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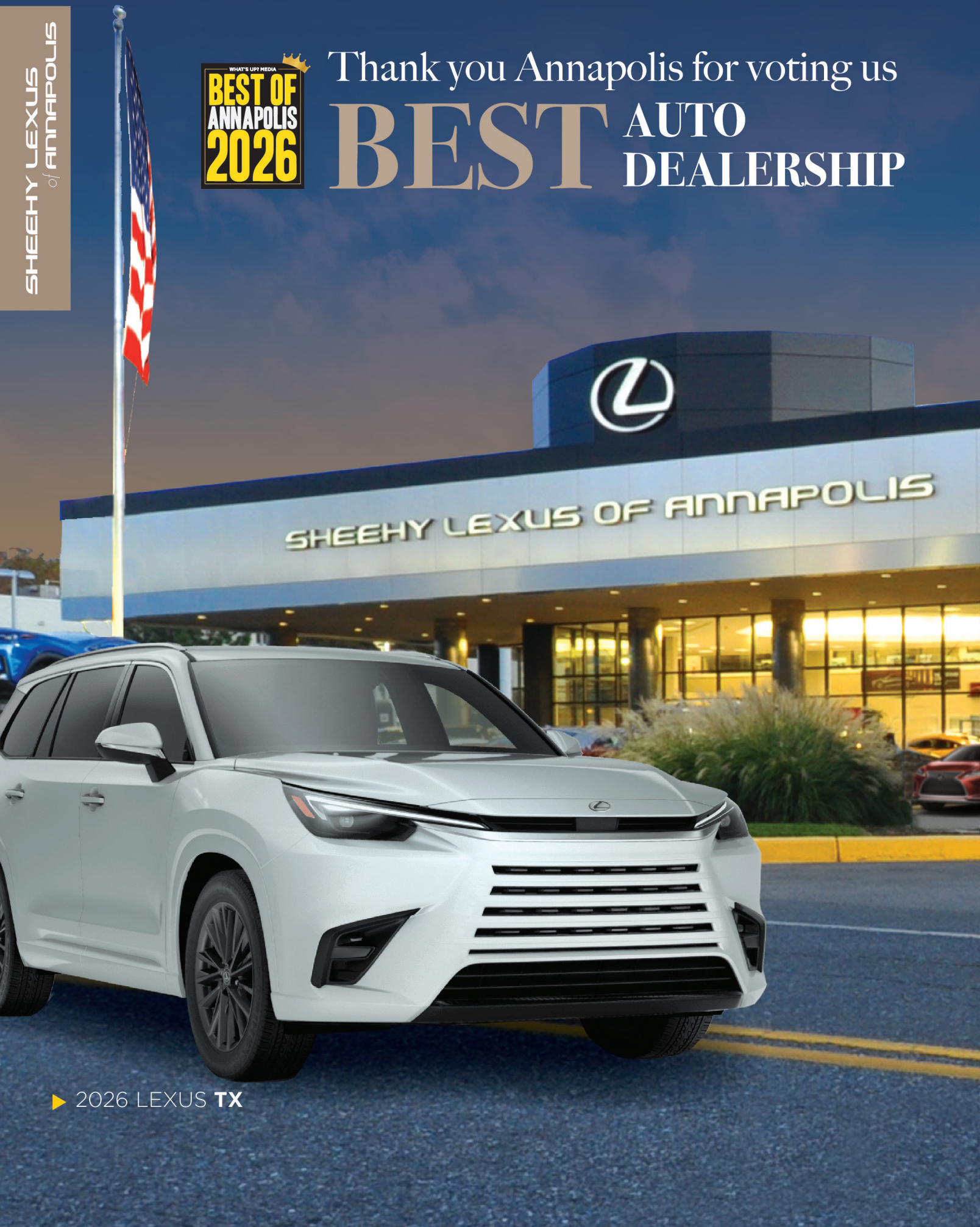
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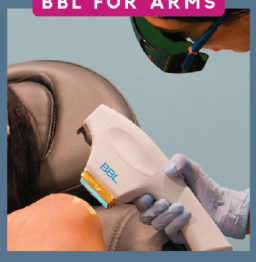

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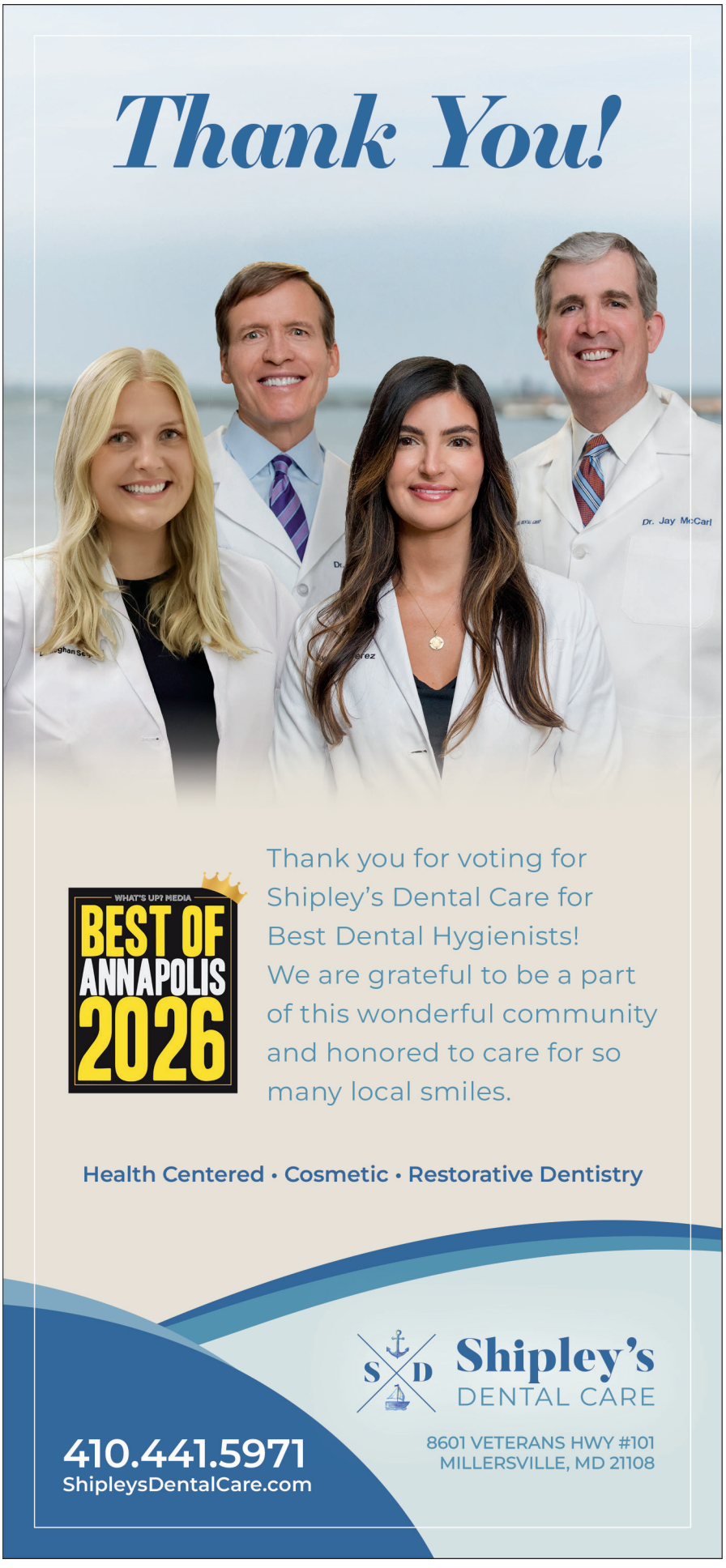

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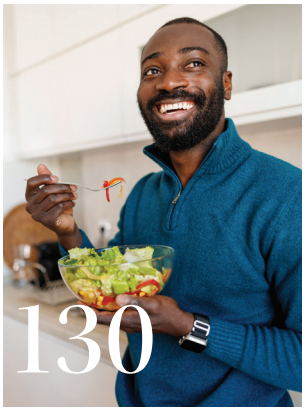



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WHAT'S UP? MEDIA'S 2026

EXCELLENCE IN NURSING

The 2026 Excellence in Nursing Campaign continues 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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Summer's arrival excites all of us in many different ways. Collectively though, we likely look forward to enjoying seasonal pastimes like swimming outdoors, sunbathing, sand between our toes, crab pickin', barbeque parties, gardening, spying fireflies, and nights spent under the stars. All of this activity seems to add an extra spring in our step as we navigate life.

Of course, we're especially grateful for being lucky enough to do all of this in a remarkable spot—Chesapeake country—on this bright blue ball spinning through the Milky Way. And thankfully—though unique, different, and opinionated as we all may be—you and I and thousands of *What's Up? Annapolis* readers (more than 40,000!) have arrived at a consensus of who makes up the very *best* of what our region offers. By way of the annual *Best of Annapolis* voting, we present the top restaurants, contractors, and services in this issue as chosen by *you*.

It's a remarkable process to solicit public voting for more than 250 categories, covering everything from the best crabcake to chicken wings, or nutritionist, architect, auto repair, and, even, live music venue. The gamut of quality purveyors and providers in Annapolis and Anne Arundel County is a blessing. And so, vetting the data and top nominees took time; the voting closed in February and here we are about four months later in June, finally publishing the results. And boy howdy, do we have a good list of winners!

My hope is that you'll use the *Best of Annapolis* as a guide for when you need a go-to restaurant recommendation to take out-of-town visitors. Or where to go for a spa day, or night out. Or when you need a contractor to fix the roof…or the broken window from an errant lacrosse ball your daughter threw (uh, not that I would know from experience). The list goes on and on.

Another celebrated summer pastime, and one that has spanned generations, is log canoe racing. Once the sport of oystermen vying for Bay bragging rights, this branch of sailing now brings family and friends together in spirited competition aboard classic vessels that have withstood the tests of time, weather, and sport. We have an engaging examination of this Chesapeake tradition in this month's article, "Chasing the Wind."

Also, this issue offers an update on the Annapolis City Dock renovation project (article "What's Up, Dock?"), which one day (perhaps by 2028) will give visitors to Downtown a wholly new waterfront experience *and* mitigate the flooding that has beleaguered the adjacent businesses. Mayor Jared Littmann offers some insight to the project among other city matters in another article, "One Hundred Days In," that profiles his first several months as Annapolis' 138th mayor.

Between *Best of Annapolis* and the many articles herein, it's a packed issue to help kickstart summer. Enjoy!

James Houck,
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Expert of the Month



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Julie Campbell

Julie Campbell
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After leading at every level over a 20-year career in the U.S. Navy, Julie Campbell now cultivates the nation's next generation of leaders at Severn Leadership Group (SLG). A graduate of the Naval Academy, she led Electronic Warfare, Communications, and $2B Space Systems teams. She also commanded the First Presidential Communications Command at the White House Communications Agency. After her career in the Navy, Campbell continued to lead multifunctional teams in defense, information technology, and nonprofit sectors.

Campbell is the lead author of *Mentorship Mastery: A Holistic Guide for Virtuous Leaders* and a co-author of *We Lead: Building Connection, Community, and Collaboration for Women in Business.*

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Arts & Culture

HIGHLIGHTING ENTERTAINMENT, COMMUNITY, AND EVENTS

28 EVENTS | 36 ARTS | 38 MUSIC | 40 SOCIAL

41 BUSINESS & COMMUNITY | 46 CHARITY | 50 EDUCATION



What's Up? Media's Best of Party

PG. 34



Let's Go! Music Festival 2026

Let's Go! Music Festival returns to the Anne Arundel County Fairgrounds in Crownsville June 5–6 with two days of nonstop live music, festival energy, and big-name performances. This year's lineup includes multi-platinum pop favorites Fitz and The Tantrums, known for infectious hits like "HandClap" and "The Walker," bringing their signature mix of indie pop, soul, and dance-ready anthems to the stage. Along with major performances, festivalgoers can expect a full weekend of food vendors, drinks, and high-energy entertainment in one of the area's biggest summer music events. More info: letsgofest.com

JUNETEENTH PARADE

The 6th Annual Annapolis Juneteenth Parade returns to downtown Annapolis on Saturday, June 20 as part of a larger weekend-long celebration honoring freedom, culture, and community. The parade will bring Main Street to life with vibrant floats, marching bands, music, and high-energy performances, including the unmistakable sounds of the Naptown Brass Band. Following last year's successful event, organizers promise an even bigger celebration in 2026, with expanded festivities and a community festival planned throughout the weekend. The event continues to serve as a joyful and meaningful gathering that celebrates Black history, culture, and unity in the heart of Annapolis. More info: theannapolisjuneteenth.org





ROCK THE DOCK

Spend a summer evening by the Chesapeake Bay at Rock the Dock on Thursday, June 4 from 6 to 10 p.m. at the Annapolis Maritime Museum & Park. Benefitting the Blue Ribbon Project, this lively waterfront fundraiser features live music from Loose Ties, all-you-can-eat BBQ, beer and wine, a crush bar, raffles, auctions, and more in a fun, laid-back setting overlooking the water. The evening supports the organization's mission to prevent child abuse and provide support to children and families across Maryland, making it a meaningful night out with a strong sense of community. More info: blueribbonproject.org



Eastport A Rockin

Eastport a Rockin' returns to the Annapolis Maritime Museum & Park on Saturday, June 27 for a full day of waterfront music, food, and summer energy in the heart of Eastport. Known as one of the region's favorite summer music festivals, the event features 40 bands performing across four stages, showcasing everything from rock and blues to folk, funk, bluegrass, and jazz. Alongside the nonstop live music, festivalgoers can enjoy local seafood, BBQ, craft beer, and waterfront views while supporting community organizations including the Annapolis Maritime Museum and local schools. With its laid-back atmosphere and eclectic lineup, Eastport a Rockin' continues to be one of Annapolis's signature summer traditions. More info: eastportarockin.com

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PACA GIRLFRIENDS PARTY

Historic Annapolis's beloved Paca Girlfriends Party returns to the William Paca House and Garden on Wednesday, June 10 from 6 to 9 p.m. for an elegant evening of fashion, food, and celebration. Guests can stroll through the stunning historic gardens while sipping bubbly, sampling culinary creations from some of the area's premier chefs, browsing a festive marketplace, and connecting with local designers and influential women from across the region. Now in its 18th year, the popular fundraiser supports Historic Annapolis and its mission to Preserve, Protect, and Connect while offering one of the season's most anticipated social events in the heart of downtown Annapolis. More info: pacagirlfriends.annapolis.org/

FASHION FOR A CAUSE

One of Annapolis's most anticipated fashion events returns on Thursday, June 4 from 6 to 9:30 p.m. at the Fluegel Alumni Center at the U.S. Naval Academy. Fashion for a Cause combines runway style with philanthropy as community models showcase summer 2026 looks from local boutiques in a high-energy show set against a glamorous red-carpet backdrop. Guests can enjoy signature cocktails along with sweet and savory bites from area restaurants and food trucks while supporting Community Health programs, including Chesapeake Kids, which serves children with life-limiting illnesses and young people experiencing grief. More info: hospicechesapeake.org/ffac/





Steve Quick Memorial Golf Tournament

Tee off for a meaningful cause at the 26th Steve Quick Memorial Golf Tournament on Monday, June 1 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Compass Pointe Golf Course in Pasadena. This annual event brings the community together for a day of golf, camaraderie, and fundraising in support of a worthy mission. Players can enjoy a full day on the course while honoring the legacy of Steve Quick through an event known for its welcoming spirit and community impact. More info: events.golfstatus.com/

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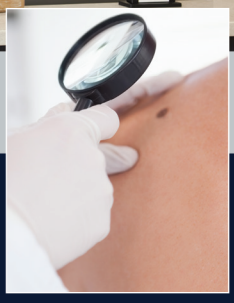

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SECRET GARDEN TOUR 2026

Step behind the gates and into some of Annapolis's most beautiful hidden spaces during the Secret Garden Tour 2026, taking place June 6–7 from noon to 5 p.m. beginning at the Hammond-Harwood House. This year's self-guided tour highlights the private gardens tucked throughout the historic Spa Creek neighborhood, where visitors can explore lush landscapes, charming pathways, and architecture steeped in Annapolis history. With tickets valid for both days, the tour offers a leisurely way to experience the beauty of the city in full spring bloom. More info: hammondharwoodhouse.org

NAPTOWN FLEA

Naptown Flea returns to downtown Annapolis on Sunday, June 14 from 1 to 6 p.m. at Federal House Bar & Grille in Market Space. The laid-back vintage market will feature more than 25 vendors offering curated clothing, handmade goods, and one-of-a-kind finds from local creatives and collectors. Whether you're hunting for standout vintage pieces or simply soaking in the atmosphere, the event promises an afternoon of shopping, music, and community in the heart of the city. More info: instagram.com/naptownflea





Bands in the Sand

Celebrate the start of summer at the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's 20th annual Bands in the Sand on Saturday, June 13 from 5:30 to 10 p.m. at the Philip Merrill Environmental Center in Annapolis. This beloved beachfront fundraiser invites guests to kick off the season with live music, dancing in the sand, all-inclusive food and drinks, and stunning waterfront views along the Chesapeake Bay. Over the past two decades, the event has raised millions in support of Bay restoration efforts, making this high-energy evening as meaningful as it is memorable. More info: cbf.org

