you'll discover the powerful difference you make in the lives of Hospice of the Chesapeake patients and families across Prince George's County.



EVENTS TYPICALLY HELD IN AUTUMN

Please check with each organization for the most up to date information.

Rock the Reef for Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center. Bayrestoration.org

Light House Pumpkin Patch for Friends of The Light House

Hoedown on the Farm for Maryland Therapeutic Riding

GiGi's Pickleball Tournament for GiGi's Playhouse

OBI Mardi Gras Masquerade for Opportunity Builders, Inc.

Bountiful Harvest for The Friends of The Light House

Rock 'N' Roll Bash for Casey Cares

Birdies for Benedictine for Benedictine School

Academy Art Museum of Easton– June 20 event details pending

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OBI opportunity builders, inc. EST. 1962

Opportunity Builders, Inc. (OBI) supports individuals with disabilities throughout Anne Arundel County to live, work, and thrive as valued members of their community.

OBI is being recognized for its success with THE FUSE– the region's first inclusive 21+ pop-up nightclub for people with *and without* disabilities. Once a month, OBI creates a "fusion" of Maryland's hottest bands, DJs, food trucks, bars, and more–creating a safe, welcoming atmosphere and a crowd all about good times and zero judgment.

This May, THE FUSE celebrates a huge milestone–the one-year anniversary of what has become known as *inclusion after dark*!

Scan QR code to help OBI "power" THE FUSE for another year!

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Mission-Driven Community Celebration

Waterfowl Festival

Easton, MD

For fifty-five years, the Waterfowl Festival in historic Easton, Maryland has used art to mirror the beauty of nature and inspire environmental stewardship. Each year, the festival presents a juried showcase of wildlife and sporting art – from paintings and sculptures to carvings and photography – that deepens appreciation for the outdoors.

The festival focuses on creating connections between the festival attendee and the wild open spaces on the Eastern Shore. The educational attractions, dock dog and retriever dog demonstrations, fishing demos, carving and painting exhibitions, and interactive drawing and carving lessons are some of the pathways used to create these connections - inspiring others to take notice and learn to care for the special place we call home.



Kids enjoying a decoy soap carving class

In addition to the festival weekend, programs such as the Community in Conservation grants and the William Perry Scholarship fund have contributed over six million dollars back into our community. Thousands of volunteers each year work together to make the festival a success at every level and something to celebrate each year. The festival contributes between five and six million dollars



2026 Featured Artist Ray Brown "Bonnie and Clyde"
Charcoal on board

in positive economic impact regionally and around nine million dollars in state-wide impact in just one weekend. Visitors from 45 states and multiple countries come together for this much-anticipated event every second weekend in November.

Artistic expression here also advances the Festival's mission of conservation. Every sale supports wetland restoration, youth environmental programs, and local nonprofits. In this way, art becomes action: visitors leave with nature-inspired treasures while helping protect wildlife and habitats for generations to come.

55th WATERFOWL FESTIVAL® | MSAC maryland state arts council

November 13-15, 2026
For more information:
waterfowlfestival.org



Creating Community for 65 Years

At Fello, we champion the rights of people with disabilities and invest in what matters most: real opportunities, strong relationships, and inclusive, equitable communities.

What began in 1961 with a handful of families advocating for dignity and opportunity for their children with disabilities has grown into a statewide movement—and in 2026, we're proud to celebrate 65 years of that impact. Together, we have created housing where people build their futures, services that meet people where they are, and a culture of inclusion that strengthens every community we touch.

Today, we support over 4,000 people with disabilities across Maryland through personalized services, self-direction, trauma-informed behavioral health, and inclusive housing. We are also the state's largest provider of self-directed services, supporting more than 3,500 participants and the 9,500+ employees they have hired. This milestone year is both a celebration of how far we've come and a commitment to the future we are still building together.

As you consider your philanthropic giving, think of Fello. Your support helps us remove barriers, champion choice, and build inclusive communities where everyone can live full, meaningful lives on their own terms.

fello.
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CREATING COMMUNITY

fello.org
410-269-1883
999 Corporate Blvd, Suite 300
Linthicum, MD 21090

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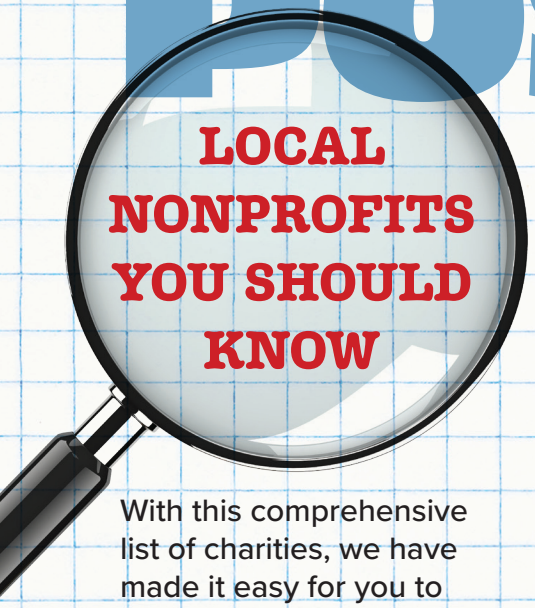

With this comprehensive list of charities, we have made it easy for you to map out your charitable agenda, whether you'd like to volunteer for a cause near and dear to you, join a community organization, or donate in other ways. Here are some of the many nonprofit organizations based in Annapolis, Anne Arundel County, Prince George's County, and beyond. Although we can't list them all, these are nonprofits you should know. And if you'd like to introduce us to one or more charities—to add to this growing list—please email: editor@whatsupmag.com. Also, check out the many events these nonprofits have scheduled in our Philanthropic Calendar both online and in this issue.

100 Women Who Care Annapolis Annapolis; 100womenwhocareannapolis@gmail.com; 100womenwhocareannapolis.org; A giving circle of local women who want to support Annapolis area nonprofits by pooling donations to create a larger impact.

Adaptive Rowing Annapolis Annapolis; 410-991-3008; adaptiverowingannapolis.org; Adaptive Rowing Annapolis (ARA) enhances the lives of adults in the Annapolis area with physical or cognitive disabilities by offering year-round training and rowing opportunities, both on and off the water.

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay Annapolis; 443-949-0575; allianceforthebay.org; Engages individuals, groups, businesses, and other environmental organizations and not-for-profit groups to develop collaborative solutions to improve, preserve, and protect the Chesapeake Bay and all its resources.

American Red Cross of Anne Arundel County/Central Maryland Annapolis; 410-624-2000; redcross.org; Respond to disasters, assist members of the military, teach lifesaving skills, and serve as one of the largest blood suppliers in the United States.

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention Annapolis; 202-770-8973; afsp.org; Focuses on educating our communities about mental health and suicide prevention, advocating for public policy, and offering support for suicide loss survivors.

Annapolis & Anne Arundel County Scholarship Trust Corporation Annapolis; annapolistrust.org; Partners with communities to provide inspiration, mentoring, and financial support for first generation students to realize their dream of a college education.

Annapolis Community Foundation Annapolis; 443-370-1785; annapoliscommunityfoundation.org; ACF serves the community by raising, managing, and distributing funds for the charitable purposes designated by its donors.

Annapolis Film Festival Annapolis; annapolisfilmfestival.com; Provide curated cinematic arts experiences to ignite, inspire, and entertain. Through independent film, we showcase film makers, global viewpoints and diverse perspectives that spark conversation and understanding to bond and unify our community.

Annapolis Immigration Justice Network Annapolis; 443-203-9175; aijnetwork.org; A volunteer supported organization dedicated to connecting asylum seekers and other vulnerable immigrants to quality legal counsel and direct case management support.

Annapolis Maritime Museum & Park Annapolis; 410-295-0104; amaritime.org; Acquire, preserve, interpret, and exhibit artifacts, and photographic and archival collections that are part of the maritime history of the Chesapeake region.

Annapolis Opera Company Annapolis; 410-267-0087; annapolisopera.org; Annapolis Opera Company is a cultural touchstone for the community, which delights audiences with musical storytelling; engages new audiences with diverse programming that inspires curiosity for opera; and attracts emerging artists.

Annapolis Police Foundation Annapolis; annapolispolicefoundation.org; Raises charitable funds to support the Annapolis Police Department in increasing the capacity and improving the effectiveness of police programs and community outreach activities.

hospice of the chesapeake



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- ✓ Family Support
- ✓ Care at Home
- ✓ Inpatient Care

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Annapolis Summer Garden Theatre Annapolis; 410-268-9212; summergarden.com; Bring community-lead stage productions to downtown Annapolis during the summer.

Annapolis Symphony Orchestra Annapolis; 410-269-1132; annapolissymphony.org; Produce, present, and promote memorable symphonic music that increases awareness, enjoyment, and appreciation of music for all ages throughout the region.

Anne Arundel Community College Foundation Arnold; 410-777-2515; aacc.edu/about/aacc-foundation; The AACC Foundation expands private philanthropy and cultivates partnerships to enhance AACC's ability to support students and initiatives that strengthen our community.

Anne Arundel Conflict Resolution Center Annapolis; aacrc.info; offers mediation, facilitation, and community conferencing services to individuals and groups in conflict.

Anne Arundel Counseling Annapolis and Glen Burnie; 410-768-5988; annearundelcounseling.com; Counseling and therapeutic professionals dedicated to providing comprehensive treatment to children, adolescents, and adults through individual, family and group counseling.

Anne Arundel County CASA Annapolis; 410-222-3330; aacasa.org; CASA educates and empowers diverse community volunteers who ensure each child's needs remain a priority in an over-burdened child welfare system.

Anne Arundel County Community Action Agency Annapolis; 410-626-1900; aaccaa.org; Working in partnership with various governmental and non- public organizations to alleviate the difficulties that beset households with low-to-moderate incomes.

Anne Arundel County Department of Aging and Disabilities Annapolis; 410-222-4257; aacounty.org/aging-and-disabilities; The Department of Aging and Disabilities seeks to improve the quality of life for older adults, individuals with disabilities, veterans, caregivers, and anyone wishing to plan for the future by providing options and resources that will enable them to live independent and meaningful lives.

Anne Arundel County Food Bank Crownsville; 410-923-4255; aafoodbank.org; Anne Arundel County Food's mission is to alleviate food insecurity in Anne Arundel County by partnering across our community to obtain and distribute nourishing food to our neighbors in need.

Anne Arundel County Library Foundation Annapolis; 410-222-1199; aacpl.net/foundation; Provide a margin of excellence and innovation in library services, above and beyond what core government funding can provide.

Anne Arundel County Literacy Council Annapolis; 410-269-4419; icanread.org; Provide free one-on-one tutoring in basic literacy and English as a Second Language (ESL) to adult residents of Anne Arundel County.

Anne Arundel County Mental Health Agency Annapolis; 410-222-7858; aamentalhealth.org; The Anne Arundel County Mental Health Agency ensures that county residents have access to a wide range of quality mental health and substance use services.

Anne Arundel Medical Center Foundation Annapolis; 443-481-4747; luminishealth.org; Enhance the health status of the people they serve by providing patients with compassionate, high-quality services that will help alleviate pain, preserve health, and extend life.

Ann Arrundell County Historical Society Linthicum; 410-760-9679; aachs.org; Provide leadership in the preservation and exploration of shared history.

The Arc Central Chesapeake Region, Inc. Linthicum; 410-269-1883; thearcccr.org; Advocate for the rights and respect of all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities by creating opportunities, promoting respect and equity, and providing access to services.

The Arts Council of Anne Arundel County Annapolis; 410-222-7949; acaac.org; Encourage and invest in the visual arts, performing arts, and historic preservation for the people of our county; as well as well as create a financial support system for arts organizations.

Arundel Bay Area Chapter of Jack and Jill of America, Inc. Gambrills; abajjoa.clubexpress.com; Membership organization of mothers with children ages 2–19, dedicated to nurturing future African American leaders through leadership development, volunteer service, philanthropic giving, and civic duty.

Arundel House of Hope Glen Burnie; 410-863-4888; arundelhoh.org; Arundel House of Hope is a non-profit ecumenical organization that provides emergency, transitional, and permanent affordable housing and support services to individuals experiencing homelessness in Anne Arundel County.

Arundel Lodge Edgewater; 443-433-5900; arundellodge.org; Arundel Lodge works toward a world where behavioral health disorders are not a limit to achieving a meaningful life and work to prevent behavioral health disorders and offer the necessary care and support for individuals to lead healthy, productive lives.

Arundel Rivers Federation Edgewater; 410-224-3802; arundelrivers.org; Deeply rooted in the South, West, and Rhode Rivers, Arundel Rivers Federation heals and protects our waterways and champions clean water across Maryland.

Assistance League of the Chesapeake Millersville; 410-956-3988; assistanceleague.org/chesapeake; This volunteer organization is dedicated to improving the lives of children and adults through community-based philanthropic programs.

Ballet Theatre of Maryland, Inc. Annapolis; 410-224-5644; balletmaryland.org; Aim to inspire the audience through the transforming power of American dance.

Baltimore Washington Medical Center Foundation Glen Burnie; 410-787-4000; umms.org/bwmc; Provide the highest quality health care service to the community they serve.

Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum Annapolis; 410-216-6180; bdmuseum.maryland.gov; The museum, named for Benjamin Banneker and Frederick Douglass, is dedicated to preserving Maryland's African American heritage and serves as the state's official repository of African American material culture.

Bay Community Health West River and Shady Side; 410-867-4700; baycommunityhealth.org; Provides Primary Care and Behavioral Health services to all ages in a Patient Centered Medical Home environment. Accepts uninsured patients and a variety of health insurances. Insurance Eligibility and Enrollment and Care Management services available at no cost.

Bello Machre Glen Burnie; 443-702-3000; bellomachre.org; Dedicated to providing loving care, opportunity, and guidance for people with developmental disabilities in Maryland.

The Bernie House Annapolis; 443-951-5193; theberniehouse.org; The Bernie House provides survivors of domestic violence and their families transitional housing and services to promote financial stability.

The Bill Sweeney Perinatal Care Fund Arnold; 410-294-0152; billsweeneycharity.org; The Bill Sweeney Charity is dedicated to providing compassionate, specialized bereavement care to families affected by perinatal death, and to promoting healing for those who support them.

The Blue Ribbon Project Crownsville; blueribbonproject.org; Dedicated to preventing child abuse in all its forms while providing meaningful, compassionate support to children, youth, and families impacted by abuse and neglect.

Bo's Effort Davidsonville; 410-790-9673; boseffort.org; Seeks to assemble community resources to break the stigma of mental illness through education and guidance as well as fund initiatives that offer awareness to families and individuals seeking to manage their illness and live healthy and productive lives.

Box of Rain Foundation, Inc. Annapolis; 410-295-0104; amaritime.org/education; Box of Rain's mission is to connect under-resourced youth to the Chesapeake Bay and its maritime heritage through fun, educational, and immersive experiences in nature.

Boy Scouts of America, Baltimore Area Council Hanover; 443-553-6913; baltimorebsa.org; Prepare young people to make ethical choices over their lifetime by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Annapolis; 410-263-2542; bgcaa.org; Inspire and enable all young people, especially those who need the most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens.

Burrows Hill Foundation to Fight Friedreich's Ataxia Annapolis; 410-279-6950; burrows-hill.org; Established to raise public awareness, money for research, find a cure, and assist those affected by FA.

Casey Cares Foundation Columbia; 443-568-0064; caseycares.org; Provides ongoing and uplifting programs with a special touch for critically ill children and their families in eight states and D.C.

Center of Help Annapolis; 410-295-3434; centerofhelp.org; Empowers, educates, and connects immigrants with resources to promote self-sufficiency and to advocate for the successful integration of the immigrant community into Anne Arundel County.

Charting Careers Annapolis; 215-301-3387; chartingcareers.org; Inspires youth to discover their power and reach their goals through transformative mentoring, life-enriching opportunities, and family partnership and by serving as champions for equity.

Chase Brexton Health Care Glen Burnie; 410-837-2050; chasebrexton.org; Provides compassionate and integrated high quality health care that honors diversity, addresses health inequities, and advances wellness in the community.

Chesapeake Arts Center Brooklyn Park; 410-636-6597; chesapeakearts.org; Fosters creativity, create connections, and inspire joy by delivering innovative and accessible arts and education programs.

Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Inc. Annapolis; 888-728-3229 (888-SAVEBAY); cbf.org; Dedicated to the protection, restoration, and management of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

Chesapeake Bay Trust Annapolis; 410-974-2941; cbtrust.org; Engages and empowers diverse groups to take actions that enrich natural resources and local communities of the Chesapeake Bay Region.

Chesapeake Children's Museum Annapolis; 410-990-1993; theccm.org; Create an environment of discovery about oneself, the peoples, the technologies, and the ecology of the Chesapeake Bay area for all children and the children in all of us.

Chesapeake Conservancy Annapolis; 443-321-3610; chesapeakeconservancy.org; To conserve and restore the natural and cultural resources of the Chesapeake Bay watershed for the enjoyment, education and inspiration of this and future generations.

Chesapeake Crossroads Heritage Area Annapolis; 410-222-1805; chesapeakecrossroads.org; Chesapeake Crossroads mission is to advance, support, and promote the natural, historic, and cultural resources of the region.

Chesapeake Environmental Protection Association Galesville; cepaonline.org; Concentrates on public awareness and education on Bay issues and encourage public activism and involvement in both legislation and enforcement of environmental policy.

Chesapeake Region Accessible Boating (C.R.A.B.) Annapolis; 410-266-5722; crabsailing.org; Provides the therapeutic benefits of sailing to people with disabilities, recovering warriors, and youth from underserved communities.

Chesapeake Youth Symphony Orchestra Annapolis; 443-758-3157; cysomusic.org; Provides young musicians with the opportunity to enjoy and refine their musical skills in ensemble performance.

Children's Theatre of Annapolis, Inc. Annapolis; 410-757-2281; childrenstheatreofannapolis.org; Provides arts education for 5-to 18-year-olds through performances, workshops, technical stage training, internships, and apprenticeships in the theatrical arts.

Chris Gives Foundation Millersville; 443-695-5008; chrisgives.com; A 501(c)(3) charity organization developed to continue the legacy of Chris Mohns, Sr., who helped many people get back on the road. CGF will provide help to individuals struggling to pay for auto repairs and other transportation costs.

Chrysalis House Crownsville; 410-974-6829; chrysalishouses.org; Provides comprehensive recovery services that empower women to build a better life for themselves and their children.

Coastal Conservation Association Maryland Annapolis; 800-201-3474 (FISH); ccamd.org; Advocates for and conserves the sustainability of Maryland's marine resources.

Colonial Players Annapolis; 410-268-7373; thecolonialplayers.org; Provide entertainment, education, training, and encouragement to all members of the community interested in participating in the dramatic arts.

Community Foundation of Anne Arundel County Annapolis; 410-280-1102; cfaac.org; Inspires and promotes giving in Anne Arundel County by connecting people who care with causes that matter.

Compass Rose Theatre Annapolis; compassrosetheater.org; Nonprofit professional teaching theater company. We believe that inclusion enriches our creativity and broadens our world.

The Complete Player Charity Glen Burnie; 301-580-1546; tcpyouthempowerment.org; Through academic mentoring, emotional support, and leadership programs, TCP creates spaces where all children feel valued and inspired to chase their dreams.

