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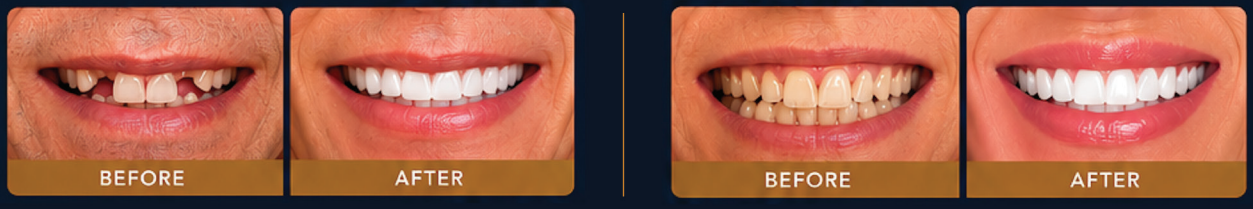


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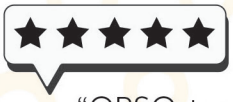
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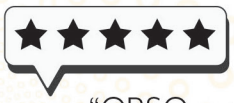
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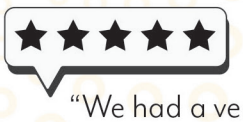
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What's Up? Annapolis online at whatsupmag.com.
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The need goes beyond personal storage. Garage spaces, land, and larger areas can also be used for heavy equipment, tractor trailers, commercial vehicles, and other business needs. Whether you need space for a few months or something more permanent, the goal is to make finding the right space simple, flexible, and purposeful because sometimes you don't need to buy more property.

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Laura Cooper, Founder

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2027 CALL FOR ENTRIES!

What's Up? Media is seeking the next class of Up & Coming Lawyers to honor in 2027! We are calling upon local law firms practicing in the Chesapeake Bay region to nominate exemplary lawyers in the early stages of their legal career.

We are currently accepting nominations from your firm's management of young, up and coming lawyers. For editorial consideration, management must complete an online form nominating an employed lawyer within your firm that is 40 years and/or younger by the deadline of December 31st. Nomination forms are online here:

whatsupmag.com/upandcominglawyers2027

Each firm may nominate up to 3 lawyers in this unique opportunity to showcase the young talent within your organization!

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How has the role of a CFP® professional changed over the past five years?

The most significant change has been the growing importance of behavioral finance. A CFP® professional must not only create a technically sound financial plan but also understand the emotions, experiences, and biases that affect whether a client can follow it. Financial decisions are rarely based on numbers alone.

Fear during market declines, overconfidence during strong markets, family dynamics, and deeply rooted beliefs about money influence choices. Our role is to recognize these behaviors, communicate, and help clients avoid emotional decisions that could undermine their long-term goals.

Today's CFP® professional is both a financial strategist and a behavioral coach, helping clients stay disciplined and move forward with confidence.

What is one of the biggest financial mistakes that people make, and how do you guide them?

One of the biggest mistakes is making important decisions based on incomplete information or advice never intended for someone's circumstances. AI and online resources can be useful starting points, but they cannot fully account for personal goals, family situations, taxes, or comfort with risk.

We help clients separate meaningful guidance from the noise, see how each decision fits into their financial life, and avoid choices driven by fear, emotion, or the latest headline. By bringing clarity and perspective, we help them make informed decisions.

What is one of the most rewarding success stories you've experienced with a client?

One that stands out involves a single mother of two daughters who went through a divorce and started a new career with the federal government. Together, we created a financial plan to support her next chapter. Through years of careful planning, disciplined saving, and personal sacrifice, she prepared for retirement, provided a college education for her daughters, and helped with her grandsons' education.

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Annapolis Town Center Tree Lighting

PG. 24



BAY BRIDGE RUN 2026

Take in one of Maryland's most iconic views on foot during the Bay Bridge Run on November 8th, beginning at 8 a.m. The annual 10K welcomes runners and walkers to cross the eastbound span of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge, with 4.35 miles of the 6.2-mile course stretching over the water and reaching 186 feet at its highest point. Along the way, participants can take in sweeping views of the Chesapeake Bay, sailboats, and passing ships during the one day each year the bridge opens to pedestrian traffic. After crossing the finish line, keep the celebration going with a free post-race concert. More info: thebaybridgerun.com

TASTINGS & TUNES - WINE & BEER FEST ON WEST

Sample your way through downtown Annapolis during Tastings & Tunes – Wine & Beer Fest on West on November 14th from 1 to 4 p.m. along West Street. The afternoon tasting festival will feature samples from eight local restaurants alongside a selection of 20 regional wines and craft beers. Live music will add to the atmosphere as guests sip, sample, and enjoy an afternoon in the heart of downtown Annapolis. More info: iwsannapolis.com





Photo by Andrew Kelly

The Great Annapolis Gingerbread Houses Contest

Celebrate a sweet Annapolis holiday tradition with The Great Annapolis Gingerbread Houses Contest, beginning November 22nd. Bakers and decorators can show off their creativity with festive gingerbread creations, which will be displayed at the Annapolis Visitor Center on West Street while the public votes for their favorites through December 6th. Winners will be announced during the Annapolis Chocolate Binge Festival, with the winning houses remaining on display into January. Those interested in entering must register by November 18th. More info: iwsannapolis.com



Photo by Jeff Jackson

FALL GARDEN RAMBLE AT HISTORIC LONDON TOWN & GARDENS

Enjoy an autumn evening after hours at Historic London Town & Gardens during the Fall Garden Ramble on November 4th from 6 to 8 p.m. Stroll through the gardens as Danny Stewart, Justin Heath, and members of The Folk Villains provide live folk music, and take in seasonal highlights including blooming osmanthus and witch hazel. Themed cocktails will be available for purchase throughout the evening. This event is for guests ages 21 and older, with tickets priced at $25 for London Town members and $30 for non-members. More info: historiclondontown.org



Festival of Trees 2026

Celebrate the start of the holiday season at the Festival of Trees, running November 28th through December 1st at The Tidewater Inn in Easton. This annual community tradition brings together beautifully decorated holiday trees and live acoustic music while raising awareness and support for hospice care in Talbot County. Organized by Friends of Hospice, the festival helps fund hospice services for terminally ill patients and their families throughout the community. Admission is $10 for adults, $5 for children ages 6–12, and free for children 5 and younger. More info: festival-of-trees.org







Photo by KRR Photography, LTD

CASABLANCA GALA - HOPE BLOOMS

Celebrate 29 years of community support and advocacy at the CASAblanca Gala – Hope Blooms on November 7th from 6 to 11 p.m. at The Westin Annapolis. This elegant black-tie evening will feature fine dining, dancing, and exciting auctions while raising support for CASA's work advocating for children in the community. Centered around the theme "When Watered, Every Child Blossoms," the gala brings supporters together for a memorable evening dedicated to making a difference in the lives of children. Tickets are $250 per person. More info: aacasa.org

Fish For A Cure

Celebrate a season of fishing, fundraising, and community impact at Fish For A Cure's shore party on November 7th from 5 to 9:30 p.m. at Safe Harbor Annapolis. The evening will feature dinner, music, dancing, and the announcement of the Tournament and Paul C. Dettor Captain's Challenge winners. More than a celebration on the waterfront, the event raises critical funds to support the Cancer Survivorship Program at Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center and the patients and families it serves. More info: fishforacure.org





ANNAPOLIS TOWN CENTER TREE LIGHTING

Celebrate the start of the holiday season at the Annapolis Town Center Tree Lighting on November 19th from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. at Annapolis Town Center. Gather with the community for an evening centered around the lighting of the holiday tree and the festive atmosphere that comes with this annual seasonal tradition. More info: greaterannapolisballet.org



Girls Night Out

Kick off the holiday season with Girls Night Out at Homestead Gardens in Davidsonville on November 18th from 5 to 8 p.m. Stroll through a holiday wonderland featuring 17 uniquely themed Christmas trees while gathering decorating inspiration and shopping for seasonal décor and gifts. Guests can sip and sample festive treats while browsing and receive 25 percent off their purchases, with some exclusions. Gather your friends for an evening of holiday shopping, seasonal displays, and plenty of festive cheer. More info: homesteadgardens.com

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& Woodinville whiskey
4-7pm Atlas Brewing

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20th
3:30-6:30pm – Mark's Pick Wines,
Brown Forman Bottle Etching &
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4-7pm New Trail Tap Takeover

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23rd
3:30-6:30pm – French 75 Tasting
with Josh & Gray Whale

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27th
Black Friday Specials
12-6pm – All Store Bottle Etching
3-6pm Great Lakes Brewing

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HOLIDAY ARTISAN MARKET

Get a head start on holiday shopping at the 14th annual Holiday Artisan Market at Quiet Waters Park, beginning November 19th. The seasonal show and sale brings together regional artists offering an assortment of handmade gifts, including ceramics, woodworking, fused glass, textiles, paintings, photography, paper arts, and more. Visitors can browse one-of-a-kind pieces throughout the Galleries at Quiet Waters Park and take purchased items home the same day, making it an easy way to find locally made gifts for the holiday season. More info: fqwp.org

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First Sunday Arts Festival

Celebrate one final First Sunday Arts Festival of the season on November 1st from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. along West Street, Calvert Street, and People's Park in downtown Annapolis. The season-ending festival brings together more than 150 artisans and vendors showcasing handmade art and creative goods, alongside live performances from local musicians on multiple stages and plenty of local food to enjoy. Stroll the streets, shop from local makers, and soak up the lively downtown atmosphere one last time before this beloved monthly avrts festival wraps up its 2026 season. More info: iwsannapolis.com

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THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE

Gilbert and Sullivan's classic comic opera The Pirates of Penzance sets sail at Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts on November 1st from 3 to 5 p.m. Annapolis Opera's lively production follows young Frederic as he prepares to leave his apprenticeship with a band of pirates and falls for Mabel, the daughter of the Major-General. When an unexpected twist threatens both his freedom and newfound romance, a spirited adventure unfolds filled with mischief, mistaken identity, humor, and plenty of swashbuckling fun. Tickets range from $28 to $120, with student ticketing also available. More info: marylandhall.org

MRE TUG OF WAR VS THE WORLD 2026!!

The Maritime Republic of Eastport takes on "The World" once again during its legendary Tug of War on November 7th, beginning at noon along Second Street in Eastport. Born in 1997 after the temporary closure of the Spa Creek Bridge inspired Eastport residents to jokingly secede from Annapolis, the tradition has grown into a spirited annual showdown featuring a tug-of-war across the water. The event celebrates the playful rivalry between Eastport and Annapolis while bringing the community together for one of the city's most distinctive maritime traditions. Proceeds benefit local charitable organizations, with the Maritime Republic of Eastport raising more than $500,000 for the community to date. More info: themre.org





Waterfowl Festival 2026

Celebrate the wildlife, art, and heritage of the Eastern Shore at the annual Waterfowl Festival, returning to Easton November 13th–15th. Spread across more than a dozen venues throughout town, the three-day tradition features wildlife art from renowned artists, retriever demonstrations, Dock Dogs competitions, duck and goose calling contests, street musicians, unique vendors, and plenty of Eastern Shore food. Nearly 35,000 attendees gather each year to experience the festival while supporting its longstanding conservation mission. Since its founding in 1971, the festival has contributed more than $6 million to environmental, conservation, and education projects across the Delmarva Peninsula. More info: waterfowlfestival.org

Grand Illumination

Kick off the holiday season in downtown Annapolis at the annual Grand Illumination on November 29th, beginning at 3 p.m. in Market Space near the Annapolis Market House and City Dock. The free community celebration will feature live holiday performances from local groups and dance academies, children's activities, and a festive arrival by Santa, Mrs. Claus, and Elfie aboard a fire truck. The celebration culminates with the official countdown and lighting of the downtown Christmas tree at approximately 5:15 p.m., filling the heart of Annapolis with holiday cheer. More info: downtownannapolispartnership.org





SIP & SAVOR: A TASTE OF PRINCE GEORGE'S

Savor the flavors of Prince George's County during Sip & Savor: A Taste of Prince George's on November 15th from 1 to 4 p.m. at the historic Newton White Mansion in Bowie. Guests can enjoy savory and sweet dishes from local chefs and caterers, cocktails and mocktails, live music, and interactive experiences in a picturesque setting. The event also highlights the work of Hospice of the Chesapeake, with proceeds supporting care, counseling, and specialized programs for patients and families throughout Prince George's County. More info: hospicechesapeake.org

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Through Cultural Connections, World Artists Experiences Builds Bridges

By Carol Denny

For nearly 25 years, an all-volunteer organization based in Arnold has brought a dazzling array of global cultures to Maryland. Partnering with embassies from Latin America, the Middle East, Asia, Africa, Europe, and China, World Artists Experiences (WAE) has brought visiting artists and local audiences together in towns across the state.

WAE has featured hundreds of free musical performances: guitarists from Brazil, Masai choirs from Africa, opera singers from China, vocal music from Syria, the throat singers of Mongolia, and more. In addition, it's presented scores of dancers, poets, filmmakers, puppeteers, and comedians—a kaleidoscope of entertainment.

During the 2025–26 season, WAE organized and presented more than 20 such events at auditoriums, churches, libraries, and other local venues, all of them offered at no cost. "Money was never our goal," explains founder Betty McGinnis. "Everything we do is really to create a dialogue through art. It's citizen diplomacy, and we've done it in a very humble way."

While in the Annapolis area, the artists stay with host families, which adds a special warmth to the exchanges. "For the visiting artists, it's an opportunity to get to know our people and our country," McGinnis points out. "A big priority is to offer them experiences right here in our community." That might include outings on the Chesapeake Bay, visits to the Banneker- Douglass-Tubman Museum, or trips to a local apple orchard.

In August of this year, for example, WAE hosted Magic Strings, a group of young violinists from Estonia. The Maryland capital was a natural stop, chosen because it's a sister city to Estonia's capital, Tallinn. During their one week tour, the youngsters, aged 9–17, played for Mayor Jared Littmann at City Hall ("the acoustics were really marvelous," McGinnis says), met the Maryland Deputy Secretary of State, squeezed in a visit to a water park, and attended potluck dinners. In addition to Annapolis, the musicians performed in Baltimore, Westminster, and Cumberland.



World Artists Experiences founder Betty McGinnis, second from right, with members of the Bratislava Boys Choir.

Photos courtesy World Artists Experiences

McGinnis says that WAE events are currently attracting the largest crowds they've seen since the pandemic. In addition to its live performances, the group also presents multi-week film festivals, and offers online events like 'Festivals of Harmony' that take viewers to a particular country to explore its art and culture.

WAE sets high standards for its performances, emphasizing personal connections. It's careful to keep politics separate from its programs and focus on shared values. But occasionally, events in the real world intervene.

"Last March, we scheduled 'The Soul of Persia,' a program by Iranian musicians now living in North America, that took place the day after the war started," McGinnis recalls. "At the conclusion of the performance, we lit candles. All the musicians and their families came to dinner afterwards, and we talked and talked. We asked each other, what is going to happen? It was very powerful."

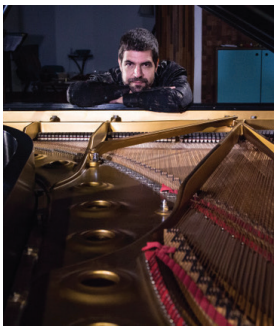
Though avoiding political issues, WAE doesn't shy away from depictions of real life. McGinnis remembers the screening of a contemporary film from Bangladesh, which contained scenes of violence. After consideration, the team decided it reflected the reality of conditions in that country and went ahead with the showing, adding a discussion period afterwards. "That was one of our most memorable programs," she says.

McGinnis has observed the remarkable effects that a live connection to the arts can spark. "At a WAE concert of Brazilian music in Baltimore, a family that had emigrated from Brazil not long before brought their young son to listen. The child hadn't spoken since they had moved to the United States, and his teachers said they had never seen him smile. And then, as the music reached him, he began to smile and respond, and he's continued to talk ever since."

More than 200 active volunteers power WAE's operations, providing not only logistical assistance, but the personal touches that are so meaningful for the visiting artists. "We have our Ambassador Teams working in every area of the state—we absolutely couldn't do it without them," McGinnis says. "People really give of themselves. They connect with the host families, assist with transporting the artists, and make sure dietary restrictions are accommodated. They even take visitors shopping."







Performances by visiting artists have included puppetry, piano, guitars, and string trios.



A WAE presentation of The Sounds of Persia coincided with the start of the war with Iran.

Despite WAE's long-running success in sparking cultural dialogue, the shrinking pool of funding available for the arts is a constant challenge. The organization depends on voluntary contributions at the door, gifts from individual donors, grants from the Arts Council of Anne Arundel County and family foundations, and support from several international firms. In-kind services constitute a large portion of the budget.

"One thing we consistently hear from the embassies is that this kind of exchange is so important—the only way for things to become settled in today's world," McGinnis notes. Through its programs, World Artists Experiences has created a community that believes art and culture can connect people everywhere.

To learn more about World Artists Experiences and its upcoming schedule, visit worldartists.org or email wae@comcast.net.

Blue Ribbon Bash

On May 16, The Blue Ribbon Project invited guests to an evening of celebration, community, and philanthropy at its annual Blue Ribbon Bash, benefiting local children and young adults impacted by abuse, neglect, and foster care. Held at the Severna Park Elks Lodge, the adults-only event featured a full dinner with hors d'oeuvres and dessert, drinks, live music by Pretty Big Deal, dancing, and an online silent auction. Learn more at blueribbonproject.org.

1. Marit and Dr. Sean Duffy **2.** Subaru's Billy Sadtler addresses the crowd **3.** Rani Ruby and Dawn Orso **4.** Taylor Pazienza, Pat Keffer, Joanne Bennett, Marj Sparer, Taylor Pyles, Corie Jones, Christine Meulemans, Stacey Boone, and Linda Rohrbaugh **5.** Taylor Pyles (Blue Ribbon Founder/CEO) speaks **6.** (Front) Nicolette Thompson, Leslie Shadrick, Kirk Shadrick, (Back) Alonna Sanchez, Jasmine Dixon, April Hounshell, Taylor Samuels **7.** Ant and Sue Steward with Dawn and David Orso **8.** Stacey Boone, Christine Meulemans, Leigh Mariassy, Laura Edwards, Corie Jones


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For the Love of the Library

On September 18, the Anne Arundel County Public Library Foundation invited library supporters and book lovers to the annual fundraiser "For the Love of the Library"—an evening of food, fun and philanthropy. Held at the Michael E. Busch Annapolis Library, the cocktail-style celebration featured catering by Palate Pleasers, an open bar with a signature cocktail and mocktail, celebrity bartenders, library-themed activities, wine and whiskey pulls, and a live auction. Learn more a aacpl.net/foundation.

1. Guests kick up their heels and celebrate the library **2.** Melanie Miller, County Executive Steuart Pittman and Cindy Busch **3.** Local author and celebrity bartender Nikki Payne pours a libation **4.** Library Foundation President Jane Campbell Chambliss and Ashley Briggs **5.** Sally Ehrle and library staff Noelle and Ember play with sensory manipulatives **6.** Library Foundation Directors Martha Baxall, Tessie Ballard and Katie Cooke **7.** Board of Trustee Member Noah Comet and others bid on auction items **8.** Hall Chaney, Library Foundation Director Chelsea Chaney, Meghan and Matt Ullman

Photographs courtesy Anne Arundel County Public Library and Kees Bucca

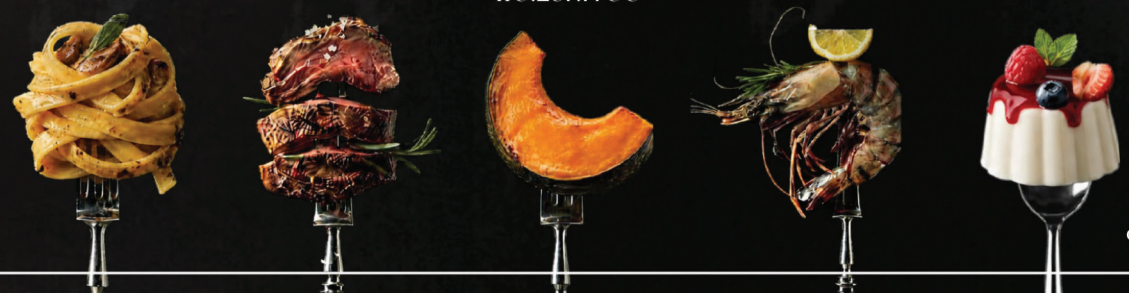
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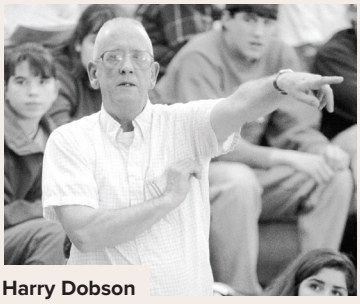
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Lyndsey Boswell



Brian Burlace


Harry Dobson



Pat Owen


Bill Wagner


John Spinnenweber

County to Induct 2026 Class Into Sports Hall of Fame

The Anne Arundel County Sports Hall of Fame recently announced its 2026 induction class consisting of six candidates. Being enshrined this year as Hall of Fame selections are: Lyndsey Boswell (women's lacrosse), Brian Burlace (men's lacrosse), Harry Dobson (girls' basketball coach), Pat Owen (men's golf), and Bill Wagner (sports media personality). John Spinnenweber will be inducted as recipient of the Bernie Walter Memorial Award for longtime, exemplary service to Anne Arundel County athletics. "We are very excited about this year's induction class, which is diverse and includes six very deserving individuals," Anne Arundel County Sports Hall of Fame president Dave Cassard says. "We are looking forward to welcoming a group of inductees whose tremendous accomplishments stood out to the members of our Board of Directors that vote on this honor." Boswell, Burlace, Dobson, Owen, Wagner, and Spinnenweber will be formally enshrined during the 35th annual Anne Arundel County Sports Hall of Fame induction banquet, being held Thursday, November 12, at the DoubleTree Hotel off Riva Road in Annapolis. Learn more about the Anne Arundel County Sports Hall of Fame and this year's induction banquet at aacshof.org.

ARNOLD FLORIST WINS NATIONAL AWARD

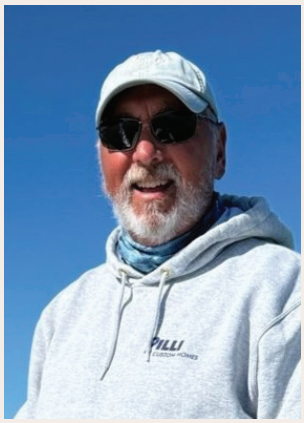
Christine Guenther (pictured on left), owner of WildFlower Stem & Sundry in Arnold, has been named a recipient of the Society of American Florists' (SAF) 2026 Next Gen Rising Star Award. Guenther received the honor on August 20th at the Stars of the Industry Awards Ceremony, held during SAF's 141st annual convention in Amelia Island, Florida. Erin Bruno (pictured right) of McNamara Florist in Indianapolis also won the award this year. The Rising Star Award recognizes young floral professionals who demonstrate creativity, innovation, tenacity, and leadership in their work, along with the potential to make a lasting, positive impact on the floral industry. Guenther purchased her first flower shop with no prior industry experience in 2016. Since then, it has grown into what many know and love, WildFlower Stem & Sundry, a thriving three-location business with more than 30 employees. Under her leadership, the company has expanded into event and corporate work. Learn more at wildflowermd.com.