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What's Up? Media's Best Of Party

What's Up? Media's highly anticipated Best Of Party returns on Tuesday, June 9 from 6 to 9:30 p.m. at the Doordan Institute at Luminis Health in Annapolis. This annual celebration brings together the region's top restaurants, businesses, entertainment, and services for an evening of food, drinks, networking, and community spirit, all while supporting Charting Careers. This year's event embraces an America's 250th birthday theme, inviting guests to dress in festive red, white, and blue attire as award-winning "Best Of" restaurant winners serve samples of their signature dishes. Known for selling out year after year, the event draws professionals, business owners, and community members from across Anne Arundel and the Eastern Shore for one unforgettable night. More info: whatsupmag.com

QUIET WATERS PARK FAIRY HOUSE FESTIVAL OPENING DAY EVENT

Magic returns to Quiet Waters Park with the opening day celebration of the beloved Fairy House Festival on Saturday, June 6 from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Along the Holly Pavilion Trail, visitors can wander through a whimsical woodland neighborhood filled with dozens of handcrafted fairy houses created by Anne Arundel County residents using natural materials. Opening day festivities include live performances by Annapolis Symphony musicians and dancers from Ballet Theatre of Maryland, with fairy-inspired costumes encouraged for guests of all ages. The enchanting outdoor display remains open throughout the month, offering families plenty of opportunities to experience this imaginative community tradition. More info: fqwp.org



Photo by Michael Augustin



GREEN HEARTS OPEN CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

Spend a day on the greens for a meaningful cause at the Green Hearts Open Charity Golf Tournament on Monday, June 8 at Compass Pointe Golf Course in Pasadena. Hosted by The Krueger Hat Trick Foundation, the event raises awareness and support for families affected by congenital heart defects and disease. Golfers can enjoy a full day featuring breakfast, complimentary beverages, on-course food, contests, raffles, auctions, and a luncheon following the tournament, all while helping provide critical resources for children and families facing heart-related medical challenges. More info: thekht.org



ANNAPOLIS STRIDERS JOHN WALL MEMORIAL ONE MILE TRACK RUN 2026

Runners of all ages and experience levels are invited to test their speed at the 44th Annual Annapolis Striders John Wall Memorial One Mile Track Run on Saturday, June 27 at Annapolis High School. Part of the 2026 Annapolis Striders Championship Series, the event features a welcoming and energetic atmosphere with heats organized by pace, beginning with a youth race at 8 a.m. Whether competing for a personal best or simply enjoying the camaraderie of race day, participants can take on the classic one-mile distance alongside the local running community. More info: annapolisstriders.org/

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The City Becomes a Stage

ARTS ANNAPOLIS ROLLS OUT A FESTIVE SALUTE

By Carol Denny

Lots of street festivals promise something for everyone, but Arts Annapolis 2026 is aiming to raise the bar. Organizers are planning a dazzling city-wide display of art, live music, and performances that will stretch from Maryland Avenue to State and Church Circles and up West Street to Calvert Street. Designed to delight, inspire, and entertain, the free event is scheduled for Saturday, June 13 from noon to 10 p.m.

"This is a real celebration of arts and culture—more than 60 visual artists, vendors, authors, buskers, choral groups, stilt walkers, dueling pianos, drummers, tango dancers, and more," says Don Lamb-Minor of the Annapolis Arts District, who's helping to coordinate the event. "We not only have Ballet Theatre of Maryland and the Annapolis Opera representing the city's professional arts groups, but we're also showcasing an amazing collection of international musicians for a global vibe." The program will include Afro-Caribbean, bluegrass, jazz, Latino, Turkish-Indian, and island music, with bands performing on stages throughout downtown and in informal sidewalk sessions.



West Street will feature vendors and performances throughout the day, as will Maryland Avenue and State and Church Circles.



Al fresco dining is scheduled for the evening, with performances continuing on the Calvert Street stage.

Many of the offerings will be interactive, connecting artists and audiences through demonstrations and free activities. Darin Gilliam of AND Creative points out, "There's a focus on local visual artists who are making really beautiful, dynamic, contemporary artwork. This isn't only sailboats and maritime art, which Annapolis is well-known for. There's more diversity, more for kids, more for communities, with everyone engaging with the art and being involved."

Melissa MacMichael, a wildlife artist inspired by the Chesapeake, will demonstrate her painting prowess while she displays her work. She says she enjoys sharing her creative experience. "When I'm painting in the studio, it's a very immersive process. I'm trying to capture what it might feel like to exist in that space.

"When I paint live, it's a completely different energy. It becomes much more open and playful; people stop, watch, ask questions, and kids especially are drawn in right away. I love that because it breaks down the idea that art has to be serious or intimidating. Instead of just seeing a finished piece, people are part of it as it's happening, which makes it feel more immediate and alive."

At stations around town, adults and kids can channel that energy through printmaking, painting mini-canvases, and drawing chalk murals. Or they can attend demonstrations of less-traditional art-forms, including fused glass and laser etching.

For a continuous flow of creativity, head over to the People's Park Youth Stage on Calvert Street, where the playbill includes performances from Class Act Performing Arts, Naptown Sings, and School of Rock. At St. Anne's Churchyard, see performances by the Chesapeake Youth Symphony Orchestra, vocalists from Severna Park High School, and a barbershop chorus.

Literary arts will share the spotlight, too, with author-artist Roxie Munro reading from her new book, *Treasure Thieves on the High Seas: Pirates, Privateers, and Plunder*—a nod to Annapolis' seafaring history. Created especially for young swashbucklers, it's a compendium of pirate lore and fun facts, which Munro will share in her appearance at the Annapolis Collection Gallery on West Street.

In addition to two shows by the artists of Ballet Theatre of Maryland, the festival will present the return of Tango on the Dock, an area troupe that specializes in the sensuous Argentine dance form. The group, known for its performances in previous years at City Dock, will appear at the Calvert Street stage from 4 to 8 p.m. Accompanied by a live trio as well as recorded music, dancers will be demonstrating the steps and inviting audience members to join in.

West Street, Calvert Street, and Maryland Avenue will be closed to traffic for the event, and restaurants along West Street will roll out tables and seating for evening dining (*a la* Dinner Under the Stars). Capping a full day of performances next to Stan & Joe's and Wiseman Park (next to the Visitors' Center on West Street), the evening promises to be a grand finale to an arts extravaganza.



Visual artists will demonstrate their technique and sell their work at this year's festival.



Dueling pianos will face off during Arts Annapolis 2026.

Learn more at the Annapolis Arts District website, annapolisartsdistrict.org.

5 Questions with Nate of All You Need

By Cali Schwerdtfeger

I had the opportunity to chat with Nate from All You Need about the band's journey and their upcoming performance at the 2026 Best Of Party on June 9th. This marks the second year the band will take the stage at the event, and after last year's crowd couldn't get enough of their high-energy performance, we knew we had to bring them back. Ahead of this year's celebration, Nate shared more about the band's beginnings, musical influences, and what they're most excited about for the future.

How did All You Need first come together, and did you ever expect the band to become such a recognizable part of the Annapolis music scene? Eastport a Rockin' 2019 was our first-ever gig as "All You Need." Nate had gotten a slot on the J Stage and came to Kaleb Shipley (bass/vocals) and Tyler Stover (drums) to play the festival. We ended up having one two-hour practice the day before Eastportarockin'. We got on stage, and it just felt right. We had an immediate connection with the audience and played a great show. We came off stage and all had the same thought: We should really do this again. That's when All You Need officially became a band.





Who or what would you say has influenced the band's sound and style the most over the years? All You Need's strongest influences are Green Day and Blink-182 (and more, but those are the comparisons we get the most by far). We absolutely love the energy they bring from the second they get on stage to the second they step off. You know you've got something if you can get people all around the world nodding their heads to one of your songs. That's what we look up to, and that's the kind of energy we try to bring everywhere we go.

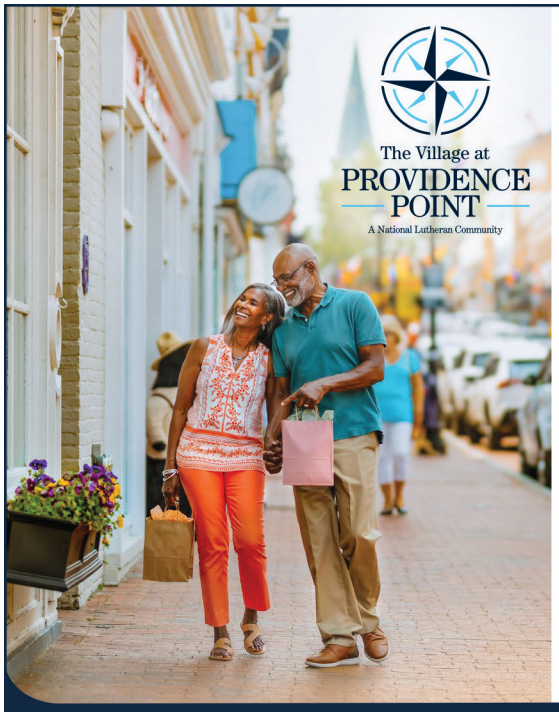
You performed at the Best Of Party last year and are returning again this year — what made you excited to come back? Yes, we did! And we had an absolute blast. Being out on the balcony, feeling the wind, and taking in the views while rocking out with everyone on acoustic guitars was such a unique experience. The event itself was also such a fun time — we enjoyed every part of it, on and off stage. It was something truly special, and we're so grateful for the opportunity to see everyone again and have some fun rockin' out!

What's your favorite part about performing at an event like the Best Of Party that brings together so many local businesses and community members? Annapolis truly has something special. This event is an amazing way to spotlight the hard work and dedication of the family and friends who make the Annapolis area what it is. We really have some of the best around here in so many different ways. Having a "Best Of" event and seeing it all together in one place really makes you feel proud to be here.

Looking ahead, what are you most excited about for All You Need in 2026? We just released our first music video, which we had a blast filming, and we have so much new video content coming out soon that we're excited to share. We're also heading into the studio for some new releases coming toward the end of the year. And, of course, we're excited for all the upcoming shows and the chance to take our music to new cities in the near future.

Learn more about All You Need and give them a listen at allyouneedofficial.com.

Photography by Tony Lewis Jr.



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Black Tie & Diamonds Gala

On Saturday, March 7th, the Rotary Club of Annapolis hosted its annual Black Tie & Diamonds Gala at the Graduate Hotel in Annapolis, in support of Chrysalis House Inc. which is celebrating its 40th Anniversary. The evening was filled with elegance, energy, and generosity as 225 sponsors and guests came together to enjoy dinner, dancing, and spirited bidding—raising an impressive $97,000 to empower women on their recovery journey. Learn more about the Rotary Club of Annapolis at annapolisrotary.org and Chrysalis House at chrysalishouses.org.







1. Lisa Hillman, center **2.** Robin Rickard, Chrysalis House CEO, Debbie Daugherty, Chrysalis House Director of Philanthropy, and Suzanne Ford, Chrysalis House Executive Assistant **3.** Jim Sherrick, Rotary Club of Annapolis President Elect **4.** Lynn Gotjen, Brittany Schuh Acree, and Ginny Acree **5.** Chrysalis House board and staff **6.** Jackie Coleman, Maryland Hall, with Sue Weber, Rotary Club of Annapolis President **7.** Hope Stewart & Fred Paone **8.** Rotary Club of Annapolis Black Tie & Diamond Committee: Sue Weber, President, Ellen Shiery, Daryl Cooke, Hope Stewart, and Debbie Daugherty

Photography courtesy Chrysalis House

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Riverside Pediatrics Opens in Arnold

Local leadership from the Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation and the Greater Severna Park & Arnold Chamber of Commerce joined the proud owners of Riverside Pediatrics—a woman-owned pediatric practice led by Dr. Eliza Huebner and Cathy Gvozden, CRNP—to officially celebrate its grand opening and cut the ribbon this spring at the new 1521 Ritchie Highway office. Congratulations! Learn more at riversidepediatricsmd.com.

BANK OF GLEN BURNIE ESTABLISHES ANNAPOLIS PRESENCE

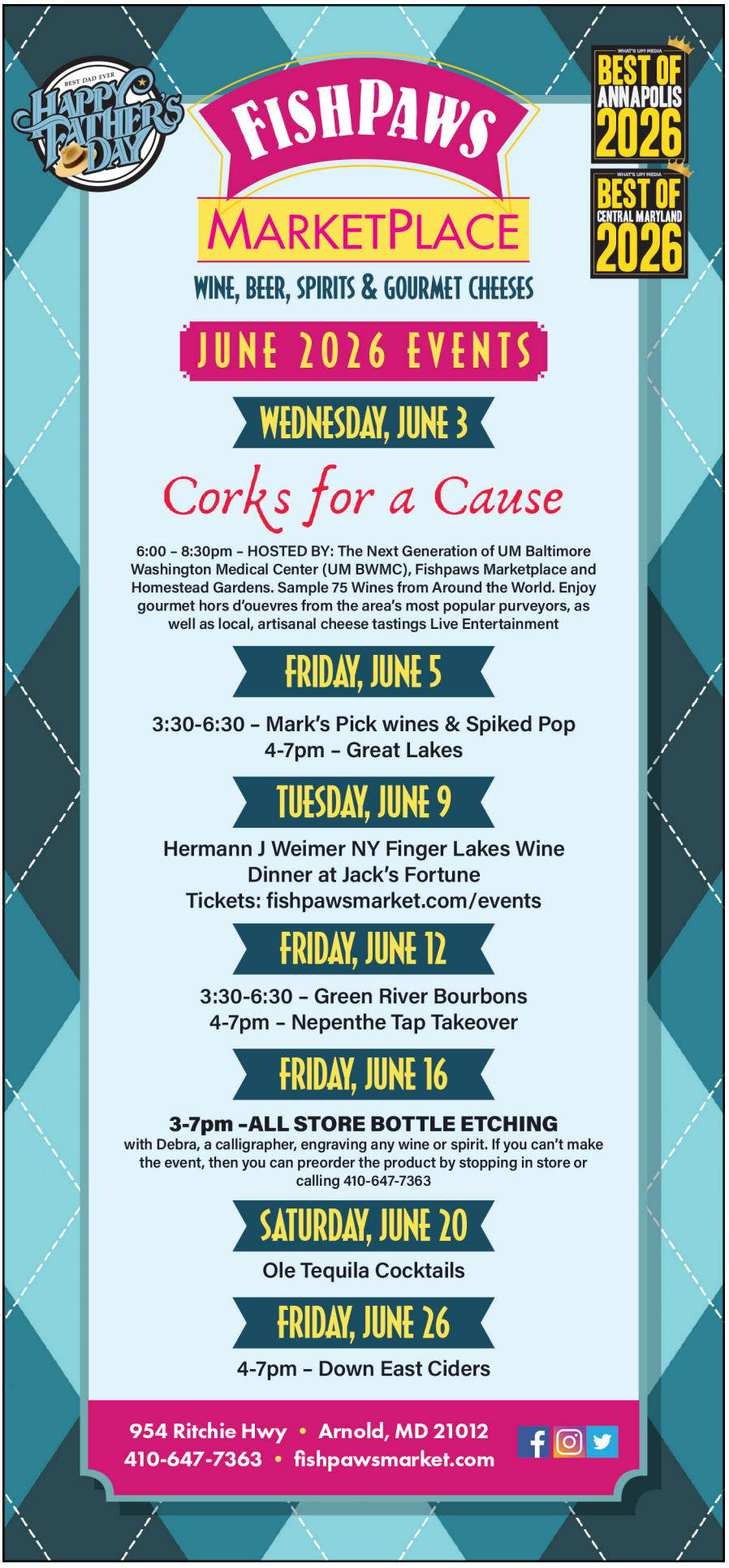


The Bank of Glen Burnie has established a new Loan Production Office (LPO) in Annapolis. Located at 2525 Riva Road, suite 141, the Annapolis LPO will serve the commercial lending and deposit needs of small to medium sized businesses and facilitate additional growth opportunities for commercial and lending services in the southern part of the county. The Bank also announced the hiring of John Camden who joins the Bank as Vice President and Annapolis Market Executive. Camden, under the leadership of Senior Vice President and Chief Lending Officer, Jonathan Shearin, will be responsible for business development and outreach and together they will drive the Bank's growth activities and build banking relationships in the Annapolis market. "We are thrilled to enter the dynamic and vibrant Annapolis market. Over the past few years, we have added products and services available to commercial customers that bring big bank options to customers along with the local, personalized service that sets us apart from our competitors and allows us to be a trusted partner," said Mark Hanna, President and CEO. Prior to joining the Bank, Camden served as Vice President of Commercial Banking in the mid-Atlantic area at First National Bank where he managed a $60MM commercial loan portfolio and generated $10MM in wealth production. Earlier in his career, he served as Senior Commercial Branch Manager and later a Market Relationship Manager at Sandy Spring Bank. "The Bank's focus on community values are well aligned with my community-centered approach to business development," stated Camden. "Growing the Annapolis market will create new growth opportunities and I look forward to being a part of the trajectory that lies ahead as we strive to meet the diverse financial needs of local businesses and to help them build financial success." Learn more at thebankofglenburnie.com.