The Coordinating Center Millersville; 410-987-1048; coordinatingcenter.org; Partners with people of all ages and abilities and those who support them in the community to achieve their aspirations for independence, health, and a meaningful community life.

Doctors Community Medical Center Foundation Lanham; 301-552-8670; luminishealth.org; The Foundation's mission is to continue the legacy of passionately caring for the health and well-being of the residents of Prince George's County and the region with state-of-the-art equipment and quality healthcare services.

Downtown Annapolis Partnership Annapolis; downtownannapolispartnership.org; Strengthen and sustain local businesses, recognizing that a vibrant and healthy business community is essential to the economic success of the city.

The Education Foundation Annapolis; 410-266-3287; 21st-education.org; Match the needs of the public schools of Anne Arundel County and the resources of surrounding businesses, industry, and community.

Ellie's Bus Anne Arundel County; elliesbus.org; Spread awareness of mental health issues and suicide prevention to teenagers across Maryland and across the country.

Friends of Anne Arundel County Animals Millersville; faacac.org; Exists to help the thousands of pets that arrive each year at the Anne Arundel County Department of Animal Services and to reduce pet homelessness.

Friends of Historic Johns Hopkins House Crofton/Gambrills; johnshopkinshouse.com; Mission is to purchase, restore, preserve, and protect the historic house and cultural heritage of the Johns Hopkins House, the Hopkins Family, and the surrounding communities.

Foundation for Community Betterment Arnold; 410-394-9868; communitybetterment.org; Network of generous individuals who believe a simple gesture that touches just one life can positively impact an entire community.

GiGi's Playhouse Annapolis; 410-517-7474; gigisplayhouse.org; Offers therapeutic, educational programs and tutoring for free, to support all ages, from families with a prenatal diagnosis through adult individuals with Down syndrome.

Girls on the Run of the Greater Chesapeake Annapolis; 410-635-9313; gotrchesapeake.org; Enhances participants' social, emotional and physical skills to successfully navigate life experiences.

Girl Scouts of Central Maryland Baltimore; 1800-492-2521; gscm.org; Provide a place where girls are encouraged to share and explore their hopes and dreams. Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character who make the world a better place.

Giving Back Linda's Legacy Severna Park; info@homelessdrive.org; homelessdrive.org; Dedicated to helping the homeless and inspiring everyone to get more involved with volunteering.

Greater Annapolis Design District Annapolis; annapolisdesigndistrict.com; Help residents and businesses to design, build, renovate, decorate, furnish, repair and maintain their homes and places of business.

Habitat for Humanity of the Chesapeake Baltimore; 410-366-1250; habitatchesapeake.org; Works in partnership with families in need of housing to build simple, decent, and affordable homes.

Hammond-Harwood House Annapolis; 410-263-4683; hammondharwoodhouse.org; To preserve and to interpret the architecturally significant Hammond-Harwood House Museum and its collection of fine and decorative arts, and to explore the diverse social history associated with its occupants, both free and enslaved, for the purposes of education and appreciation.

The Harbour School Annapolis; 410-974-4248; harbourschool.org; Provides supportive, individualized education to students with learning disabilities, autism, speech impairments, and other disabilities.

Harvest Resources Glen Burnie/Pasadena; harvestresources.net; Partners with Anne Arundel County families and individuals that are working towards self-sufficiency and addiction recovery by providing needed food and resources.

Historic Annapolis Annapolis; 410-267-7619; annapolis.org; Preserves and protect the historic places, objects, and stories of Maryland's capital city, and provide engaging experiences that connect people to the area's diverse heritage.

Historic London Town & Gardens, Edgewater; historiclondontown.org; Inspires present and future generations to a deeper understanding of the past, the environment, and our shared humanity.

Hope For All Glen Burnie; 410-766-0372; hopeforall.us; Provides basic human necessities (i.e. furniture, housewares, clothing, and personal items) to families and individuals without sufficient economic resources.

Hope House Treatment Center Crownsville; 410-923-6700; hopehousemd.org; Residential, inpatient treatment center specializing in the treatment of substance use disorders, co-occurring mental health challenges and problem gambling.

Hospice of the Chesapeake Pasadena; 410-987-2003; hospicechesapeake.org; Provides physical, psycho-social, and spiritual support services to individuals living with and affected by advanced illness.

Impact 100 Greater Chesapeake Annapolis; info@impact100greaterchesapeake.org; impact100greaterchesapeake.org; Funding the community through organizations supporting the arts and culture, the environment, education, health and wellness, and families— right here in Anne Arundel County, Maryland.

The Ivy Community Charities of Prince George's County Suitland; 301-702-7312; iccpgc.org; The Ivy Community Charities of Prince George's County, Inc. is committed to community outreach through education, health, the family, leadership development, cultural arts and economic empowerment.

James' Place, Inc. Ellicott City; 410-480-2334; jamesplaceinc.org; Raises funds to provide services to those with substance addiction and educates on the complex issues of substances.

Junior League of Annapolis Annapolis; 410-224-8984; jlannapolis.org; An organization of women is committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women, and improving the community.

Kunta Kinte-Alex Haley Foundation Annapolis; 410-295-9395; kintehaley.org; Spreads Alex Haley's vision of a world that celebrates ethnic diversity while honoring humankind's common, universal experiences.

Lucky and Blessed Fishing Maryland; labfishing.org; Dedicated to providing inclusive and therapeutic fishing experiences to underserved and differently abled communities in Maryland.

Wellness House of Annapolis

Wellness House
OF ANNAPOLIS

PAINT YOUR RAINBOW SUMMER CAMP!







Become a sponsor of our June 2026 Summer Camp

By becoming a sponsor, you'll provide kids the opportunity to:

- Connect with others who truly understand their journey.
- Explore nature and engage in fun, healing activities.
- Build lasting friendships in a supportive, safe environment.
- Find hope, joy, and strength in the face of adversity.



When faced with the uncertainty of a loved one's cancer diagnosis, life can be especially chaotic and scary for children. Wellness House's child life specialists and counselors provide a safe, supportive environment where kids can find comfort, understanding, and the tools they need to cope with their emotions during such a difficult time.

For sponsorships, contact Sophia Smith at sophia@annapoliswellnesshouse.org or call 410-990-0941.

For more information about Wellness House of Annapolis, visit www.annapoliswellnesshouse.org.

Langton Green Annapolis; 410-263-3225; langtongreen.org; Helps people with developmental disabilities to live with the highest possible degree of independence and quality of life.

Leadership of Anne Arundel, Inc. Annapolis; 410-571-9798; leadershipaa.org; Provides people of diverse backgrounds with the education, resources, and networks necessary to become successful, proactive leaders.

Leslie's Week Annapolis; 410-263-5598; lesliesweek.org; Provides vacations away from cancer for Stage 4 Breast Cancer women and their families.

The Lifecare Institute Anne Arundel and Prince George's counties; gilchristcares.org/thelifecareinstitute; Provides an integrated continuum of hospice, palliative, and in-home medical care for adults living with serious or advanced illness.

Life Bloom International Odenton; mylifebloom.co; Dedicated to creating awareness about endometriosis, fostering honest conversations about relationships, and exploring the role of faith in navigating life's challenges.

Life of Joy Millersville; info@lifeofjoyfoundation.org; lifeofjoyfoundation.org; Aims to nurture mental wellness and prevent suicide by serving as a link to integrative care of mind, body and spirit and serve as advocates with collaborative network of resources, community engagement and cost assistance programs.

Light House: A Homeless Prevention Support Center Annapolis; 410-349-5056; annapolislighthouse.org; Helps rebuild lives with compassion by providing shelter and services to prevent homelessness and empower people as they transition toward self-sufficiency.

Live Arts Maryland Annapolis; 443-771-5198; liveartsmaryland.org; Enhances community life through performing a wide variety of music and to provide education programs for musicians of all ages. Programs include Annapolis Chorale, Annapolis Chamber Orchestra, Annapolis Youth Chorus, and St. Anne's Concert Series.

Livewater Foundation Annapolis; livewaterfoundation.org; Serves veterans, underprivileged youth, and the waters they paddle while inspiring a lifestyle of health and wellness through watersports activities.

Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education (MCIE) Baltimore; mcie.org; MCIE's mission is to be the catalyst for the meaningful and successful inclusion of all students in their neighborhood or choice schools.

Maryland Crime Victims Resource Center Upper Marlboro/Baltimore; mdcrimevictims.org; Advocating for the rights and well-being of crime victims across Maryland and beyond.

Maryland Cultural & Conference Center (MC3) Annapolis; 410-626-6055; Creates a world-class performing arts center in our state capital to confirm Maryland's commitment and support of the importance of the arts in our society.

Maryland Federation of Art Annapolis; 410-268-4566; mdfedart.org; Creates connections in the community by hosting professional avenues of exhibition for local, national, and international artists.

Maryland Hall Annapolis; 410-263-5544; marylandhall.org; Provides entertainment and education for adults and children including classes and workshops in visual and performing arts in dance, theatre, visual arts, music, and health.

Maryland State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled Baltimore; 410-230-2424; marylandlibraries.org; Provides support and awareness of the Maryland State Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

Maryland Therapeutic Riding Crownsville; 410-923-6800; horsesthatheal.org; Connects humans and horses to help conquer physical, developmental and emotional challenges and improving quality of life.

Monarch Academy Annapolis, Glen Burnie and Laurel; 410-444-3800; monarchacademy.org; Tuition-free, public charter school that educates students to be self-motivated, creative, critical thinkers and life-long learners who are productive contributors to the global community in the 21st century.

NAMI Anne Arundel County Arnold; 443-995-2222; namiaac.org; Works to positively impact the lives of individuals living with mental illness and their families by reducing stigma and providing support, education, and advocacy.

National Ovarian Center Coalition: Central Maryland Chapter Crownsville; 443-569-4651; ovarian.org; The mission of the NOCC is to save lives through the prevention and cure of ovarian cancer and to improve quality of life for survivors and their caregivers.

Nature's Sacred Annapolis; 410-268-1376; naturesacred.org; Inspires, informs and guides communities in the creation of public green spaces designed to improve mental health, unify communities and engender peace.

New Village Academy Annapolis; newvillageacademy.org; A tuition-free public charter high school where students learn through projects, internships, and real-world experiences connected to the Annapolis community.

Nico's Hope for Life Foundation nicoshopeforlifefoundation.org; hello@nicoshopeforlifefoundation.com; Strive to empower the community by raising awareness about the silent epidemic and providing resources to support those struggling with their mental health.

Olivia Constants Foundation Annapolis; 443-949-7714; oliviaconstants.org; Supports and encourages individuals and organizations in their efforts to enhance the positive quality of individual, family, and community life.

Opportunity Builders, Inc. Millersville; 410-787-0700; obiworks.org; Provides adults with developmental disabilities a motivational environment offering vocational training, employment services, recreational activities, and support services.

Oyster Recovery Partnership, Inc. Annapolis; 410-990-4970; oysterrecovery.org; Leads the conservation of the native oyster in the Chesapeake Bay and beyond, through oyster restoration, shell recycling, conservation, and sustainable fishery practices.



JOIN US IN 2026!

Fish For A Cure (F4AC) is a fishing and fundraising competition that benefits cancer patients and their families in our community. Over the last 19 years, F4AC has raised more than $7.7 million to support the Cancer Survivorship program at Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center's Geaton and JoAnn DeCesaris Cancer Institute.

The Tournament, Paul C. Dettor Captain's Challenge, and Shore Party will take place on **Saturday, November 7, 2026** at Safe Harbor Annapolis, our tournament home.

REGISTER OR SPONSOR TODAY!
fishforacure.org

F4AC FISH FOR A CURE

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bello machre
Enriching Lives Heart by Heart

EVERY step COUNTS

Saturday, June 13th

Bello Machre provides a lifetime of loving care and opportunity for people with developmental disabilities across Maryland.

Anne Arundel Community College 9:30am
Dutterer Family Park 9:30am



Join us for Every Step Counts

A day that brings our community together in support of Bello Machre's mission of providing a lifetime of loving care and opportunity for people with developmental and intellectual disabilities across Maryland.







Walk alongside families, friends, and supporters as we celebrate the individuals who make our community so special.
Every step taken and every gift given helps ensure the people we support can continue to live, grow, and thrive.

A special thank you to our Lead Sponsor, Commercial Insurance Managers, for making Every Step Counts possible.

Commercial INSURANCE managers
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Scan to Register!

443-702-3000 bellomachre.org

Parents Place of Maryland Glen Burnie; 410-768-9100; ppmd.org; Empowers family as advocates and partners in improving education and health outcomes for all children with disabilities and special healthcare needs.

Partners In Care, Inc. Pasadena; 410-544-4800; partnersincare.org; Assists older and disabled adults to remain independent in their own homes by helping with transportation, handyman chores, and other neighborly tasks.

Patuxent Riverkeeper Upper Marlboro; 855-725-2925; paxriverkeeper.org; Protects, restores, and advocates for clean water in the Patuxent River and its connected ecosystem.

Pets with Disabilities Prince Frederick; 443-624-9270; petswithdisabilities.org; Provides humane sheltering and specialized vetting for those pets in need and provide support, resources and education for families whose pet has become disabled or those who are thinking about adding a pet with a disability to their family.

Project Chesapeake Annapolis; 443-214-5097; projectchesapeake.com; Strengthens communities through innovative, recovery-focused strategies and connects individuals seeking alcohol or drug abuse and addiction counseling services with the best treatment opportunities to promote long-term recovery and sustained success.

Providence of Maryland Arnold; 410-766-2212; www.providenceofmaryland.org; Supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to discover and live their best lives in their communities.

Rebuilding Together Severna Park; 240-749-1699; rebuildingtogether.org; Provides free services to Anne Arundel County homeowners who are elderly or disabled, or households with children that face necessary but unaffordable dwelling repairs.

Rise and Shine Bakery Annapolis; riseandshinebakery.org; The mission of Rise and Shine Inc is to provide workforce training and jobs in the bakery industry for people with employment barriers. Rise and Shine serves individuals experiencing homelessness, veterans, those in addiction recovery, people formerly incarcerated, youth aging out of foster care and survivors of domestic violence.

Robert A. Pascal Youth and Family Services Severna Park; 410-975-0067; pascalcsi.org; Provides persons experiencing behavioral health and substance use disorder crises with innovative, comprehensive mental health and substance use disorder treatment.

Rockbridge Academy, Crownsville; rockbridge.org; To provide a distinctively classical and unwaveringly Christian education, encouraging the pursuit of goodness, truth, and beauty in all of life.

Rotary Club of Annapolis Annapolis; annapolisrotary.org; Proceeds from the Rotary Club of Annapolis's fundraising efforts go to many worthy organizations in the area, with the aim of making life in Annapolis better for everyone.

Sail Beyond Cancer Annapolis Annapolis; info@sailbeyondcancer.org; sailbeyondcancer.org/annapolis-md-chapter; Honoring those challenged by cancer by harnessing the healing powers of wind, water, and sail.

Sarah's House Baltimore; 667-600-2000; cc-md.org/programs/sarahs-house; Provides safe shelter, daily meals, personal, as well as professional casework support for those in need.

Scenic Rivers Land Trust Annapolis; 410-424-4000; srlt.org; A nonprofit, nongovernmental organization that assists landowners who want to protect and preserve their undeveloped properties. Land trusts craft and execute voluntary land protection agreements, such as conservation easements, with landowners who wish to conserve their properties and take advantage of financial incentives.

Scholarships for Scholars Annapolis; 410-544-2341; scholarshipsforscholars.org; A nonprofit to award scholarships to graduating high school seniors who are county residents attending public and accredited private high schools in Anne Arundel County and home-schooled students living in Anne Arundel County.

Second Chance Baltimore; 410-385-1700; secondchanceinc.org; Provides people, materials and the environment with a second chance by deconstructing buildings and homes, salvage usable materials, and make those and other donated items available to the public for reuse.

Seeds 4 Success Annapolis; 410-533-3847; seeds4success.org; Provides children from low-income communities with the skills and support to achieve success in school and life.

Senior Dog Sanctuary Severn; 443-742-0270; seniordogsanctuary.com; Providing a permanent safe haven for senior dogs who are unable to be cared for by their owners, who are abandoned or abused, or face euthanasia.

Senior Provider Group Severna Park; seniorprovidergroup.org; Awards grants to local area nonprofits. These grants assist the non-profits with their supportive work with the elderly.

Services from the Heart Severna Park; donna@communityservicesfromtheheart.com; communityservicesfromtheheart.com; Provides children in need with weekly food backpacks over the weekend and holidays.

Severn Leadership Group Annapolis; severnleadership.org; Our mission is to develop and support leaders and teams to be agents of transformation and exceptional outcomes.

Severn River Association Annapolis; 410-774-0317; severnriver.org; Connect the people who live, work, and play on the Severn River to restore and protect it for all of our communities.

Severn Riverkeeper Annapolis; 410-849-2329; severnriverkeeper.org; To protect and restore the Severn River for our families and future generations.

Sheppard Pratt Baltimore; 410-938-3000; sheppardpratt.org; Comprehensive psychiatric rehabilitation services and outpatient mental health clinic services for adults with severe and persistent mental illness.

SPAN, Inc. Severna Park; spanhelps.org; Provides food and/or financial assistance to qualified individuals and families to help them through critical or emergency situations.

SPCA of Anne Arundel County Annapolis; 410-268-4388; aacspca.org; The SPCA exists to protect animals in Anne Arundel County from acts of cruelty and neglect.

Special Olympics Maryland Baltimore; 410-242-1515; somd.org; Provides year-round sports training and competitions to children and adults with intellectual disabilities and other closely related developmental disabilities.

Start The Adventure in Reading Annapolis (STAIR) Annapolis; 443-924-1578; stairannapolis.org; Works with second-grade readers in Anne Arundel County Public Schools to help children improve critical early literacy skills.

St. John the Evangelist School Severna Park; stjohnspschool.org; A Roman Catholic Preschool through Grade 8 parish school under the jurisdiction of the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

St. Martin's-in-the-Field Episcopal School Severna Park; stmartinsmd.org; We seek to inspire in students a love of inquiry, a sustaining faith, and a generous spirit open to ideas, peoples of the world, and a call to service.

The Summit School Edgewater; 410-798-0005; thesummitschool.org; Educates children with unique learning styles to their full potential. Serving bright students with dyslexia and other learning differences.

TBC Foundation Edgewater; thebrickcompanies.com; Supports a wide range of like-minded charitable organizations through the monies raised from our TBC Foundation annual charity tournaments (golf & pickleball) and events.

Unstoppable Joy 410-213-3707; unstoppablejoyco.org; Provides preventive support and supportive care for cancer warriors and caregivers, emphasizing the importance of putting self-care first.

Vision Workshops Annapolis; info@visionworkshops.org; visionworkshops.org; Provides innovative, dynamic, educational, and life-changing experiences for youth from underserved communities using the tools of photojournalism.

Walk the Walk Foundation Annapolis; 443-457-0216; wtwf.org; Faith-centered organization working to help children with fundamental needs.

We Care and Friends Annapolis; 410-263-2874; wecareandfriends.org; Supports the building blocks to create strong families and communities in areas affected by drugs, poverty, and crime in Annapolis and Anne Arundel County.

