The Beltsville News

An All Volunteer Newspaper

Vol. 74, Number 10 | Beltsville, Maryland | October 2026

Update on the future of the Spicknall's Land

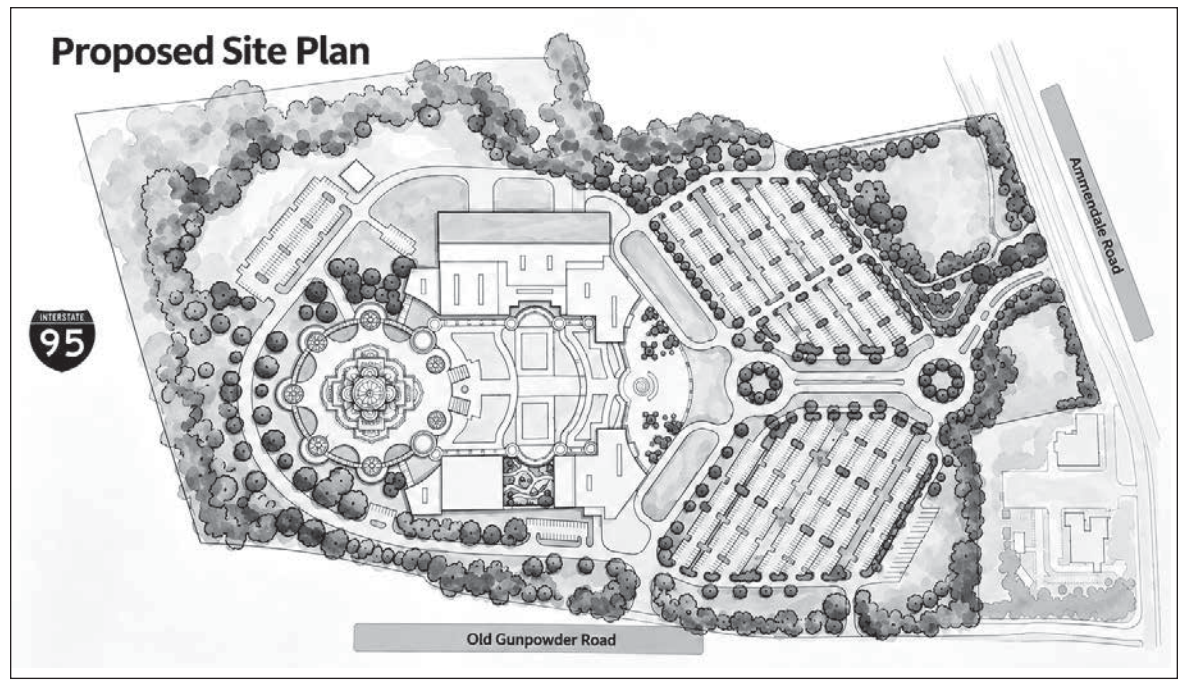
By Jillian Schweitzer

There was an informational session at the BAPS Mandir regarding their plans for the space. There was an original kick off meeting with the community in March of this year, where they solicited ideas as they began to work on their larger goals.

An information packet was given out at the door, and anyone can also register as a person of record (I confirmed with Parks and Planning, once an official number is given to the project, people can register. As it does not yet have one, we cannot do so yet).

The presentation featured a mockup image and the speakers (which included the attorney, vari-

SPICKNALL'S continues on page 8



A mockup of the proposed use for Spicknalls.

New Year of Cub Scouting for Cub Pack 1031

By Regina Halper

We saw lots of families at the Back-to-School nights where the "Fishing Hole" was very popular along with Frog Sounds (using pebbles, a comb, a rubber band and a balloon!) We are having our Join Scouting Night on Sept. 28th at our meeting place at Beltsville Academy at 6:30..

This year we are looking forward to all our scout activities: service projects including Scouting for Food! (November 7th sticker distribution and 14th pickup). This has always been a great source of donations to the food pantries at St Josephs Catholic Church and Emmanuel UMC. Pack 1031 and Troop 1033 are always happy to support the community.



Scouts in Troop 1031 are learning how to sign the Pledge of Allegiance!

Check out our website: https://pack1031.org/ There you can find information on how to join our Pack. If you are interested in Cub Scouts at P1031, contact Regina Halper at Pack1031cubscouting@gmail.com or BeAScout.org- select Cub Scouts and enter 20705 and look for our pack for information. We are a family scouting unit. During the school year we meet at Beltsville Academy for our den meetings and in the summer we meet at least twice a month mostly in the parks.

The Beltsville Police Department Invites the Community to a Spook-Tacular Trunk or Treat

By Rick Bergmann

Families are invited to put on their costumes and enjoy an evening of Halloween fun at a community **Trunk or Treat** hosted by the Beltsville Police Department. The event will take place on **Wednesday, October 28, 2026, from 6 to 8 p.m.** at the **District VI Station, 4321 Sellman Road, Beltsville, MD 20705**.

Trunk or Treat offers children and families a fun and welcoming way to celebrate Halloween. Participating local businesses and community organizations will decorate their vehicles and hand out candy to trick-or-treaters, creating a festive gathering filled with colorful displays, costumes, treats, and community spirit.

The event is also an opportunity for neighbors to come together and connect with local businesses and members of the police department in a relaxed, family-friendly setting. Children are encouraged to come dressed in their favorite costumes and bring a bag or bucket for collecting treats.

Mark your calendars for October 28 and bring the family out for an evening of Halloween fun at the District VI Station. Costumes, candy, decorated trunks, and plenty of community spirit will help make this year's Trunk or Treat a **spook-tacular** celebration.

NEXT ISSUE:

Submissions Due

No Later Than:

October 21

Paper Out:

October 30

News You Can Use



Karen Coakley

By Karen Coakley

October is Fire Prevention Month…10 Essential Home Fire Safety Tips

- **Watch your cooking:** Stay in the kitchen when frying, grilling, or broiling food. Turn pot handles inward and keep a three-foot kid-free zone around the stove.
- **Install smoke alarms:** Place working smoke alarms on every level of your home, inside bedrooms, and outside sleeping areas. Test them monthly.
- **Give space heaters space:** Keep portable heaters at least three feet away from anything that can burn. Turn them off when you leave the room or go to sleep.
- **Create a fire escape plan:** Design a home fire escape plan with two ways

NEWS YOU CAN USE continues on page 9



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Beltsville News: Blast from the Past

By Ted Ladd

(From the Beltsville News issue of October 2001)

"Dark Days in Beltsville," was a comprehensive first-person article on the 24 September 2001 tornado that struck Beltsville, written by William "Bill" Raulin.

Senator Arthur Dorman reported in his monthly column that the new IKEA Project would create 450 jobs.

Linda Good authored an article on "Ebenezer Meeting House," that was built near the corner of Powder Mill and Gunpowder Roads in 1836.

Ginger Butcher would sign copies of her new book, The Adventure of Echo the Bat, at the Apple Festival at Emmanuel United Methodist Church on 3 November.

Christian Brother Phil Whitman celebrated 50 years as a member of The Brothers of Christian Schools on October 6, 2001.

Neighbors in the News

The Value of Membership: Why Your Community Credit Union Matters



When it comes to managing your money, where you bank matters. Choosing a financial institution is about more than finding a place to deposit a paycheck or open a loan—it is about finding a financial partner that understands the community you call home.

That is where credit unions offer something unique.

What Is a Credit Union?

A credit union provides many of the same financial services you expect from a traditional bank, including checking and savings accounts, debit cards, online and mobile banking, auto and home loans, credit cards, and other financial products. The biggest difference is **ownership**.

Credit unions are not-for-profit financial cooperatives owned by their members. When you open an account and become a member of **Prince George's Community Federal Credit Union (PGCFCU)**, you are not simply a customer—you become a member-owner of the credit union.

That structure allows credit unions to focus on serving their members rather than generating profits for outside shareholders. For members, that can mean competitive rates, lower fees, personalized service, and financial products designed around the needs of the people and communities the credit union serves.

Why Community Banking Matters

There is also tremendous value in keeping your financial relationships close to home.

For nearly 60 years, PGCFCU has served Prince George's County, helping local individuals and families save, borrow, build credit, purchase vehicles, buy homes, start new chapters, and work toward greater financial security.

Community financial institutions have a vested interest in seeing the areas they serve thrive.

CREDIT UNION
continues on page 3

The Beltsville News
An All Volunteer Newspaper

PUBLISHED BY THE BELTSVILLE-VANSVILLE DISTRICT CITIZENS' ASSOCIATION INC.

News: Rick Bergmann, editor@beltsvillenewstoday.com, 8 Center Street, Laurel, MD 20723. Enclose self-addressed stamped envelope if photo is to be returned. Accepted material may be edited. Letters to the Editor on local topics are encouraged. Names may be withheld upon request.

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Kitty Post By Sallie Rhodes

Why Spaying and Neutering Every Cat Matters

Beltsville Community Cats (BCC) has received so many calls recently about unaltered cats and litters of kittens that we sometimes wonder if we are really making a difference.

One thing is for sure: We cannot make a real impact without the cooperation and assistance of people who feed free-roaming community cats in the Beltsville area. While it thrills us to hear from people we have helped in the past, it is disappointing when they wait until a female cat is pregnant or has already had a litter before calling BCC for help.



In too many cases, the calls involve female cats that are well along in their pregnancies or have already given birth. By waiting, what could have been one spay surgery has become a litter of kittens that also need food, veterinary care, socialization, foster homes, spay/neuter surgeries, and, eventually, placement in forever homes. Sometimes the kittens are already too old to socialize easily for adoption and BCC is forced to release these older kittens outside, where they do not have a good chance of surviving to adulthood.

To avoid these unfortunate outcomes, BCC is asking people to report unaltered (non-ear tipped) community cats as soon as they see them. Please don't wait until a female is pregnant or has kittens.

While you may enjoy seeing little kittens, far too many are being born. Animal shelters and rescue groups are already beyond their capacity to foster the adult cats being abandoned by their owners and the kittens being born outdoors.

At the same time, the constantly increasing cost of veterinary care is making it more difficult for rescue groups like BCC to keep up with the demand for trap, neuter, vaccinate and return (TNVR) services, and the medical services needed by community cats that are sick or injured. When BCC started in 2019, basic spay/neuter/vaccine packages cost us just $25. Today, the low-cost spay-neuter clinics that we use charge between $70 and $110 for the same services.

Cats entering BCC's Rescue Program (for fostering and eventual adoption) require more extensive (and expensive) veterinary care, including testing for Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) and Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV), microchipping, and treatment for illnesses or injuries. Many young kittens arrive with serious, sometimes life-threatening, medical problems requiring intensive treatment or surgery.

So, let's take a quick look at why spaying and neutering cats is so important.

First, **neutering male cats can prevent a lot of undesirable behavior**. Unneutered males are much more likely to spray urine to mark their territory, roam in search of females, and get into fights with other males. They can travel surprisingly long distances, increasing the chances that they will be hit by a car, become lost or injured, or spread diseases through bites.

Neutering generally reduces or eliminates spraying and decreases hormone-driven aggression and roaming. It can also reduce injuries resulting from fights. Neutering before these behaviors become established is especially beneficial.

And what about female cats? **Spaying prevents unwanted litters and eliminates the risks associated with pregnancy and giving birth.** A female cat can become pregnant when she is still surprisingly young and can produce multiple litters in a single year. Her daughters can begin reproducing while they are still kittens themselves.

Spaying also eliminates the possibility of uterine infections such as pyometra, a potentially life-threatening condition, and significantly reduces the risk of mammary cancer when performed early in life.

Spaying and neutering can benefit **indoor pet cats, too**. An indoor cat may never encounter a community cat, but an unaltered cat can still develop hormone-driven behaviors such as spraying, attempting to escape outdoors, and calling or seeking a mate. Accidental litters can happen when an indoor cat slips outside or when an unaltered male or female is introduced into a household.

Perhaps most importantly, every cat that is spayed or neutered means fewer unwanted kittens. That gives the cats already waiting in foster homes and shelters a better chance of finding an adoptive home.

BCC's message is simple: **Don't wait! Call us at 240-444-8353 or email hello@beltsvillecats.net as soon as you see an unaltered cat so that we can get it "fixed" before it gets pregnant or acquires potentially fatal injuries or disease. And if you see kittens, please contact us immediately – it could make the difference between a high-risk (and often very short) life outdoors and adoption into a loving forever home.**

CREDIT UNION

continued from page 2

When local residents become members, use financial products, refer friends and family, and build long-term relationships with their credit union, they help strengthen an institution whose mission is directly connected to their community.