MEET LUMINIS HEALTH'S CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Last fall, Luminis Health announced the appointment of Catherine Maloney, PT, MSPT, MSHA, FACHE, as the organization's new System Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President. She also serves as president of Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center (LHAAMC), serving Annapolis, Maryland's Eastern Shore, and surrounding communities. Maloney began her role in late September and reflects on her transition, with an eye toward the health system's 125th anniversary. "We have grown, adapted, and innovated, but our identity has remained constant: a trusted neighbor committed to delivering excellent, compassionate care. As we look ahead to celebrating our 125th anniversary in 2027, we remain as dedicated as ever to providing health care that is accessible, equitable, and centered on the needs of every patient who walks through our doors. I am profoundly grateful for the warm welcome I've received, and even more grateful for the opportunity to build upon this incredible legacy. With your support, your partnership, and your voice, we will continue to be a beacon of hope and create a healthier future for this region." Learn more at luminishealth.org.











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Restaurateurs Brian Hovermale and Lino DiMeo recently opened Positano, a new Italian-inspired restaurant at 106 Annapolis Street in West Annapolis. The restaurant boasts fresh brick oven pizzas, handcrafted pastas, sandwiches, salads, and more within a beautifully renovated 4,500-square-foot space in the heart of the neighborhood. “This upscale yet family-friendly concept is exactly what the community has been craving,” said Hovermale. “We’ve always believed there has been a void in West Annapolis for a vibrant, high quality Italian-inspired dining experience, and we’re excited to bring something fresh and welcoming to the neighborhood while continuing to expand our presence locally.” Learn more at positanoannapolis.com.



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The Transformative Power of Women's Philanthropic Organizations

IMPACT100 GREATER CHESAPEAKE AND THE WOMEN & GIRLS FUND OF THE MID-SHORE

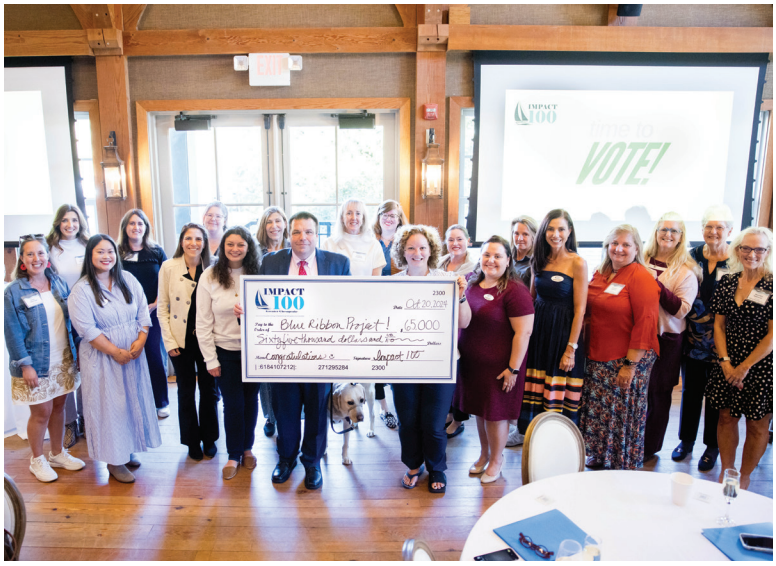
By Lisa A. Lewis

Although the mission, focus, and scope of Impact100 Greater Chesapeake and the Women & Girls Fund of the Mid-Shore differ, both women-led grantmaking organizations pool their donations to make a significant impact on local nonprofits. By empowering women with a shared vision, these critical organizations serve as catalysts for change through their transformative grants.

Located in Annapolis, Impact100 Greater Chesapeake awards one large grant each year to a local nonprofit in Anne Arundel County across five focus areas: arts and culture, education, environment, family, and health and wellness. The organization utilizes a collective giving model in which 100 members each donate $1,000 annually and pool the money to fund a grant.



Board President Beth Spurry highlighting the 2025 grants to attendees of the Women & Girls Fund Golf Tournament last September. Photo by Karena Dixon Photography.



Impact100 Greater Chesapeake Annual Meeting 2026 where Blue Ribbon Project was awarded $65,000 to purchase a van that will be used to deliver Backpacks of Love and transport materials and volunteers to community events. It will also be used to pick up donations for Backpacks of Love from community partners who collect items on The Blue Ribbon Project's behalf, increasing their efficiency in the community. Photo by DANIE Photography

Based in Easton and specifically serving the needs of women and girls in Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, and Talbot counties, the Women & Girls Fund is a permanent endowment that funds several small grants annually to nonprofits in need and provides a source of funding for future grantmaking. The endowment is managed by the Mid-Shore Community Foundation.

"As an all-women's organization, Impact100 Greater Chesapeake creates a space where women's leadership and collective power come together, and that has a meaningful ripple effect throughout the community," says Sarah Amyot, president, Impact100 Greater Chesapeake. "When women pool their resources, they don't just increase the size of the grant; they expand their knowledge, confidence, and influence, resulting in more effective grantmaking and stronger communities."

"As a group of women pulling together to help women, the Women & Girls Fund connects our resources and experience with the dynamic needs facing our communities," adds Beth Spurry, president, Women & Girls Fund. "It offers women a chance to lead and use their voices to create change."

THE POWER OF WOMEN

According to Impact100 Greater Chesapeake, the all-volunteer organization was founded by Heather DeBuse, who currently serves as grant review coordinator and president emeritus. DeBuse and a group of like-minded women united their efforts to create a chapter of Impact100 in Maryland. And in 2017, Impact100 Greater Chesapeake was officially launched.

The only chapter located in Maryland, Impact100 Greater Chesapeake is guided by its mission of "driving transformational change in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, by collectively funding high-impact grants to local nonprofits."

Impact100 Global, the umbrella organization for individual chapters, credits Wendy Steele with founding the Impact100 model of collective giving in 2001. Today, numerous chapters are located in the United States and other countries.

Photography courtesy Partners in Care, Inc.

"The collective giving model of Impact100 is unique," Amyot says. "It operates on the premise that we can make a big impact when we combine our individual donations into one amount. This 'think big' approach is truly transformative. Our largest grant was awarded to the Annapolis Symphony Academy in the amount of $90,000 in 2023. Grants such as these truly demonstrate the power of collective giving and greatly benefit our communities."

According to the Women & Girls Fund, the organization was founded in 2002 as a grassroots effort by Alice Ryan and a group of women who were trying to identify effective ways to address local issues. The first donation was received that year, and after working with the United Fund and the Mid-Shore Community Foundation, the organization's first grants were awarded in April 2003.

Since its inception, the Women & Girls Fund has been dedicated to fulfilling its mission to "use the power of pooled resources to improve the lives of women and girls on Maryland's Mid-Shore."

"Women and girls are often the most vulnerable in a crisis situation," Spurry says. "They suffer disproportionately from domestic abuse, assault, hunger, and other issues. We believe that focusing on these issues benefits the entire community. Supporting a mother supports the family. Lifting up a girl's confidence gives her a chance for a lifetime of promise."

2025 GRANT RECIPIENTS

In 2025, Impact100 Greater Chesapeake awarded a $56,000 grant, and the Women & Girls Fund awarded 18 grants totaling $64,970—a testament to their philanthropic efforts and their dedication to supporting the needs of the communities they serve.

The recipient of Impact100 Greater Chesapeake's annual grant was Open Hands of MD, a food pantry and distribution center in Pasadena. The funds were used to purchase a new outdoor walk-in freezer, which will greatly impact the operations of the nonprofit organization. To learn more about Open Hands of MD, visit openhandsofmd.org.

Amyot says it's so empowering to take an idea, make it come to life, and see its impact on the nonprofit organization and the community as a whole.

"We were delighted to fulfill our grant commitment to Open Hands of MD," Amyot says. "This pivotal addition will significantly expand their capacity to store and distribute frozen foods, enabling them to reach more neighbors in need and fight food insecurity in Anne Arundel County."



Impact100 Greater Chesapeake Annual Meeting 2025 where Open Hands of MD was awarded $56,000 to support the purchase of a Polar King Outdoor Freezer. The pivotal addition of a new freezer significantly expands their capacity to store and distribute frozen foods, enabling them to reach more neighbors in need and fight food insecurity in Anne Arundel County. Photo by Autumn Ka'ree Photography

The Women & Girls Fund awarded one of its 18 grants to Open Doors Partners in Education, a nonprofit organization located in Chestertown that is committed to its mission "to increase the literacy rate of struggling readers." According to information provided by the Women & Girls Fund, the nonprofit is the only organization to address the literacy crisis in Kent County by providing free and reduced-cost tutoring. To learn more about Open Doors Partners in Education, visit opendoorsed.org.

Spurry says the $5,000 grant will benefit the organization by underwriting a portion of the costs of providing educational supplies for teachers and female students. The grant will also support tutoring services for women in shelters and rehabilitation facilities.

"Literacy is a family affair," Spurry says. "Moms who are fluent readers guide their children and [inspire them] to lead. This program provides science-based tutoring to readers to increase their literacy levels on a one-on-one basis—free of charge. We believe that bringing students up to grade level prepares them for success in school and sets the stage for generational success in education."

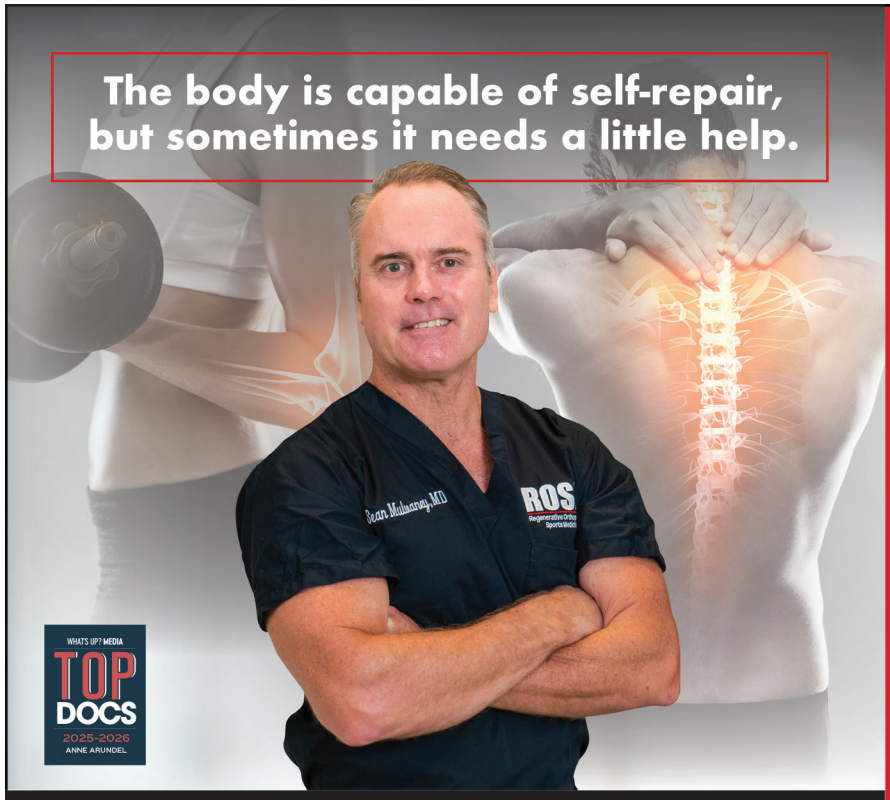
The grant awarded to Open Doors Partners in Education is just one example of the many grants that the Women & Girls Fund awarded in 2025 to address the needs of women and girls in the communities it serves.





Left: Past and present board members celebrating the Women & Girls Fund's 20th Anniversary in January 2023 at Tidewater Inn, Easton. Courtesy of the Women & Girls Fund. Right: Grants Committee of the Women & Girls Fund at work reviewing requests. Courtesy of the Women & Girls Fund.

Both Impact100 Greater Chesapeake and the Women & Girls Fund empower women to become philanthropists and make a difference in their communities. To learn more, visit impact100greaterchesapeake.org and womenandgirlsfund.org.



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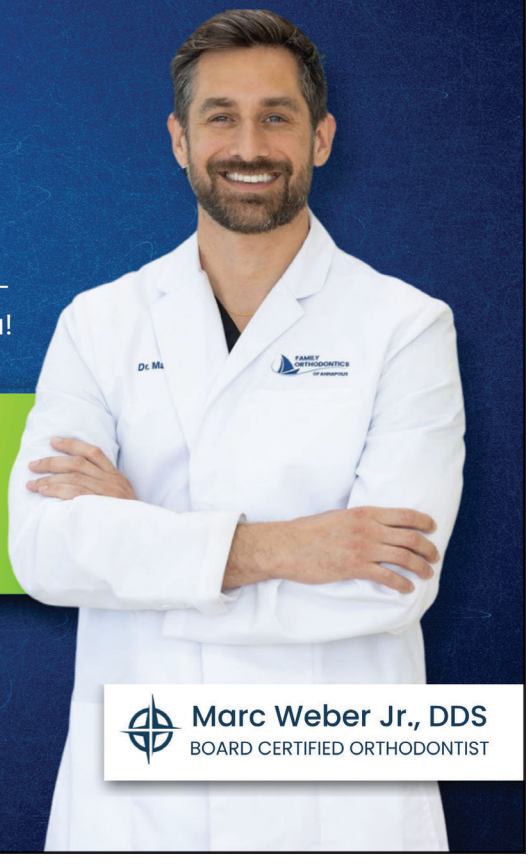

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Meet Maebelle Stern of Key School

ELITE SWIMMER WILL COMPETE COLLEGIATELY THIS FALL

By Tom Worgo



Key School senior Maebelle Stern is exceptionally focused and driven—especially when it comes to swimming. Stern wanted to develop into an elite competitor, so she outworked many swimmers in the sport to go far and accomplish her lofty goal. Stern will swim at Columbia University in Manhattan in the fall, where she plans to major in biology. She carries a 3.75 grade-point average.

Her achievements for the Annapolis Swim Club—where she has swum for 11 years—helped her get to Columbia, a Division I swimming program. Stern's dedication and passion shows up constantly during practices and championship meets.

The 5-foot-7 Stern, an Annapolis resident, specializes in the freestyle (200, 500, club-record 4:58.35) and excels in grueling long distance events (800 free, 1,500 freestyle). Her list of accomplishments is a long one.

"SHE IS MORE FOCUSED THAN OTHER SWIMMERS, THAT'S HER PASSION IN LIFE."

"Her determination and grit," Annapolis Swim Club Coach Stephen Henderson says of what separates Stern from other swimmers. "She has the toughness of always competing in challenging events. She never misses a practice in all the years she's been here."

Stern considers placing second in the 200 and 500 free at the Maryland LSC Senior Swimming Championships, which features many future college swimmers, in February of last year at St. Mary's College of Maryland, to be the highlights of her career.

In February, she shined again at states, placing second in the 1,000 free, setting a club-record 10:19.36.

"She started high school as an ordinary swimmer," Henderson explains. "Last year, she was a silver medalist in the (Maryland LSC) Senior Swimming Championships in two events."

Stern's rigorous schedule is proof of her dedication. During the busiest part of the seasons in the winter, she swims more than 19 hours a week, including 6 a.m. practices, between her club and school teams. Stern practices six day a week for her swim club, counting time in the pool and dry land practice. You can call her a workhorse with the load of events she swims. Sometimes, it's seven per meet.

"I've felt I've had to work really hard through the years," Stern explains. "I had to be very mindful of how my training was, and how my lifestyle was. Making sure I was getting enough sleep and eating right. All those sorts of things."

Stern hopes to finish her career with a flourish in a pair of national meets in Buffalo this spring and North Carolina in the summer.

"I felt I had to work really hard to qualify for the meet in North Carolina," Stern says. "You had to make sacrifices. I had to be more mindful of my training and lifestyle."

Photograph courtesy Stern family

The 18-year-old Stern is eyeing a top finish in both meets in one of six or seven individual events, which she does consistently, including the 200, 400, 800, or 1,500 freestyles.

"I like swimming in a lot of events," Stern says. "It gives you chances to do well and get the best times. Because I am a (long) distance swimmer, I don't get easily fatigued at meets."

Stern also enjoyed winning the 200 and 500 individual titles for Key four times each in the Interscholastic Athletic Association of Maryland (IAMM) championship meets.

Her coaches rave about Stern's leadership skills, especially when it comes to working with her younger sister Adie, a 10th grader who also swims for the Key School varsity. Stern's other sister, Stella, a fourth grader at Key, swims for Annapolis Swim Club.

Maebelle and Adie were part of a third-place 200 medley relay team in the IAAM championships.

"She is more focused than other swimmers," Key Swimming Coach Karla McMahon says of Maebelle. "That's her passion in life."

"She is like a coach," she adds. "She teaches swimming herself when she is not swimming." Stern gets some swimming tips over the years from her mother Kirra Brandon, who swam at Harvard University.

"Two of my sisters swim for our club team," Stern points out. "I think that was inspired by my mom. When I was young, I wanted to swim at an Ivy League school because I looked up to my mom so much."



INTRODUCING
2026 COLOR TRENDS

This forecast offers a full-spectrum view of where design is headed. In it, we discuss four distinct themes brought to life through directional palettes, material choices, and interior applications across both residential and commercial spaces.



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Name Best Chef in What's Up? Media's 2026 Best Of issue, Chef John Walsh credits his passion for cooking to his upbringing in France, where fresh ingredients and homegrown meals shaped his culinary philosophy from an early age.