The Well Curtis Bay; 410-589-6670; drinkatthewell.org; Community of women committed to transforming lives through long-term relationships, practical programs, and the healing power of love.

Wellness House of Annapolis Annapolis; 410-990-0941; annapoliswellnesshouse.org; Provides strength and support for people and families living and coping with cancer.

YMCA Camp Letts Edgewater; 410-919-1410; ymcadc.org/campletts; Offers Traditional and Specialty Day Camps, Resident Camps, and a year-round Retreat Center.

Yumi C.A.R.E.S. Foundation Ellicott City; 703-624-5482; yumicares.org; Therapeutic art program for pediatric hospital patients founded by Maryland's First Lady, Yumi Hogan.

YWCA Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Arnold; 410-626-7800; annapolisywca.org; Provides environments where women and girls can thrive.

Learn about many more nonprofits based on the Eastern Shore by visiting whatsupmag.com and clicking on "Digital Editions" to read the digital May 2026 issue of *What's Up? Eastern Shore.*



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Meet Claire Buchner, Principal Broker and Founder of Omnia Real Estate. With years of practice in litigation, extensive expertise in real estate law, and many accomplishments in the real estate brokerage world, she has done and seen a lot. But here is a glimpse into who Claire is as a person...

After litigating for 15 years, Claire realized litigation was not feeding her soul or serving others in the way that she wanted. Instead, she sought to blend her legal know-how with her love of people to build something that meaningfully served her community. For the next decade, Claire worked as the Principal Broker and General Counsel of a successful real estate brokerage in the DC metro area. Although she enjoyed much growth and success during that time, she came to reject the traditional premise that many brokerages rely upon - using sales volume as the sole measure of a successful agent. Rather, Claire believes work ethic, integrity and genuine care for clients are the key attributes of a truly exceptional agent.

With this philosophy in mind, Claire teamed up with her partners to create Omnia Real Estate in 2023. Omnia's mission is simply to foster excellent service and have a great time doing it! By only hiring agents with the highest ethics, integrity, and care for their clients and empowering them with knowledge and savvy to exceed their customer's needs and expectations, the standard real estate transaction becomes an empowering and memorable experience for our clients, who often become friends.

Rather than amassing a large roster of agents, Omnia set out to curate a group of quality agents from diverse backgrounds and experiences, who share the collective goal of being the best advisors to their clients as possible. As Claire explains, Omnia is a special group -- all of whom are constantly driven to be better than they were the day before. And, we share a lot of laughs and good vibes along the way!

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WHAT'S UP? MEDIA
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At Liff, Walsh & Simmons, we deliver value-driven solutions and exceptional experiences across a wide range of legal needs. Our team partners with privately held middle-market companies, entrepreneurs, and families to help them thrive at every stage of their journey. By turning bold ideas into successful enterprises, navigating complex transactions and resolving disputes, and protecting hard-earned wealth for generations, we are committed to being your trusted advisors. Whatever your business or personal goals, Liff, Walsh & Simmons is here to help you achieve them.



Leading Lawyers

2026–2027

Welcome to the region's most comprehensive, independent, *and* peer-evaluated list of exceptional lawyers practicing more than 35 branches of law. *What's Up? Media* conducted the biennial **Leading Lawyers Peer Review Survey** just ahead of the new year, inviting all attorneys and judges who practice law in Anne Arundel County, Central Maryland, and the Eastern Shore to participate. A true peer review survey is a rarity today—most publications don't take the time and energy to conduct the survey in-house, which makes these results all the more meaningful. These are not "editor picks" or the result of limitless ballots from the general public. **These honors only come directly from other attorneys and judges**—people who really know what it takes to be a good lawyer right here in Maryland.

Additionally, during the vetting process we fact checked all honorees through the Maryland Judiciary to ensure each is currently in good standing with the bar. We are especially grateful to all lawyers who participated because we believe this biennial poll provides **an invaluable service to our readers**. Please consider this group of esteemed lawyers when seeking and vetting legal counsel. The following names represent the individual lawyers who clearly received the *most substantial number of nominations*; not every lawyer who was nominated. *No attorney paid to be on this list*. Some categories list more names than others. This is the result of especially active nominations in those categories.

Congratulations to all Leading Lawyers named herein!

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CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LAWYERS



Leading Lawyer	Leading Lawyer	Leading Lawyer	Leading Lawyer	Leading Lawyer	Leading Lawyer
Ronald H. Jarashow	Frank P. Lozupone	Brooke H. Bowman	Jeffrey P. Bowman	Matthew J. Chalker	Lucas Van Deusen

Bowman Jarashow Law LLC is pleased to share recent recognition received by members of its team, reflecting the firm's continued focus on providing comprehensive, effective representation across a broad range of practice areas. **Jeffrey P. Bowman** was recognized in Litigation, Business Law, Civil and Political Law, Construction Law, Education Law, Employment Law, General Practice, and Corporate Law. **Matthew J. Chalker** was recognized in Appellate Law, Litigation, and Military Law, reflecting his depth in both trial and appellate advocacy. **Brooke H. Bowman** was recognized in Estate Planning Law for her work advising individuals and families in planning and administration matters. **Ronald H. Jarashow** was recognized in Arbitration Law, General Practice, and Mediation, continuing his long-standing role as a trusted advisor and dispute resolver. **Frank P. Lozupone, III** was recognized in Corporate Law and Real Estate Law, and **Lucas Van Deusen** was recognized in Intellectual Property and Patent Law. **Anthony T. Rowe** and **Joseph D. Dowdell** recently joined the firm following judicial clerkships in Maryland, with Mr. Rowe, a graduate of The Catholic University of America Columbus School of Law, serving with the Circuit Court for Prince George's County, and Mr. Dowdell, a graduate of University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law, serving with the Appellate Court of Maryland. The firm remains focused on delivering clear, effective counsel tailored to the needs of its clients and the expectations of the courts and business community.

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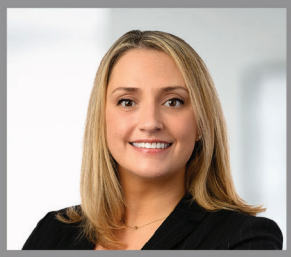

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Founded in 1929 by the late Noah A. Hillman, the rich history of HBD dates back to 1976 when Samuel J. Brown began his practice with Noah and his son, Richard. When Hillman & Brown merged with the practice of Michael P. Darrow on October 1, 1979, HBD was officially born. This year, HBD commemorates 47 years of service, and Brown celebrates his 50th anniversary of practicing law.

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How To Fund Your Revocable Living Trust

By Jon Gasior
Owner, Managing Attorney
Sinclair Prosser Gasior



A Living Trust is a way to hold title to assets, just like sole ownership or joint tenancy. The main reason most individuals choose an estate plan that includes a Revocable Living Trust is to avoid probate. The only way to accomplish this is to set up the trust properly and fund your trust. Funding a trust is the process of transferring your assets to the ownership of your trust. Once ownership is transferred, the trustee will have control of these assets.

Funding a trust refers to taking assets that are titled in your individual name or in joint names with others and retitling them into the name of the Revocable Living Trust. For example, if Bill and Mary set up a Revocable Living Trust and name themselves as initial co-trustees then they will need to re-title their assets to the "Bill and Mary Jones, Trustee or their successors in trust under the Jones Living Trust dated April 1, 2021, and any amendments thereto." The assets that you generally want to include in your revocable living trust include real estate, bank accounts, brokerage accounts, savings bonds and stocks.

The tricky part of making sure your Revocable Living Trust works with your estate plan is that each asset is treated differently and your estate planning attorney should make a recommendation for each asset you own. For example, a house is re-titled by executing a new deed and having it filed with the county land records. Bank accounts will usually require a letter of instruction and copy of your certificate of trust (i.e., summary of your trust) to the various financial institutions where you have accounts.

Are there any assets that I should not transfer to my trust?

Most assets should be owned by your trust, but some should not. For example, an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) needs to be in your individual name. You can name the trust as the beneficiary of the IRA, but this should be discussed with your estate planning attorney as you set up your estate plan. Additionally, your life insurance policy will typically remain in your individual name, and the trust may be added as the beneficiary on that asset. Also, if you're receiving Social Security, or other payments, which are directly deposited into your bank account, you should not re-title that account into the name of the trust. However, you will likely be able to add a payable on death beneficiary to the account to have it transfer to your trust at the time of your death and avoid probate.

What happens if my trust is not funded?

If you do not fund your trust by transferring title of your assets, then any asset in your individual name without a named beneficiary will be subject to probate. In addition to probate being stressful and expensive, failing to transfer assets to your trust may mean that your assets will not go to the people you want. The funding process can sometimes be time consuming, but it is arguably the most important part of making sure your estate plan works when you need it to. You invested your time and money to set up your trust to avoid probate, so make sure it works!

Sinclair Prosser Gasior focuses its practice on estate planning, elder law, and estate administration. We are established members of the American Academy of Estate Planning Attorneys and the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys. Our attorneys and staff offer years of knowledge and experience in matters associated with protecting estates and families from issues arising from death and disability.

For more information visit www.spgasior.com

Member of the American Academy of Estate Planning Attorneys

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3261 Old Washington Rd., Suite 2020

Spgasior.com



Burnett Injury Group

Lawyers for the injured. Guided by compassion, driven by justice.

At Burnett Injury Group, the practice of personal injury law is rooted in something deeply personal: care for people at their most vulnerable moments. Founded by husband-and-wife team Suzanne and Andrew Burnett, the firm was built with a simple but powerful mission—to stand up for injured individuals and families with compassion, clarity, and unwavering advocacy.

From the beginning, Burnett Injury Group has approached legal representation as more than a case. It is a relationship built on trust, communication, and respect. Clients often come to the firm during periods of uncertainty—after a serious accident, a life-altering injury, or an unexpected loss. The Burnetts and their team understand that these moments require not only legal skill, but also empathy, patience, and a willingness to truly listen.

Areas of Practice

Burnett Injury Group advocates for people whose lives have been unexpectedly changed by negligence, providing guidance and support when it matters most. The firm handles cases involving motor vehicle accidents, pedestrian or bicycle collisions, medical malpractice, nursing home abuse, and other serious injury matters. These cases often involve profound physical, emotional, and financial consequences, and Burnett Injury Group brings depth of experience, compassion and communication to every client they represent.

A Client-First Philosophy

At the heart of Burnett Injury Group is a steadfast commitment to putting clients first. The firm understands that clients

often arrive at a moment of uncertainty—recovering from injuries, facing mounting expenses, or coping with the trauma of a preventable harm. Legal representation in these moments must be both strong and compassionate.

Rather than overwhelming clients with process or pressure, the team prioritizes communication and transparency. Clients are guided through each step of their case with clarity, empowering them to make informed decisions while focusing on healing. This approach fosters trust and ensures that clients feel supported from the first consultation through resolution.

Advocacy With Purpose

Suzanne and Andrew Burnett share a belief that effective advocacy requires both strength and compassion. The firm is known for its willingness to stand up to insurance companies and pursue full and fair compensation for clients—whether through strategic negotiation or litigation when necessary. At the same time, the team never loses sight of the client behind each claim.

This balanced approach is what sets Burnett Injury Group apart. Every case is prepared thoroughly and thoughtfully, with attention to detail and an understanding of how injuries affect not just finances, but families, careers, and daily life. Their mission is to tell each client's story with clarity and compassion, illuminating the true impact on their lives. The goal is not only to secure results, but to help clients move forward with dignity and peace of mind.

Deep Roots in the Community

As a husband-and-wife-owned firm, Burnett Injury Group reflects the values of family and community. Suzanne and Andrew are deeply invested in the Annapolis area and are passionate about giving back to the community they call home. Their involvement extends beyond the courtroom, supporting local organizations, schools, and initiatives that strengthen and protect families. This connection to the community reinforces the firm's purpose. The Burnetts understand the people they represent because they live alongside them—raising families, building relationships, and sharing in the challenges and successes of the community.

> "At the heart of Burnett Injury Group is a steadfast commitment to putting clients first."

A Commitment That Endures

At its core, Burnett Injury Group is defined by a promise: to honor every client's story with clarity and compassion, bringing to light the real and lasting impact of what they have endured. The firm's success is measured not only by outcomes, but by the trust clients place in the team during some of the most difficult moments of their lives.



For those seeking experienced legal guidance paired with genuine compassion, Burnett Injury Group offers both—delivering advocacy that is as personal as it is powerful.

The Daily Record Maryland's Top 100 Women

The Daily Record Leading Women Maryland's Future

The 2023 Power List — The Daily Record — Personal Injury & Medical Malpractice

Rated by Super Lawyers — Rising Stars — Alicen Jobes — 2026

Rated by Super Lawyers — Suzanne Burnett — 2026

Maryland Top 100 — Rated by Super Lawyers — Andrew T. Burnett

Million Dollar Advocates Forum

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Johnson Law LLC

At Johnson Law LLC, we understand that estate planning and elder law are not just legal matters—they are deeply personal matters. Clients often come to us at pivotal moments in life: when they are planning for the future, caring for an aging parent, facing a long-term care concern, or trying to put the right protections in place for the people they love most. In each of those moments, they need more than technical legal guidance. They need a trusted relationship, a comfortable environment, and counsel that is both thoughtful and compassionate.

Our firm is proud to serve individuals and families throughout Maryland with a practice focused on estate planning, elder law, probate, and trust and estate administration. We have built Johnson Law around a simple philosophy: every client deserves personal attention, clear advice, and a plan tailored to real life. No two families are exactly alike, and no important planning decision should feel rushed or impersonal. We take the time to listen, understand each client's goals and concerns, and develop practical solutions that reflect what matters most to them.

In our estate planning practice, we work with clients in all phases of life, from young families putting foundational documents in place, to retirees refining long-term plans, to individuals and couples with substantial assets, business interests, or more sophisticated tax and succession concerns. We help clients create wills, trusts, powers of attorney, advance medical directives, and other planning documents designed to protect their wishes and provide peace of mind. Good planning is not only

about deciding who receives assets. It is also about reducing confusion for loved ones, minimizing unnecessary delay and expense in the administration process, and creating a clear path forward when incapacity or death occurs. We guide clients through planning that ranges from very simple to highly complex, always with the goal of addressing family needs, tax considerations, and practical realities in a way that is understandable and effective. We want clients to leave our office feeling informed, reassured, and confident that they have taken meaningful steps to care for their families.

Our elder law practice is equally grounded in personal relationships and practical guidance. Families often seek our help during stressful and emotional times, particularly when a loved one is aging, experiencing cognitive decline, or facing the prospect of nursing home care or other long-term care needs. In those moments, the legal issues can feel overwhelming. Questions about incapacity planning, asset protection, Medicaid planning, and how to pay for care often arrive all at once. We help clients and their families work through those issues with sensitivity, clarity, and a steady hand. Our goal is to make a difficult process feel more manageable and to help families move forward with a sense of direction and support.

We also guide personal representatives, trustees, and families through probate and the administration of estates and trusts. After the death of a loved one, legal and financial responsibilities often come at a time of grief and uncertainty. We believe clients deserve counsel that is both highly organized and genuinely supportive. We work to reduce stress and provide clear communication throughout the process.

A defining part of Johnson Law is the atmosphere we strive to create for every client. We want people to feel welcome here. We want meetings to be comfortable, conversations to be candid, and advice to be understandable. Estate planning and elder law can involve sensitive family issues, difficult decisions, and highly personal concerns. We believe clients are best served when they feel at ease sharing their questions and priorities, and when they know their lawyer is truly listening.

> **“Our firm is proud to serve individuals and families throughout Maryland with a practice focused on estate planning, elder law, probate, and trust and estate administration.”**

Jason C. Johnson is the founder of Johnson Law LLC. His practice focuses on estate planning, elder law, probate, and trust and estate administration, with an emphasis on providing careful, individualized counsel to Maryland families. Mr. Johnson holds a Juris Doctor from the University of Maryland School of Law and a Masters of Law (LLM) in Taxation from the Villanova University School of Law. He is committed to helping clients navigate both proactive planning and difficult life transitions with clarity, responsiveness, and practical guidance.

At Johnson Law, we value long-term relationships with the individuals and families we serve. Many clients first come to us for one specific need, but continue to rely on us as trusted counsel through later stages of life and planning. That continuity matters. It allows us to offer guidance informed not only by the law, but also by a genuine understanding of the people we represent.

Our commitment is to provide careful legal work, responsive service, and a client experience grounded in trust, respect, and personal connection.

Whether planning ahead or responding to a difficult moment, our clients know they have an advocate and advisor they can trust. That is the standard we bring to every matter. At Johnson Law, we are honored to help Maryland families protect what they have built and prepare wisely for what lies ahead with care.

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Evan Koslow

Your Family Law Advocate – Reliable, Efficient, Accessible, Determined.

In my opinion, family law matters (divorce, custody, domestic violence, etc.) are the most personal type of law there is. More so than criminal law or personal injury law. The outcome in a family law matter affects more than just the parties involved - it affects all aspects of their lives, children (regardless of age), extended family, friends, jobs, and finances. Additionally, unlike in criminal and personal injury cases, you may have less control over why you are involved in a family law case in the first place.

As a family law attorney, my goal is not only to try and resolve your case with the best possible outcome, but also to guide my client toward a result that will help all aspects of their life (the court does not consider or even think of this when making decisions). Even though I am a litigator by training and know my way around the courtroom, it is my philosophy that it is in my client's best interest to resolve personal matters as quietly, quickly, and amicably as possible. Only in the extreme circumstances such as if the other party is being unreasonable should "pit bull" tactics come into play.

If you ask anyone (including attorneys), they will agree that the judicial system (especially for family law cases) is not perfect and causes a greater likelihood of destroying families.

Even though parties involved in a divorce and/or custody matter can easily suffer from "temporary insanity," I challenge my clients (and myself) to take the higher ground. While some attorneys may "go for the jugular" of their spouse/other parent, from the beginning which only makes matters worse, I focus on the bigger picture and help my clients see the light at the end of the tunnel while ensuring that their rights are protected.

While I am an attorney and I aggressively advocate for my client's rights, I am also a father, a son, a sibling, and a friend. I show compassion for my clients and treat every case with respect and dignity during the course of my representation and beyond.

[K]
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The Jaklitsch Law Group

The Big Dogs from the Small Firm

So…why the Big Dogs from the Small Firm?

In 1999, Rick founded the Jaklitsch Law Group with the goal of creating the number one personal injury firm in the state. Established on family principles, valuing open communication, trust, and empathy, the Jaklitsch Law Group quickly garnered a reputation for superior client service and case results. Today, the firm specializes in serious and catastrophic injury cases, and its four award-winning lawyers have become synonymous with significant settlements and verdicts for the seriously injured. This track record of success has repeatedly earned the Jaklitsch Law Group national awards and recognition, and is another reason why *What's Up? Annapolis* is again recognizing Rick and his firm as one of its Leading Legal Professionals.

- Named Best of Annapolis 2022 from *What's Up?*, our hometown (and favorite) magazine.
- Named both Maryland's "Best Personal Injury Firm" and "Best Civil Litigation Firm" by *The Daily Record.*
- Named Annually to "Best Law Firms" list by both *U.S. News & World Report* and *Best Lawyers.*
- Rick Jaklitsch and Christine Murphy recognized as two of the "Best Lawyers in America" by *Rue Rating.*
- Christine Murphy named one of Maryland's "Leading Women" by *The Daily Record.*
- David Jaklitsch Named a "Top 40 Under 40" civil plaintiff trial lawyer by *The National Trial Lawyers.*

If you're hurt, have the Big Dog bite the insurance company for you!

