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♻️ Please recycle this magazine.

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What's Up? Central Maryland is published by
What's Up? Media 900 Bestgate Road, Ste.
202, Annapolis, MD 21401, 410-266-6287, Fax:
410-224-4308. No part of this magazine may be
reproduced in any form without express written
consent of the publisher. Publisher disclaims any
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27,410 copies with an estimated readership of
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EDITORIAL CLARIFICATION

In our July/August issue's "Best Of Central Maryland" listings, we omitted **Tangled Balloons** (tangledballoons.com) as the winner for Best Party Vendor.



e-content



THE MOST EXQUISITE AND COMPELLING PROJECTS IN RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION AND DESIGN!

What's Up? Media's 2027 Home Excellence Awards program will honor elite home builders, architects, designers, and professionals serving the greater Chesapeake Bay region. Home industry professionals and firms may submit their completed projects for evaluation and vetting in 11 award categories. Entries—consisting of a project description and accompanying photographs—will be accepted through the October 31st deadline.



whatsupmag.com/homeexcellenceawards2027

Awards will be published in the February 2027 issues of *What's Up? Annapolis*, *What's Up? Eastern Shore*, and March 2027 issue of *What's Up? Central Maryland*.



With the trade winds of summer transitioning to autumn northerlies, sailors and boaters of all kinds will excitedly make haste along Chesapeake tributaries for both play and work. The maritime community is as alive as ever, soaking in every minute of waning sunlight before the big chill arrives. We see this river dance play out within our many communities from Western Shore to Eastern. Festivals and friendly sailing, boating, and fishing competitions celebrate nautical ambitions and legacies, which are very much of kith and kin.

Generations of watermen and women exemplify this camaraderie and culture, perhaps none more active and respected than those who sail the last remaining wooden skipjacks of the Bay. This fleet of aging vessels—some a century or older—is skippered by fathers, sons, mothers, and daughters, who have kept the oyster trade's influence alive by restoring and racing the boats.

Stewarding this heritage and educating the public about the fleet is the Skipjack Heritage Museum in Chance, Maryland, just a half mile ahead of the two-lane bridge that connects mainland Eastern Shore to Deal Island (the once-illustrious home port for this fleet). This September, the nonprofit organization is abuzz with co-coordinating the annual Skipjack Races—the

“Triple Crown of the Bay”—consisting of three weekend races hosted in Deal Island, Annapolis, and, lastly, Cambridge. The sight of the fleet's expansive, triangular white sails gliding across the horizon and their low-slung, hardwood hulls slicing through waves is majestic.

I invite you to get a taste of this living, racing history by reading this month's article “White Sails Billowing on the Horizon.” Even better, visit the museum or experience the skipjack races as a spectator this month!

Adjacent to this exciting tale are more articles and columns in this September issue that offer suggestions to experience autumn on the Chesapeake and beyond: enjoy a bluegrass fest overlooking sandy shorelines; the arc of a well-thrown football at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium; treasure hunting at flea markets; merriment that's nearly 500 years in the making; cattails swaying in the wind; and, even, campus tours of premier local schools (if you're in the market).

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James Houck,
Editorial Director

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HIGHLIGHTING
ENTERTAINMENT,
COMMUNITY,
AND EVENTS

Pops in the Park

PG. 13





21ST ANNUAL BOATYARD BEACH BASH

Escape to the islands without leaving Annapolis at the Annapolis Maritime Museum & Park's 21st Annual Boatyard Beach Bash on Saturday, September 19, from 4 to 10 p.m. This all-inclusive waterfront celebration features performances by world-class musicians and members of Jimmy Buffett's legendary Coral Reefer Band, including Peter Mayer, Doyle Grisham, Nadirah Shakoore, John Frinzi, Scott Kirby, and more. Guests will enjoy six hours of live music, handcrafted cocktails, gourmet bites, and a laid-back Key West atmosphere, all while supporting the Annapolis Maritime Museum & Park's educational programs. It's the ultimate end-of-summer celebration for Parrotheads, music lovers, and anyone looking to enjoy an unforgettable evening on the Chesapeake Bay. More info: amaritime.org

Maryland Seafood Festival

Celebrate Maryland's rich maritime heritage at the Maryland Seafood Festival, returning to Sandy Point State Park on Saturday, September 12, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday, September 13, from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. This beloved annual tradition features fresh local seafood, live music, artisan vendors, family-friendly activities, contests, and an impressive selection of local beverages. Running alongside the festival, Skipjack Heritage Days invites visitors to experience the Chesapeake Bay's working waterfront through hands-on exhibits, educational demonstrations, public skipjack sails, and a thrilling skipjack race on Sunday. Whether you're coming for the crab cakes, waterfront entertainment, or to celebrate the Bay's enduring traditions, this weekend festival offers something for every member of the family. More info: mdseafoodfestival.com





Navy Football Kicks Off September 5

Experience one of Annapolis' most cherished traditions as Navy Football returns to Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium on Saturday, September 5, when the Midshipmen kick off the 2026 season against Towson University at 3:30 p.m. Fall Saturdays in Annapolis come alive with pageantry, patriotic pride, and the excitement of college football as fans from across the country gather to cheer on the Midshipmen. Whether you're a lifelong Navy supporter or experiencing the game-day atmosphere for the first time, the pregame traditions, Brigade of Midshipmen, and electric stadium environment make for an unforgettable start to football season in Maryland's capital. More info: navysports.com

ANNAPOLIS POWERBOAT SHOW

Experience the world's largest in-water powerboat show when the Annapolis Powerboat Show returns to City Dock from Thursday, October 8, through Sunday, October 11, beginning daily at 10 a.m. Stroll the floating docks as Annapolis Harbor transforms into a premier showcase of luxury yachts, fishing boats, cruisers, and the latest in marine technology, accessories, and apparel. Whether you're a lifelong boater, an avid angler, or simply love being on the water, this internationally renowned event offers the perfect opportunity to explore the boating lifestyle while enjoying the vibrant waterfront atmosphere of downtown Annapolis. More info: annapolisboatshows.com



Photo courtesy of Annapolis Boat Shows



NEXTNOW FEST 2026

Experience the intersection of creativity and community at NextNOW Fest, taking place September 9–15 at the University of Maryland in College Park. This free, weeklong arts festival features live music, comedy, visual art, performances, and interactive experiences from innovative artists across the country alongside talented members of the university community. Festival events begin Wednesday, September 9, at 11 a.m., with additional featured performances on Thursday at 1 p.m., Friday at 5 p.m., Saturday at 5 p.m., Monday at 3 p.m., and Tuesday at 5 p.m. Whether you're a lifelong arts enthusiast or simply looking for an inspiring day out, NextNOW Fest offers something for everyone. More info: theclarice.umd.edu/

Annapolis Baygrass Music Festival

Experience two unforgettable days of live music, waterfront views, and Chesapeake Bay culture at the Annapolis Baygrass Music Festival, returning to Sandy Point State Park on Saturday, September 19, and Sunday, September 20, beginning at 10 a.m. each day. This beachside festival brings together nationally acclaimed bluegrass, jamgrass, Americana, and roots artists for performances across two stages while celebrating the beauty and preservation of the Chesapeake Bay. Beyond the music, festivalgoers can enjoy fresh local seafood, craft beverages, yoga classes, family activities, artisan vendors, and educational workshops focused on Bay conservation and mental wellness. With a mission of giving back to both the environment and the community, Baygrass offers a one-of-a-kind festival experience where every jam truly helps save the Bay. More info: baygrassfestival.com



Photo by Jay Strausser



NAPTOWN FLEA

Browse, shop, and celebrate local creativity at Naptown Flea on Sunday, September 13, as Maryland Avenue transforms into a vibrant open-air marketplace from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. This special collaboration with Lucky Girl Market features more than 60 vendors offering vintage finds, handmade goods, art, and one-of-a-kind treasures, along with food trucks, live music, and tattoo artists. Whether you're searching for unique pieces or simply soaking up the lively atmosphere, this community market is the perfect way to spend a Sunday supporting local makers and small businesses. More info: [instagram.com/naptownflea](https://www.instagram.com/naptownflea)

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Lower School
(PK3 - Grade 5)

Thur., November 12
9:00 - 10:30 a.m.

[indiancreekschool.org](https://www.indiancreekschool.org)

Photo by Josh Davidson



ANNAPOLIS SAILBOAT SHOW

Set sail for one of the world's premier boating events as the Annapolis Sailboat Show returns to City Dock from Thursday, October 15, through Sunday, October 18, beginning daily at 10 a.m. Explore floating docks filled with sailboats from leading manufacturers around the globe, from sleek racing yachts and cruising vessels to multihulls and sailing dinghies. Along the waterfront, exhibitors showcase the latest in marine technology, sailing gear, charter opportunities, and educational resources, making this internationally acclaimed event a must-visit for seasoned sailors and newcomers alike. More info: annapolisboatshows.com

Art @ the Park

Celebrate creativity in the great outdoors at the 36th annual Art @ the Park, taking place Saturday and Sunday, October 17–18, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Quiet Waters Park in Annapolis. This beloved fall festival showcases an impressive collection of visual art alongside live music, artist demonstrations, food trucks, and hands-on activities for children, making it a perfect outing for the whole family. Leashed dogs are welcome, and with beautiful park scenery as the backdrop, it's an ideal weekend to enjoy local art, fresh air, and community. More info: fqwp.org



FREDERICK'S OKTOBERFEST

Celebrate German heritage, food, and festive traditions at Frederick's 25th Annual Oktoberfest on Saturday, October 2 and 3. Attendees will enjoy authentic German cuisine, lively entertainment, and the spirited atmosphere of one of fall's most beloved celebrations. Bus transportation is available on Saturday for a \$10 fee to/from the City of Laurel's Robert J. DiPietro Community Center. More info: city-of-laurel.org/parks or frederickoktoberfest.org



Pops in the Park

Celebrate Labor Day weekend with the Annapolis Symphony Orchestra's annual Pops in the Park, a free outdoor concert series bringing inspiring American music to two Anne Arundel County parks. The festivities begin Saturday, September 5, at 11:30 a.m. at Downs Park in Pasadena before continuing Sunday, September 6, at 5 p.m. at Quiet Waters Park in Annapolis. Inspired by the spirit of America 250, this family-friendly program features works by celebrated American composers, a special performance of Aaron Copland's Lincoln Portrait narrated by Maryland Poet Laureate Lady Brion, and an opening performance by the Annapolis Symphony Academy Aries Youth Chamber Orchestra. Guests are encouraged to bring lawn chairs, blankets, and a picnic while enjoying food trucks, beautiful park settings, and an unforgettable celebration of music, history, and community. More info: annapolissymphony.org

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The Muralist

**ARTIST JEFF HUNTINGTON
SEES THE BIG PICTURE**

By Carol Denny

You know Jeff Huntington's art, even if you don't know his name. His arresting, super-scaled portraits grace 39 public spaces throughout Annapolis. His career as an accomplished mural painter, which started here, now takes him around the world.

Huntington maintains that there's a difference between his work and other kinds of fine art. "A public mural is more of a temporary thing," he explains. "It can be affected by many factors: weather, vandalism, new development, a change of property owners. It's impermanent. For that reason, I sort of divorce myself from it more than I do with my personal studio work."

Annapolis, with its abundance of historic buildings, might seem to be an unlikely backdrop for his murals, but Huntington has proved coexistence is possible. "Contemporary art can definitely exist in historic towns," he says, pointing to examples in Frederick, Westminster, and Easton. "I'd rather see murals raining down instead of big corporate signs. They've actually been proven to help build communities, rather than tear them down. So why push them into the shadows?"



On Church Circle, portraits of Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Thurgood Marshall celebrate their work for social justice.



The Breonna Taylor Mural Project in Chambers Park became a potent image of the national Black Lives Matter movement.

Growing up in Prince Georges County, Huntington was inspired by his father and grandmother, both of whom were avid amateur painters. "Everyone was painting, and that's what I wanted to do," he recalls. "My father worked nights as a nurse then went to art school during the day, and he'd bring me with him. I was in the middle of it all, playing with drawing pads, going to the sculpture room, going to the Smithsonian for free."

At 15, Huntington dropped out of high school to follow the Grateful Dead tour. When he turned 16, friends bought him a GED workbook and urged him to get a diploma so he could apply to art school. "So, I did one painting a day for a year to prepare, then sent slides of 120 of them to schools. I got a scholarship to the Corcoran School of the Arts & Design at George Washington University, and later got my master's at the Art Institute of Chicago."

In 2018, a commission to create a mural on the exterior of Tsunami restaurant on West Street landed the artist in a dispute with the City. "The city sued, not to remove the mural, but to have the owner retroactively apply for permission to have it. So he did, to which they said yes," Huntington relates. The work wove abstract elements into a traditional portrait, a style which became a Huntington trademark.

While that case moved through the courts, artist Jason Liggett, with an assist from Huntington, painted another mural, this one Mayan-themed on a wall facing a parking lot at 110 Cathedral Street. It was planned to be the first in a series of mentorship projects. After the city told the owner it had to go through the approval process, Huntington and Liggett decided to paint over the mural, instead. They threw a "mural funeral" accompanied by New Orleans-style second line music.

"Boy oh boy, did people show up! Adults, kids—all kinds of people joined in," recalls Huntington. "That's when we said, 'This is beautiful, think about what's happening here! Let's turn our focus to young people.' And that was the birth of Future History Now." The nonprofit, founded with Huntington's wife, Julia Gibbs, has facilitated collaborative mural projects with youth facing adversity in underserved communities in Annapolis and across the world. It's taken the couple as far as China and India.



Huntington's most recent commission was a mural of Chinese-American suffragist Mabel Ping-Wah Lee in Washington, D.C.'s Chinatown.

Future History Now made national headlines in July 2020 when it organized young artists and volunteers to paint the Breonna Taylor Mural Project at Annapolis's Chambers Park. (Taylor, a 26-year-old woman in Louisville, Kentucky, had been shot and killed in her home by police executing a "no warrant" search for narcotics, which were not found.)

Completed only months after her passing and just weeks after George Floyd's death, the 7,000-square-foot portrait of Taylor on an outdoor basketball court quickly became a potent image in the Black Lives Matter movement. "The mural was featured in *Time* magazine on July 27," Huntington says. "It was a wild summer as

the coverage went viral." His reputation skyrocketed, and clients with commissions began calling.

"We pick and choose our projects now," Huntington explains. "For the first time since 2019, we're not scheduled through the end of the year." He's currently working on long-postponed 10-story mural in Jersey City, and in conversations with the NOMA mural festival for a project in D.C.

Recently, Huntington completed a mural of Mabel Ping-Wah Lee, a Chinese-American suffragist, next to the Friendship Arch in Washington's Chinatown. Again, his aim was to give voice to people who have suffered injustice. "Mabel worked to pass the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote. But she wasn't able to vote because of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, which barred Chinese residents from citizenship," he explains.

Huntington continues to imbue his art with social consciousness, pairing it with his technical skills to create extraordinary impact. He paints with purpose, and audiences are responding. "It's the best compliment—and rare in mural production today—to hear a client say, 'We want you, your work, your vision,'" Huntington says.



Huntington and his wife, Julia Gibbs, founded Future History Now, an art collective that engages underserved youth in mural creation.

Learn more renown local artist Jeff Huntington at jeffhuntington.com.



Archbishop Spalding Gala

On March 28, Archbishop Spalding held its Gala 2026, an unforgettable evening of community, generosity, and celebration. Held on the school campus in Severn, the Spalding gym was transformed into an elegant gala space, bringing together nearly 300 parents, alumni, faculty, and supporters for a night dedicated to making a lasting impact on students. Guests enjoyed cocktail hour, dinner, live and silent auctions, dance and band performances, and camaraderie. Learn more at archbishopspalding.org.



1. Chaplain Rondall Howard greets guests 2. Guests dance to live music 3. Fundraising Ambassador and emcee Frankie Fletcher 4. Spalding Head Football Coach R.B. Green 5. Spalding President Shannon Gilligan and Principal Regina O'Hara delivers remarks 6. Spalding's dance teams performs 7. Raising paddles and funds 8. The Spalding gym was transformed into a gala experience





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Best Of Party

The annual Best Of Party took place on June 9th at the Doordan Institute at Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center in Annapolis. Hosted by What's Up? Media and presented by Porsche Annapolis, the evening was a celebration of the best businesses in the region! Local restaurants, shops, services, entertainment, and businesses were all rolled up into one fantastic fundraising event supporting Charting Careers. This year's event also honored America's 250th birthday, and featured special performances by the Naptown Brass Band, All You Need, The Edge Dance Complex, and Annapolis' renowned Squire Fred! Learn more at whatsupmag.com.



1. Cali Schwerdtfeger, Katie Mosaic, and Elizabeth Caropreso in front of a Porsche at the VIP reception area 2. Chris Barber, Catherine Brady, Gene Condon 3. Rob and Becky Bontempo 4. Steve Adams, Veronica Tovey 5. Steve Arentz, Steven Arentz, Biana Arentz 6. David Orso, Olivia Orso, Dawn Orso 7. Catherine Brady, Victoria Zelefsky, Fayth Ribeiro, Amy Berry, Lacey Snyder, Patrizia Risi, Maddalyn Kunst 8. Brooke and Kevin Silard, Brenda Kookan 9. Colin Lennon, Lauren Burleigh 10. James Houck, Karla Wagner, Mandy Cole, Alfred Kamal, Justin Cole 11. Naptown Brass Band performs 12. Lauren Ropel, Kathy Sauve, Beth Kuhl 13. Squire Fred, Veronica Tovey, and Milo Mason 14. Katie and Joe Guido, Lauren Thompson 15. Ross Westholm, Erin Bleacher, John Rosso, Brooke McAdam, Tyler Barnett, Ryan Brant, Colin Lennon 16. Kim Denis, Ashley Raymond, Liz Stoll 17. Crighton and Heather Chase, Norman and Danielle Randall 18. Erin and Jeff Jacobs

Playin' in the Sand

JOHN BOLTEN OF THE ROOTS BAND GERALDINE DISCUSSES THE ANNAPOLIS BAYGRASS MUSIC FESTIVAL EXPERIENCE

By James Houck

This September 19th and 20th, the Annapolis Baygrass Music Festival returns to Sandy Point State Park for its fifth incarnation, a testament to the regional community's love for live bluegrass and roots music, Chesapeake Bay conservation, and the festival experience. The two-day event will be a summer swan song for attendees, with top tier performances by Little Feat, Yonder Mountain String Band, Bela Fleck, Sam Bush, and many more. Among them is the local roots-based string band Geraldine, led by singer/songwriter, guitarist, and banjo player John Bolten. The band has gained a following in recent years among Appalachian and American-folk music aficionados. So much so, that Geraldine was tapped to play the inaugural Baygrass Festival in 2022. In fact, the band is the only performer to have been invited back *and perform* at each of the five festivals.

To learn more about Geraldine and the Baygrass Festival connection, we talked with Bolten.



The band Geraldine performs for the fifth year in a row at the Annapolis Baygrass Music Festival.

John, could you tell us a bit about your history with the Baygrass Festival and how you first connected with Ron Peremel (founder of Baygrass)? Sure! I was in Annapolis watching some friends play a show and I ran into Ron. He was telling me about his plans for Baygrass and its mission to 'Save the Bay'. He also mentioned that he would love to have a festival song highlighting the importance of protecting the bay. I mentioned that I am a hydrologist and serve as Chief of NASA's hydrological sciences lab, and enjoy writing songs. He asked me if I would work on a song for the festival, and I went home that night and started working on it. Actually, I started working on a melody while driving home from the show!