"The food was so fresh—if you wanted eggs, you went out to the chicken coop," he shared. When asked to describe his culinary style in one sentence, his answer was simple: "Fresh. Fresh. Fresh."

That same energy carries into Ashling's connection to the music industry, where the team regularly feeds touring artists and backstage crews throughout the region. When asked what fuels kitchen prep during long days and busy services, his answer came without hesitation: "The Wu-Tang Clan."

Despite the recognition, he says the award is really about the people around him. "Without everyone who surrounds me daily in the kitchen, out incredible team who sells the food and represents the brand every single day, and of course our exceptional marketing support, none of this would be possible. It truly takes a team effort, and I've never seen a group so diverse in talent and so driven when we put our minds together. This "Best Chef" recognition isn't just my success—it's our team's success."

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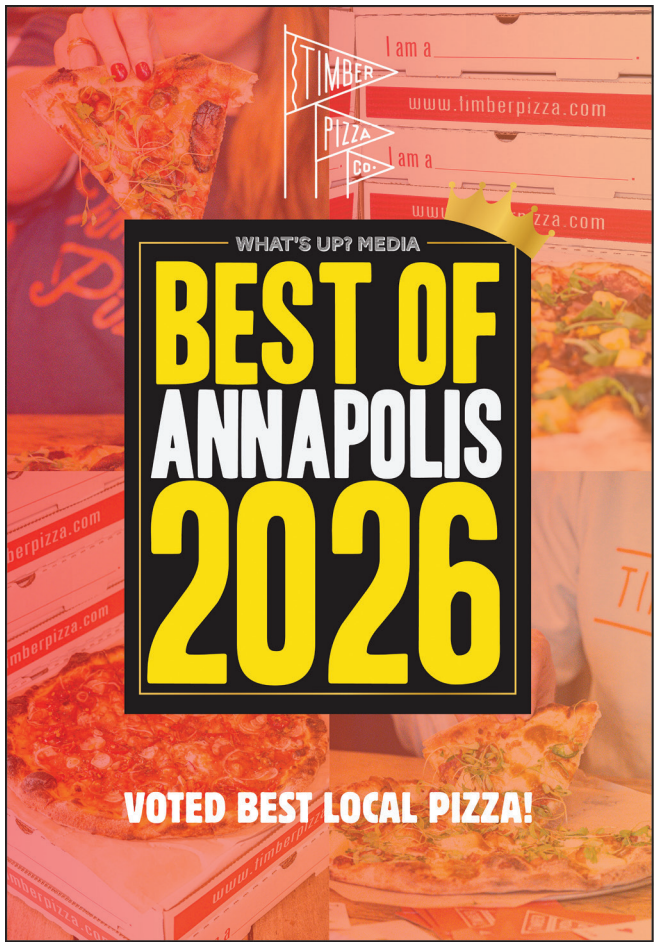
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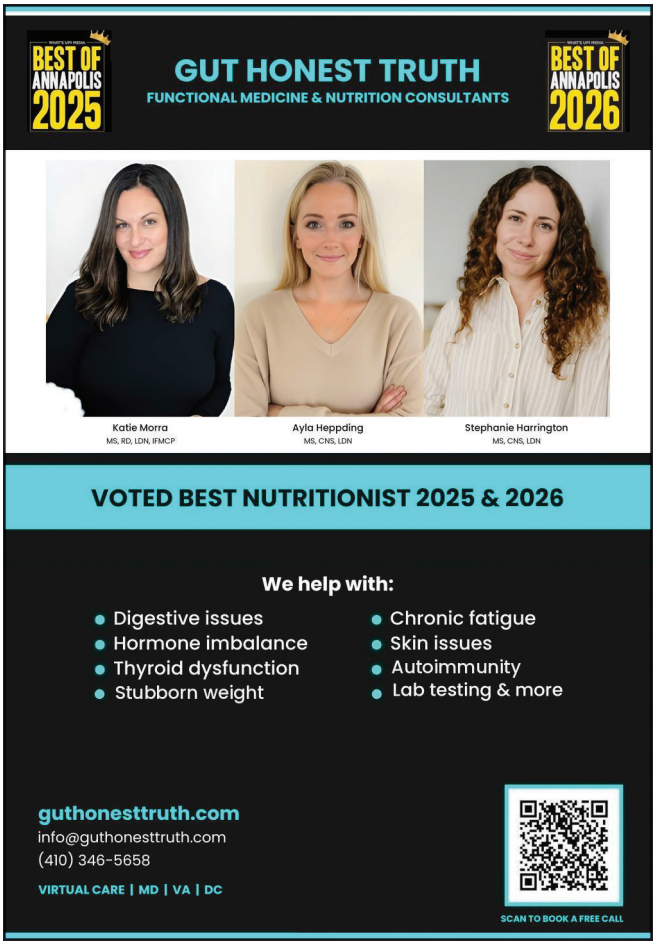
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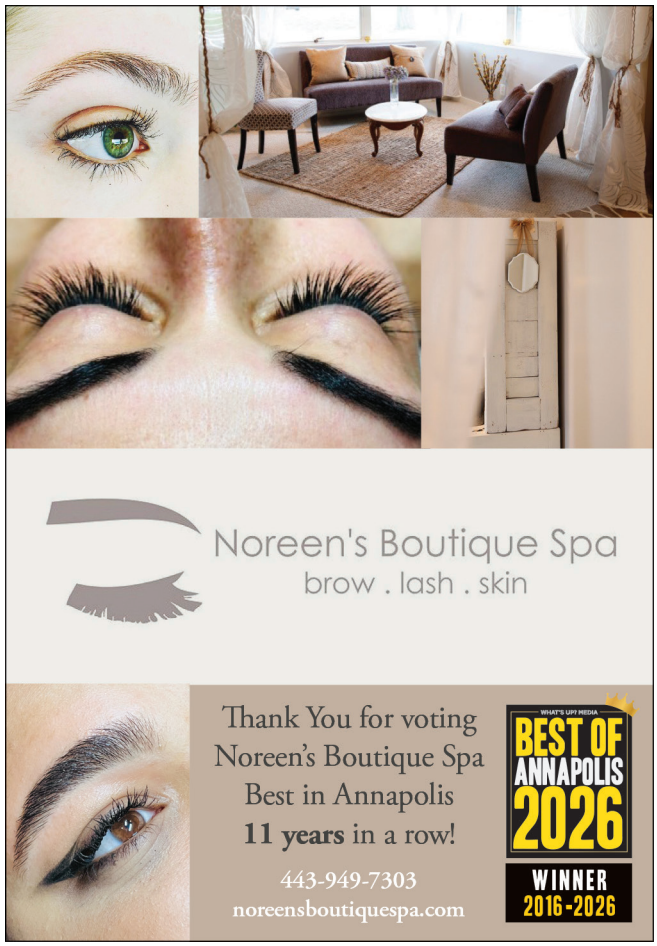

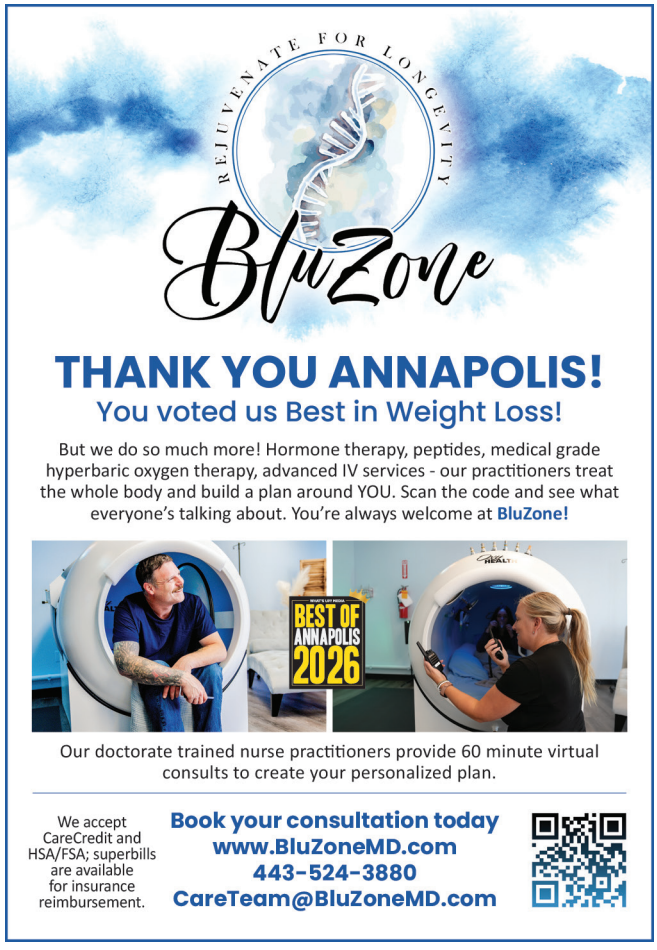

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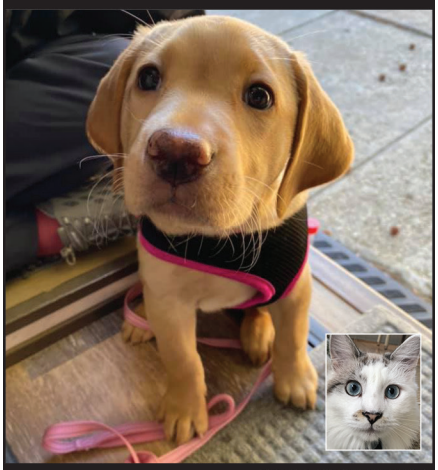

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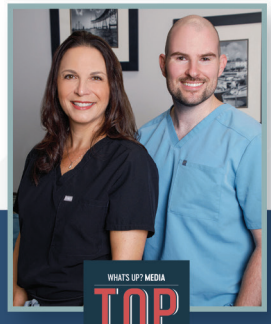

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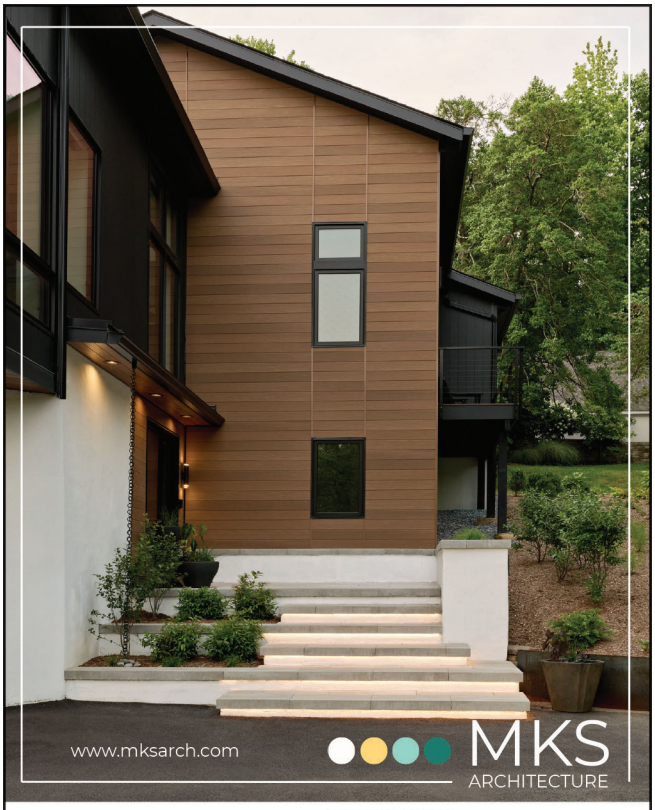

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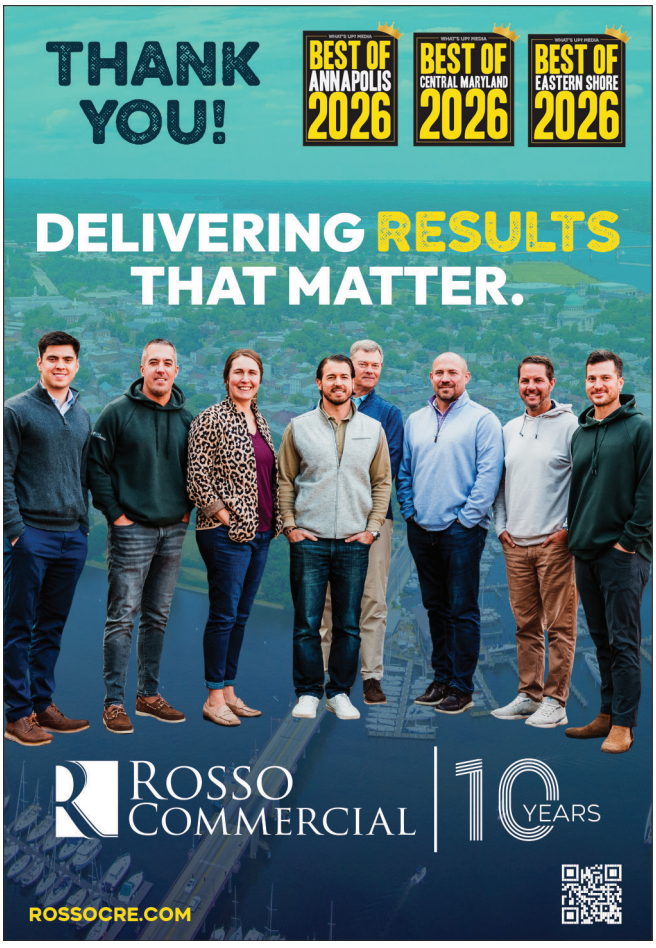

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Cannabis only makes you "high".	While THC is the most common & well-known cannabinoid, there are many others that have little to no psycho-active effects, such as CBD. Additionally, various cannabinoid ratios can decrease the amount of psycho-activity in a product.	Kevin Han, Jia-Yu Wang, Peng-Yun Wang, Yue-Chu-Han Peng, Therapeutic potential of cannabidiol (CBD) in anxiety disorders: A systematic review and meta-analysis, Psychiatry Research, Volume 339, 2024, 116049, ISSN 0165-1781 Sholler DJ, Schoene L, Spindle TR. Therapeutic Efficacy of Cannabidiol (CBD): A Review of the Evidence from Clinical Trials and Human Laboratory Studies. Curr Addict Rep. 2020 Sep;7(3):405-412. doi: 10.1007/s40429-020-00326-8. Epub 2020 Jul 25. PMID: 33585159; PMCID: PMC7880228.
Cannabis has no medical benefits.	Customers have reported that cannabis has helped relieve sleep deprivation, joint pain, chronic pain, inflammation, anxiety, depression, nausea, gastrointestinal disorders, PTSD, ADD, ADHD, and many more. Side effects may occur including impairment, dry mouth, red eyes, increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, and/or paranoia.	National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine; Health and Medicine Division; Board on Population Health and Public Health Practice; Committee on the Health Effects of Marijuana: An Evidence Review and Research Agenda. The Health Effects of Cannabis and Cannabinoids: The Current State of Evidence and Recommendations for Research. Washington (DC): National Academies Press (US); 2017 Jan 12. 4, Therapeutic Effects of Cannabis and Cannabinoids. Cury RM, da Silva T, Cezar-Dos-Santos F, Fakih YRC, Narvaez KAR, Gouvea MC, Espínola C, Ferreira CF, de Castro WAC, Pamplona FA, Silva EGD, Bicca MA, Nascimento FP. A randomized clinical trial of low-dose cannabis extract in Alzheimer's disease. J Alzheimers Dis. 2025 Dec;108(4):1602-1613. doi: 10.1177/13872877251389608. Epub 2025 Oct 29. PMID: 41160460.
You have to smoke cannabis to receive medical benefits.	Medicating with cannabis is typically associated with smoking. However, there are many methods of delivery including: edibles, tinctures, topicals, patches & more!	Barrus DG, Capogrossi KL, Cates SC, Gourdet CK, Peiper NC, Novak SP, Lefever TW, Wiley JL. Tasty THC: Promises and Challenges of Cannabis Edibles. Methods Rep RTI Press. 2016 Nov 16 Filipiuc SI, Neagu AN, Uritu CM, Tamba BI, Filipiuc LE, Tudorancea IM, Boca AN, Hâncu MF, Porumb V, Bild W. The Skin and Natural Cannabinoids-Topical and Transdermal Applications. Pharmaceuticals (Basel). 2023 Jul 24

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Chasing the Wind

Preserving the celebrated tradition of log canoe racing on Maryland's Eastern Shore

BY LISA A. LEWIS



Each summer, sailing enthusiasts eagerly await the start of the log canoe racing season, a cherished tradition that blends intense, high-adrenaline sailing with Maryland's rich maritime heritage. Excited spectators watch in awe as the crews of these historic vessels vie for glory—shifting their weight on wooden planks (springboards) in an elegant, yet chaotic, "water ballet" choreographed to avoid capsizing and achieve victory in an experience that can only be described as precarious.

But, perhaps, what makes this tradition even more revered by both crew members and spectators is the fact that these vessels were not originally intended for racing. Evolved from Indigenous dugout canoes, log canoes were adapted in the 17th century as workboats for another iconic Maryland tradition: oystering. Due to their hull form, log canoes were fast for their size, enabling watermen to get their catch to market quickly. Over time, this competitive spirit led to informal races, which later evolved into the first organized log canoe races.