The Jaklitsch Law Group | BigDogLaw.com | 855-BigDog1



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Christopher J. McNally, Esq.
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Andréa L. Sinacola, Esq.
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Jonathon C. Scruggs, Esq.
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Lochner Law Firm, P.C.

BoatingLaw.com

Serving the legal needs of vessel owners, marine businesses, yacht builders, and those who live, work, and play on the water, BoatingLaw.com, backed by the attorneys of Lochner Law Firm, P.C., is a one-stop shop for all things admiralty. The firm's practice areas include vessel documentation and finance, vessel sales and purchases, vessel taxes, marine contracts and insurance, all manner of maritime litigation and general business advice.

From its founding in 1999 by Todd D. Lochner, a Proctor in Admiralty, the firm has been a key player in the field of admiralty law and is one of the most experienced boutique maritime practices on the East Coast. The firm has grown substantially since its founding over twenty-five years ago. Now, the firm fields a dynamic team of eight attorneys with deep roots in the maritime world. Collectively, the attorneys at Lochner Law Firm, P.C., serve clients in Maryland, Virginia, Florida, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and beyond. The firm's attorneys handle maritime transactional work and maritime litigation in both state and federal courts across the United States. In addition to being boaters themselves, many of the firm's attorneys are also members of the Maritime Law Association of the United States. Todd D. Lochner currently serves on the Board of Directors, and Chase A. Eshelman currently serves as Secretary of the association's Recreational Boating Committee.

For more information about the firm and how its attorneys can assist you, please visit the firm's website at BoatingLaw.com.

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LOCHNER LAW FIRM, P.C.

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2026-2027

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McAllister, DeTar, Showalter & Walker LLC

McAllister, DeTar, Showalter & Walker LLC (MDSW) is honored that our dedication to the practice of law and service to our communities has been recognized with 15 of our attorneys selected as 2024 – 2025 Leading Lawyers across the state! What's more, two of our Annapolis associate attorneys have joined the Up & Coming Class of 2025: Craig Snyder and Kaitlin O'Dowd!

At MDSW, we are experienced in handling all manner of complex business transactions, bet-the-company litigation, employment disputes, estate and trust planning and administration, family law matters, real estate transactions and land use regulation. Our attorneys work collaboratively so that our clients benefit from all of our respective abilities.

This past year has marked significant growth across our practice areas, with noteworthy expansion of our complex federal criminal defense practice group led by Strider Dickson and supported by Emma Grandfield.

MDSW understands that the essence of a successful firm is not only in the expertise of its attorneys, but also in its commitment to the community it serves. Our attorneys are involved in community programs, boards, and non-profits, including Leadership Anne Arundel, the Anne Arundel County Chamber of Commerce, the Anne Arundel Bar Association, the Risk Management Association, and TCP Youth Empowerment.

We look forward to the opportunity to continue growing our relationships in the Annapolis region and beyond.

MDSW MCALLISTER DETAR SHOWALTER & WALKER

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*** Medical Malpractice Law**
Benjamin H. Meredith
Kathleen H. Meredith
Patrice M. Clarke
*** Personal Injury Law**
Benjamin H. Meredith

Iliff, Meredith, Wildberger & Brennan, P.C.

Attorneys at Law

Since its founding in April 1995, the attorneys at Iliff, Meredith, Wildberger & Brennan, P.C. have worked tirelessly to represent victims injured as a result of medical negligence, i.e., medical malpractice. While the firm's primary focus is on medical malpractice injuries, the firm's practice also emphasizes representation of clients injured in automobile accidents and truck accidents.

The firm understands that victims are often unable to afford an attorney's hourly rate. The firm often represents clients on a contingency fee basis. This means that the firm is paid a percentage of a client's recovery as the firm's fee, but that a client does not owe the firm a fee unless a client obtains a monetary recovery. This contingency fee model allows Iliff, Meredith, Wildberger & Brennan, P.C. to represent injured clients who otherwise could not afford to pursue their claims.

Iliff, Meredith, Wildberger & Brennan, P.C. offers clients a potent combination of small firm efficiency coupled with ability and experience in litigating large and complex cases. All of the firm's clients receive personal attention from their attorneys at Iliff, Meredith, Wildberger & Brennan, P.C.

Iliff, Meredith, Wildberger & Brennan, P.C.'s relationships with clients are characterized by confidence and trust. Irrespective of the type, value, or complexity of a given case, the attorneys care about what happens to the firm's clients. The firm's attorneys do their utmost in every case to ensure that justice is done for their clients and to assist clients in achieving the best possible result.

Iliff, Meredith, Wildberger & Brennan, P.C. also believes in giving back to the community. In addition to financially supporting community initiatives, the firm's attorneys regularly donate their time through a variety of charitable and professional organizations. This commitment has resulted in many honors and awards to Iliff, Meredith, Wildberger & Brennan, P.C. and its attorneys, as well as many leadership positions being held by the firm's attorneys in both community and professional organizations. Iliff, Meredith, Wildberger & Brennan, P.C. provides potential clients with free legal consultations. Please contact the firm by telephone (410) 685-1166 or online to discuss how its attorneys may be able to provide assistance. Please visit Iliff, Meredith, Wildberger & Brennan, P.C.'s website, www.ilimer.com, to review a more complete description of the firm's practice areas and to view individual attorney profiles.

ILIFF, MEREDITH, WILDBERGER & BRENNAN, P.C.

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Ronald M. Naditch, P.A.

Ron Naditch has decades of experience successfully handling disputes in the areas of family law (prenuptial agreement, divorce, alimony, domestic violence, and all children related issues), automobile accidents, criminal law, and general civil law.

Ron is a graduate of Dickinson College and University of Maryland Law School (with honors), where he served as an Assistant Editor of the Maryland Law Review and finished in the top 10 percent of his day school class. After law school, he served as a law clerk for The Honorable C. Ferdinand Sybert, a judge on the Maryland Court of Appeals. He then served a tour of duty in the United States Coast Guard before going into private practice as an associate of Goodman and Bloom in Annapolis, a position he held for one year.

For more than 25 years thereafter, while Ron was developing his private practice, he served under five States Attorneys as a part-time Senior Assistant State's Attorney in Anne Arundel County. In this capacity he specialized in handling murders, rapes, robberies, and other major felony cases and was the go to person in cases involving insanity pleas until he retired in 1993.

During his legal career, Ron has represented the Anne Arundel County Department of Social Services; he has been a member of the Maryland Attorney Grievance Review Board; and he has been recognized by Martindale Hubbell (a publication that rates lawyers based upon responses from their peers) as an "AV" rated attorney since the mid-1970s. He also has the highest attorney rating from AVVO. In 1993, the judges of the Anne Arundel County Circuit Court appointed him as part-time Master/Examiner and he participated as a hearing officer for the Court in 5000-7000 cases over a period of 25 years before the elimination of that position in 2018.

At this stage of his practice, a great deal of Ron's time is spent conducting mediations for people who have family law issues. It has been his experience, after more than 25 years as a mediator, that nearly all family law issues can be resolved in this non-adversarial procedure. Mediation is far less expensive than litigation and, with the assistance of a trained mediator, can allow couples to dissolve their marriages and determine how to fairly resolve all child related issues, as well as issues relating to fair and appropriate monetary adjustment with regard to their property and/or to adjust their differences in income. The balance of his time is spent representing clients in contested family law cases in Anne Arundel, Queen Anne and Talbot Counties.

Ron considers family law to be a unique legal area and that it is in the best interest of the divorcing parties and their children if they seek to mediate solutions to their problems, as opposed to allowing the courts to mandate decisions about their lives, the lives of their children, and their financial assets. A divorce should not be about winners, losers, and results that end in scorched earth. Peaceful solutions to divorces inures to the benefit of all parties. An attorney should act as a problem solver, neither accelerating nor aggravating what is often a stormy situation. Ron's approach is to say to his clients when they come into his office, "Let's sit down, discuss, mediate, and resolve the issues, instead of letting a person in a black robe make a decision about you and your family."

According to Ron, "I think of myself as a problem solver, not a troublemaker, in family law cases. But if trouble arises or problems cannot be resolved without limitation, I have the experience to handle any type of case."

RONALD M. NADITCH, P.A.

AV Preeminent peer rating from Martindale Hubbell since 1980

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Kagan Stern Marinello & Beard LLC

Kagan Stern Marinello & Beard provides highly skilled legal services to businesses and individuals in the areas of business, employment, and litigation in Maryland, DC, Virginia, and other jurisdictions throughout the country. The firm's attorneys have been consistently recognized as "AV" rated by Martindale-Hubbell (which is the highest rating attorneys can receive from their peers), as well as by "Super Lawyers," "Best Lawyers," and annually by What's Up? Media's "Leading Lawyers," in the areas of business, employment, and litigation.

Kagan Stern's business law practice includes corporate formation and organization, drafting contracts and business agreements, mergers and acquisitions, and financing and security transactions. In addition, our attorneys draft and review intellectual property and related licensing agreements and handle other general counsel needs of our business clients. The firm also participates in real estate matters, including drafting and negotiation of leases and purchase contracts, and conducting real estate settlements through its title company affiliate, Title Nation, in addition to land use and licensing matters such as development and zoning issues, variances, special exceptions, site design plans, permitting, and issues related to liquor licenses.

The firm's employment law practice involves advising businesses and individuals on nearly all aspects of the employment relationship. The firm's attorneys draft and review employment agreements, nonsolicitation and noncompetition agreements, confidentiality and nondisclosure agreements, severance agreements, employee handbooks, and employment policies. They also advise on matters such as wage and hour compliance, trade secret protection, discrimination and leave laws, and privacy issues. Kagan Stern's lawyers are trained and experienced in conducting confidential internal investigations for businesses regarding potential violations of employment laws and other sensitive business matters.

When litigation arises or becomes necessary, the firm's experienced trial attorneys handle a wide variety of complex civil cases in trial and appellate courts, as well as in arbitration and before governmental agencies or boards.

The litigation attorneys at Kagan Stern are experienced in handling cases involving business, employment, trusts and estates, real estate, and various other types of disputes.

The combination of business, transactional, and trial experience makes the attorneys at Kagan Stern an ideal choice to represent companies as outside general counsel to work with management on a regular basis to address the particular legal needs of the business.

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McNamee Hosea, P.A.

Experienced. Established. Trusted.

For over 40 years, McNamee Hosea, P.A. has served as a trusted, full-service law firm providing sophisticated counsel to clients throughout Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, D.C. Widely recognized as "The Business Owner's Law Firm," our attorneys act as strategic partners to entrepreneurs, established businesses, and individuals navigating the complexities of the Mid-Atlantic legal landscape. We pride ourselves on a multidisciplinary approach that ensures every client benefits from integrated expertise tailored to their unique professional and personal goals.

Our seasoned team advises on a comprehensive range of legal services, including business law, estates and trusts, and tax. We provide trial-ready representation in litigation and offer specialized guidance in bankruptcy, employment law, and construction law. Furthermore, our deep regional roots allow us to excel in real estate, land use and zoning, and our criminal defense practice ensures the rigorous protection of individual rights.

At McNamee Hosea, we are passionate about providing our clients with exceptional, valuable, and effective service. We believe that true impact is driven by a combination of zealous advocacy and creative strategies that make a real difference. By blending the resources of a large-scale regional leader with the agility and personal touch of a boutique practice, we provide the clarity and tenacity needed to secure your future. We truly love what we do!

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Jimeno & Gray, P.A.

Experienced, Empathetic, Effective

Founded in 2003, Jimeno & Gray's award-winning attorneys provide experienced and compassionate representation for Anne Arundel County residents facing family law matters and for those seeking to protect their assets through estate planning.

The firm's attorneys and staff share a commitment to a family-oriented culture where colleagues collaborate toward consistently successful outcomes and clients feel genuinely comfortable and supported throughout the process.

Jimeno & Gray's family law practice handles divorce, adoption, custody, child support, mediation, separation, and related matters. The firm's goal is to help clients regain control of their lives and achieve results that serve them both now and in the future.

Their estate planning division, Chesapeake Wills and Trusts, focuses on wills, trusts, probate, elder law, and Medicaid planning, prioritizing strategies that protect each client's life savings for the benefit of themselves and their families.

The firm's growth and excellence have earned numerous prestigious recognitions, including:

- ***2025 Inc. 5000:*** One of the most prestigious rankings of the fastest-growing private companies in America.
- ***Super Lawyers:*** The firm's attorneys are consistently recognized among Maryland's top legal professionals.
- ***What's Up? Magazine*** Leading Lawyers: Top Anne Arundel County attorneys selected by their peers.

For more than 20 years, Jimeno & Gray has been a trusted partner to Anne Arundel County families. The firm tailors its approach to each client's unique situation and goals, empowering clients with the knowledge they need to make informed, confident decisions and achieve the best possible outcomes.

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Silverman Thompson Slutkin & White

Since 1994, Silverman Thompson has provided highly skilled legal services to businesses and individuals across Maryland, Washington, D.C., and throughout the Mid-Atlantic. In 2025, we expanded into the heart of downtown Annapolis, offering convenient access for clients in Anne Arundel County.

With the recent additions of Annapolis-based attorneys, expanding to a brick-and-mortar presence in the state capital was a natural next step.

Partner Christopher Mincher has joined the firm's Annapolis office, bringing extensive experience from his role as former chief legal counsel to Governor Larry Hogan and a career advising on regulatory compliance, administrative law, and litigation. With strong local ties and deep insight into Maryland's legal and governmental landscape, he enhances the firm's presence in the region.

Established family law attorney Nathan Volke is also located in Annapolis, continuing to serve Anne Arundel County clients and representing District 3 on the Anne Arundel County Council. His background in public service and family law further strengthens our connection to Annapolis and its clients.

Finally, Partner Steve Leitess, of our business litigation practice, is now a resident in our Annapolis office. Steve began his career in the Anne Arundel State's Attorney's Office and it is only fitting that he is now back full-time in Anne Arundel County, where he has lived and been an essential part of the community for decades.

Known for our strength in the courtroom, the firm represents clients in:

- Family Law
- Real Estate, Zoning & Land Use
- Business Counseling, Litigation & Transactions
- Estates, Trusts & Fiduciary Litigation
- Administrative and Regulatory Matters
- Personal Injury
- Federal and State Criminal Investigations and Defense

All our attorneys are available to meet with clients in this welcoming space, conveniently located in the heart of Annapolis. For more information about our Annapolis, Downtown Baltimore, or other locations, find us at silvermanthompson.com.

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Row 1: **Kristen Gartner** (Associate); **Diana Fairweather** (Associate); **Darby Fowler** (Associate); **Corinne Adams** (Counsel); **Erin Benson** (Associate). Row 2: **Kinley Bray** (Member); **Catherine (Cate) Hopkin** (Member); **Paul Sweeney** (Managing Member); **Ben Wechsler** (Member); **Jonathan Grasso** (Member).

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Located just steps from the courthouse in the heart of downtown Annapolis, Rice Posner Mastracci, LLC (RPM Law) is a trusted advocate for families navigating life's most complex legal challenges. With a reputation built on both skill and compassion, the firm is dedicated to protecting what matters most—your family and your future.

Whether guiding clients toward amicable resolutions or providing strong representation in the courtroom, RPM Law offers a balanced approach rooted in experience and empathy. Founding partner Stacey Rice brings nearly 25 years of family law experience in Annapolis and is now expanding her practice to include mediation services, helping families find constructive paths forward.

The firm's leadership team reflects a deep commitment to the well-being of children and families. Partner Samantha Posner serves as a Parent Coordinator, while partner Nicholas Mastracci is a Best Interest Attorney—roles that underscore the firm's focus on thoughtful, child-centered advocacy.

Supporting this leadership is a talented team of dedicated attorneys, including Senior Associate Michael Von Sas and associates Anne Thomas, Jessica Guntow, and Collin Brown. The firm also benefits from the experience of Of Counsel Morgan Foster and its affiliation with the Mediation Center led by CeeCee Paizs, further expanding the range of services available to clients.

At RPM Law, every case is approached with diligence, strategy, and care—because every family deserves a strong advocate in times of transition. For more information or to schedule a consultation, visit www.RPM-LAW.com or call 443.333.4343.



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Back, from left to right: John Robinson, Jane Frankel Sims, Zoe Kerasidis, Victor Lembo, Melanie Marban, Christia Pritts, and Jennifer Yeagle | Front, from left to right: Sarah Thiroway, Michael Lehr, Frank Campbell, and Gabriela Beese

Sims & Campbell

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At Sims & Campbell, our estate planning lawyers help individuals and families create plans that maintain harmony, avoid probate, reduce taxes, protect assets, designate guardians for minors, and support charities. All our lawyers focus solely on estate planning and administration, leveraging deep experience to address complex tax and family issues with clarity and empathy. Our dedicated approach delivers practical, compassionate solutions, ensuring every client has peace of mind in an efficient, well-structured plan.

Our team serves a wide range of clients, from young families just starting out to ultra-high net worth individuals with complex needs. This diversity lets us adapt to clients' evolving wealth and planning demands over time. Whether you're building a legacy or safeguarding assets for heirs, we provide tailored, practical solutions. Our expertise ensures each plan fits your current needs and future goals.

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Q&A

Questions and Answers with the Experts



Q: Would having another child after a child support order be a material change?

A: Under Maryland's new child support law, a parent who pays child support pursuant to an order may return to court for a modification of support if they have another child. The law aims to create more equitable child support orders by accounting for the cost to support their other children. Previously, the law did not fully or consistently account for a parent's financial responsibilities to other children living in their household unless there was a prior child support order for them.

Crighton A. Chase, Hillman, Brown & Darrow, P.A.



Q: How can I protect my savings if I may need nursing home care?

A: Many families are surprised to learn that long-term care can quickly consume a lifetime of savings. Planning in advance may help preserve assets, protect a spouse, and improve eligibility for public benefits such as Medicaid. The right strategy depends on timing, health, income, and the types of assets involved. Early planning usually creates more options, but even in a crisis there may still be useful steps available. An elder law attorney can help families understand the rules, avoid costly mistakes, and develop a plan tailored to their circumstances.

Q: Why is elder law planning important during retirement?

A: In retirement, estate planning should do more than say who receives your property when you die. It should also prepare for the realities of aging, including possible incapacity, health care decisions, long-term care needs, and protecting assets for a spouse or family. Documents like powers of attorney and advance medical directives are essential, but so is thoughtful planning for what happens if you need help during life. Elder law planning gives families clarity, direction, and peace of mind at a time when uncertainty can otherwise create confusion, delay, and unnecessary expense.

Jason C. Johnson, Johnson Law LLC



Q: Are noncompete agreements still enforceable and, if so, what should businesses consider when using them?

A: Despite the FTC's recent attempt to ban noncompete agreements, they remain enforceable in most states, including Maryland. To be enforceable, they must be reasonable in scope and duration and narrowly tailored to the employer's legitimate, protectable business interests. For example, noncompete agreements cannot prohibit employees from working "in any capacity;" employees may be restricted from working only in the same or similar capacity as they worked for the previous employer. When implementing noncompete agreements, companies should consider the facts of each case, as well as various legal issues, and consult with legal counsel on appropriate legal, strategic, and drafting considerations.