At PGCFCU, membership is open to individuals who live, work, worship, volunteer, attend school, or own a business in Prince George's County. That means many Beltsville residents already have a path to membership.

September Is a Great Time to Join

As PGCFCU continues its membership campaign, September is an especially exciting time to become part of the credit union family.

New members who join during September will have the opportunity to win a $100 Amazon gift card, in addition to gaining access to the benefits that come with credit union membership.

While the gift card provides a little extra incentive to get started, the greater value is the opportunity to establish a relationship with a local financial institution designed to serve its members for years to come.

Whether you are looking for a new checking account, working toward your savings goals, financing your next vehicle, exploring homeownership, rebuilding credit, or simply looking for a financial institution that feels more connected to the community, credit union membership is worth considering.

Your money is personal. Your financial institution should be, too.

Your Community. Your Credit Union.



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Ask the Expert

BY ANDRE GIBSON,
CHAMPION HOME IMPROVEMENTS

By Andre Gibson, Champion Home Improvements

Keeping Children and Pets Safe During Home Renovations

Home renovations can be exciting. Whether you're replacing a roof, building a new deck, remodeling a bathroom, installing new windows, or updating another part of your home, improvements can make your property more comfortable, attractive, and functional. However, construction also temporarily changes your home environment. If you have children or pets, taking a few extra precautions can help keep everyone safe while work is underway.

Create a Safe Construction Zone

One of the most important steps is keeping children and pets away from active work areas. Construction zones may contain tools, ladders, nails, screws, lumber, electrical cords, equipment, and other materials that can cause injuries.

Before work begins, determine which areas of the home or yard will be used by the construction crew. Children should understand that these areas are off-limits. Temporary gates, closed doors, fencing, or other barriers can help prevent young children and pets from accidentally entering the work zone.

Keep Pets Secure

Construction can be stressful for pets. Hammering, power tools, unfamiliar people, and frequent opening and closing of doors can cause dogs and cats to become frightened or anxious.

During construction, consider keeping pets in a quiet room away from the work area. For larger projects, dog daycare, a trusted family member, or a pet sitter may be a better option.

Make sure pets have identification tags and updated contact information in case they accidentally get outside.

Watch for Construction Debris

Small construction materials can be especially dangerous for children and animals. Nails, screws, wood pieces, packaging, insulation, and other debris should never be treated as toys.

Even with regular cleanup, homeowners should check areas surrounding the project before allowing children or pets back into them. This is particularly important during roofing, decking, fencing, siding, and exterior remodeling projects where debris may temporarily fall or collect around the property.

Plan for Dust and Fumes

Interior renovations can produce dust, odors, and fumes. Whenever possible, work areas should be separated from occupied portions of the home. Doors can be closed, temporary barriers may be installed, and proper ventilation can help reduce dust traveling through the house.

Children and pets can be more sensitive to environmental changes, so keeping them away from dusty work areas is a good precaution.

Talk With Your Contractor

Communication is an important part of renovation safety. Before the project begins, let your contractor know that children or pets will be present in the home.

Ask about the expected work schedule, where materials will be stored, what areas need to remain clear, and whether there will be periods when it would be better for your family to leave the house.

Safety Comes First

A home improvement project should be an exciting investment in your property. A little preparation can help make the construction process safer and less stressful for the entire household.

At Champion Home Improvements, we understand that we're not just working on a house—we're working around the place your family calls home. Planning ahead, maintaining a clean work environment, and keeping communication open can help protect children, pets, homeowners, and workers throughout the renovation process.

From Samhain to Trick-or-Treat: The Long History of Halloween

By Rick Bergmann

Every October 31, neighborhoods fill with ghosts, witches, superheroes and monsters as children travel from door to door in search of candy. Pumpkins glow from front porches, homes are covered with spiderwebs and skeletons, and scary movies become required viewing.

But behind the costumes, candy and jack-o'-lanterns is a holiday with roots stretching back thousands of years.

The Halloween celebrated today is the result of centuries of traditions that blended together as cultures, religions and people changed. Customs that once marked the end of the harvest, honored the dead or protected people from wandering spirits eventually became one of America's most recognizable celebrations.

An Ancient Beginning

Many Halloween traditions are connected to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain, which marked the end of the harvest season and the beginning of winter. More than 2,000 years ago, Celtic communities in areas including present-day Ireland and Britain observed the transition into the darker months of the year with gatherings, fires and religious customs.

Samhain was also associated with beliefs about the dead. People believed the boundary separating the living and the dead became especially thin at this time of year, allowing spirits to return. Masks and disguises became associated with the celebration, while bonfires played an important part in community gatherings.

The Romans had traditions of their own surrounding the dead. Feralia, for example, was associated with remembering those who had died. As Roman and Celtic cultures interacted, customs surrounding seasonal celebrations and remembrance of the dead influenced one another.

From Samhain to All Hallows' Eve

Christianity brought another transformation.

All Saints' Day, also known as All Hallows' Day, eventually came to be observed on November 1. The evening before it became known as All Hallows' Eve. Over time, the name was shortened to "Halloween."

Older traditions did not simply disappear. Instead, customs from different celebrations blended together.

One practice that developed in Britain was known as "souling." Poor people would travel from house to house asking for small cakes, sometimes called soul cakes, in exchange for offering prayers. The custom of visiting homes and receiving food bears a noticeable resemblance to a tradition familiar to almost every child today.

HALLOWEEN
continues on page 7

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What is it about the green trees?
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Flowers with fruit like no other.

They warm us with fuel for fire,
Wood to build all kinds of houses,
Poles for tents, majestic spires,
Even palaces for spouses.

Two were famous in a garden:
One forbidden to desire,
Questioning, a heart was hardened
The affect death was required;

Blood was spent upon its pieces
By the Son of Heaven's kindness
To deliver human species
From their wickedness and blindness.

'Neath its shadow in surrender
Leaves of healing it provides;
Those rejecting their Defender
Holiness will cast aside.

Always, it's been God's intention
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Beckie Hutchings
9/11/2026

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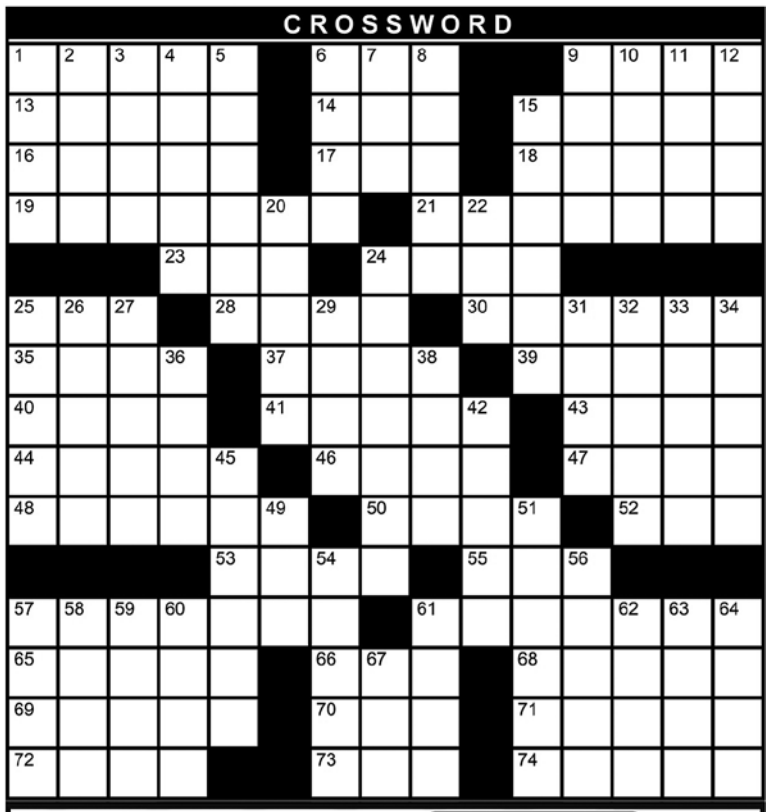
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Statepoint Crossword: Movie Quotes





ACROSS

1. Give benediction
6. World's oldest broadcasting company, acr.
9. Hoodwink
13. H, spelled out
14. Have a cold, e.g.
15. Dogma
16. Raja's wife
17. Shel Silverstein's constrictor
18. Extreme, prefix
19. *"____, my dear, I don't give a damn"
21. *"Why so ____?"
23. "High" beverage
24. Fairytale's second word
25. "Swan Lake" step, e.g.
28. Potassium hydroxide solution, pl.
30. Nincompoop
35. Month of Purim
37. At any time
39. Coastal town in southern England
40. Flick part
41. 4 x 4 race
43. Like most Brothers Grimm stories
44. "Peer Gynt" playwright
46. Actress Campbell
47. Please do not delay, acr.
48. Experienced sailor (2 words)
50. Dispatched
52. a.k.a. Tokyo
53. Window guards
55. Beer faucet
57. *"I'm mad as hell, and I'm not going to take it ____"
61. *"What we've got here is ____ to communicate"
65. Like United States Capitol
66. Food safety org.
68. Ritual basin
69. Tooth trouble
70. Husk of corn
71. Sharks' domain
72. Fence board
73. Pastrami partner
74. Paper quantities

DOWN

1. Vomit
2. The one with pants on fire
3. Volcano in Sicily
4. *"I can smell the ____ of a woman... Honey oil, lavender, soap"
5. Israeli monetary unit
6. *"Hasta la vista, ____"
7. Life story, for short
8. Fastener
9. Hero shop
10. "Do ____ others..."
11. Paddington Bear's homeland
12. Airport postings, acr.
15. Rutabaga cousin
20. Extra sweatshirt, e.g.
22. Long period of time
24. No-good
25. *"We'll always have ____"
26. Hacienda brick
27. Mexican cuisine staple
29. *"She doesn't ____ go here"
31. Party garb?
32. Not better
33. Homer's famous poem, with The
34. *"Not quite my ____"
36. Donna or Lou
38. Techno dance party
42. Busybody, in Yiddish
45. *"____ puts Baby in a corner"
49. Toothy fish
51. Alterations specialist
54. Mention something
56. *"There's no ____ like home"
57. Contributes
58. Season to be jolly
59. Village People hit
60. Source of protein
61. Cab payment
62. Eye layer
63. #74 Across, sing.
64. Sea eagles
67. *"Go ahead, make my ____"

See Solution on page 6

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Crossword Solution from page 5

B	L	E	S	S		B	B	C			D	U	P	E
A	I	T	C	H		A	I	L		T	E	N	E	T
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F	R	A	N	K	L	Y		S	E	R	I	O	U	S
			T	E	A		U	P	O	N				
P	A	S		L	Y	E	S		N	I	T	W	I	T
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I	B	S	E	N		N	E	V	E		A	S	A	P
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				B	A	R	S		T	A	P			
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D	O	M	E	D		F	D	A		L	A	V	E	R
D	E	C	A	Y		E	A	R		O	C	E	A	N
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Rosapepe's Report to Beltsville

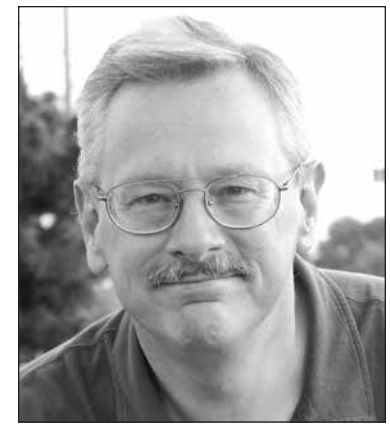
Make Your Plan to Vote

Election day is almost upon us! Please make a plan to vote. Election day is November 3. The polls will be open from 7am to 8pm. Early voting will be conducted October 22, 2026, through October 29, 2026 (7am - 8pm). Beltsville's early voting center is at the Laurel-Beltsville Senior Center at 7120 Contee Road. If you wish to vote by mail, please request a mail-in ballot at vote.md.gov/NeedBallot by Tuesday, October 27. You may also drop off a mail-in ballot at the Beltsville Community Center or the Laurel-Beltsville Senior Center.

If you have further questions, please contact the Prince George's County Board of Elections at 301-341-7300. You may also check your current voter status at https://voterservices.elections.maryland.gov/VoterSearch.