The Miles River Yacht Club's annual Centennial Cup takes place in June. Photographs courtesy Sharon Thorpe for Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum



A tradition exclusive to Maryland's Eastern Shore, log canoe racing is a beloved sport dating back to the 19th century in which crew members act as "human ballast," climbing onto and sitting on springboards that extend over the side of the vessel to counteract the force of the wind and maintain stability. Constructed from three to five hollowed-out logs joined together side by side, log canoes have long, narrow hulls with large sails. Since their design makes them extremely sensitive to changes in wind and balance, every crew member has a specific job, and they all must work together as a team. The number of crew members may vary from four to more than 15 sailors, depending on the size of the vessel.

According to Patrick Penwell, who shares the role of skipper of *Island Blossom* (built 1892), the reigning champion on the log canoe racing circuit, with Jeff Cox, the crew is responsible for keeping the boat balanced, trimming the sails, calling tactics on the racecourse, and bailing water out with small buckets to keep the boat lighter and more stable. The sail trimmers constantly adjust the sails to keep the boat moving as fast as possible while also helping control the power in the sails when the wind increases.

The boardmen must act quickly—constantly moving in and out on the springboards to keep the boat stable. During a tack or jibe (maneuvers for changing direction relative to the wind), they have to time the throw of the boards from one side of the boat to the other almost perfectly. Being out on the springboards also gives them a bird's-eye view of the racecourse, where they can see the other boats, the next mark, and wind shifts approaching. Communication is critical, and quick decisions must be made during a race.

"Nothing really compares to the thrill of sailing a log canoe," Penwell says. "They are incredibly fast, extremely tippy boats, and when the wind picks up, the adrenaline really kicks in because everyone on board must react instantly to keep the boat balanced and moving fast. When the boat powers up and heels over, you can feel how close you are to the edge, which makes it both exciting and demanding at the same time."

"The whole thing is kind of crazy," adds Sean Callahan, log canoe fleet captain, Tred Avon Yacht Club (TAYC) and skipper of *Billie P. Hall* (ca.1903). "You're racing sailboats that are in some cases more than 100 years old and chasing other 100-year-old race boats around in circles. And if you're good at it, you might win."

Spectators enjoy watching the annual Governor's Cup log canoe race on the Miles River. Photographs courtesy Sharon Thorpe for Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum



From Workboat to Racing Machine

A proud tradition, log canoe racing originated in the 1840s among Eastern Shore watermen. According to Pete Lesher, chief historian and ambassador at large, Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum (CBMM) and a crew member of *Island Bird* (1882), the first documented race took place in 1859 on the Miles River. By the 1870s and 1880s, more log canoe races were being held, and a trend towards building boats specifically for racing emerged. These vessels featured lighter hulls, larger sails, and springboards.

But with the introduction of gasoline engines in the early 20th century, log canoes began to die out—rendering them nearly obsolete. Although this technological advancement marked the end of the era for log canoes for oystering, the conversion to gasoline engines paved the way for a new chapter in history: the transformation from workboats that "raced to market" to an organized racing sport.

The final weekend of Miles River log canoe racing of the season brings together generational racing teams and plenty of spectators. Photographs courtesy Sharon Thorpe for Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum





According to the Miles River Yacht Club (MRYC), a group of St. Michaels businessmen decided to revive the tradition of log canoe racing by organizing a race among three canoes: *Sam*, *Mary Rider*, and *Island Blossom*. This historic race, which was held in 1920, was so successful that the men were inspired to create a club with 10 charter members. In 1921, MRYC, proudly known as the "home of the canoes," was officially born.

"The Miles River Yacht Club has been involved with log canoe racing since its inception," says Marshall Patterson, former member and current volunteer, CBMM, who is also the skipper of the museum's log canoe, *Edmeé S.* (ca. 1934), and a past commodore at MRYC. "The club is proud to showcase the rich history of the sport and to support the tradition for the sailing community."

According to MRYC, more than a dozen log canoes—many of them more than a century old—still race today during the celebrated log canoe racing circuit on the Eastern Shore.

"Log canoe racing is a remarkable tradition," Lesher says. "It has a mystique that attracts the sailing community. Some are family members with deep roots in the sport who have passed it down through the generations. Others just want to be involved in a sport that is very special to the Chesapeake Bay."



The Thrill of the Race

The racing circuit features a series of nine regattas (27 total races) on the Miles, Choptank, Tred Avon, Chester, and Corsica rivers. The races are hosted by MRYC, the Cambridge Yacht Club (CYC), TAYC, the Chesapeake Bay Yacht Club (CBYC), the Chester River Yacht & Country Club (CRYCC), the Corsica River Yacht Club (CRYC), and the Rock Hall Yacht Club (RHYC). The events are organized by volunteers.

Throughout the season, which takes place on weekends in June through September, crew members demonstrate their physical prowess and endurance as they compete for the coveted High Point title. Established in 1969, the George H. Wilson High Point Trophy is presented at the end of the season to the log canoe with the best overall record across all races. *Island Blossom* has consistently won the title since 2010 and is considered "the boat to beat."

Since Penwell and Cox took over the helm in 2023 from Penwell's father, Corbin Penwell, who retired from skippering *Island Blossom* after 24 years, they have continued the streak—winning the title in 2024 and 2025.

According to Patterson, other log canoes that are considered top competitors include *Persistence* (ca. 1890s), *Jay Dee* (1931), *Billie P. Hall* (ca. 1903), and *Mystery* (1932).

Hosted by MRYC, the **Centennial Series** officially kicks off the log canoe racing season. Perhaps it's fitting—and even poetic—that the first weekend of the season takes place on the Miles River, where the tradition was revived more than a century ago.





Top: The log canoe *Island Blossom* competing in the annual races. Photo by Sherie Munday.

Bottom: The log canoe *Island Blossom* competing in the annual races. Photo by Randy Welch.

"The Centennial Series is especially exciting for crew members and spectators because it's the first time back on the water," Patterson says. "There's excitement in the air, and everyone is looking forward to long summer days filled with thrilling adventures on the race circuit."

The **Governor's Cup**, also hosted by MRYC, is one of the most prestigious racing events of the season. Established in 1927, the two-day regatta was originally sponsored by Governor Albert C. Ritchie to continue MRYC's efforts to preserve the log canoe racing tradition. The perpetual trophy, a large silver punch bowl, was named in his honor. *Island Lark* (1901) won the Governor's Cup in 2025.

The oldest yacht club on the Eastern Shore, CYC hosts the **Governor Hicks Cup**, which showcases the high-stakes action of log canoe racing during a two-day regatta on the Choptank River. The perpetual trophy was originally awarded in 1938 and named in honor of Thomas Holliday Hicks, former governor of Maryland. *Island Blossom* won first place in 2025.

"The Cambridge Yacht Club has been renowned for hosting regattas, and our club has a rich history of log canoe racing and camaraderie," says Trevor Carouge, a CYC member, past board member, past sailing chair, and past commodore, who also oversees the planning of the Governor Hicks Cup. "In recent years, we have focused on reinvigorating our club to put an even greater focus on log canoes.

"Since sailing is one of my passions, I was excited when the opportunity to organize the Governor Hicks Cup arose about eight years ago. Organizing such an important event definitely causes a lot of anxiety. We want to put on a good show and ensure that everyone has a great time. So, it's always rewarding to see the first boat cross the finish line."

Founded in 1931 in Oxford, TAYC hosts two log canoe racing events: the**Oxford Regatta**, held in collaboration with CBYC, and the **Heritage Regatta**. According to Callahan, the Oxford Regatta is a major event and features about 150 boats racing on the river. Last year, he and his crew won the regatta on *Billie P. Hall*, which was purchased by the Callahan family in 1983.

One of those crew members is Liz Principe, a member of CYC. When she saw log canoe racing for the first time, she fell in love with the exhilarating sport and immediately thought, "I'd like to try that." Through a friend, she received an invite to become a crew member on *Billie P. Hall* and has been ever since.

"Log canoe racing is so thrilling," Principe says. "It's like riding on a roller coaster. When I became a crew member on *Billie P. Hall*, I gelled so well with Sean and the rest of the crew and felt like part of a team. Log canoe racing is a beautiful way to build lasting friendships among fellow sailors. We race together, and we socialize together. It's a privilege to race on these historic boats, and I am grateful for the opportunity."

Unlike the Oxford Regatta, the Heritage Regatta has a more laid-back atmosphere and features log canoes, Comets, Penguins, and Shields The river is less crowded, which allows for better racing.

"Right now, the competition across the fleet is very good," Callahan explains. "All the boats are fast, and everybody puts in a lot of effort. It's very competitive, fabulous racing. The spectating is great, and so is the afterparty."

The log canoe racing season officially closes with the **Bartlett Cup**, a prestigious race that CBMM has hosted since 1972. According to Lesher, the repoussé silver punch bowl was originally presented to Commander Edward L. Bartlett by the Baltimore Yacht Club. When it was donated to CBMM in 1971, it was repurposed as a perpetual trophy for the regatta, with support from MRYC. *Mystery* won the Bartlett Cup, which is not scored for the High Point title, in 2025. CBMM encourages spectators to watch the races aboard its *PATRIOT* cruises on the Miles River on select weekends. To learn more, visit cbmm.org/patriot-cruises.



The log canoe *Island Blossom* competing in the annual races. Photo by John Rock/ Tidewater Images.



From the 2024 races in Cambridge. Past Commodores Trevor Carouge (left) and Graham Ward (right) with Alaina Basciano. Photo by Tidewater Images.

A Family Tradition

Like many beloved Maryland traditions, log canoe racing is often passed down through the generations. The North family, led by Judge John C. North, II, is widely considered one of the most prominent families in log canoe racing. For more than 70 years, Judge North skippered *Island Bird*, which was built by his great-grandfather, William Sidney Covington, before passing the boat down to his grandson, Dylan North.

In addition, *Island Blossom* has been in the North family since 1952 and is currently owned by Judge North's sons, David and Dan North (skipper of *Jay Dee*). The boat was passed down to them following the passing of their father in 2025.

"You cannot talk about log canoe racing without mentioning Judge North and the tremendous impact he had on the fleet," Patrick Penwell says. "He will be deeply missed as one of the great sailors, ambassadors, and stewards of the sport."

Born into the tradition, Callahan started sailing with his father on *Island Blossom* when he was seven years old and continued to sail with him throughout the years. He also passed down the tradition to his own sons, Harry and Leo.

Like Callahan, Patrick Penwell also started sailing on *Island Blossom* when he was about seven years old, crewing as a bail boy for his father. He has many fond memories of the time his father spent as skipper of *Island Blossom*—the role he now holds.





Keeping the Tradition Alive

Steeped in history, log canoe racing continues to serve as a reminder of Maryland's rich maritime heritage, thanks to the dedication and ingenuity of generations of sailors. The workboats of days gone by have been replaced by racing machines worthy of admiration and awe. The design of these historic vessels and the synchronized movements of their crew members convey a sense of beauty and grace as they speed across the water.

For more than a century, log canoe racing has captivated both crew members and spectators, and this love of the sport helps keep the tradition alive—inspiring future generations to take up the mantle and ensure its legacy.

"Wherever you go in Maryland, you will find interesting pockets of culture," Lesher says. "Log canoe racing is one of these gems. It's thrilling to participate in and beautiful to watch. A time-honored tradition, the sport inspires regional pride and makes Maryland truly special."

Top: The log canoe *Island Blossom* competing in the annual races. Photo by John Rock/Tidewater Images.

Bottom: The log canoe *Island Bird* competing in the annual races. Photo by John Rock/Tidewater Images.

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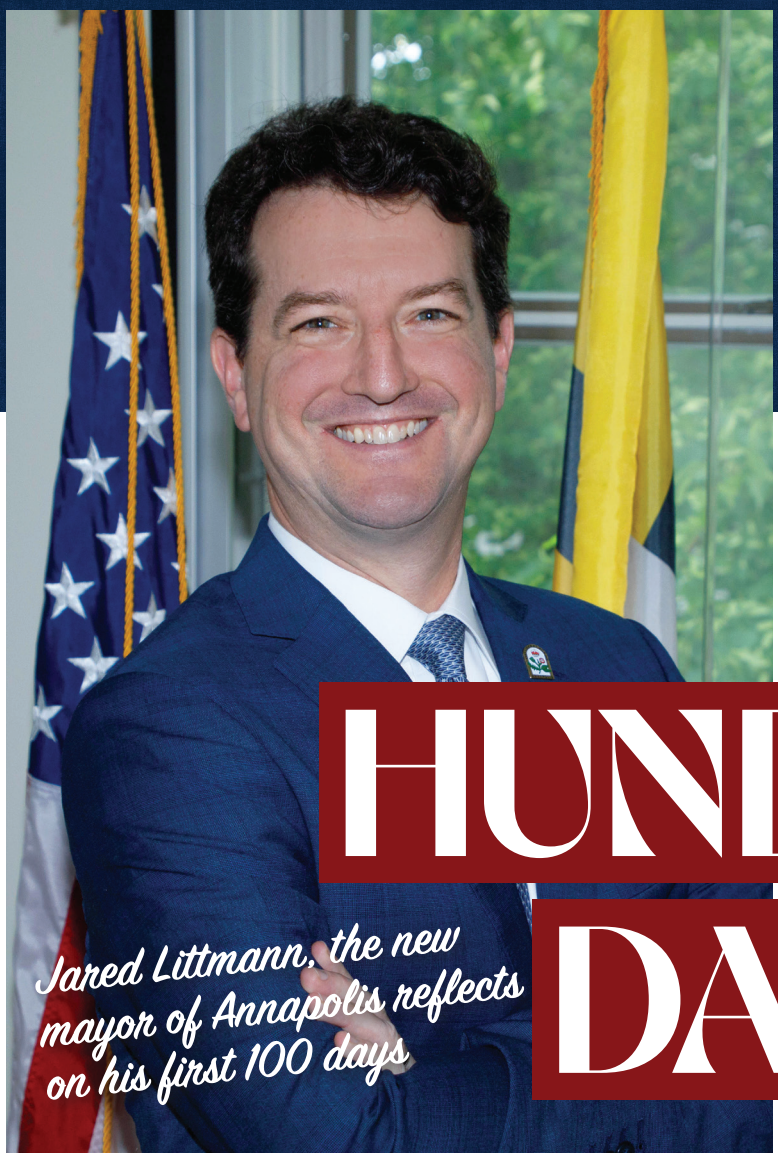

Story By **LISA HILLMAN**

Photographs by **LAURA WIEGMANN**

ONE HUNDRED DAYS IN

Jared Littmann, the new mayor of Annapolis reflects on his first 100 days

"I view it [being mayor] as I have 14-and-a-half 100-day plans. One down and 13-and-a-half to go."

—ANNAPOLIS MAYOR JARED LITTMANN

Imagine you've just taken a new job. You are responsible for the basic well-being of some 40,000 people. In your first three months in office five of your top staffers depart. A seismic weather event shuts down "normal" life for everyone for weeks—except you. And your first budget is due in 120 days. Then there are the lawsuits.

Welcome to City Hall, Mayor Jared Littmann. Speaking to *What's Up? Media* during his first 100 days in office, Littmann appears relaxed, focused, and open to any question, despite activity in a room alongside his office where confidential conversations are taking place.

"Today is Wednesday," he notes, "but when someone mentions what happened Monday it feels like 30 days ago."

What's surprised him most since taking office?

"How much time I spend on litigation," he says. "Leftover problems are a natural consequence of any new administration."

He points to a clock on his desk. This isn't any normal clock. It's counting down by days, hours, minutes, and seconds the time remaining in his four-year term. Headlined "Make Every Day Count," it was a takeaway from a three-day course at Harvard known as "Baby Mayor Boot Camp" that he attended last December along with about 50 mayors from cities across the country.

"I view it as I have 14-and-a-half 100-day plans. One down and 13-and-a-half to go," he notes.

Tackling the "First" 100-Day Plan

When he ran for office, Littmann promised improved communication with city residents, greater transparency, and tackling tough issues, like housing, parking and permitting. But as any CEO or business executive knows, it takes a strong team to succeed.

Littmann is every bit a businessman. He comes to his new job with as strong a background as any aspiring mayor.

Having been elected and serving as Ward 5 Alderman from 2013–2017, he knows how the City Council functions. His public service record is lengthy and includes such organizations as the Caucus of African American Leaders and the city's Ward Boundary and Redistricting Task Force. He earned a degree in Engineering and Public Policy from Washington University in St. Louis and a law degree from the University of Maryland School of Law. He also knows government.

For four years he served as an Associate County Attorney in the Montgomery County Attorney's Office focusing on environmental law, civil enforcement, and legislation. In 2004, he joined his family's business running what is now K&B Ace Hardware, a customer-oriented independent business which has served Annapolis for more than 50 years.



Jared Littmann stands in front of a plaque listing all who have served as the City's mayor. He is the 138th Mayor of Annapolis.

All of which brings him back to his number one priority: "building my team."

"First I met with all my directors. These were structured conversations. I got a sense of their energy, planning, and their pain points."

Next came 19 round tables with all city employees. "We went to them. For example, the transportation hub on Chinquapin Round Road and the Public Works building on Hudson Street. Several employees said it was the first time in 30 years they'd met the mayor."

What emerged were shared concerns from directors and staff and a long list of short and interim solutions.

Then there are the vacancies. While it's common for new administrations to bring in their "own people"—especially for senior roles—Littmann seems to have more than his share. By mid-March, just as his first 100 days closed, he faced five vacancies: City Manager, Finance Director, HR Director, City Attorney, and Police Chief.