Stephen B. Stern, Esq., Kagan Stern Marinello & Beard, LLC



Q: If my parent is entering a nursing home, should I transfer their assets out of their name to qualify for Medicaid?

A: NO. This is a common misconception that could lead to delayed or denied Medicaid benefits. Medicaid imposes a penalty period for any assets improperly transferred within five years of entering a nursing home. Instead, asset protection strategies must be implemented carefully and with the proper legal guidance to avoid serious harm to your parent. An experienced elder law attorney can provide a strategy tailored to your parent's situation to lawfully protect as much of their assets as possible.

Gregory P. Jimeno, Jimeno & Gray, P.A.



Q: How does someone with a maritime issue select the right lawyer?

A: When it comes to the practice of maritime law, the number of practitioners who focus on that field dwindles with each passing year. To start, check to see if the attorney is a member of the Maritime Law Association of the United States (MLA)—an organization that is comprised of admiralty attorneys. The MLA designates qualified admiralty attorneys as "Proctor" members. Although the requirement of a separate bar exam for admiralty attorneys no longer exists, the "Proctor" designation is still granted by the MLA "to designate the most distinguished class of membership for practicing maritime attorneys."

Todd D. Lochner, Esq., Lochner Law Firm, P.C.



Q: Can I sue my lawyer? What are some of the factors that I need to consider?

A: Yes, you can sue your former lawyer for legal malpractice. To prevail, a Plaintiff typically must prove (1) the attorney's employment, (2) the attorney's neglect of a reasonable duty, and (3) loss to the client proximately caused by that neglect of duty. Outside of legal requirements, one must also consider whether the claim has sufficient economic viability. Because it is often costly to pursue a legal malpractice claim, a former client must determine whether the cost to assert the claim is likely less than the amount that might be recovered to make it economically viable.

Wes P. Henderson, Henderson Law, LLC



Q: How can patients tell the difference between an unfortunate medical outcome and true medical malpractice?

A: This is one of the most common — and most understandable — concerns patients have. A disappointing or unexpected outcome does not automatically mean malpractice occurred. The focus is whether the healthcare provider followed the accepted standard of care. In other words, did they act as a reasonably competent provider would have in the same situation? Potential warning signs include missed or delayed diagnoses, preventable surgical mistakes, lack of appropriate follow-up, or feeling that serious symptoms were repeatedly dismissed. Because these cases are highly technical, the most helpful next step is often a professional review of the medical records to determine whether what happened was unavoidable or preventable.

Andrew Burnett, Burnett Injury Group



Q: How do the Courts decide custody of kids?

A: You may have heard about a new law that lists factors that the Court must consider in determining a custody schedule. The factors are meant to clarify what is in the "best interests of the child." But a list of factors can only go so far. Knowing how the Court might apply facts in your case differently to each of the factors is crucial to ensuring the best possible results. What schedule is "in the best interests of the child" does not equate to deciding who may be a "better" parent. At Hillman, Brown and Darrow, we can help you navigate the custody process, make informed decisions based on the range of possible outcomes and the nuances of the custody determinations that the Court will make, if an agreement cannot be reached.

Sarah E. Brown, Hillman, Brown & Darrow, P.A.



Q: Does estate planning just involve creating a Will?

A: Estate planning generally involves a broader discussion of many kinds of tools, which include the creation of a Last Will. Estate planning involves looking at change over time, and identifying who you trust to make decisions for you and take care of things in your place. While you are living this involves Powers of Attorney, or Trusts and Trustees. For when you become sick, this involves, Advance Directives, and Medical Powers of Attorney. For when we die, the tools are our Wills and/or Trusts and our beneficiary designations. Ideally estate planning involves a coordinated package of these kinds of tools.

Kendall Summers, Esquire, Kendall Summers Law



Q: What if one of the parents committed adultery or is in a new relationship? How does that factor into how the court determines legal and/or physical custody?

A: When determining both legal and physical custody arrangements, the court looks at the best interest of the child. If the Court finds that a parent has committed adultery, that does not make the parent unfit. While it is one of many factors to consider in a divorce action, adultery is not a ground for not allowing a parent to have custody and/or access to a child. When it comes to a new relationship, unless the "new" person is a harm to the child (i.e. has a violent past, criminal history, is harming the child (physically or emotionally) it is not a factor the Court will consider as a negative against the other parent when determining legal and/or physical custody.

Evan Koslow, Esq., Koslow Law Firm LLC



Q: What is Enhanced UIM?

A: Enhanced UIM is coverage on your policy that protects you if the at fault driver has a lower policy than what you carry. This "enhances" or increases your coverage, so that you have more insurance coverage to protect YOU if you are injured by someone else's carelessness. This is typically a minimal cost, and your health and a full recovery are worth it.

Deborah Potter, Potter Law



Q: Should I add my child to my deed to make things easier when I pass away?

A: For many of us, our home is one of the most significant assets in our estate and we want to make sure it passes to our loved ones with ease. Most people think adding a child to their deed is a simple and inexpensive solution, however, there are serious consequences to consider. Title issues, gift tax implications, third-party creditor claims, and capital gains tax issues are just a few reasons we do not recommend this technique. You should always consult with your attorney on the titling of your assets to ensure a successful estate plan.

Jon Gasior, Owner, Managing Attorney
Sinclair Prosser Gasior



Q: How does a person who is about to become involved in a family law problem select the right lawyer?

A: 1) Start by checking the lawyer's rating in Martindale-Hubbell, a publication which rates attorneys based on evaluations from one's peers. 2) Inquire of friends who have been through a similar situation. 3) Inquire of lawyer friends you may have. 4) Ask people at the courthouse who work for the court in the family law division. 5) Confer with more than one lawyer to make certain that you are comfortable with the person selected. Lawyers are not "one size fits all." Determine what you are looking for—super aggressive, cerebral, or warm and fuzzy. Look for someone who is responsive in getting back to you, who will not delegate duties to others, and who specializes in the issues that are likely to be involved in your case. This is a very important decision — select wisely.

Ron Naditch, Ronald M. Naditch, P.A.



Q: Why shouldn't AI do my divorce for me?

A: While AI can be an asset, helping to keep track of complicated schedules or tone checking a message before we hit send, it has also made it easier than ever to alter a text or fabricate a photo. People who input personal information may find their data is far less private than anticipated, and courts are only beginning to grapple with AI misuse. Family law cases are deeply personal and domestic law is constantly evolving. AI may be a helpful tool, but there is no substitute for experienced counsel in your corner.

Marietta B. Warren, Hillman, Brown & Darrow, P.A.



Q: When should I seek help from a personal injury attorney after a car accident?

A: After a car accident, trust your instincts. If you're in pain, need ongoing treatment, are missing work, feel overwhelmed by the process, or aren't sure what your recovery will look like, it may be time to speak with an attorney. You should also pause if an insurance company asks for a recorded statement, downplays your injuries, or offers a quick settlement before you understand the full impact on your life. Many people contact Burnett Injury Group when something simply doesn't feel right—and that's enough. Because we offer free consultations, you can reach out, ask questions, and get clarity about your options without any pressure or obligation.

Suzanne Burnett, Burnett Injury Group



Q: My spouse and I agree on divorce terms, and they're not complicated. Can't I just draft an agreement myself using AI?

A: Please don't! AI-generated contracts consistently contain many loopholes and ambiguities that can really cost you. If you do use AI, it is critical that you consult with an attorney before signing anything. Too many people have spent thousands trying to clean up a mess that could have been avoided by a consultation with an attorney.

Elizabeth A. Pfenson, Council Baradel



Q: Should my boat be federally documented or state titled?

A: Most vessels are eligible to be state-titled. Vessels that are owned by a US citizen and meet certain size requirements are eligible for documentation with the US Coast Guard. Documented vessels receive a certificate of documentation, which is akin to a title. A vessel cannot be both state-titled and federally documented. Whether to document your vessel with the US Coast Guard depends on a number of factors, such as citizenship, size, and use. Notably, vessels engaged in coastwise trade, which includes many chartering (vessel rental) activities, must be federally documented.

Chase A. Eshelman, Esq., Lochner Law Firm, P.C.



Q: Why did Silverman Thompson choose to open an Annapolis office?

A: Annapolis is not just my hometown – it's an obvious place to expand Silverman Thompson's strong ties to Maryland politics, deep experience with government issues, and growing presence in the Anne Arundel courthouse and legal scene. The office will be a hub for our experienced state appellate practice and serving clients with state government concerns, as well as local clients looking for top-notch, high-level representation conveniently located where they live. Nathan Volke, Steve Leitess, and I are proud to be the firm's flag bearers in Anne Arundel County.

Christopher J. Mincher
Silverman Thompson Slutkin & White



Q: If I hire Iliff, Meredith, Wildberger, & Brennan, PC to represent me, will I be able to speak with my attorney throughout the entire case?

A: Yes. Iliff, Meredith, Wildberger & Brennan, PC, is a small, client-focused law firm. Every case is staffed by at least two attorneys. Our goal is to provide clients with ready accessibility to attorneys at all times. We work hard to ensure effective communication with clients from start to finish.

Benjamin Howard Meredith
Iliff, Meredith, Wildberger & Brennan, P.C.



Q: With thousands of lawyers out there, how do I find the best lawyer to handle my car crash?

A: You wouldn't hire a doctor who says "I handle dermatology, allergies, lung cancer and oh, by the way, I do brain surgery on the side." Lawyers that limit their practice to car crash cases will most likely get much better results than lawyers who do not. We live and breathe those issues daily. Start there – find someone handling only the problem you have. Then check them out on-line, with a judge you may know, through MartindaleHubble.com (find lawyers with an "AV" rating), ask other lawyers, read client reviews, look in *Faces of the Chesapeake Magazine*, ask bailiffs or courtroom clerks who watch lawyers in court every day. Find lawyers that have built their reputations on trial results. Insurance adjusters know which lawyers will push hard for the best results and which will settle easily for less money. You need that information too.

Rick Jaklitsch, The Jaklitsch Law Group | 1-(855)-Big-Dog1



Q: HELP! Can an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) help me control my housing costs?

A: In 2025, House Bill 1466 was passed to encourage localities to define and allow more ADUs. Under the new law, an ADU has size restrictions and must provide housing for at least one individual. Many ADUs have already been built in converted garages, basements, or in addition to existing homes, but they may not be legal. Although ADUs can provide rental income or a solution for intergenerational housing, they are still subject to local regulations. If you have one or are contemplating an additional let us know if we can help.

Brian D. Lyman, Hillman, Brown & Darrow, P.A.



Q: How can Advanced Planning Strategies benefit me and my loved ones?

A: Advanced Planning Strategies offer powerful benefits for you and your loved ones. These strategies help minimize taxes. The estate tax exemption is currently at a remarkably high rate. For Maryland, the current estate tax exemption is $5 million for 2026. At the federal level, it is $15 million for 2026. With the right plan in place, you can preserve your legacy, reduce stress for your family, and gain peace of mind knowing your future is secure.

Alex Pagnotta, Sinclair Prosser Gasior
Managing Attorney



Q: Why should trial counsel, already familiar with a case, consider hiring an appellate attorney for an appeal?

A: In addition to timesaving familiarity with appellate procedure and practice, one of the key benefits of an appellate attorney is a detached, critical analysis of the trial record. Unlike trial, where emotional involvement in a case is normal, and oftentimes necessary, emotion is generally unhelpful on appeal, because the audience is different. Though trial may have resulted in emphasis on a certain argument, appellate counsel can help trial counsel determine which arguments and issues from trial are strongest on appeal, or whether a new perspective on an old issue is necessary, all without bias for or against any issue.

Matthew J. Chalker, Bowman Jarashow Law LLC



Q: Can I name someone as a joint owner on my bank account in order to avoid probate?

A: Yes, however there may be unintended consequences. For example, naming a joint owner may expose your account to the joint owner's creditors during your lifetime.

Deborah F. Howe, Franke Beckett LLC



Q: What does McNamee Hosea offer its clients that separates it from other law firms?

A: McNamee Hosea attorneys always provide their clients with consistent and clear communication to solve whatever legal problem needs to be solved. Whether your legal problem involves a business dispute, an estates and trust issue, litigation, employment, zoning, contract, criminal defense, bankruptcy, or anything in between, you can trust that McNamee Hosea attorneys will be understanding and empathetic. For more than forty years, our skilled trial attorneys and advisors have provided creative solutions to complex legal issues. Because of our diverse practice experience, we can handle all of your legal needs within our Firm, resolving them effectively and efficiently.

John P. Lynch, McNamee Hosea, P.A.



Q: What is the Significance of a deed versus title?

A: A deed is the legal instrument used to transfer ownership, while title refers to the legal rights and interest in the property. The deed is evidence of the transfer; title is the underlying ownership right.

Steve McClung, Esq., Manor Title



Q: For divorce, how do Court process and negotiated settlement work to bring about settlement and good results in a marital divorce?

A: Settlement is a usually an ideal result, but only if the settlement is a good one & fair! The good news is that the Circuit Court process in Maryland is a very good one, that provides the power and tools through discovery to ensure that you have the truth about assets, financials and other relevant issues. We settle most of our cases, but some cases do not settle. What is great about our Circuit Court is the judges really try to bring about the best results they can for families! Our Courts provide important tools, but having an attorney who can work in settlement dialogue and who is experienced in drafting Marital Settlement Agreements and Child Custody Plans is also helpful for achieving your hoped for goals and results.

Kendall Summers, Esquire, Kendall Summers Law



Q: What impact will AI have on commercial borrowers in the credit underwriting process?

A: Banks and fintech companies have been early adopters of machine-learning models for commercial underwriting, which have the potential to accelerate and automate what has traditionally been a very data-intensive process—promising increased efficiency and utility for borrowers seeking credit. At the same time, as adoption of AI tools becomes more widespread, the existing web of banking and privacy regulations is likely to create new operational and governance challenges for both lenders and borrowers. While AI may usher in a new level of efficiency, the disclosure and independent validation requirements tied to its use in credit decisions will still require ongoing, and evolving, human oversight.

Michelle DiDonato, McAllister, DeTar, Showalter & Walker LLC



Q: Is it ever possible to change or modify an "irrevocable" trust?

A: In general, an "irrevocable" trust is a trust that cannot be changed or terminated by its creator (the "grantor"). These types of trusts are popularly used for tax planning or creditor protection purposes, and the trust's irrevocability helps accomplish those objectives. However, in limited circumstances, the terms of an irrevocable trust can be changed. For example, a court can modify the trust's terms, or in certain circumstances, Maryland's new Decanting Act permits transfer of the existing trust assets to a new trust.

Jack K. Beckett, Franke Beckett LLC



Q: Are there any risks associated with using artificial intelligence (AI) to solve legal problems?

A: Yes, there are several. Among them, it is well documented that AI can hallucinate legal authorities and provide incorrect or incomplete responses. Therefore, consulting an experienced attorney remains critical. In addition, according to one recent case, AI platform queries may not be protected by the attorney-client privilege or the work product doctrine. Therefore, if you input your legal strategy or the advice of your lawyer into an AI platform, you run the risk that it may no longer be deemed confidential.

Richard J. Berwanger, Jr., *Partner,* Liff, Walsh & Simmons



Q: What can a lawyer do for me if I'm injured in a car crash?

A: Your lawyer can do more than simply help you get the best monetary result possible. A great lawyer can assist with the property damage settlement on your car (or settling the total loss) and getting you into a rental car while you wait. The lawyer will interview witnesses while the accident is fresh, including the investigating police officer, obtain the light sequence from the State Highway Administration (or black-box data in a commercial truck crash), look for physical evidence, such as skid marks or crash debris, run tag traces, and more. Your lawyer will also coordinate paying the doctors either through health insurance or Personal Injury Protection Coverage (PIP) and arrange treatment with a quality doctor if needed, all while ensuring no immediate out-of-pocket payment is required from you.Your lawyer will also maximize the available insurance coverage available to you by coordinating different insurance policies that you may not even know exist, will know the value of your case for settlement purposes, can advise you on litigation strategy, and help you obtain the maximum value for your case. Remember, you should only pay if a lawyer wins your case. So contact a lawyer immediately who handles nothing but car, truck or train crashes if that's how you were injured.

Christine Murphy, The Jaklitsch Law Group | 1-(855)-Big-Dog1



Q: Why do so many families avoid estate planning conversations, and how can adult children start "the talk" with aging parents?

A: Estate planning is often avoided due to discomfort with mortality, procrastination, cost concerns, and lack of knowledge. Many people think they don't have enough assets or feel the process must be perfect. As a result, both planning and conversations are delayed. To begin, choose a calm, private setting and approach the topic with curiosity, not urgency. Ask open-ended questions like, "What matters most to you as you think about the future?" Starting small helps reduce pressure, encourages honest dialogue, and moves families from avoidance toward meaningful planning and shared understanding.

Maria Worthington McKenna, *Managing Partner*
McKenna Russo Law

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RETURN OF THE DRAGON

Chess, classic board games, and, yes, Dungeons & Dragons are seeing a renewed interest locally

Story and Photos by JoAnna Daemmrich • Additional photography by Laura Wiegmann

As the boys around him shouted "doom," Jakob Miller leaned over a medieval battle map, trying to figure out his next move. Would a lightning bolt save them—or just singe their hair?

Luckily, a librarian had the answer. Glancing at her notes, Gabriella Norton laughed a little and said, "Go ahead, roll again."

Outside the room, the Annapolis library was quiet. Inside, Jakob and a half-dozen other boys talked over each other, arguing and joking through a Dungeons & Dragons battle. They traded claims of greatness as freely as d20 dice (a special 20-sided dice used in the game) and mini-cookies. Phones stayed buried in backpacks.

"I kind of let my imagination run wild," said Jakob, 13, who lives in Crofton and rushed from Boy Scouts to the "high point" of his day. "It's looser, so you can be yourself."

For the iPad kids, pencil-and-paper games no longer seem just nerdy or niche. Lately, the same teenagers who obsess over TikTok and YouTube are also dusting off classic board games, from chess and backgammon to Scrabble and Risk, all offscreen and unscripted.

Much of the revival can be traced to the pandemic, when families were stuck at home looking for something to do. Sales of puzzles and board games jumped 30 percent in 2020, according to market research, and have been brisk ever since. Online chess surged, too: Chess.com monthly users climbed in the past five years from about 8 million to over 57 million today. Meanwhile, in-person game nights continue to multiply across the country.

In New York and Los Angeles, chess clubs that once fit around a few tables are drawing cocktail-sipping crowds of 20-somethings to studios and warehouses. Here in Anne Arundel County and on the Eastern Shore, though, it's less a nightlife than a low-key suburban scene.

Local high schools have newly energized chess clubs. Neighborhood stores like Games and Stuff in Glen Burnie and Edgewater's Token host game nights. And public libraries, long past the "shh" era, now fill their calendars with everything from anime screenings to mahjong meetups.

"There's definitely more interest," says Norton, who is 33 and doubles as the "dungeon master" at the Michael E. Busch Annapolis Library, leading teen and adult D&D games. "Once you start talking their language, and they see you're invested, they get more and more engaged."