I sent him a recording of Geraldine playing 'In The Water' a couple weeks later and asked him to come watch us perform. The timing of the song was perfect because Geraldine was in the studio recording our *Paw Paw* album. We were able to get Cris Jacobs in with us to play on the song. The rest is history!

What was that first Baygrass Fest experience like as a performer, both on stage and off stage? The first Baygrass at Sandy Point State Park was such a wonderful experience. Geraldine played two sets and sang 'In The Water' during a special 'tweener' set before the headliner, and the crowd loved it.

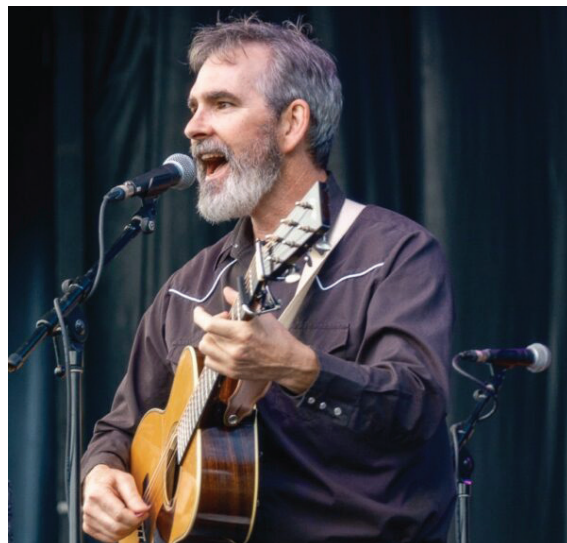
What sticks out about this festival is the amount of care that goes into making the experience fun and meaningful for both the artists and the audience. I was very impressed with the thoughtfulness that went into having a diverse set of bands, and the very visible focus on educating people about conservation and preserving our water resources.

Geraldine has been invited back every year to perform; why do you think that is and what makes that fact special to you? We are extremely grateful to be a part of the Annapolis Baygrass family. Geraldine plays the festival song each year, of course, which always helps bring the focus back to healing the bay. And the 'In The Water' theme is evident on the posters and even the water stations around the festival.

Over the past eight years Geraldine has steadily built an audience from our original take on old time and bluegrass music. We focus on creating something different, and writing new songs that resonate with people, plus, we just enjoy having fun and putting on an entertaining show for folks.

Our friends Jan and Kim from Step Jam dance with us during our sets, which is always a crowd pleaser and brings another unique element to our shows. I'm passionate about protecting the Chesapeake Bay and watershed and have been working with several nonprofits and organizations that share that mission. This theme is woven throughout our songs and helps amplify the message. It really is a festival with a purpose! **When you and the band are in 'Baygrass mode,' what's the anticipation like—are you dreaming up setlists, meet-ups with other artists, sit-ins, etc.?** Yes! Baygrass is our favorite festival to play in the region because we get to play a few sets, show off new songs, and talk with other artists and the nonprofits about the Baygrass mission. We enjoy having the artists-at-large sit in with Geraldine and it is always a blast. Each year we try to polish our set and think of new ways to make the most exciting show we can. It's our homecoming every year!

Looking at this year's lineup, what or who is getting you excited for the weekend? Oh my, so many cool bands this year. We will be playing a short set before Little Feat, so that will certainly be a feather in our cap! I'm a big Béla Fleck fan...Sister Sadie is a must see, the Melody Trucks and the Fitzkee Brothers will certainly be a highlight, and I'm on a mission to see Sam Bush play as many times as I can!



John Bolten of Geraldine.

How would you describe the Geraldine approach to live music and community? Geraldine is 'Good Time Old Time'. We really just want to make the best music we can and put on an entertaining show for folks. I like to say that we are on a 'slow burn' by just taking our time and slowly growing an audience. Geraldine is not in a hurry to be anywhere. By that I mean that we are focused on crafting fun original songs and sharing them wherever we can. And it's worked! We've had eight songs from our first two albums selected by national song contests (and two more for our upcoming album).

But it's not just about crafting songs—we play square dances, concert halls, house concerts, and festivals, and I also enjoy playing solo shows. We try to stay involved in the community as much as we can through supporting other bands and regional festivals. I also run songwriting classes at a few regional festivals, which I greatly enjoy.

What do you and the band enjoy most about the Baygrass Festival experience at Sandy Point State Park overall? In short, it is the good vibes, clean and carefully planned festival, and the incredible cast of musicians that we get to share the stage with. For Geraldine to play the festival each year, it feels like a 'local boy makes good' homecoming. All our friends are there cheering us on and we are cheering the festival on!



Annapolis Baygrass Music Festival returns to Sandy Point State Park on September 19 and 20.

Visit baygrassfestival.com for the Annapolis Baygrass Music Festival lineup, times, tickets, and more information.

2026

TOP

DENTISTS

2027

The definitive, local list of exceptional dental professionals

Every two years we survey local dentists with our **Top Dentists Peer Review Survey**. These dentists let us know exactly who they trust with their own oral health care needs. In spring, we called upon all dentists practicing in Anne Arundel County, Prince George's County, and throughout the region, asking them, "If you needed to recommend a dentist (other than yourself) to a friend or loved one, which dentist(s) would you recommend in the following specialties?" We listed more than 10 areas of dental specialty on the digital survey. Dentists could vote for up to three candidates per specialty. Only one survey entry was allowed per dentist. The response was impressive and we want to thank the many dentists who took the time to fill in all the categories. After vetting the initial list, we confirmed licensing and integrity of each dentist through the Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners.

Please note that these results represent those individuals who clearly received the most *substantial* number of nominations. Some categories saw more voting activity than others—and that is reflected in the higher number of winners in some specialties.



Top Dentists on the Shore

For the full list of Top Dentists 2026–2027 on Maryland's Eastern Shore, visit whatsupmag.com and click "Digital Editions" in the top-right corner of our website. You'll be able to flip through the digital versions of our magazines, including the October 2026 issue of *What's Up? Eastern Shore*.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING DENTISTS EARNING HONORS IN OUR ANNAPOLIS AND CENTRAL MARYLAND MAGAZINES, LISTED ALPHABETICALLY BY FIRST NAME UNDER EACH RESPECTIVE DENTAL SPECIALTY CATEGORY.

Dental Anesthesiology

The medical specialty is concerned with the total perioperative care of patients before, during, and after surgery. It can encompass anesthesia, intensive care medicine, critical emergency medicine, and pain medicine.

Dr. Ashli Cumberbatch – My Riverdale Dentist
• 6201 Baltimore Avenue, Riverdale Park, MD 20737 • 301-507-0032 • myriverdaledentist.com

Dr. Dennis Cherry – Cherry Family Dental • 900 Ritchie Highway, Ste. 204, Severna Park, MD 21146 • 410-793-5802 • cherryfamilydental.com

Dr. Kurt Jones – Oral Surgery Specialists
• 275 West Street, Ste. 100, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-268-7790 • annapolisoss.com

Dr. Leo Menendez – Center for Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery • 3233 Superior Lane, Ste. B23, Bowie, MD 20715 • 301-262-4500 • marylandoms.com

Dr. Meredith Esposito – Chesapeake Dental Arts • 1509 Ritchie Highway, Arnold, MD 21012 • 410-220-2744 • chesdentalarts.com

Dr. Michelle Ayoroa-Perez – Shipley's Dental Care • 8601 Veterans Highway, Ste. 101, Millersville, MD 21108 • 410-442-6903 • shipleysdentalcare.com

Dr. Nitchel Bastein – The Haven Family & Cosmetic Dentistry • 983 Waugh Chapel, Ste. E, Gambrills, MD 21054 • 410-612-3595 • thehavendentistry.com

Dr. Ryan McCarty – Shady Side Family Dental • 5482 Muddy Creek Road, West River, MD 20778 • 410-867-0247 • shadysidefamilydental.com

Dental Public Health

A para-clinical specialty of dentistry that deals with the prevention of oral disease and promotion of oral health.

Dr. April Calton – About Smiles Dentistry • 507 S. Cherry Grove Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-691-3228 • aboutsmilesdentistry.com

Dr. Celeste Ziara – Chesapeake Health Care • 12165 Elm Street, Princess Anne, MD 21853 • 410-651-5151 • chesapeakehc.org

Dr. Nick Boyd – Boyd Family Dentistry • 528 College Parkway, Ste. A, Annapolis, MD 21409 • 410-757-7070 • drnickboyd.com

Endodontics

Dental specialty dealing with diseases of the tooth root, dental pulp, and surrounding tissues. Root canal procedures are commonly performed by endodontists in order to alleviate pain and to save the tooth.

Dr. Anthony Shahata – Endodontic Specialists • 8221 Ritchie Highway, Ste. 201, Pasadena, MD 21122 • 410-647-3453 • kmendo.com

Dr. Charles Herbert – Endodontics, P.A. • 888 Bestgate Road, Ste. 220, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-224-6150 • annapolisrootcanals.com

Dr. Corey Rollor – Sterling Endodontics • 808 Landmark Drive, Ste. 221, Glen Burnie, MD 21061 • 410-482-5317 • sterlingrootcanal.com

Dr. Frank Parreira – Chesapeake Endodontic Center • 888 Bestgate Road, Ste. 213, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-224-7556 • chesapeakeendo.com

Dr. Jeffery Luzader – Chesapeake Endodontic Center • 888 Bestgate Road, Ste. 213, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-224-7556 • chesapeakeendo.com

Dr. Joshua Willens – Chesapeake Endodontic Center • 888 Bestgate Road, Ste. 213, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-224-7556 • chesapeakeendo.com

Dr. Juheon Seung – Sterling Endodontics • 808 Landmark Drive, Ste. 221, Glen Burnie, MD 21061 • 410-482-5317 • sterlingrootcanal.com

Dr. Louis Berman – Annapolis Endodontics • 200 Westgate Circle, Ste. 104, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-268-4770 • annapolisendodontics.com

Dr. Mark Lentz – Annapolis Endodontics • 200 Westgate Circle, Ste. 104, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-268-4770 • annapolisendodontics.com

Dr. Michelle Hack – Endodontic Specialists • 8221 Ritchie Highway, Ste. 201, Pasadena, MD 21122 • 410-647-3453 • kmendo.com

Dr. Michelle Rampulla – Endodontics, P.A. • 888 Bestgate Road, Ste. 220, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-224-6150 • annapolisrootcanals.com

Dr. Saurabh Gupta – Annapolis Endodontics • 200 Westgate Circle, Ste. 104, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-268-4770 • annapolisendodontics.com

General Dentistry

A general dentist caters to a wide variety of dental health concerns for patients of all ages by preventing and/or treating both straightforward and complex conditions.

Dr. Adam Groyer – Chesapeake Dental Arts • 1509 Ritchie Highway, Arnold, MD 21012 • 410-220-2744 • chesdentalarts.com

Dr. Alan Binstock – Dr. Binstock • 571 Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard, Severna Park, MD 21146 • 410-647-6611

Dr. Alan Kline – Dr Alan G. Kline, D.D.S. • 584 Bellerive Road, Ste. 3B, Annapolis, MD 21409 • 410-757-3008 • dralankline.com

Dr. Albert Lee – Annapolis Cosmetic and Implant Dentistry • 1606 Forest Drive, Annapolis, MD 21403 • 410-268-5503 • myannapolisdentist.com

Dr. Andrew Lericos – Anchor Family Dentistry • 815 Ritchie Highway, Ste. 202, Severna Park, MD 21146 • 410-647-3883 • thesevernaparkdentist.com

Dr. Angela Miele – Annapolis Periodontics • 888 Bestgate Road, Ste. 300, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-224-0500 • annapolisperiodontics.net

Dr. April Calton – About Smiles Dentistry • 507 S. Cherry Grove Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-691-3228 • aboutsmilesdentistry.com

Dr. Ashley Francis – Naptown Smiles / Bross & Associates • 129 Lubrano Drive, Ste. 300, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-224-0018 • naptownsmiles.com

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Dr. Bonny Mitchell – Mitchell Dental Care • 3168 Braverton Street, Ste. 380, Edgewater, MD 21037 • 410-956-8380 • mitchelldentalcare.com

Dr. Brian Valle – Dr. Brian Valle P.A. Functional & Cosmetic Dentistry • 251 Najoles Road, Ste. #J, Millersville, MD 21108 • 410-987-9100 • drbrianvalle.com

Dr. Chris Anderson – Annapolis Family Dentistry • 914 Bay Ridge Road, Ste. 110, Annapolis, MD 21403 • 410-267-7713 • annapolisfamilydds.com

Dr. Clayton McCarl – Shipley's Dental Care • 8601 Veterans Highway, Ste. 101, Millersville, MD 21108 • 410-442-6903 • shipleysdentalcare.com

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Dr. Eric Rabovsky – Crownsville Dental & Wellness Solutions • 1321 Generals Highway, Ste. 200, Crownsville, MD 21032 • 410-923-0110 • crownsvilledental.com

Dr. Erin Golueke – Bay Hills Family Dentistry • 1298 Bay Dale Drive, #206, Arnold, MD 21012 • 410-757-9222 • bayhillsfamilydentistry.com

Dr. Erin Paluchowski – Severna Park Smiles • 479 Jumpers Hole Road, Ste. 104, Severna Park, MD 21146 • 410-544-4444 • severnaparksmiles.com

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Dr. Holly Guard-Mayher – Guard Your Smile Dentistry • 101 Ridgely Avenue, Ste. 22, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-268-5751 • guardyoursmile.com

Dr. Hussian Ahmed – Annapolis Dental Associates • 20 Ridgely Avenue, #306, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-268-9336 • annapolisdentalassociates.net

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Dr. Jason Zitofsky – Severna Park Family & Cosmetic Dentistry • 22 Truck House Road, Ste. 3, Severna Park, MD 21146 • 410-647-4269 • thetoothplace.com

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Dr. Joanna Frazier – Vantage Point Dental Studio • 160 Ritchie Highway, Ste. 10A, Severna Park, MD 21146 • 667-678-4042 • vantagepointdentalstudio.com

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Dr. Kendall Murphy – Churchton Dental • 5570 Shady Side Road, Ste. A, Churchton, MD 20733 • 443-203-4945 • churchtondentalcare.com

Dr. Kennedy Dele – Annapolis Dental Center • 161 Jennifer Road, Ste. B, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-919-9823 • annapolisdentalcenter.com

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Dr. Todd Patton – Patton Smiles • 104
Forbes Street, Ste. 204, Annapolis, MD 21401 •
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Dr. Valerie Vitagliano – Dental One
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MD 21401 • 410-793-4922 • dentalone-md.com

Dr. Yeremi Canizales – Severn River Dental
Health Center • 572 Ritchie Highway, Ste. F,
Severna Park, MD 21146 • 410-647-4094 •
severnriverdental.com

Oral & Maxillofacial Pathology

This specialty is concerned with diagnosis and study of the causes and effects of diseases of the mouth, jaws, and related structures, such as salivary glands, temporomandibular joints, facial muscles, and perioral skin (the skin around the mouth).

Dr. Christopher Chambers – Oral Surgery
Specialists • 275 West Street, Ste. 100,
Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-268-7790 •
annapolisoss.com

Dr. Kenneth Kufta – Oral Surgery Specialists
• 275 West Street, Ste. 100, Annapolis, MD
21401 • 410-268-7790 • annapolisoss.com

Dr. Leo Menendez – Center for Oral and
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marylandoms.com

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Dr. Richard Garden – Chesapeake Oral
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drrichardgarden.com

Dr. Ziad Batrouni – Maryland Oral
Surgery Associates • 128 Lubrano Drive,
Ste. 300, Annapolis, MD 21401 •
410-897-0111 • mosa4os.com

Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery

This specialty deals with the diagnosis and surgical treatment of diseases, injuries, and defects of the teeth, mouth, and face. Procedures range from removal of wisdom teeth to surgical treatment of facial trauma.

Dr. Borek Hlousek – Oral Surgery Specialists
• 275 West Street, Ste. 100, Annapolis, MD
21401 • 410-268-7790 • annapolisoss.com

Dr. Clifford Walzer – Oral Surgery Specialists
• 275 West Street, Ste. 100, Annapolis, MD
21401 • 410-268-7790 • annapolisoss.com

Dr. Edward Zebovitz – Edward Zebovitz
D.D.S. Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery •
4311 Northview Drive, Bowie, MD 20716 •
301-352-6311 • drzebovitz.com

Dr. Kenneth Kufta – Oral Surgery Specialists
• 275 West Street, Ste. 100, Annapolis, MD
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Glen Burnie, MD 21061 • 410-761-4684 •
glenburnieoralsurgery.com

Dr. Sara Stires – Chesapeake
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Ste. 103, Severna Park, MD 21146 •
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Dr. Ziad Batrouni – Maryland Oral
Surgery Associates • 128 Lubrano Drive,
Ste. 300, Annapolis, MD 21401 •
410-897-0111 • mosa4os.com

Orofacial Pain

This specialty of dentistry encompasses the diagnosis, management and treatment of pain disorders of the jaw, mouth, face, head and neck. The specialty of Orofacial pain is dedicated to the evidenced-based understanding of the underlying pathophysiology, etiology, prevention, and treatment of these disorders and improving access to interdisciplinary patient care.

Dr. Leo Menendez – Center for Oral and
Maxillofacial Surgery • 3233 Superior Lane,
Ste. B23, Bowie, MD 20715 • 301-262-4500 •
marylandoms.com

Orthodontics & Dentofacial Orthopedics

This specialty deals with the diagnosis, prevention, and correction of improperly aligned teeth and abnormal jaw structures. Treatment can be for functional and/or aesthetic reasons.

Dr. Julie Langguth – Annapolis Orthodontics
• 129 Old Solomons Island Road,
Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-266-8880 •
annapolisorthodontics.com

Dr. Karina Spivak – Spivak Orthodontics •
690 Ritchie Highway, Severna Park, MD 21146
• 410-647-0800 • bracesinthepark.com

Dr. Marc Weber, Jr. – Family Orthodontics
of Annapolis • 888 Bestgate Road, Ste.
301, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 443-726-1653 •
annapolisortho.com

Dr. Ora Reinheimer – Reinheimer
Orthodontics • 802 Bestgate Road, Ste.
B, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-263-5600 •
marylandbraces.com

Dr. Reza Ghajarnia – GlowSmiles Orthodontics
• 9433 Annapolis Road, Lanham, MD 20706 •
240-583-1771 • glowsmilesortho.com

Dr. Robert Yoon – Chesterfield Orthodontics
• 8092 Edwin Raynor Boulevard, Ste. C,
Pasadena, MD 21122 • 410-255-0200 •
cforthodontics.com

Pediatric Dentistry

This is an age-defined specialty that provides primary and comprehensive preventive and therapeutic oral health care for infants and children through adolescence.

Dr. Akshay Kolluri – One Tooth Pediatric Dental • 621 Ridgely Avenue, Ste. 202, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-897-1931 • onetoothpediatricdental.com

Dr. Beverly “Sissy” Jimenez – Annapolis Pediatric Dentistry • 41 Old Solomons Island Road, Ste. 103, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-573-0691 • annapolispediatricdentistry.com

Dr. Devin Langguth – Naptown Smiles / Bross & Associates • 129 Lubrano Drive, Ste. 300, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-224-0018 • naptownsmiles.com

Dr. Jessica Lee – Naptown Smiles / Bross & Associates • 129 Lubrano Drive, Ste. 300, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-224-0018 • naptownsmiles.com

Dr. Katie Siegel – Vernon Pediatric Dentistry • 900 Ritchie Highway, Ste. 101, Severna Park, MD 21146 • 410-544-4888 • vernonpediatricdentistry.com

Dr. Maya Vernon – Vernon Pediatric Dentistry • 900 Ritchie Highway, Ste. 101, Severna Park, MD 21146 • 410-544-4888 • vernonpediatricdentistry.com

Dr. Michelle Decere – Three Bridges Pediatric Dentistry & Orthodontics • 1507 Ritchie Highway, Ste. 201, Arnold, MD 21012 • 410-757-5437 • 3bridgespdo.com

Dr. Tyson Bross – Naptown Smiles / Bross & Associates • 129 Lubrano Drive, Ste. 300, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-224-0018 • naptownsmiles.com

Periodontics

This specialty deals with the tissue that supports and surrounds the teeth—including gums, jaw, and roots. This effort often includes salvaging the teeth and jawbone from gum disease.