BARC Update: Maryland Joins Lawsuit to Stop Closure

As you know, Delegates Joseline Peña-Melnyk, Ben Barnes, Mary Lehman, and I are doing everything we can to protect the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, its employees, and its land. Maryland Attorney General Anthony Brown joined the fight in September, filing a friend of the court brief in a new lawsuit brought by American Federation of Government Employees and several other federal worker unions. On September 12, a federal judge paused the forced relocation of U.S. Department of Agriculture employees following the filing. The relocation is scheduled



to resume October 2, but we are hopeful that this will be extended after the hearing on September 29.

Medicaid Changes, Resources for Constituents

Due to policy changes by the federal government, Medicaid eligibility may change for some Marylanders. Those who are impacted should have recently received a letter from Maryland Health Connection (MHC) regarding these upcoming changes.

Notices have been sent to impacted households regarding changes to Medicaid eligibility based on immigration status. For some noncitizen Medicaid members, federal changes may result in coverage loss beginning October 1, 2026. These changes do not impact pregnant individuals or children.

Beginning January 1, 2027, approximately 320,000 Maryland Medicaid adults may be subject to work requirements, unless an exception or exemption is applicable, and may have to reapply for Medicaid coverage twice a year instead of annually. Notices to impacted households will be mailed and emailed mid- September 2026. The Maryland Health Benefit Exchange (MHBE) and MHC will also notify via email and text message.

These changes are specific to adults and will not affect children, pregnant individuals, or individuals with disabilities. The notices provide information about the new federal requirements and what steps are needed to maintain coverage.

I encourage constituents to visit MarylandHealthConnection.gov/Checkin. There, you can update your contact information and review any official notices from the Maryland Health Connection.

WSSC Construction Coming to Powder Mill Road

WSSC has announced plans to replace four miles of sewer pipes off Powder Mill Road starting spring 2027. During this remediation, WSSC activities may include pruning/removing trees, temporary parking restrictions, and construction over sidewalks. Closer to the date of construction, WSSC plans on holding a community meeting to provide more details. For more information, contact project manager Gary Wallace at Gary.Wallace@wsscwater.com or 301-206-8012 and refer to Project Number CRCILRMH8114A25.

Contact me

Please let me know if there are other issues you have questions or thoughts about. And, of course, feel free to be in touch if I can be of help to you. Just email me at jim.rosapepe@senate.maryland.gov or call (410) 841-3141.

Fall Yard Sale to Benefit Beltsville Community Cats and United Women in Faith

By Rick Bergmann



Beltsville Community Cats and the Emmanuel United Women in Faith will team up for their Annual Fall Yard Sale on Saturday, October 17, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Emmanuel United Methodist Church, 11416 Cedar Lane.

Shoppers are invited to stop by and hunt for bargains while supporting two organizations that serve the Beltsville community. Beltsville Community Cats will have a wide variety of items for sale, with plenty of bargains and treasures waiting to be discovered.

Shopping can work up an appetite, and the Emmanuel United Women in Faith will have that covered. The group will be selling a hot lunch throughout the event, along with an assortment of homemade baked goods. Visitors can grab something to eat while they shop or take home a sweet treat for later.

The annual sale offers community members an opportunity to find great deals, enjoy good food, and support the work of Beltsville Community Cats and the Emmanuel United Women in Faith.

Mark your calendar for Saturday, October 17, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., and come out for a day of bargains, food, and community fellowship.



New Member of the Beltsville VFD Travis P.



New Member of the Beltsville VFD Ashlyn P.



New Member of the Beltsville VFD Briana G.



New Member of the Beltsville VFD Laila J.

Beltsville Volunteer Fire Department Welcomes New Members

The Beltsville Volunteer Fire Department is proud to welcome several new members to our family. We are extremely excited to have them join our ranks.

1. Travis P., who is a PG County volunteer fire service veteran who has served in many roles, including Chief of his past department. Travis has already taken a leadership role and is helping grow and expand our membership including the addition of his daughter Ashlyn.
2. Ashlyn P., a high school student who is joining with her dad Travis. Ashlyn recently completed her EMT training through a school program and is an enthusiastic EMS member looking forward to providing primary patient care when she turns 18..
3. Briana G., a Beltsville resident and UMD Sophomore Premed major. Briana recently completed a summer EMT class that compresses 6 months of medical curriculum into a 9 week class, attending 5 days per week. Briana is looking forward to passing her National Registry certification exam and gaining experience on the ambulance to achieve primary patient care responsibility.
4. Laila J., A high school senior who is working through the County screening process. Laila is already very active in participating, in a limited manner, in our duty nights and public activities.

There are others in the pipeline who will be announced soon. Please stay tuned.

HALLOWEEN

continued from page 4

Halloween Comes to America

Halloween did not immediately become a major American holiday.

That began changing dramatically during the 19th century as immigrants—particularly Irish and Scottish immigrants—brought Halloween customs with them to the United States. The large wave of Irish immigration associated with the Great Famine of the 1840s helped spread those traditions across the country.

Among the traditions immigrants brought with them was the jack-o'-lantern.

In Ireland, people traditionally carved faces into turnips. The practice became associated with the folktale of "Stingy Jack," a man condemned to wander the earth carrying a light inside a hollowed-out turnip. Once Irish immigrants arrived in America, they discovered that pumpkins—native to the Americas—were larger and considerably easier to carve. The pumpkin gradually became the familiar glowing face of Halloween.

Halloween in America, however, wasn't always innocent fun.

By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, pranks had become an important part of the holiday. Some were harmless, while others involved damaged property, overturned wagons, released livestock and vandalism. In growing cities, Halloween mischief could include fires and damage to buildings.

Communities began looking for ways to channel that energy into something less destructive. Halloween parties, costume contests and community celebrations offered alternatives to a night of mischief. In 1914, for example, Elizabeth Krebs helped organize a large Halloween celebration in Hiawatha, Kansas, after years of frustration with annual vandalism. The event included entertainment, a parade and costume contest and became an influential example of a community-centered Halloween celebration.

Trick or Treat?

Exactly how trick-or-treating developed is complicated because several older customs likely contributed to it.

There was the centuries-old tradition of souling, in which people went from door to door seeking food. There were also traditions of wearing disguises, as well as Halloween's long association with pranks.

Eventually, those ideas came together in a rather simple bargain: give us a treat and we won't play a trick.

One of the earliest known printed appearances of the phrase "trick or treat" appeared in a Canadian newspaper in 1927. The custom spread through North America during the following decades, although World War II sugar rationing temporarily limited the availability of candy.

After the war, Halloween increasingly became centered around children and families. By the 1950s, trick-or-treating was commonplace, with communities encouraging children to collect candy rather than engage in destructive pranks.

Centuries of Tradition in One Night

By the latter decades of the 20th century, most of the pieces of modern American Halloween were firmly in place: trick-or-treating, costumes, jack-o'-lanterns, parties, parades, haunted attractions, ghost stories and scary movies.

Yet beneath the plastic skeletons and overflowing candy bowls are echoes of celebrations stretching back centuries.

The bonfires of Samhain became part of Halloween's imagery of autumn nights and fire. Ancient masks and disguises evolved into costumes. Carved turnips became glowing pumpkins. Souling and other door-to-door customs helped pave the way for trick-or-treating. A night once associated with preparing for winter and contemplating the boundary between life and death gradually became a night when communities gather for costumes, candy and a little carefully controlled fright.

Halloween has changed dramatically during its long journey.

Perhaps that is the tradition that has remained most consistent of all: transformation.

For thousands of years, the arrival of the darker days of autumn has inspired people to gather, tell stories, disguise themselves and confront the mysteries that frighten them. Today we may do it while wearing a superhero costume and carrying a plastic pumpkin filled with miniature candy bars—but the impulse behind the celebration is much older.

Sources: World History Encyclopedia — History of Halloween; DeKalb Public Library — The Spooky, Fun-Filled History of Halloween; and The Frick Pittsburgh — A History of Halloween: Tricks, Treats and Enduring Traditions.







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From the Office of Council Member Tom Dernoga

Upcoming General Election

Make your voice heard and vote for your state and local representatives in the upcoming General Election on November 3, 2026. Early voting will take place from October 22nd to October 29th. Polling locations will be open from 7 AM to 8 PM during both early voting and on Election Day.

You can vote in three ways: by early voting in person, by mail-in ballot, or in person on Election Day. To vote in person on Election Day, find your assigned polling place at voterservices.elections.maryland.gov/PollingPlaceSearch.

The following mail-in ballot drop boxes are in and near District 1: 1) Beltsville Community Center - 3900 Sellman Road, Beltsville 20705, 2) College Park Community Center - 5051 Pierce Avenue, College Park 20740, 3) Deerfield Run Community Center - 13000 Laurel Bowie Road, Laurel 20708, 4) Laurel-Beltsville Senior Activity Center - 7120 Contee Road, Laurel 20707, 5) Riderwood Wellness Center - 3138 Gracefield Road, Silver Spring 20904.

To register to vote, confirm your registration, request a mail-in ballot, update your information, or see which candidates will be on the ballot, visit the Maryland State Board of Elections (SBE) website at elections.maryland.gov. You can also register to vote at your polling place on Election Day. Mail-in ballots must be postmarked or placed in a designated ballot drop box by 8 PM on November 3rd to be counted.



(From left to right) Officer Jose Alvelo, Chief of Staff Michelle García, and Corporal Michael Fraser at the District VI PGPD's "Cutz for Kidz" event at Beltsville Academy.

Spicknall's Farm Development Update

A pre-application meeting was held on Wednesday, September 2nd, regarding the BAPS Religious Complex's application for construction on the former Spicknall's Farm property. Now that this has taken place, the applicant will file a Preliminary Plan of Subdivision (PPS) and a Detailed Site Plan (DET), along with companion applications.

The proposed construction would include a place of worship, a cultural facility, a monastery, and walking trails. An environmental assessment has already taken place, and an extensive traffic study is planned for the surrounding Ammendale Road and Old Gunpowder Road.

Once an application is officially submitted, residents can register as a Person of Record for future opportunities to engage. Stay updated by searching the address of the proposed development (12011 Old Gunpowder Road) through the Planning Department's Development Application Review Tracking System (DARTS) at tinyurl.com/DARTSPG.

Apply for Utility Assistance

Beginning in January 2027, most low-income customers who are signed up to receive assistance through the state's Office of Home Energy Programs (OHEP) will automatically have their utility bill capped at, on average, 6% of their income. This results from a decision by the Maryland Public Service Commission.

I encourage everyone to apply for assistance through OHEP to see if you are eligible for any grants and to potentially benefit from this incoming discount.

You can apply in three ways: 1) at your local OHEP office (Prince George's County Department of Social Services, 425 Brightseat Road, Landover, MD 20785), 2) by mail (download the application at myohepstatus.benefits.maryland.gov/), or 3) online at benefits.maryland.gov.

For help understanding the application, you can watch the Maryland Office of People's Counsel (OPC)'s training, "Master the Energy Assistance Application", at tinyurl.com/OPCEnergyApp.

Contact Us

Please keep in touch by emailing us at councildistrict1@co.pg.md.us or calling 301-952-3887.

Church

Emmanuel UMC to Hold Blessing of the Animals

By Rick Bergmann

Emmanuel United Methodist Church will welcome some four-legged—and perhaps feathered and scaly—visitors to worship this fall during its annual Blessing of the Animals.

The special service will take place on Sunday, October 4, at 10 a.m. on the front lawn. Members of the congregation and the surrounding community are invited to bring their pets to receive a special blessing.

Dogs, cats, birds, rabbits and other beloved animal companions are welcome to attend with their families. The outdoor service celebrates the important place animals hold in people's lives and recognizes them as part of God's creation.

The Blessing of the Animals is open to the entire community, and participants do not need to be members of Emmanuel to attend.


Bring your pet to Emmanuel UMC on October 4 at 10 am to have them blessed by the Pastor!

Emmanuel United Methodist Church is located at 11416 Cedar Lane in Beltsville.

For those whose pets are part of the family, Emmanuel offers a simple invitation: bring them to church!

St. John's Annual Trunk or Treat!

St. John's Episcopal Church, located at 11040 Baltimore Avenue, Beltsville MD 20704, is sponsoring a Trunk or Treat Event! For elementary students, 4 to 9 years old, on Saturday, October 24th, from 4:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. The event will be held in the upper parking lot of the church. Parents are asked to park on the lower level of the church property. We look forward to welcoming you to this fun-filled event!