While he spoke cautiously given pending litigation, he admits the departure of Police Chief Edward Jackson, who had served since 2019, weighs on him.

"Going into this job I made no promise to keep or fire any department director or chief. I asked everyone to stay until we went through the round tables. The fact that I ended up having to dismiss the police chief within two months made members of the Caucus of African American Leaders think that I had planned to dismiss him. However, we had several issues that were time sensitive. Unfortunately, we got to a point where we were not aligned on how to move the city forward.

"I know letting him go probably wasn't in my best personal interest. I hold myself to a high standard, and it's painful not to be able to share the details people want to hear. I also want to make it clear I was not pressured by anyone. I did what was best for the city. And that will always be my North Star."

Someone who understands how difficult this was for the mayor is local civil rights activist and convenor of the Caucus of African American Leaders, Carl Snowden.

"Clearly some of his most ardent supporters were disappointed in his decision," Snowden says. "It was more how it was done that what was done. He knew they were upset."

Making it Happen

With several top personnel in "acting" roles, the mayor is pushing forward. In quick succession he hits the highlights:

OPEN GOVERNMENT

In keeping with his promise of greater government transparency, Littmann is hosting Town Halls in each of the eight city wards along with the respective alderperson and city staff. As he notes, "The people get to hear directly from the directors who actually manage things. It gives them unfiltered information and helps us have a better and trusting relationship instead of that big faceless entity called 'city government.'"

Erin McCopp, President of the Germantown Homewood Community Association, who hosted Ward 2's February Town Hall agrees: "I think the communications and transparency, especially with the Town Halls, are very welcome."

Littmann plans bi-annual Town Halls going forward, as well as open office hours and "neighborhood walks." He hopes such close government access will help educate citizens to know their city better. For example, a common complaint from residents is litter on roads that aren't the city's, but rather the county or state, like portions of Forest Drive or Aris T Allen Boulevard. He's even received a complaint about an issue in Odenton.

PARKING

Given so much confusion over city garages, the mayor wants to change the Mills-Hillman garage to conform to other city garages. Parkers will pay as they leave, instead of as they enter, eliminating the "guessing" required to pre-pay.

Another early effort to help parkers is the new Golden Parking Pass, a pilot plan for seniors offered to both residents and non-residents. For $20 a month a driver can park for free for two hours on Main Street, Hillman garage, and Maryland Avenue. The hope is to "take the fear" out of parking downtown and be a "big win for businesses." The program will be evaluated after its month-long trial and will likely be available during off-season months.



Mayor Jared Littmann at the entrance to the Council Chamber inside City Hall.

PERMITTING

Littmann says he and Planning and Zoning Director Chris Jakubiak are "aligned" in making permitting faster, more predictable, and less expensive: "We're already getting good feedback that it's working, but we still need to do more."

HOUSING

Before he initiates housing efforts, the mayor first wants to define what success looks like. "My goal is to actually have a housing plan," he says. "We need to make mid-size moderate housing easier and faster to build to incentivize developers to choose that over single family housing."

CITY DOCK

On March 6, just as the mayor's first 100 days were ending, a collective sigh of relief rose from City Hall. The long-awaited and worry over the FEMA grant ended with announcement that the city would receive $35.5 million to complete flood mitigation at City Dock. Littmann does not anticipate any delays in construction. By this summer, he says, residents will see "substantive progress" with wall barriers and the infrastructure in place for the Maritime Welcome Center. The entire project is planned for completion in two years.



Annapolis Mayor Jared Littmann has maintained an "open door" to his office, allowing citizens to book 10-minute in-person meetings with him and staff during this first year in office.

Working With a "New" City Council

Perhaps nowhere are the new mayor's personality and skill on full display more than on the second and fourth Monday each month in the City Council chamber. Here, the public can express personal grievances or voice opinions during public hearings, applaud as groups and individuals receive city honors, and witness how proposed legislation becomes law. The latter typically tests how a mayor manages what can sometimes be a contentious evening.

On a Monday in March, the City Council is debating a proposed 12-month moratorium on new short-term rental licenses, or "STRs." It's clear that Littmann's experience as a councilman, plus his legal background, plus his relationship with each of the eight council members, makes a difference in keeping the discussion moving. As he admits, it doesn't hurt that all are Democrats.

"I know we're all acting in the best interests of the city," says the mayor, who presides over Council meetings and is one of nine votes. "No one is trying to undermine anything for political points."

Four Council members are new. Of the returning four, Ward 7 Alderman Rob Savidge proposes the most amendments to the STR ordinance. Debate continues for nearly two hours. Littmann defers to a senior staff member for input, such as whether 12 months is necessary and should there be an interim report? Savidge wants language to acknowledge the previous council's work. Finally, the mayor calls for a five-minute recess to allow his acting attorney to affirm a technical matter. At each step, he shows a deference to Council members, respect for his staff, and a willingness to admit he doesn't know it all. The humility is both obvious and refreshing.

At 10 p.m., after two hours of lively but orderly debate, the ordinance passes 8 to 1. Only Savidge votes against it. "I look forward to working with the new mayor and council," Savidge says later. "I'd like to see us improve communication and collaboration moving forward."

What's Next

Despite how prepared he is for the role, Littmann admits he has a lot to learn. A top priority is the budgeting process due in April. "I don't have a good handle yet on the money" he confesses, "but I will." He plans to involve his directors and the finance team and wants to include the City Council "as much as possible." He also pledges to "start the process much earlier next year."

A bit confounding for him in these early months is protocol. While campaigning a year ago "I made a mistake and was not aware others were involved. I'm not always sure who gets the credit. I never want to offend anyone or leave anyone out."

In a rare nod to his own well-being, he admits he needs to manage his health. It is impossible to overstate the stress of the job. A typical day runs from 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., with calls, texts, and emails non-stop.

Littmann likes sports and joined Peake Social's Volleyball league at the Pip Moyer Recreation Center, playing from 9 to 10 p.m. most Tuesday nights. Bike rides, poker with friends, and fantasy football also help. He's a Washington Commanders fan and having grown up in New Jersey, a "diehard Yankees fan."

Home life has changed. He misses family dinners, but his children are busy, too. Son Zach is a junior in high school and daughter Isabel is a sophomore in college. He tries to keep a "date night" with wife Marlene who now runs the hardware store fulltime.

And while it may seem a bit too early to ask about legacy—whether it's for four or eight years—Littmann is clear about how he wants to be remembered:

> I led honorably with the best interest of the city at heart and not for me personally. I communicated the rationale of those decisions, so people understood. City Dock was built. I understand what the city housing policy is and can measure its success. And the city is operating in a way that treats everyone fairly and equally, offering opportunities to uplift individuals who live in communities that often get neglected.

On the desk in his office, there are now fewer seconds, minutes, hours, and days. That clock keeps winding down.

What They're Saying

ERIN MCCOPP, PRESIDENT, GERMANTOWN HOMEWOOD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

"We will be watching very closely what happens over the next year in making the city more customer-service oriented and more towards ordinary residents. There is a lot of focus on tourism and city dock, but there are other issues people are interested in."

CARL SNOWDEN, CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST, CONVENOR OF THE CAUCUS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN LEADERS

"Mayor Littmann has an opportunity to make city government work for all citizens. He's faced with a major affordable housing problem for Annapolitans who can't afford to live in the city. The Caucus intends to have quarterly meetings with him."

BURR VOGEL, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

"The mayor is super organized. He got thrown into this project (City Dock) at a crucial and tenuous moment. We needed that FEMA funding. He mobilized every resource he possibly could. We're all breathing so much easier now. We have clarity."

ROSSIO RAMIREZ-SMITH, HISPANIC LIAISON

"The administration came to work to make things happen. They came ready. Getting together with our community so soon has been wonderful. All the Town Halls were in Spanish as well."

ROB SAVIDGE, THIRD-TERM ALDERMAN WARD 7

"The mayor and his administration have done a very good job improving communication with the public. We've had some controversial legislation come up, and that's expected. I hope we will find a more positive way to handle some of the legislative policies moving forward."

JANICE ALLSUP-JOHNSON, FIRST-TERM ALDERWOMAN WARD 4

"The mayor always has time for his council members. He's very informative, very easy to get along with. He's a people person."

NEILYE GARRITY, CHIEF OF STAFF

"On day one, it felt like stepping into a storm—every issue urgent, every decision consequential. But what stood out was the mayor's composure. While everything moves at full speed around him, he never rushes his judgment. Every decision he makes is deliberate and well-informed."

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What's Up, Dock?

ANNAPOLIS CITY DOCK RENOVATION PROJECT TARGETING COMPLETION BY 2028

BY GARY JOBSON | ALL IMAGES COURTESY CITY OF ANNAPOLIS

On February 18, 2007, Dick D'Amato, an attorney and former state delegate from District 30, and I co-authored an opinion piece for *The Capital-Gazette*, titled, "City Dock work isn't merely cosmetic." It seemed to us that this precious area was a parking lot for most the year before being the venue of important annual sail and power boat shows. We thought City Dock could be a better place, and we were worried about the persistent flooding that was hurting downtown commerce. At the time, there was a $9 million proposal for a "vital face-lift" to complete the work.

We wrote, "City Dock could be enhanced as a community magnet (a centerpiece for cultural and family activities) if we choose to take advantage of it." We suggested, "The Annapolis Mayor (then Ellen Moyer) should establish a citizen's body to examine anew this location's exhilarating potential."

Finally, in 2019, Mayor Gavin Buckly appointed a City Dock Action Committee (CDAC) to study all the solutions of the flooding issue and find ways to improve Annapolis' important waterfront. Former head of the City's Planning Zoning Department, Eileen Fogerty was hired to administer the project. A successful piece of the equation was the construction of the new Mills-Hillman Parking Garage behind Main Street. The enhanced garage, with 586-parking spaces, opened in June 2023 and alleviated the need for parking on City Dock.



U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen speaks at the City Dock FEMA Grant press conference on March 6, 2026.

Move ahead 19 years after our newspaper article and, happily, construction at City Dock is underway—although the estimated price tag has skyrocketed. The total cost of all the planned upgrades, including a renovated historic Burtis House, a new Maritime Welcome Center, utility work, site work, and landscaping approaches $100 million.

Our Congressional leaders, U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen and U.S. Congresswoman Sarah Elfreth, in working with Anne Arundel County Executive Steuart Pittman, Maryland State Delegate Dana Jones, Mayor Jared Littmann, and the Annapolis City Council, secured a $35,522,069 grant from the U.S. Government to help pay for the resiliency phase of City Dock's renovation. The specific purpose of the government's funding is to reduce flooding and storm surges on City Dock. Additional funding is being augmented by the State of Maryland, Anne Arundel County, and the City of Annapolis.

Senator Van Hollen and the government leaders celebrated the funding announcement on City Dock on March 6, 2026. During his remarks the senator noted, "There was a growing backlog of FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) projects but also growing frustration with what was happening with the project backlogs all over the country. And so, all that pressure built, and the dam broke. And the good news is (U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security) Kristi Noem is out and the funding for the Annapolis dock is in!" A sustained round of applause broke out.

Congresswoman Sarah Elfreth added, "All the small businesses you see around here, every time there is a major flood, we are all on the phone checking in, making sure they have what they need, making sure we're corralling the state resources and local resources to get them what they need."

The City Dock project has had many challenges including lawsuits, skeptical residents, angry historic preservationists, and general uncertainty about funding. Additionally, temporary pumping stations and backflow preventers have been placed around City Dock to deflect storm water surges. The pumps are annoying and unsightly, but necessary. Flooding is particularly acute during significant rainfall events in the summer months. Flooding brings unwanted garbage, sediment, and debris causing pollution to our waterways.



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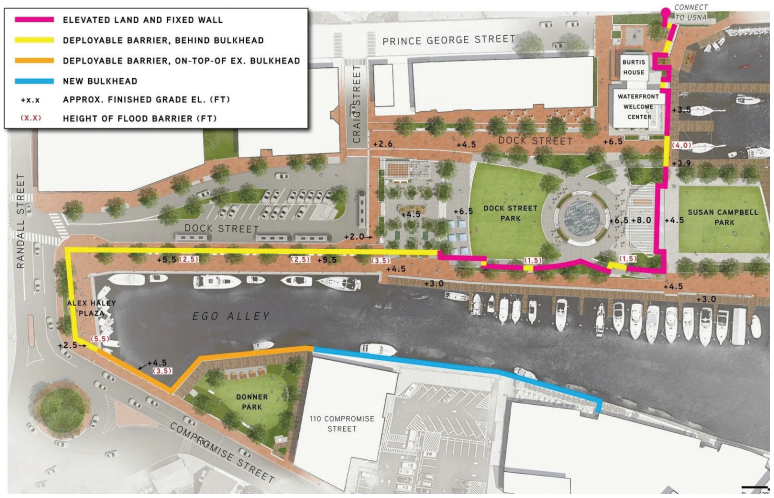

A series of mechanical and floating flood barriers around the perimeter of Ego Alley.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) published a study based on readings from the Annapolis Tide Gauge Station that showed a dramatic increase in the number of hours and days Annapolis suffers from flooding. The NOAA report says Annapolis had 120 flooding events in 2024. Just five years earlier the number of flooding days was 69. Go back to 1950 and flooding events averaged only two times per year. Sea levels are rising at an alarming rate making the resiliency project urgent. The devastating cost to local businesses is significant. The City of Annapolis has forecasted more than $125 million in economic damage over the next 30 years if flood mitigation action does not take place.

Adding to the engineering challenges, the City of Annapolis must adhere to environmental regulations to protect the surrounding waters. This includes filtering the debris that comes with flooding. It is a complicated project.

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) has the responsibility within the City's Planning and Zoning department for reviewing zoning reviews. The HPC ruled in favor of the City Dock plan. The courts have ruled in favor of the HPC rulings.

Mayor Jared Littmann and his new administration have been working hard to move the project forward. Construction on City Dock was slow over the winter due to severe icy weather. With spring finally arriving and new funding in place, the pace of construction has accelerated. The height of City Dock will be raised 3 to 6 feet with deployable barriers during significant flooding events. An elevated City Dock will be a green park, eliminating a considerable amount of asphalt.

A parallel project is building the new Maritime Welcome Center that will house the Harbor Master office, an area where Visit Annapolis and Anne Arundel County can provide tourist information, restrooms, and a place for visitors to find a respite. The adjacent park will provide an entertainment area, room for boat shows, hosting sporting events, concerts, and a long list of ceremonies. There will be areas of shade, which have been non-existent along City Dock. The end of Prince George Street will also be converted into a park on the opposite side of the Burtis House. It is hoped that visitors will be able to gain access to the U.S. Naval Academy, which is located on the north side of Prince George Street.

Building a resilient and welcoming City Dock will attract residents and visitors to spend time downtown. This will be a benefit to local businesses that have suffered through storms, flooding, and now, construction. In the meantime, the project will proceed. The City is aware of the need to make room for the boat shows in October. When finished, City Dock will be an improved and vibrant place. And flooding will not be problem for a long time.



An elevated and resilient City Dock, designed to reduce the impacts of tidal and storm surge flood events.



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Gary Jobson is a world-class sailor, television commentator, author, longtime resident of Annapolis, and pre-eminent ambassador for sailing of the United States. He either serves on or has served on the boards of Operation Sail, US Sailing, Olympic Sailing Committee, Leukemia Cup Regatta Series, Annapolis Yacht Club, National Sailing Hall of Fame, Chesapeake Bay Trust Board of Directors, and Visit Annapolis, among many others.



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118 TUDOR CHARMS ON THE WATERFRONT

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Image courtesy of happywall.com

Defining Neo-Deco Design

By Lisa J. Gotto

Like its 20th century design cousin in Art Deco, Neo-Deco uses elements of bold geometry, luxe materials, and statement pieces—but then thoughtfully applies them through a modern sensibility filter that values comfort, restraint, and livability. Experts describe Neo-Deco as a vibe that is confident without being loud, indulgent without being impractical, and nostalgic without feeling stuck in the past.

So, don't expect the feel of your grandmother's mirrored bar cart era. Neo-Deco works with today's homes that need to function as sanctuaries, not movie sets, favoring quality over quantity, statement over clutter, and polish over perfection.

The result is an interior scheme that feels elevated and expressive, while still feeling warm and welcoming for guests, as well as the family.

HERE'S A RUN-DOWN OF THE HALLMARKS OF NEO-DECO DESIGN:

STRUCTURE & SWAGGER BORNE OF GEOMETRY

At the heart of Neo-Deco is geometry—but not in the rigid, boxy sense. Curves, arches, fluting, scallops, and chevrons add movement and softness, creating spaces that feel dynamic rather than severe. These shapes show up everywhere including furniture profiles, architectural details, tile layouts, and even in subtle millwork. What makes Neo-Deco feel modern is how those shapes are used. Instead of repeating motifs endlessly, designers let one or two geometric elements take center stage. A curved sofa anchors a living room. An arched doorway becomes a moment. A fluted wall adds texture without overwhelming the eye. Geometry becomes a form of visual punctuation—stylish, expressive, and confident.