Dr. Angela Miele – Annapolis Periodontics • 888 Bestgate Road, Ste. 300, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-224-0500 • annapolisperiodontics.net

Dr. Caitlin Darcey – Chesapeake Periodontics • 900 Ritchie Highway, Ste. 103, Severna Park, MD 21146 • 410-647-0200 • chesapeakeperio.com

Dr. Cary Bly – Capital Periodontics of Maryland • 104 Forbes Street, Ste. 101, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-268-5103 • laserperiodontist.com

Dr. Christopher Cruz – Annapolis Periodontics • 888 Bestgate Road, Ste. 300, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-224-0500 • annapolisperiodontics.net

Dr. Dave Glynn – Neighbor Dental • 8383 Cherry Lane, Laurel, MD 20707 • 202-318-7176 • helloneighbor dental.com

Dr. David Mugford – The Mugford Center for Periodontics & Dental Implants • 1660 Village Green, Crofton, MD 21114 • 410-721-7801 • mugfordcenter.com

Dr. Elizabeth Polak – Dr. Mark Greenstein & Associates • 7905 Malcolm Road, Ste. 104, Clinton, MD 20735 • 301-710-0439 • clintondentist.com

Dr. John Bruce – The Mugford Center for Periodontics & Dental Implants • 1660 Village Green, Crofton, MD 21114 • 410-721-7801 • mugfordcenter.com

Dr. John Duckworth – Chesapeake Periodontics • 900 Ritchie Highway, Ste. 103, Severna Park, MD 21146 • 410-647-0200 • chesapeakeperio.com

Dr. Keith Merchant – Chesapeake Periodontics • 900 Ritchie Highway, Ste. 103, Severna Park, MD 21146 • 410-647-0200 • chesapeakeperio.com

Dr. Ramz Khleif – Dental One Associates • 2623 Housley Road, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-793-4922 • dentalone-md.com

Prosthodontics

This specialty centers on the function, comfort, and health of patients with missing or deficient teeth caused by congenital disorders and those caused by trauma or decay. Treatment may involve the creation of dentures, crowns, and/or dental implants.

Dr. Arezoo Bahar – Annapolis Prosthodontic Associates • 200 Westgate Circle, Ste. 106, Annapolis, MD 21401 • 410-268-7100 • apadentistry.net

Dr. Ashli Cumberbatch – My Riverdale Dentist • 6201 Baltimore Avenue, Riverdale Park, MD 20737 • 301-507-0032 • myriverdaledentist.com

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**THE MOST EXQUISITE AND COMPELLING
PROJECTS IN RESIDENTIAL
CONSTRUCTION AND DESIGN!**

What's Up? Media's 2027 Home Excellence Awards program will honor elite home builders, architects, designers, and professionals serving the greater Chesapeake Bay region.

Home industry professionals and firms may submit their completed projects for evaluation and vetting in 11 award categories. Entries—consisting of a project description and accompanying photographs—will be accepted through the October 31st deadline.



WHAT'S UP? MEDIA'S
**HOME
EXCELLENCE
AWARDS
2027**



whatsupmag.com/homeexcellenceawards2027

*Awards will be published in the February 2027 issues of What's Up? Annapolis,
What's Up? Eastern Shore, and March 2027 issue of What's Up? Central Maryland.*

Leading Medical Professionals



In the following special advertising section you can discover helpful information about a wide variety of healthcare individuals, organizations, and services that could provide the exact assistance you require.

Keep this valuable resource handy throughout the year.



Kian Djawdan, DMD

Djawdan Center for Implant and Restorative Dentistry

F

or more than 30 years, Dr. Kian Djawdan has helped patients restore their health, confidence, and quality of life through advanced implant and restorative dentistry. That depth of experience is complemented by an artistic approach to cosmetic dentistry—creating results that are strong, functional, natural, and beautiful. As a board-certified implant dentist, Dr. Djawdan provides both the surgical and restorative phases of implant care in one location. Every case is planned with the final smile in mind—from the foundation beneath it to its shape, balance, and appearance.

Expertise Supported by Technology

The Djawdan Center combines advanced clinical expertise with sophisticated digital technology and an on-site dental laboratory. Three-dimensional imaging, facial scanning, digital planning, and precision-guided techniques allow the team to personalize every detail of treatment. The in-house laboratory also gives Dr. Djawdan close control over the design and fabrication of implant restorations, crowns, bridges, and full-arch smiles—helping create results that look natural, feel comfortable, and are designed to last.

A Personalized Path Forward

Many patients arrive after living with missing or failing teeth, uncomfortable dentures, dental anxiety, or a smile they have hidden for years. IV sedation and other comfort options make it possible to receive even complex care in a calm, supportive environment. Every patient begins with a conversation. Dr. Djawdan and his team listen carefully, explain the available options, and create a plan around the patient's health, lifestyle, and long-term goals. Because restoring a smile is about more than teeth—it is about restoring hope and confidence.

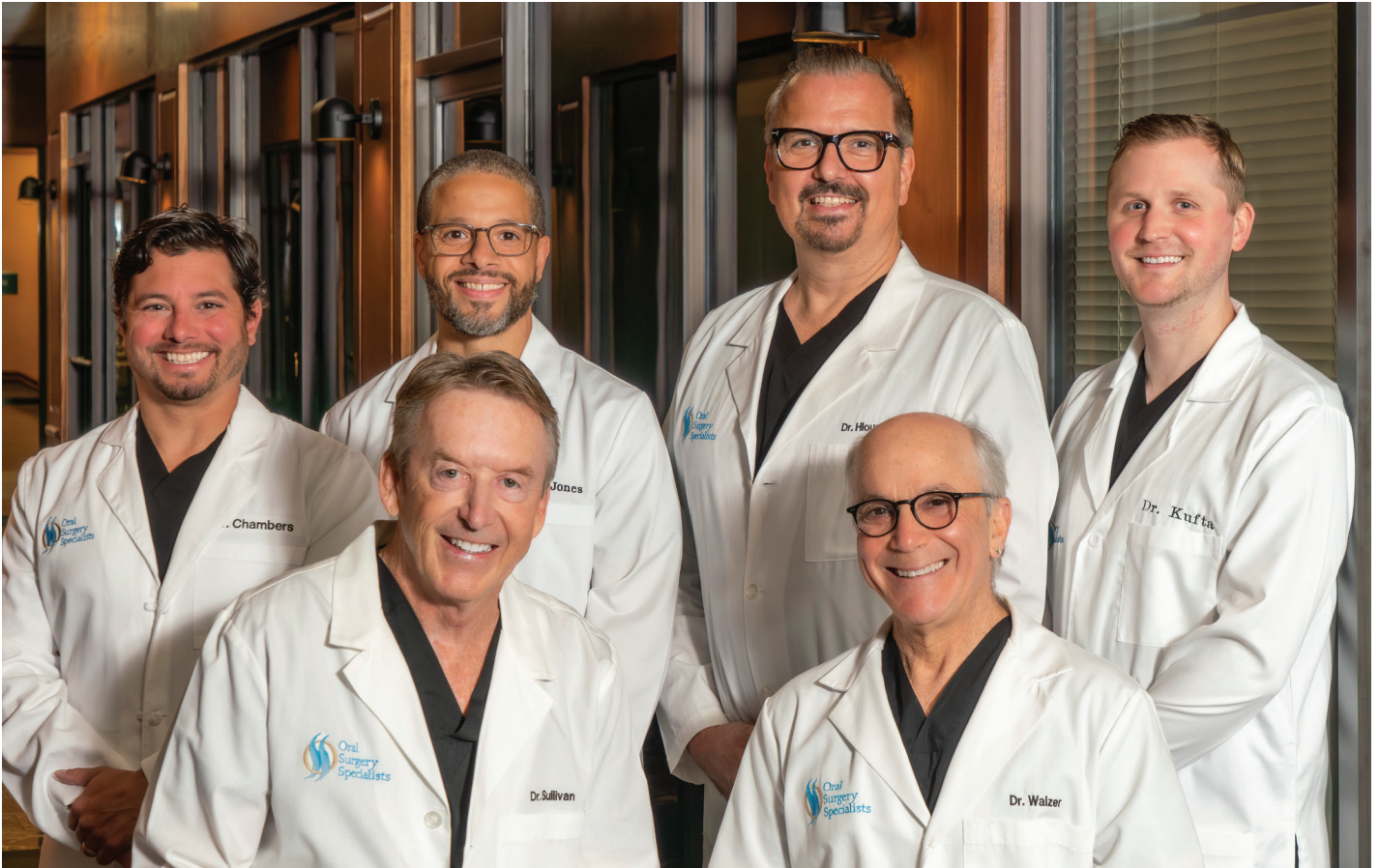
Djawdan Center for Implant and Restorative Dentistry

133 Defense Hwy, Suite 210

Annapolis, MD 21401

410-266-7645 • smileannapolis.com





Oral Surgery Specialists

Drs. Chris Chambers, Neil Sullivan, Kurt Jones, Borek Hlousek, Cliff Walzer, and Kenneth Kufta

Drs. Walzer, Sullivan, Hlousek, Jones, Chambers, and Kufta are renowned Board Certified Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons. Dr. Kufta, who is skilled in advanced surgical techniques, seamlessly fits in with the practice, further enhancing their comprehensive care offerings. These experts handle a broad spectrum of oral, dental, and facial issues. Their proficiency encompasses dental implant surgery, wisdom tooth removal, and corrective jaw surgery, employing methods that emphasize bone structure rebuilding with minimal surgical intervention and enhanced patient comfort. Their practice prioritizes creating stunning smiles and rejuvenating the functionality of teeth and jaws. Unique to their specialty, they are licensed to administer intravenous (IV) general anesthesia in a state-of-the-art office environment. Their practice ethos combines excellent care with the art, science, and technology, ensuring an outstanding experience marked by compassion, courtesy, and respect.

The practice is known for managing a wide variety of problems related to the mouth, teeth, and facial regions, offering a full scope of oral and maxillofacial surgery. Their expertise extends from routine procedures like wisdom tooth removal to more complex surgeries such as dental implant placement and corrective jaw surgery. The surgeons utilize advanced techniques designed

to rebuild bone structure with minimal surgical intervention, optimizing patient comfort and promoting quicker recovery times.

In addition to their surgical expertise, the practice is equipped to diagnose and treat facial pain, injuries, and fractures, providing comprehensive care under one roof. The practice operates across five state-of-the-art locations, ensuring that patients throughout the region have access to top-quality care close to home.

The team's commitment to excellence is reflected in every aspect of their work, from the initial consultation to post-surgical follow-up. They continually invest in the latest technology and ongoing education, ensuring that they remain at the forefront of their field. This dedication, combined with a patient-centered approach, has earned them a stellar reputation as leaders in oral and maxillofacial surgery in the region.

Oral Surgery Specialists

Annapolis, Pasadena,
Kent Island, Waugh Chapel

410-268-7790 • annapolisoss.com





All Star Pain Management and Regenerative Medicine

F

ounded in 2017, All Star Pain Management and Regenerative Medicine has become a regional leader in advanced orthopedic and regenerative care. From competitive athletes recovering from sports injuries to patients struggling with arthritis or longstanding back pain, the practice combines established

interventional medicine with evolving regenerative technologies to treat conditions affecting the spine, joints, muscles, tendons, and ligaments.

Rather than treating pain as an isolated symptom, All Star's physicians look beneath the surface to identify the underlying orthopedic condition. Each treatment plan is personalized to relieve pain, restore function, and help patients return to the activities they love.

Treatment options range from image-guided spinal and joint injections to minimally invasive spine procedures, neuromodulation, and advanced regenerative medicine. The practice offers platelet-rich plasma (PRP), alpha-2-macroglobulin (A2M), bone marrow concentrate, and microfragmented adipose tissue. These products, also called orthobiologics, support the body's natural healing response and help repair injured tissues.

All Star also offers shockwave therapy to stimulate healing and PNÖE VO₂ max and resting metabolic rate testing to personalize exercise, nutrition, and recovery strategies. Together, these advanced technologies help patients heal, perform, and feel their best by using a natural and holistic approach.

At the center of this approach is founder Zvezdomir Zamfirov, MD—known to his patients as “Dr. Zed.” With more than 30 years of experience spanning orthopedics, physical medicine and rehabilitation, and interventional pain care, Dr. Zed has been at the forefront of regenerative medicine in the Annapolis region. Across three convenient locations, All Star is redefining what pain treatment can look like: precise, personalized, evidence-based, and focused not only on relieving pain, but on helping patients reclaim their strength, mobility, and quality of life.

All Star Pain Management & Regenerative Medicine

443-808-1808

Offices in Annapolis, Glen Burnie
and Bowie • AllStarPainManagement.com





Anne Arundel Gastroenterology Associates

AGA has been a pillar of the local healthcare community for over four decades diagnosing and treating all symptoms and diseases associated with the GI tract (esophagus, stomach, small bowel, colon), pancreas, liver and gallbladder. Common symptoms and diseases include gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) including Crohn's disease and Ulcerative colitis, colon cancer prevention, Celiac disease, fatty liver and pancreatic inflammation, cysts and cancer. AAGA includes ten physicians and five midlevel providers who are all taking in new patients and are excited about caring for our community. Our main office is located in Annapolis, and we have satellite offices located in Greenbelt, Odenton, Bowie, Pasadena and Kent Island.

Colorectal cancer is the third most common cause of cancer worldwide.¹ In the state of Maryland colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer related deaths, accounting for ~9%

of deaths annually.¹ The development and impact of colon cancer can be greatly reduced with colorectal cancer screening. For optimal health, it is essential that you meet with your Gastroenterologist or Primary provider to discuss when you should start screening, and which method is right for you! We are accepting new patients at all of our locations. Feel free to visit us at www.aagastro.com or call to schedule an appointment at 410-224-2116. We look forward to meeting you soon!

1. Johns Hopkins Medicine – Cancer in Maryland. <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/kimmel-cancer-center/community-outreach-engagement/cancer-maryland#:~:text=The%20second%20most%20common%20cause,and%20liver%20cancer%20at%205%25>. Accessed Jan 26, 2024.

Anne Arundel Gastroenterology Associates

Locations in Annapolis, Pasadena, Bowie, Odenton, Stevensville, Greenbelt and Easton
Visit our new Easton location:
8695 Commerce Dr, Suite 5, Easton, MD
410-224-2116 • aagastro.com





Annapolis Prosthodontic Associates

P

roudly Serving the Annapolis Community for More Than 50 Years. For more than five decades, Annapolis Prosthodontic Associates has provided sophisticated, highly personalized dental care with an unwavering commitment to clinical excellence.

Our practice is led by three accomplished prosthodontists—dental specialists with advanced training in the restoration and replacement of teeth, implant dentistry, esthetics, and the management of complex dental needs.

Sara Satin, DMD, MS, FACP: Board-Certified Prosthodontist President of the Maryland Section of the American College of Prosthodontists, with a special interest in advanced digital dentistry.

Arezoo A. Bahar, DDS: Prosthodontist Trained in London with advanced postgraduate training in Prosthodontics and Implant Prosthodontics at the University of Maryland.

John P. Davliakos, DMD: Prosthodontist Assistant Professor in the University of Maryland Graduate Prosthodontic Program and a nationally and internationally recognized lecturer in implant and prosthetic dentistry.

Our doctors combine specialized expertise, meticulous treatment planning, and advanced digital technology to provide individualized care for restorative and implant needs—from the restoration of a single tooth to full-mouth rehabilitation. Our on-site dental laboratory allows our doctors to collaborate directly with experienced dental technicians throughout the design and fabrication of custom restorations, providing exceptional attention to detail, precision, function, and esthetics.

Contact us today to schedule your consultation and let us restore that beautiful smile that you were meant to have.

Annapolis Prosthodontic Associates

Shore United Bank Building
200 Westgate Circle, Suite #106
Annapolis, MD, 21401
410-268-7100
apadentistry.com





Drs. Joseph Wazen, Emmanuel Koli, Cina Karodeh, Emeka Nwodim, Mark Linzer, and Justin Waltrous.

Bay Area Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine

Bay Area Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine is a leading multidisciplinary musculoskeletal care provider serving communities throughout Maryland. As a division of The Centers for Advanced Orthopaedics (CAO)—one of the nation's largest orthopaedic groups—the practice provides comprehensive care across Annapolis, Hanover, and Kent Island.

Founded in Anne Arundel County by decorated Vietnam War veteran and renowned surgeon Dr. Edwin Fulton, Bay Area Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine has built a longstanding legacy of clinical excellence, community trust, and compassionate patient care. The practice's comprehensive Continuum of Care integrates advanced diagnostics, non-operative treatment, interventional pain management, physical therapy, bracing, minimally invasive and complex surgical procedures, and individualized rehabilitation. By bringing multiple musculoskeletal specialties together under one roof, patients benefit from coordinated, personalized treatment without unnecessary referrals.

Dr. Emeka Nwodim, MD, FAAOS, Managing Partner, leads the Spine and General Orthopaedics division, specializing in complex spinal reconstruction, trauma, and degenerative conditions. The Sports

Medicine team, Dr. Emmanuel Koli, MD, FAAOS and Dr. Joseph Wazen, DO, provides advanced treatment for athletic injuries, ligament reconstruction, and joint disorders. Dr. Cina Karodeh, MD, specializes in Hand and Upper Extremity microsurgery, while Dr. Mark R. Linzer, DPM, provides comprehensive Foot and Ankle surgical care. Dr. Justin Waltrous, MD, leads Interventional Physiatry, offering advanced non-operative treatments, targeted injections, and physical medicine therapies.

Beyond clinical expertise, the practice is defined by genuine warmth, accessibility, and individualized attention. From the first interaction through rehabilitation, the entire team strives to make patients feel comfortable, heard, and informed. Physicians take the time to explain complex conditions, answer questions, and develop treatment plans collaboratively. At Bay Area Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine, exceptional care is built around the whole patient—not just the condition.

CAO Bay Area Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine
Locations in Hanover, Annapolis and Kent Island
410-768-5050 • bayareaorthopaedics.com



Churchton Dental Care

Dentistry like you've never experienced before

W

e are proud to have spent the last 14 years serving our community. Our core belief has always been that we don't just treat teeth—we care for people.

As local residents, we love seeing our patients around town and treating everyone who walks through our doors like family. We strive to put ourselves in your shoes and recommend what is truly best for you, whether that means implants, dentures, or no treatment at all.

Going to the dentist can be confusing, which is why we offer free second opinions and consultations. We combine trusted experience with modern technology to achieve the best possible results.

We also believe that everyone deserves access to quality dental care. That's why we accept most PPO insurance plans, offer our affordable in-house Dental Savers Plan for patients without insurance, and work with patients to create payment options that fit their budget. Our goal is to remove financial barriers whenever possible so that everyone has the opportunity to achieve and maintain a healthy smile. Thank you for trusting us with your care. We look forward to continuing to serve you and making you feel comfortable and valued.