CHESAPEAKE YOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ANNOUNCES NEW LEADERSHIP

As the Chesapeake Youth Symphony Orchestra (CYSO) enters its 37th season, it announced new Board leadership, a renewed strategic vision, and a new rehearsal home designed to strengthen the student experience for young musicians throughout the region (relocating its weekly rehearsals to Annapolis Area Christian School in Severn). At its recent Board Retreat, CYSO's Board of Directors reaffirmed the organization's commitment to expanding educational opportunities, community engagement, and student leadership initiatives. As part of this vision, the Board elected Chie Smith as President of the Board of Directors. Smith is an internationally trained pianist and educator with more than 20 years of experience in music education and performance in both Japan and the United States. She currently serves as Music Director for the Keisho Washington Japanese Heritage Center and as a piano instructor through the Anne Arundel County Public Schools Guest Artist Program at Broadneck High School. "Chie is an exceptional educator and leader whose passion for young musicians aligns perfectly with the direction of our organization," says Dane Krich, Executive Director of the Chesapeake Youth Symphony Orchestra. "As we continue to grow, our focus is not simply on increasing enrollment, but on creating an experience where students develop as musicians, leaders, and people. Chie shares that vision completely." Learn more at cysomusic.org.



Bayview Builders Welcomes Guy Pilli in Advisory Role

Bayview Builders recently announced that Guy Pilli, longtime leader of Pilli Custom Homes and a widely respected name in custom homebuilding, will be joining Bayview Builders in an advisory role. For decades, Pilli has been known for a highly personal, hands-on approach to homebuilding and for the trust he has earned among clients, architects, craftspeople, and trade partners. As he enters the next chapter of his career, he is formally transitioning that legacy to Bayview Builders. In his new role, Pilli will serve as a brand ambassador for quality, provide guidance on means and methods, support training and mentorship for Bayview team members, and continue to foster relationships and referrals across his longstanding network. "Guy has built a remarkable reputation through craftsmanship, integrity, and a personal commitment to every project," says Dave Carlisle, President of Bayview Builders. "We are honored to welcome him to Bayview in a role that allows his experience and relationships to continue making an impact. We are excited to be carrying forward a legacy of quality in a way that respects what he has built." Learn more at bayviewbuildersmd.com.

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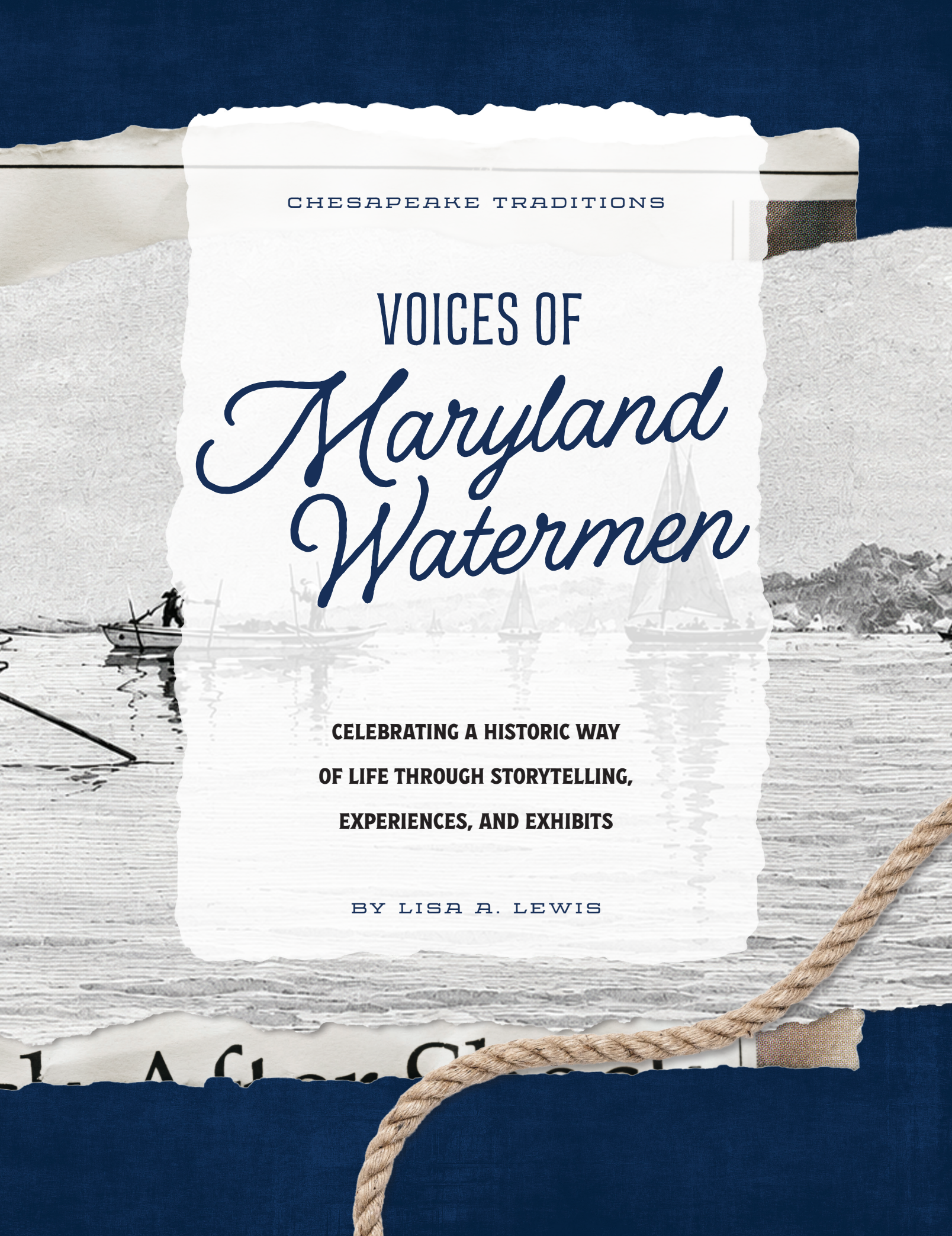
COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY ANNOUNCES LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

The Anne Arundel County Community Action Agency, Inc. (AACCAA), Anne Arundel County's designated anti-poverty agency, recently announced the retirement of Chief Executive Officer Dr. Charlestine R. Fairley and the appointment of Berneitha McNair as the agency's new Chief Executive Officer. Dr. Fairley concludes a distinguished tenure marked by sustained growth in the agency's capacity to serve individuals and families across Anne Arundel County. The Board of Directors extends its deep gratitude for her vision, integrity, and years of dedicated service. McNair brings more than 30 years of executive leadership experience in the nonprofit sector and Community Action network. Throughout her career, she has strengthened organizations, advanced innovative solutions to address poverty, and improved outcomes for individuals, families, and communities. She assumes leadership of the agency's full portfolio of federal, state, local, and foundation-funded programs, including those operated under the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). "It is an honor to serve as Chief Executive Officer of Anne Arundel County Community Action Agency," McNair says. "Community Action has been my life's work, and I am committed to building upon the agency's strong foundation while working collaboratively with our Board of Directors, employees, community partners, funders, and the residents we serve." Learn more aaccaa.info.









CHESAPEAKE TRADITIONS

VOICES OF *Maryland Watermen*

CELEBRATING A HISTORIC WAY OF LIFE THROUGH STORYTELLING, EXPERIENCES, AND EXHIBITS

BY LISA A. LEWIS

A fifth-generation waterman, Captain Tyrone Meredith wakes up at 4 a.m. to prepare for his day. By 5 a.m., he arrives at Wells Cove Public Landing in Grasonville, checks the engines on his headboat, *Island Queen II*, and waits for his fishing charter guests. An independent charter captain, Meredith has offered daily fishing trips in various locations on the Eastern Shore for more than 40 years. And he couldn't be happier.

"I love what I do," Meredith says. "I enjoy being on the water, driving my boat, meeting new people, and seeing them have fun while they fish. If they have never been fishing before, I give them some tips. Sometimes I even get to meet the children of guests who I took out on the boat several years ago when they were kids. Being a charter boat captain is a nice way to make a living, and I lead a pleasant life on Kent Island."





Captain Tyrone Meredith has been an independent charter captain on the Eastern Shore for more than 40 years, offering daily fishing trips. Photographs courtesy Captain Tyrone Charters.





Meredith started going out on a boat when he was six years old as a mate for his father, the late Captain Eldridge Meredith, the 101st Admiral of the Chesapeake Bay. By age 12, he was crabbing commercially with his brother, catching crabs on the trotline to take to market. As a teenager, Meredith oystered in the winter before obtaining his captain's license and making the transition to operating fishing charters.

Being a waterman is in Meredith's blood, and he grew up in the business. His great-great grandfather came to Kent Island in 1867—making a living oystering in the winter and crabbing in the summer. And the way of life has been passed down through the generations, establishing a proud family tradition.

"Every aspect of life is affected by where land and water meet," says Jen Dolde, director of curatorial affairs and exhibitions at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum (CBMM). "Watermen developed their knowledge of the water, built it over generations, and passed it down. This folk knowledge can't be obtained from books; it's established through shared stories and cultural practices.

"It's important to understand the history of watermen and preserve their long-standing traditions. They were able to adapt, which is why their way of life survived. A key way to preserve their history and its impact on our heritage is through storytelling."

"IT'S IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND THE HISTORY OF WATERMEN AND PRESERVE THEIR LONG-STANDING TRADITIONS. THEY WERE ABLE TO ADAPT, WHICH IS WHY THEIR WAY OF LIFE SURVIVED."

Whether members of the community attend a panel discussion, watch a documentary, take a watermen heritage tour, visit museum exhibits, or attend a festival, Maryland offers a variety of opportunities to engage in storytelling as a means of preserving the watermen's way of life.



Watermen's Story Swap

Gone are the days when traditional watermen's boats filled the Bay. Although the way of life has not vanished, it has significantly diminished. Today, their numbers may be smaller than in the past, but traditional watermen still make their living harvesting the bounty of the Bay and utilizing skills that have been passed down through the generations.

In an effort to preserve the oral histories of watermen, CBMM presents Watermen's Story Swap, an event that offers local watermen the opportunity to share their personal experiences with a panel of other watermen. Hosted by local author and emcee Brent Lewis, the event educates the public by providing firsthand accounts of watermen's day-to-day lives.

"When Brent asked me to participate in Watermen's Story Swap, I thought it would be a great way to share my experiences working on the water and hear other panel members' stories," Meredith says. "It's important for the public to know what watermen did and that they're still doing it today."

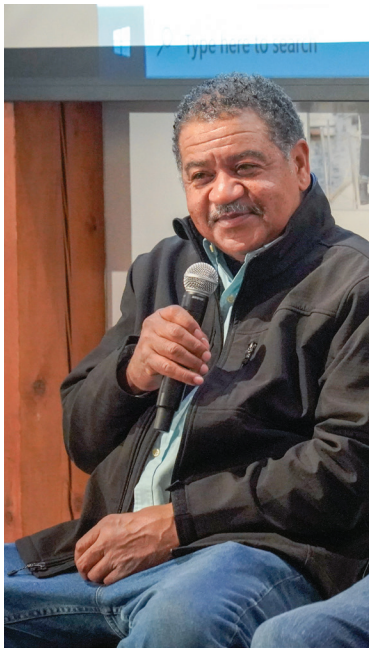
A natural storyteller, Meredith is an ideal fit for the story swap. He was recently featured in a highly acclaimed Maryland Public Television (MPT) documentary, *Water's Edge: Black Watermen of the Chesapeake*, which premiered April 17, 2023.

The film, which "chronicles unsung Marylanders who revolutionized an industry, dreamed beyond their circumstances, and continue to keep their traditions alive today," won a regional Emmy Award at the 66th Capital Emmy Awards in June 2024 and multiple Telly Awards in 2025.

During CBMM's panel events, Meredith enjoys sharing stories about how he and his brother would go crabbing early in the morning when they were kids and catch bushels of crabs. Since they were too young to drive, they had to find someone to pick them up, so they could take the crabs to market.

Meredith also talks about how times have changed and reflects on the history of Black watermen and how their numbers have declined.

"When I was growing up, there were quite a few Black watermen, and in Kent Island, it was a way of life," Meredith recalls. "Today, the average age of Black watermen is 60 years old, and there are only about a dozen or so still actively working. The younger generation doesn't want to pursue the way of life. It's very expensive to buy a boat and pay for its upkeep. For many young people, it's just easier to get a job."





Watermen's Story Swap was held in February 2026 at Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in St. Michaels. The event brought together several local watermen and women to share their experiences of working the water. Photographs courtesy CBMM.



Photograph by Jay Fleming

Captain Jeff Harrison, a fifth-generation waterman and the president of Talbot Watermen Association, also participates in Watermen's Story Swap on a regular basis. A lifelong resident of Tilghman Island, he started fishing with his grandfather when he was nine years old. When he was still very young, he and his brother started a soft crab business. And by age 17, Harrison was oystering with his father during the winters.

Harrison advocates strongly on behalf of traditional watermen. While some watermen have continued the family tradition, others born into the way of life have sought other employment due to the challenges of making a living. Since modern watermen face obstacles that their predecessors didn't encounter, such as environmental issues, climate change, strict regulations and catch limits, aquaculture, and economic pressure, entering the trade is difficult for the younger generation.





Photographs by Robin Harrison

"Things are changing, and it's been really tough," Harrison says. "Being a waterman is deep in my bloodline, and I have three sons. But they didn't pursue it as a career. So, I am the last of the watermen in my family. My grandson loves the water, but he is still very young.

"The people working on the water are older now, so their stories will be lost if we don't share them. Watermen's Story Swap is a great opportunity to give watermen a voice, allowing us to share our stories and keep them alive for future generations."

> "THE PEOPLE WORKING ON THE WATER ARE OLDER NOW, SO THEIR STORIES WILL BE LOST IF WE DON'T SHARE THEM."

CBMM's Watermen's Story Swap will take place on February 18, 2027. The event is sponsored by the Upper Shore Regional Folklife Center. Both Meredith and Harrison plan to participate.



Captain Jeff Harrison is a fifth-generation waterman and lifelong resident of Tilghman Island who started fishing with his grandfather when he was nine years old. Today, he is president of Talbot Watermen Association.

Photograph by Sharon Thorpe



Photograph by Edwin Remsberg

Watermen Heritage Tours

Unlike many watermen, Captain Rachel Dean wasn't born into the way of life. A first-generation waterman—who prefers to be called a "waterman" rather than a "waterwoman" because it gives her a greater sense of belonging—she teaches English at Patuxent High School and is a waterman during the summer. Interestingly, her husband, Simon, who shares her love of the Chesapeake Bay, is also a first-generation waterman.

"I don't want to set myself apart by putting emphasis on the term 'waterwoman,'" Dean says. "I don't want that distinction. I'm a waterman."

Although there are far fewer women in the business, women have always participated in the way of life. Their work was based onshore and included mending nets, shucking oysters, processing seafood in packing houses, and other tasks, while men worked on the water. But today, women play a more active role and increasingly work on the water—a trend that makes Dean happy.

According to data provided by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Licensing and Registration Services, the number of women with commercial licenses increased from 546 in 2016 to 726 in 2026 (32.97 percent). In contrast, men with commercial licenses increased from 6,133 in 2016 to 6,243 in 2026 (1.79 percent). However, it's important to note that not all men and women who hold commercial licenses are currently active watermen.

Dean developed a love for the Chesapeake Bay early in life and credits her passion for the water to her mother, who would take her crabbing in Solomons Harbor. One day, she had a chance encounter with a captain, and he asked her to work on his boat. The experience ultimately laid the foundation for her to establish businesses in both charter boating and commercial fishing with Simon.

When Dean learned about the Watermen Heritage Tourism Training Program, an initiative supported by federal funding from the DNR and launched by Chesapeake Conservancy in 2010, she was interested enough to sign up. Partners included the Coastal Heritage Alliance (CHA), the Maryland Watermen's Association (MWA), and CBMM. After Dean completed the training, she and Simon founded Solomons Island Heritage Tours.

"I just knew the training program would be perfect for me," says Dean. "Watermen heritage tours are a great way to share our perspective of the Bay with our visitors. We offer a variety of opportunities to observe and engage in harvesting methods for blue crabs, finfish, and oysters on a working fishing vessel. We want our visitors to experience the Bay up close through the eyes of a Chesapeake Bay waterman."





Photographs by Roderick Sheckler

Captain Rachel Dean and her husband, Captain Simon, are both first-generation watermen (Dean prefers the term waterman versus waterwoman). The couple operates a maritime heritage tour based out of Solomons, Maryland.

Dean loves that every tour is unique. Mother Nature dictates what passengers will see and do on the day of the trip. However, they definitely will explore the area, see landmarks and historical sites, learn local history, and participate in hands-on watermen's activities, such as setting fish pots and dropping and pulling an oyster dredge and sorting through their catch."

Since Simon has scaled back a bit on the heritage tours, Dean currently conducts them with her daughter, Jamie, who is 16 years old.

"I hope that visitors emerge from the tours with a better perspective and an appreciation for the Chesapeake Bay and the watermen's way of life," Dean says. "Watermen's heritage tours are a great way to share the stories of those who worked on the water. I hope that all our visitors build awareness, learn to value the ecosystem, and develop a sense of pride for our maritime heritage."

"I HOPE THAT ALL OUR VISITORS BUILD AWARENESS, LEARN TO VALUE THE ECOSYSTEM, AND DEVELOP A SENSE OF PRIDE FOR OUR MARITIME HERITAGE."

In addition to operating Solomons Island Heritage Tours, Rachel is deeply committed to advocacy and serves as a voice for the industry. She and Simon also own Patuxent River Seafood, which supplies seafood to local businesses.









At Waterman's Wharf, a recreated crabber's shanty at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, you can try your hand at several of the seafood harvesting activities of a Chesapeake Bay waterman. You can watch crabs shed, check an eel or crab pot to see if you've caught anything, or tong for oysters. Outside the shanty are the waterman's boats—the Hooper Island draketail *Martha*, the Pot Pie skiff, and the *Volunteer*, a replica Smith Island crab scrape. Photographs courtesy CBMM.

Museum Exhibits and Festivals

Members of the community who want to learn about the watermen's way of life can explore two popular exhibits at CBMM: *Oystering on the Chesapeake* and *Waterman's Wharf*.

Oystering on the Chesapeake offers visitors the opportunity to board the skipjack *E.C. Collier* (1910) and discover how the Bay's oyster fishery has shaped the region's history and culture. Visitors can also examine oyster harvesting equipment, including hand tongs and a dredge, as well as artifacts and historic photographs.

"The participatory exhibit, which we have offered for more than 20 years, helps visitors understand how difficult life was for watermen and how they had to endure difficult, challenging work in harsh weather conditions to bring in their catch," Dolde says. "It's a great way to tell their story."

CBMM is planning an update of *Oystering on the Chesapeake*, which will focus on aquaculture and how it has transformed the oystering industry. By adding this component, the staff hopes to expand and enhance their storytelling and inspire visitors to become stewards for a healthier Bay.

Located in a recreated crab shack, *Waterman's Wharf* is a hands-on exhibit that allows visitors to experience seafood harvesting firsthand. Visitors can pull up a crab pot or eel pot from the wharf to see if they caught anything or hand tong for oysters.

Another way that members of the community can pay tribute to watermen—and celebrate the Bay's most iconic bivalve—is OysterFest. Hosted by CBMM on November 7, the festival features fresh oysters, including offerings from Talbot Watermen Association and local oyster farms, as well as other local fare, craft beer, and spirits. Attendees can also enjoy live music, an oyster stew competition, boat rides, demonstrations, presentations, hands-on children's activities, and more.



Photograph by George Sass



Photograph by Sharon Thorpe



Photograph by George Sass

The Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum welcomes thousands of guests each autumn to celebrate the Bay's favorite bivalve with a tasty menu of oysters prepared a variety of ways, plus activities and fun for the whole family.

Preserving a Way of Life

Although the number of watermen has significantly declined since its heyday—leaving only a fraction of active watermen working on the Bay today—the way of life endures. Watermen are known for their resilience and adaptability, and their traditions represent a vital part of Maryland's cultural and maritime heritage.

Indeed, the concept of traditional watermen has shifted, but it's not the end of an era. As long as watermen continue to share their stories and pass them down to the next generation, their rich history and proud way of life will never be lost.

"There will always be watermen, and sharing our stories keeps our legacy alive," Harrison says. "I grew up in the way of life and learned to love it. I can't wait to get on the water every day. I'll continue to be a waterman as long as I am able. I wouldn't change a thing about my life, and I have no regrets."

EXPERIENCING MARYLAND WATERMEN'S WAY OF LIFE

Captain Tyrone Charters – captaintyronecharters.com

Watermen's Story Swap – cbmm.org/SpeakerSeries

***Water's Edge: Black Watermen of the Chesapeake* – mpt.org/info/watersedge**

Talbot Watermen Association – talbotwatermen.net

Solomons Island Heritage Tours – solomonsislandheritagetours.com

OysterFest – cbmm.org/event/oysterfest

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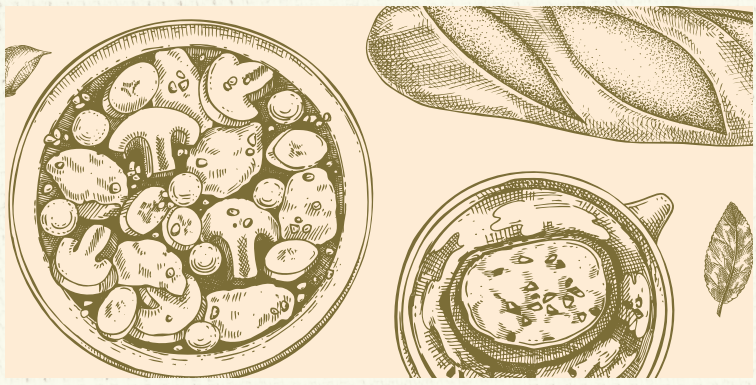


HEARTY HOLIDAY FEAST!

Crowd pleasing recipes from local restaurants that you can make this season

Set your holiday table* and enjoy! From first course to last, we have a bevy of recipes to cook and share with loved ones. There are a couple unique twists on classic ingredients, plus a few dishes that hark tradition. Merry appétit!

And for even more recipes (many more!), visit the What's Up? Media Recipe Archive by scanning this QR code:



* FOR NIFTY IDEAS ON HOLIDAY TABLE SETTINGS, SEE THE ARTICLE "COZY HOME HOLIDAY" ON PAGE 96 *



MAPLE BACON WRAPPED OYSTERS

RECIPE BY RIP'S COUNTRY INN

PHOTOGRAPH BY TONY LEWIS, JR.