Perhaps the hottest tabletop game right now is the patriarch of them all—chess, first played in India over 1,500 years ago. Boosted by the Netflix series *The Queen's Gambit*, chess has shed its once-stodgy image, with top players streaming games and analysis to global audiences.

For Greg Acholonu, the crowds and new clubs recall the chess fever after Bobby Fischer's 1972 world championship, which inspired him as a boy. A national master, Acholonu has taught hundreds of Annapolis-area schoolchildren the basics over the past 25 years. Around town, everyone knows him as "Mr. A." Though he worries AI is changing the way the game is played, Acholonu says even first-graders still want to sit down, concentrate, and play face to face.

"The charm of chess has always been what you get out of it," Acholonu says. He has coached some students to tournaments but mostly focuses on "getting them to love the game." "As you increase your skill level, it keeps opening new portals and vistas. Hopefully, it will go on."

"The charm of chess has always been what you get out of it. As you increase your skill level, it keeps opening new portals and vistas." – Greg Acholonu, chess instructor

At the Broadneck library, 16-year-old Michael Dunn has started monthly chess sessions for younger kids (and the occasional retiree). He keeps matches to 10 minutes, easy to reset if a kid gets discouraged, capped by a lightning round. As president of Broadneck High School's chess club, Dunn takes the same relaxed approach. "The best part?" he says. "We reject absolutely no one."

Fourth-grade soccer teammates Drew Winner and Vince Skretch come often. One December afternoon, Drew arrived beaming. "Look at my shoes!" he said, showing off his red-and-white checkerboard Vans. Within minutes, he had scooped up Vince's queen. But two moves later, Drew slumped in his chair and sighed, "This is impossible! I lose to him every time."

Both boys love a challenge: Vince looks to "attack early," while Drew wants to "beat any player who has more experience than me." Just as often, they're moving from table to table, making new friends. "It's a lot of fun meeting people here," Vince said.

Moments later, Drew jumped up to find his favorite partner: his mom. At home, Orian Moss Winner said, he's been teaching her "all the very good strategies" he first learned from Mr. A. Eager to play more, Drew even tried chess on his tablet, she said, but it wasn't the same.



"One of the big things we talk about in our house is balance," says Winner, who lives with her family in Annapolis and encourages them to take regular screen breaks. "We try to go outside and run around, or find time to read, or get out a board game."

Many families are making similar choices, notes Christine Feldmann, spokeswoman for the 16-branch county library system. Since the pandemic, they've flocked to libraries, not just for books but for teen craft nights, resume help, tax prep, and even line dancing. Digital fatigue after so much time online, she said, has left more people "looking for a place of belonging really."

In a corner of the Glen Burnie library, light pop music played as several families settled around a stack of board games on a Monday night. Two moms chatted with their little girls between turns at Connect 4. Nearby, Trey Fraser challenged his 11-year-old son, Nathan, to a round of "War."







"It's been years since I played an actual card game," admitted Fraser, 42, chuckling as Nathan swept up four more cards. Though they play online together, Fraser said he limits Nathan's iPad time and looks for evenings like this, saying, "It's good to get out."

"Growing up, I used to go to the music store and buy CDs. I'd look who the producer was, what the mixing was," he added. "Now everything is on Apple, and you get it right away, but you don't get the same feel for it. It's readily accessible, but somehow less tangible."

For younger fans, that's often the appeal of old-school games, whether it's lining up knights and rooks or flipping through an illustrated monster book. Like Drew with his chess app, Jakob and his friends have checked out online D&D games. But they missed rolling their quirky, multi-sided dice with friends and keeping score by hand.

"It's a lot more rewarding on paper than on the computer," says Jakob, who gets a kick out of the character he invented—a gloomy college grad, wandering among the "happy adventurers" played by fellow middle schoolers. "Plus, you actually get to see people."

Other teens and tweens welcome a break from tightly structured days. Luke Bates, a 15-year-old freshman at Broadneck High, plays trombone in the marching band and studies Taekwondo, every note and step rehearsed. In D&D, he said, it's different.

"You can do what you want just by imagining it, the way you can't with other things," he explains. "There are still rules with D&D, but they don't restrict you. It's more about being able to talk to other people and choose the way the story goes."

First released in 1974, the medieval-inspired fantasy game became a staple of 1980s rec rooms and still draws devoted fans. More recently, it's caught on with the Minecraft generation growing up on role-play video games. County libraries started hosting D&D clubs in 2018, Feldmann said, and now offer about a half-dozen—free, though spots fill fast.

"If you're a geek," Luke quips, "it's considered very cool." At the library table, he looked serious, if half-amused, as the younger boys debated fire, wind—or maybe an arrow—when Norton's dragon unleashed a "cone of doom." Some players hung over the battle map, while others quickly tallied hit points. One minute, the group feared no weapon would work; the next, a 12-year-old declared, "I'm the world's greatest swordsman."

After three years of running D&D games in Annapolis, Norton has heard just about every wild plan. Both storyteller and referee, she's fielded all kinds of questions—could a druid shape-shift, or a bear squeeze through a window? "Solid," she said after one well-timed blow, then teased the group about shrinking their giant characters to dodge Jakob's lightning strike.

"You can do what you want just by imagining it, the way you can't with other things. It's about being able to talk to other people and choose the way the story goes."—Luke Bates, Broadneck High School freshman



Toward the end of the Saturday afternoon, their spells suddenly clicked. One player after another struck—a dart flying, a battleax swinging—until the dragon crumpled. Luke grinned and reached for his stick of dynamite. "Just a nasty smell of sulfur and a screech," Norton said, wrapping up the game in a cloud of smoke and laughter.

Gathering up their dice, the boys said quick goodbyes. A few were already on their phones. As the last of the D&D faithful headed for the door, Norton called after them:

"Same time next month!"









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Home & Garden

132 RESPITE IN FRENZIED TIMES

136 EXTRAORDINARY LIVING ON THE SEVERN



Suburban Take on Modern Luxury

PG. 122

Photography by Eric Tate


Miele

Suburban Take on Modern Luxury

By Lisa J. Gotto

Sometimes it takes a fair amount of imagination and certainly just the right resources to totally reimagine what a home would look like with less walls, a more intentional floorplan, and the interior creature comforts that convert a mere house to a place that you can't wait to come home to.

Fortunately, our feature homeowners found that resource in a growing design/build enterprise that handles all aspects of the quintessential interior gut job.

Hart, who has a background in engineering and interior design, says her company sources all the required contractors, from home builders, to woodworkers, and associated trades, and then manages the entire project.

"We've been in business for 10 years and do mostly full-home renovations."

In this particular case, Hart was looking to address three complete floors, and a fourth-level loft that would become a bedroom for the couple's 4-year-old.

THE PROJECT: A three-story home in a highly desirable Anne Arundel County suburb. Built in the 1980s, this approximately 4,000-square-foot house required nearly every aspect of a modern renovation, including infrastructure concerns such as the mitigation of a prior ill-conceived addition and smart accommodations for the new HVAC system the project would require.

THE PLACE: This professional couple with a young son found a great location for their family in Millersville. The neighborhood offered pockets of green spaces, and the property afforded the advantage of a private backyard that became more easily accessible through the optimization of a thoughtful floorplan that emphasized flow.

EXECUTING THE PLAN: The homeowners chose Taylor Hart Designs, an Annapolis- and Baltimore-based design/build firm that offers a full-service, concierge-model approach to whole-home interior remodeling projects.



Photography by Eric Tate

THE MAIN LEVEL

Hart describes this home as somewhat of a split level, but not in the traditional sense where the split occurs at the entry where you have a landing that goes either up or down.

"The house was a 1980s special," says Hart, who explains upon first entering the house she could tell from its dated, small, patterned wallpaper and ceramic wall switch plates, that very little had been done to the home since it was built with the exception of the ill-conceived addition that only accentuated its series of small, dark rooms.

Happily, the home's entry provided the space to create a proper, welcoming foyer that leads to the residence's formal living room. From there, she says, the original floorplan was anything but welcoming with a series of walled-in spaces that included a small, dark kitchen, and a dining room and home office area located in the addition to the home.





The interior of the new entry was designed to showcase the homeowner's Italian roots where items from her homeland could be displayed within the context of a more modern home with nods to little luxuries throughout. A subtle paper with a delicate, fresh design was used to highlight the ceiling and the couple chose to go with an engineered wood plank floor of white oak in a natural stain throughout.

Earth tones on the walls in the foyer and living room provide the opportunity for furnishings to make a statement with a clear injection of the homeowner's personality shining through in the supple choice of lush velvet for the couch and chair, and the addition of a stylish Commerce and Market Frame Cocktail Table by Hooker Furniture to the grouping.

This area now has visual connections to the home's kitchen and dining areas that it didn't have prior to the renovation.

"It was really a weird design that was not at all useful with nothing really connected to the main living space," Hart says. In addition to the kitchen being painfully small and outdated, the newer add-on to the home further contributed to what turned out to be a series of disjointed small rooms.

"So, we just blew it all up," Hart explains. "We put the kitchen into the dining room and office space, and then I ended up taking out an entire wall and adding a sliding glass door for outdoor access."

The result created the kitchen of the homeowner's dreams with a huge center island, commercial grade appliances, custom cabinetry, and lots of natural light from the new windows that were designed into the plan.

"Whenever we design, the primary focus is always about getting light into the kitchen."







Hart designed the cabinets herself and then had them fabricated at Woodworking by Design of Owings. And while the homeowner did request a solid marble for the countertops and island, Hart says, she felt she needed to recommend the more functional quartz for the homeowner, who is an accomplished chef in her own right. The stone was then run up the wall to create a seamless backsplash, with the exception of the area over the range where they then chose a painted 8x8 ceramic tile from Compass Tile in Annapolis to safeguard that part of the wall from the substantial heat of the range.







Hart credits their in-house interiors expert, Deanna Gurri, for helping create the home's showstopper of a dining room with its glamourous finishes, fixtures, and wallpaper.

The homeowner's love of style and flair for color also played a prominent role in the form and function of this room. Hart says the homeowners wanted to do something different with the space and Hart knew she had some extra square footage to work with.

"The dining room was really fun because we used a William & Morris Strawberry Thief wallpaper in there that [the homeowner] loves, and then we were able to do the arched blue butler's bar.

This signature element was not part of the original room design, says Hart, but was built out from the wall to create a purposeful space for storage and be the highlight of any cocktail hour.

The gorgeous Xavier chandelier by Crystorama, was a fortuitous find sourced by Gurri, which happened to have a blue shade option that exactly matched the pretty pale blue paint by Farrow & Ball that was chosen for the room.



So, Hart's team set out to create an experience that would comfort and interest the boy by adding warmth with a cozy night-sky wallpaper on the ceiling and a bed where he could imagine himself camping out under the stars. "We had to make it magical, so he would sleep there," says Hart, who adds she has since spoken to the homeowner about whether the endeavor was a success or not.

"And she replied, 'Mission accomplished.'"



UPSTAIRS, DOWNSTAIRS

This four-bedroom, four-and-a-half-bath home would also realize improvements to its lower and upper floors. Downstairs, a cozy and comfortable family room with an attractive black brick fireplace wall replaced what Hart says was a totally underutilized and uninspired space that just had furniture sitting in it. Nearly the entire footprint would be reconfigured on this level taking storage and extra laundry room space and re-imagining it into a private office, an attractive mudroom where the family could transition in from the garage, and an amazing powder room clad in a bright, large-format floral paper with an exceptionally gorgeous vanity accented with luxe brass fixtures.

Upstairs, a quiet haven in tranquil tones was created for the couple's primary bed and bath, and the youngest member of the family literally received the bedroom of his dreams.

Hart says the homeowners expressed their concern that their son was consistently having trouble sleeping in his own bed in their prior home and they were hoping to address that issue with the new one.





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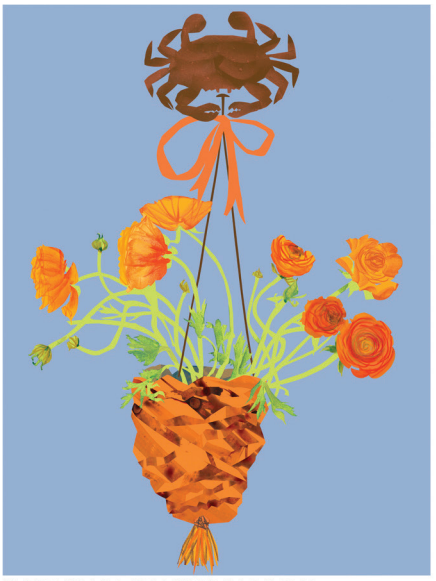

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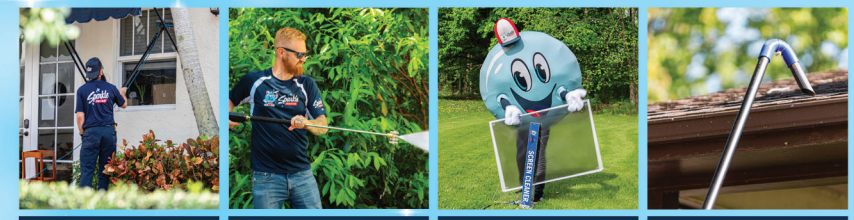

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Respite In Frenzied Times

CREATING A MEDITATION GARDEN

By Janice F. Booth

It's here! May 3rd is *National Garden Meditation Day*. As early as 2500 BCE, Chinese gardens were designed to encourage meditation and quiet reflection. Zen gardens in Japan date from 600–900 CE. In 16th century India, Mughal gardens were arranged for contemplation and relaxation. Apparently, life's demands have always led people to turn to their gardens for renewal. It's the 21st century, and when we want to recover from the demands and pressures of life, we, too, turn to our gardens.

Perhaps now is the perfect time to add a meditation space to your garden, or maybe simply create a meditation area on your deck or patio. You don't need much space. Let me review with you the (1) DESIGN of a meditation garden, (2) IMPLEMENTATION of your design, and (3) adding a BONSAI to your meditation garden.





DESIGN GOAL: Create an area that reminds us to slow down and meditate or reflect.

◆ The 4 elements to incorporate into our meditation gardens are: **earth**, **wind**, **fire**, and **water**.

◆ Choose or create an area that is **quiet**, **shady**, and **private**.

◆ Include focal points in our plan: a Buddha, a fountain, a statue, or other item that will invite us to rest our eyes, linger a while.

◆ Keep it simple; the design should be **low maintenance**. We don't want to feel guilty about stray weeds when our minds should be at ease.

◆ For **privacy**, a grouping of shrubs or a screen, perhaps of bamboo, will be needed. (Do not plant bamboo in your garden. Its rhizomes/roots will choke out everything in its path.) Here's where you can impress your friends and landscaper: When you discuss your plan for the meditation garden, reference the "Law of Significant Enclosure." That "law" asserts that a cozy space will have walls/privacy barriers that are 1/3 of the height of the horizontal/length of the space. So, a 12' long meditation garden would need privacy walls approximately 4' high.

◆ **Seating**. Traditional meditation gardens often have raised platforms where one sits (ideally cross-legged.) Instead of the yoga position, a comfortable, small bench may suit. (Avoid seating that appears to invite more than one person.)

◆ **Paths** are lovely, usually curved. If your garden permits, add a simple path of pebbles, flagstone, or wood chips.

IMPLEMENTATION: This portion of the project should be relaxing and not stressful.

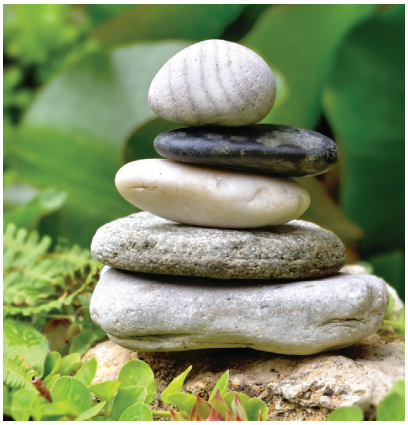
Incorporating the 4 elements:

◆ **Earth:** this may be the soil among the plants or fine gravel on the path. Building a cairn as a focal point, earth as stone, is another beautiful option.

◆ **Wind:** windchimes are lovely ways to honor the wind or breezes. You'll want to carefully select for sound quality and volume. The same will be true if you choose to suspend a grouping of bells.

◆ **Fire:** there are so many interesting light sources appropriate for a meditative space. Candles, scented or plain, lanterns, solar torches, or even a fire pit—though I fear that's a bit too much of an activity rather than a simple point of focus.

◆ **Water:** a small fountain can serve as a focal point in a meditation garden. A simple shallow bowl of still water is lovely too. The Japanese see bridges as water elements. A bridge symbolizes passages and unification. The bridge need not cross water; it can simply be a lovely feature to contemplate.



Fragrance: our olfactory senses can help us relax. Consider:

◆ **Fragrant plants:** planting lavender or jasmine is ideal, but they require quite a bit of sun. If your meditation garden is shaded, these dears won't flourish.

◆ **Incense:** keep a water-tight container with matches and incense sticks. Set one stick into the sand or earth and let it burn down. In addition to the relaxing scent, its burning can serve as a timer: You'll meditate until the incense stick has burnt down. (We have to train ourselves to slow down.)

Easy maintenance: plan your garden so you needn't face chores before you can settle in and relax.

◆ Cover the seating with a tarp or sleeve or keep the cushions indoors until needed.

◆ Keep a small hand brush or broom nearby to remove the leaves that might gather, and a mid-size basket that can hold your sweepings. The trick is to avoid having to run around doing housekeeping when you want to meditate.

◆... and that's all the maintenance you'll need.



BONSAI: These miniature trees and shrubs are often used in meditation gardens. They're symbols of harmony, balance, order, and peace. (There are amazing bonsai gardens at the National Arboretum in Washington, D.C.) If you're interested in adding bonsai to your garden, here are a few pointers.

◆ Usually, we buy bonsai that have been trained for 3–5 years; that means the roots and branches have been pruned to create a specific formation.

◆ Bonsai are grown in pots or bowls, usually simple in form and colors.

◆ The tree or shrub will be comfortable outdoors in your meditation garden, as long as the temperature is above 40 degrees F. It will need 4–6 hours a day of sun and/or diffused light.

◆ Moisture is important. If you have a fountain, place the bonsai nearby or set the bonsai on a bed of damp pebbles. Remember to watch that the pebbles remain damp. Water your bonsai when the soil feels dry. (You might check that the drainage holes in the bonsai pot are clear.)

◆ Finally, the most popular types of bonsai include: Chinese elm, Bristlecone pine, Dawn Redwood, Jade, Beech, Azalea

You may find your bonsai becomes a sweet focus point for your meditations. And, before too long, meditating may become an essential part of your time in your garden.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Extraordinary Living on the Severn

By Lisa J. Gotto

The modern luxury trend is living large in Arnold with this amazing 4,600-square-foot home and surrounding property that brings the vibe of resort living to everyday life.

Capturing panoramic waterfront views of the Severn River and Asquith Creek, this home's floorplan was executed to inspire and enliven from the moment you cross the threshold.

Primary Structure Built: 1978

Sold For: $3,550,000

Original List Price: $4,299,000

Bedrooms: 4

Baths: 4 Full, 1 Half

Living Space: 4,607 Sq. Ft.