SPICKNALL

continued from page 1

ous engineers, and Mr. Patel (who, along with the BAPS leadership, purchased the property) emphasized the community aspects, including a community garden and walking trails. They also noted that there would be a green space/tree buffer and additional trees added.

They want to make room for up to 2,500 worshippers at this new building (basically the events they currently host at their present building, but on a larger, more spread-out area). They will include a lot of parking but also said they'd continue sharing parking with the 7th Day Adventist Church (and the pastor of that church also got up and spoke about the volunteer work, friendship and community drive they share with BAPS). Everyone who spoke emphasized that there will be more information and meetings given as the process progresses.

There was also a Q & A session after the short remarks, which included the below topics:

- Traffic and how it would affect the surrounding neighbors/streets
  - The panel said the traffic study isn't currently complete but will share the data once it is ready. I admit, I am nervous when some of the options include widening Old Gunpowder Road (one lane for acceleration/deacceleration) and possibly putting a light at North Lincoln, which is one entrance to my neighborhood. Any work that the intersections need (repaving, etc) would be paid for by BAPS. While the main entrance would be on Ammendale, the panel did say that they will also take into account the school timetables as well, but the majority of the traffic would be on Sunday, per the religious ceremonies held on that day.
- Noise and light pollution
  - It was brought up but admittedly glossed over due to overlapping voices/questions.
- Green Spaces/Water Management
  - There are culverts already included, underneath Ammendale that currently have path flows from the top north part of the property. Upgrades will be made to ensure that run-off is treated properly and not pooling around non permeable surfaces. The panel said the county is requiring a 100-year plan, but I'm not sure if that's for all new development or just this one or how climate change factors in. The final design isn't ready for this one yet either.
  - Regarding a soil study, there was an initial study done when Mr. Patel and his partners purchased the property, but several additional soil borings of several feet will also be done. There was an additional question re: any lingering pesticides in the soil from the years of farming and the panel said that studies would be done to ensure nothing was thrown into the air during construction.
  - A representative from the new farm market (held in the parking lot by the soccer field on Old Gunpowder said she would like to temporarily lease the old farm stand while this building is moved along in the process (I'm all in favor of using that old building!!)

I think a larger part to the conversation of this space and of Beltsville at large is change. The Spicknall's farm has been around for generations (I have old pictures of my husband as a kid picking pumpkins with his brother), Borgwardt is making changes to a building that has been around longer than I've been alive and now with BARC being targeted and likely closed, Beltsville feels very very different from five, ten, fifteen years ago. There was a comment during the Q & A that was unnecessarily harmful and while folks may not 100% agree with the new plans, criticizing them for their religion is absolutely uncalled for.

Humans, as a whole, generally aren't very good at mourning and grieving. But two things can be true; we can miss what was but also have legitimate and informed questions for the new owners and stewards of this land, not just for this project but any projects that come forward in the future.

Obituaries



Ernestelle "Ernie" Kilbourne

Ernestelle L. Kilbourne

Ernestelle (Loffler) Kilbourne passed away peacefully on August 31, 2026, in Olney, Maryland, at the age of 96. During her last days she was surrounded by family, loved ones, and friends. Ernestelle, known to friends and family as Ernie, was born April 18, 1930, in Washington, D.C., the daughter of Ernest and Margaret (Kuenne) Loffler. She graduated from McKinley Tech High School in the District, and received a Bachelor's degree in sociology from the University of Maryland. She married George J. Kilbourne

on September 9, 1951, and raised two children, Gary Ball-Kilbourne and Suzi Kilbourne. Throughout her life she was a faithful member of Emmanuel United Methodist Church in Beltsville, Maryland, and active in the United Methodist Women. She was a lifelong Eleanor Roosevelt Democrat.

Preceding her in death were her parents, her husband George, and her brother and sister-in-law Ernest and Patricia Loffler. Surviving family members include her children Gary Ball-Kilbourne and Debra Ball-Kilbourne, and Suzi Kilbourne and Chris Insley; grandchildren Matthew Ball-Kilbourne and Heidi Ball-Kilbourne, Zachary Ball-Kilbourne, Alden Kilbourne and Chris Pedersen, and Zoë Kilbourne and Ron Horton; great-grandchildren Chloe, Jordan, Grayson, and Lawson; great-great-grandchildren Colton and Kahlani. She is also survived by her nephew Steve Loffler, his wife Alice, and their family; and her niece Cindy Stevens, her husband Wayne, and their family. Ernie was blessed with a large extended family whom she loved very much, including Amanda Smith, Jennifer Kresge, Marcia and Marijo Cosmas-Monnett, Elke Sobieraj, and Leann and Clint Horn.

A memorial service will be held October 10 at 3:00 PM at Emmanuel United Methodist Church (11416 Cedar Lane, Beltsville, MD).

Ernie found great joy and comfort in her church community, her family and friends, and the animals she shared her home with. Even on her last day, she asked about "her big dog" and wanted to see pictures of him. If you wish to honor her life, please consider a donation to Emmanual United Methodist Church or to a local animal welfare organization.

Donald Reed

It is with deep sorrow, sadness and profound respect that we announce the passing of Donald James Reed, "Don", who departed from this life on August 24, 2026 at Sterling Hillhaven Nursing Home in Adelphi, Maryland. He was 100 years old, born on July 5, 1926, in Dudley Pa. Don was.one of 13 children. Don served as a Staff Sergeant, Company, C, 1304th Engineering, Army of the United States during World War II for two years.

Don was the son of William Reed and Theresa Ritta McPhillips. who instilled in him the values of diligence, perseverance, commitment and strong work ethic throughout his life. He worked during his high school days and after World War II for the W.W. Reed Coal Company, a family-owned a coal mining business. Don's duties included pumping water and transporting the canaries to the mines in order to check the safety of the methane gases in the mines to determine the safety working environment for the coal miners.

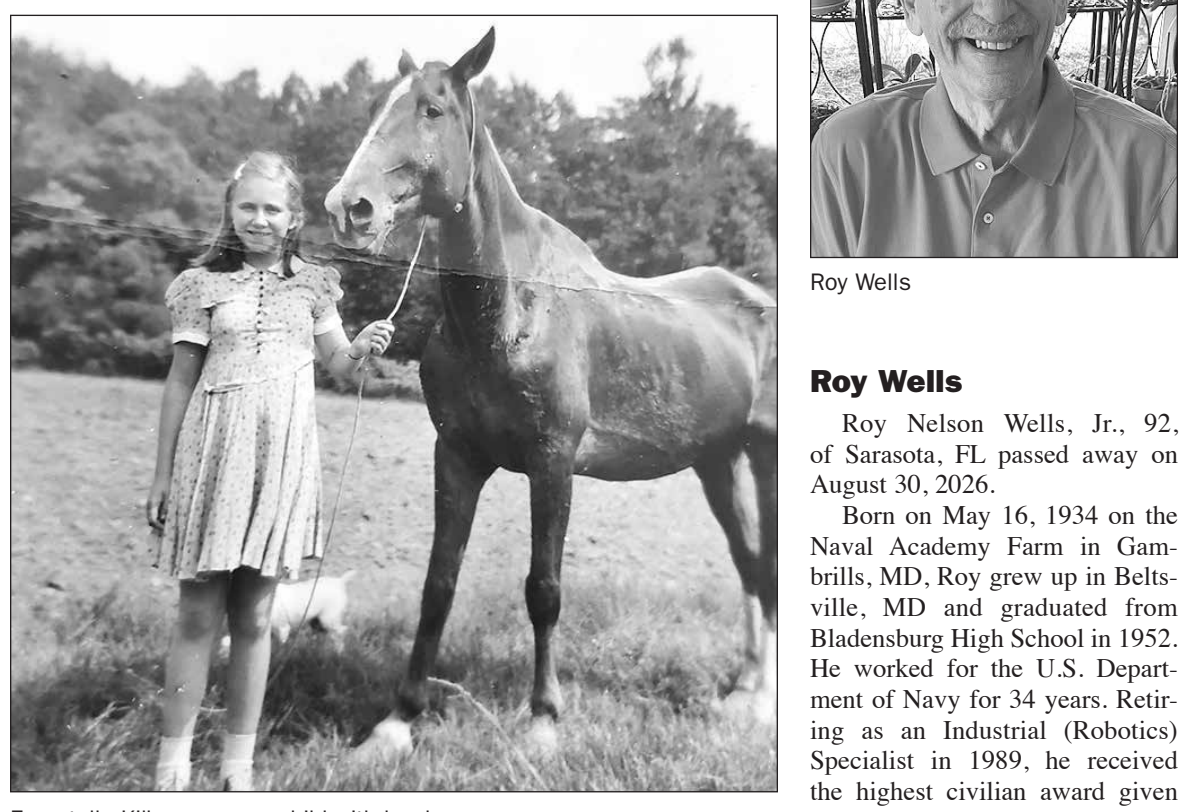
Before refrigeration was invented, Don also worked at his father's ice delivery business. Don's work responsibility included cutting blocks of ice from the lake to store the ice at the Dams Ice Plant. Don would later ship the ice to the neighboring towns, Altoona, Huntington and Pittsburgh Pa. by train, The Penn Railroad.

Later in life Donald and his Brother-in-Law, Joseph Scarcia established a successful concrete business together for over 50 years pouring concrete throughout the Washington, DC, Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania area.

Donald married his high school sweetheart, Mary Jean Scarcia, who he shared 60 years with and moved to Maryland and started his family. They had three sons James William, John Keith and Robert Patrick.

Don's legacy of love and wisdom leaves behind is carried forward by his sons, two daughters in laws and four grandchildren, Shannon, Cameron, Joseph and predeceased grandson Donald James Reed II, who brought immense joy into his life. His memory will also be cherished by several nieces, nephews, other relatives, countless friends and people who had the privilege of knowing him.

Donald developed a very close caring relationship with his next-door neighbor William Cenac, a very religious and dear friend.



Ernestelle Kilbourne as a child with her horse

Roy Wells

Roy Wells

Roy Nelson Wells, Jr., 92, of Sarasota, FL passed away on August 30, 2026.

Born on May 16, 1934 on the Naval Academy Farm in Gambrills, MD, Roy grew up in Beltsville, MD and graduated from Bladensburg High School in 1952. He worked for the U.S. Department of Navy for 34 years. Retiring as an Industrial (Robotics) Specialist in 1989, he received the highest civilian award given by the Navy, the Superior Civilian Service Award, for his innovative ideas and projects.

Roy was a faithful and lifelong member of the Methodist Church. He was a member and officer of the Beltsville Volunteer Fire Department Company 31 and proudly served in the National Guard. He was a 32° Free Mason, a member of Birmingham Lodge #188 since 1958, and a member of the Scottish Rite of Free Masonry since 1961.

After moving to Village Walk in 2004, Roy served on the Board of Directors for two years and his vision to provide geothermal systems to the community swimming pools has saved residents over $1.2 million to date. In 2008, Roy founded the Village Walk Republicans and served as its president until 2024.

Roy was known for his strong work ethic and volunteer community service. He spent decades actively involved in local politics and serving in leadership roles for multiple civic organizations and neighborhood groups by sharing his wisdom and experience to better his community. He enjoyed many hobbies including sports, dancing, collecting cars, investing in real estate, gardening, and traveling. Roy's motto was "Take time to smell the roses" which he indulged relaxing on many beaches over the years.

Roy is survived by Peggy (neé Forrester), his wife of 64 years, his daughters Barbara Bittner (Jerry) and Michele Kauffman (Jeff), three granddaughters, seven great-grandchildren, and six great-great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Roy N. Wells, Sr. and Ida V. Wells, and his sister Ida "Sis" Stinchcomb. He leaves behind a legacy of love and countless cherished memories that will remain with all who loved him.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Saturday, October 10 at 11:00 AM at St. John's Methodist Church, 6611 Proctor Road, Sarasota, FL with reception to follow. In lieu of flowers, kindly make donations to the American Diabetes Association or a favorite charity.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

continued from page 1

out of every room. Practice it with your family at least twice a year.