4 servings

INGREDIENTS

Sauce
1 cup Mayo
2 Tbsp. Cajun spice
1 Tbsp. maple syrup

Add all ingredients to the bowl and mix well.

Skewers
4 slices Applewood smoked bacon
8 fresh local oysters
2 Tablespoons butter
1 cup all-purpose flour
2 Tablespoons maple syrup
1 teaspoon Cajun spice

DIRECTIONS

Mix the flour with the Cajun spice. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Then cut the bacon slice in half and wrap the oyster in bacon and skewer two per skewer. Coat with the flour mix. In a sauté pan, melt the butter and place skewers in pan. Sear on both sides and place skewers on a baking sheet. Take the pan off the heat and add the maple syrup to it, stirring it in well. Then pour over top of the oysters on the baking sheet. Bake for 5 minutes or until bacon is cooked. Spoon the sauce on the plate and place oyster skewers on sauce. Enjoy.







CRAB AND VEGETABLE SOUP

RECIPE BY CHEF JIM ERIKSEN OF PUSSER'S CARIBBEAN GRILLE (SINCE CLOSED)

PHOTOGRAPH BY TONY LEWIS, JR.

6 to 8 servings

INGREDIENTS

2 cups of each: 3/8 inch dice of carrots, celery, onions, mixed green and red peppers, and cut white corn (use frozen out of season)
1 cup frozen peas
1 cup green beans cut one inch long
6 cups strong crab stock
2 cups peeled, seeded, and diced plum tomatoes (or 14. oz. can)
2 each 5.5 oz. cans of "V8" juice
1 Tablespoon course black pepper
1 1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
1 Tablespoon prepared horseradish
1/2 stick butter
1/2 cup flour
1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat

DIRECTIONS

Sweat all vegetables (except corn and peas) in the butter until most moisture is gone. Add flour and cook roux until smooth. Add stock, juice, and tomatoes; bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer cooking roux out. Add spices and horseradish. Cook for about five minutes. Add frozen vegetables. Return to a boil and stir in crabmeat. Adjust seasoning with salt and pepper and serve.

Chef's Notes: I like to make the base the day before and let the flavors meld together, reheat, and then add the crabmeat. Crab stock in the wintertime can be difficult. Substituting clam juice works, but doesn't taste as good. The best substitute is to go online and buy crab stock concentrate or crab base. Be careful with these items as they tend to be salty.



STEAMED CLAMS IN WHITE WINE, GARLIC, & BUTTER

RECIPE BY JIM HOLDERBAUM OF RANGE & REEF

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEPHEN BUCHANAN

4 servings as a main course or
10 guests as an appetizer

INGREDIENTS

8 Tablespoons butter
6 cloves fresh garlic, minced (or more if you like)
1 cup dry white wine
(such as Pinot Grigio or a dry Riesling)
4 pounds (about 50 clams) of Littleneck or
Midneck clams (clams that are
1 ½ to 2 ½ inches work best)
3 Tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped
(as an optional garnish)

Serve with a French baguette. Slice it or let guests pull off a piece for dipping into the broth.



DIRECTIONS

Clean clams with a stiff bristle brush and rinse under cold water. Discard any clams that are cracked or open. In large sauté pan or heavy skillet, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the garlic and cook for 2-3 minutes until fragrant. Add the white wine and bring to a simmer over medium-high heat, then add the clams and cover with a lid. Cook for 3-4 minutes or until most of the clams are wide open. Cooking time may be longer for larger clams. Discard any that remain closed. Transfer the open clams to a large serving bowl and ladle the broth over the clams. Garnish with the chopped parsley and serve with rustic (French) baguettes.



DOUBLE BONE-IN PORK CHOP WITH BALSAMIC ONIONS AND OVEN ROASTED POTATOES

RECIPE BY O'BRIEN'S OYSTER BAY & SEAFOOD TAVERN

PHOTOGRAPH BY RITA CALVERT

1 serving (large portion)

INGREDIENTS

1 14-oz pork chop (double bone-in)
1/2 large white onion
8 red potatoes
3 sprigs of basil, rosemary, and thyme, removed from stem, finely chopped
2 large cloves fresh chopped garlic
3 Tablespoons olive oil
1 Tablespoon balsamic vinegar
1 teaspoon sugar
1 teaspoon kosher salt and black pepper
1 cup demi-glaze (store bought or instant)
2 Tablespoons butter

DIRECTIONS

For the Pork Chop: Coat pork chop on both sides with salt and pepper, garlic, and herbs. Heat sauté pan with 2 oz of olive oil, sear pork chop on each side for 3–4 minutes and set aside. Keep sauté pan aside as well. **For the Balsamic Onions:** In seasoned sauté pan, heat 1 tablespoon butter, pinch of salt and pepper, and a pinch of sugar. Add onions and sauté for 2-3 minutes, then add 1 tablepoon balsamic vinegar and simmer for 15–20 minutes. **For the Herbal Demi-Glaze:** Heat demi-glaze in small sauté pan with 1/4 oz garlic and a pinch of herbs (basil, rosemary, thyme) and simmer for 2–3 minutes. Add 1 tablespoon butter at the end of simmering to thicken, then turn off heat. **For the Oven Roasted Potatoes:** Boil potatoes for 6–8 minutes and strain. Place potatoes in mixing bowl with remaining garlic, herbs, salt, pepper, and olive oil. Mix together and place on baking tray with pork chop and bake at 420 degrees for 12–15 minutes until potatoes are golden brown. Pork chop is best enjoyed cooked to medium. If well-done is preferred, remove potatoes and cook the pork chop by itself for an additional 6–8 minutes **Plating:** On a dinner plate, make a bed of the caramelized onions and place the pork chop on top. Arrange potatoes on plate and finish with the herbal demi-glaze. Garnish with rosemary and enjoy!



TURKEY PIE

RECIPE BY DENNIS HAGER OF TWO TREE RESTAURANT (SINCE CLOSED)

PHOTOGRAPH BY JENNY MADINO

6 to 8 servings

INGREDIENTS

2-1/2 to 3 pounds of pulled/carved turkey meat, seasoned (or substitute 1 whole roasting chicken)
1 large yellow onion, chopped
Salt and freshly ground pepper
Fresh rosemary leaves
Fresh thyme
3 cups velouté sauce, seasoned with fresh rosemary and thyme
Pie crust
Egg wash (1 egg beaten with 2 tablespoons water)



DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 375F. Pick meat from turkey (or chicken) bones and shred into medium bites. White meat should be shredded smaller than dark meat. Make stock from skin and bones and when cool, skim fat from the top to use for sautéing. Use the stock for making the velouté sauce. Sweat onion in turkey fat. Add shredded turkey and enough velouté to moisten the mixture. Place filling in pie crust and top with crust. Do not vent. Brush with egg wash and bake in hot oven until crust is golden. Serve hot with more velouté.

Chef's notes: If one insists on white meat only, don't bother to make this pie. It will be too dry and no amount of added velouté will compensate. However, it can be made with leg and thigh meat only. Use a 4" x 4" cast iron baking dish and neatly fold corners to form a pocket for one serving. The dough is rolled thinner than it would be with a larger container so as not to make the product too "bready." But you can use a 9-inch pie plate.



WHIPPED SWEET POTATOES WITH CITRUS

RECIPE BY CHEF KEVIN DEVINE OF CRAVE CATERING CO.

4 servings

INGREDIENTS

1-1 ½ pounds Whole sweet potatoes about the size of a baked potato (smaller size)
4 Tablespoons Unsalted butter, at room temperature, cut into small pieces
1 Tablespoon Kosher salt
1 small oranges zested and juiced, discarding flesh
1 Tablespoon maple syrup

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350F. Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil and wash potatoes, do not peel. Place potatoes on baking sheet and put in the oven for approximately 40 minutes. (Cooking times may vary depending on size of potato.) Potatoes should be soft and easily mashed. Remove potatoes from the oven and allow to cool until they are able to be handled. With your hands, peel away the skin and place into a mixer bowl. Add butter, salt, orange zest and juice, and maple syrup. Then whip with a whisk attachment or beaters into all ingredients are incorporated well and potatoes appear smooth and fluffy. Serve warm.



TAKE-A-BREAK BARS

RECIPE BY SETON ROSSINI AND WINNER IN THE 2018 WHAT'S UP? MEDIA COOKIE BAKE-OFF

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEPHEN BUCHANAN

12 bar servings

INGREDIENTS

3 heaping cups mini pretzels
1 cup peanut butter
1 cup, plus 2 tablespoons granulated sugar, divided
1/4 cup water
1/2 cup heavy cream, at room temperature
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
3/4 cup peanuts, coarsely chopped
1 1/4 cups of high-quality semisweet chocolate chips
Sea salt flakes (such as Maldon), for topping

DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 350F degrees. Line an 8-inch square pan with parchment paper. In a food processor, pulse the pretzels, peanut butter and 2 tablespoons of sugar until the pretzels are crushed and the mixture clumps together. Press mixture firmly into the pan and bake for 10 minutes. Keep the oven preheated. In a saucepan over medium-low heat, stir remaining cup of sugar and water until sugar fully dissolves. Increase heat to high and boil sugar, without stirring, for about 5 minutes, or until the color begins to darken. Carefully pick up the saucepan and tilt to swirl caramelized sugar to mix and continue to cook for another minute, or until it's a medium-amber color. Remove from the heat and carefully whisk in the heavy cream and vanilla. (It will bubble violently, so stir carefully!) Whisk until it stops bubbling, then set aside to cool. Pour caramel over the pretzel crust, then evenly top with chopped peanuts. Cover the peanuts with the chocolate chips and bake for 10 minutes. Remove the bars from the oven and use an offset spatula or knife to smooth out the chocolate while it's still warm. Sprinkle sea salt flakes on top of the chocolate and let cool to room temperature. Refrigerate for a couple hours, or until chocolate hardens. Slice into bars and serve.

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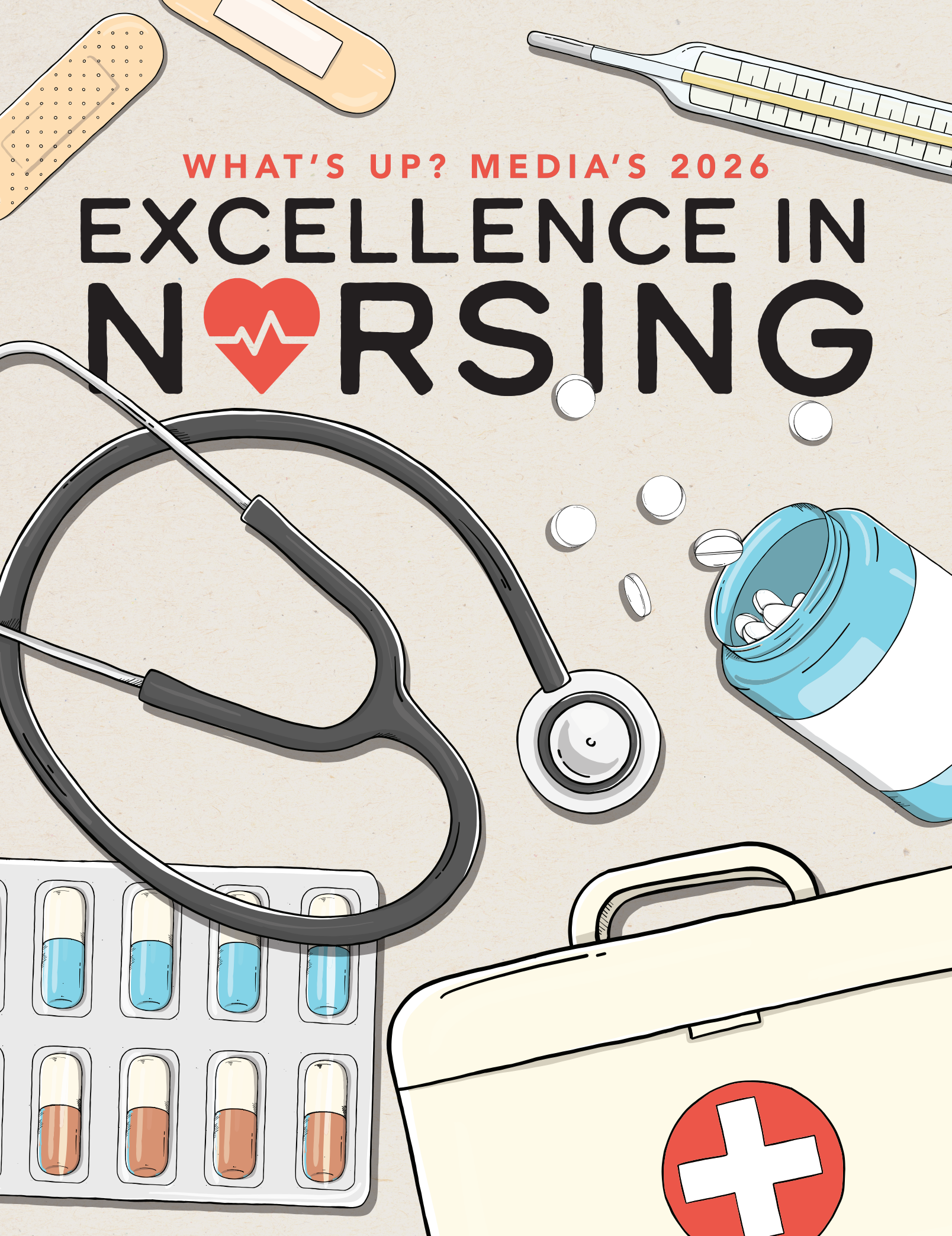
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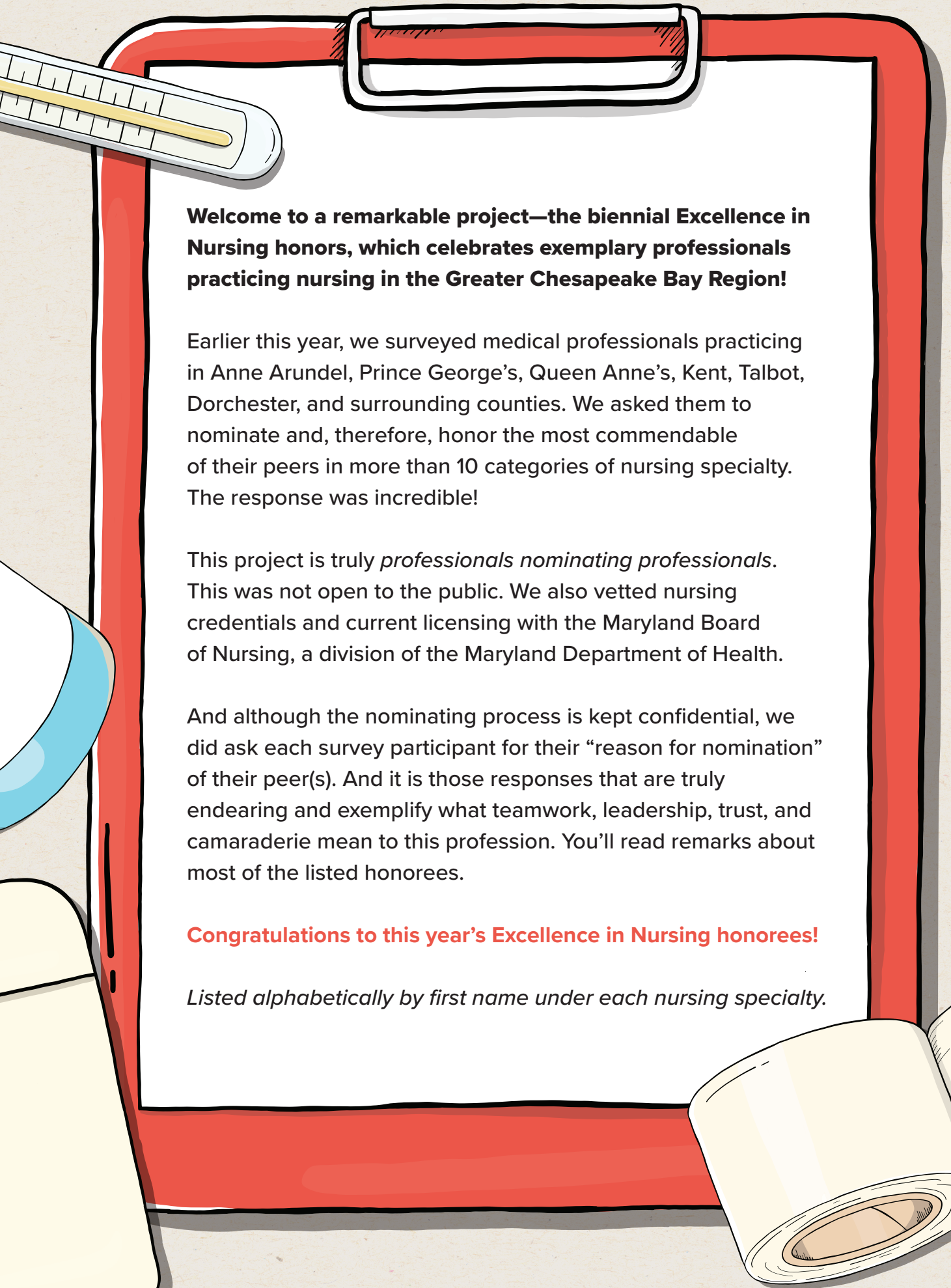
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WHAT'S UP? MEDIA'S 2026
EXCELLENCE IN
NURSING



Welcome to a remarkable project—the biennial Excellence in Nursing honors, which celebrates exemplary professionals practicing nursing in the Greater Chesapeake Bay Region!

Earlier this year, we surveyed medical professionals practicing in Anne Arundel, Prince George's, Queen Anne's, Kent, Talbot, Dorchester, and surrounding counties. We asked them to nominate and, therefore, honor the most commendable of their peers in more than 10 categories of nursing specialty. The response was incredible!

This project is truly *professionals nominating professionals*. This was not open to the public. We also vetted nursing credentials and current licensing with the Maryland Board of Nursing, a division of the Maryland Department of Health.

And although the nominating process is kept confidential, we did ask each survey participant for their "reason for nomination" of their peer(s). And it is those responses that are truly endearing and exemplify what teamwork, leadership, trust, and camaraderie mean to this profession. You'll read remarks about most of the listed honorees.

Congratulations to this year's Excellence in Nursing honorees!

Listed alphabetically by first name under each nursing specialty.

ADVANCED PRACTICE

Masters prepared nurse in an advanced practice setting; clinical nurse specialist, certified nurse midwife, nurse practitioner, nurse psychotherapist, CRNA

CESAR VISURRAGA • Visurraga Enterprises LLC, Hyattsville • "Cesar Visurraga exemplifies excellence in nursing leadership, innovation, and patient advocacy."

DENISE GRANT • UM Baltimore Washington Medical Center, Glen Burnie • *"Denise is an acute care nurse practitioner who works in the Pediatric ED at UM BWMC. Her dedication to all pediatric patients is truly inspiring. She exemplifies excellence in advanced nursing practice through her exceptional clinical expertise, compassionate care, and unwavering dedication."*

DEVONNE HURST • UM Baltimore Washington Medical Center, Glen Burnie • *"Devonne truly embodies what it means to be an advanced practice nurse. She is incredibly knowledgeable and always incorporates the most recent evidence based practice updates to her workflow. Devonne is a natural leader who practices with compassion for her patients, patience with new clinical staff, and with a robust knowledge of medical management and interventions."*

DIANA GOMEZ • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Diana represents Ghilcrest Luminis Health Palliative/Pain Management with honor and grace. She is highly communicative with the staff when it comes to the care and comfort of her patients. She goes the extra mile to connect with the family members at such a delicate and difficult time of their lives."*

MEGAN JENDROSSEK • Chief Health and Wellness, Pasadena • *"Megan consistently demonstrates exceptional clinical knowledge, professionalism, and genuine compassion for her patients. What makes Megan truly outstanding is her ability to make every patient feel heard and valued. Megan goes beyond treating symptoms—she focuses on the whole person."*

RACHEL BURDA • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Rachel has demonstrated excellent leadership, innovation and professionalism in the initiation and programming development for Luminis Health CHF follow up programming. Her ability to manage the complex patient populations and ensure transition from hospital to home has been the cornerstone in the care of recently discharged patients and readmission prevention."*

AESTHETIC/ COSMETIC NURSING

Provides care for patients during elective or reconstructive surgery processes, inclusive of non-invasive procedures (such as administering Botox), therapeutics, monitoring the healing process, and helping facilitate communication between physicians and patients

KELLY SUTTER • Skin Wellness MD, Annapolis • *"I have never met a nurse with such passion and love for the work they do. In addition her care and concern for her patient as a whole is amazing!"*

MARY COFRAN • Adoro Medical Spa, Severna Park • *"Mary is a trusted aesthetic expert and award-winning nurse. Her blend of clinical precision, artistic eye, and compassionate care makes her an essential force behind the transformative, personalized treatments at Adoro Medical Spa."*

AMBULATORY NURSING

Clinic, office, and other ambulatory care settings, employee health, occupational health, industrial health, infection control

PATRICE ANDREWS • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Patty has been an infusion nurse for a long time and is super knowledgeable in her field. Patients feel comforted when they are in her care, and Patty will always advocate for her patients."*

SHERI PORETZ • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Sheri is an exceptional infection control clinician and bedside nurse. She stays current with all of the literature to provide information to the colleagues to assure they follow best practices. Her expertise in emergency nursing is a bonus and enables her to walk the talk with her colleagues."*

CASE/QUALITY MANAGEMENT, MANAGED CARE INFORMATICS

Community or hospital case manager, quality management, risk management, infection prevention, patient safety, utilization management, and informatics

ANNALISA PORTER • UM Baltimore Washington Medical Center, Glen Burnie • *"Annalisa is a phenomenal nurse. She goes above and beyond in taking care of her patients, often coming up with ideas to seamlessly obtain care for her patients. Not only is she a wonderful case manager, she is also an inspiring leader and mentor."*

HETAL PARMAR • UM Baltimore Washington Medical Center, Glen Burnie • *"Hetal Parmar serves as a dedicated Nurse Navigator for the COPD Transitional Care Program, providing essential support to patients who are at high risk for hospital readmission. She works closely with patients following hospitalization to ensure a smooth transition from inpatient to outpatient care. Her proactive approach helps patients remain engaged in their treatment plans and promotes better long-term health outcomes."*

STEPHANIE TIBBS • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"As a Care Manager, Stephanie consistently goes above and beyond to ensure patients are discharged safely, efficiently, and with the resources they need to succeed after leaving the hospital. She is dedicated, resourceful, and unwavering in her commitment to patient care."*

CLINICAL EDUCATION

Nurse educators responsible for overseeing or administering ongoing clinical education and resources

ALICIA BLAKE-HALL • Eat Healthy to B-Healthy, Anne Arundel County • *"Alicia Blake-hall is an exceptional registered nurse and Diabetes educator who is dedicated to improving the quality of life of her patients through compassionate, evidence based care. She works collaboratively with endocrinologist primary care providers and other healthcare professionals to ensure coordinated care and seemless communication."*