Churchton Dental Care

5570 Shady Side Rd.

Churchton, MD 20733

410-203-4945 • churchtondentalcare.com





Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery

Edward Zebovitz D.D.S. and Injamamul "Inja" Niloy, D.D.S.

F

or more than two decades, Dr. Edward Zebovitz has built a reputation as not only one of the region's most respected oral and maxillofacial surgeons, but one recognized nationally for the complexity of the procedures he performs and the compassionate care he provides every patient who walks through his doors.

From to Corrective Jaw Surgery for Sleep Apnea, TMJ disorders, facial reconstruction, obstructive sleep apnea, and facial trauma to wisdom tooth removal and dental implants, Dr. Zebovitz believes exceptional outcomes begin with listening. Every treatment plan is thoughtfully tailored to each patient's goals, concerns, and overall health, ensuring they feel informed and confident before treatment begins.

Dr. Zebovitz combines decades of surgical experience with a commitment to staying at the forefront of his specialty. By pairing advanced technology with evidence-based treatment, he delivers precise, predictable results while prioritizing patient comfort and safety.

While his clinical expertise is well known, patients often remember

something even more meaningful, the time he spends with them. Dr. Zebovitz believes every patient deserves to feel heard, informed, and confident in their treatment decisions. Whether performing a routine procedure or managing a complex reconstructive case, he strives to create an experience built on trust, education, and genuine compassion.

This year, that same philosophy continues to grow with the addition of Dr. Injamamul "Inja" Niloy to the practice. Dr. Niloy joins the team with advanced training in oral and maxillofacial surgery and shares Dr. Zebovitz's dedication to delivering thoughtful, personalized care. His arrival expands appointment availability while allowing the practice to continue providing the same individualized attention patients have come to expect. Together, Drs. Zebovitz and Niloy are committed to ensuring patients throughout the region have access to advanced surgical care delivered with compassion, precision, and respect.

Dr. Edward Zebovitz, DDS

4311 Northview Drive • Bowie, MD 20716

(301) 352-6311 • www.drzebovitz.com

Instagram: [doctorzebovitz](https://www.instagram.com/doctorzebovitz)



Q&A

WITH THE EXPERTS



Q: What should patients consider when choosing a dentist for dental implants or a smile transformation?

A: Patients should look for experience, comprehensive treatment planning, and care that is personalized to their needs. Implant and cosmetic dentistry involve more than replacing teeth—they require careful consideration

of health, function, facial balance, and the natural appearance of the final smile. Because I provide both the surgical and restorative phases of implant care, I can plan treatment with the final result in mind from the beginning. Our advanced digital technology and in-house laboratory give us additional control over the precision and design of each restoration. Most importantly, patients should feel heard. The best results come from understanding what matters to each individual and combining expertise, technology, artistry, and compassionate care to support their health, confidence, and long-term goals.

KIAN DJAWDAN, DMD

Djawdan Center for Implant & Restorative Dentistry



Q: When is the best time to get a hip or knee replacement?

A: Some patients reach a point where pain and mobility issues disrupt daily life, and they're ready for surgery right away. But if you're able to plan ahead, timing can help. Autumn allows recovery before winter

weather increases your risk of slips and falls. Winter offers time to heal before spring and summer activities. Spring and early summer work well with school breaks and recovery in time for mid-summer travel. The best time is when you're healthy, supported and ready to recover. Whenever you choose, we'll be here to guide you through it. Learn more at Luminis.Health/Joint-Surgery.

JAMES MACDONALD, MD, Luminis Health



Q: If I can screen for colon cancer at home with Cologuard, why would I need a Colonoscopy?

A: Cologuard has been a major advancement because it makes colorectal cancer screening easier and more accessible. However, screening is

about more than finding cancer- it is about preventing it. Cologuard does not detect approximately 8 out of every 100 colorectal cancers and about 57 out of every 100 advanced precancerous polyps-lesions that may progress into cancer. Colonoscopy allows us to find and remove these polyps before they become cancer. The greatest success in colorectal cancer screening is not simply finding cancer early, it is preventing cancer from ever developing in someone you care about.

RAJA TAUNK, MD, Anne Arundel Gastroenterology Associates



Q: I've been told I don't have enough bone for dental implants. Could I still be a candidate?

A: Yes, possibly. Being told that you do not have enough bone for conventional dental implants does not necessarily mean that fixed teeth are no longer an option. Advanced bone loss can occur after years of missing teeth, periodontal disease, infection, or long-term denture wear. Depending on the

individual's anatomy and overall health, advanced treatment options may include bone grafting, specialized implant placement, or zygomatic implants. Zygomatic implants are longer implants that anchor into the cheekbone rather than relying solely on diminished bone in the upper jaw. For certain patients, this can make fixed teeth possible even when traditional implant treatment is not. These are complex procedures that require careful three-dimensional imaging, comprehensive planning, and advanced surgical and restorative experience. Every patient must be evaluated individually, but the important message is this: a previous "no" may mean that conventional implants were not an option—not that no options exist.

RENEE DJAWDAN

Djawdan Center for Implant & Restorative Dentistry



Q: Can regenerative medicine actually help patients avoid surgery?

A: Absolutely. I treat many conditions – such as rotator cuff tears, mild to moderate arthritis, and degenerative disc disease – with regenerative therapies that can help patients avoid major surgery.

The key is early intervention, as waiting too long can limit results. Compared to surgery, these procedures are safe, minimally invasive, and carry a lower risk of complications. As the only physician in Annapolis licensed through the premier Regenxx network, I offer advanced, research-driven regenerative treatments tailored to each patient. If you're trying to avoid surgery, an early evaluation can help determine if you're a good candidate and improve your outcome.

DR. ZVEZDOMIR ZAMFIROV, All Star Pain Management and Regenerative Medicine



Q: What sets your practice apart from other oral surgery offices?

A: Our philosophy has always been simple: it's all about the patient. We take the time to understand each person's goals, educate them about their options,

and develop a treatment plan that's tailored specifically to them. We combine advanced technology and surgical expertise with genuine compassion because outstanding care isn't just about achieving excellent clinical results—it's about making patients feel comfortable, confident, and cared for throughout every step of their journey.

EDWARD ZEBOVITZ D.D.S., Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery



Q: What are you most proud of over the last 14 years?

A: We are most proud of the relationships we have built with our patients. We have earned their trust by consistently doing what is right for them every day. While we don't claim to be

the world's best fixers of teeth, we would argue that our team is the absolute best. From your first time meeting Debbie, Meg, or Becky, to our amazing assistants Christy, Brooke, Mai, and Hailey, our wonderful hygienist Ryan, to our Sarah, you will always be cared for like family and never just a set of teeth.

ERIC GABRIEL, D.D.S., Churchton Dental Care



Q: What are Dental Implants?

A: When you are missing teeth, you may feel uncomfortable eating, speaking or worst of all SMILING. Dental implants offer a permanent solution to these problems. Dental implants are titanium replacements for missing teeth that act as a strong

foundation to support new crowns, bridges or anchor slipping dentures. The implant procedure is painless and involves placing the implant under the gums and into the jawbone just like the roots of your own natural teeth. Recovery time is usually no more than 24 hours and total treatment time from the day of your implant placement to the time of attaching the new teeth range from 2 months to as little as 1 day. Dental implants are the next best thing to your own teeth...IT'S TIME TO SMILE AGAIN!

KURT JONES, DDS, Oral Surgery Specialists



Q: When is sports-related knee pain or injury serious enough to consider surgery?

A: Consider surgery if your injury locks your joint, limits daily movement, or fails to improve with rest and physical therapy. Knee pain is highly serious if you experience

stubborn swelling, a buckling sensation, or an inability to bear weight. These red flags usually signal a torn ligament or cartilage that cannot heal on its own. Consult a sports medicine doctor for a personalized treatment plan. The ultimate choice to undergo a procedure depends entirely on your specific injury severity, overall health, and long-term fitness goals.

DR. JOSEPH WAZEN, DO, Bay Area Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine



Q: What types of patients do you treat as prosthodontists?

A: Prosthodontists care for patients of all ages with a wide range of dental needs. We may treat a child born without permanent teeth, an adult who has lost or damaged teeth from trauma or disease, a patient affected by cancer

treatment or radiation, or anyone with complex cosmetic and restorative needs. We often collaborate with other dental specialists to provide comprehensive, interdisciplinary care. Our specialty combines this coordinated approach with careful consideration of facial esthetics, harmony, and function to create beautiful yet natural-looking smiles designed for long-term health and durability.

DR. SARA SATIN, Annapolis Prosthodontic Associates



Leading Medical Professionals

For more information visit whatsupmag.com



Fall Admission Events

8
OCT



**Lower School
Information Session**
9:00-11:00 a.m.

20
OCT



**Middle School
Information Session**
1:30-3:30 p.m.

29
OCT



**Upper School
Information Session**
6:30-7:30 p.m.

7
NOV



**First School
Open House**
9:00-11:00 a.m.

PLAN YOUR VISIT



Register for our fall admission events or schedule a private tour of campus!

LEARN MORE



See what our families and graduates have to say about Key!



KEY
SCHOOL



Best Private
K-12 Schools



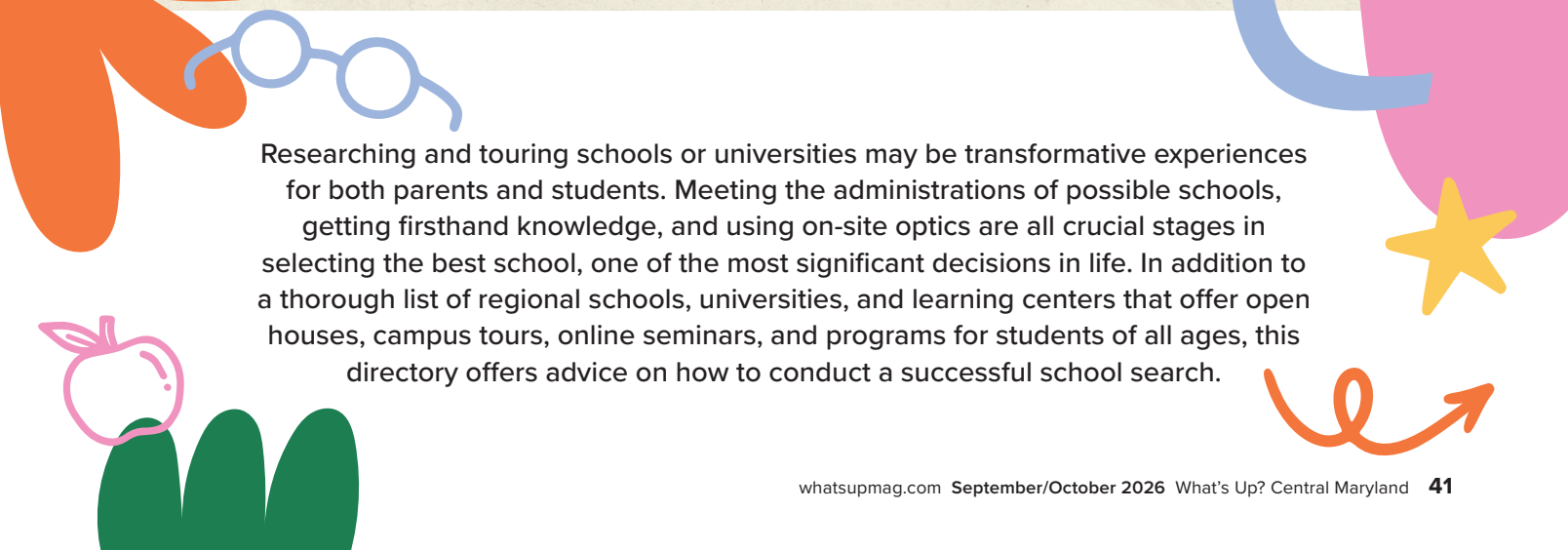
Best Private
High Schools



VISIT COOL SCHOOLS!



OUR 2026 SCHOOL VISITATION GUIDE OFFERS AN OVERVIEW OF OPEN HOUSE DATES AND HOW TO HANDLE PRESCHOOL, GRADE SCHOOL, AND COLLEGE VISITS!



Researching and touring schools or universities may be transformative experiences for both parents and students. Meeting the administrations of possible schools, getting firsthand knowledge, and using on-site optics are all crucial stages in selecting the best school, one of the most significant decisions in life. In addition to a thorough list of regional schools, universities, and learning centers that offer open houses, campus tours, online seminars, and programs for students of all ages, this directory offers advice on how to conduct a successful school search.



If you're considering school visitations this fall, or in the near future, here are several tips and considerations when planning.

5

MAKE EXTRA TIME TO EXPLORE ON YOUR OWN

Make sure you take extra time to explore areas of campus that were not covered in your trip because the official campus tour will showcase the school's best characteristics. This is the ideal time to sit in a class or lecture, observe students, or visit any department that interests you.

6

TALK TO CURRENT STUDENTS AND STAFF

Your tour guide may be a biased source because it is their responsibility to present the best possible image of their school. Your guide's knowledge is important, but you might wish to speak with existing students to get a more honest impression. If the tour didn't cover anything, ask the students: What is everyday life like for students? Is meeting people and forming friendships easy? On campus, is there a lot of diversity? Are you having trouble adjusting?

DOCUMENT EVERY VISIT

If you plan to visit several schools, make sure to document each visit. Take pictures, jot down some notes, or record a voice memo to highlight your favorite—or least favorite—aspects of each school. Going on several tours within a short period of time can be chaotic, so this will help you separate and compare each visit.

8

SHADOW DAYS

Shadow days provide prospective students with a firsthand experience of a school's daily life—academics, social dynamics, and campus culture—helping them make informed decisions, ease transition anxiety, and determine if the environment is the right fit for their personal and educational goals.

1 MAP OUT ALL OF THE SCHOOLS AND MAKE A LIST

Make a list of all the possible schools, conduct some research on them, and then select a few before the application process starts. When your selection has been narrowed down to the best candidates, it's time to begin organizing your campus visits. Plan ahead and map out each school you are seriously considering because you should ideally visit them all.

2

ORDER IS IMPORTANT

Make an effort to visit your top school or schools last. You'll start to have a clearer understanding of your preferences as you visit additional campuses. By the end of the process, you will have a better idea of what to look for and what questions to ask about the campus you wish to tour.

3

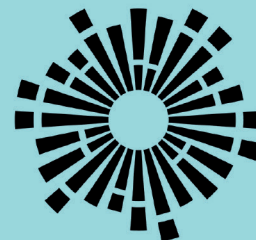
TIMING MATTERS

Plan your visit while school is, hopefully, in session. Observing student life will give you an authentic view of the school and will (hopefully) help you envision yourself as a student there.

4

KEEP AN OPEN MIND

Your priorities during your initial school search may completely shift once you start touring, so remain open minded. Walk onto every campus with a positive attitude and save your judgments until the end of the tour



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PUBLIC LIBRARY

TAKE ON SCHOOL

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DISCOVER SEVERN.

FALL ADMISSION EVENTS

Chesapeake Campus Open House for
Preschool–Grade 5 October 9 @ 9:00 am

Teel Campus Open House for
Grades 6–12 October 15 @ 7:00 pm

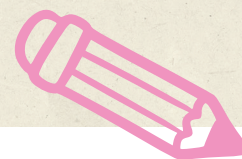
Middle School Parent Information Session for
Grades 6–8 September 22 @ 9:30 am



Learn more at
severnschool.com/open-house



Severn School



Regional educational institutions, learning centers, and schools that advertise in the *What's Up? Media* family of publications are listed below. For program availability, visitation instructions, and open house dates, please think about giving them a call directly. The listing of schools is alphabetical.

Annapolis Area Christian School – Annapolis Area Christian School
Lower School Annapolis Campus – 710 Ridgely Avenue, Annapolis; 410-846-3504; aacsonline.org; October 2 and November 13, 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Lower School Severn Campus – 61 Gambrills Road, Severn; October 7 and November 20, 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Middle School – 109 Burns Crossing Road, Severn; October 15 and November 19, 9:00 a.m. Upper School – 109 Burns Crossing Road, Severn; October 19 and November 16, 9:00 a.m. K-12 Evening Information Nights – 109 Burns Crossing Road, Severn; –Inside the Kerr Center; September 17, and April 22, 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Anne Arundel Community College
101 College Parkway, Arnold; 410-777-2222; aacc.edu; October 7, 2026, 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. A virtual tour is available on the school website.

Archbishop Spalding High School
8080 New Cut Road, Severn; 410-969-9105; archbishopspalding.org; October 25, 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., sign-ups are available online.

Benedictine School

14299 Benedictine Lane, Ridgely; 410-634-2112; benschool.org; Contact school directly for guidance on visitations, tours, etc.

Chesapeake College/Eastern Shore Higher Education Center
1000 College Circle, Wye Mills; 410-822-5400; chesapeake.edu; Contact school directly for guidance on visitations, tours, etc.

DeMatha Catholic High School
4313 Madison St, Hyattsville; 240-764-2200; dematha.org; November 1, 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Holy Trinity: An Episcopal School
Primary – 13106 Annapolis Road, Bowie; 301-262-5355; The Daisy Lane School & High School Prep – 11902 Daisy Lane, Glenn Dale; 301-464-3215; htrinity.org; October 15, November 11, February 4, April 8, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Indian Creek School
1130 Anne Chambers Way, Crownsville; 410-923-3660; indiancreekschool.org; Lower School – November 12, 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Middle School – November 19, 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Upper School – November 5, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Kent School
6788 Wilkins Lane, Chestertown; 410-778-4100; kentschool.org; Kent School Discovery Day - November 15, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Key School

534 Hillsmere Drive; 410-263-9231; keyschool.org; Middle School Sports Clinics – September 19, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.; Lower School Information Session – October 8, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.; Middle School Information Session – October 20, 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.; Upper School Information Session – October 29, 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.; First School Open House – November 7, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.; Contact school directly for daily tours.

Lighthouse Christian Academy
931 Love Point Rd, Stevensville; 410-643-3034; lcacademy.org; October 24, 10 a.m.; November 18, 9 a.m.; January 9, 10 a.m.; February 17, 9 a.m.

Monsignor Slade Catholic School
120 Dorsey Road, Glen Burnie; 410-766-7130; msladeschool.com; Pre-K3 to Grade 8; November 11, 8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. January 30, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Montessori International Children's House
1641 N. Winchester Road, Annapolis; 410-757-7789; montessoriiinternational.org; Tours are held on Wednesday mornings by appointment only.

Polaris Village Academy
31 Jowite Street, Easton; 410-714-0275; polarisvillageacademy.org; Contact school directly for guidance on visitations, tours, etc.

Radcliffe Creek School
201 Talbot Boulevard, Chestertown; 410-778-8150; radcliffecreekschool.org; Contact school to schedule an in-person tour. A virtual tour is available on the school website.





Right Start Academy

331 Gambrills Road, Ste. 1, Gambrills; 890 Airport Park Road, Ste. 119, Glen Burnie; 410-923-7575 (main line for both locations); rightstartacademy.org; Tours are typically held Monday through Friday between 9 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.; Contact school directly for guidance on visitations, tours, etc.

Rockbridge Academy

680 Evergreen Road, Crownsville; 410-923-1171; rockbridge.org; All Grades – October 19, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten – October 23, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Preview Night (open to all prospective families) – November 6, 7 p.m.; The Paideia School (K-6th Grade Hybrid Program) – November 2 and February 19, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

St. Andrews Day School

4 B Wallace Manor Road, Edgewater; 410-266-0952; school.standrewsum.org; Contact school directly for guidance on visitations, tours, etc.