Lot Size: 1.53 acres

Photography by Jonathan Hsu

The main living area is expansive and absolutely an entertainer's paradise with its exquisite flow from space to space. Guests will note the attention to detail given to all the finishes and materials used in its design, especially its sleek cable stairways, luxe, beachy hardwoods, and the nearly endless floor-to-ceiling windows in every room.

The kitchen can best be described as glamorous utility meets life at the beach with its sandy-colored custom cabinetry, ultra-modern accessorization, and incredible views from every vantage point.

Overhead, the space is warmed with white-washed wood beams and, at the center of the room, there's a roomy island with a stone-topped counter and a stainless steel gas cooktop. Underneath there's plenty of storage and the unit provides counter seating for four.

The dedicated dining space overlooking the water is nearby and provides the perfect layout for family gatherings of all sizes. The space is accented with a floor-to-ceiling stone fireplace wall that meets a serene main living room on the opposite side.











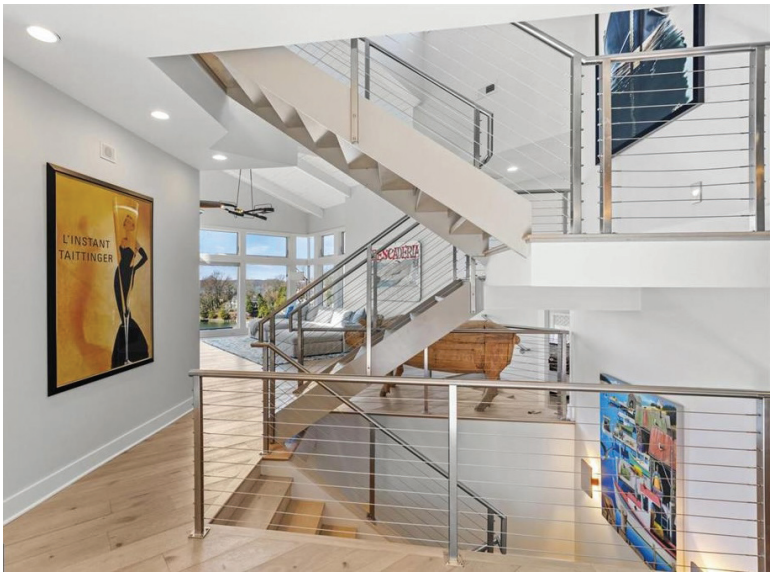
This level of the home provides one of the dwelling's guest suites with full bath and a private deck overlooking the water.

One level below, there are two additional bedrooms that share a full bath and a large and bright family room with another attractive stone fireplace, great views, and step-out access.

The impressive primary suite encompasses the entire upper floor and features incredible views, its own waterside balcony, a spa-like bath with a gorgeous dual vanity and a floor-to-ceiling tiled shower with glass doors. Completing this private retreat is a totally customized walk-in closet.

Outside, this home is situated on a scenic point and was advantageously conceived within the landscape to offer the best possible integration with its surrounding natural world. Terraced grounds with lush green spaces, gorgeous paved and bordered gathering spaces, and a multi-level deck overlooking the water and property's private dock provide a picture postcard-like experience to being outdoors.

And within moments, you can be on the water and on your way to the historic sights and sounds of downtown Annapolis.









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Health & Beauty

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Why GLP-1s Work for Many Patients

BUT NOT ALL

By Dylan Roche

By now, you've likely heard of medications such as Ozempic, Wegovy, Zepbound—all brand names for what are known as **glucagon-like peptide-1 receptor agonists**, or **GLP-1** drugs for short. These medications have offered hope for people battling obesity who haven't found success with traditional approaches like diet and exercise. For some, they seem to be a miracle weight-loss option.

But then there are those who don't find success even with these so-called miracle drugs. **It leaves many frustrated people thinking: Why?**

It's not because the GLP-1s aren't working—instead, it has to do with the root cause of a person's struggle with their weight.

CONSIDER HOW GLP-1S WORK:

- These drugs mimic your body's natural GLP-1 hormone that prompts your pancreas to release insulin and transport glucose from your bloodstream to your cells for energy. This is why GLP-1s can help people with type 2 diabetes, who either do not produce enough insulin or their body is resistant to it.
- While the GLP-1 drugs are encouraging your body to produce more insulin, there are also other benefits: They reduce thoughts of hunger in your brain, and they delay stomach emptying so you stay fuller longer.
- In addition to improved insulin dynamics, the reduced hunger, increased satiety, and delayed stomach emptying mean GLP-1 drugs can boost weight-loss efforts, which is why they're prescribed for people with obesity.

If you struggle with your weight because of poor appetite regulation, poor satiety signaling, or reward-driven eating (that is, you're always feeling a want to eat, you rarely feel full even after eating, or you crave foods that make you feel good emotionally), then GLP-1 drugs could address these problems.

ON THE OTHER HAND, OBESITY COULD BE CAUSED BY OTHER PROBLEMS UNRELATED TO APPETITE:

- Hormonal problems, such as cortisol, menopause, or hypothyroid
- A naturally low resting metabolism (known medically as adaptive thermogenesis)

In these cases, GLP-1s might not work as well. There's also the chance that your body is more responsive to weight loss—it lowers its basal energy expenditure and increases its metabolic efficiency as you lose weight. Now that you're smaller, your body needs even fewer calories, which makes weight maintenance harder.

Plus, remember that GLP-1s might reduce your appetite, but they won't eliminate learned behavior. It's still easy to take in liquid calories if you're not hungry, or your favorite foods might still be easy to overeat even if you aren't constantly craving them.

Does this mean GLP-1s "failed" if someone is still struggling with their weight? Not at all—the drugs are likely working. It just means there's another cause that needs to be addressed.

Healthy Hair, Courtesy Tretinoin Cream

By Dylan Roche

You might not think of your hair as an extension of your skin, but it is—after all, your scalp *is* skin. Which is why hair loss is often considered a dermatological issue, and it might then make some sense why dermatologists will sometimes recommend a prescription skin cream known as **tretinoin** for hair loss.



Even though this recommendation isn't exactly without reason, it's important to understand that tretinoin doesn't have approval by the Food & Drug Administration to treat hair loss. This is because it doesn't stop androgenetic alopecia (male/female pattern hair loss) or block the DHT hormones that drive hair loss. It could still have some benefit though:

WHY IS TRETINOIN GOOD FOR SKIN?

This prescription cream has a potent dose of vitamin A and can increase skin cell turnover. That's why it's used to treat acne, reduce fine lines, and undo sun damage when you apply it to skin on your face. When applied to the scalp, research shows it increases blood flow, which would improve the effectiveness of a minoxidil-based anti-hair loss treatment like Rogaine.

SO, I WOULD HAVE TO USE TRETINOIN AND ROGAINE TOGETHER?

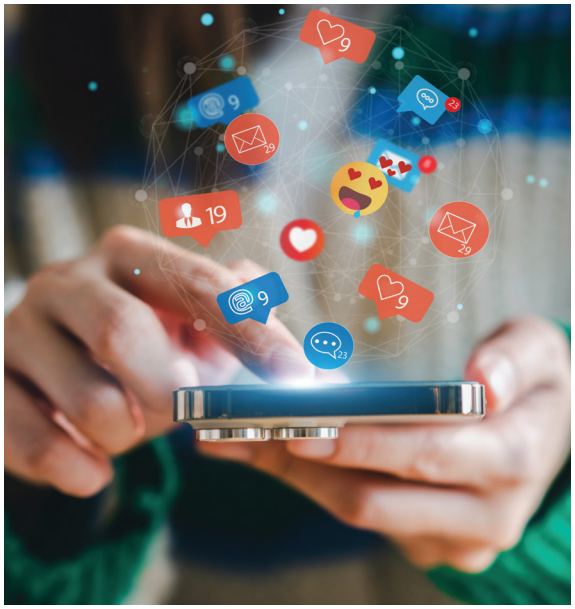
Minoxidil can be effective on its own, but with tretinoin increasing the blood flow to the scalp, the minoxidil penetrates the skin and is absorbed up to three times as well. Applying both products together once a day could be more effective than using minoxidil twice a day—something that would be a huge advantage if a twice-daily regimen is difficult to follow.

ARE THERE OTHER BENEFITS TO TRETINOIN THAT COULD BE GOOD FOR HAIR LOSS?

Because tretinoin exfoliates dead skin cells, it could keep the hair follicles on your scalp clear of sebum that builds up around them and blocks their growth. This could promote healthier follicular cycling so your hair grows back thicker and fuller. However, there still needs to be more research on this process.

WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT TRETINOIN FOR SCALP HEALTH?

Tretinoin has the potential to inflame your scalp if it's used excessively, which would make hair loss even worse. You want to start applying it lightly only two or three times a week until your scalp is conditioned for it. Apply it before you go to bed instead of in the morning, as it is light sensitive. Finally, have patience—it could take up to six months to see effects.



Don't Like This

SOCIAL MEDIA USE TAKES A TOLL ON TEENAGERS—BUT YOU CAN KEEP IT UNDER CONTROL

By Dylan Roche

Every parent wants their kid to be healthy—not just physically but also mentally and emotionally. Unfortunately, one of the bigger threats to their mental-emotional health might be something that is constantly in their life. It's their phone, and the access it provides to social media.

Now, it's important not to demonize social media, according to Dorian Johnson, a public health educator specializing in adolescent health. In fact, it's on social media that Johnson shares insight for parents under the handle @thephuncle on Instagram and TikTok. And he knows social media *can* have its benefits for teens.

"Social media isn't inherently evil," he says. "There are spaces and places that affirm ideas and celebrate talents and interests. Amplifying that is great, especially if they don't have community that celebrates those interests in person."

Socializing on an online platform can be fun—but as with an in-person social interaction, online social interaction be negative. Couple that with the fact that social media is often inescapable and its algorithms reward the content that gets the biggest reactions (more on those points in just a second) and you've got an environment that sets kids up for all kinds of mental health problems.

If you're trying to understand why social media can be so harmful for a young person, here are four crucial points to keep in mind:

Teen brains are still forming. The prefrontal cortex, which handles everything from judgement to emotional regulation, doesn't fully mature until a person is in their mid-20s. A teen's dopamine reward system is also highly sensitive, so they thrive off little rushes of excitement that adults wouldn't care as much about.

Now consider how social media works:

- Likes, views, and comments trigger dopamine spikes similar to gambling
- Those likes, views, and comments are often unpredictable and out of your control—but still highly addictive
- This creates an impulsive desire to seek those dopamine spikes, even in the form of constant checking, which teens are neurologically less able to self-regulate

Social media is often built for social comparison. Most adults can remember the pressure of trying to fit in when they were teenagers, constantly asking themselves, "How do I rank socially? Am I cool enough?" Social media forces them to be ranking themselves 24/7. Their algorithms feed them a distorted reality of people who are attractive, popular, successful, and wealthy. Teens start to compare themselves to the people they see on social media, which can lead to: Anxiety, Depression, Body dysmorphia, Perfectionism

Added to all this: They base their self-worth on the engagement they receive on social media. They see what they post as an extension of themselves—if their friends don't like their photo or their video, it's seen as a reflection that their friends don't like them.

"Social media is more nuanced for teens than adults. There's pressures and dramas," Johnson says. "Some posts are deeper than posts. Streaks? Commenting on others posts when you said you wouldn't? Not tagging someone but tagging others in a photo? These are concerns and they can harm feelings of self-worth."

Their ability to form their identity is outsourced to others. Adolescence is a time for young people to figure out who they are—this often requires making mistakes, changing their minds, or trying something new. A digital environment is one where they're constantly on display and being scrutinized.

"Social media has created environments where the mistake of one person is now shared with many others," says Kevin Greene, a psychotherapist who works with teenagers. "For example, a 14-year-old might say something online in a group chat that gets them in trouble, whereas in the past it would have been in a small group of friends in person. Because it is online, it likely was sent to a lot of people and can easily be shared. What has unfortunately become common are arguments between two people becoming an issue for an entire friend group, leading to too much toxicity."

HOW TO MAKE SOCIAL MEDIA WORK

Remember though: Social media isn't all bad. It's all in how it's being used—and it's completely possible for young people to use social media in a way that's productive and healthy. It's why many people, teens included, continue to use it.

"I think using it to share news and experiences, and to communicate is fine and the proper purpose for social media," Greene says. "I have met with teens who would give up their accounts if it didn't mean being left out of plans for things."

Consider these tips for helping teens develop a relationship with social media that's good for their mental and emotional health:

1. Wait until they're a little bit older. Every parent has to make the decision for themselves when is an appropriate age for their kid to access social media, but most experts agree 14 is the absolute youngest. By the time they're in high school, they'll have had a chance to form their identity and learn to regulate their emotions.

2. Focus on rules, not lectures. Lecturing your teen about the detriments of social media rids them of the autonomy they seek at this age, which can make it even harder for you to discourage use. Instead, give them structure, such as phone-free bedrooms at night, time limits on pointless scrolling, and tech-free meals or homework sessions.

3. Explain the algorithm to them. When teens use social media, they should understand that the content they're being shown isn't random and neutral. Content that makes people feel angry or insecure tends to have better engagement. When they understand this, they're less likely to draw comparisons ("Why don't I look like that?" or "That's not what I think!") and possibly less likely to be interested in what they're seeing ("It's all just rage bait.").

4. Encourage offline sources of self-worth. The best diversion to social media is a fulfilling life offline. When they're enjoying themselves in the real world, they'll be less likely to spend mindless time on socials. And when they *do* log onto social media, it won't be their only perception of the world. They'll have a better perception of their own self-worth thanks to sports, music, art, work, volunteering, and in-person friendships.

DON'T EXPECT THE SOCIAL MEDIA COMPANIES TO PARENT FOR YOU

You might have heard some buzz that social media companies want to put guardrails in place to keep young users safe, either because of legislation or moral obligation.

But is there anything significant social media companies can actually do? "I personally don't believe so, and things can be so much better for youth and we shouldn't have to wait for things to get worse for it to happen," Johnson says "Instagram Teen versions exist, but I'm not clear on how it works in practice. If anything, it does shift from blaming teens from being on social media too much to a bigger issue for tech and apps to do better."

Greene is an emphatic no, pointing to the assessment that a user's well-being will never be the priority for these social media platforms. "The companies want to get as much information about their users as they can to help with ads and new products to generate revenues. Their core interests are not aligned with safeguards."





5 Yoga Poses to Fix 5 Common Problems

By Dylan Roche

A dedicated yogi might be practicing yoga every day, going through a full cycle of poses to build strength, increase flexibility, or simply improve mental clarity. Maybe that's not you though—and that's okay. You don't have to be a full-time practicer of yoga to reap its benefits. Learning a simple pose or two could help undo the stressors of everyday life and alleviate common ailments you're suffering because of them.

SO, IF YOU'RE YOGA CURIOUS, HERE ARE FIVE POSES YOU CAN LEARN TO TREAT THOSE ACHES AND PAINS A LOT OF US DEAL WITH:

Lower back stiffness? Try the pigeon pose. The pigeon pose is great because it stretches the deep hip rotators, improving your hip mobility and reducing your anterior hip tightness that feeds your lower back pain. **Here's how you do it:** Start in a straight-arm plank position. Bring your right knee up toward your right wrist. Slide your right foot forward, keeping your shin angled comfortably. Extend your left leg straight back. Square your hips as much as possible. Stay upright and hold for 30 seconds. Switch legs and hold again for another 30 seconds.

Neck and shoulder tension? Try threading the needle. Thread the needle is a yoga pose that releases your upper back and rear shoulder muscles. It counteracts forward-head posture (often caused by sitting at a desk for prolonged periods) and improves thoracic spine rotation. **Here's how you do it:** Start on your hands and knees. Slide your right arm under your chest with your palm facing up. Lower your right shoulder and head while keeping your hips stacked over your knees. Gently press the left hand into the floor. Hold for 30 seconds. Switch sides and hold for another 30 seconds.

Feeling stressed or anxious? Try legs up the wall. Legs up the wall will activate your parasympathetic nervous system. This lowers your heart rate and cortisol levels—in other words, it takes your nervous system out of overdrive. **Here's how you do it:** Sit sideways next to a wall. Swing your legs up as you lie back. Keep your hips close to the wall or only slightly away. Keep your arms relaxed by your sides. Close your eyes and breathe slowly as you hold for 5 minutes.

Poor posture? Try the locust pose. The locust pose will activate your glues and upper back, and it strengthens your spinal extensions. This is good for countering the slouching or rounded shoulders you develop when you walk around with poor posture. **Here's how to do it:** Lie face down with your arms by your sides. Press the tops of your feet into the mat. Lift your chest, arms, and legs slightly. Keep your neck neutral and look down. Engage your glutes gently (but not forcefully). Hold for 30 seconds and repeat three times.

Tight hamstrings? Try downward-facing dog. Downward-facing dog is a yoga pose that will decompress your spine and lengthen your hamstrings and calves. As a bonus, it's also good for your shoulder mobility. **Here's how to do it:** Start on your hands and knees. Tuck your toes as you lift your hips up and push them back. Bend your knees slightly if your hamstrings are tight. Press your chest toward your thighs while pushing your hands firmly into the mat. Hold for 30 seconds.