ALISON LYONS RODERIGUEZ • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Alison is such an amazing asset to our NICU as the Unit Educator. Her clinical knowledge base is exceptional. Most importantly, her ability to translate complex algorithms and new knowledge into digestible material for staff is top-notch!"*

ALLISON LILLY • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Supportive of new initiatives. Always eager to learn and teach staff."*

ASHLEY FENTON • Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing, Baltimore • *"Dr. Fenton is an incredible mentor, educator and provider. I am thankful for her guidance and support throughout my doctoral program."*

BETHANY SINGLETON • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Bethany is the Educator on the 4 Medical Unit at AAMC. With a large 48 bed unit, Bethany educates all staff with kindness, respect, and integrity. She makes an extraordinary impact on our staff and the patients that we serve."*

CHRISTINE SCHAEFFER • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Christine is a highly experienced and skilled nurse educator who oversees two departments at AAMC. She is positive, upbeat, and can always come up with a solution to any issue that arises. She looks out for the best interest of her new nurses and nursing staff to provide the best learning experience for all. She is innovative, engaging and so very knowledgeable in acute care nursing."*

DANETTE KRAMER • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Danette exemplifies nursing excellence through her dedication to education, mentorship, and professional development. As the ACE Unit Clinical Educator, she plays a vital role in supporting nurses at all stages of their careers, ensuring they have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to provide exceptional patient care."*

JENNIFER KING • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Jennifer King excels as our PACU educator consistently fostering a culture of professional growth and advanced learning. Actively encourages staff to further their education, become certified and apply for their clinical ladder. Jenn is always there to support her staff in anyway needed."*

LAUREN STYLC • Luminis Health, Annapollis • *"Lauren is creative and uses her knowledge and skills to inspire her colleagues to deliver the highest quality care. She drives quality and leads teams in performance improvement processes that have had a significant impact on risk reduction."*

MAGYN EL-SAYED • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Magyn makes a meaningful impact every day by sharing her extensive knowledge and experience with her team and supporting high-quality patient care. Her dedication ensures compliance and excellence, while her flexibility and willingness to support others make her an invaluable team member."*

NANCY LANGR • UM Baltimore Washington Medical Center, Glen Burnie • *"Nancy goes out of her way to accommodate staff needing competency refresher training. She makes herself available for "just in time" training in order to improve care."*

PAMELA NEHRING • UM Baltimore Washington Medical Center, Glen Burnie • *"Our clinical educator for pediatrics at BWMC is a dedicated leader who inspires excellence through education, mentorship, and a commitment to pediatric nursing. Pam supports nurses at every stage of their careers, whether you are a new graduate, new to specialty, or experienced nurse. She creates engaging learning opportunities that build confidence, strengthen clinical skills, and promote evidence-based practice."*

CRITICAL CARE

Adult ICU/CCU, cath lab, oncology, special procedures

AARON GRIFFIN • UM Baltimore Washington Medical Center, Glen Burnie • *"Aaron embodies the absolute highest standards of the nursing profession through his exceptional clinical expertise, steadfast patient advocacy, and remarkable adaptability. Aaron is incredibly knowledgeable and pairs his clinical acumen with deep, genuine compassion. He is a fierce, vocal advocate for his patients, consistently speaking up to ensure that every care plan is appropriate, effective, and fundamentally safe."*

BARBARA BIELER • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Bobbi is an exceptional nurse. As an ICU nurse and AAMC's Resource Nurse, she has spent the past several years being the person the entire healthcare team can rely on. She ensures the best outcomes for the patients by enhancing education, communication with providers, and quick response times."*

JENNIFER LUCIANI • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Jennifer combines the science and skill of cardiac critical care nursing with empathy, gentleness and patient and family advocacy. She leads patients and families down the difficult pathway of recovery from cardiac surgery with poise and confidence."*

JESSICA TUER • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Jessica is the embodiment of patient-centered care. As the Clinical Supervisor of our Resource Nurse Team, she is often called to the bedside during some of the most frightening and challenging moments patients and families will ever experience. No matter the situation, Jessica brings a calm presence, clinical expertise, and genuine compassion that immediately puts people at ease."*

KARA COULLARD • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Kara consistently demonstrates exceptional clinical knowledge, quick critical-thinking skills, and a calm positive demeanor in even the most challenging situations. Her ability to quickly respond to changes in patient condition ensures the highest level of safe, effective care."*

LORRAINE ANTEL • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Lorraine is an invaluable source of support, knowledge, and guidance for staff across the unit. Her calm demeanor during emergencies, combined with her exceptional clinical skills, inspires confidence and helps ensure the highest quality of patient care. She is approachable, compassionate, and always willing to help other"*

EMERGENCY

Emergency department, flight, ambulance, pre-hospital, telephone triage

KAITLYN AYERLE • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Excellent bedside manner, covers all bases, goes the extra mile."*

EMERGING NURSE LEADER

Inclusive of charge nurses, assistant nurse managers, supervisors; first-line nurse leaders are those professionals who are responsible for overseeing first-level nursing services

ALYSSA WELCH • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Over the past 10 years, Allie has exemplified dedication, perseverance, and excellence, growing from a Patient Care Technician to a Nursing Supervisor through hard work and an unwavering commitment to patient care and her team. She is kind, intelligent, and deeply respected by those who work alongside her."*

BRIANNA REILLY • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"As a charge nurse Brianna demonstrates exceptional leadership by effectively coordinating patient care, supporting her team, and maintaining a calm, professional demeanor, and a positive presence during challenging situations. Bri consistently promotes collaboration, mentors' fellow nurses, and serves as a trusted resource for staff and patients alike."*

HANNAH FOLDERAUER • UM Baltimore Washington Medical Center, Glen Burnie • *"As a charge nurse on the pediatric unit, Hannah exemplifies the qualities of an exceptional first-line nurse leader. She leads with confidence, compassion, and integrity, creating an environment where both patients and staff thrive. Hannah is a natural leader who consistently supports her team while ensuring the highest quality of care for every child and family."*

JAVIDA WOODSON • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Javida is a charge nurse in the main operating room; she is deeply committed to achieving excellence. She fiercely advocates for her team and fosters a welcoming environment where all staff, including physicians, can communicate clearly and effectively to deliver high-quality care."*

KATHRYN CATE • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Kathryn is leader with strong clinical skills, knowledge and expertise in her specialty, and leads her team with humor and grace. She was recognized this year as our organization's Nurse Leader of the Year and deserves recognition on a regional level."*

KELLIE HOGUE • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Kellie maintains a positive demeanor while seamlessly guiding a 48-bed busy med-surg unit. She addresses concerns immediately with all people involved in a fair and appropriately manner. She lights up a room with her bright smile and engaging personality."*

LAURA COFFIN • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Laura is an amazing nurse and supervisor. Patients always look forward to seeing her. There's a reason why her nick name is coach, because she's excellent in leading our team."*

NATALIE JOHNSTON • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"She works to support the clinical staff. She is fair and listens."*

SONIA ANTAO • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Supports the staff in the preop and Phase 2 areas."*

TEARA GRAY • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Teara has quickly distinguished herself as an emerging leader through her dedication to excellence, positive influence on her team, and commitment to providing exceptional patient care. She consistently demonstrates willingness to take on new challenges while supporting both patients and colleagues."*

HOME HEALTH/HOSPICE

Staff nurse in home health care settings, hospice, in-patient hospice

JEMILAT RAJI • Hospice of the Chesapeake, Pasadena • *"This nurse is a shining star. She is a Rapid Response Nurse for Hospice Chesapeake. She is always learning and always makes sure that her patients are free of symptoms, clean and dry and that the family is educated at each visit. She leaves no stone unturned. She is flexible with her assignments and a pleasure to work with."*

MAURA RINGLEY • Hospice of the Chesapeake, Pasadena • *"Maura is the epitome of excellence in all that she does as a hospice admissions nurse for Hospice of the Chesapeake. Maura consistently demonstrates the highest standards of patient-centered care while supporting patients and families during some of the most difficult moments of their lives."*

MATERNAL-CHILD/ WOMEN'S HEALTH

Obstetrics, gynecology, women's health, nursery, pediatrics, NICU, PICU, Peds ER, early childhood/early intervention services

CATHY GVOZDEN • Riverside Pediatrics, Arnold • *"Cathy is the most thoughtful and passionate pediatric nurse practitioner. She cares for every one of her patients like they are her own family."*

LAQUANTA SMALLEY • UM Baltimore Washington Medical Center, Glen Burnie • *"LaQuanta, also known as Lala, is one of our pediatric nurses at BWMC. She is highly respected by by colleagues and trusted by patients and families. She truly embodies the qualities of an outstanding nurse with her leadership, compassion, and unwavering commitment to excellence."*

MICHELLE RITTER • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"For over 25 years of dedication to the promotion of wellness, education, and pro-lactation support for new moms and babies."*

STEPHANIE HARMON • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Stephanie is one of the clinical supervisors for our NICU. She has an amazing heart and it shines through. Stephanie greets you with a smile, listens to concerns, make staff feel heard, has the nurses back when needed, and can lead the unit on hectic day."*

SUSANNA BRADBURY • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Susanna always does a great job of making patients feel safe and comfortable. She provides great education and always listens very well to her patients."*

MEDICAL/SURGICAL

Acute or chronic medical and surgical nursing specialties

ADRIANA JIMENEZ • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"I would like to nominate Adriana for recognition because of the exceptional care, kindness, and positivity they bring to every patient interaction. She consistently goes above and beyond to make patients feel comfortable, supported, and cared for. What makes Adriana especially remarkable is their ability to use humor appropriately to ease anxiety and brighten difficult days."*

ARIANNA GRAZIADEI • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Arianna exemplifies nursing excellence through her exceptional compassion, dedication, and commitment to the ACE patient population. She consistently goes above and beyond to ensure her patients feel cared for, respected, and supported during some of their most vulnerable moments."*

BERENICE MEJIA PADILLA • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Berenice is an outstanding nurse on the 4 Medical Unit at AAMC. She is smart, kind, and soft spoken. She advocates for patients and staff and always lends a helping hand. She is an amazing preceptor and relief charge nurse for us on 4 Med."*

BRITNEY REYES • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Britney is a wealth of knowledge. She a key asset to our unit when it comes to training and empowering new grad nurses. I am confident one day she will shine as a Clinical Educator."*

CHRISTINE TYLER • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Christine has overcome immense personal challenges and still remains committed to being an exemplary professional nurse. She is actively transitioning from LPN to RN and remains a steadfast and dedicated member of the patient care team."*

FRANCES TOMPKINS • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Fran consistently demonstrates compassion, professionalism, and a genuine commitment to ensuring her patients receive the highest quality care. Her easy-going nature and positive attitude make her a pleasure to work with, and she is always willing to support her colleagues whenever needed."*

GILBERT WAIRIA • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Gilbert has exceptional critical thinking skills, allowing him to assess complex situations and provide outstanding patient care."*

JEFFREY TUZO • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Jeffrey is such an amazing kind nurse. He is always attentive to his patients. He goes above and beyond."*

JENNIFER BARRETT • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Jen consistently demonstrates exceptional compassion and dedication to her patients. She goes beyond providing excellent clinical care by ensuring our long-term "resident" patients feel valued and remembered. Jen organizes birthday celebrations, coordinates holiday gift collections, and creates meaningful moments that bring joy and dignity to those in her care."*

JESSICA O'CONNELL • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Jessica is a superb bedside nurse for the geriatric population. She is always supportive of the bedside nurses when she is in charge and eager to help "put out fires." She is a fierce advocate for her patients."*

LELAND LEAVERTON • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Leland is a phenomenal nurse. He has excellent critical thinking, clinical judgement, and leadership skills. Most of all, he is extraordinarily empathetic and kind."*

PAUL ZACHARSKI • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"It is with great pride that I nominate 1 Med New Grad Paul Zacharski for Nurse Excellence recognition. In a remarkably short period of time, he has demonstrated clinical growth, professionalism, and dedication that far exceed expectations for a nurse at this stage in his career."*

RACHEL METCALF • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Exceptional nursing. Continued growth and personal development. Rachel is an exceptional Med-Surg, and now ICU nurse. She is quick to respond to changes in clinical condition and advocates for her patient's well-being. Her skills in recognizing the need for escalation of care have helped numerous patients and lead her to a new role as an ICU nurse."*

SARAH NOBLE • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Sarah is thorough and compassionate. She is always willing to lend a helping hand to her coworkers. Beyond her bedside care, she is actively involved in multiple councils and committees, serving as a strong advocate for patients and helping drive meaningful improvements in care delivery."*

SHEILA NEIS • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Sheila is our number 1 preceptor for new staff. She is serious about this role and ensures that all staff she trains have sound clinical judgement and critical thinking skills before they become nurses on the floor on their own."*

TRISHA DELOS REYES • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"An exceptional board certified bedside nurse on 4 Medical, she excels as a relief charge nurse, guides new staff into practice as a dedicated preceptor, and actively drives patient safety on our unit Quality Council."*

NURSING LEADERSHIP

Inclusive of, Chief Nursing Officers (CNOs) Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), clinical nurse managers, coordinators, directors; these middle management nurse leaders are often responsible for overseeing several units, departments, or service lines within an organization

ANGELA TREMPER • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"As a clinical supervisor, Angie consistently goes above and beyond to support her unit's nurses. During busy shifts, especially when new admissions arrive, she does not hesitate to step in and help wherever she can. Most importantly, Angie works hard to cultivate a culture focused on patient safety, quality outcomes, and compassionate nursing care."*

CHRISTINE FROST • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Christine exemplifies nursing excellence through her unwavering advocacy for nurses and her steadfast commitment to patient-centered care. As Chief Nursing Officer, she ensures that nursing always has a voice in organizational decisions and fosters an environment where nurses feel valued, supported, and empowered to succeed. She understands that exceptional patient outcomes are achieved by investing in and supporting those who provide the care."*

CHRISTINE USILTON • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"As Director of the ACE unit, Christine sets a culture of high standards of care for the geriatric population the unit serves. Christine is open to staff's ideas, concerns, and questions."*

DEVRA COCKERILLE • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Devra is the epitome of a nurse's nurse and nurse leader. As Senior Director of the Acute Care Pavilion, she leads with compassion, integrity, and an unwavering commitment to excellence in patient care. She inspires those around her through her deep clinical knowledge, authentic leadership, and dedication to supporting and developing nurses at every level."*

EDITH DOBBINS • UM Baltimore Washington Medical Center, Glen Burnie • *"Edith is especially in tune with the needs of the staff on all units while she is on duty. She rounds frequently and is mentor to charge nurses in particular. Edith never gets flustered and always kind and caring even on the busiest and most stressful days. Edith helps her peers by switching shifts or covering call outs whenever possible. She is a joy to work with."*

EMILY PARK • UM Baltimore Washington Medical Center, Glen Burnie • *"As Nurse Manager of both the Pediatric Emergency Department and Pediatric Inpatient Unit, Emily is an exceptional leader whose vision, dedication, and commitment have transformed pediatric care within our organization. Emily has been instrumental in the growth and expansion of the Pediatric Emergency Department, leading initiatives that have strengthened services such as pediatric triage and our behavioral health hold process, improved patient access, and enhanced the quality of care for children and their families."*

EMMA DURHAM • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Emma exemplifies nursing excellence through her steadfast leadership, resilience, and dedication to supporting both patients and staff on night shift. As Clinical Supervisor, she consistently navigates the unique challenges of overnight operations with professionalism, composure, and a commitment to high-quality care."*

EMMA HAMMEN • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Emma consistently demonstrates exceptional leadership by supporting her team, fostering collaboration, and promoting high standards of patient care. She leads by example with professionalism, compassion, and a commitment to mentoring and empowering others."*

JENNIFER HOOVER • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"As a Hospital Administrative Coordinator, Jenn consistently demonstrates exceptional problem-solving skills and professionalism. She effectively manages complex situations and challenges with confidence. Her extensive knowledge and resourcefulness make her a trusted source of guidance for staff across the organization."*

JULIE MCCLYMENT • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Julie is the Clinical Supervisor for a very busy Post-Anesthesia Care Unit. Not only does she lead with fairness, humor, and knowledge, she is also a resource and role model to her staff with her many years of critical care expertise."*

LEANN ROSSETTI • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Leann is the perfect example of what defines a leader. She goes above and beyond for her staff and is always willing to step in and help when it's needed. She's very knowledgeable and provides the best support for her team."*

LORI MANN • Arcadia Living, Crofton and Denton • *"Lori is the kindest person you will ever meet. She for her staff. She uses lifting and wants the staff here to learn and grow!"*

MICHELLE LUSBY • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Works to manage the changes in surgical services. Advocate for the staff."*

RACQUEL MCCREA • Luminis Health, Annapolis and Lanham • *"Dr. McCrea, Manager of Luminis Health's Clinical Education Department, exemplifies excellence through her unwavering dedication, leadership, and commitment to others. She is an exceptional nurse leader, clinical education specialist, mentor, and colleague. Through her leadership, she fosters a culture of continuous growth, accountability, and professional excellence, leaving a lasting and meaningful impact on her team and the organization."*

SARAH FOX • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Sarah is a focused and inspiring leader of an extremely busy cardiac and vascular unit. She juggles patient emergencies, nurse mentoring, staffing, and fiscal responsibilities with poise, kindness, and composure that makes her team feel supported and valued in the best and most challenging times."*

SARAH MORGAN • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Sarah exemplifies nursing excellence through her strong clinical leadership, calm presence, and unwavering commitment to both patients and staff. As a Clinical Supervisor and Charge Nurse, she consistently leads by example, supports her team through complex situations, and ensures safe, high-quality patient care."*

SARAH WATSON • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Director of the Oncology inpatient unit, Sarah has a vision for the unique needs of the patients navigating the difficult world of a cancer diagnosis but also supports her staff on this very important mission. She is visionary, representing on many hospital teams and advocating for safe staffing, evidence based nursing and healthy work environments."*

SHAROLYN BUSH • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Sharolyn leads the 4 Medical Unit and Dialysis Units with respect and integrity. She is always smiling, addressing concerns, and advocating for our unit. We are lucky to have her as an amazing leader for our unit!"*

TERRI CARTER • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"We call Terri the angel of 4 Medical. She leads our unit with grace, respect for everyone, and the utmost kindness in all situations. Terri is an incredible leader who always puts patients first."*

PERIOPERATIVE

Perioperative, recovery room, day surgery, operating room

JENNA KAMP • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Jenna's role as an inpatient pre-op nurse is essential to our success. By rapidly optimizing patients for urgent and emergency procedures, she bridges the gap between admission and the operating room, drastically reducing surgical delays and length of stay."*

LAUREN STONE • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Lauren is a phenomenal Orthopedics Team Leader in the Operating Room. She tirelessly supports the teams in the room, facilitates cases and turnovers. She is a fierce patient advocate and staff educator. She is always willing to lend a hand to any staff member. W"*

MEGAN ASBURY • Luminis Health, Annapolis • *"Leader in the preop area. She is a resource to all her coworkers."*

Arabeth Turner

RN, BSN

Arabeth Turner, RN, BSN, brings more than 20 years of experience in aesthetic medicine to the West Annapolis Medical Spa team. After beginning her nursing career at Anne Arundel Medical Center, Arabeth transitioned to plastic surgery in 2006, where she spent more than a decade as a first assistant, developing an extensive understanding of surgical aesthetics, facial anatomy, and facial rejuvenation.

Today, as a nurse injector, Arabeth combines her clinical expertise with an artistic eye to create natural, balanced, and refreshed results. She specializes in neuromodulators and dermal fillers and takes pride in thoughtfully tailoring each treatment to her patients' individual goals and anatomy.

Arabeth believes the most beautiful results enhance a patient's natural features without appearing overdone. Her genuine care, years of experience, and dedication to personalized treatment allow her to build meaningful relationships with her patients while helping them look and feel their very best.



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2026-2027



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YOUR HOLIDAY 2026 THROUGH SPRING 2027 CHARITY EVENTS GUIDE

Mark your calendars for a season full of giving, celebration, and community spirit across Annapolis, the Eastern Shore, and Central Maryland. From black-tie galas and waterfront festivals to family fun runs and heart-warming traditions, our region knows how to pair celebration with giving back. This winter and spring, dozens of nonprofits are hosting can't-miss events that not only bring our communities together but also raise vital support for causes close to home. Browse through this list, note your favorites, and join in the spirit of generosity that makes our community shine. ***Note: This list only features events confirmed by publication deadline.***

Want More Events?