- **Use electricity safely:** Check cords for cracks or fraying and never run cords under rugs. Avoid overloading outlets or plugging multiple cords into one receptacle.
- **Practice candle safety:** Keep candles at least 12 inches away from items that burn. Blow them out before leaving the room or going to bed.
- **Secure matches and lighters:** Store matches and lighters up high and out-of-reach of children, preferably in a locked cabinet.
- **Maintain heating equipment:** Have your chimney, furnace, and heating appliances inspected and cleaned by a professional once a year.
- **Know what to do if clothes catch fire:** Remember to stop, drop, and roll to smother the flames if your clothing catches fire.
- **Get out and stay out:** If a fire occurs, get out immediately, never go back inside for anyone or anything, and call for help from a safe location.

Get more guidelines from the American Red Cross or the National Fire Protection Association.

Fire Safety Tips for Lithium Batteries:

On a flight? Keep it in sight. When on a plane, keep devices where you can see them while charging. Do not charge e-cigarettes or vapes on the plane. Tell a flight attendant if you notice a problem with your device. For tools and rides, charge outside. Charge large items like e-bikes, scooters, and power tools outside when possible. Do not block exits when charging. Cheap charger? Don't chance it. Use the cord and charger that came with your device or one approved by the manufacturer. Soft surface? Hard pass. Charge on a hard, flat surface like a table, desk, or bare floor. Fully charged? Time to unplug. Unplug your device when it is fully charged. Feels hot? Stop using it. Stop using your device if it feels very hot, starts to swell, smells strange, leaks, smokes, or makes popping or hissing sounds.

Love, Marriage, and Money in British Colonial Maryland

By Mark Tomassoni

Mr. Tomassoni is an amateur historian and science writer based in the Montpelier section of Laurel, mtomassoni770@gmail.com

Was there such a thing as marrying for love in British Colonial Maryland? Most observers would say, "sort-of" since property, political influence, family status, and religion all entered the equation. Imagine being a young woman or man living in the Laurel area 250 years ago (1776). You meet someone, fall in love, and want to marry. Today, that decision would be yours. In colonial Maryland, it could involve your parents, your church, the courts, and perhaps most importantly your family's property.

Two major religious groups were based in Colonial British Maryland, like the strong religious segregation in the United Kingdom:

Protestants. Anglicans (Church of England), Quakers, and French Huguenots. **Families**. Snowden, Contee, Dorsey, Duvall, Dulany and Ridgely (Baltimore County), Ogle, Bowie, Brooke, Tasker, Worthington, Hammond, Ridout, Goldborough.

Catholics. Families. Carroll, Contee, Darnall, Digges, Lee, Brent, Sewall, Rozier, Neale, Fenwick, Boarman, Gardiner, Plowden, Semmes.

Religious Divisions. While Maryland Protestants and Catholics were economically, politically, and socially interconnected, they were largely religiously divided. The very families whose wealth, land, business, and political interests pushed them together, remained distinctly separated through their religious traditions. Questions were continually asked in the event of potential marriage: Was the marriage between two persons of the same faith? If not, how would they raise their children? Who would inherit what? Would marriage improve or damage political prospects? Could a Catholic heir be excluded from public office?

Marriage	Date	Religion	Why it matters
Benjamin Young & Ann Rozer	1730	Protestant + Catholic	Religious boundaries did not always prevent marriage among Maryland's elite. Ann's connection to the Carroll family placed marriage within powerful Catholic social network. Young, as a Protestant, served on Maryland Council, an institution dominated by the Protestant politicians.
Charles Carroll ***of Annapolis*** & Elizabeth Brooke	1757	Catholic + Catholic	Two Catholics marrying within Maryland's interconnected Catholic landed elite
Charles Carroll ***of Carrollton*** & Mary Darnall	1768	Catholic + Catholic	Carroll married his first cousin linking two of the wealthiest Catholic families when Maryland Catholics faced political and legal attacks. Helped preserve religion, property, wealth, family alliance, and social networks. Reinforced broader Catholic network with Digges, Brentt, and Neal families.
Benjamin Ogle & Henrietta Margaret Hill	1770	Anglican + Anglican	Two Protestant/Anglican marrying. Reinforced Protestant relationships with Tasker, Dorsey, others

For Maryland's wealthy plantation and iron production families, marriage could be both a personal relationship and a business decision. A well-chosen husband or wife might bring land, money, political influence, business connections, and valuable ties to another prominent family. Among the Chesapeake gentry, parents often tried to influence whom their children married, while young people increasingly sought affection and companionship as well.

Protestant Revolution of 1689. In 1689, Maryland's Protestant majority overthrew the Catholic proprietary government of the Calvert family in the Protestant Revolution of 1689. The immediate catalyst came from England. The Glorious Revolution of 1688 removed the Catholic King James II and installed the Protestant monarchs, William III and Mary II. Maryland's Catholic proprietor, Charles Calvert, Lord Baltimore, suddenly was politically vulnerable.

In Maryland, John Coode, an Anglican planter and former clergyman, organized Protestant colonists into the Association in Arms for the Defense of the Protestant Religion. Claiming that Maryland's Catholic leaders might support James II and threatening rumors of Catholic and Native American attacks, Coode's force mobilized hundreds of armed men.

In July 1689, they marched on the proprietary government at St. Mary's City. The government had little military capacity to resist. Proprietary officials surrendered, and the Protestant Associators took control. The consequences were profound with Catholic Calvert proprietary rule immediately shifting to Protestant-controlled royal government.

In 1691, William and Mary formally made Maryland a royal colony. The Church of England became Maryland's established church in 1692, and Catholics subsequently faced significant political and legal disabilities leading to two broad overlapping elite networks. The colony's capital moved from heavily Catholic St. Mary's City to Annapolis in 1695, and the Church of England became Maryland's established church.

Ironically, Maryland, famous for its 1649 Act Concerning Religion, which protected many Christians from religious persecution, subsequently imposed substantial restrictions on Catholics. Catholics lost political power and eventually faced restrictions on voting, holding office, public worship and education. At one point, Charles Carroll of Carrollton seriously considered moving to New Orleans where French Catholics provided the religious freedom he so desperately wanted.

Religious Conversion. After 1689, Catholics lost many political rights and were barred from public office. Some members of wealthy Catholic families responded by converting to Anglicanism. Henry Darnall III, born into one of Maryland's most prominent Catholic families, became Anglican and subsequently held important government offices. Similar pressures affected other elite families whose wealth depended on land, law, and political influence. Conversion could therefore bring substantial advantages: eligibility for office, greater political influence, and easier participation in Maryland's Protestant-dominated governing class.

Government Regulation of Marriage. Marriage was also regulated by government. Between 1640 and 1776, Maryland enacted more than a **dozen laws governing marriage,** covering matters such as who could marry, what notices were requiring before a wedding, who could perform ceremonies, family relationships, race, and recording marriages.

This was particularly consequential for the wealthy colonists such as the Carrolls despite British Government restrictions on Catholics. Carroll married Mary "Molly" Darnall who also came from a prominent Catholic Maryland family. Their marriage helped preserve both Catholic family traditions and connections within Maryland's Catholic landed elite.

The Snowdens, by contrast, belonged to Maryland's Protestant/Quaker world. Richard Snowden and his family were associated with the Society of Friends, and their marriage connections included other families within the broader Protestant/Quaker commercial and landowning community.

Even as these families occupied the same interconnected world of land, agriculture, commerce, political influence and enslaved labor, religion could divide their social and marriage networks even while geography and business brought those networks together.

Narrowing Pool and Inter-faith Marriage. Catholic canon law placed restrictions on marriages between Catholics and non-Catholics, although dispensations could allow Catholic marriages with non-Catholics. Protestants likewise often preferred marriages within their own denominations. Consequently, religion helped narrow the pool of socially acceptable spouses.

This became particularly important among Maryland's elite because the potential marriage pool was already small. A suitable spouse ideally needed the right social standing, property, family reputation, and religion. That helps explain why the same family names repeatedly appear in genealogies and why ***cousin marriages were not particularly surprising***. Historian Robert Brugger's, "Maryland: A Middle Temperament" reports that perhaps half of Eastern Shore landowners were linked by marriage or blood relationship. Some surviving genealogies document marriages between first cousins.

Religion and Politics. After 1689, being Protestant gave Marylanders advantages that Catholics did not enjoy. Catholics were eventually prohibited from voting and holding public office during portions of the colonial period. A family's religious identity therefore affected much more than Sunday worship.

A mixed marriage potentially introduced a difficult choice: Does the Catholic spouse remain Catholic? Do the children become Protestant? And could conversion open doors to political office and influence?

In Sickness and in Health? So, four factors directly influenced marriage in British Colonial Maryland:

Love. Do the couple want to marry?

Money. What land, inheritance or wealth comes with marriage?

Family. Does marriage strengthen the family's social network?

Religion. Is the spouse Catholic or Protestant, and what faith will the children follow?

Compelling Paradox. Maryland was founded partly as a refuge where Catholics could live alongside Protestants. The Maryland elite were **economically and socially interconnected yet religiously divided.** The very families whose wealth, land, business and political interests pushed them together remained largely separated through religion. This helps explain the extraordinary web of family relationships that developed among Maryland's colonial elite.

Love could win out over religious affiliation. But Mom and Dad had a strong vote in how young couples proceeded. Marriage was a "social sport" with more at stake then love. Parents and grandparents each had votes, and marriage decisions were based on wealth, business, and politics as much as love. Same land, different people, different ways of life.

Suduko Solution from page 7

7	5	9	8	1	2	4	3	6
4	3	1	7	9	6	8	2	5
8	2	6	3	4	5	9	7	1
6	4	2	5	3	9	1	8	7
5	8	3	1	7	4	6	9	2
9	1	7	2	6	8	5	4	3
1	9	4	6	2	3	7	5	8
2	7	8	4	5	1	3	6	9
3	6	5	9	8	7	2	1	4

Stopping Phone SPAM

SPAM, we know them as the messages received over our phones, through our emails, via text messages, and social networks. Some of these are scams attempting to steal money or personal information from innocent people or businesses.



Telephone SPAM

Last month I conducted a telephone experiment. I forwarded my primary house phone to a different number that went directly to a voice mail account. All incoming phone numbers were also collected and saved. In the first day I received 60 voicemails. Most of these were SPAM with no response. These calls were mostly empty, blank, they varied between two and three seconds to 10, 32 and 52 seconds in duration. I listened to each one and marked each as SPAM, blocking the numbers, preventing them from being called again. There were only two legitimate calls, I saved those messages and returned the calls the next morning.

Over the past month I have continued this experiment with similar results. I now have a list of over 400 spam callers. My home phone service is provided by Verizon Fios who also provides a SPAM blocking through a company called Nomorobo. This is supposed to block SPAM calls coming to your home phones. So far this hasn't been effective for me. I am creating a new experiment where I will submit all 400 of these phone numbers to Nomorobo to see if any of them get blocked.

I also called each of the 60 numbers that called me during the first experiment. It turned out most of them were out of service. Incoming calls to my phone should not have been enabled by any of the North American Phone services.

Since 2021 the FCC has required all major phone services to use a suite of protocols known as SHAKEN/STIR. STIR stands for Secure Telephone Identity Revisited and it supports Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) used for controlling routes for Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) communications. STIR provides information to the receiver for the receiver to confirm the caller.

The SHAKEN system (**S**ignature-based **H**andling of **A**sserted information using to**KEN**s) is used for landlines, like your home phone and mobile phone channels. Unfortunately, the SHAKEN system was thought of as a means of verifying Caller ID but what it actually does is verify the original call provider and not the caller.

Stopping the calls

So, you may be wondering how I set this up. It turns out there are several ways that can work. I think the simplest way is to tell Verizon Fios to forward all calls to Voicemail. Most hangups won't even show up. You can review the remaining calls quickly, deleting the ones that are SPAM. Another means I have used successfully is to forward all calls. I sent all of my calls to a Google Voice number. Then I checked each call. Calls shorter than 4 seconds I immediately delete or I tell Google to mark it as spam. Longer calls I sample to see if I care about the message. Clearly undesirable messages I mark as spam. Any legitimate messages I return a call to the caller that left the voicemail.

Mobile Phone Call SPAM

Mobile phones are different than the home line. The ability to block SPAM may come from the service provider or from the operating system. Google will even use an AI system to converse with an unrecognized caller and send the information to the recipient. I have even forwarded my home phone to my mobile phone and Google has blocked all of the SPAM phone calls sent to my phone. They also show the calls that were SPAM or were blocked, so I could call them back if I wanted.