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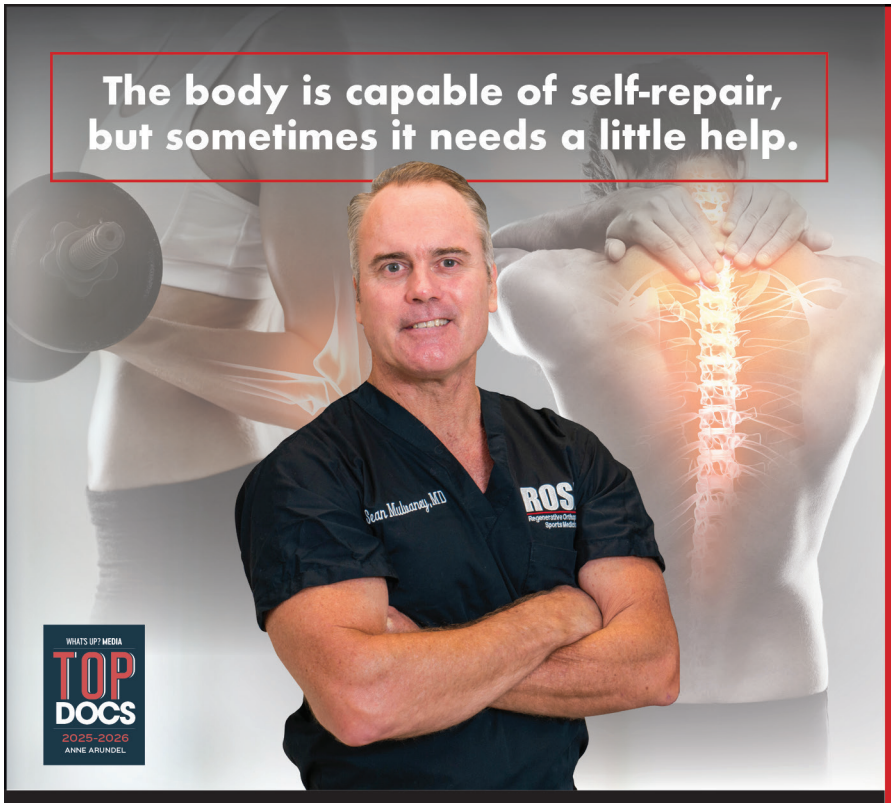

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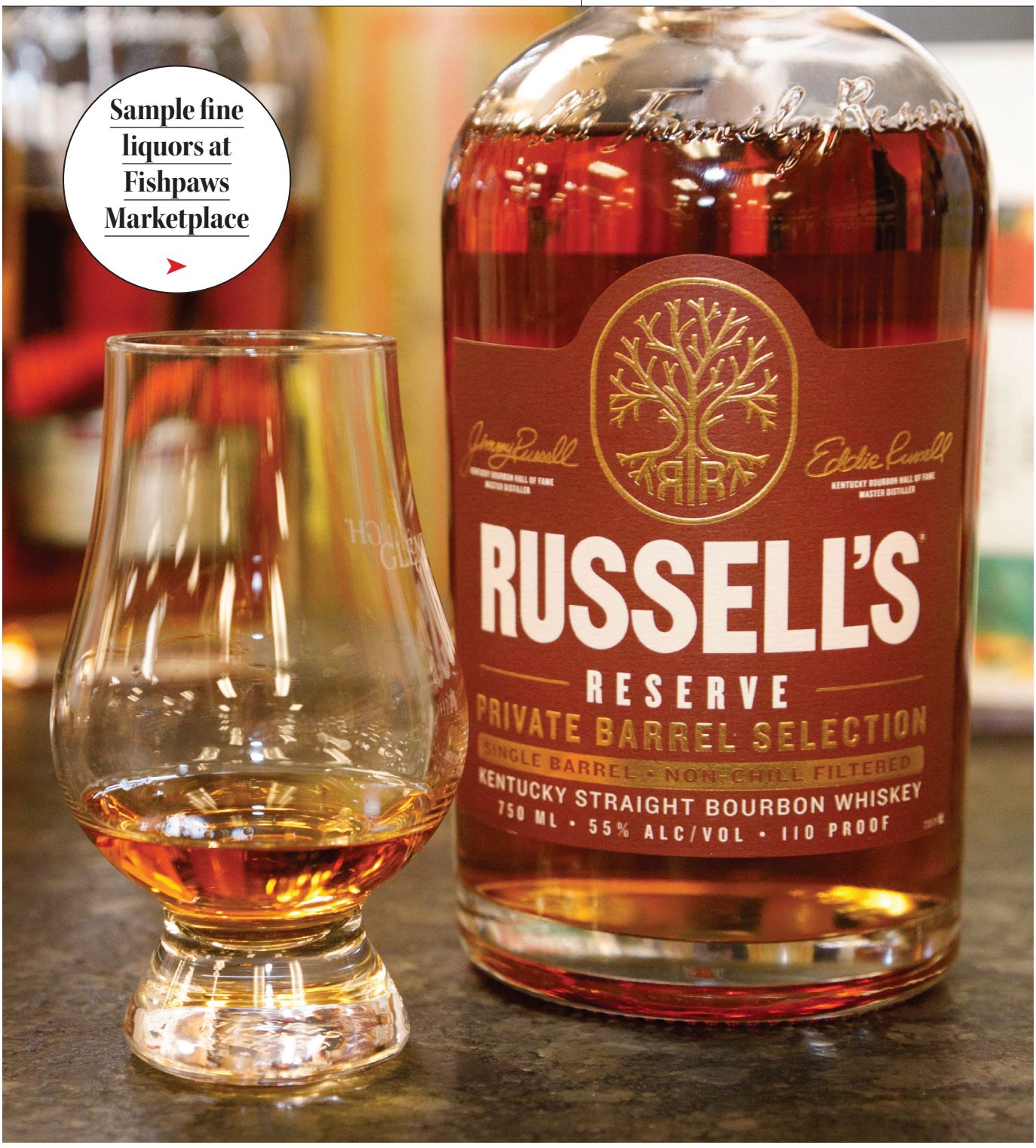

Photography by Laura Wiegmann

Savor the Fishpaws Experience

By Lisa A. Lewis

A staple in the community, Fishpaws Marketplace offers a wide selection of specialty products and friendly, personalized service. Located in Arnold, the business is steeped in history—dating back to 1935 when Bill Fishpaw founded it as a liquor store, tavern, and service station. In 1939, a liquor license was officially issued to the property.

The establishment operated under various names throughout the years, including Bill and Etta's Tavern and Bill's Tavern, before becoming Arnold Liquors in 1982. When the Lawson family purchased the business in 1983, they changed the name back to Fishpaws Marketplace to honor its deep roots and iconic presence in the community. Kim Lawson became a partner with her parents in 1989.





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The Lawson family changed the dynamic of the business—transforming it from a traditional liquor store to a gourmet marketplace that serves as a one-stop shop for its loyal customer base. In 2010, Kim became the sole owner, and she is proud to carry on the Fishpaws' legacy.

"We aren't a shopping trip but an experience," Lawson says. "We are a premier shopping destination, providing you with an experience like no other. Our extremely knowledgeable staff always greets you and asks if you need help. Local delivery is also available for online orders."

To learn more, we spoke to Lawson.

How has Fishpaws Marketplace evolved under your family's ownership? We completed a major construction project in 2002, which doubled our square footage. After the renovations, we began focusing on food and added gourmet cheese and charcuterie. We also hired a certified cheese specialist. Most of our managers have food and beverage experience, so they can assist with pairing beverages with our selection of food items.

Tell us about your background in the beverage industry. I grew up in the retail industry. My family owned six gift shops in Annapolis, D.C., and Virginia, and a marine supply store. I worked side by side with my parents from the age of 13 at these businesses. My father was in the liquor business at the distributor and importer level, so I had a great mentor.

Describe your wide selection of alcoholic beverages. We source single-barrel whiskies and tequilas, which are one-of-a-kind selections, and buy whole barrels. Our beer selection includes imports, craft beers, and domestic beers, including IPAs, lagers, stouts, porters, and seasonal offerings, especially from local breweries. We also have a crowler/growler station with 12 tap lines and offer beer flights from the draft station.

Photography by Laura Wiegmann

Fishpaws' spirit tasting bar features limited-release whiskies and tequilas, which are available to taste and purchase by the bottle. Our 16-station wine bar features one-ounce, two-ounce, or four-ounce pours. The bar consists of eight red wines and eight white wines from around the world. We rotate them often, so there is always something new to taste.

What types of gourmet food do you offer? We offer gourmet cheese, charcuterie, focaccia bread, and a huge selection of locally-sourced food items from Jimmy's Famous Seafood, Shore Boys Soups, Squire's Italian Restaurant and Catering, Wockenfuss Candies, VanEllin, Otterbein's Cookies, Berger Cookies, and Always Ice Cream (including our curated boozy options).

We also carry a gourmet selection of chips, pretzels, hummus, and dips as well as fresh-baked, crispy French baguettes. Our baguettes are baked in-house or available frozen to reheat at home.

What are some of your top-selling items? Some of our top-selling items include La Marca Prosecco, canned cocktails from Surfside and High Noon, Squire's Take & Bake pizzas, French baguettes, and VanEllin's focaccia breads. An Italian sparkling wine, Prosecco, is great for mimosas or served alone, especially for brunch. The canned cocktails are perfect for boating, pool parties, and tailgating. VanEllin's rosemary olive oil focaccia is so crispy and light with a touch of salt. It's delicious!









Tell us about the tastings and events you host. We host weekly tastings, featuring wine, spirits, and craft beers, with our distributor partners as well as wine dinners at local restaurants. Our tastings are a great opportunity for customers to sample our products before they buy them, and our wine dinners allow customers to learn about a particular wine region or winery.

We also partner with Homestead Gardens for our annual Corks for a Cause wine tasting event to benefit Baltimore Washington Medical Center Foundation. A fun social gathering, Corks for a Cause allows guests to enjoy wines from around the world, sample appetizers from local restaurants, and support a good cause.

What charities do you support? We support the Greater Severna Park and Arnold Chamber of Commerce's Holiday Taste and Sip, Severna Park Community Center, Maryland Therapeutic Riding, Arnold and Earleigh Heights Fire Departments, Friends of the Light House, Stef Ripple Foundation, Believe in Tomorrow Children's Foundation, and many other local charities. These causes are dear to our hearts, and many are also recommended by our customer base.



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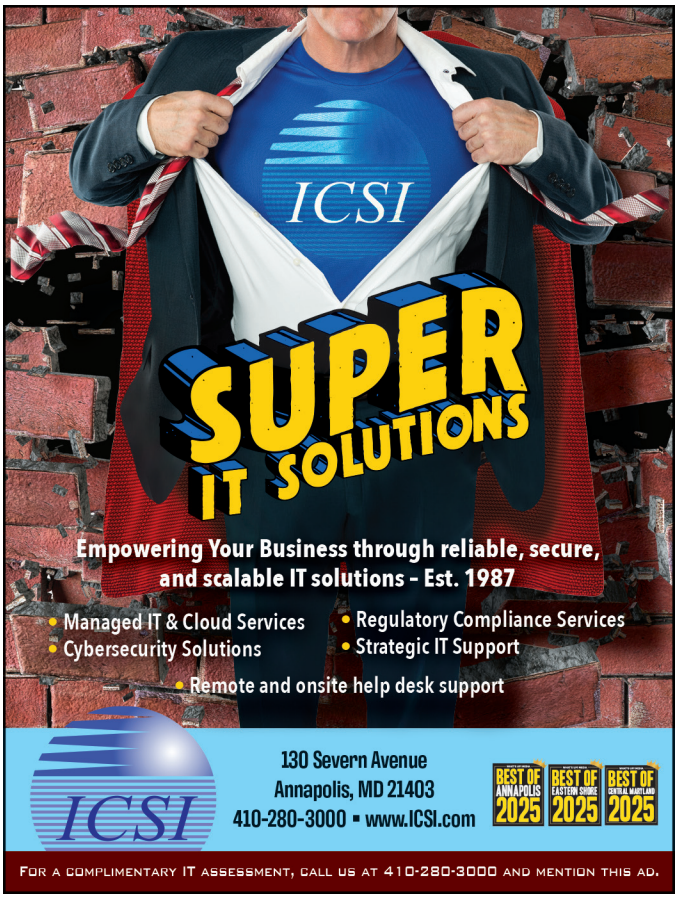
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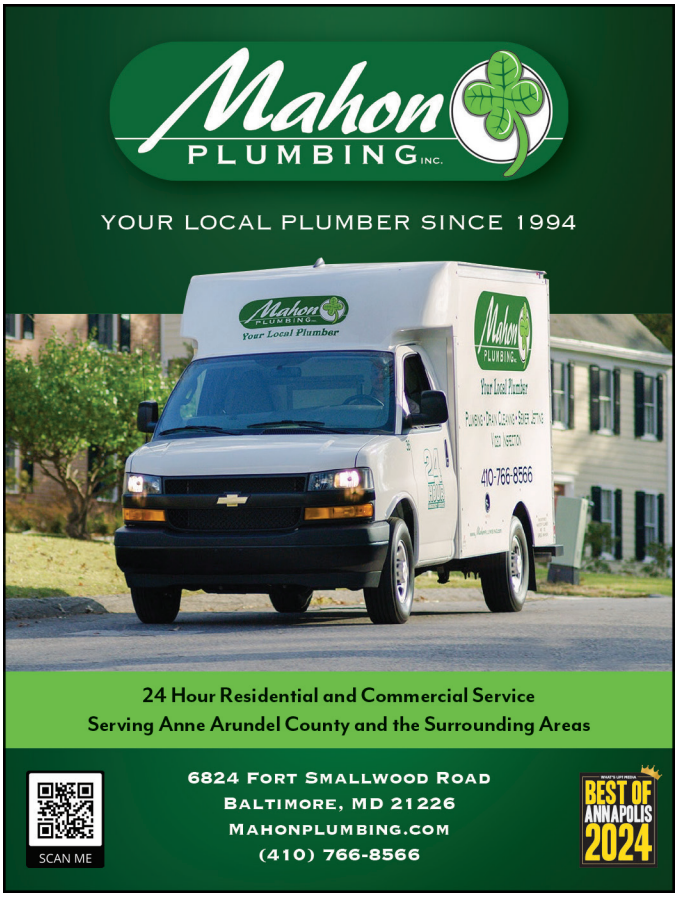
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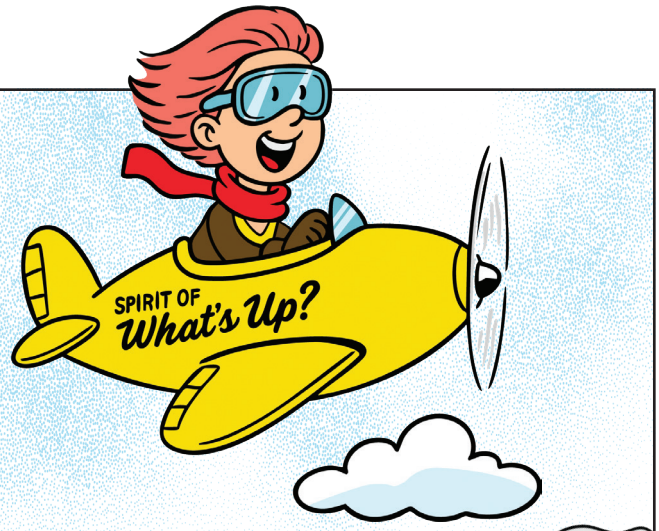

Where's Wilma?



FIND WILMA AND WIN!

Our faithful, flying mascot Wilma has zipped into her 29th year of appearing within the pages of *What's Up? Media* magazines. Wilma loves to "fly" from town to town for shopping, dining, and visiting the best local businesses. And she's showing no signs of slowing down. Where will she land next? Here's how the contest works: Wilma appears next to three different ads in this magazine. When you spot her, write the names of the ads and their page numbers on the entry form online or mail in the form below and you'll be eligible to win. Only one entry per family. Good luck and don't forget to submit your restaurant review online at whatsupmag.com/promotions for another opportunity to win a prize.

Congratulations to John M. D. of Riva, who won a $50 gift certificate to a local business.

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Yes, please! No, thanks

Entries must be received by May 31, 2026. Winner will receive a gift certificate to a local establishment and their name will appear in an upcoming issue of What's Up? Annapolis. **Mail entries to:** Where's Wilma? Annapolis, 900 Bestgate Road, Ste. 202, Annapolis, MD 21401 or fill out the form at **whatsupmag.com/promotions**.

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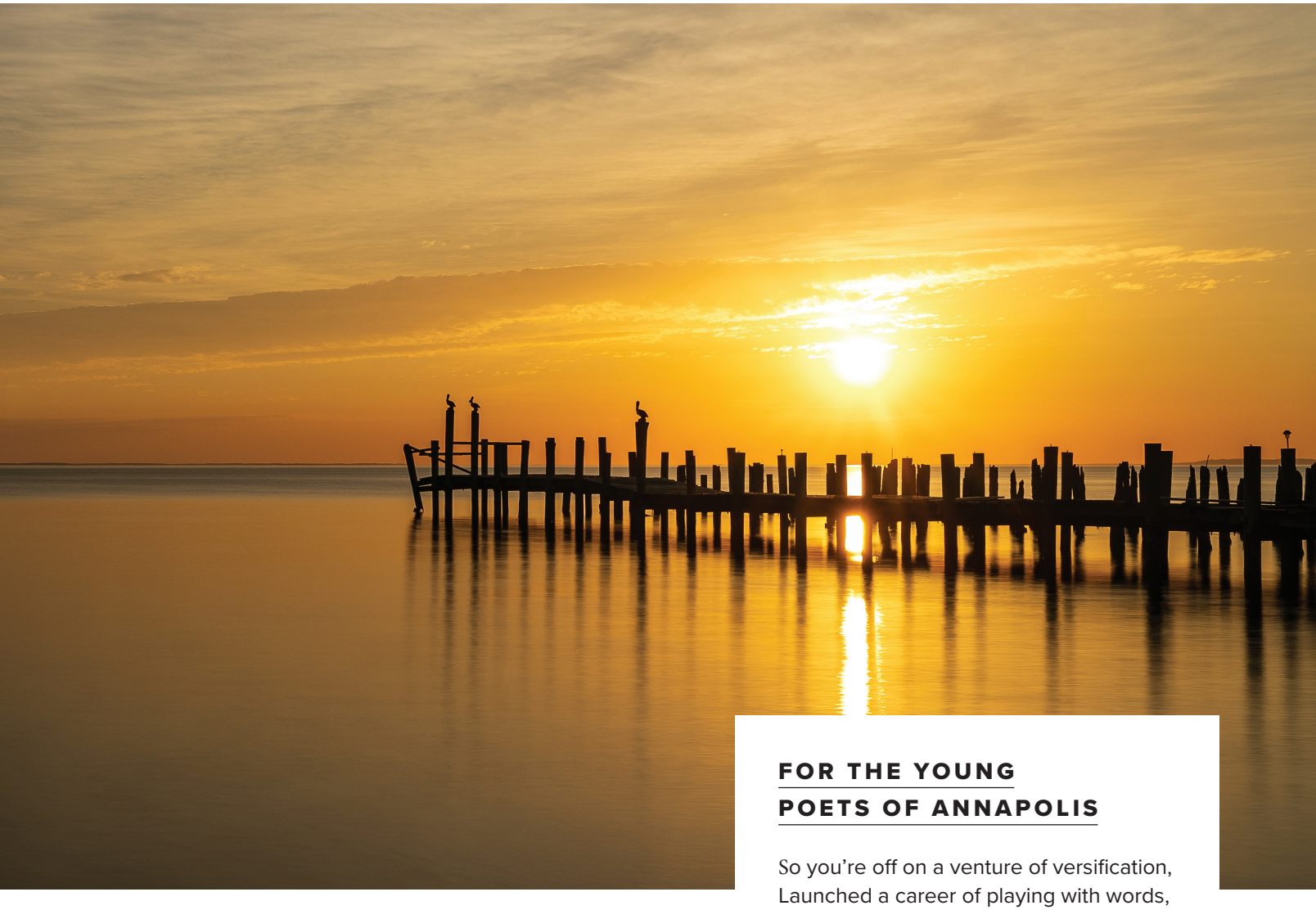

One Verse at a Time

Here is the first poem of a planned monthly series of contributions from local and renown poets. We hope you will find each month's poem amusing, inspiring, or thought provoking. We begin with a poem encouraging young people to write.

Annapolis's own Poet Laureate, Jefferson Holland is singer-songwriter, storyteller, and poet. As Annapolis Poet Laureate he encourages the addition of poetry in our lives and has a lot of fun doing so. Enjoy! **—JANICE F. BOOTH**

FOR THE YOUNG POETS OF ANNAPOLIS

So you're off on a venture of versification,
Launched a career of playing with words,
Some bug has infected your imagination,
Now you can't help it, it's just that absurd!

First, your brain flashes with hot inspiration,
A mess you address via meter and rhyme,
Wrestling words into some formulation
Of what best expresses what you had in mind.

That's the fun part of this whole operation,
You might even make up a new word or two,
Maybe a word like "poetification,"
Who would object? It's all up to you.

What do you have when
you're finally done with it?
No matter! So long as you've
had some good fun with it!



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