Visit the What's Up? Media online Events Calendar at this QR code:

Sultana Downrigging Festival: October 30 – November 1, 2026 | 7 a.m. – 10 p.m. Benefiting Sultana Education Foundation and other educational nonprofits, held in Chestertown. More info: downrigging.org

Fish For A Cure: November 7, 2026 | Fishing 12 a.m. – 3 p.m.; Shore Party 5 – 9:30 p.m. Benefiting Luminis Health AAMC—Cancer Survivorship Program, held at Safe Harbor Annapolis. More info: fishforacure.org

Maryland Irish Festival: November 13 – 15, 2026 | 12 – 11 p.m.Benefiting Irish Charities of Maryland, held at Maryland State Fairgrounds. More info: irishfestival.com

CASAblanca Gala: November 7, 2026 | 6 – 11 p.m. Benefiting Anne Arundel County CASA, held at Westin Annapolis Hotel. More info: aacasa.org

Benedictine's 1st Annual Sporting Clays Classic: November 7, 2026 | 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Benefiting children and adults living with developmental disabilities and autism. More info: benschool.org

Annapolis Jazz & Roots Festival: November 6 – 15, 2026 | 11 a.m. – 7 p.m. Fosters an appreciation for cultural diversity and artistic excellence in a cordial and inviting atmosphere, held throughout Downtown Annapolis. More info: annapolisjazzandrootsfestival.com

Bay Bridge Run: November 8, 2026 | 7 a.m. – 1 p.m. Benefiting Chesapeake Conservancy, Severn Leadership Group, and Walk the Walk Foundation, held at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge. More info: thebaybridgerun.com

Chase Brexton Annapolis Gala: November 14, 2026 | 6 – 10 p.m. Benefiting Chase Brexton Health Care, held at Chesapeake Bay Foundation headquarters. More info: chasebrexton.org

CCA Maryland Pickerel Championship: November 1, 2026 – February 28, 2027. Four-month winter fishing tournament benefitting Coastal Conservation Association Maryland. More info: ccamd.org/pickerel-championship

Sip & Savor: November 15, 2026 | 1 – 4 p.m. Benefiting Hospice of the Chesapeake, held at Newton White Mansion. More info: hospicechesapeake.org

A Celebration of Charities: November 19, 2026 | 12 p.m. Benefiting Chesapeake Charities, held at Chesapeake Bay Beach Club. More info: chesapeakecharities.org

Reelin' & Rockin' Rockfish Bash Benefit: November 12, 2026 | 6:30 – 9:30 p.m. Benefiting: Lucky and Blessed Fishing, held at 8855 Veterans Highway, Millersville. More info: rockfishbash.com

Waterfowl Festival: November 13 – 15, 2026 | 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Benefiting William A. Perry Scholarship Fund & Samuel H. Shriver Jr. Sporting Heritage Fund, held throughout Downtown Easton. More info: waterfowlfestival.org

A Starry Night Fundraiser Gala: November 19, 2026 | 6 – 10 p.m. Benefiting Young Life, held at Fluegel Alumni Center near the U.S. Naval Academy. More info: ylaac.younglife.org



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- Sponsoring our fundraiser in May

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amaritime.org/support/donate/

Lights on the Bay: November 23, 2026 – January 3, 2027 | 5 – 10 p.m. nightly. Benefiting SPCA of Anne Arundel County, held at Sandy Point State Park. More info: lightsonthebaymd.org

Y Turkey Trot Charity 5K (Arnold): November 26, 2026 | 8:30 – 10:30 a.m. Benefiting YMCA of Central Maryland, held at The Greater Annapolis Y in Arnold. More info: ymaryland.org/locations/arnoldy

Festival of Trees – Kennedy Krieger: November 27 – 29, 2026 | 10 a.m. – 7 p.m. Benefiting Kennedy Krieger Institute, held at the Maryland State Fairgrounds. More info: kennedykrieger.org

Festival of Trees – Talbot Hospice: November 27 – December 1, 2026 | 6 – 8 p.m. Benefiting Friends of Talbot Hospice, held at The Gold Room of The Tidewater Inn. More info: festival-of-trees.org

Holiday Joy Gala: December 6, 2026 | 3 p.m. Benefiting Mid-Atlantic Symphony Orchestra at venue to-be-determined. More info: midatlanticsymphony.org

Lights of Kindness: December 4 – 6, 2026 | 9 a.m. Benefiting Rotary Club of South Anne Arundel County, held at Homestead Garden. More info: southcountyrotary.org

UWLES 22nd Annual Holiday Ball: December 5, 2026 | 5 p.m. Benefiting United Way of the Lower Eastern Shore, held at Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay Resort & Spa in Cambridge. More info: uwles.org

Annapolis Chocolate Binge Festival: December 6, 2026 | 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Benefiting Inner West Street Association & Annapolis Arts District, held in the first block of West Street, Annapolis. More info: iwsannapolis.com

What's Up? Media's Nutcracker Tea 2026: December 6, 2026 | Three seatings: 10 a.m., 1:30 p.m., 5 p.m. Benefiting multiple local charities, held at DoubleTree Hotel, Annapolis. More info: whatsupmag.com

Christmas in St. Michaels: December 10 – 13, 2026 | 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Benefiting local nonprofit organizations, held throughout Downtown St. Michaels. More info: christmasinstmichaels.org

Bay Bells & Shark Tails: December 12, 2026 | 6 – 10 p.m. Benefiting Core Shark H2O, held at Charles Carroll House. More info: csh2o.org

Holiday Book Festival: November 7, 2026 | 12 – 4 p.m. Benefiting Eastern Shore Writers Association, held at Cult Classic Brewing. More info: easternshorewriters.org

TidalHealth Penguin Swim: January 1st, 2027 | 12 – 2 p.m. Benefiting TidalHealth hospital system, held at Princess Royale Oceanfront Resort. More info: tidalhealth.org/events/tidalhealth-penguin-swim

Maryland State Police Polar Bear Plunge: January 22 – 30, 2027 | Multiple daily plunges. Benefiting Special Olympics Maryland, held at Sandy Point State Park. More info: plungemd.com

Casey Cares Annual Gala: February 27, 2027 | 6:30 – 11 p.m. Benefiting Casey Cares, held at American Visionary Art Museum. More info: caseycares.org

CCA Southern Maryland Chapter Annual Fundraising Banquet: February 27, 2027 | 6 – 9:30 p.m. Benefiting Coastal Conservation Association's Southern Maryland Chapter, held at Calvert Marine Museum. More info: ccamd.org

Chefs for Habitat Gourmet Gala: March 20, 2027 | 7 – 10 p.m. Benefiting Habitat for Humanity, held at Wicomico Civic Center in Salisbury. More info: chefsforhabitat.org

Black Tie & Diamonds: March 20, 2027 | 6 – 10 p.m. Benefiting Rotary Club of Annapolis, held at Annapolis Graduate Hotel. More info: annapolisrotary.org

Annapolis Film Festival: April 1 – 4, 2027 | Showings daily, 9 a.m. – 9 p.m. Benefiting Annapolis Film Festival and arts programs, held at multiple venues in Annapolis. More info: annapolisfilmfestival.com

Blue Ribbon Bash: April 17, 2027 | 6 – 9:30 p.m. Benefiting Blue Ribbon Project, held at Severna Park Elks Lodge. More info: blueribbonproject.org

UJ "5 Strong" Annual Gala '27: April 24f, 2027 | 5:30 – 10 p.m. Benefiting Unstoppable Joy at Oceans Downs Casino in Berlin. More info: unstoppablejoyco.org

The Blue-Ribbon Open House and Family Fun Day: May 15, 2027 | 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Benefiting Blue Ribbon Project. More info: blueribbonproject.org

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Email us directly with a request to add your event: editor@whatsupmag.com

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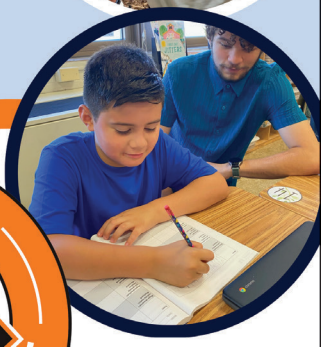
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"Care here means more than managing pain. It means making room for a person to be fully human, not just a patient."

This is what's at the heart of both centers: The medical equipment and clinical expertise are constant. So is the space carved out for rest, for love, for joy, for connection. Care here means more than managing pain. It means making room for a person to be fully human, not just a patient. There are no visiting hours. Sleeper sofas allow family members to stay close, day and night.

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The care team also believes it's important to honor the lives people have lived and the ways they have served others. Military Honor Salutes recognize veterans for their service to their country. Nurse Honor Salutes celebrates patients who spent their careers caring for others, offering gratitude for a lifetime of compassion and dedication.

And when someone comes to the center without family or friends who are nearby, they are never alone. Vigil Volunteers sit with patients in their final days, offering a reassuring presence. It is a simple but profound act of kindness that ensures no one has to walk this journey by themselves.

Not every stay at the inpatient centers is focused on end of life. They also provide respite care, giving family caregivers an opportunity to step away, rest and restore themselves, knowing their loved one is safe and comfortable, and receiving expert care. Sometimes, caring for a caregiver is one of the most important ways they can care for a patient.

At the Rebecca Fortney and Charles Inpatient Care Centers, life doesn't pause at the door. It continues in conversations, celebrations, shared meals, quiet moments and expressions of love, finding its way in, again and again, in the most unexpected ways.

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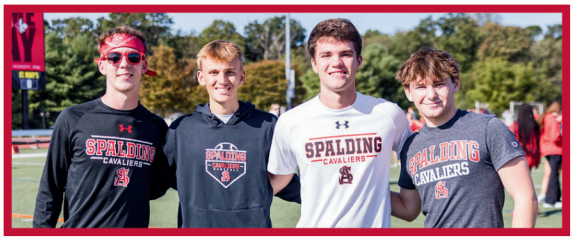
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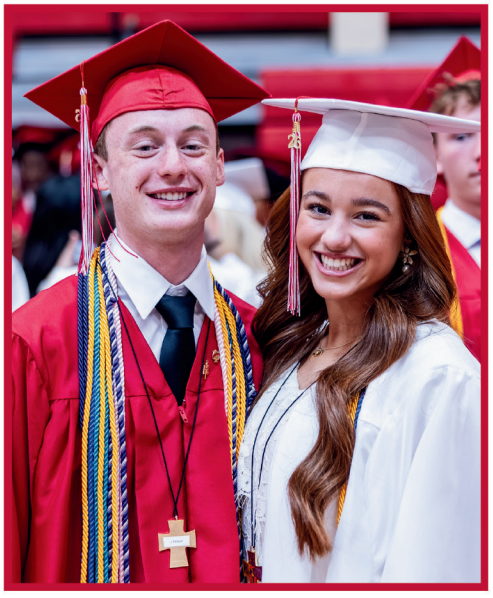
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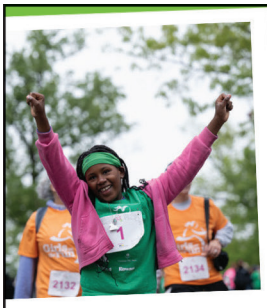




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We thank you for having fun with this project, contributing your photos, and voting for your favorites. Enjoy!



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FIRST PLACE WINNER

BISCUIT

Submitted by Jennifer Holland

"Biscuit's favorite chapter? Story time with our students. Meet Biscuit, the heart (and paws) of St. Mary's School. More than just our beloved school dog, Biscuit's gentle presence inspires confidence, sparks a love of reading, and reminds our students that learning is always better together. And if Biscuit could talk, she'd tell you how proud she is that the St. Mary's community regularly supports the SPCA through donations, helping other dogs and cats find the same love and care she enjoys every day."



SECOND PLACE

MARSHALL

Submitted by Jill Hannon

"Hi, my name is Marshall. Sir Marshall Stack officially. I was named after a guitar amplifier and my human Dad's middle name is Marshall. Mom says I'm too much of a dude sometimes, but I just like to keep her on her toes!"

THIRD PLACE

SPENCER

Submitted by Grace Finnegan

"Returning champion...still winning hearts, Spencer is the official greeter at Lee Nannette's of Annapolis Hair Salon, where every great haircut begins with a wagging tail. He welcomes every client with gentle kisses and his signature nose bump in hopes of earning a treat. A certified service dog with a background in pet therapy, Spencer has a remarkable gift for making everyone feel at home. He reminds us every day that the smallest acts of kindness—a wagging tail, a loving heart, and a warm welcome—can make the biggest difference."



RUNNER UP ENTRIES

ROUNDING OUT THE TOP 10 IN VOTES RECEIVED

LUIGI

Submitted by Clare Vanderbeek

"We adopted Luigi in late-2009 from Lab-Rescue LRCP, an organization which has placed about 1,000 surrendered labs annually. Luigi was, bar none, the perfect dog in every sense: obedient, affectionate and goofy. This picture of Luigi was taken the first time he played in snow."





SALINAS

Submitted by Jocelyn Vazquez

"Salinas likes to stay cool for the summer!"

RUNNER UP ENTRIES

ROUNDING OUT THE TOP 10 IN VOTES RECEIVED



ADDIE

Submitted by Chan Mee Huffman

"In a world full of roses, be a sunflower!"



KADEN

Submitted by Chan Mee Huffman

"Kaden loves the outdoors, especially paddleboarding with Capital SUP! He especially likes to jump off the board and play fetch!"





CHARLOTTE

Submitted by Debbie Hardie

"Charlotte is a 3-year-old Tibetan Terrier. She is a certified Pet Therapy Dog through Pet Partners and Caring Canines. She also has her AKC Canine Good Citizen title as well as her AKC Trick Dog Novice title. We volunteer weekly at Anne Arundel Medical Center visiting patients and staff. She also provides support to youth witnesses at the Circuit Court by being in the witness box with them. We participate at Wellness House and Camp Sunrise. She always makes people smile with her sweet face and personality!"



LATTE

Submitted by Madeleine Harbin

"That gentle nudge at your ankle? That's Latte politely asking for more treats. Never late to a breakfast of fresh greens. Can be bribed with banana and watermelon treats to participate in her seasonal photo shoots. Rescued from South Carolina and resides in Annapolis in her furever home."

NINA

Submitted by Cheryl Gray

"I've had many dogs throughout my life, but there will never be another Nina. She was truly one of a kind—a funny, adventurous companion who brought our family so much joy. Of all her adventures, biking was her absolute favorite. The moment she heard me filling my water bottle, she knew what was coming. She would start barking excitedly and spinning in circles, eager to hit the trail. Over the years, we shared hundreds of miles together, creating memories I'll cherish forever. Sadly, kidney disease took her from this world far too soon. While she's no longer by my side, her spirit, her enthusiasm, and the love we shared will remain in my heart forever."

HOLIDAY

Gift Guide



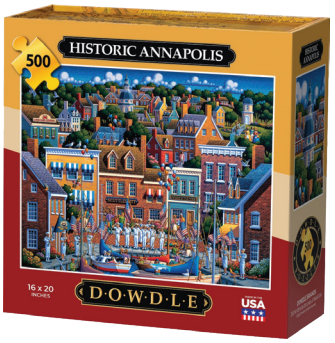
1. Acorn candles. Hollow No. 3 candle — 6 oz — $25.00 (grey acorn, Autumn No. 7 candle — 4.5 oz — $20.00 (copper), The Lovejoy Project, 8268 Veterans Highway, Suite 6, Millersville MD, 410-999-5893, Hello@thelovejoyproject.com



2. Custom Prints by Jay Fleming. Jay Fleming Photography, 1415 Sonny Schulz Blvd., Suite B, Stevensville, MD 21666. Open by appointment; email jaypfleming@gmail.com to schedule. JayFlemingPhotography.com



3. Gift a Creative Experience at a Resin Room DIY Workshop. Prices vary. The Resin Room, 209 West St., Annapolis, MD, 667-299-5920, TheResinRoomDIY.com



4. Historic Annapolis Puzzle. 500 pieces, $24. Museum of Historic Annapolis, 99 Main Street, 410-267-7619, annapolis.org



5. Kim Hovell Decoupage Ornaments. Prices vary. Kim Hovell Fine Art, 151 Main Street, Annapolis MD, 410-709-8247, kimhovell.com



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HOLIDAY Gift Guide 2026



7. **Receive a $40 bonus with qualifying gift card purchases starting Black Friday.** Carrol's Creek Cafe, 410 Severn Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21403, 410-263-8102, carrolscreek.com



8. **Personalized Bottle Etching.** Make a favorite bottle a personal gift with in-store etching. A thoughtful choice for holiday hosts, friends, and family. All-store bottle etching November 27, 12–6 p.m. Prices vary. Fishpaws Marketplace, 954 Ritchie Highway, Arnold, MD, 410-647-7363, fishpawsmarket.com



9. **Make Holiday Entertaining Deliciously Easy with Graze Craze Charcuterie Boards!** Prices vary, Graze Craze of Odenton, 8383 Piney Orchard Pkwy, Odenton, MD, 410-650-2502, whatsup.grazecrazeodenton.com



10. **CocoSong Extraordinary Eyewear Collection.** Priced from $509, McNelly Optical, 2002 Medical Pkwy, Sajak Pavilion, #615, Annapolis, MD, 410-573-2822, mcnellyoptical.com



11. **Limited Edition: 12 Days of Flavor - All Star Blends OR Top Tea Sips**. $39.99, The Spice & Tea Exchange of Annapolis, 155 Main Street, Annapolis, MD. spiceandtea.com/annapolis

HOLIDAY Gift Guide 2026



12. **Gourmet Charcuterie.** A savory gift for hosts and food lovers, ideal for holiday gatherings or an evening with friends. Prices vary. Fishpaws Marketplace, 954 Ritchie Highway, Arnold, MD, 410-647-7363, fishpawsmarket.com



13. **Galway Bay Authentic Irish Eggnog Liqueur.** $24.99/bottle or $144 half-case (6 bottles) + tax, Galway Bay Irish Pub & Whiskey Bar, 63 Maryland Avenue, Annapolis, MD, 410-263-8333, galwaybaymd.com



14. **Pearls, Gold & A Little Sparkle.** Prices vary, starting at $1,875, Zachary's Jewelers, 100 Main St., Annapolis, MD, 410-266-5555, zacharysjewelers.com



15. **Sip In Style!** For the whiskey lover on your list, explore Fishpaws' premium single-barrel collection and choose a bottle worth savoring. Prices vary Fishpaws Marketplace, 954 Ritchie Highway, Arnold, MD, 410-647-7363, fishpawsmarket.com



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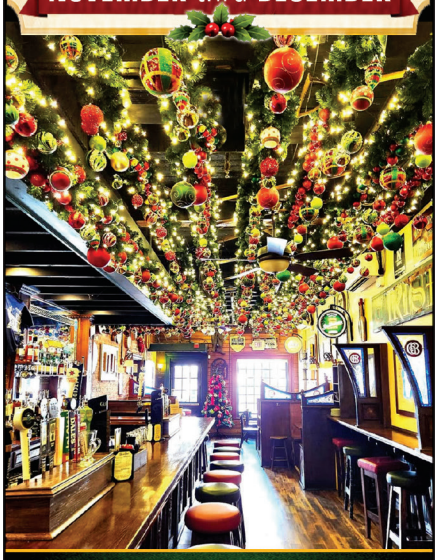
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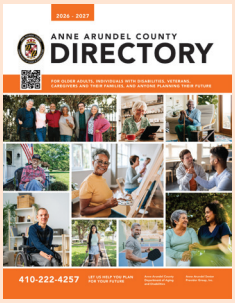
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THE FUSE NIGHTCLUB AND OPPORTUNITY BUILDERS, INC. OFFER AN INCLUSIVE SOCIAL EXPERIENCE FOR THE COMMUNITY





Story and photography by Laura Wiegmann





An often-neglected snippet of age-old wisdom about ourselves, our neighbors, community, and society holds that, "when we choose to accept our differences, we may realize our commonalities." A special, nonprofit nightclub in Anne Arundel County seems to have unlocked this ethos.



The Fuse dance floor is packed with enthusiastic attendees.

THE HISTORY

Marsha Legg, CEO of the nonprofit Opportunity Builders, Inc. (OBI), has long had a passion for helping the special-needs community, wanting to provide new ways to enrich lives. More than a decade ago, when she was working with leadership at the League for People with Disabilities, Inc., she and others on her team came up with an idea to create a monthly nightclub experience for this community. Located in the Baltimore area, it was the first such nightclub in Maryland. This was... and still is... a place for special-needs individuals to go out and have a good time—a place with music and dancing, and easy to visit because they can bring caregivers along. It was dubbed Club 1111, named after its address at 1111 E. Cold Spring Lane, and has been so successful that in April 2025, it celebrated its 10th anniversary.

Legg was so thrilled with the community participation at Club 1111 that it became her inspiration for what came next. When she became CEO of the Millersville-based nonprofit OBI in August of 2020, she saw that the organization's headquarters had room for hosting a similar nightclub experience. After all, the mission of OBI is to "support youth and adults with disabilities to experience full inclusion in their communities as they learn, work, and pursue their paths to personal success."

Legg immediately began laying out plans for the site, excited to turn it into another venue for the individuals she serves and many others to congregate. Like Club 1111, the new nightclub would be held monthly and have the participation of many popular local bands. Unlike its counterpart, this club would be fully inclusive, also incorporating a bar (actually three bars!) with both alcohol and non-alcohol options, as well as opportunities for food onsite. Her vision, with the help of many volunteers (including Leadership Anne Arundel), created the club known as The Fuse.

Now operating for more than one year, the club opens its doors on the first Saturday of each month (moving occasionally for holidays) and welcomes anyone interested in coming to hang out with friends and hear a great band—and anyone who wants to be a part of something truly unique. On a typical night, the percentage of special-needs and non-disabled patrons is close to 50/50.

The Fuse celebrated its first anniversary in May of this year, holding the monthly event as usual, but with a giant VIP "pre-game" event beforehand under a tent at the back of the building.



It was the club's first fundraiser, designed to both celebrate the present success of the endeavor and generate additional funding to improve and enlarge the experience for everyone. One thing was clear on this night: everyone connected with this phenomenon was enthusiastic.



The Boh Daddies perform at The Fuse nightclub.



Marcia Legg, center, with OBI staff at The Fuse's Halloween party night.

The Experience

As you enter the building, staff welcome you and collect the cover charge that helps make it all happen. The Fuse is a nonprofit with a mission, and though the bands work with the organization (and accept less pay) to support the mission, there are expenses involved with such an event. Just down the hallway, several volunteers create a welcoming atmosphere and answer questions. At the end of that hall, there's also a merch table.

From here, you can turn right and take a short walk to the biggest and most eventful room...the dance hall with the band. There is a bar to the right of entry, or you can purchase drinks further inside, where glowsticks also are for sale—a bright, fun accoutrement to the nightclub experience.

A different, locally popular band performs each month. Legg books bands that play regularly at local clubs and have a dedicated following. Some of the bands that have enjoyed playing at The Fuse include Kanye Twitty, Oracle, Side Hustle, and the Boh Daddies, among others. These bands keep people on their feet and are excited to be there, with professional stage lighting and a presence that is on par with any other nightclub. There is a huge floor for dancing, tables for sitting or just hanging out, and a photo booth at the back of the room.

If you get hungry, the door at the back of this room is where you can walk outdoors to visit onsite food trucks. On pleasant evenings, it's also a great place to get some air or have a conversation away from the music.

At the other end of the hall is another room with a DJ playing popular favorites from a variety of periods and genres. Though there is also good music here, the energy is different, making it a little more comfortable for those that are hesitant to jump in with both feet. There is also a Sensory Lounge to provide a quieter, soothing space for someone who needs to take a bit of a break from the intensity of the music and the crowd.



Tending bar at The Fuse is always a lively experience.



The band Alter Ego performs at The Fuse's October Halloween event.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

Generally, The Fuse occurs on the first Saturday of the month from 6 to 10 p.m. (next date: November 7th), with an occasional holiday exception, and always at the OBI headquarters building on Veterans Highway in Millersville. The entry cover can be paid in advance online, up to noon the day of the event—the cost has been $10. This is a good idea because sometimes, the event sells out. If you miss that window, the charge is $15 at the door. Visit obiworks.org/the-fuse for up to date information and tickets purchases.

If you've never had a relationship with someone who has a disability, or you have never spent time in this type of environment, you may not know what to expect, how to respond, or feel uncertain about what might happen around you. An open mind and eagerness to have fun is all that you need. You might even make a friend.

The Fuse is a place where you can just be yourself. It isn't that different from other nightclub venues; the music is loud and you will hear songs that you enjoy. Attendees enjoy camaraderie and with good music, most everyone is uninhibited, spending much of the evening on the dance floor.

Legg says that the biggest challenge to creating an inclusive club is attracting people without disabilities to come. If you don't come for the new experience, come for the band; they are all great. Come to hang out with your friends, take it slow, and let the spirit of the event wash over you. If you have a good time, come again, and tell someone else about it. Slightly cheaper drinks, great bands, food trucks, and feel good supporting a worthwhile mission.



Opportunity Builders, Inc. CEO Marcia Legg with attendees Shannon Rosenthal and Destinee Edwards.