Apple also has built-in call filtering that recognizes many SPAM callers and blocks them. The primary service providers (AT&T, Verizon, and T-Mobile) all offer some form of call filtering. These may have extra costs depending on the provider.

Until Next Time

I plan to cover other SPAM sources and how to block in future columns. For example, to block text messages reply with STOP. This is great to know during election time to block the annoying political advertisements. I will also cover call blockers designed for the home phones and software add-ons for use with your mobile phones.



(c) koldo studio / iStock via Getty Images Plus

Tips to Ace Math Class This School Year

(StatePoint) Math is often the most challenging class in a student's course load. But it doesn't have to be. Follow these tips to prevent feeling frazzled and overwhelmed this school year:

Find study buddies

Staying on top of your A-game can be as simple as making some friends in your class. Find some study buddies to remain accountable and work through difficult problems together.

Check in with your teacher

If you are having trouble with any particular concept, don't be afraid to reach out to your teacher. Ask questions during class or request to see them before or after class for a little extra support.

Equip yourself to succeed

A well-designed scientific calculator can simplify learning and make test days less stressful. The fx-300ES Plus B 2nd Edition from Casio is affordable, user-friendly and a good choice for everyday math needs. Its Natural Textbook Display shows results and formulas as they typically appear in textbooks, making it easier to read and understand complex

MATH CLASS
continues on page 14

America's First-Time Home Buyers Feel Ready. The Facts Say Otherwise

(StatePoint) A new homebuying quiz reveals a stark disconnect: most aspiring first-time buyers believe they're ready to buy a home, but fundamental knowledge gaps suggest otherwise.



(c) Jacob Wackerhausen / iStock via Getty Images Plus

Consider a typical would-be buyer. She's saved for years, tracks listings daily, knows her preferred neighborhoods, and has consumed endless checklists and videos about buying a home. She feels prepared.

Then she takes a 12-question homebuying quiz and gets only three answers right.

Her experience is far from unique. A recent Wells Fargo survey conducted by Ipsos found that nearly 70% of prospective first-time homebuyers believe they understand the process. Yet roughly three-quarters couldn't correctly answer even half the questions. Out of more than 2,000 respondents, only one answered all 12 correctly.

The results point to a troubling confidence gap where mistakes can be especially costly. Buying a home is a long-term financial commitment that shapes a household's future for decades. Overestimating knowledge increases the risk of delays, higher costs, and unnecessary financial strain.

The quiz was conducted March 5–13, 2026, testing foundational concepts affecting affordability and competitiveness, such as when to apply for a mortgage, how closing costs work, down payment strategies, and structuring offers. The findings suggest many first-time buyers lack understanding of the most consequential steps.

Only 25% knew the correct timing to apply for a mortgage, an error that can derail transactions before the home search begins. Nearly 90% misunderstood closing costs, leaving buyers vulnerable to large, last-minute expenses that could reach tens of thousands of dollars. More than 75% believed a larger down payment is always better, overlooking strategies that could preserve savings or improve financial flexibility.

Even more striking, 88% were unclear about the very first steps in the process. Four in five

HOME BUYERS
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OCTOBER 2026

Calendar of Events

AREA EVENTS

COLLEGE PARK DAY

Sat., Oct. 3 from 12 noon to 6 p.m. The annual College Park Day festival will take place at the College Park Aviation Museum and Airport, located at 1985 Corporal Frank Scott Drive, College Park. There will be three stages of live music and performances, 17+ food & drink vendors, artist alley, activities and games for all ages, fun races, helicopter and plane fly-in, games, free museum entry, and more! Free event with free nearby parking, metro access, bicycle racks, and nearby shuttle service. Details at www.collegeparkday.org.

VICTORIA FALLS EVENTS

Address: at 13701 Belle Chasse Blvd., Laurel, MD 20707.

YARD & GARAGE SALE
Sat., Oct. 3 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. There is no rain date. This event will be held at the main address and various garage locations within the community. Only residents can sell items, but it is open to the public for purchases.

COMMUNITY CRAFT FAIR
Two dates: Sat., Oct. 10 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Sun., Oct. 11 from 12 noon to 3:30 p.m. Over 20 vendors will be displaying their crafts. It is open to the public and there is no admission fee.

COLLEGE PARK AVIATION MUSEUM

Address: 1985 Corporal Frank Scott Dr., College Park, MD 20740. Phone: 301.864.6029. Fax: 301.927.6472. E-mail: collegeparkaviation@pgparks.com. Regular hours of operation: Open Tuesday – Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Closed Mondays and some holidays (double-check with the museum regarding the specific holidays). Special events may have different costs and hours of operation. General admission: Adults/$5; Seniors/$4; Children and Students with ID/$2 (1-year-old and under, free). The museum exhibit area highlights 10 unique aircraft and objects relating the history of early aviation at the College Park Airport. For additional events see www.pgparks.com/facilities/college-park-aviation-museum.

CUB CORNER
Two dates: Sat., Oct. 17 and Sun., Oct. 18 from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. each day. Join us for a reading of ***Spider in a Glider*** by Lesley Sims. Dive into the enchanting story, then let imaginations soar as guests craft adorable pompom spiders and help them take flight on their own paper airplane gliders. This program is recommended for children ages 3 – 6. Cost: FREE. No registration required; includes museum admission.

GREENBELT PARK EVENTS

Address: 6565 Greenbelt Rd., Greenbelt, MD 20770.

CAMPFIRE PROGRAM: WELCOME TO WASHINGTON!
Every Friday night through Fri., Nov. 13. Location: Campfire Circle in Loop B. Program times typically begin in the evening around 6:30 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. Join Greenbelt Park staff for a weekly program focused on how to visit Washington, DC and the special events happening throughout the city. Cost: Free to attend.

WHY DO LEAVES CHANGE COLOR?
Sat., Oct. 3 at 6:30 p.m. Location: Campfire Circle in Loop B. The question of why do trees change color is as old as time itself. Join Ranger James from Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens as he discusses the importance for why our forest landscape changes and evolves every year. The forest of Greenbelt Park comes alive with magnificent colors.

THE ONE-MAN IRISH BAND CONCERT
Sat., Oct. 10 at 6:30 p.m. The One-Man Irish Band—Brandon Kennedy—returns for festive fall concert of Irish music and dancing! This program promises to be fun and engaging as Brandon tells stories about the music and provides a wonderful experience for all ages!

KATY GAUGHAN & THE DRUM CIRCLE
Sat., Oct. 17 at 6:30 p.m. Come and join Katy Gaughan who brings her energetic and powerful performance of the Drum Circle. Be regaled with stories of local lore and cryptids. Bring your own drum or one will be provided for you!

CRYPTIDS OF MARYLAND
Sat., Oct. 24 at 6:30 p.m. Location: Campfire Circle in Loop B. Beware the bleat of the Goat! The Goatman has been sighted in and around Greenbelt Park and Beltsville! Join the Rangers as we learn about the things that go bump in the night.

NATIONAL WILDLIFE VISITOR CENTER

10901 Scarlet Tanager Loop, Laurel, MD 20708. 301-497-5772. Entrance from Powder Mill Rd. between the Baltimore-Washington Pkwy. and Rt. 197. Hours: Grounds open sunrise–sunset daily; Tuesdays until 4 p.m. Visitor building open Wed.–Sat., 10 a.m.–4 p.m., except federal holidays. Admission, parking, exhibits, and programs are free. Enjoy miles of walking trails, birdwatching, and photography. Dogs must be leashed (6-ft. maximum). Hours may change due to weather. Check the website or call for October events and updates.

STORY TRAIL
Daily, from sunrise to sunset (except Tuesdays, only until 4 p.m.). All Ages. Explore a seasonal children's book, displayed page-by-page in weather-protected, child-height boxes outdoors along the paved Loop Trail that are near the outdoor bathrooms.

SCHOOLS AND YOUTH GROUPS
Invitation to enjoy educational species exhibits, the grounds and trails, bird blind, and pollinator gardens. There is a patio for picnics. Send your questions to Jason at michael_cangelosi@fws.gov.

AGENTS OF DISCOVERY
Sunrise to sunset daily, except only until 4 p.m. on Tuesdays. All ages. This is an outdoor self-guided nature-challenge game on the grounds. Download free phone app at home first. Complete challenges and earn a patch. Play: https://fws.gov/media/agents-discovery-patuxent-research-refuge.

KIDS DISCOVERY CENTER
10 a.m. to 12 noon (35-minute time slots, on the hour). Ages 3 – 10, with an adult. Crafts, puzzles, games, nature exploration. Registration is strongly recommended: Call 301.497.5772 during regular business hours. For large groups please contact michael_cangelosi@fws.gov.

MONARCH MAGIC CENTER
Open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. when the Visitor Center is open. The monarch butterfly season is here! All ages. This is a fun and educational exhibit. See the various stages of this fascinating insect's life cycle in person! You can also see the monarch butterfly life cycle video. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, call 301.497.5772 when the Visitor Center is open and sign up for a Butterfly Team overview presentation.

***WINGSPAN* GAME DAY**
Two dates: **Fri., Oct. 9** and **Sat., Oct. 24** from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day. Ages 12+. No experience needed. Play the award-winning board game and learn more about birds! Use our game or bring yours and sign in at the Front Desk to play.

HOLLINGSWORTH ART GALLERY
Free. All ages. Open when the building is open. The art gallery is next to the bookstore.
• **October artist**: Bird photographer Wade Stephen presents his stunning wild bird photographs, including some rare or uncommon species.

FAMILY FUN
This educational exhibit is open to individual study from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wed. – Sat. All ages.
• **Theme for autumn:** Dirt—Dig it! Explore through hands-on activities, games and crafts for all ages. This is a drop-in program: come when you wish and leave when you're ready.

LAUREL–BELTSVILLE SENIOR ACTIVITY CENTER

7120 Contee Rd., Laurel, MD 20707 | Phone: 301-206-3350 | Fax: 301-206-3387 | MD Relay: 711. Membership is free for Beltsville residents age 60+. Hours: Mon.–Thur., 8 a.m.–8 p.m.; Fri., 8 a.m.–5 p.m.; Sat., 8 a.m.–2 p.m. Closed Sundays and most major holidays. Masks are optional.

LAUREL SENIOR FRIENDSHIP CLUB (LSFC)
October meeting: Wed., Oct. 7 at 10:30 a.m. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month. For information, call Pary Harris at 240-893-6738. Office hours: Mon.–Fri., 10 a.m.–12:30 p.m. | 301-206-3380. Lunch reservations should be made two weeks in advance.
- Bingo: Tuesdays at noon; doors open at 11 a.m. No admission fee; fee for cards. Call 240-788-2290 for updates.
- 2026 Trips: Register early—many trips sell out.

BELTSVILLE EVENTS

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL LIBRARY (NAL)

Address: 10301 Baltimore Ave. in Beltsville. Main phone number: 301.504.5755. We continue to serve our customers remotely during regular business hours. Website: https://www.nal.usda.gov/; online information products are always available. NAL is on X at https://x.com/National_Ag_Lib. The National Agricultural Library (NAL) is one of five national libraries of the United States. It houses one of the world's largest collections devoted to agriculture and its related sciences. See nutrition information for every stage of life at https://www.nutrition.gov/. Get *MyPlate* nutrition information for babies and toddlers via the free Amazon Alexa app. To learn more, visit www.myplate.gov/myplateassistant.

YOUNG AT HEART CLUB

The October meeting will take place **Thur., Oct. 15** at 10:30 a.m. Address: the Beltsville Community Center, 3900 Sellman Rd., Beltsville. The meeting is for residents who are 55 years of age and older. We'll have our usual light refreshments and 50/50 chance. The Beltsville Young at Heart Club meets on the third Thursday of each month (weather permitting) and is for residents who are 55 years of age and older. Contact Lois at 301.498.9736 for more information.

BELTSVILLE LIBRARY EVENTS

4319 Sellman Rd., Beltsville | 301-937-0294 |TTY: 301-808-2061 | Ask a Librarian: 240-455-5451
Closed Oct. 5 for PGCMLS Staff Day and Oct. 11–12 for the Native Americans holiday.
Hours: Mon., Thur. & Fri., 10 a.m.–6 p.m.; Tue. & Wed., noon–8 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; Sun., 1–5 p.m. Closed most major holidays.

PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

READY 2 READ STORYTIME
Two Mondays: Oct. 19 and 26 at 10:30 a.m. each day. Ages 2 – 3. Bring your toddler for stories, songs, and fingerplays that spark imagination and encourage a love of reading.