St. Anne's School of Annapolis

3112 Arundel on the Bay Road, Annapolis; 410-263-8650; stanness-school.org; Messtival Preschool-aged children (up to age 5) – September 26, 9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.; Lower School and Middle School Open House November 11, 9 a.m.

St. John the Evangelist Catholic School

669 Ritchie Highway, Severna Park; 410-647-2283; stjohnspschool.org; - Fall Open House – September 29, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. A virtual tour is available on the school website.

St. Margaret's Day School

1605 Pleasant Plains Road, Annapolis; 410-757-2333; stmargaretsday-school.org; October 16 and January 15, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

St. Martin's in the Field Episcopal School

375 A Benfield Road, Severna Park; 410-647-7055; stmartinsmd.org; October 13, January 13, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Registration for Open Houses and/or private school tours (available most school days) through their website.

St. Martin's Lutheran School

1120 Spa Road, Annapolis; 410-263-4723; stmartinsonline.org; Contact School for personalized campus tours throughout the year by appointment, Monday through Thursday, for families interested in learning more about our PreK–8 programs; Fall Open House – September 21, 9–11 a.m. and 4–6 p.m.

St. Mary's Annapolis

109 Duke of Gloucester Street, Annapolis; 410-263-2869; stmary-sannapolis.org; Elementary (Pre-K through Grade 8) – October 23, 9 a.m. High School – October 24, 9 a.m. Athletic Open House (Pascal Field) – October 27, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Sts. Peter and Paul High School and Elementary School

High School – 1212 S. Washington Street, Easton; 410-822-2275; hs.ssp-peaston.org; October 25, 12 p.m. Elementary School – 900 High Street, Easton – Contact school directly for guidance on visitations, tours, etc.

St. Vincent Pallotti High School

113 St. Mary's Place, Laurel; 301-725-3288; pallottihs.org; Lady Panther Pink Out Admissions Event – October 21, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Open House – November 8, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Arts, Sciences & Learning Center Open House – December 1, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Spring Open House – April 22, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.

School of the Incarnation

2601 Symphony Ln, Gambrills; 410-519-2285; schooloftheincarnation.org; November 7, 8:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Severn School

Lower School – Chesapeake Campus: 1185 Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard, Arnold; 410-862-3684; severnschool.com; October 9, 9 a.m. Middle and Upper School – Teel Campus: 201 Water Street, Severna Park; October 15, 7 p.m.

The Country School

716 Goldsborough Street, Easton; 410-822-1935; countryschool.org; Contact school directly for guidance on visitations, tours, etc.

The Gunston School

911 Gunston Road, Centreville; 410-758-0620; gunston.org; October 18 and November 1, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.; January 24 and May 2, 11 a.m.

The Summit School

664 E. Central Avenue, Davidsonville; 410-798-0005; thesummit-school.org; October 7, November 12, December 8, January 13, February 18, March 23, 9 to 10:30 a.m.

Wye River Upper School

316 S. Commerce Street, Centreville; 410-758-2922; wyeriverupperschool.org; Open House – November 3, January 27 and March 3, 9:30 a.m. Virtual Open House – February 22.

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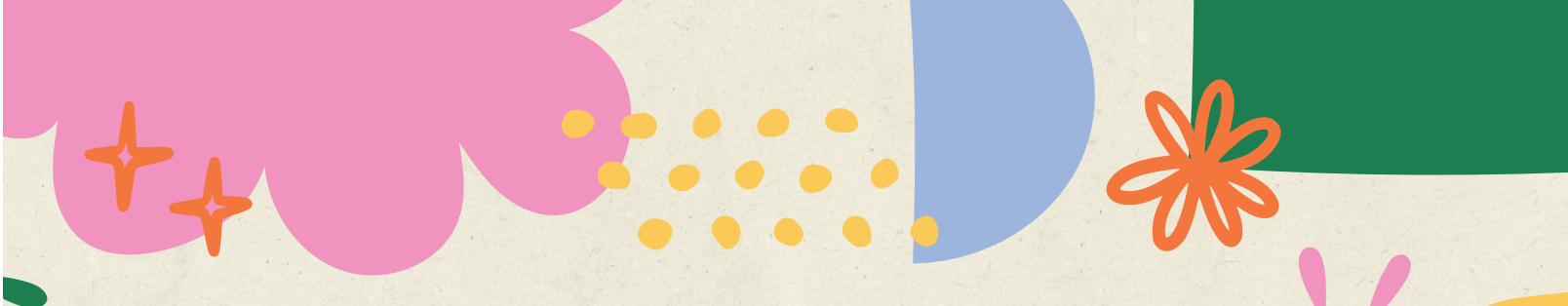
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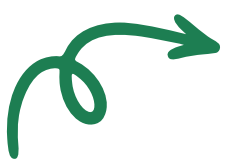


Kids need to be cared for, and sometimes it takes a village. Whether you're returning to work, seeking social opportunities for your toddler, or simply looking for a trusted partner in your child's early development, choosing childcare is one of the most important decisions you'll make as a parent. The good news? Maryland offers strong oversight of licensed childcare providers, along with resources to help families make informed decisions. Here's what to know before your little one's first day.

START WITH LICENSING

Your first step should always be confirming that a childcare center or family childcare home is licensed or registered through the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), Office of Child Care. Licensed providers must meet state requirements for staff qualifications, child-to-teacher ratios, health and safety standards, emergency preparedness, nutrition, sanitation, and ongoing inspections. Don't hesitate to ask a provider about its licensing status, inspection history, and safety procedures. High-quality programs welcome these conversations and are happy to answer parents' questions.

LOOK BEYOND THE BASICS WITH MARYLAND EXCELS



Licensing establishes the minimum standards, but many Maryland families also look for programs participating in **Maryland EXCELS**, the state's Quality Rating and Improvement System. Participating programs receive ratings on a scale of 1 through 5, with higher ratings reflecting continued investments in staff development, curriculum, family engagement, administrative practices, and nationally recognized quality standards. A level 5 program has achieved the highest quality rating and state or national accreditation. While an EXCELS rating isn't required, it offers parents another valuable tool when comparing childcare options.





TOUR WITH A CRITICAL EYE

A brochure can tell you what a program says it offers. A tour shows you how it actually operates. As you visit programs, look for: Warm, attentive teachers who interact positively with children. Clean, organized classrooms with age-appropriate materials. Secure entrances and visitor check-in procedures. Safe indoor and outdoor play spaces. Calm, engaging classrooms where children appear comfortable and involved. Clearly posted emergency plans, health policies, and daily schedules

Pay attention to how staff members greet children and communicate with families. Those everyday interactions often reveal the culture of a program better than any marketing materials.



ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Parents should feel comfortable asking detailed questions before enrolling. An experienced provider will appreciate your interest and answer openly.

Consider asking: What is your child-to-teacher ratio? How long have your teachers worked here? What training do staff members receive each year? How do you comfort children during difficult transitions? How do you communicate daily updates with families? What is your illness policy? How are emergencies handled? How do you support each child's developmental milestones? Can parents tour the facility and observe classrooms before enrolling?



PREPARING FOR THE TRANSITION

The first few weeks of childcare can be emotional for children and parents alike. Some toddlers adapt immediately, while others need several weeks to become comfortable with a new routine.

You can make the transition easier by:

- Visiting the classroom together before the first day
- Talking positively about "school" and new friends
- Establish consistent bedtime and morning routines
- Sending a favorite blanket or comfort item if allowed
- Keeping goodbyes short, calm, and reassuring

Remember that tears at drop-off are common and usually temporary. Most children quickly settle into their daily routine once parents leave.



EXPECT PLENTY OF LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

The best childcare programs understand that toddlers learn through exploration, not worksheets. Experiences build social, emotional, language, and motor skills that prepare children for preschool and beyond. **Daily activities could include:** Story time and early language development, Music, movement, and singing, Sensory play, Outdoor recreation, Creative art projects, Opportunities to practice sharing, problem-solving, and independence

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

A quality childcare program views parents as partners. Many Maryland providers use secure apps or daily reports to share activities, meals, nap times, diaper changes, and photos throughout the day. Regular communication helps families stay connected and allows caregivers to better understand each child's individual needs. Don't be afraid to ask questions or share concerns. Open communication benefits everyone, especially your child.





EXPECT A FEW SNIFFLES

One surprise for many first-time childcare families is how often children catch common colds during their first year. Exposure to other children naturally increases encounters with everyday viruses. While frequent minor illnesses can be frustrating, they're a normal part of building young immune systems. Ask prospective providers about handwashing practices, cleaning procedures, immunization requirements, and illness policies. Strong health protocols help reduce the spread of infections while keeping children and staff safe.



TRUST BOTH RESEARCH AND INSTINCT

Choosing childcare isn't simply about finding an available opening—it's about finding the right fit for your family. Review licensing information, compare Maryland EXCELS ratings, ask thoughtful questions, and observe how caregivers interact with children. Then trust your instincts. When you walk into the right program, you'll likely notice children who are engaged, caregivers who are patient and attentive, and an atmosphere that feels warm, safe, and welcoming. Your child's first year in childcare is filled with milestones: making new friends, building confidence, developing independence, and discovering the joy of learning. By doing your homework before enrollment, you'll be setting the stage for a successful beginning that benefits your entire family.

STATE CHILDCARE RESOURCES

Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), Office of Child Care. The Office of Child Care licenses childcare centers and family childcare homes throughout Maryland. Parents can learn about licensing requirements, health and safety regulations, and consumer education resources to help evaluate providers. More info | earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org. **Maryland EXCELS.** Maryland EXCELS is the state's Quality Rating and Improvement System for licensed childcare and early education programs. Participating providers earn quality ratings on a scale of 1 to 5, giving families another way to compare programs beyond basic licensing requirements. More info | marylandexcels.org. **Check Child Care Maryland.** Before enrolling your child, review a provider's licensing status, inspection reports, and compliance history through Maryland's online childcare search tool. More info | checkccmd.org. **LOCATE: Child Care.** Operated by Maryland Family Network, LOCATE: Child Care is a free referral service that helps parents find licensed childcare programs based on location, a child's age, schedule, and other family needs. Childcare specialists can also answer questions about choosing quality care. More info | marylandfamilynetwork.org/programs/locate



BEFORE YOU ENROLL CHECKLIST

Use this checklist as you compare childcare providers and prepare for your child's first day.

Verify the Basics. Confirm the program is licensed by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), Office of Child Care. Review the provider's licensing and inspection history. Ask whether the program participates in Maryland EXCELS

Visit the Program. Tour the classrooms during normal operating hours. Observe how caregivers interact with children. Check that classrooms, playgrounds, and common areas are clean, organized, and secure. Ask about daily schedules, meals, naps, and outdoor play

Meet the Care Team. Ask about staff qualifications, training, and CPR/First Aid certification. Learn about child-to-teacher ratios and class sizes. Ask how long teachers have worked at the program and how staff continuity is maintained

Understand the Policies. Review tuition, payment schedules, and vacation or holiday closures. Ask about illness policies, medication administration, and emergency procedures. Understand the program's approach to discipline, guidance, and positive behavior support

Prepare Your Child. Schedule a visit before the first day so your child can explore the classroom. Label all personal belongings, including clothing, bottles, blankets, and comfort items. Complete required enrollment and health forms, including immunization records. Establish consistent bedtime and morning routines before your child's start date

Stay Connected. Learn how teachers communicate with families through daily reports, emails, or parent apps. Share your child's routines, allergies, preferences, and comfort strategies. Plan to check in regularly with caregivers during the first few weeks as everyone adjusts

White Sails Billowing on the Horizon

Celebrating America's
last working sailing
fleet at Maryland's
iconic Skipjack Races

story by **LISA A. LEWIS** photography by **GLENN THOMPSON**



Left page photo: The historic oyster fishing skipjack *Rebecca T. Ruark* under sail near Tilghman Island on the Chesapeake Bay. Right page photo: Skipjacks were designed in the late 1800s for oyster dredging in the Chesapeake Bay. By the 2000s, about 40 skipjacks remained in existence, some of which are still actively used for dredging and racing.

Each September, sailing enthusiasts gather at the renowned skipjack races to celebrate Maryland's rich maritime heritage and pay tribute to the watermen who defined a way of life that still endures today. A palpable sense of excitement fills the air, and a chaotic melee ensues as captains aggressively position their vessels at the starting line, preparing to battle the wind and outmaneuver the rest of the fleet. Designed in the 1890s to dredge for oysters, skipjacks are sturdy, wooden workboats—not racing machines. But on race day, these historic vessels glide across the water, their beauty and classic elegance on full display, as they vie for victory.

"The lead up to the race as we're checking our rigging and preparing to compete is an adrenaline rush for me," says Shawn Ridgley, the captain of *Ida May* (built 1906). "Once the starting gun goes off, and we're out on the water under sail, it's a familiar feeling. The races are more about strategy than speed, so we focus on tactical maneuvers and harness the wind to gain a competitive edge."

Not only do the races demonstrate the competitive spirit of the sailing community, they also preserve a tradition that dates back generations. According to Skipjack Heritage, Inc., informal races began during the late 1800s. To test their boats before the start of the oyster season, watermen held "shakedown sails," which eventually evolved into friendly, yet highly competitive, races. The first official Skipjack Sailing Workboat Race was held in June 1927.

A nod to watermen, the sailing community continues to celebrate Maryland's proud skipjack racing tradition at the **Deal Island Skipjack Festival**, **Skipjack Heritage Days** at Sandy Point State Park in Annapolis, and the **Choptank Heritage Skipjack Race** in Cambridge. The races pay tribute to skipjacks and their legacy—shining a light on the importance of preserving these iconic boats for present and future generations.

"The races are a great way to raise awareness about skipjacks and their history," says Wade Murphy, III, a fifth-generation waterman and the owner and captain of *Rebecca T. Ruark* (1886). "Everyone wants to win, so the races are definitely competitive. But they are also friendly. I love being on the water, feeling the wind on the sails, and my blood pumping."



Left: Push boat and skipjack at Sandy Point. Courtesy Glenn Thompson. Right: Skipjacks racing. Courtesy Glenn Thompson.



History of Skipjacks

Skipjacks are shallow-draft, wooden sailing vessels with a single raked mast, two sails, and a V-shaped hull. Built for power, ease of sailing, and affordability, watermen developed skipjacks to harvest shallow oyster beds. Since deeper-draft vessels had exhausted the more accessible beds during the late 19th century, skipjacks were born of necessity.

According to Maryland Sea Grant, during their heyday (the late 19th and early 20th centuries), these majestic boats dominated the Chesapeake Bay, with historians estimating a fleet of thousands of skipjacks dredging for oysters. However, due to oyster overharvesting, pollution, and disease, the number of skipjacks steadily declined. By the late 20th century, about two dozen were still actively working. Today, they are regarded as a vanishing fleet, and only a few skipjacks continue to dredge for oysters.

Like all sailing vessels, skipjacks depend on the wind to propel them. But since the wind is highly variable, dredging under sail is not always possible. So, sometimes, skipjacks need a “boost” from a push boat (also known as a yawl boat). These small, motorized boats push the vessels to the oyster beds and back to port and provide power for dredging when there is no wind.

To prevent overharvesting, the State of Maryland establishes regulations to dictate the use of push boats. Currently, watermen can use push boats two days of the week. During the rest of the week, they must dredge under sail. Dredging season runs from November through March. More than a historic boat, the skipjack is one of the defining cultural symbols of Maryland and the Chesapeake Bay. To honor its legacy, the Maryland General Assembly named it the official state boat in 1985.

“Dredging for oysters is in my blood, and I love being on the water,” Wade Murphy, III says. “My grandfather did it. My father [Wade Murphy, Jr.] did it, and it goes back even further. I started on a crab boat when I was 13 years old, and I have been on the water ever since. I stopped dredging for oysters for a few years and did carpentry work, but I missed it and got back on the water. I always come back to the water.”

“Being a waterman has been very important to me,” adds Stoney Whitelock, a fifth-generation waterman and the owner and captain of *Han Em Harv* (1981). “When I was a kid, the older men would talk about these old boats—which one was fast, pretty, good, bad. That’s all they talked about at Sunday dinner, and I guess some of it rubbed off on me. I fell in love with boats, and I’m still in love with them.”

The Triple Crown

The time-honored tradition of skipjack racing continues this September at three historic races, known collectively as the Triple Crown—showcasing the boats and serving as an enduring reminder of a once-thriving fleet.

In addition to the races at Deal Island and Cambridge, skipjack racing returns to Sandy Point State Park again this year after a highly anticipated race in 2025, which marked the end of a 35-year hiatus. Originally known as Chesapeake Appreciation Days (1965–1990), the event, now called Skipjack Heritage Days, was previously sponsored by the Maryland Watermen's Association and served as a major fall gathering for the Chesapeake Bay skipjack fleet for decades.

“With fewer than two dozen surviving vessels remaining, Skipjack Heritage Days represents far more than a festival,” says Susan Schneider, manager, Skipjack Heritage Days. “It is the restoration of a cultural gathering place for working watermen, wooden boat preservationists, maritime historians, and the public to celebrate a way of life that shaped the Chesapeake Bay for generations.”

Perhaps one defining feature of skipjack races that distinguishes them from other types of races is the distribution of “show-up” money. Each boat that participates receives funds for maintenance and preservation. Other perks include trophies for the winners and, of course, bragging rights.



Sandy Point Skipjack Race in 2025. Courtesy Glenn Thompson.



Bow sprits of the *Wilma Lee* and *Messenger*.
Courtesy Glenn Thompson.



Skipjack race trophies await the winners. Courtesy Skipjack Heritage.

Milestones and Memorable Moments

Whether they are multigenerational watermen who dredge for oysters or skilled skipjack captains and their crews, the sailing community is passionate about the races. The following is a snapshot of a few individuals who made a name for themselves in the world of skipjack racing.

Stoney Whitelock: A Living Legend

Dredging for oysters has always been a way of life for Whitelock—a proud family tradition that is in his blood. When he retired after a 40-year career as a lineman, he began rebuilding skipjacks to keep them alive for future generations. A “savior of skipjacks,” he resurrected *Kathryn* (1901), *Helen Virginia* (1948), *Minnie V* (1906), and *Han Em Harv* (1981), previously *Anna McGarvey*, to their former glory. His son, David, currently owns *Kathryn* and continues the family tradition of dredging for oysters. In 2013, Whitelock and three other buyers bought *Helen Virginia*, which he gave to his wife, Katarina Ennerfelt, as a Valentine’s Day gift. Ennerfelt, who was also a co-owner, captained the boat in the Deal Island race in 2014, sailing to victory with an all-female crew and making sailing history. “The race kind of just happened,” Whitelock says. “Katarina trained the women—some of whom had never sailed before. Since *Helen Virginia* was still being restored, they practiced on *Rebecca T. Ruark* and *Nathan of Dorchester*. And everything just came together that day.” A legendary captain who has attended nearly every skipjack race, Whitelock currently owns *Han Em Harv*, which he named after his grandchildren, Hannah, Emily, and Harvey. He also serves as the president of the board of directors of Skipjack Heritage, Inc. and the chairman of the Skipjack Heritage Museum. A staunch advocate of skipjack preservation, he played an active role in the revival of skipjack racing at Sandy Point State Park. “The races are a great way to keep these historic boats alive,” Whitelock says. “It was great to see so many people at Sandy Point last year, and I hope we can continue this tradition every year.”



Top: Captain Stoney Whitelock, Deal Island Skipjack Race winner in 2025. Courtesy Skipjack Heritage.
Right: A skipjack’s sailing boom and folded sails at Deal Island.





Captain Wade Murphy, Jr., with his son Wade, III, owner of the *Rebecca T. Ruark*. Photo by Christopher White and Greg Bassett / Salisbury Independent.