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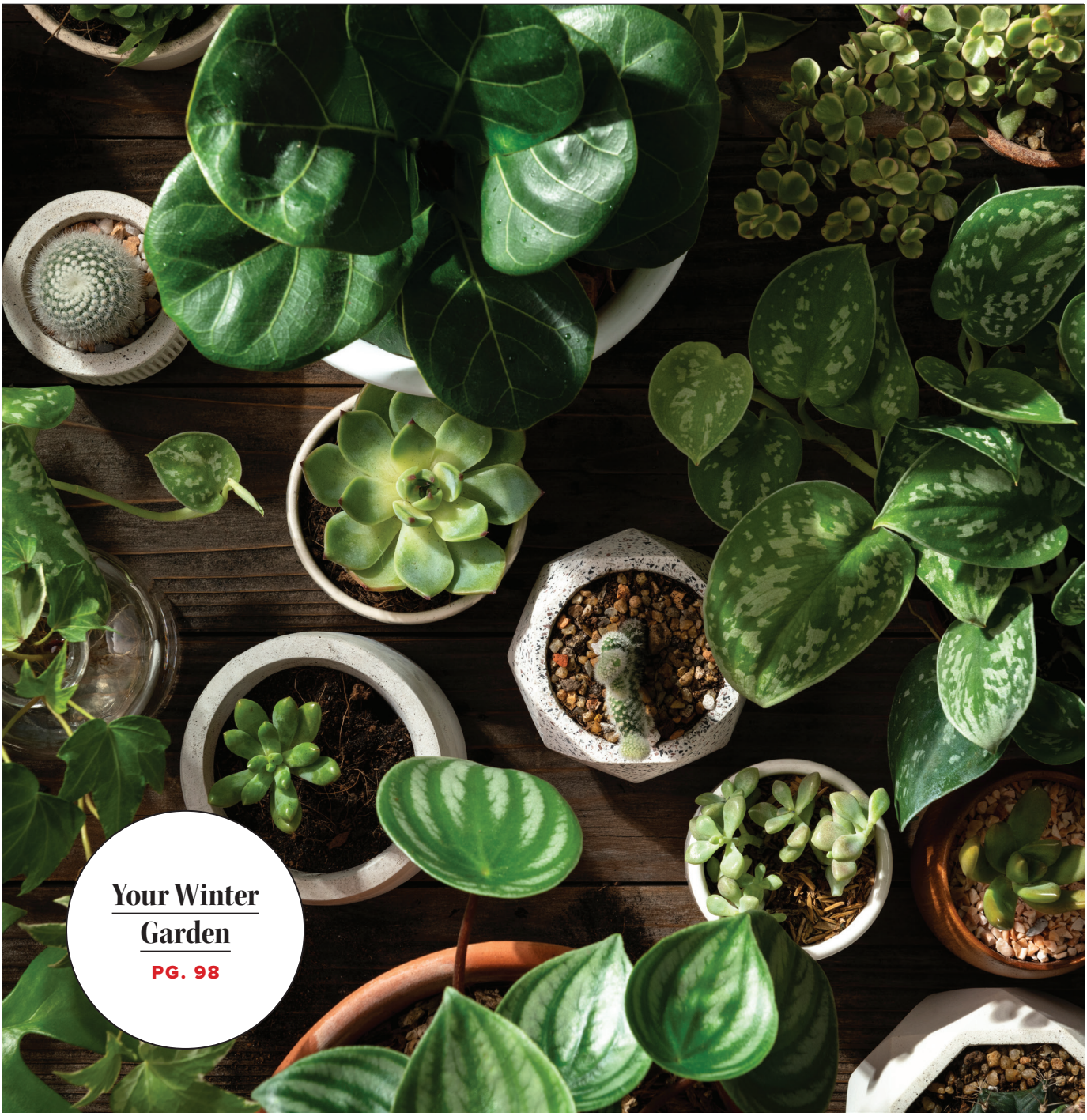
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Home & Garden

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Your Winter Garden

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Cozy Home Holiday

By Lisa J. Gotto

It's the most wonderful time of the year! And if you love celebrating and entertaining, retailers are ready with their finest tabletop options for all the holidays you honor. This year our theme is homespun inspiration, which focuses on elements of the natural world and nostalgia to instill the feeling of love and togetherness that help make these days at the end of the calendar year the ones we look forward to the most. Here's what's on the cozy home list this year!



A return to a Classic Flatware Silhouette

Like the jewelry you wear to accent your wardrobe, the utensils you choose to grace your dinner table should convey a subtle statement. This five-piece Ashton brushed silver set combines a classic silhouette with an antique-inspired tumbled finish. And the perfectly proportioned oar-shaped handles on slender stems pull in just a dash of nautical panache to our Chesapeake tabletop schemes.



Traditional Color Pops

This year we're focusing on the nostalgia and tradition of the "red and green" Christmas dinner table and these gorgeous French linen napkins with their rustic gooseberry design will complement the cranberry sauce on your Thanksgiving Day table, so you can really put them to work! Made of 100 percent cotton, these Anand square napkins from perogold.com feature a natural pattern in rich vermilion and mossy green set against a simple ivory background that is all at once tasteful, homespun, and timeless, for whatever wintertime feast is offered at your table.



THE STONEWARE SET OF THE SEASON

Inspired by the color of the herb, thyme, this Le Creuset Heritage Thyme Five-Piece Stoneware Bakeware Set chose a refreshing earthy hue for its gray-green enamel glaze, and every piece is so attractive, it will go right from your oven to your tabletop in stylish fashion. This design is said to be inspired by the early days of this legendary homeware brand with its vintage scalloped detail. So, bake and serve that cherished pie recipe, that bread that everyone loves, and your traditional side dishes in suburb style this season.



IT'S THE GREAT PUMPKIN CLOCHE!

Not only is this a great piece for your Thanksgiving and Christmas tabletops, it's sparkly presence would work splendidly on your countertop until spring! This glass pumpkin cloche comes with an all-occasion white mango wood base that was sustainably sourced. The gorgeous pumpkin-shaped lid is made of mouth-blown soda lime glass creating a solid and stunning tabletop presentation.



When Presentation is Everything

Whether you're serving an assortment of appetizers or bite-size desserts, you can easily transport and display your culinary and confectionary creations on this whimsical two-tiered stand and create an engaging focal point for the table in the process. This Fantastical Forest-themed stand is handcrafted from stoneware and zinc alloy and hand-painted with a green glaze finish. And we can definitely see this piece making a lovely addition to your Thanksgiving table, as well.

Serving Up Memories

Your dinner plates are the key ingredients in your tabletop recipe, so choose wisely and you'll be serving meals that look as good as they taste for years to come! We loved these Christmas in the Country Dinner Plates from Pottery Barn for their simplicity and charm. Crafted of stoneware with a subtle reactive glaze, this plate design evokes memories of a snowy holiday with an air of fragrant balsam.



HAPPY TOASTS START HERE!

Bring out your best of the season vintages in these vintage-style Celestial White Wine Glasses from Terrain. These pretty little pick-me-ups are beautifully and intentionally hand-painted so no two are exactly alike. And when you choose this sweet design, you're bound to use them to ring in the New Year, too. Cheers!



Your Winter Garden



By Janice F. Booth

Americans are noted for spending up to 90 percent of our time indoors. Yes, we live within closed spaces: our homes, our offices, schools, churches, banks, and stores. While indoors, we are not usually connected with nature—not the birds or bees, not the trees, shrubs, or even domesticated plants. But research has shown that there are benefits to bringing nature indoors. Why not start with what we commonly call "house plants"?

We might be able to help lower our blood pressure, improve our cognition, and relieve some of our mental fatigue. All we need to do is introduce plants into our homes or simply refresh and re-pot the house plants we've nursed along all summer.

Let's review the basics of choosing and maintaining houseplants. Then, I'll suggest some of the easiest and hardiest plants for indoors. Finally, I'll point out some potential problems as your indoor garden grows.

STEP ONE

Review the areas and hours of sunlight in the windows that will be available for potted plants. This is an essential step unless you're lucky enough to have a conservatory with sunlight everywhere. While you're taking stock, are there air vents or heat ducts that could impact plants, causing them to dry out or deal with heat or chilly drafts?

STEP TWO

Evaluate the humidity levels in the rooms and areas where plants are being added. Some homes have automatic humidifiers, some have none. Some of us have tried the shallow pots with pebbles and water for added moisture in the air. (This pretty solution does not work if you have indoor pets; they'll drink all the water.) In the areas that are dry, you'll want to stick with aloe and other succulents; they tolerate dry conditions; they're low maintenance and exotic.

STEP THREE

Plan the plants. If you want to bring indoors some of the more exotic and fragile plants from your garden, make a list of them. Then, consider how much time and energy you'll want to devote to your indoor gardening. Based on that, how many houseplants do you have and how many will you want to add to your home? A few plants from the garden that enjoy a winter vacation indoors are Calla lily, Canna lily, and those dramatic Alocasia; herbs, too, can do well indoors during the winter.

STEP FOUR

Prep work for your indoor garden begins now. Choose pots that will look just right in your home. If they have drain holes, you'll want a waterproof saucer beneath the pots. If the pots you choose do not have drain holes, try to find some "liners"—usually plastic pots from the nursery that do have drain holes and can fit inside the decorative pots you've chosen. Then, prepare fresh soil for your pots and plants. Do not use soil from the garden or "old" soil that your plants may have been sitting in for months or even years. Fresh "potting soil" gives your plants a burst of energy and encourages healthy growth.

STEP FIVE

Plant selections: You've gone into your garden and dug up those few precious plants that will enjoy a winter vacation in your house. (Be sure they don't hibernate. If they do, you'll be disappointed when they look sad the entire winter.) Now, have some fun at the local nursery purchasing a few reliable houseplants. (Take that list you prepared so you don't forget how many garden plants you've moved inside already.) Some of the reliable plants you may purchase, or get from friends are:

Rubber trees (reasonably tall with large, glossy leaves) These are noted for their valuable feng shui benefits. **Snake plants** (spare and angular, with long individual leaves). **Pothos** (trailing vines with mid-size heart-shaped leaves). **Aloe vera** (small, chubby spikes rising from the plants center, a lovely light green color, and great as first aid for small burns). **Spider plant** (no spiders involved). Flouncy, slender leaves, often variegated, with long stems and tiny plants—the spiders descending from the parent plant. **Prayer plant** (rather large oval leaves of variegated greens with the underside usually russet or red). **Boston fern** (they do require cool spaces with soft light; their beautiful fronds are deep green with tiny white blossoms occasionally)

There are many other popular houseplants. So much depends on your level of involvement and your home's climate. You may want to prepare for some trial-and-error, replacing the sorry looking philodendron with a perky spider plant.







STEP SIX

Nothing is perfect, even your "Eden" in the family room. So, let me offer a few cautions to keep in mind as your indoor garden flourishes.

- Be careful when watering your indoor plants. Even though most houseplants require very little watering (once a week or less) you still might find yourself over-zealous or in a rush. I have more than a few dark spots on my oak floors where water has dripped out of a plant pot or dish and remained on my floor too long. The same discoloring happens if we become too generous when watering and splashed water settles on our rugs.
- There is a chance of mold indoors, particularly if over-watering is a problem. Better to err on the side of dry plant soil. (It's easier to restore a dry plant than to wring-out a wet one.) Small children are vulnerable to mold, so keep that in mind.
- If you have a pet, be aware that some plants can cause tummy aches or worse. We're all aware of the warnings about our lovely poinsettias during the holidays. But even the lovely peace lilies can make a pet sick.

Whether this will be your first attempt at keeping an indoor garden, or you're trying again to keep plants alive indoors over the winter, I think you'll find satisfaction and even some admiration from your family and guests as your beautiful plants flourish indoors.

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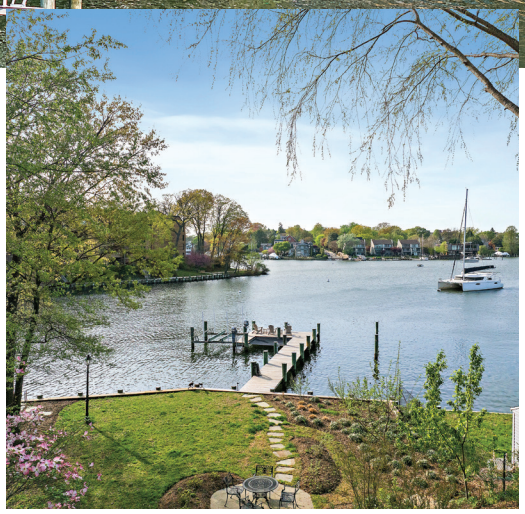

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Impeccable and Distinct on Spa Creek

By Lisa J. Gotto



Primary Structure Built: 2009

Sold For: $6,200,000

Original List Price: $6,950,000

Bedrooms: 4

Baths: 4

Living Space: 3,887 Sq. Ft.

Lot Size: .17 acres

An exceptional location and a superior build and layout make this 3,800-square-foot family home a classic waterfront residence with coastal appeal.

A façade of misty grey cedar shakes and white tapered columns welcome guests to the lovely wood and glass-paneled front door of this charming Eastport abode. Once inside, the home's sightlines lead past a gorgeous set of stairs to an open floorplan with craftsman flair and living, dining, and kitchen windows overlooking the creek.

Handsome, honey-colored hardwood floors flow underneath and a wealth of custom millwork highlight this home's outstanding architectural features. From classic white wood beams overhead to the attractive, two-sided gas fireplace gracing the living and dining rooms, quality workmanship abounds.

These spaces are large, sunny, and are uniquely situated to take advantage of the home's perched positioning above Spa Creek. The kitchen is a chef's dream with its large central island, custom integrated cabinetry, and stainless-steel gas range—all arranged so the chef can be part of the fun when entertaining.

Photography by Michele Sheiko | Chesapeake Home







This floor of the home offers a large bedroom or potential office with a wall of custom built-ins, while the spacious primary suite is located on the second floor. This room is sunny, tranquil, and features a lovely gas fireplace with seating area and a private waterside balcony. Its *en suite* bath has his-and-hers vanities, a jetted garden tub, and a huge, glass panel shower.

There are two additional large bedrooms on this floor and another full bath. Another guest bedroom and bath is located on the home's finished lower level that also features a huge family room with an attractive stone fireplace, wet bar, and a custom wall of built-ins.

Outside, the home boasts a sunny first floor deck easily accessed from the living and dining spaces, and terraced steps down to the backyard and water with its 76-feet of bulkheaded waterfront, kayak storage, a resurfaced pier that offers 6-plus feet of water depth, and a 10,000-pound boat lift.





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Remarkable Four Square Charm Upgraded

By Lisa J. Gotto

This signature property located mere steps from Spa Creek is a fine example of what Old World sensibility and modern engineering and design can do. Built in 1911, this fine four-square style home located in Murray Hill was exquisitely updated in 2021; leaving no style stone un-turned.

Primary Structure Built: 1911

Sold For: $3,290,000

Original List Price: $3,500,000

Bedrooms: 5

Baths: 4 Full, 1 Half

Living Space: 4,298 Sq. Ft.

Lot Size: . 17 acres

From the moment of entry, the welcoming foyer reminds you of what quality craftsmanship brings to a dwelling with its richly-toned hardwood floors, space to add a statement-making entry table, an enchanting staircase, and elements of classic millwork.

A set of glass French doors provide entry to the formal living room with its air of relaxed opulence and fine details. The space features an entire room of tasteful built-ins accented with smart backsplash wallpaper and shelf lighting, a gorgeous chandelier, and a striking stone fireplace with built-ins on either side.

Photography by In-Vision Fotography

This room flows into a spacious dining room and kitchen well suited for entertaining. The large, gourmet kitchen with gray, custom cabinetry features a contrasting center island topped with gleaming quartzite and outfitted with an apron sink and stools for breakfast bar seating. The stainless steel gas range is a work of art with its custom hood crafted in the French style and an exceptionally well-designed earthen tile backsplash.

The dining room offers plenty of room for Sunday family dinners and anyone who works from home here has the good fortune of a sublimely sunny office adjacent to the dining room.











Located a short flight of steps from here is the home's sunken family room with its walls of windows, dramatic arched ceiling, and elegant stone fireplace. This happy, holistic space opens up to the home's spacious back deck and a yard with plenty of room to run.

This home features three large bedrooms and two full baths on the second level, and a large, primary suite that takes up the entire third floor. This space offers a custom closet and dressing room and an amazing *en suite* bath with soaking tub, a gorgeous, stone-topped double vanity, and large, walk-in shower with a glass door and luxe tile treatment.

On the home's lower level, there's another large family gathering area, perfect for movie nights, and another guest bedroom with full bath.

A completely gorgeous family home that offers a refined yet restive style of living.











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Health & Beauty

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The Case for Creatine

By Dylan Roche



Creatine—it's a supplement you'll hear about over and over again in fitness circles. It's not exactly a protein, although it does come from three amino acids, which are the building blocks of protein. Instead, creatine is a natural compound that delivers energy to parts of your body, primarily your muscles. This is why it's used to improve workout performance training.

But it's also the subject of a lot of misconception and hype. People have concerns about it, unrealistic expectations, or simple skepticism. The good news is that creatine has been one of the most widely researched supplements for decades.

BUT IT'S ALWAYS GOOD TO DISPEL THE MYTHS AND FOCUS ON THE FACTS…

Myth: Creatine miraculously grows muscle mass.

Fact: Creatine can aid in fitness performance and building muscle, but it's not a miracle worker. Our bodies naturally produce creatine and store it in our muscles. Supplementing our body's creatine could improve athletic performance, especially with high-intensity exercises. Having greater power during these short bursts of physical activity, along with improved recovery, can give you an advantage in your fitness goals—but that's more because it improves your ability to lift weights, not because it prompts muscle growth. But supplemental creatine isn't just for fitness junkies: Studies show creatine can improve cognitive function, making your mind sharper. It can also strengthen bones.

Myth: Creatine causes weight gain.

Fact: Creatine draws water into your muscle cells, so any initial weight gain (or size) you gain will simply be from water retention. Over the long term, your improved exercise performance could cause you to build more lean muscle mass. But changes on the scale are not because creatine is causing fat gain.

Myth: Creatine dehydrates you.

Fact: Because creatine draws water into your muscle cells, this actually *improves* hydration rather than dehydrating you. Just make sure you're consuming plenty of water when you take your supplements. The improved cell hydration gives your body an improved ability to withstand heat stress and reduces your risk of injury.

Myth: Creatine causes kidney damage.

Fact: When creatine breaks down in the body, it becomes another compound called creatinine (confusing, because their names are similar). Creatinine is a normal byproduct excreted by the kidneys, and so supplemental creatine can cause a rise in blood creatinine levels, which in turn can cause a false positive for kidney stress on routine blood panels. However, research shows that standard doses of supplemental creatine won't hurt your kidneys.

As with any supplement, ask your doctor about what's best for you.



Healing Well

LITTLE THINGS MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE IN HEALTH CARE

By Dylan Roche

What makes a great health care center? Even when all services are the same, your experience might be slightly different depending on where you go.

Whether you're going in for an elective procedure or life-saving treatment, here are four metrics you might consider when you're determining what makes the best hospital, according to sources that focus on this type of assessment.

The Objective Measures: This one is the easiest to determine and arguably the most important. When *U.S. News & World Report* releases its annual list of best hospitals—which includes several Maryland hospital systems—the publication looks at outcomes using data from records of patient care, specifically looking at things like risk-adjusted mortality rates and preventable complications.

The Patient Experience: After looking at outcomes, consider how a hospital makes patients feel. The Picker Institute, an international charity focused specifically on improving health and social care through research into patient experience, measures medical centers based on principles of person-centered care, including the speed of access to reliable advice and how much emotional support, empathy, and respect a patient receives.

The Healing Spaces: Patients deserve to heal in a comfortable environment—not just because it's enjoyable but also because it's better for recovery. The nonprofit Center for Health Design focuses on how environment affects patients, their family, and the staff taking care of them. Everything from natural light and views of nature to the right acoustics and a sense of privacy can support the emotional and psychological well-being of those who are receiving and providing care.

The Coordination and Continuity: The World Health Organization emphasizes that the best health care centers are those that are integrated for a seamless patient experience. Any patient who has ever had to navigate disconnected providers knows how stressful it can be, especially when timeliness is a factor and proper communication between all specialists is crucial. Coordinated health services always serve a patient better than a separated collection of medical offices.



Check the Label Again

DON'T FALL FOR THE MARKETING TRICK OF "HEALTHWASHING"

By Dylan Roche

Choosing a healthy lifestyle can be enough of a challenge when there are so many unhealthy options around us all the time. But the challenge gets even worse when you realize some of your favorite healthy options might not be as healthy as you think they are.

That's right—sometimes *healthy* is a marketing ploy. In a way, it makes sense: Many consumers are trying to choose the healthy options, so food manufacturers want to tout the health benefits their products do have. In some cases, it's not necessarily false advertising. But if you're not looking at the full picture, or if you don't know what to look for, it's easy for the average person to fall victim to it.

IF YOU'RE LOOKING TO BE A LITTLE SAVVIER WHEN SCOUTING LABELS, HERE ARE A FEW COMMON CULPRITS YOU SHOULD LOOK OUT FOR:

HIGHLIGHTING ONE POSITIVE TRAIT WHILE IGNORING ANOTHER

When manufacturers try to "health-ify" a favorite food, they often have to make adjustments to ensure the taste is the same or similar enough. For example, you find a box of cookies or carton of ice cream that's advertised as low fat. That's great—until you realize the recipe replaces the fat with more sugar than the original recipe.

In some cases, this results in food being less nutritious. Low-fat peanut butter saves you a few calories, which sounds great for somebody who is trying to lose weight, until you realize the heart-healthy fat from peanuts is replaced with sugar, which will likely leave you less satisfied and hungrier later.

Another healthy trait you'll often see highlighted is "fortified," in which vitamins and minerals are added to less nutritious foods. That's not necessarily a bad thing, but extra vitamins and minerals won't counteract a high sugar content.

INGREDIENT SPLITTING

When you read the ingredient list on the back of the box, you probably already know the ingredients are listed in order of the amount the product has, with the primary ingredient listed first. Imagine looking at the ingredient list on a snack product like a granola bar and expecting to see sugar listed as the main ingredient—but surprisingly, it's not. In fact, the primary ingredient is oats. That's healthy enough!

But keep reading that ingredient list a little more closely. The only reason sugar is not the main ingredient is because it's been split up into many different forms/names: sucrose, glucose, malt syrup, molasses, agave nectar, and so on and so forth. These are all sweeteners that metabolize the same way as cane sugar, but because they're technically different ingredients, they can be listed as different ingredients that are used in lesser amounts.

THE PHRASE "MADE WITH"

Sure, a product could be made with something, but that doesn't guarantee it includes a significant amount. Candy can be made with real fruit, cereal can be made with whole grains, and chips can be made with real vegetables—but those ingredients are negligible. Your favorite spinach chips are just regular potato chips with a smidge of spinach powder, and those fruit snacks have a little bit of juice for flavoring.

"NATURAL" PRODUCTS

A product that's marketed as "natural" sounds great. Unfortunately, it means nothing. The term "natural" is regulated by the United States Department of Agriculture when it pertains to meat, poultry, and eggs—it means these foods are minimally processed with no artificial ingredients.

For other foods, it's a non-binding term that means a food has no artificial or synthetic ingredients, such as dyes. But refined flour is natural, as is oil, sugar, salt, and other ingredients you might be trying to limit. And while "organic" is strictly regulated by the USDA to mean a food's ingredients are grown without synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, or GMOs, the way the food is grown does not affect its nutritional value.