SPANISH–ENGLISH READY 2 READ STORYTIME
Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. each day. Ages 3 – 5.

READY 2 READ ART: HANDPRINT CACTI
Thur., Oct. 1 from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Ages 3 – 5. Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month with fun stories themed around a craft of cacti! After the stories, unleash creativity by crafting a themed masterpiece. It's a delightful way for little ones to appreciate art while having a blast! All supplies will be provided and are limited, please register beforehand.

CREATE: VOLADORES DE PAPANTLA
Tue., Oct. 6 from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month by making your own craft based around *Los Voladores de Papantla* inspired by the indigenous Totonac ritual dance from Veracruz, Mexico.

TAIL WAGGIN' TUTORS
Two dates: Sat., Oct. 10 and Fri., Oct. 16 from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. each day. Boost your child's confidence by reading to friendly, trained therapy dogs. Whether they bring a favorite book or choose one from the library, each child gets 10 to 15 minutes of one-on-one reading time with a furry friend.

MOVIE AND A CRAFT
Tue., Oct. 13 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. See ***The Emperor's New Groove*** (free; rated G). Relax, make a craft, and watch the film on the big screen with others in the community.

KIDS CREATE: MINI PIÑATAS
Thur., Oct. 15 from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. Have fun making art and crafts while learning new skills. With easy-to-follow steps, kids will create their own unique piñatas to take home. Supplies provided.

PROGRAM FOR TEENS

MOVIE AND A CRAFT
Tue., Oct. 27 from 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Enjoy a free screening of ***Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*** (PG) at the library. Relax and watch the film on the big screen with others in the community or do a fun craft.

PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS

PUBLIC SPEAKING WORKSHOP
Wed., Oct. 7 from 5:45 p.m. to 7:45 p.m. Presented by Toastmasters International. Enhance your public speaking and presentation skills to communicate with confidence and professionalism. We will cover speech organization, effective speaking techniques, audience engagement, and presentation delivery. Participants will develop and deliver their own speeches, practice voice, pacing, and nonverbal communication skills, and learn strategies for connecting with an audience.

ENGLISH CONVERSATION CLUB
Wednesdays, Oct. 7, 14, and 21 from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. each day. Learning to

CALENDAR
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USPS Operation Santa Opens for the 2026 Holiday Season

It may only be September, but the holiday season is already underway at the North Pole—or at least at the United States Postal Service.

USPS Operation Santa is now accepting letters for its 2026 holiday season, giving children and families across the country an opportunity to send their holiday wishes to Santa while allowing generous individuals and groups to help make some of those wishes come true.

The program works by collecting letters addressed to Santa and making eligible letters available for adoption, with personal identifying information removed. Beginning November 16, registered participants can browse letters online, select one or more to adopt and purchase gifts for the letter writers. Gifts can be purchased through the program's online Santa's Gift Shoppe or independently and shipped through participating USPS locations.

How to Write to Santa

Letters should be addressed to:
Santa
123 Elf Road
North Pole, 88888

Writers should include their full name and return address, including an apartment number when applicable, and place a First-Class stamp on the envelope. USPS recommends that letters be written legibly and that gift requests be specific and listed in order of preference.

Families may send several letters together in one envelope, using additional postage if necessary. Letters submitted by organizations or classrooms should each be mailed separately in a standard letter-size envelope with a First-Class stamp and the child's holiday return address. USPS also asks writers to keep letters flat and avoid glitter or glued-on decorations that could interfere with processing.

The deadline to mail letters for the 2026 program is **December 5**. Mailing a letter does not guarantee that it will be posted for adoption, selected by an adopter or result in a gift.

Want to Be One of Santa's Helpers?

Those who would rather give than write can participate as letter adopters. Registration for adopters opens **November 2**, with letter adoption beginning **November 16**.

Individuals can adopt a single letter, an entire family or work together as a team to fulfill holiday wishes. The final day to adopt a letter is **December 12**, which is also USPS's recommended shipping date for gifts expected to arrive before Christmas.

USPS Operation Santa reminds participants that adopters are not required to fulfill expensive requests. Even when a child's complete wish list cannot be provided, participants can still choose meaningful gifts within their own budgets.

For generations, letters to Santa have been part of the excitement of the holiday season. Operation Santa turns those letters into an opportunity for people across the country to share some holiday cheer with families they may never meet.

Letters are being accepted now, so children hoping to get their wishes to the North Pole can start writing.

For complete instructions, important dates and information about adopting a letter, visit https://www.uspsoperationsanta.com/.

CALENDAR

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speak English? Enhance your skills in a relaxed and welcoming environment! Join us to practice conversation, build confidence, and connect with others who share your interest in English. Once registered you will receive a reminder email.

LEARN AND EARN: CAREER TRAINING & CERTIFICATIONS FOR TODAY'S WORKFORCE
Wed., Oct. 14 from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Explore a world of new skills for the workplace and beyond. Learn about continuing education programs at Prince George's Community College, including noncredit courses, career training, and certifications. Discover the Workforce Development Sequence Scholarship for eligible students pursuing employment, licensure, or skill advancement.

Club News

Women's Community Club of Beltsville Holiday Donation Drive

Hello Beltsville Community!

We are coordinating our annual holiday food and gift programs, as well as fundraising for our other important projects. We are asking our Beltsville community of businesses, schools, service organizations, social clubs, churches and individuals to help us further help our fellow community members and provide food and gifts to those in need for the holidays. We hope you can assist us in these worthwhile endeavors.

Throughout the year, we also funded scholarships, Adopt-A-Road and Adopt-A-Creek, beautification projects and partnerships with other Beltsville organizations.

For Thanksgiving, we provide a Thanksgiving meal, in the form of a grocery store gift card. For Christmas, we provide presents for children (new toys and new clothes). We do also accept monetary contributions and store gift cards. You or your organization are also welcome to sponsor a child or a family. As a certified 501c3 organization, all contributions are tax deductible. Donations can be sent via Paypal (womensclubbeltsville@gmail.com) or mailed to:

Women's Community Club of Beltsville
P. O. Box 1607 Beltsville, Maryland 20704-1607

The deadline for Thanksgiving donations is Friday November 21st, 2025. The deadline for Christmas donations is Friday December 12th, 2025.

For any questions, please feel free to contact Karen Coakley at 301-741-7672 or at the email address listed above. Thank you for helping us spread a little sunshine through the holidays and the rest of the year!

Women's Club of Beltsville https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100068832288067

Tips to Lower Your Blood Pressure As You Age

(StatePoint) As you age, there's a pretty good chance you'll eventually develop high blood pressure, also known as hypertension. In fact, according to one study, about 60% of people get hypertension by the time they reach age 60.

Fortunately, high blood pressure is highly treatable and manageable through a combination of lifestyle changes and, when necessary, medication. Unfortunately, it often appears without symptoms, putting people at risk of stroke, heart failure, kidney disease, and death, without them even knowing it.



(c) JLco - Julia Amaral / iStock via Getty Images Plus

"High blood pressure is sometimes called the silent killer," said Dr. Jennifer Ziemianin, chief medical officer for HealthSpring. "But we're not going to be quiet about

BLOOD PRESSURE
continues on page 14

IF IT'S REAL ESTATE, IT'S ROBERTA!!

TAYLOR PROPERTIES
175 Admiral Cochrane Dr. Suite 112 Annapolis, MD 21401

ROBERTA
301-937-3124
Experienced, Reputable • Distinguished Sales Club
Full time professional • CRS, GRI, SFR



Associate Broker

E-mail: robertayaklich@gmail.com • Office: 301-970-2447

THE REAL ESTATE MARKET IN PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY IS ACTIVE AND STRONG. HOMES THAT ARE PRICED RIGHT ARE SELLING QUICKLY. IN TIMES LIKE THIS, THE OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE GENERATIONAL WEALTH IS STILL VIABLE. TALK TO ROBERTA WITH YOUR QUESTIONS, CONCERNS, AND YOUR SITUATION !!!

IF IT'S REAL ESTATE, IT'S ROBERTA !!!

REAL ESTATE MARKET IS STRONG IN PRINCE GEORGE and MONTGOMERY COUNTIES !!!

BLOOD PRESSURE

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it. We want older adults to know about the risks and take action to manage hypertension."

The first step is to get your blood pressure checked. The American Heart Association recommends adults get their blood pressure checked at least once a year. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, high blood pressure is an upper reading of 130 or above or a lower reading of 80 or above.

If your blood pressure is high, you should check it regularly using an automatic, upper arm cuff-style monitor. These monitors are widely available, affordable and easy to use. You can ask your doctor for tips if needed.

Although hypertension generally can't be cured, it can be effectively managed through a variety of measures, Ziemianin said, including the following:

Exercise. Moderate activity, such as brisk walking or swimming, can lower high blood pressure. Always talk with your doctor before starting an exercise plan. If you belong to a Medicare Advantage (MA) plan, you may have access to a fitness program at no extra cost to you.

Eat a heart-healthy diet. Having a higher body mass index is a risk factor for hypertension. That's why it's important to eat a balanced diet, including vegetables, fruits, grains, protein, dairy and oils.

Cut down on salt. As you get older, the body becomes more sensitive to salt. Too much salt can increase your blood pressure. Limit the amount of salt in your diet by choosing low-sodium seasonings when preparing meals.

Drink less alcohol. Even moderate alcohol use can increase your blood pressure. The American Health Associations recommends no more than two drinks per day for men and one drink per day for women.

Quit smoking or don't start. Smoking increases your risk for high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, and other health problems. It's never too late to quit. If you have a Medicare plan, you have access to counseling services to help you quit. Additionally, a Medicare Part D plan may cover medications to help you stop smoking.

Manage stress. Stress can increase your blood pressure. Medicare and MA plans cover counseling services, including telehealth in some cases, to help you cope with stress.

Talk to your doctor about medication. There are several medications available to help lower your blood pressure. You may need to try several types or combinations before you find a plan that works for you. Once you find the right plan, always take your medication as prescribed. If cost is an issue, an MA plan with drug coverage, or a standalone drug plan, helps pay for most blood pressure medications.

For more information about Medicare and MA benefits that can help you lower your blood pressure, visit https://www.healthspring.com.

"Lowering blood pressure, even a small amount, can make a big difference," Ziemianin said. "That's why it's so critical for you to identify high blood pressure early and then work very closely with your primary care physician to develop a plan for managing your hypertension so you can live a longer, healthier life."

Beltsville News CHURCH DIRECTORY

EMMANUEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
BELTSVILLE, MD

ALL ARE WELCOME HERE!
Emmanuel United Methodist Church
Sunday Morning Worship 10:00 AM
11416 Cedar Lane, Beltsville, MD 20705

Join us for meaningful worship, inspiring music, and a warm, welcoming community.

Can't attend in person? Watch our live broadcast at www.eumcbeltsville.com

"For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them"

Upcoming Events

October 3 & 4: Auditions for Babes in Toyland
October 4: 10:00 AM Blessing of the Animals Service! Bring your pets to church!
October 11: 11:00 AM Monthly Potluck following Service
October 17: 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM Community Yard Sale

Rev. Dr. Andrea Middleton King, Pastor
(301)937-7114 † office@eumcbeltsville.com
www.eumcbeltsville.com
Find us on Facebook
https://www.facebook.com/groups/EUMCBeltsville
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Holy Apostles Orthodox Church
Come and see.

A Mission Parish of the
Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia
Located in Twin Chimneys Office Park
10760 Baltimore Ave., Beltsville, MD
Evening Vigil: Sat. 5:00 PM
Hours & Divine Liturgy: Sun. 9:40 AM
All Services in English
Fr. Christopher Johnson, Rector
443-472-0512
www.holyapostlesorthodoxchurch.org

Abiding Presence Lutheran Church
10774 Rhode Island Avenue
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Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.
Rev. Jongkil Na
www.APLChurch.org

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St. John's Episcopal/Anglican Church

11040 Baltimore Avenue Beltsville, MD 20704
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The Reverend Joseph M. Constant, Rector

Join us for In Person Worship every Sunday at 10 AM
Youth Sunday School 11:15 AM

To view services online:
Go to https://www.facebook.com/StJohnsZionParish/Live/

Other services online via Zoom: Wednesday Noonday;
Thursday Bible Study and Compline 7 PM via Zoom

Contact the Church office if you are interested in any of these resources

Our Mission: To Share God's love with everyone to bring hope and change lives.