The Murphy Family: A Racing Legacy

When Wade Murphy, Jr. bought *Rebecca T. Ruark*, the oldest surviving skipjack, in 1984, he established himself as a racing legend. He owned her for nearly 40 years, sailing her as a dredge boat, but, perhaps, the races were where Murphy truly shined. Indeed, since 1988, he sailed *Rebecca* to victory at the Deal Island race 12 times—more than any other captain in the history of the race. He also won the Cambridge race four times from 2010 to 2014. *Rebecca's* story is defined by resilience, and she can perhaps be likened to a phoenix rising from the ashes. She sank, was raised, and has been repaired and rebuilt several times. She even survived being hit by a pickup truck while docked in 2022. After the accident, Murphy decided that it was time to pass the torch to his son, Wade Murphy, III, who bought her and made extensive repairs. “*Rebecca T. Ruark* is so special,” Wade Murphy, III says. “I raced with my dad for years. But I’ll never know as much as he does. He’d still be racing if he could, but he’s getting older. So, I’ve got big shoes to fill.” In 2025, *Rebecca* took first place in the Choptank Heritage Skipjack Race. Just as Wade Murphy, III followed in his father’s footsteps and became a waterman, he also hopes to establish a winning streak at the races—just like his dad. “*Rebecca* is still dredging, still racing, and still winning,” he says. “She’s a good boat, and I hope she lasts the rest of my lifetime—and even longer.”

Shawn Ridgley: A Changing of the Guard

Although he grew up sailing and working with boats, Ridgley didn’t develop a passion for skipjacks until he held positions at Annapolis Sailing School, Living Classrooms Foundation, and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF). These roles sparked his interest in skipjack racing, and he began competing around 2005, which ultimately led to his association with *Ida May*. Through his work, Ridgley had met *Ida May's* owners, Elbert Jr. and Gordon Gladden, who had inherited the boat from their father, Elbert Gladden, Sr. But at the time, he couldn’t have imagined that he would one day become the captain of *Ida May*. When *Ida May's* captain passed away, the Gladden family—thanks to a good word from Stoney Whitelock—asked Ridgley to become the captain. He took the helm in 2016 and immediately started an impressive winning streak. *Ida May* won the Deal Island race in 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2022, 2023, and 2025. She also won the race in Cambridge in 2017, 2018, 2019, 2022, and 2023 as well as the race in Sandy Point in 2025. (*Ida May* didn’t race in 2021 or 2024.) “The skipjack races are a lot of fun, but they are also about camaraderie and fellowship with the sailing community,” says Ridgley, who is the captain of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) icebreaker, *Eddie Somers*. “The sailing community takes care of each other, and their love of skipjacks keeps these historic vessels going for future generations.”



Captain Shawn Ridgley (right) and 1st mate Keith Whitelock on the *Ida May*. Courtesy Skipjack Heritage.



Kate Dumhart: A Steward for the Next Generation

When Dumhart began working at the Calvert Marine Museum (CMM) in 2013, the museum had just acquired *Dee of St. Mary's* (1979). And the timing couldn't have been better. Since Dumhart had experience teaching in an outdoor setting, CMM offered her a unique opportunity. If she learned to sail, she could teach aboard *Dee of St. Mary's*. And so, at the age of 26, Dumhart learned how to sail a skipjack and obtained her dream job. Not only did Dumhart gain sailing experience at CMM, but she also became an avid skipjack racer—blending the high-stakes world of racing with her competitive spirit. The first race that she competed in was the 2014 Choptank Heritage Skipjack Race as a crew member on *Dee of St. Mary's*. “The year that I first participated in the Cambridge race was the year that *Helen Virginia* won the Deal Island race,” says Dumhart, also the captain of Schooner *SULTANA*, a floating classroom that delivers educational programs at the Sultana Education Foundation in Chestertown. “Since the entire crew was female, their victory was inspirational to me. A rare female in a male-driven world is the norm, but *Helen Virginia* was the exception and the inspiration. It's great to see women continue to make strides in skipjack racing, which has primarily been a male-dominated sport.” A staunch advocate of Chesapeake Bay heritage and preservation, Dumhart continues to compete regularly in the skipjack races aboard *Messenger* (1975).

Cyndy Carrington Miller: A Skipjack Enthusiast and Documentarian

When Miller moved to Maryland's Eastern Shore from Pennsylvania in 1999, she began doing volunteer work at Richardson Maritime Museum in Cambridge. While working for the museum, she met Captain Frank Newton, one of the captains of *Nathan of Dorchester* (1994), in April 2022. He invited her to start crew training, and she immediately accepted—even though she knew nothing about boats. “From the moment I saw *Nathan of Dorchester* and learned about how to sail her, I fell in love,” Miller says. “They couldn't get me off the boat that summer. I went out for every crew training and signed up for as many trips as possible.” Miller was a crew member on *Nathan of Dorchester* from 2002 to 2015 and participated regularly in the races in Deal Island and Cambridge. Her experience sparked her interest in skipjacks and inspired her to create **The Last Skipjacks Project** in 2009. Born from a simple question—“How many skipjacks are left?”—Miller embarked on a journey to track and document the status and condition of every surviving skipjack. She created an online database of her findings, updating it on a regular basis and encouraging website visitors to submit information. “The Last Skipjacks Project is a labor of love,” Miller says. “It represents a vital part of our maritime heritage and highlights the importance of preserving skipjacks to ensure that they are not lost forever.”



Cyndy Carrington Miller at the mast of *Nathan of Dorchester*. Courtesy Preservation Maryland.

To learn more, visit lastskipjacks.com.



Honoring a Vanishing Fleet

The last working sailing fleet, skipjacks are much more than historic vessels that helped shape Maryland's rich maritime heritage. They are also a symbol of a resilient fleet that may be vanishing but is still very much alive. The celebrated skipjack races pay tribute to these majestic boats. Not only do they offer a thrilling, competitive experience for the captains and their crews, but they also help raise public awareness about the importance of preserving skipjacks for future generations.

"When spectators watch the fleet race, step aboard a skipjack, meet the captains, or hear the stories of Chesapeake watermen, they begin to understand that these vessels are not merely historic objects," Schneider says. "They are the surviving expression of an entire maritime culture."

Top: The historic skipjack *Dee of St. Mary's* at the Calvert Marine Museum in Solomons, Maryland. Bottom: The skipjack *Martha Lewis* that belongs to the Chesapeake Heritage Conservancy.



Triple Crown of Skipjack Racing

67th Annual Deal Island Skipjack Festival

Sunday, September 6

Live music, Chesapeake Bay educational exhibits, local artisans, and vendors. Skipjacks arrive throughout the day.

Monday, September 7

Blessing of the Fleet – 8 a.m.
Parade of Skipjacks – 9 a.m.
Skipjack Race – 9:30 a.m. Best viewing: Deal Island Harbor and along the shoreline of Tangier Sound

Sponsor: Deal Island-Chance Lions Club. Info: lionsclub-dic.org

2nd Annual Skipjack Heritage Days at Sandy Point State Park

Saturday, September 12

Public sailing aboard historic skipjacks at no cost from 1–5 p.m. from Sandy Point Marina (with Maryland Seafood Festival admission)

Sunday, September 13

Parade of Skipjacks to Sandy Point Lighthouse – 11 a.m. Skipjack Race – 12 noon. Best viewing: East Beach inside Sandy Point State Park

Sponsors: Skipjack Heritage, Inc. in partnership with Maryland Seafood Festival. Info: mdseafoodfestival.com

30th Annual Choptank Heritage Skipjack Race at Cambridge

Saturday, September 26

Parade of Skipjacks – 10 a.m.
Skipjack Race – 11 a.m. Best viewing: Long Wharf Park

Sponsor: Dorchester Skipjack Committee. Info: skipjack-nathan.org



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Everyday
Reasons
to Stay

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Everyday Reasons to Stay

By Lisa J. Gotto

To stay and make improvements or to pull up stakes and start over? This common conundrum faced by many homeowners at one time or another, is at the heart of this month's home feature upgrade.

He wanted to stay. Their waterfront location was ideal. She wanted to go. Their kids were grown and were leaving the nest. Plus, she had already been working around their home's design snafus for years and could not imagine how any amount of remodeling could change an uninspiring and downright counterproductive floorplan into something that really worked for them.

THE PROJECT: A traditional, circa 2000 colonial that the couple purchased knowing it would require a decent amount of work. From its woefully average primary bath to its dysfunctional kitchen layout, to an awkward main level retrofitting project, the home would require a modern remodeling miracle to keep the owners at the same address.

THE PLACE: An idyllic waterfront location in Stevensville where a trip out to the Bay was mere minutes by boat. A setting so beautiful, the homeowners went for a number of years in the home with a just a few tweaks while they were busy working and raising their three kids.

EXECUTING THE PLAN: The homeowners chose Taylor Hart Design, an Annapolis-based custom interiors and home renovation firm to transform an, in essence, builder-grade house that had already undergone some less-than-advantageous previous owner upgrades into something better suited to their current lifestyle.



WHERE TO START?

While the entire home needed a solid redressing, Laurie Hart, Founder and Principal of Taylor Hart Design, says there was one thing the homeowner insisted be resolved sooner rather than later: Their primary bedroom and *en suite* bath.

The re-imagining of this space would comprise the first phase of renovations...and that re-imagining would be substantial, to elevate what initially was very basic design right down to its one-piece glass shower surround. The room was also dark, and the commode actually had too much pride of place in the room, which resulted in a complete do-over attitude on part of the homeowners. Their wish list included more natural light, a view out to the water if possible, and a more thoughtful approach to the vibe, which, in the homeowner's opinion, should be more holistic and relaxing.





The new version of this room has become more of an oasis for the homeowners with its opulent, free-standing soaking tub, luxurious Herringbone porcelain tile from Compass Tile, a gorgeous walk-in shower with a view to the water, and a fresh approach to the overall aesthetic by employing an arched doorframe to the shower entry, providing elevation that the space required. Luxe details such as an over-the-tub Talia glass bubble chandelier from Visual Comfort and a touch of color courtesy of a light blue Raphael style wallpaper by Sandberg results in the type of *en suite* experience the couple had wanted all along.

“IT’S ABSOLUTELY NOTHING LIKE IT WAS BEFORE AND THEY GOT SO MUCH MORE IN THE SAME SPACE.”

“We basically just reconfigured the entire layout,” Hart explains. “It’s absolutely nothing like it was before and they got so much more in the same space.”

POINT OF ENTRY

As Hart describes it, this home's first impression was a lackluster one. "When you walked in the house, it was just walls with all these bank doors," says Hart of the vintage doors the previous owner had retrofitted and installed on the main level.

"That's all you saw. They had closed all the walls up. The living room and dining room walls were closed in with these bank doors, so you couldn't see into them. Everything was painted a yellow color. So, we took all those walls back to actually the way it was originally built."

While the homeowner described the main level as "livable" prior to its renaissance, the frustration Hart sensed coming from her told a different story.

"She hated the doors. They're really dark and heavy," says Hart, who recalls her client lamenting that she just wanted to see something beautiful when she walked down her staircase into the foyer, but that hadn't been happening.



"The foyer was really important to her and then their kitchen, the way it was [originally] designed, they had so many windows in the kitchen—the previous owners, they just had windows everywhere," Hart adds.

Knowing how traditional her clients were, Hart says her on-staff interiors expert, Deanna Gurri, leaned into a classic "black and tan" color story to pull the look of the main level together, which included a formal living room, family room, and a kitchen with an inspiring waterfront morning room.

The resulting renovation took the foreboding entry to a place of refinement and good taste. The opening of the walls, swapping out old-school staircase spindles for modern, black iron spindles, the addition of subtle hints of trim, and the laying of a sandy-colored hardwood floor throughout most of the main level, allows the eye to flow seamlessly from the entry and into its adjacent rooms.





HERE TO STAY

The kitchen, before it was addressed, was also a frustrating space for the homeowners. Too many windows in this room along one wall limited the amount of functional storage space it could provide. A smaller center island with a built-in sink and dishwasher feature became a focal point for family clutter, and the original mudroom was less than the epitome of functionality.

All that would change. Taking a page from the primary bath's playbook, Hart replaced a series of windows along one wall with one, large arched style window, which now perfectly frames a cherished gazebo outside on the grounds. Custom cabinetry was added on either side and the counter below it would now provide a home for a sink and dishwasher, allowing a new larger island to take its place in the center of the room. A continuing scheme of black, tan, and white keeps the look crisp and continuous throughout. And a thoughtful re-envisioning of the kitchen's

square footage, allowed a mudroom upgrade to include coveted office space with a view for her, and a walk-in pantry was added to the floorplan, making clutter a mere pre-reno memory.

Finishing touches abound in these spaces including their dining room where their heirloom table now has the rarified surroundings to complement its vintage, including the stunning Regina Andrew Echo chandelier. And off the kitchen in the morning room, a special space was created for the couple where they could reflect and just appreciate the journey to create the home they ultimately wanted.

"We wanted to give them a place to sit and have coffee and eat, or if they didn't want to have to go sit at the island, or go into the dining room," explains Hart of the modern café table by Dovetail Furniture.

"So, we put a little bistro table with chairs in [the morning room]. And that was like a huge thing for them because now they sit in there every day together, which is a huge change from the way they were living before."





Image courtesy of perigold.com

The Art of Fine and Fun Furniture Statements

By Lisa J. Gotto

The concept of the **statement piece** has been a long-standing approach employed by interiors professionals and homeowners that helps define a room's personality by drawing attention to it. Generally, characteristics of its scale, shape, color, craftsmanship, materials, or historical significance are what help set the piece of furniture apart.

What does change with the times is the attitude given to these pieces *vis-à-vis* the culture and contemporary trends. Right now, we're loving these seven examples of statement furniture pieces on the rise!



Image courtesy of jonathanadler.com

Sculptural Curved Sofa

This incredible sofa by Jonathan Adler gets high marks as a statement piece because of its flowing silhouette, its ability to be a visual anchor, its reflection of the trend toward organic, soft-edged interiors, and the movement and visual interest it will create even if placed in a neutral color scheme.



Image courtesy of CB2.com

OVERSIZED BURLWOOD DINING TABLE

You can identify this burlwood dining table from CB2 as a statement-maker because it features dramatic wood grain patterns that are naturally unique. Pieces like this command attention by combining a sense of natural luxury with contemporary design. It also scores points in the function category because it all at once serves as furniture and artwork.



Image courtesy of worldmarket.com

HANDCRAFTED CREDENZA OR SIDEBBOARD

Displays of exceptional craftsmanship and unique detailing sets these pieces apart and provide pleasing focal points in dining rooms, entryways, or great rooms. Handcrafted furnishings also always align with the growing preference for investment pieces over disposable furnishings.

Artistic Accent Chair

This upholstered Judarn chair from Anthropologie works as a statement piece for several reasons: It acts as a functional sculpture, it offers a contrast against your more conventional furniture pieces, it's a great way to introduce texture, pattern, or color, and it's a workhorse fitting in well into a living room, bedroom, or reading nook scheme.



Image courtesy of anthropologie.tif



Image courtesy of wayfair.com.

A VINTAGE-INSPIRED CABINET IN A BOLD COLOR

The saturated color of this statement piece will provide contrast to any of its surrounding furnishings by adding personality and a collected-over-time feel. This distressed hand-painted mango wood vintage reproduction cabinet from Wayfair provides a focal point while providing an attractive storage option and by introducing a jewel-box effect to your room.



Image courtesy of maisonreves.co

A STONE OR TRAVERTINE COFFEE TABLE

This little stunner plays on its substantial visual weight and rich natural texture and veining to make its statement. The La Cantera Organic Travertine Coffee Table by Richmond Interiors works because it creates contrast from furnishings with softer upholstery and reflects the ongoing popularity of natural materials.

A MONUMENTAL FOUR-POSTER BED

Nothing lends an architectural presence to a bedroom better than a four-poster bed. This example from Classic Furniture may appear simple in form, but it becomes the defining feature in the space by creating a room-within-a-room feeling and by adding visual sense of height and drama.



Image courtesy of classicfurniture.com.

More than establishing a mood, expressing personality, and becoming a visual focal point, around which a room is designed, a well-intentioned statement piece can beautifully blur the line between mere furnishings and art.

Your Garden's Soil May Need a Spa Day

By Janice F. Booth

“The soil is the great connector of lives, the source and destination of all...the healer and restorer...”

OBSERVES WENDELL BERRY, AMERICAN ENVIRONMENTALIST AND POET.

As autumn arrives, we look to our gardens and consider what we may need to do to prepare for spring's glory. And it is the earth, the soil in which our plants grow, that can benefit from our attention now.

I'D LIKE TO REVIEW HOW WE CAN IMPROVE THE SOIL WE RELY ON:

- ◆ The characteristics and types of soil
- ◆ The benefits of soil conditioning
- ◆ Soil testing: types of tests
- ◆ Treatment options for our tired soil
- ◆ Revisiting the fallen leaves option



We need not be master gardeners or horticulturists to look after the health of the soil we rely on in our gardens. We dig in it, plant in it, and enjoy the bounty of it.

Soil is made up of minerals, organic matter, and micro-organisms: Mineral content can be sand, silt, or clay in differing ratios (seldom is earth completely one type of mineral. But your garden's earth may have one type predominating). The organic matter may include decomposing plants and animals, which eventually break down completely becoming humus. Micro-organisms are the earthworms, bacteria, and fungi that help loosen soil and maintain aeration.

Keeping track of our soil's health includes: Testing the soil make-up regularly. Adding organic matter regularly. Deep but infrequent watering to encourage strong root-systems.

Signs of problems in your soil: Yellow leaves. Poor or slow growth. Root balls that are too small and/or too frail (as you dig among your plants you can see the condition of their roots. You're looking "under the hood").

My experience has been that our garden's soil almost always can use some attention. Consider the benefits of conditioning: Encourage roots and plant growth by aerating, improving drainage, and increasing moisture retention. Plants need nutrients too, and we can improve the availability of nutrients. Balancing the pH levels in the earth keeps the root systems happy.

NOW, PERHAPS YOU'RE WONDERING HOW TO FIGURE OUT WHAT YOUR SOIL IS LACKING. YOU MAY WANT TO MAKE TESTING PART OF YOUR SEASONAL "TO-DO" LIST. HERE ARE THE BASIC TYPES OF SOIL TESTS:

Nutrient: measuring oxygen, phosphorous, potassium, and magnesium sulfur. **pH:** measures acidity and alkaline levels. **Texture:** the "Squeeze Test," identifies sandy, silt, or clay soil. **DIY Kit:** purchased at your favorite garden center. **Professional Testing:** done by your county agriculture extension office

There are four basic types of conditioners we can use to improve the soil in our gardens:

Compost: rich, organic material (I'm coming back to this later, specifically using fallen leaves). **Peat Moss:** great for water absorption and retention. Since peat moss is slightly acidic, it's useful for lowering alkaline soil pH. **Gypsum:** inorganic material that reduces compaction and neutralizes soil acidity. This is particularly helpful for soil that is predominantly clay. **Lyme:** raises the pH level and adds nutrients to the soil

We're all familiar with those simple methods for conditioning our soil. But let me just review:

Add **Sulphur** to improve the pH level to an optimum level of 6.0–7.0 for most gardens. Apply **Mulch** to a depth of 2–4 inches if you're trying to improve water retention and provide organic matter. **Aerate** the soil by poking holes with a garden fork or roller-tool designed for the purpose of aeration. Add **bone meal**, **blood meal**, and/or **fish emulsion** if organic matter is needed. Choose a **commercial product** and carefully follow the application directions to avoid damaging the plants or root systems



Finally, let me make my case for *fallen leaves* as organic mulch. Don't rake those leaves into bags or bins! Add to the leaves your veggie scraps and grass clippings, and you'll have a super mulch. Rake that onto your flower beds and under your trees. Your garden will thank you! (and so will she or he who is responsible for raking.)