Image courtesy of thecameronteam.net



Image courtesy of soutidy.com

Intention Through Statement Pieces

Rather than appointing a room; Neo-Deco is about curating it. In lieu of layering in numerous accessories, this style relies on a few standout pieces to carry the visual weight. A dramatic light fixture, a sculptural chair, an oversized mirror, or a bold piece of art becomes the focal point, allowing the rest of the space to breathe. This approach creates interiors that feel intentional and confident. Nothing is there "just because." Every piece earns its place, contributing to the overall story of the room. The effect is both luxurious and calming—a rare combination that feels especially appealing in a chaotic world. Ultimately, Neo-Deco invites you to enjoy elegance without formality, drama without tumult, and luxury without excess. It's a style that understands that the most compelling spaces don't try too hard—they simply know who they are.



Image courtesy of calendoostudios.com



Image courtesy of homary.com

Thoughtfully Edited Glamour

Where classic Art Deco possessed an air of excess with more shine, more pattern, and just more in general, Neo-Deco keeps the glamour but edits with a modern eye. Ornamentation is streamlined, silhouettes are cleaner, and details err of the side of intentional rather than ornamental. Where traditional deco might have layered patterns and finishes with abandon, Neo-Deco chooses its moments more carefully. Another way to interpret Neo-Deco is to think couture versus costume. A Neo-Deco space might feature one dramatic flourish—a sculptural chandelier, a high-contrast floor pattern, or a striking wall treatment—but it is balanced by calm, understated surroundings. So, the drama is still there, but it's controlled.



Image courtesy of hommes.studio

LUXURIOUS MATERIALS, SOFTENED FOR REAL LIFE

Neo-Deco provides the buffer between beauty and no-nonsense modern living. Materials traditionally associated with luxury like marble, brass, velvet, lacquer, and glass are still front and center, but they're treated with a lighter hand. High-gloss finishes give way to honed stone and brushed metals. Plush velvets are balanced with nubby linens or warm woods. Lacquered surfaces appear in measured doses rather than coating an entire room. The goal is richness without rigidity, indulgence without intimidation. This balance is what makes Neo-Deco so appealing for contemporary lifestyles. It allows rooms to feel elevated and tactile, without crossing into "don't touch anything" territory. Intentionally, these are spaces meant to be admired—and enjoyed.

A COLOR PALETTE THAT SETS A MOOD

Neo-Deco color palettes typically begin with a refined neutral base such as a creamy white, warm taupe, soft gray, or a deep charcoal—that is then layered with saturated hues for impact. Jewel tones like emerald, sapphire, eggplant, and intense navy appear as accent colors, adding depth and richness without overpowering the room. There is also a role for classic black to play in these schemes and it is often paired with warm metallics like brass or bronze for contrast. The effect comes off as striking but not stark, remarkable but still cozy. Even when bold colors are used, they're grounded by balance and repetition, keeping the overall look cohesive rather than chaotic. In Neo-Deco spaces, color isn't just decoration—it's atmosphere. It sets the mood, frames the architecture, and adds a sense of subtle indulgence that makes a room feel special.



Image courtesy of soutidy.com

We Can Make a Difference

ADDING RAIN GARDENS TO OUR LANDSCAPES

By Janice F. Booth

Summer is here; school is almost over for the year, and everyone is looking forward to enjoying our tributaries and grand Chesapeake Bay. As gardeners can we do more to protect our waterways from contamination? Consider our region's rainfall, which averages about 42–47" per year. Perhaps, we can do something more in our gardens to utilize that rainfall and help maintain clean waterways.

Let me suggest adding a small, attractive rain run-off catchment, a Rain Garden to your landscaping this summer. According to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, in urban and suburban areas, "Rain gardens filter up to 93 percent of the oil in urban and suburban runoff…also filtering up to 90 percent of toxic metals, 70 percent of the sediment, 30 percent of the phosphorous, and at least 25 percent of the nitrogen pollution" carried in the rain that is not absorbed into the earth naturally.

In addition to being a boon to our waterways, a rain garden is a favorite hangout for birds and pollinators. Once you've gotten through the construction stage, a rain garden is attractive and easy to maintain.

LET ME REVIEW THE (1) BENEFITS, (2) DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION, AND (3) MAINTENANCE OF A RAIN GARDEN.

BENEFITS

In addition to the "big picture"—protecting our water from runoff pollution, there are additional benefits closer to home. Rain gardens:

- Improve the neighborhood's drainage, reducing the danger of basement or sewer backups and flooding
- Improve your property value
- Increase the aquafers groundwater flow, improving the quality of the groundwater
- Improve the landscape, particularly if you're trying to cut back on lawn maintenance
- Create a natural wildlife habitat
- Optimize the use of available water during droughts



DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

There are some simple do-it-yourself ideas, but you may want to consult a hardscape or landscape specialist before digging an indentation in your lawn.

- Simple raised planters and water barrels at downspouts are two easy ways to reduce runoff
- Rain gardens should be situated at least 10' from building foundations and 50' from a septic system, if you have one
- Determine the percolation rate of the area by determining how long it takes groundwater to move through the soil. (You can find directions for simple tests on-line, or have the test done by the professional.)

◆ Based in part on the rate at which water is absorbed, decide on the size and shape of the indentation you'll be making in your garden or lawn. Note: situating the rain garden on a slope will make it easier to capture the runoff water, allowing runoff to settle into the earth. There are **three levels of efficiency** to choose from: **Simple rain garden:** a depression where water will collect planted with grasses and native flowers and shrubs. **Intermediate:** a "Biosphere" is larger, designed to capture greater volumes of run-off water. **Advanced:** often called a "Settling Area" is constructed where severe urban runoff is likely to occur. It can collect debris and trash, and is designed to make periodic cleaning and clearing possible. (Such a "settling area" is usually a community or neighborhood project.)

◆ After choosing a shape and size, remove from the area any grass or plants. Dig a hollow that is deeper than you want finally. You will add layers of soil combined with compost and top that with mulch. So, your initial depth must allow for the layers you will place in the hollow area.

◆ You have two choices: You can keep the rain garden spare, with attractive rocks, a few simple grasses and perhaps a bush or two. Or you can choose to fill your rain garden with plants that will create a nature area. If you do, **choose plants that are native** to our region. You'll want to select some that can tolerate standing water, at least briefly, and plants that can tolerate drought conditions. The moisture loving plants will go in the deepest area of the hollow. The drought tolerant plants will be the band around the upper rim of the garden. In our region, some of the native plant favorites are: Siberian iris, Aster, Turtlehead, Phlox Gentian, Beebalm, Sedge, and Forget-Me-Nots. Check out the recommendations on the Univ. of Maryland Extension site: extension.umd.edu/resource/introduction-rain-gardens





MAINTENANCE

While a rain garden is fairly self-sufficient, you should plan on a few regular chores.

◆ Prepare to regularly water the plants during the first year. As with any flowerbed, a strong root system must be established.

◆ Yes, even in a rain garden, someone will have to weed and trim the grasses and plants.

◆ Clean out the debris that will collect over time—leaves, twigs, plant detritus, silt and sand. If the rain garden is not cleaned periodically it will eventually fill in and stop working as a catchment. A garden rake may suffice, but you may need heavy-duty shovels or a gardener's services.

A few misconceptions:

◆ **A mosquito breeding ground:** A well-constructed rain garden will absorb run-off within 24–72 hours. Mosquitoes require 4–7 days of standing water to breed

◆ **An untidy appearance:** If you want to avoid the "wild meadow" look, you can plant your rain garden with ground cover, rocks, and a decorative tree or two. You can edge, prune, and trim the rain garden to please your own aesthetics.

◆ **A swamp in the yard:** Rain gardens are generally dry, except after a heavy rain. If water remains after a few days, it may be time to clean the rain garden of built-up silt and detritus.

We live in a particularly beautiful and vulnerable region along inviting waterways. They are vulnerable to human pollutants. Adding a rain garden will benefit you and the earth.

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Tudor Charms on the Waterfront

By Lisa J. Gotto

An awesome private setting off of Cypress Creek in Severna Park plays the backdrop for this impressive 4,600-square-foot waterfront residence. This classic brick Tudor-style home offers a charming exterior and the convenience of a circular drive at the front of the home.

Mature trees and established landscaping frame the home, while a gently sloping lawn leads down toward the creek, creating both privacy and easy water access.

Inside, an immediate impression is made with its distinctive two-story foyer, highlighted by rich wood detailing and terrazzo flooring. The center hall entry flows forward to the waterside of the home, where the main living spaces are designed to take full advantage of the scenic setting. This is accomplished through the dramatic application of an entire back wall of windows filling the room with natural light.

At the heart of the home is a spacious kitchen with its rich wood cabinetry, stainless steel appliances, and large center island. The open layout flows directly into a breakfast room and family room creating an inviting gathering space for everyday living as well as entertaining.

Primary Structure Built: 1969

Sold For: $1,400,000

Original List Price: $1,695,000

Bedrooms: 4

Baths: 4 Full, 1 Half

Living Space: 4,636 Sq. Ft.

Lot Size: .69 acres







From the family room, doors open onto a large deck overlooking the water, extending the living area outdoors. The deck provides an ideal setting for dining, relaxing, or enjoying the quiet beauty of the surrounding landscape. A short walk from the house leads down toward the shoreline.

The main level also features a formal dining room with hardwood floors that connects to an adjoining living room anchored by a classic wood-burning fireplace. A den at the front of the house offers a quiet workspace with views of the landscaped front yard.

Three of the home's four bedrooms including the primary suite are located on the upper level. This spacious retreat features an *en suite* bathroom and a balcony that overlooks the waterfront.









A fourth bedroom is tucked away in its own private wing and accessed by a separate staircase off the living room; making for ideal guest and extended family accommodations, or as space for an au pair.

The fully finished walkout lower level further expands the home's living space. It includes a full bathroom, a large recreation room, and an additional room that could serve as a bedroom or flexible living area. Sliding doors lead directly to a waterside patio overlooking the property's private boat ramp, creating a seamless connection between indoor and outdoor living.

Listing Agent: Reid Buckley, Long & Foster Real Estate, 320 6th St., Annapolis, m. 410-279-1843, o. 410-266-6880, reid@waterfronthomes.org, waterfronthomes.org **Buyer's Agent:** Andrew Goodman, RLAH Real Estate, 4600 N. Park Ave., Chevy Chase, m. 240-731-4827, o. 301-652-0643, andrew@goodmangroup.com, atproperties.com

At Home in Homewood

By Lisa J. Gotto

Built in 1930, this pre-war era Cape Cod has been marvelously updated to include cedar ceiling detail on the porch and a cozy, blue cedar shake-look exterior. This architectural classic situated in the sought-after Homewood community within Annapolis immediately stands out for its curb appeal.

"Homewood has become hugely popular and it's easy to understand why buyers love it," says Listing Agent Liz Dooner. "It's a special place—close to town, with its own personality and strong sense of community."

Primary Structure Built: 1930

Sold For: $931,722

Original List Price: $889,000

Bedrooms: 3

Baths: 2 Full, 1 Half

Living Space: 1,890 Sq. Ft.

Lot Size: .17 acres







Photography by Michele Sheiko



But beyond the idyllic façade, the home's appeal lies in a thoughtful blend of classic character and modern updates designed for comfortable everyday living.

Inside, the home has been thoughtfully updated to create a more open and connected layout. Renovations include an expanded kitchen, updated flooring, and reconfigured living areas that help support the way families live today. Opening into a sunny living room, this space is light, airy, and anchored by its central fireplace with whitewashed brick and a handsome custom mantel.

The kitchen now serves as a central gathering space, opening comfortably into the surrounding living areas. The updates here provide a quintessential sense of Annapolitan style with custom deep blue cabinetry on the bottom and crisp white uppers that coordinate with the room's smart white subway tile backsplash. A butcher block center island with breakfast bar seating for two, classic stainless steel appliances, and a sunny eat-in area help equip the space.





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The main level of this home also provides ample space for a bright and cheery home office and a child's playroom with sightlines to the property's pretty backyard through a large picture window.

Upstairs, a spacious primary bedroom makes a comfortable homeowners' retreat. The suite is complemented by a generously sized primary bathroom, which includes a convenient laundry hookup.

There are two additional bedrooms with charming dormer details, cozy hardwood floors, and like the rest of the home, lovely wood trim throughout. These rooms share the home's second full bath.

Outside, there's an ideal setting for entertaining and relaxed outdoor living with a thoughtfully designed rear patio creating a natural outdoor dining area in the warmer months, and a dedicated fire pit area provides another inviting gathering spot for life's cooler evenings.

This property is perfected with a rare amenity for the neighborhood: a two-car garage. In addition to providing valuable parking and storage space, the garage includes pull-down attic access, creating additional room for seasonal storage and practical household needs.











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High or Low? Your Blood Sugar Still Matters

(YES, EVEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE DIABETES)

By Dylan Roche

Paying attention to your blood sugar levels sounds like a concern for somebody with diabetes—and if you're not diabetic, you might think you don't have to worry. The reality is that even non-diabetics should still be aware of their blood sugar levels.

The human body is constantly regulating glucose, aka blood sugar. It's what your body breaks your food down into and sends to your cells for energy. Diabetes affects the body's production of the hormone insulin, which regulates blood sugar. That doesn't mean that your blood sugar levels will always be steady—and it's worth paying attention because of the way blood sugar affects your energy levels and mood.

Hyperglycemia (high blood sugar): This is a spike in blood sugar you'll often experience after eating a large amount of sugar or refined carbohydrates. It's typical to experience a "crash" after a big meal where your blood sugar spikes and then drops quickly. But it can also be caused by severe stress, illness, or certain medications.

Symptoms of high blood sugar include: Fatigue after a big meal, Brain fog or difficulty focusingl, Headaches or irritabilityl, Frequent urination. **Frequent spikes in blood sugar can lead to complications such as:** Weight gainl, Inflammationl, Increased risk of developing type 2 diabetesl, Cardiovascular problems.

Hypoglycemia (low blood sugar): The other extreme is when your body doesn't have enough glucose in the bloodstream, frequently because you skipped a meal or engaged in heavy exercise without enough food.

Symptoms of low blood sugar include: Dizziness or lightheadednessl, Anxiety or irritabilityl, Brain fog or difficulty focusingl, Sweating, shaking, or trembling

SHOULD YOU BE CONCERNED?

If you don't have diabetes, your body can usually maintain steady glucose levels except in unusual situations. An occasional high or low means you won't be feeling your best, but it's nothing to worry about. However, if you start to notice…

Frequent energy crashes after mealsl, Strong sugar cravingsl, Shakiness when hungryl, Brain fog or fatigue

…these could indicate insulin resistance or reactive hypoglycemia. That's worth discussing with your doctor, because you could have prediabetes or another metabolic syndrome—and your doctor could help guide you in making the proper lifestyle adjustments to prevent any progression.

Learn more about tracking blood sugar levels at home and **over-the-counter glucose monitors** in the article "Benefits (or Not) of Tracking Blood Sugar" from our March 2026 issues. Scan this QR code to read the article



"Revenge Bedtime Procrastination"

By Dylan Roche

We've all been there: It's been a long day, you're exhausted, and you finally have some time to yourself. **Do you go to bed early or do you stay up just a little later to do a little bit of nothing?**

The responsible (i.e. healthy) choice would be to go to bed early, so you get plenty of sleep and feel refreshed the next day. But if you're like many people, you stay up past your bedtime—maybe even *way* past your bedtime—doing something mindless like scrolling your phone or streaming several episodes of a series.

There's a term for this habit: **bedtime procrastination**. People want to create time for themselves, so they procrastinate on bedtime the way they would on chores or other unwanted tasks. As with other forms of procrastination, people do it knowing full well it'll have negative consequences later.

In fact, the Sleep Foundation highlights the specific term *revenge* bedtime procrastination. That's because people who procrastinate on sleep often do it because they feel their daily responsibilities are encroaching on their personal time, and they want to reclaim it. The Cleveland Clinic notes that revenge bedtime procrastination often feels like self-care in the moment, and those who are most likely to engage in it are those who often must sacrifice control over their own time, such as caregiving parents or busy students.

PRIORITIZE SLEEP

Even if staying up an extra hour to scroll through social media feels like self-care, keep in mind: Sleep is one of the three pillars of good health, along with nutrition and exercise. Most adults need seven to nine hours of sleep. Sleep is important for warding off illness, regulating your emotions, and keeping your mind clear. Health risks of too little sleep include heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, stroke, and depression

STOP PROCRASTINATING

Tired of being tired? Stop being so vengeful—take these steps to cut back on the procrastination and start observing a healthy sleep schedule: Keep a log. For a week, write down what time you go to bed and how much sleep you get. You might be surprised—some people don't even realize how bad their procrastination is until they start paying attention. **Set a goal.** Start by being realistic. You don't have to aim for nine hours of sleep right away. Instead, set a small goal by telling yourself you'll go to bed 30 minutes earlier or limit yourself to one episode of a show. **Put your phone away.** Your phone is your biggest culprit of bedtime procrastination. Harvard Medical School reports procrastinators use their phone for 80 minutes before bed compared to 18 minutes for non-procrastinators. Making your bedroom a no-phone zone will make a huge difference. **Engage in quiet reflection.** Prioritize quantity over quality when it comes your bedtime wind-down. A short period of a mindful activity like yoga or journaling can be more rewarding than hours of mindless scrolling or streaming, plus it will help relax you for bed.