GLUTEN-FREE OR DAIRY-FREE PRODUCTS

Gluten-free and dairy-free products are healthier for people who are allergic to gluten and dairy, but these don't necessarily make a food more nutritious. In some cases, these alternatives could be more calorically dense than their regular counterparts, such as a gluten-free bread that's made with rice flour instead of wheat flour. A nut-based milk, such as almond milk or cashew milk, is a delicious option for somebody who doesn't consume dairy, but they do not have the same protein and calcium that dairy milk has.

FITNESS-RELATED MARKETING

Be wary of any food or beverage that's marketed for a fitness lifestyle, such as a protein bar or electrolyte drink. The benefits of these products assume you're living an active lifestyle—an electrolyte drink provides electrolytes your body needs if you're sweating heavily from exercise and sugar for quick energy, while a protein bar offers lots of supplemental protein. But the electrolytes in that sports drink aren't necessary if you're not sweating heavily, and the protein bar might have more protein than you need if you're not exercising, not to mention added sugar and fat.



SMARTER SHOPPING: HOW TO AVOID HEALTHWASHING

Just because healthwashing is commonplace doesn't mean you have to fall victim to it. Here are three tips for smarter shopping.

Pay attention to all aspects of the nutrition label: Reading the nutrition label will give you a broad picture, especially when you consider the serving size. Packages often contain more than one serving, but they'll adjust their marketing to match what appeals most to consumers. For example, it's only 100 calories if you eat one serving, which is only a quarter of the package; it has 20 grams of protein, but that's if you eat all four servings.

Focus on whole foods when you can: Minimally processed foods with shorter ingredient lists create fewer opportunities for deception. Every food won't be the right fit for every diet (for example, butter is high in saturated fat—not ideal for somebody who is trying to eat a heart-healthy diet), but it's still easier to keep track of what you're feeding yourself.

If something seems too good to be true, assume that it is: This isn't to say there's no such thing as a healthy cookie that tastes great. But if a food manufacturer is putting out a cookie that tastes that same but is marketed as a healthier option, there's probably a catch of some kind.



Virtually Beneficial

By Dylan Roche

"Face your fears."

It's easier said than done. But in some cases, therapists are turning to virtual reality as a valuable tool to treat anxiety and stress disorders surrounding common fears like flying on an airplane or crossing bridges. This practice, known as virtual reality therapy, uses the tech advances of immersive simulated environments to provide exposure in small, controlled amounts.

Does it work? That depends. It's certainly research-supported: Studies show virtual reality therapy can help with PTSD, OCD, anxiety disorder, panic disorder, and phobias. But as with any method of treatment, it depends on the provider and patient.

HERE ARE A FEW PROS AND CONS TO CONSIDER ABOUT VIRTUAL REALITY THERAPY:

It's easier and more affordable. Because exposure therapy relies on exposing a patient to their triggers, it isn't always practical. Booking a plane ticket or standing on the edge of a cliff isn't something you can do in the middle of a therapy session. When virtual reality recreates these environments, therapists and patients have easier access to them. **...BUT: It can still be expensive.** Virtual reality is much more affordable than taking multiple trips to a cliffside, but it still comes with expense. The VR goggles or headset used to simulate the environment visually and audibly requires an initial investment for therapists, who also may face learning gaps with this new technology and have to invest in training.

The therapist and patient have more control. Even though exposure therapy relies on exposing patients to triggers in a safe way, it doesn't always *feel* safe for the patient. They can still get upset and may need to cease the exposure. With virtual reality, a therapist can end the simulation immediately. It's not always possible to remove a patient from a triggering environment so quickly. Additionally, the therapist has the control to repeat the exposure over and over again. **...BUT: It can be uncomfortable.** While virtual reality comes with less emotional and physical danger, it's not always entirely comfortable. Some patients don't like the feeling of wearing the VR headsets, and they might suffer dizziness, nausea, or disorientation.

It's private. Many patients doing exposure therapy have the added stress of doing it in public. It can be embarrassing if they do not cope well with their triggering environment in front of strangers. Virtual reality lets them experience this environment in privacy where it's just them and their therapist. **...BUT: Not everyone responds to it.** Because patients know the environment is simulated, the exposure isn't as effective—they know this isn't a dangerous situation. The success of VR therapy depends on how much a patient is willing to buy into it. Relying on VR exposure also means they are facing less exposure to the real world, and real world exposure could ultimately be more beneficial.

It's still improving. Some high-quality virtual realities are realistic, with excellent graphics and sound. Others are less believable. But the technology is rapidly improving, and therapists are getting more comfortable using it. VR technology might be able to do much more in the near future. **...BUT: Therapists might have fewer signals to work with.** Even with all of the benefits VR therapy offers, therapists might find they don't give the best care when they're putting a patient in a simulated environment. Therapists often rely on subtle cues to assess their patients, such as a facial expression or shifting posture. These are hampered when the patient is wearing a VR headset.

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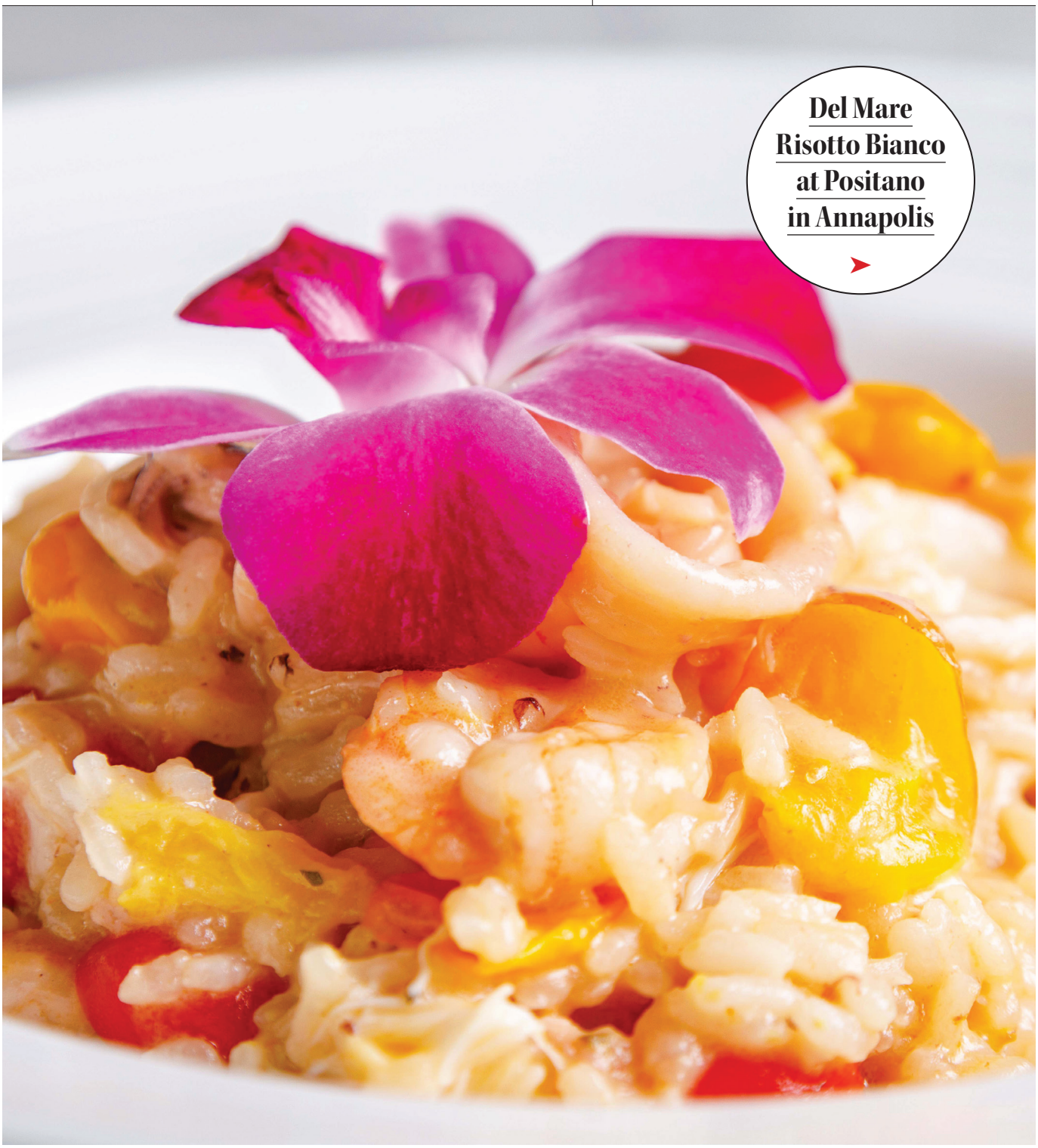
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BEST OF ANNAPOLIS 2026

Food & Dining

118 PUTTING THE NAPOLI IN *ANNAPOLIS*

121 READERS' DINING GUIDE



Del Mare Risotto Bianco at Positano in Annapolis

Photography by Laura Wiegmann

Putting the Napoli in *Annapolis*

By Mark Croatti



POSITANO

106 Annapolis Street, Annapolis • 410-621-9374 • positanoannapolis.com

Earlier this year, restaurateurs Brian Hovermale, Jamie Kujawski, and Lino DiMeo—the creative proprietors connected to Della Notte Restaurant & Wine Bar, Carpaccio Tuscan Kitchen & Wine Bar, and Yellowfin Steak & Fish House, among others—brought an exciting new eatery to West Annapolis: Positano Ristorante & Pizzeria. On a pleasant September evening, my family visited during Happy Hour (offering food and drink discounts from 3– 6 p.m. Monday–Friday).

Their Annapolis Street location exudes Italy's colors—a green, beautifully landscaped flora; a white, balconied façade; and red Compari umbrellas that shade ample outdoor seating. Just beyond a silver Vespa, the front doors open to a spectacular mural of Positano's waterfront (a seaside village on Italy's Amalfi coast); to its left, behind a glass pane (and seemingly bobbing in the mural's waves) is an enormous, 7-foot-tall Naples-style brick pizza oven handcrafted by Marra Forni, a Naples-founded manufacturer now headquartered in Maryland. This busy chamber—assembling mouthwatering toppings on homemade, hand-kneaded dough—faces a rectangular dining room engulfed in the dreamy scent of baking pizzas. A partition divides one section near the windows from another beside a well-stocked bar boasting two jumbo, flat screen televisions and an impressive variety of Italian and California wines, bottled and draft beers such as Peroni and Birra Moretti Lager, Italy-inspired cocktails, and "dessert" Martinis. Most nights, one or more owners are present; I saw DiMeo greeting patrons enthusiastically, as if welcoming them into his own home.



Our server Gabi cheerfully greeted us and described a broad spectrum of steak, short rib, chicken, sausage, seafood, and vegetable options plus the many "Artisan Pizzas" like the Margherita (a Napoli favorite) and the Americano (their #1 seller). We selected the Bacon Jam and Calabrian Chili Honey, a spherical delicacy featuring edges of airy, pillowy crust rising above a bright, vibrant tomato foundation; a scrumptious blend of milky mozzarella and indulgent, Italian Alps-Fontina cheeses; and an exquisite, magenta glaze—a curvy river drizzled from the crust to the tip on each hefty slice—combining bacon, apples, maple, cinnamon, and unsalted butter.

The thin, glistening, mild clover honey coating, infused with red chili peppers from Italy's Calabria region, made it literally drip with flavor (use the crust to absorb the honey!). Wonderfully sweet while pleasantly spicy, it was a moist, chewy, zesty sensation, the best pizza I've ever had.

Head Chef Lester Sican, certified in Napoletana pizza, strictly follows an original, Italian origin-only ingredient recipe; a specific preparation method; and a required cooking procedure—a comprehensive process protected by the European Union with the geographical certification *traditional specialty guaranteed* and recognized by the United Nations as an *intangible cultural heritage of humanity*. It's *that good*, so move over, New York, Chicago, and Detroit—Annapolis now makes America's finest pizza!

Photography by Laura Wiegmann



For our entrees, my oldest son chose Gnocchis—round potato dumplings swimming in a luscious, velvety, parmesan and soft Fontina cheeses. Enhanced with garlic, oregano, shallots, butter, and olive oil, the jewels were crowned with toasted breadcrumbs and succulent truffles (also available plain or with jumbo lump crab). My youngest son decided on Mac & Cheese from the inexpensive children's menu, but this is no basic cheddar concoction. The macaroni is immersed in a yummy, trio parmesan mix with heavy cream, salt, and pepper, and paired with a strawberry/blackberry medley or the tastiest restaurant French fries I've encountered yet.

Mamma's "Signature Selection" was Del Mare Risotto Bianco, white arborio rice slow cooked the Southern Italian way in a smooth clam stock with fresh herbs, and piled high with thick, elastic rings of Rhode Island calamari, tender Louisiana lump crab, springy Portuguese octopus, plump Venezuelan shrimp, chunky red tomatoes, and lush, yellow peppers. It was a maritime masterpiece in every bite!

Papa's "Pasta Specialty" was Pappardelle alla Crema Di Zucca E Pistachio—a mound of wide, flat, ribbon-shaped, porous egg noodles that deliciously grip the satiny, marigold sauce they're lathered in. An astounding pumpkin-pistachio puree swirled with heavy cream, butter, basil, oregano, parsley, diced zucchini, and shallots sauteed in olive oil until liquified. Topped with heavenly burrata (a pouch of soft, tangy, stracciatella encased in silky mozzarella) and sprinkled with crushed pistachios and shredded parmesan cheese, this hearty, piquant, peppery, and slightly nutty dish was deeply satisfying.







We split the Neapolitan Meatball starter—three beef and pork polpettones braised in olive oil before simmering for eight hours in an auburn broth of basil, oregano, parsley, garlic, salt, and D.O.P-certified (*designation of origin protected*) San Marzano heirloom plum tomatoes (grown in volcanic soil near Pompeii). These huge, juicy, tennis ball-sized medallions—accompanied by more burrata and golden-brown crostini slices—vanished beneath a flurry of four forks.

For dessert, Mom and Dad collectively indulged in two lavish treats simultaneously. The exceedingly moist Tiramisu's multiple levels juxtapose a luxurious, mascarpone cream frosting and ladyfingers soaked in Caffè Borghetti, a Milanese espresso liqueur; Giffard, a French Amaretto; and Crème de Cacao, a chocolate cordial. A cocoa powder dusting and an additional ladyfinger—long, sugary, and crunchy—complete this incomparably extravagant, brick-sized ensemble. The equally decadent Chocolate Layer Cake merges two fluffy clouds of light and dark chocolate under a dense fudge shell that has a hint of hazelnut. Both items are placed on chocolate syrup-striped plates next to a dollop of whipped cream and colorful berries. Our children enjoyed a sensational, creamy Italian gelato—medium chocolate, in between light and dark—by Bindi, a New York subsidiary of Sammontana Italia (it also comes in vanilla).

As we departed, we noticed several incentives to return that include rotating weekend specials and daily Brunch/Lunch from 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.—with breakfast and handheld listings ranging from omelettes, pancakes, waffles, and French Toast to burgers, subs, and sandwiches.

We greatly appreciated how everything here is *purposely* affordable. According to General Manager Chris Spencer, "We want to be fast and casual with a price point that attracts people, a neighborhood spot to gather and bring the kids, so 90 percent of our menu is $30 or less."

For an authentic Campania culinary adventure—on a budget—it's no longer necessary to go all the way to Italy; Positano Ristorante & Pizzeria has put the "Napoli" back in Annapolis!

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.

Readers' Dining Guide

Welcome to your regional dining. We include many restaurants for many tastes and experiences. Don't see your favorite on the list? Email editor@whatsupmag.com and let us know! And for the full guide, visit whatsupmag.com.

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Acqua Al 2
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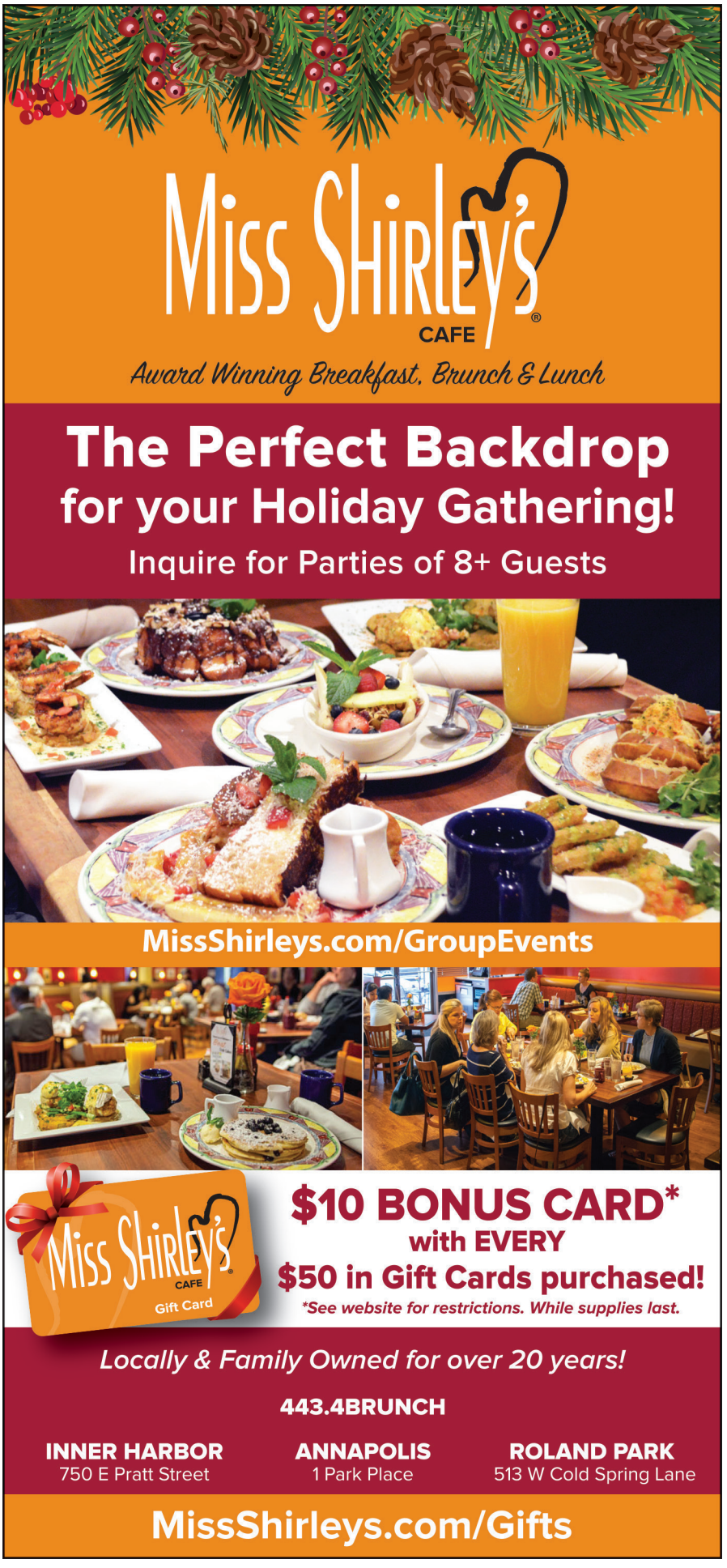
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25 Market Space, Annapolis; 443-949-0024; annapolis-markethouse.com $$ ●●

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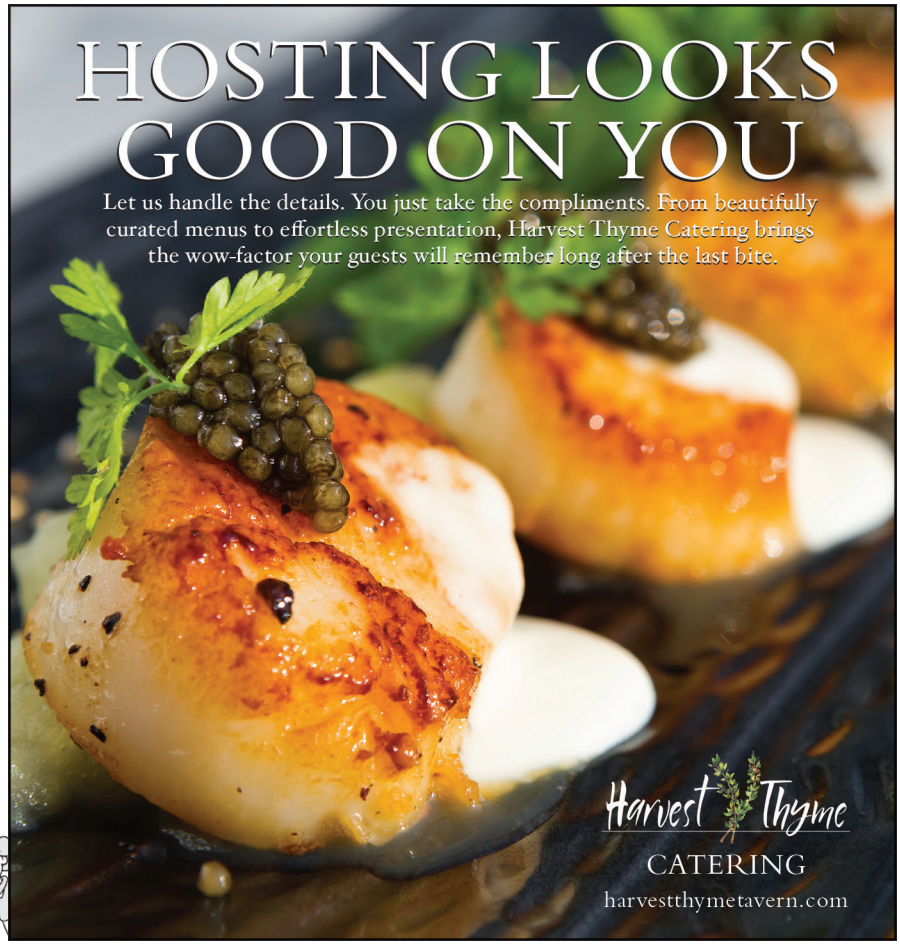
Armadillo's Bar and Grill
132 Dock Street, Annapolis; 410-280-0028 $$ ●

The Big Cheese
47 Randall Street, Annapolis; 410-263-6915; tbcsannapolis.com $ ●

Buddy's Crabs & Ribs
100 Main Street, Annapolis; 410-626-1100; buddysonline.com $$ ●●







Café Normandie
185 Main Street, Annapolis; 410-263-3382; cafenormandie.com $$ ●●

Capo Deli
139 Main Street, Annapolis; 410-304-3311; capodeli.com $ ●

Carpaccio Tuscan Kitchen & Wine Bar
1 Park Place Suite 10, Annapolis; 410-268-6569; carpacciotuscankitchen.com $$ ●●●

Castle Bay Irish Pub
913A Main Street, Annapolis; 410-626-0165; castlebayirishpub.com $$ ●●●