The usefulness of crumbled, rotting leaves are numerous:

- ◆ They'll serve as a warm coverlet over your tender roots during the cold, winter months
- ◆ The leaves will retain moisture, and aid against parched, cold weather
- ◆ The piles of leaves are wildlife friendly. Worms, bugs, and other garden critters will be delighted to burrow down into the leaf-mulch as protection from the cold
- ◆ Avoids the wasteful bags and bins of leaves collected, adding to our gardens' sustainability

Hang up that rake! If you have a mulching-mower, fire it up! (Mulching the fallen leaves will help them decompose quickly and make it easier for you to evenly distribute the chopped-up leaves.)

Now, sit back and watch the brilliant display of oak and maple leaves as they fall. You'll put them to good use with a few easy hours of mulching or raking them onto your flower beds and under the trees.

The soil you work to strengthen now will awake in the spring ready to feed your plants and their roots...and dazzle you!

The Charm of a Foursquare Character Home

By Lisa J. Gotto

A picture-perfect, classic four-square, craftsman-style home proves investing in Annapolis real estate remains a sound practice, coming in at \$175,000 over ask. This impeccable and impressive residence located in the desirable Homewood section of Annapolis provides 2,800 square-feet of living space and the charm of a character home.

Squeaky clean curb appeal and a welcoming front porch with picket fence appeal makes a solid first impression. Many of this residence's fine original details remain and were augmented with a thoughtfully designed addition conceived for modern-day living.



Primary Structure
Built: 1936

Sold For:
\$1,400,000

Original List Price:
\$1,225,000

Bedrooms:
4

Baths: 3
Full, 1 Half

Living Space:
2,844 Sq. Ft.

Lot Size:
.16 acres



Knotty white oak floors grace the entry and mostly all of the home's main level. A gorgeous architectural staircase leads the eye forward as does the handsome wood trim gracing the entry to the home's formal living room to the right. This room is highlighted with the structure's original brick fireplace, bright, sunny windows, and entry into the home's sleek, modern kitchen.

This room is punctuated with a luxe waterfall island flowing down the center of the space. Hardware-less, all-white custom cabinetry and gleaming white Caesarstone quartz work surfaces abound. A stunning modern hood range of complementary white oak planks rivals the island for attention. The gourmet of the house will love this room's Miele oven, Wolf gas cooktop, and porcelain tile backsplash.

An arched entryway conveys traffic to the sunny, open dining room, and then into a charming and bright family room with sleek sliding doors to the patio, and an amazing central, stacked stone fireplace console with built-in craftsman-style cabinetry.

All of the home's four bedrooms are located on its two upper levels, which includes a dormered attic level with window bench seat. The primary suite is modern and minimalist with clean lines and a sparkling en suite bath with dual vanities and a large, glass walk-in shower.

The home's lower level offers a generous finished flex space and outdoors there's plenty of room for entertaining on the gorgeous Ipe deck with stainless cable railing and convenient in-deck hot tub.



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Turn-key Farmhouse Charm

By Lisa J. Gotto

It took just four days on the market for this like brand-new classic, modern farmhouse residence to move from a “for sale” to a “sold!” listing.

Perfectly located and well situated on its lot perched above Harness Creek, this 3,600-square-foot home offers remarkable water views and comes with the convenience of a turn-key move. “The value of this property really

Primary Structure Built: 2021

Sold For:
\$3,950,000

Original List Price:
\$3,950,000

Bedrooms:
2

Baths: 3

Living Space:
3,602 Sq. Ft.

Lot Size:
.66 acres



revolved around the Harness Creek address and the incomparable views of Quiet Waters Park,” says Listing Agent Reid Buckley.

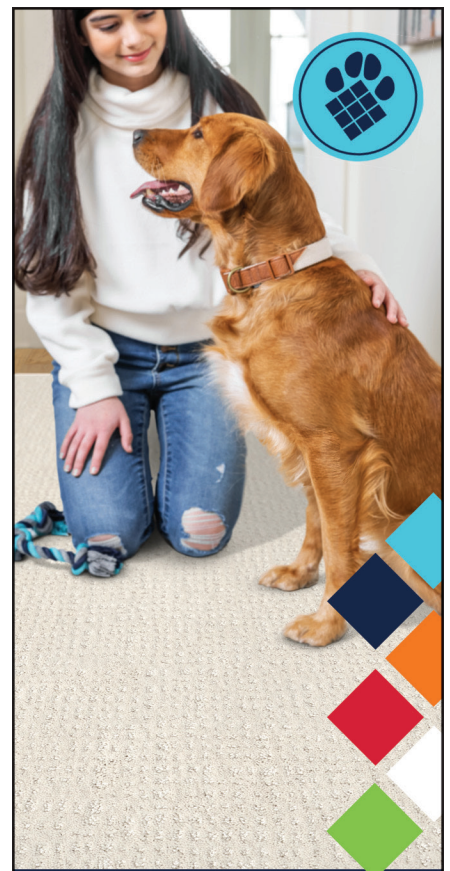
“With a coveted boathouse, this home met exacting LEED Platinum standards while retaining a clean, coastal vibe. The minute you walk inside, you can feel the stress melt away. One of my favorite features is sitting under a blanket on the screened porch in the winter with a blazing fire and friendly conversation.”

A gorgeous stone accent wall greets visitors to the covered front entry as a double glass-paneled door provides straight ahead views to the waterfront. Once inside, the space opens and flows along handsome blonde hardwood floors complemented by crisp white walls with accents of black trim throughout.

The great room features a series of floor-to-ceiling windows that frame the creek like a work of art. The adjoining modern kitchen offers everything the contemporary chef could want, plus the ability to easily connect with guests while cooking and entertaining. Sleek, black custom cabinetry pulls the whole space together, along with its



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central island that offers additional prep space, an apron sink, and breakfast bar seating for four. The floorplan also provides for an adjacent catering kitchen/pantry to help keep the clutter and noise under control.

Gleaming stainless-steel appliances, white stone countertops, and an attractive hardware and finishings package layer the icing on this cake of this room. Nearby, guests can dine on the waterfront in the spacious dining area.

A covered porch off the great room features handsome in-laid wood ceiling detail and great views of the backyard extending to the water. Also outside, this home features an amazing three-season screened in porch with a gorgeous floor-to-ceiling stone fireplace wall.



The main level of this home offers a flex room that can be used as an office or another bedroom. The primary suite is located on the upper level and is a complete waterfront retreat with floor-to-ceiling glass doors that lead out to the upper deck. This room also features a fireplace and spa-like primary bathroom with a soaking tub, a large, glass panel shower, and a pair of his and hers vanities topped with luxe white stone.

This floor of the home offers another flex space that can be used as an office or TV room, and a large second bedroom suite overlooking the creek.



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Health & Beauty

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84 HEART HEALTH'S EVOLVING UNDERSTANDING

The Importance of Playing

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IF THAT SOUNDS APPEALING, CONSIDER THESE FIVE NON-INVASIVE, LESS CONSPICUOUS COSMETIC OPERATIONS:

1. Microdose Botox. Also known as “baby Botox,” this procedure is exactly what it sounds like—it’s a smaller amount of Botox. You get less of the botulinum toxin injected in your face, so it still reduces creases and lines without freezing your facial movements.

2. Conservative dermal fillers. You don’t need to go heavy on the dermal fillers to get volume back in your cheeks, temples, and under eyes. Conservative dermal fillers are sparser compared to the traditional filler treatment, so you can still offset age-related volume loss in your face without getting that “full” look.

3. Injectable hyaluronic acid hydrators. You can improve skin hydration and texture without adding too much unnecessary volume by injecting these skin boosters. They’ll enhance your skin quality, so you look more refreshed without changing your facial shape.

4. Intense pulsed light therapy (IPL). Treating your skin with IPL will target redness, broken capillaries, and brown spots to remove discoloration and create a more vibrant complexion people will perceive as healthier, all without any other change to your appearance.

5. Microneedling. These ultra-small needles go into the skin to create micro-injuries, which stimulates collagen production to repair them. After doing this a little bit over the course of months, you’ll start to slowly but surely see improved skin texture and reduced lines. It’s gradual, so there’s no obvious overnight change that will take your friends and family by surprise the next time they see you.

Bonus: Medical-grade skincare programs. Maybe you don’t even need a procedure at all. Prescription-strength retinoids, antioxidants, and pigment-correcting products dramatically improve your complexion and skin texture for a natural-looking anti-aging appearance.

When Less Is More. Sometimes you might be tempted to make a more dramatic transformation—if that’s the case, talk it over with your doctor or surgeon. But some reasons you might find doing less is more effective: **These treatments preserve movement:** You don’t get the overtreated look associated with older cosmetic trends. **You can make changes gradually:** Small changes over time are less likely to be noticed immediately. **It’s easier to slow down that reverse:** Subtle improvements over time give you a chance to be more considerate about the changes you’re making

Inconspicuously Cosmetic

By Dylan Roche

“You look great. Have you been getting extra sleep? Did you go on a long vacation?”

That’s the kind of greeting most people want to get. Nobody (or at least, very few people) want to be asked, “What work did you get done?”

When cosmetic procedures look too dramatic, it can be distracting. In a worst-case scenario, you might even worry you don’t look like yourself anymore. That’s why lately a big trend in aesthetic medicine is to move away from these dramatic transformations and focus instead on less detectable changes. You don’t want to look like a different person—you just want to look healthy and vibrant.



Is It Really Healthy?

By Dylan Roche

We've all heard the hype: Some of your favorite indulgences, long considered to be unhealthy, actually have some small benefits to them, such as disease-fighting antioxidants. Not so fast though—the cons can still outweigh the pros. Consider this breakdown of chocolate, wine, and coffee ▼

BUT THERE'S GOOD NEWS...

Potatoes: The low-carb craze villainized potatoes because they're high in starch, which converts to glucose and spikes blood sugar. But complex carbohydrates like those in potatoes are the body's preferred source of energy. Potatoes are packed with vitamins, minerals, fiber, antioxidants, and even a moderate amount of protein. Just be smart about preparation methods—opt for potatoes that are baked or roasted rather than deep-fried or slathered in rich toppings.

Eggs: You might be wary because they're high in cholesterol (they are!), but they're also rich in protein, as well as vitamins D, A, B, and E. Although the American Heart Association once suggested limiting your egg consumption to no more than three per week, guidance now says heart-healthy adults can have an egg a day.

Cheese: While cheese is high in saturated fat, it's also a good source of protein and calcium. Softer cheeses, such as mozzarella and ricotta, tend to be lower in fat and calories than their harder counterparts. Some research has even shown that moderate consumption of cheese (1.5 ounces per day) lowers risk of heart disease and boosts brain health.

Peanut butter: Peanut butter is high in fat, but it's the unsaturated fat that improves heart health. While its fat content makes it calorically dense, it's still a good source of protein, fiber, and vitamin E. Choose natural peanut butter, which is made without sugar and hydrogenated oils.

Chocolate. Pros: Cocoa—as in the seeds that are dried and ground to make chocolate—is rich in flavanols, which are good for blood pressure and blood vessel function. It's also a source of magnesium, iron, and copper. **Cons:** Cocoa is an ingredient in chocolate, but so is lots of sugar. The average milk chocolate bar often contains less than 30 percent cocoa, so there's a marginal amount of cocoa compared to the less nutritious ingredients. **The least you should know:** If you enjoy very dark chocolate (made with 70 percent cocoa or more) in modest proportions, there's a nutritional upside. But don't consider the average Hershey bar to be a health food.

Wine. Pros: Studies have shown that red wine contains polyphenols from the grapes it's made with. This antioxidant protects the body from cellular damage and lowers risk of disease. **Cons:** Alcohol consumption increases risk of disease, including cancer, liver disease, and hypertension. It also increases risk of accidents, disrupts sleep, and contributes to weight gain. **The least you should know:** Even when consumed moderately, alcohol doesn't offer real health benefits—and no amount of alcohol is completely risk-free. Simply eating unprocessed grapes would be a better source of polyphenols.

Coffee. Pros: Coffee is a source of antioxidants and consistently associated with lower risk of disease, including type 2 diabetes, Parkinson's disease, and liver disease. **Cons:** Too much caffeine leads to anxiety, insomnia, palpitations, and digestive upset. Many sweeteners and flavorings added to coffee drinks can be a source of empty calories. **The least you should know:** As long as you're watching your overall caffeine consumption and sticking to black or lightly sweetened coffee, its benefits are worthwhile.

The Importance of Playing

By Dylan Roche

When it comes to a child's health, you could probably rattle off a list of the most common concerns: nutritious food, regular physical activity, a consistent sleep schedule, and socio-emotional support. When it comes to their academic success, you might be thinking about their ability to read or their understanding of multiplication.

Then there's recess. It's a common part of a child's day. Now the American Academy of Pediatrics is saying it might be more important than a lot of people realize. The association recently released a policy statement titled *The Crucial Role of Recess in School*, the first update to its position since 2013, and made its stance clear: Recess isn't frivolous "extra" time. The opportunity for unstructured play is a crucial part of development—improving a child's physical, social, and cognitive health. Here's why:

1. THEY LEARN SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SKILLS

Playtime's physical benefits are obvious—when a kid has the chance to run around on the playground with their friends, they're getting the kind of movement they need for strong growing bodies. This is especially important in an era of TVs and tablets, when children are more likely to be sedentary, even during non-school hours at home. What might be less obvious to us are the ways play can benefit the social and emotional health of children. The AAP explains that playtime with their peers is when children learn how to communicate with one another and form relationships. They learn not only self-regulation of their emotions but also conflict resolution when they have any kind of problem or disagreement (big or small) with their friends.

2. IT IMPROVES THEIR EDUCATION

In addition to physical and social health, play is good for cognitive health. Recess is a crucial part of the school day because it gives children a break from structured educational activity—and breaks are necessary if children are going to be good students. A break in the day improves their focus and manages their energy so they behave better during structured times.

3. IT'S NOT THE SAME AS GYM CLASS

Because playtime is a part of the day when children run around and engage in physical activity, it's easy to think it's like physical education—both are focused on exercise and movement. But the AAP emphasizes that recess is different from phys ed. In class, children are receiving instruction and structured activities to understand motor skills and fitness. They might enjoy the games or activities they're doing, but



it's not the same as unstructured, self-directed play, which is different from play that's organized and directed by adults. When children's play is unstructured, they gain a sense of autonomy, and they learn to cooperate and solve problems among themselves.

That's not to say recess or playtime should be entirely unsupervised—having a responsible adult supervising and ready to intervene is what ensures playtime remains safe and healthy for all involved.

This is especially true when it comes to being inclusive, because adults can encourage children to make accommodations for their peers with physical, medical, behavioral, or special needs. Learning to be inclusive is another key component of a child's social-emotional health.

4. TIME MATTERS

One of the parameters the AAP recommends for recess is that it's a sufficient amount of time. Children should have *at least* 20 minutes of cumulative unstructured playtime throughout the day, but ideally, children should have a short 15- to 20-minute break after 45 minutes to an hour of instruction. Too much instruction time without recess can cause a kid to suffer cognitive fatigue; it's easier to prevent this fatigue with frequent breaks than it is to recover from it after children have already reached that point.

One of these recess periods throughout the day should come before (not after) lunch. When recess is scheduled after lunch, excited children could be inclined to rush through eating or throw their lunch away without finishing it. Recess *before* lunch gives children the full opportunity to enjoy this time of day without risking nutritional deficiency.

5. RECESS SHOULDN'T BE WITHHELD

Taking away a child's recess time because they misbehaved or because they need to make up missed classwork seems like a harmless or even reasonable practice, but the AAP says you shouldn't do this. Given the importance of playtime, taking it away for disciplinary or academic reasons is counterproductive. In fact, a child who is struggling behaviorally or academically needs playtime the most!

6. SOME DEGREE OF RISK ISN'T ALWAYS BAD

Playtime should always be safe, but that doesn't mean it should be risk-free. Playing will always involve an appropriate level of risk—climbing, running fast, swinging, and rough-and-tumble play all carry some chance that a child could be hurt. By engaging in these activities, a child learns self-regulation and risk assessment. In other words, it's not good for children to be helicoptered by adults. Adult supervision should be appropriately hands-off and ready to intervene only if there's a serious risk to safety or well-being.

7. PLAYTIME IS FOR EVERY CHILD

Despite the benefits of play, the AAP acknowledges that under-resourced schools and students from marginalized groups might not have the same opportunities. For example, an under-resourced school might not be able to offer the same kind of playground equipment, or a marginalized student is more likely to face disproportionate disciplinary actions that keep them off the playground. Therefore, the AAP calls for policies that make sure access to playtime is equitable and inclusive.

How About for Adults? Sure, playtime is great for kids—but how about adults? Yes, planning some time into your schedule for unstructured play is good for you no matter how old you are. So, if you're tired of adulting and wishing you could bring the joy of recess back into your life as a grown-up, consider these benefits: Having fun reduces your stress levels and promotes positive emotions. This could be as simple as playing a board game or doing a puzzle, but you could also engage your dog in fetch or sign up for a recreational sports league. Playing with your adult peers fosters the same sense of cooperation, trust, and communication that it fosters in children. Visit an escape room or attend trivia night with a group of people from work or your neighborhood so you all can work together toward a common goal in a low-stakes environment. Friends and/or romantic partners who engage in playful activities together often feel closer because they share positive experiences. It could be as simple as a bike ride or a hike.



Heart Health's Evolving Understanding

WHAT'S DIFFERENT?
WHAT'S THE SAME?

By Dylan Roche

Hear disease isn't something that develops overnight—it develops over years through a combination of factors. Similarly, the medical community's understanding of heart disease itself continues to develop. Common wisdom from 20 years ago or even 10 years ago isn't as specific as what doctors recommend now. (And no, you're not necessarily bound to end up on cholesterol medication to manage your heart health.)

RISK FACTORS TO KNOW

In the past, medical understanding of cholesterol came down to how much LDL (“bad” fat) and HDL (“good” fat) you had in your bloodstream. Thanks to medical advances, there's more to consider if you want the full picture, explains Dr. John Martin, vascular surgeon with University of Maryland Medical Center.

Martin points to the understanding of **lipoprotein(a)**, a genetically determined particle largely independent of diet and lifestyle. Often referred to as Lp(a), it's now recognized as a causal risk factor for atherosclerotic disease and calcific aortic valve disease, affecting roughly 1.5 billion people worldwide. “Twenty years ago, almost nobody was tested for it; now it's increasingly part of standard risk assessment, and several RNA-based drugs designed specifically to lower it are in late-stage clinical trials,” Martin says.

He also points to **inflammation** as a risk factor that's now understood to be more influential than once thought. Our bodies can suffer chronic inflammation—an immune response to injury or stress—because of obesity, diabetes, poor nutrition, or lack of exercise. “It's the inflammatory state that actually creates some of the damage to the lining of the vessel that obviously allows the entry of cholesterol into the wall of the vessel,” Martin explains.

START EARLY

Your best prevention is early intervention. “Most people don't start thinking about their heart until, most likely, their 50s, 60s and 70s,” Martin says. “The problem is cholesterol starts in your teens and 20s, particularly if you have genetic problems or family history.”