9 Myths About Good Hydration It's Time to Pour Out

By Dylan Roche

"Stay hydrated"

Is one of those bits of health wisdom that's as ubiquitous and longstanding as "eat your vegetables" or "move your body." But staying hydrated isn't always as simple as drinking plenty of water—and there are plenty of myths and misconceptions surrounding good hydration practices. Here are 9 healthy hydration tips you might've heard—but might want to reconsider.

"YOU NEED 8 GLASSES OF WATER A DAY."

For the longest time, people swore by the rule of 8 by 8: Eight 8-ounce glasses throughout the day were the secret to good hydration. The only problem? There's no scientific basis for that number.

Sure, it's a good guideline for most people, but your specific hydration needs are going to vary based on your body size, your diet, your physical activity levels, your environment, and your overall health. In other words, a 200-pound person exercising heavily in hot weather is going to have different hydration needs compared to a 120-pound person in the air-conditioning.

Plus, you have to remember that many of the foods you eat contain water, which counts to your daily hydration. Eating a juicy watermelon can be just as hydrating as a glass of water. Instead, focus on drinking water when you feel thirsty. For most healthy people, that's enough to meet hydration needs.

"IF YOU'RE THIRSTY, YOU'RE ALREADY DEHYDRATED."

You might be reluctant to let your sense of thirst guide your hydration needs because you've heart that being thirsty is a symptom of being hydrated. It's not. In fact, it's your body's physiological cue, according to science. That's why it's a good indicator.

If you're worried about dehydration, there are other symptoms you need to watch out for. Dizziness, rapid heart rate, and dark urine are all signs your fluid balance is off.

"CLEAR URINE MEANS PERFECT HYDRATION."

If dark urine means you're dehydrated, then it would only seem natural to aim for the opposite—you want to be peeing clear. But clear urine isn't the ideal. In fact, clear urine signals overhydration, and if you're consistently peeing clear, that's a sign you're taking in more fluids than you should. Overhydration dilutes your electrolytes, so it can be just as bad as dehydration.

Instead, you want your urine to be pale yellow, which indicates proper fluid balance.

"CAFFEINE DEHYDRATES YOU."

The science behind this one is a little bit confusing. Caffeine is a natural diuretic, which prompts your kidneys to flush excess sodium and water from your body. Therefore, if you consume a lot of caffeine, you're going to be flushing a lot of fluid from your body. However, your body can develop a tolerance to caffeine's diuretic effect. If you're regularly drinking a lot of tea and coffee, you've likely adapted fairly well and those caffeinated beverages will hydrate you as well as water would.

"YOU CAN'T DRINK TOO MUCH WATER."

Water is great for you, and it's hard to imagine having too much of a good thing. But there is such a thing as overhydration. Excess water intake can cause what's known as hyponatremia—dangerously low sodium levels. That's because your body has more fluid than it has sodium. This is something that's frequently seen with endurance athletes, who lose large amounts of sodium through their sweat and try to rehydrate with plain water. To stay properly hydrated, you need to monitor the amount of water you're drinking, and if you need to take in large amounts of fluid (such as you would during prolonged exercise), you should aim to take in electrolytes as well. A simple teaspoon of salt in your water bottle could make all the difference.

"SPORTS DRINKS ARE THE BEST WAY TO STAY HYDRATED."

Here's the catch about those electrolytes: You need them if you're losing a lot of fluid, such as through heavy sweating. But if you're not? Plain water will probably be sufficient for your hydration needs. Stick to sports beverages like Gatorade only when you're doing intense exercise for more than an hour or if you're in extreme conditions. Otherwise, you're just drinking a sugary beverage.

"COLD WATER HYDRATES YOU MORE THAN WARM WATER."

Cold water is super refreshing, especially on a hot day. That's why it can feel like cold water quinches your thirst better. And if it tastes better, that will likely encourage you to drink more of it. But your body doesn't absorb cold water any more efficiently than it does warm water. Hydration is going to depend on your total fluid intake, not the fluid's temperature.

"HYDRATION IS ABOUT DRINKING WATER."

Hydration isn't as much about drinking water as much as it is about maintaining fluid balance in your body—and yes, water is a big part of that. But you also need electrolytes—sodium, potassium, calcium, and magnesium, which your body can lose through sweating and need to be replaced in addition to water. Most people consume far more sodium (salt) than their body needs, and they don't consume enough potassium to balance it out. In addition to drinking plenty of water, be sure you're eating a nutritious diet; when your hydration needs are high, such as on a hot day or when you're exercising intensely, that's when you need supplemental electrolytes in the form of a sports drink.

"MORE WATER BOOSTS YOUR METABOLISM AND DETOXES YOUR BODY."

This one isn't as untrue as much as it's greatly exaggerated. Yes, drinking water will slightly increase the number of calories your body burns, and hydration is good for healthy digestion. Certain toxins do leave your body through your urine, but that detox process is a result of your liver and kidneys, not the fluid volume in your body. In general, adequate hydration supports all your body's processes—but don't count on it to be a miracle worker that sheds excess weight or flushes toxins.



What does good hydration actually look like? With all the myths and misconceptions about hydration, it's easy to lose sight of how simple it really needs to be. According to science, here are the best practices for maintaining the right fluid balance in your body: 1. Drink when you're thirsty 2. Increase your fluids when it's hot, you're sick, you're exercising, or you're pregnant 3. Consume hydrating foods like fruits and vegetables 4. Add electrolytes like salt when you've been sweating profusely 5. Aim for pale yellow urine, not clear

From Diet Culture to Nourishment Culture

By Dylan Roche



In the past, most people thought of healthy eating as being about what you *should eat* and what you *shouldn't eat*. There were foods that were good for you and foods that were bad for you. For a lot of people, the goal might have been to lose or at least maintain their weight.

That relationship with food is changing for many people, at the encouragement of dietitians and nutritionists who want them to banish "diet culture" and focus less on the ways food *hurts* them and more on the way food *helps* them.

REJECTING "DIET CULTURE"

When people talk about diet culture, it often looks like:

- **An emphasis on strict restriction, especially restricting calories or specific nutrients:** For example, avoiding all fats or carbohydrates even from nutrient-dense foods
- **A goal of weight loss or weight maintenance that feels unachievable:** For example, constantly worrying about losing 10 vanity pounds
- **Designating certain foods, food groups, or eating times as off limits or bad:** For example, no sugary treats, no snacking between meals, no dinner after 6 p.m.

For some people, this is confusing—these kinds of practices are healthy in theory, and something you might have been taught by your doctor. The nuance is in your mindset. If you have a healthy approach to this advice—great! The problem is when you find yourself constantly monitoring what you eat or worried about food to the point that it interferes with your mental health or your daily life.

"There is no flexibility in a diet mentality—it either is or isn't in your program, and this is not sustainable long term, which only creates unhealthy eating habits and yo-yo dieting, which is bad for your metabolism," says Shelley Balls, a registered dietitian and nutritionist.

SWITCHING YOUR MINDSET

In some ways, it's as simple as changing your mindset when it comes to healthy eating habits. "Viewing our eating habits as nourishing ourselves takes the negativity out of it," says Stacy Antos, a certified health coach and self-care strategist for women. "It's about eating food, noticing how it makes us feel, and choosing to focus mostly on what helps us feel good in our body, provide steady energy throughout the day, and may even contribute to weight loss if that's the goal."

Consciously focusing on hunger, fullness, and satisfaction can be difficult for someone who has always been guided by diet rules. However, this practice—often described as intuitive eating—can lead to better overall health:

- An observational study published in the peer-reviewed journal *Eating and Weight Disorders* in 2021 found intuitive eating is associated with glycemic control in type 2 diabetes.
- Similarly, a study published in the *Journal of Nutritional Education and Behavior* found adults who eat intuitively are likely to eat more fruits and vegetables.

Why? Consider this: Maybe it's the middle of an afternoon when you're feeling hungry but you're craving chips—realistically, you might know the chips won't fill you up, but avoiding the chips won't make the craving go away. So, what if you were to have a small portion of chips with 1) a dollop of hummus for fiber and healthy fats, along with 2) a string cheese for protein. That way, you get to enjoy the chips while also satisfying your hunger by making your snack more nutrient-dense. It balances want with need.

Nourishment first: Putting the emphasis on nourishment takes the emphasis off restriction. "A nourishment-focused approach focuses on what you can add to your plate instead of restriction," says Mel Spinella, a women's health dietitian. "Focusing on meals balanced with protein and fiber is key for feeling full and satisfied, energized, and overall more in control around food."

Good choices in the long term: Being too restrictive isn't sustainable. When you focus on nourishment, and giving yourself consistent nutrients throughout the day, you're more likely to continue making healthy choices. "I hear from clients all the time, 'I eat so well in the morning, but then everything falls apart at night,'" Spinella says. "This doesn't happen because the person 'failed' the diet, but rather hunger is a biological response to being too restrictive. Eating regular, balanced meals throughout the day can help keep hunger levels more steady."

FOCUS ON HEALTH, NOT WEIGHT

Many people make the mistake of telling themselves they want to be healthier, but what they really want is to lose weight. Losing weight does come with positive outcomes, but it can be a difficult goal. If the weight doesn't come off, it's easy to get discouraged. Instead, you can focus on other measurable outcomes that are more controllable with a nutritious diet.

For example: "I want to lower my blood sugar."
"I want to lower my blood pressure."
"I want to lower my cholesterol."
"I want to have the energy to train for a 5K."

Nutritious food is an integral part of all these goals—and as a bonus, you may lose weight while pursuing them. But even if the numbers on the scale don't move, you'll have the pride and satisfaction of knowing your other health metrics still improved.

CHOOSE TO FEED YOURSELF

Even while you're striving to have a better relationship with food, you may face days where you have negative body image—that's normal. Balls emphasizes these are days when you still need to eat. "Making the choice of 'I don't like the way my body looks today, but I'm going to nourish it anyways' with nutritious foods is a way healthier mentality than skipping meals," she says.

And when you understand all foods fit into a healthy diet, sometimes the healthiest thing you can do is let yourself enjoy a small indulgence. A small portion of your favorite dessert might not offer you a lot of nutrients, but it offers you a lot of pleasure—and a small portion in the context of an otherwise nutritious diet won't slow you down. As Antos puts it, "Nourishment comes from a place of knowing your body, choosing to mostly eat foods that make you feel good, and not shaming yourself if you choose something another person might consider 'bad.'"



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Photography by Laura Wiegmann

Shortcut to the Emerald Isle

By Mark Croatti

On a festive Friday night as St. Patrick's Day approached, my family entered Galway Bay Irish Restaurant and Pub, originally opened by Michael Galway and Anthony Clarke in 1998. The Maryland Avenue eatery welcomed us with a green and white façade adorned with the flags of Ireland and the United States and was pulsing with the jovial sounds of live Irish music. We were immediately greeted by their enchanting maître d' Armen Madirossian and seated in one of two spacious bars (which offers discounts during both Happy Hour, 3:30–6:30 p.m., and Late Night, 10–11 p.m.).

As our fabulous waitress Taylor arrived, Jameson distributors presented free samples! (This happens periodically). The first sample emanated a symphony of notes—toffee, cacao, vanilla, orange, apple, and pear—that crescendo to an oaky, silky smooth finish. The second was paired with ginger beer and a lime wedge, creating a bubbly, crisp, and refreshing libation.





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The first of our four starters was a deep vessel of savory **Pub Meatballs**—big, egg-sized orbs of tasty lamb bobbing in a thick, mouthwatering marinade made from Jameson Orange Whiskey, orange zest, and onions; we used a soup spoon to scoop them out to make sure that every bite was engulfed in this wonderful glaze. Next came the extremely overstuffed **Cabbage Wraps** featuring layers of Angus corned beef, champ mashed potatoes, and thin, buttery cabbage leaves rolled up in a footlong dumpling topped by julienne carrots and lathered with a tangy, golden, Irish whole grain mustard sauce.

A rectangular tray of golf ball-sized **Mini Crab Cakes** followed, one for each of us—delightfully crackly on the outside yet deliciously moist and accentuated by a notably creamy tartar sauce. "We pride ourselves in the fact that even though we're an Irish restaurant, our back-fin-only crab cakes are as good as any you'll ever find," Assistant Manager Kyle Smith told me. The inventive **Shepherd's Pie Mac & Cheese** was a culinary sensation—a perfect blend of ground beef, mashed potatoes, peas, carrots, and chewy shell pasta sealed by a circular blanket of melted white cheddar cheese and a parmesan sprinkling.

For our entrées, my oldest child chose the **Tavern Lamb Cheese Steak**. A toasted, flaky roll brushed with a sharp, garlic herb spread was loaded with thinly sliced, succulent leg of lamb smothered in grilled, diced onions, and saturated in gooey mass of mild provolone cheese. My younger son picked the **Beef Stew,** accompanied by Irish soda bread, on the Kids Menu. An ample helping of meaty cubes was slow-cooked with minced onions and chopped carrots into a dense, hearty broth ladled into a cavernous bowl and crowned with a softball-sized mound of airy mashed potatoes. We added an order of **Cheese Fries**—Irish "chips" under a molten, shredded Colby and Jack coating. Taylor brought a ramekin of traditional Irish curry dip that enhanced the fries.

Photography by Laura Wiegmann









Before our main courses, my wife and I shared the incredibly fresh **Roasted Beet Salad**. Reddish-purple beetroot bulbs are baked at a high temperature, cut into immense pyramid-shaped chunks, and tossed with a delectable swirl of assorted greens, ripe mandarin oranges, and crunchy walnuts—all covered by a heaping pile of robust goat cheese and a fruity, golden balsamic vinaigrette.

My dinner selection was a reliable Irish staple and a city of Galway classic—the incomparable **Bangers and Mash**, an allotment of expansive, curvy, plump, and burly sausages perched upon a mountain of signature mashed potatoes and immersed in a dark brown, scrumptious, ale-based onion gravy. She went with the **Jameson Steak Tips**. On one side of the dish were numerous slabs of juicy, Angus tenderloin, expertly seared medium with a slightly pink interior—cloaked in an astounding, bronze-colored whiskey peppercorn cream sauce over a fluffy mashed potato tower; on the other side sat a collection of steamed broccoli, yellow squash, green zucchini, and ring-shaped carrots.

For dessert, the massive scoops of **Vanilla Ice Cream** listed on the inexpensive Kids Menu electrified the boys while their parents jointly consumed the **Irish Crème Chocolate Mousse**, an impressively rich delicacy attempting to hide under a gigantic dollop of whipped topping. I then noticed a sign encouraging patrons to ask for a free sample of the legendary alcoholic Egg Nog, imported from Ireland, which our host Armen enthusiastically brought to the table.

This heavenly, satiny concoction—emanating hints of nutmeg, cinnamon, and cloves—nicely set up one final Irish indulgence: **Guinness Chocolate Cake With Egg Nog Ice Cream**, a creative treat boasting a generous slice of crumbly chocolate confection and its magnificent partner—a non-alcoholic, Maryland-churned, gelato-style version of their Egg Nog that we all thoroughly enjoyed. There was simply no better way to conclude this captivating rediscovery of Ireland's magical appeal, right here in Annapolis at Galway Bay Irish Restaurant & Pub.

Mark Croatti has worked all over the country from Los Angeles to Washington, D.C. as a caterer, prep cook, and food server at both specialty restaurants and large chains, including preparing meals for major figures in the entertainment industry and professional sports.



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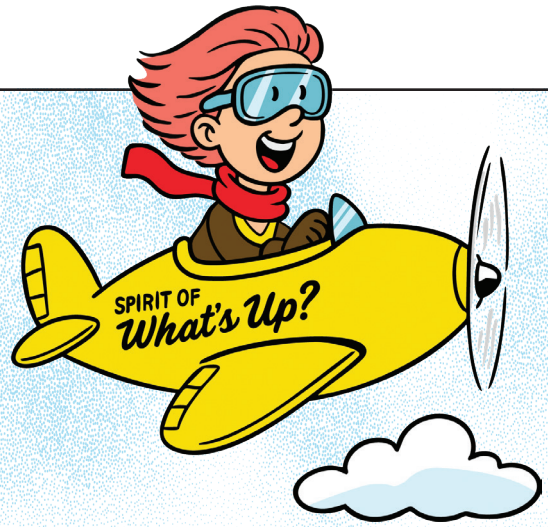

Where's Wilma?



FIND WILMA AND WIN!

Our zippy, high-flying mascot Wilma is whirling around the Chesapeake Bay region in search of the very best shops, services, and restaurants. She won't have to go far though because she has the June issue of *What's Up? Annapolis* magazine, which features the *Best of Annapolis* winners list! So, where will she decide to go? 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 Lynne C. of Severna Park, who won a $50 gift certificate to a local business.

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Entries must be received by June 30, 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

Maryland's 10th Poet Laureate, Grace Cavalieri is the author of 26 plays and 28 collections of her poems. Grace's unparalleled skill as an interviewer has been honed over the nearly 50 years interviewing every U.S. Poet Laureate and other renowned poets for her radio/podcast *The Poet & the Poem* from the Library of Congress. Here is her poem for What's Up? Media.—**JANICE F. BOOTH**

SIMPLE ACTS

It was getting in a hot car
and driving up the bright street
turning left

I think it was the thought of
cooking a turkey for the family

and the children looking friendly
climbing off the school bus

It was coffee by the pool
a long red dress
the plans for a wedding

It was the bird staying still on the
branch long enough to see.

GRACE CAVALIERI

From OWNING THE NOT SO DISTANT WORLD (Blue Light Press)



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