Chick & Ruth's
165 Main Street, Annapolis; 410-269-6737; chickandruths.com $$ ●●

The Choptank
110 Compromise Street; 443-808-1992; thechoptankrestaurant.com $$$ ●●●●●

Curate Annapolis
141 West Street; 410-907-0968; curateannapolis.com $$, Daily Breakfast

Dock Street Bar & Grill
136 Dock Street, Annapolis; 410-268-7278; dockstreetbar.net $ ●●

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193B Main Street, Annapolis; 443-214-5171; Dry85.com $$ ●●

Eat Sprout
100 State Circle, Annapolis; eatsprout.com $ ●

Federal House
24 Market Space, Annapolis; 410-268-2576; federalhouse.com $$ ●●

Fox's Den
179B Main Street, Annapolis; 443-808-8991; foxsden.com $$ ●

Galway Bay Irish Restaurant and Pub
63 Maryland Avenue, Annapolis; 410-263-8333; galwaybaymd.com $$ ●●

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114 West Street, Annapolis; 410-885-4589; gameonbararcade.com $ ●

Harold Black
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Harry Browne's
66 State Circle, Annapolis; 410-263-4332; harrybrownes.com $$ ●●

Iron Rooster
12 Market Space, Annapolis; 410-990-1600; iron-rooster.com $$ ●●●

Joss Café & Sushi Bar
195 Main Street, Annapolis; 410-263-4688; josssushi.com $$ ●

Latitude 38
12 Dock Street, Annapolis; 667-204-2282; Latitude38waterfront.com $$ ●●●●●

Lemongrass
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Leo Annapolis
212 West Street, Annapolis; 443-782-7549; leoannapolis.com $$ ●●

Level A Small Plates Lounge
69 West Street, Annapolis; 410-268-0003; levelannapolis.com $$ ●●

Lighthouse Bistro
202 West Street, Annapolis; 410-242-0922; lighthousebistro.org $ ●●●

Luna Blu Ristorante Italiano
36 West Street, Annapolis; 410-267-9950; lunabluofannapolis.com $$ ●●

Marmo
80 Compromise Street, Annapolis; 410-927-3027; marmoitalian.com $$ ●●●

McGarvey's Saloon
8 Market Space, Annapolis; 410-263-5700; mcgarveysannapolis.com $$ ●●

Metropolitan Kitchen and Lounge
169 West Street, Annapolis; 410-280-5160; metropolitanannapolis.com $$ ●●●

Middleton Tavern
2 Market Space, Annapolis; 410-263-3323; middletontavern.com $$,●●

Miss Shirley's Cafe
1 Park Place, Annapolis; 443-4BRUNCH; missshirleys.com $$ ●●●

O'Brien's Oyster Bar & Seafood Tavern
113 Main Street, Annapolis; 410-268-6288; obriensoysterbar.com $$ ●●●

Osteria 177
177 Main Street, Annapolis; 410-267-7700; osteria177.com $$$ ●●●

Parley Room
25 State Circle, Annapolis; 443-837-6481; parleyroom.com $$ ●

Picante Cocina Mexicana
48 West Street; 443-775-5957; picanteannapolis.com $ ●●

Potato Valley Café
47 State Circle, Annapolis; 410-267-0902; potatovalleycafe.net $ ●

Preserve
164 Main Street, Annapolis; 443-598-6920; preserve-eats.com $$ ●●●●

Ram's Head Tavern
33 West Street, Annapolis; 410-268-4545; ramsheadtavern.com $$ ●●●●

Red Red Wine Bar
189B Main Street, Annapolis; 410-990-1144; redredwinebar.com $$ ●

Reynolds Tavern
7 Church Circle, Annapolis; 410-295-9555; reynoldstavern.com $$ ●●

Sofi's Crepes
1 Craig Street, Annapolis; 410-990-0929; sofiscrepes.com $ ●●

Stan and Joe's
37 West Street, Annapolis; 410-263-1993; stanandjoessaloon.com $$ ●●

Trophy Room
126 West Street, Annapolis in Graduate Hotel; 410-263-7777 ex 3225; graduatehotels.com $$ ●

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51 West Street, Annapolis; 410-990-9869; tsunamiannapolis.com $$ ●

Vida Taco
200 Main Street; 443-837-6521; vidatacobar.com $$ ● Farm-to-Table

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Bean Rush Café
112A Annapolis Street, Annapolis; 410-263-2534; beanrushcafe.com $, Daily Breakfast, ●

Bella Italia
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Cantler's Riverside
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Chessie's Wharf
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Cooper's Hawk Winery and Restaurant
1906 Town Centre Blvd, Annapolis; 443-837-9989; chwinery.com $$ ●●●

Davis' Pub
400 Chester Ave, Annapolis; 410-268-7432; davispub.com $$ ●●

Della Notte
1374 Cape St. Claire Road, Annapolis; 410-757-2919; dellanotterestaurant.com $$ ●

Eat Sprout
150 Jennifer Road Suite K, Annapolis; 443-223-0642; eatsprout.com $ ●

Eggcellence Brunchery
2625 Housley Road, Annapolis; 410-573-9503; eggcellencebrunchery.com $ ●

Evelyn's Annapolis
26 Annapolis Street, Annapolis; 410-263-4794 $$ ●

First Watch
2339 Forest Drive, Annapolis; 667-380-2422; firstwatch.com $ ●●

Full On Eats & Drinks
2478 A Solomons Island Road, Annapolis; 443-949-0203; fulloncraft.com $ ●

Grapes Wine Bar
1410 Forest Drive, Annapolis; 410-571-5378; grapeswinebarannapolis.com $$ ●● Wine

Hangry Joe's Hot Chicken
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Ingrano Restaurant & Events
17 Annapolis Street, Annapolis; 410-980-5514; ingranoannapolis.com $$$ ●●

InGrano Bistro Bakery
302 Harry S Truman Parkway; 410-919-0776; ingranobakery.com $$ ●

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85 Forest Drive, Annapolis; 410-266-7580; jalapenosonline.com $$$ ●

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Lemongrass Too
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The Lodge
177 Jennifer Road, Annapolis; 410-266-7474; lodgeannapolis.com $$

Lures Bar and Grille
1397 Generals Highway, Crownsville; 410-923-1606; luresbarandgrille.com $$

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914 Bay Ridge Road, Annapolis; 410-626-0388; mainandmarket.com $$ Beer and Wine

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302 Harry S Truman Parkway Suite K, Annapolis; 410-266-5006; memosbarandgrill.com $$,

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2134 Forest Drive, Annapolis; 410-571-0500; lindocancungrill.com $$

Pit Boys
1515 Forest Drive, Annapolis; 410-263-2333; pitboys.com $

Positano Ristorante & Pizzeria
106 Annapolis St, Annapolis; 410-621-9374; positanoannapolis.com

Red Hot & Blue
200 Old Mill Bottom Road, Annapolis; 410-626-7427; redhotandblue.com $$

Rodizio Grill
1079 Annapolis Mall Road, Annapolis; 410-849-4444; rodiziogrill.com $$$

Sandy Pony Donuts
2444 Solomons Island Road, Annapolis; 410-873-3272; sandyponydonuts.com $

Seoul Blues Coffee & Dessert
1084 Annapolis Mall Road, Annapolis; 443-949-8018; seoulbluescafe.com $ Pastries

Severn Inn
1993 Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard, Annapolis; 410-349-4000; severninn.com $$,

Stoney River Steakhouse and Grill
2190 Annapolis Mall, Annapolis; 410-224-8312; stoneyriver.com $$

Toastique Gourmet Toast & Juice Bar
214 Harker Place, Annapolis; 443-430-0085; toastique.com $

True Food Kitchen
1906 Town Centre Blvd Suite 110, Annapolis; 443-775-5179; truefoodkitchen.com $$

Vibe
2072 Somerville Road, Annapolis; 443-949-7582; vibeannapolis.com $$

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921 C Chesapeake Ave, Eastport; 410-267-0064; adamsribs.com $$

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107 Hillsmere Drive, Eastport; 410-571-5073; annapolissmokehouse.com $$

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Beacon Waterfront Galley and Bar
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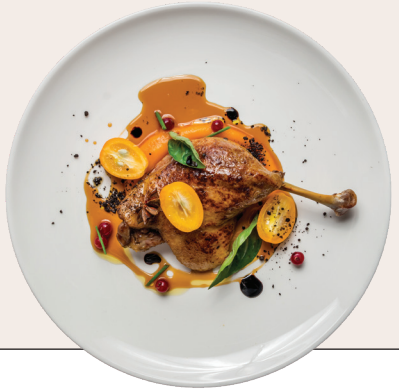
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Carrol's Creek Café
410 Severn Avenue, Eastport; 410-263-8102; carrolscreek.com $$$

Chart House Prime
300 2nd Street, Eastport; 410-268-7166; charthouseprime.com $$$

Eastport Kitchen
923 Chesapeake Avenue, Annapolis; 410-990-0000; eastportkitchen.com $

Forward Brewing
418 Fourth Street, Annapolis; 443-221-7277; forwardeastport.com $ Beer

Grumps Cafe
117 Hillsmere Drive, Annapolis; 410-267-0229; grumpscafe.com $

Lewnes' Steakhouse
401 Fourth Street, Eastport; 410-263-1617; lewnessteakhouse.com $$$

Rum House
422 6th St, Annapolis; 410-469-2500; rumhouseannapolis.com $$

Ruth's Chris Steak House
301 Severn Ave, Eastport; 410-990-0033; ruthschris.com $$$

Vin 909
909 Bay Ridge Ave, Eastport; 410-990-1846; vin909wine.com $$

South Anne Arundel

Adam's Taphouse
169 Mayo Road, Edgewater; 410-956-2995; adamsgrilleedgewater.com $$

Always Ice Cream Company
129A Mitchell's Chance Road, Edgewater; 443-949-8309; alwaysicecreamcompany.com $

Bayside Bull
108 W Central Ave, Edgewater; 410-956-6009; baysidebull.com $

The Boathouse
604 Cabana Blvd, Deale; 410-867-9668; theboathousedeale.com $$

Cappy's
479 Deale Road, Deale; 443-607-4138; cappysdeale.com $$, Seasonal

Chad's BBQ
158 W Central Ave, Edgewater; 410-956-7774; chadsbbq.com $

Cooper's Tavern
173 Mitchell's Chance Road, Edgewater; 443-837-6126; coopers-tavern.com $$

Dockside Restaurant & Sports Bar
421 Deale Road, Tracy's Landing; 410-867-1138; docksiderestaurantmd.com $$

Edgewater Restaurant
148 Mayo Road, Edgewater; 410-956-3202; edgewaterrestaurant.com $$

Happy Harbor Waterfront Restaurant and Bar
533 Deale Road, Deale; 410-867-0949; happyharbordeale.com $$

Harper's Waterfront Restaurant
1107 Turkey Point Road, Edgewater; 410-798-8338; harperswaterfront.com $$$, Reservation Only

Harvest Thyme Tavern
1251 West Central Ave, Davidsonville; 443-203-6846; harvestthymetavern.com $$

Jesse Jays
584 West Central Avenue, Davidsonville; 240-903-8100; jessejays.com $

Killarney House
584 West Central Avenue, Davidsonville; 410-798-8700; Killarneyhousepub.com $$

Lemongrass South River
3059 Solomons Island Road, Edgewater; 443-221-7693 $$

Mike's Crab House
3030 Riva Road, Riva; 410-956-2784; mikescrabhouse.com $$

Petie Greens
6103 Drum Point Rd. Deale; 410-867-1488; petiegreens.com $$

The Pier Waterfront Bar & Grill
48 South River Road, Edgewater; 443-837-6057; thepierwaterfrontbarandgrill.com $$

Pirate's Cove Restaurant and Dock Bar
4817 Riverside Drive, Galesville; 410-867-2300; piratescovemd.com $$

Señor's Chile
105 Mayo Road, Edgewater, 410-216-2687; senorschile.com $$

Skipper's Pier Restaurant & Dock Bar
6158 Drum Point Road, Deale; 410-867-7110; skipperspier.com $$

South County Café
5960 Deale Churchton Road, Deale; 410-867-6450; southcountycafe.com $

Stan and Joe's Riverside
4851 Riverside Drive, Galesville; 410-867-7200; stanandjoessaloon.com $$

West River Pit BBQ
5544 Muddy Creek Road, West River; 443-223-9956; westriverpit.com $

Yellowfin Steak & Fishhouse
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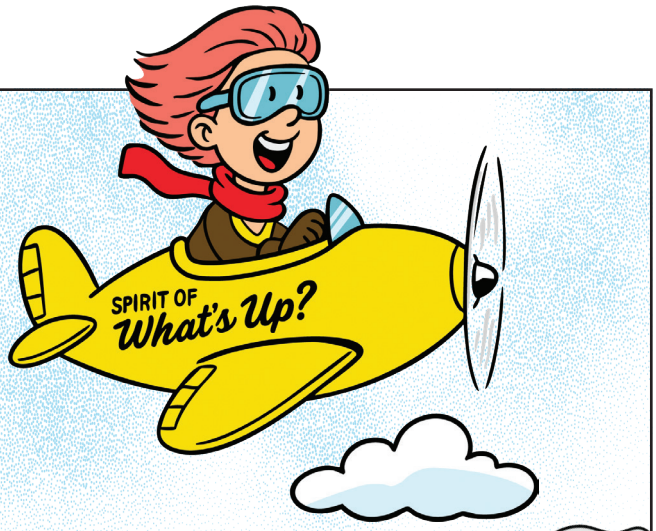


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Where's Wilma?



FIND WILMA AND WIN!

Flying in the northerlies of autumn, our pilot mascot Wilma has been busily preparing for the holiday season and is ready to host her friends and family for Thanksgiving. Of course, she visited businesses across the Bay region to help her get ready, from caterers to interior designers to house cleaning services. Who did she visit and where will she land next? Here's how the contest works: Wilma appears next to three different ads in this magazine. When you spot her, write the names of the ads and their page numbers on the entry form online or mail in the form below and you'll be eligible to win. Only one entry per family. Good luck and don't forget to submit your restaurant review online at whatsupmag.com/promotions for another opportunity to win a prize.

Congratulations to MaryRose B. of Arnold, who won a $50 gift certificate to a local business.

Please Print Legibly

I FOUND WILMA ON PG. _____ Advertiser _____
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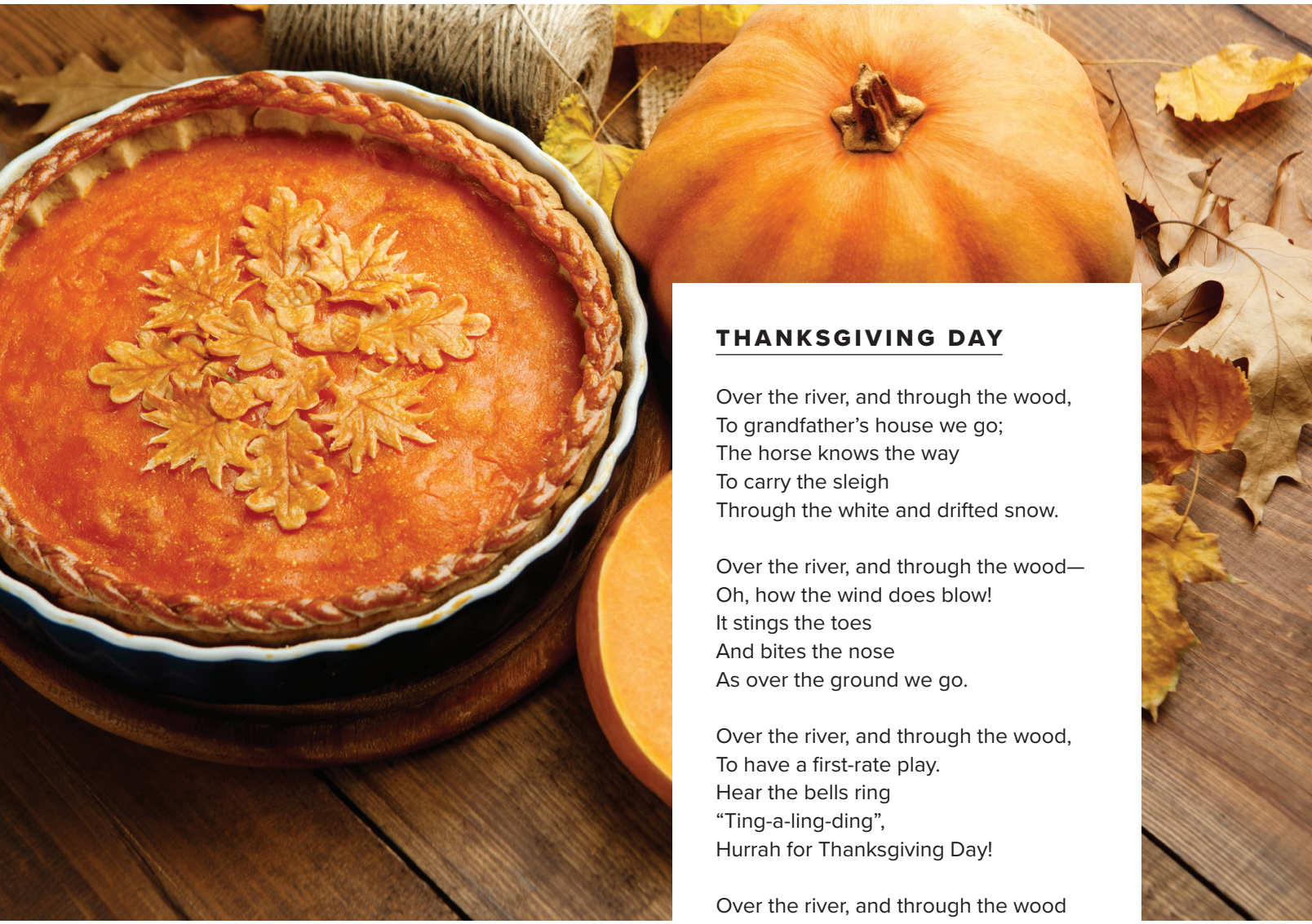
Yes, please! No, thanks

Entries must be received by November 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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BC = Back Cover
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One Verse at a Time

Perhaps you encountered this poem during your childhood or even heard it set to music. In the 20th century, this poem was part of many Thanksgiving celebrations. Lydia Maria Child was an American writer born in 1802. She was a poet, novelist, and abolitionist whose novels reflect themes of racial equality and the rights of women. She died in 1880. **—JANICE F. BOOTH**

THANKSGIVING DAY

Over the river, and through the wood,
To grandfather's house we go;
The horse knows the way
To carry the sleigh
Through the white and drifted snow.

Over the river, and through the wood—
Oh, how the wind does blow!
It stings the toes
And bites the nose
As over the ground we go.

Over the river, and through the wood,
To have a first-rate play.
Hear the bells ring
"Ting-a-ling-ding",
Hurrah for Thanksgiving Day!

Over the river, and through the wood
Trot fast, my dapple-gray!
Spring over the ground,
Like a hunting-hound!
For this is Thanksgiving Day.

Over the river, and through the wood,
And straight through the barn-yard gate.
We seem to go
Extremely slow,—
It is so hard to wait!

Over the river and through the wood—
Now grandmother's cap I spy!
Hurrah for the fun!
Is the pudding done?
Hurrah for the pumpkin-pie!

BY LYDIA MARIA CHILD





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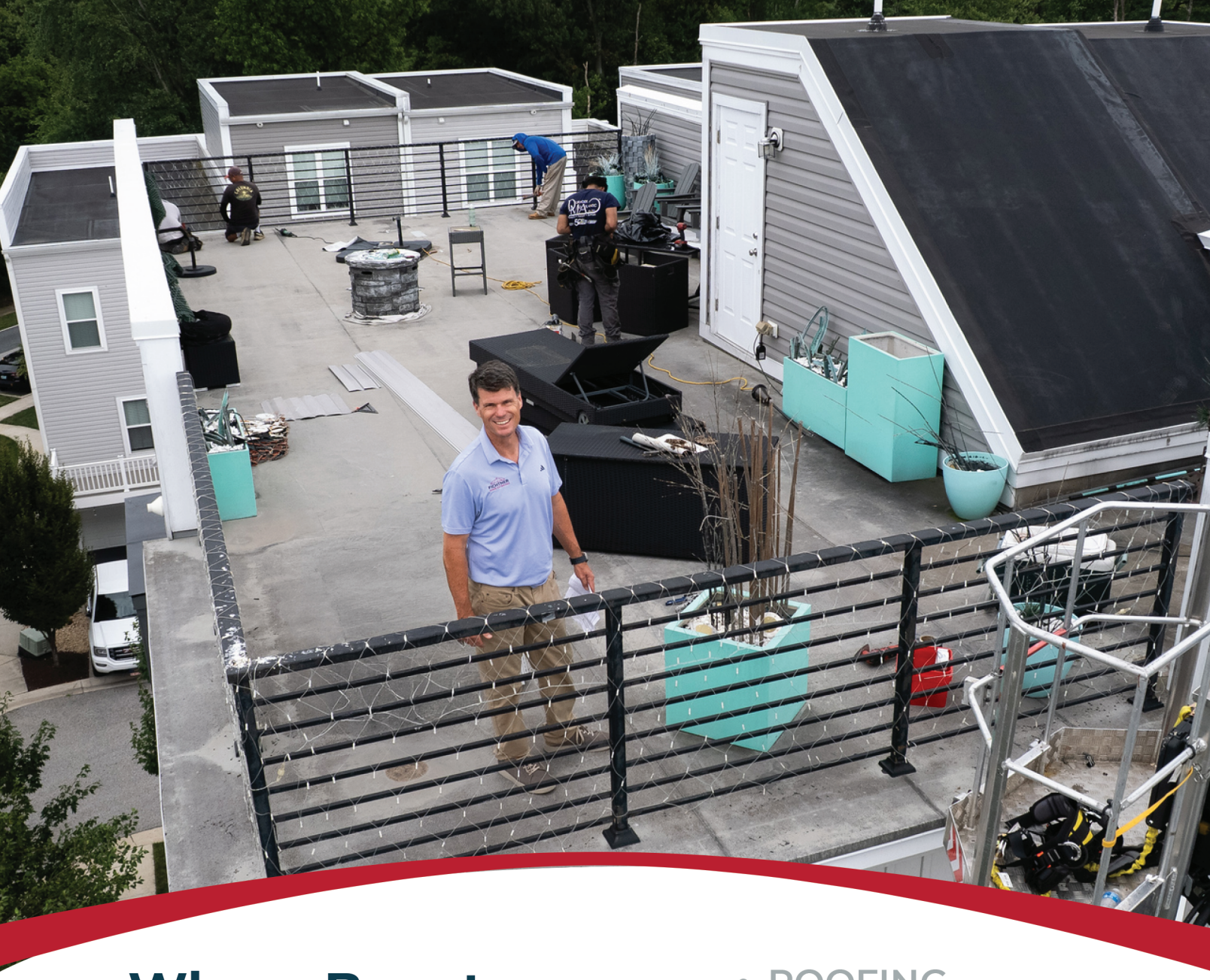
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