If you're at risk, waiting until middle age can be too late. If you know you're susceptible when you're in your 20s, you can take preventative measures. “Newer risk calculators, along with tests such as lipoprotein(a) and coronary artery calcium (CAC) scans for some patients, help identify people who may appear healthy today but are quietly accumulating cardiovascular risk over time,” Martin says.

UNDERSTANDING STATINS

You may have heard of statins, the prescription medications that prevent your liver from producing cholesterol. They can help people who can't bring their cholesterol into a normal range through lifestyle factors alone. But like GLP-1s for weight management, they aren't miracle workers—adopting healthy habits is most important. “Even promising medications for weight loss or cholesterol work best when paired with lasting lifestyle changes rather than replacing them,” Martin says.



And on that note...

Lifestyle Is Most Important. Most of the tried-and-true healthy lifestyle habits you've heard before remain the foundation of heart disease prevention. These are practices, Martin emphasizes, we should all be observing regardless of whether you're susceptible and regardless of whether you're starting a statin: Focus on a Mediterranean-style eating pattern rich in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes, olive oil, nuts, and fish. Limit ultraprocessed foods, added sugars, excess sodium, and saturated fats. Get regular physical activity. Maintain a healthy weight, avoid tobacco products, get seven to nine hours of sleep, manage stress, and limit alcohol

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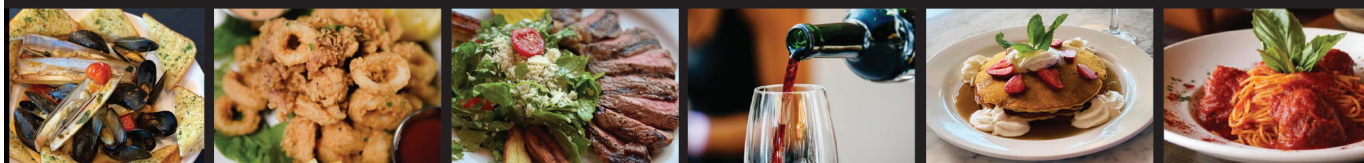
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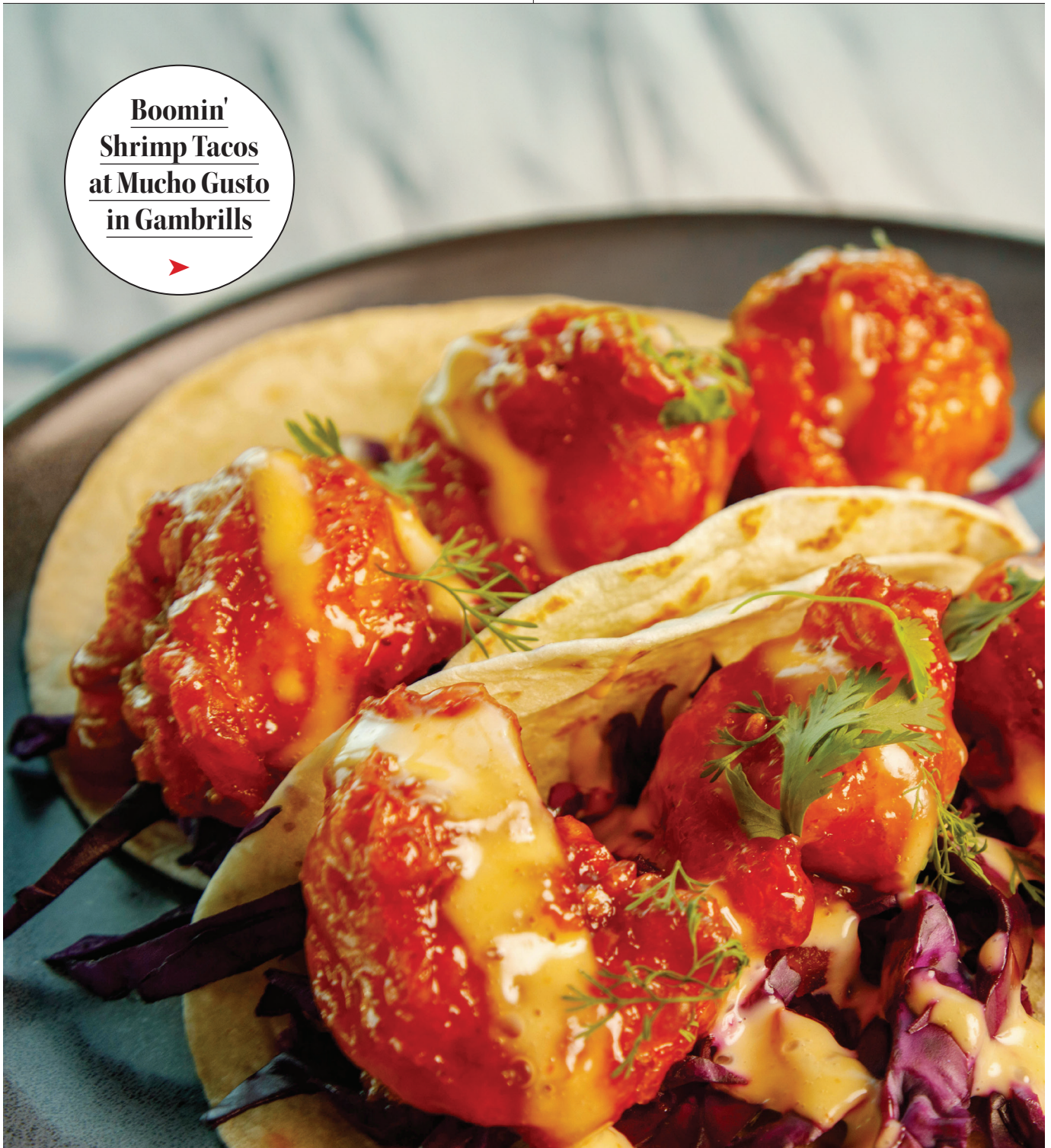


Food & Dining

88 FESTIVE FLAVORS FOUND

90 READERS' DINING GUIDE

**Boomin'
Shrimp Tacos
at Mucho Gusto
in Gambrills**



Festive Flavors Found

By James Houck

There's a "just right" energy at Mucho Gusto that feels refreshing, bright, and comforting without the intrusive boisterous-ness and claustrophobia that other Mexican-inspired restaurants so often possess. Let me explain. Throw a dart at the map. Nail a Mexican restaurant. Dine there. When I do, I often find my family squeezed into a booth or at a table where I feel sardined in a sea of diners. The sea is often hectic with servers scuttling sizzling plates, music jingles constantly ringing from eardrum to eardrum, and the décor awash in every color imaginable—all of it climaxing into a near-seizure state of cacophony. It's okay, when that matches my mood. But sometimes—most of the time these days—I prefer a peaceful atmosphere for hearing conversation, quality food, and not feel like I'm competing in a heavyweight bout versus gluttony. Enter Mucho Gusto, which I do, indeed, like very much.

My first visit, on an otherwise nondescript Thursday evening in Spring, became the highlight of the day. Arriving at about 5 p.m., the four of us (with wife, two kids), were warmly greeted and seated at a table of our choosing. The main room had several active tables but, by and large, was still awaiting the dinner crowd to arrive. The decor is near-tropical with hues of jungle-green, orange, and brown, grass fronds poking between tables, and rattan-inspired chairs matched to white marble tabletops. Lighting is soft and pleasant, with only a few touches of neon signage here and there.



MUCHO GUSTO

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To the room's rear, an expansive bar and lounge area invites patrons to grab their seats—high-backs or cozier wrap-arounds—for specialty cocktails and small plates. The drinks here are creative and super fresh with squeezes and muddles of fruits and herbs combined with spirits (or not, as was the case with my chosen Razzle Dazzle mocktail). Tequila, agave, rye, whiskey, and liqueurs of multiple flavors are all mixed into curiously fun concoctions with names like Spicy Lychee Mezcalita or BMore Honey, and, of course, multiple margherita options.

We sat, chatted, and server Nataly promptly attended to us. We quickly settled on a couple of starters to get things moving along. Chips and salsa arrived on cue without asking and, to them, we requested a bowl of guacamole (prepared table side) with lump crab meat mixed in—an excellent embellishment! The house-made chips had an elevated taste and crunch above the standard found at other restaurants. We added a small plate of Camarones Asados (seasoned grilled shrimp with corn pico de gallo and chipotle aioli). This plate was an early highlight of our meal with plump shrimp exhibiting perfect char. A forkful with morsels of corn and the zesty sauce was umami heaven.

Main courses were easy pickings for us—the kids chose a couple varieties of tacos made with shredded chicken—one being a basic selection with the expected accoutrements of cheese, lettuce, and pico; the other a specialty taco(s) with homemade style chipotle sauce, cheese melted on the tortillas, all topped with grated Manchego cheese and minced cilantro. No bites left on their plates.

For the adults, a full-size entrée of Carne Asada and a Burrito stuffed with carnitas, black beans, Mexican rice, pico, lettuce, cheese, and salsa ranchera. The burrito was well-constructed and topped with avocado sauce, crema, house pico, and cotija cheese, which took the familiar fare to the *next* level in a very good way. Super fresh, plenty filling, and just plain good. The carne asada—translated to *roast meat*—was a cut of skirt steak rubbed with Mexican spices and grilled, then topped with melted cilantro lime butter. The platter came with slices of avocado, refried beans, and Mexican rice. The steak was a dream—tender, sizzling slices with the floral essence of cumin. Pairing a morsel of steak with a dab of rich, buttery avocado was mmm, mmm, deliciosa.



With enough room for dessert, our family sort of went all-out and split three selections: the Churro Cheesecake (with a churro top crust, sprinkled with cinnamon sugar, and drizzled with Dulce de Leche and sweet cream sauce!); the Mocha Tres Leches (sponge cake made with a mixture of three milks, cocoa powder, and coffee liquor, then topped with sweet, whipped cream); and Mexican Brownie a la Mode (with vanilla ice cream, served warm and drizzled with raspberry and chocolate sauces). I feel like the not-so-secret ingredient in many Mexican desserts is cinnamon, which takes any familiar bite to the moon, especially that chocolate brownie.

Each dessert was remarkable, and emblematic of the entire Mucho Gusto experience. Oh, so sweet. We cherished the time together, the atmosphere didn't overwhelm, service was excellent, food and drinks were top shelf, and our timing was perfect (unwittingly earning a couple discounted menu items due to happy hour pricing). Mucho Gusto does have it all—you'll find fun options that stray from the ordinary, but you'll also find comfort in the classics.



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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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Crafty Crab

6800 Race Track Road, Bowie; 240-245-3715; crafty-crabrestaurant.com \$\$\$ ●●●

Fiorella Italian Kitchen & Pizzeria

152 National Plaza, National Harbor; 301-839-1811; fiorellapizzeria.com \$\$\$ ●●●

First Watch

15471 Excelsior Drive, Bowie; 301-352-3447; firstwatch.com \$ ●●●

Hunch House

6451 America Blvd Suite 101, Hyattsville; hunchhouse.com \$\$\$ ●●●

The Irish Whisper

177 Fleet Street, Oxon Hill; 301-909-8859; theirishwhispernh.com \$\$\$ ●●●

Looney's Pub

8150 Baltimore Avenue, College Park; 240-542-4510; looneypubmd.com \$\$\$ ●●●

Milk & Honey Café

12500 Fairwood Parkway, Bowie; 240-260-3141; milknhoneycafe.com \$\$\$ ●●●

Public House

199 Fleet Street, National Harbor; 240-493-612; public-house-nationalharbor.com \$\$\$ ●●●

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186 Waterfront Street, National Harbor; 301-567-8900; redstonegrill.com \$\$\$ ●●●●●

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153 Waterfront Street, National Harbor; 301-567-1005; rosamexicano.com \$\$\$ ●●●●●

Ruby's Southern Comfort Kitchen

14207 Old Annapolis Road, Bowie; 240-260-3989; rubys-bowie.com \$\$\$ ●●●

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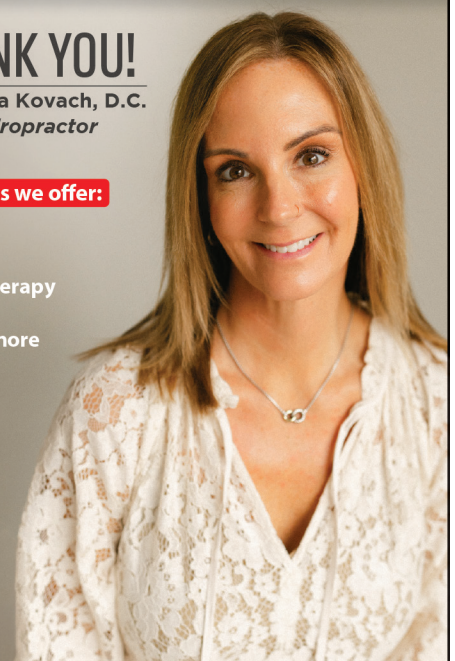
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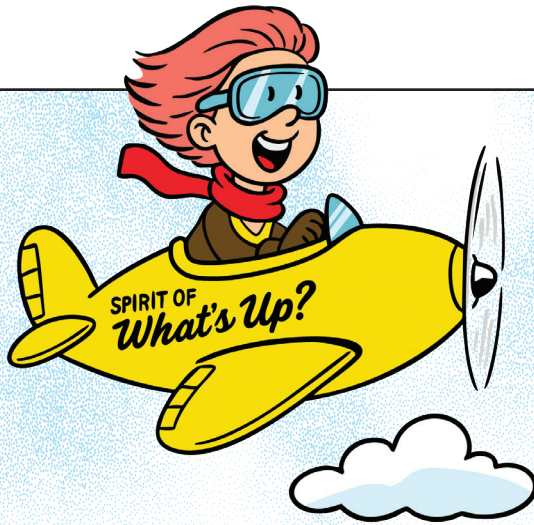
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Where's Wilma? ➤

FIND WILMA AND WIN!

It's a good thing that our flying mascot Wilma soars the skies by plane because street traffic will be extra busy this month as school buses return to the road. And Wilma needs to shop, dine, and visit all the wonderful business and towns throughout the Chesapeake Bay region. 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 Michael K. of Bowie, who won a \$50 gift certificate to a local business

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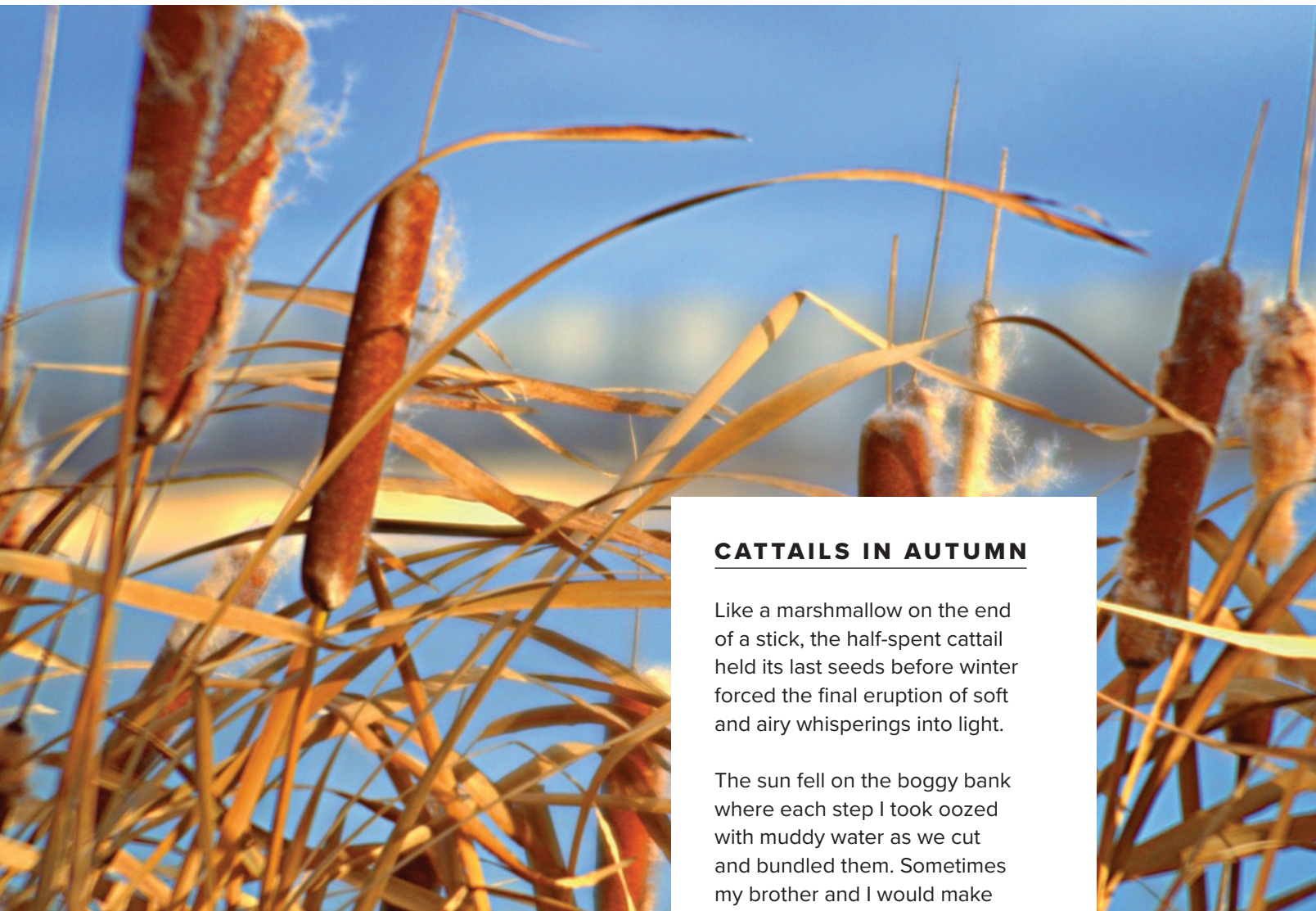
Yes, please!

No, thanks

Entries must be received by September 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? Central Maryland, 900 Bestgate Road, Ste. 202, Annapolis, MD 21401 or fill out the form at whatsupmag.com/promotions.

IFC = Inside Front Cover
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CATTAILS IN AUTUMN

Like a marshmallow on the end
of a stick, the half-spent cattail
held its last seeds before winter
forced the final eruption of soft
and airy whisperings into light.

The sun fell on the boggy bank
where each step I took oozed
with muddy water as we cut
and bundled them. Sometimes
my brother and I would make

swords of the stems and lance
each other in mock battles
where the seeds would break
away. Sometimes all it took
was for us to blow on the ends

like candles and the chill air
would burst with white fireworks
that floated on the endless breeze.
And always I felt a little sadness
as I watched with a child's joy

the air take the seeds. So many
I couldn't count them. So bright
in the September sun. Dispersing
beyond my reach, my vague desire
to keep what could not be kept.

BY V.P. LOGGINS

One Verse at a Time

V. P. Loggins is the author of several poetry collections, most recently *The Wild Severance* (2021), where "Cattails in Autumn" first appeared. *The Wild Severance* is the winner of the 26th Annual Bright Hill Press Poetry Book Competition as well as many other awards. His poems and articles have appeared in *The Baltimore Review*, *Chiron Review*, *Crannog* (Ireland), and many other national and international publications. He and his wife reside in Annapolis.—**JANICE F. BOOTH**



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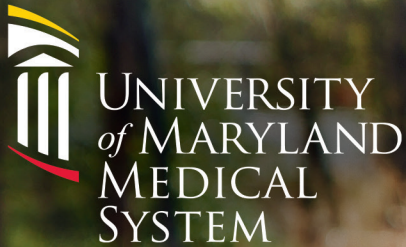
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