IF YOU NEED HELP
WE ARE HERE!
Si necesitas ayuda, estamos aqui!
301-937-8119
www.baccmd.org

Beltsville Adventist Community Center

Struggling with job loss, to pay rent, to get food, or need emergency help? The Beltsville Adventist Community Center (BACC) exists to help those in the Beltsville Community and beyond take the next step toward financial independence.

FIND US at 4220 Ammendale Road, Beltsville MD 20705, located in the house behind the Beltsville SDA Church

BACC Services
- Job Counseling Assistance
- Rental & Utility Assistance (on a case by case basis)
- Food Supplement
- Professional Counseling

Food and financial assistance HOURS:
Tues and Wed 9 am to 2 pm.
Office calling HOURS:
Mon through Thurs
9 am to 4:30 pm

On Site Agent of Dept of Social Services (DSS)
- SAIL: Apply for services on-line
- Food Supplement (FS)
- Medical Assistance for Families & Children (FAC)
- Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP
- Recertify—(Redetermination) -Dropoff documents
- Other DSS Emergency Assistance

We are celebrating our tenth year of operation

MATH CLASS

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equations, and its clearly labeled buttons are intuitive to use. With a total of 262 functions, it's great for middle school, high school and college students across a variety of mathematical subjects, including algebra, trigonometry and statistics. Plus, it's reliable and convenient. With a single AAA battery, its efficient power supply lasts approximately three years, and its slim size easily fits into backpacks, bags and drawers.

Don't save math homework for last

If math is not your favorite subject, it can be tempting to put this homework off for last. Don't. To avoid burnout, consider approaching the subjects that are most difficult for you when you're still fresh.

Get help online

Free online resources can help you gain more practice and improve your math skills. For example, Casio's ClassPad.net offers a clean, versatile workspace for performing essential primary computational and trigonometric functions, visualizing expressions and analyzing functions. There are also many YouTube and TikTok content creators offering math tutorials and advice, along with demonstrations on how to make the most of specific calculator models.

With new study habits and the right tools, you can ensure math class is fun, engaging and never a source of stress.

Jason's Jive By Jason Inanga

Greetings. Something different this month. In June 2026, I got connected to the curator of a film festival in Dallas, the night before the event. I promised the gentleman that I would show up the next evening for his event. (I do photography and then create news magazines of the events, so that there is marketing material available for future years).

Anyway, in the process of taking photographs of people, I also networked, as I am involved in the Nollywood film industry (that is the name given to the Nigerian film industry, the third largest globally – behind Hollywood and Bollywood).

I connected with a film producer, Geoff Browne, and here is an account, from him, about his new film, Godpower, that is winning many awards on the International Film Festival Circuit. The film is set in Nigeria and is as real as it gets.

For those who are just getting to know you, please tell us what inspired the film Godpower? Hi! I'm Geoff Browne. It genuinely began with a T-shirt. I was in Lagos finishing another project when I noticed that my old The Endless Summer shirt had Nigeria printed on it. I had a day off, so I found a surf instructor named Godpower - GP - on Instagram and booked a lesson. He told me to meet him under a bridge, and before I knew it, we were on a boat heading to Tarkwa Bay.

During that first visit, GP told me he had learned to surf after seeing The Endless Summer as a child. There was something beautifully full-circle about that. But the real inspiration was GP himself - his warmth, determination and the responsibility he carries as a father and provider. He welcomed me into his family and community, and the more time we spent together, the more I saw the possibility of telling an intimate story about survival, fatherhood and the moral choices people face when money is tight.

GP and I developed the story together from his life, real events and the world around him. It is a narrative film, so like all storytellers, we took some creative licence. The goal was to make something authentic and entertaining at the same time. I went home, wrote the screenplay and returned several months later with one camera and no crew.

Although I wrote and directed the film, it came from GP's world and was made with the people of Tarkwa Bay. GP played the lead, and his son, Isaac Humphrey - an incredible surfer himself - also acted in the film. I showed up alone, but I certainly didn't make it alone.

What's happened with Godpower since the film was made? One of the most incredible parts of the journey is that Bruce Brown Films - the creators of the original The Endless Summer, the film that inspired GP to surf in the first place - came on board as executive producers. It really brought the story full circle.

We recently screened at the Toronto International Nollywood Film Festival, and from September 18-24 we have an Academy-qualifying theatrical engagement at the Culver Theater in Los Angeles, which allows us to submit the film for Academy Awards consideration. From there, Godpower screens at the Del Mar Surf Film Festival, where we'll open for The Rebirth of The Endless Summer. We then screen at the Awaken Film Festival in Santa Monica on October 13, followed by Nollywood in Hollywood on October 15. And from November 1-7, the film comes home to Lagos for AFRIFF.

For a film that started with a surf lesson in Tarkwa Bay, it's been an incredible journey - and now we're taking that story into the feature film.

Is there any hope of this film being seen on a streaming platform? Yes, that is definitely the hope for the short. But we're already moving forward with the feature film. The screenplay is written, we're ready to make it, and we're launching a crowdfunding campaign toraise the financing.

We're returning to Tarkwa Bay to expand GP's story into a feature-length film inspired by his life, his family and the community. Once the feature is finished, the plan is to take it through the international film festival circuit, build an audience around it, and then find the right home for the film. We would love for both the short and eventually the feature to become widely available.

The response so far has shown us that the story travels. It is deeply specific to Tarkwa Bay, but the questions it asks about family, dignity and survival are universal.

Godpower Surf The story didn't end with the film. We created Godpower Surf, and the line is growing - T-shirts, hats, beanies, hoodies and more, all carrying Tarkwa Bay, Nigeria. We want to build an original surf brand from Tarkwa Bay and share this world with people who may not even know there's a surf culture in Lagos.

As the brand grows in the U.S., Europe and beyond, we hope someone sees "Tarkwa Bay, Nigeria" and asks, "Wait - there's surfing in Nigeria?" The more people wear it, the more we can share that story with the world - and maybe inspire people to come to Lagos and surf Tarkwa Bay for themselves.

Want to be part of the story? Visit GodpowerSurf.com and discover the collection. Wear Tarkwa Bay, Nigeria wherever you are - and when someone asks, "Surfing in Nigeria?" tell them: yes. Come to Lagos and see for yourself.

And if you're in Lagos, take it one step further - book a surf lesson with Godpower at GP Surf School @gpsurfing.

Classifieds • Call 301-257-3408

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VOLUNTEERING

CALLING ALL CAT LOVERS!

Do you enjoy cats and can spare one hour a week? Beltsville Community Cats would love for you to join our awesome Colony Support Team to help feed kitties and experience their gratitude firsthand! Contact 240-444-8353 or email hello@beltsvillecats.net 01/27

HELP WANTED

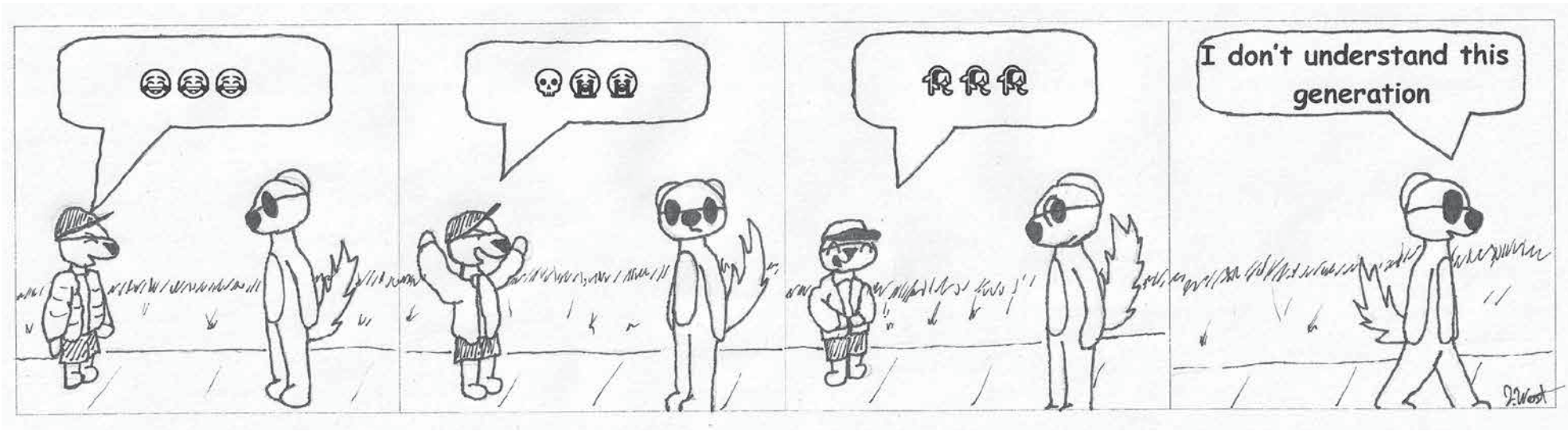
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The Beltsville News

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College Park, MD 20740
Contact Gary Kingery

Boosipherous Boonipherous Bojangles Barnaby III, a.k.a. BOO By Joseph West



Why Columbus Day Is Becoming Indigenous Peoples' Day

By Rick Bergmann

For generations, the second Monday in October was known simply as Columbus Day, a federal holiday recognizing Christopher Columbus and his 1492 voyage across the Atlantic. In recent decades, however, a growing number of states and communities have chosen to observe Indigenous Peoples' Day instead—or recognize both holidays.

The change has not been without controversy. Some Americans see replacing Columbus Day as another example of political correctness or an attempt to judge historical figures entirely by modern standards. For many Italian Americans in particular, Columbus Day also developed into an important celebration of Italian American heritage at a time when Italian immigrants faced discrimination in the United States. Those concerns are an important part of the discussion, and changing the holiday does not require dismissing the cultural significance it has held for generations.

Supporters of Indigenous Peoples' Day argue that the traditional Columbus Day story leaves out an equally important part of American history. Columbus was not the first person to reach the Americas, nor did he arrive in an uninhabited land. Indigenous civilizations had existed throughout the Western Hemisphere for thousands of years before Europeans arrived. European colonization that followed brought disease, warfare, enslavement, forced relocation and the loss of Indigenous lands and cultures on an enormous scale.

The Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian notes that focusing exclusively on Columbus can obscure both those consequences and the experiences of the people already living here. Indigenous Peoples' Day shifts the emphasis toward the history, cultures, survival and continuing contributions of Native peoples. It is also a reminder that Indigenous history did not end with European settlement; Native communities remain a living and diverse part of the United States today.

The idea itself is not new. Britannica traces modern Indigenous Peoples' Day observances to efforts by Native activists and communities to reconsider how the Columbus anniversary was commemorated. Over time, states, cities and other governments began adopting the alternative observance, generally on the same second Monday in October traditionally associated with Columbus Day.

Ultimately, the change is more than changing the name printed on a calendar. History becomes more complete when it includes the experiences of people who were often left out of earlier versions of the story. Americans can recognize the role Columbus and European exploration played in world history—and acknowledge the importance Columbus Day has held for many Italian Americans—while also confronting the consequences that colonization had for Indigenous peoples.

Indigenous Peoples' Day asks us not to erase history, but to broaden it. Recognizing the people who were here long before 1492 gives us a fuller understanding of the complicated history that eventually produced the nation we know today.

HOME BUYERS

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would make serious offer mistakes, including revealing their maximum pre-approval amount to sellers—instantly weakening their negotiating position. For many respondents, realizing they had the process backward—house first, financing later—served as a wake-up call.

"These results should be a wake-up call for everyone in the industry," said Rulon Washington, Customer Growth Segments executive at Wells Fargo Home Lending. "We're seeing confident, motivated buyers entering one of the most significant financial decisions of their lives with critical blind spots."

Where buyers get information may explain the disconnect. Most relied on friends, family, real estate websites, and search engines. Only about one-third consulted lenders or financial professionals, the experts best positioned to provide personalized guidance.

Younger buyers were especially likely to turn to social media influencers, viral videos and AI tools, while older buyers leaned on banks and advisors. The risk isn't curiosity, it's oversimplification. Short-form content often strips away crucial nuance, glossing over differences in credit profiles, debt levels, local markets, and long-term trade-offs.

These gaps have real consequences, and the cost isn't just measured in dollars, it's measured in financial stress, missed opportunities and dreams deferred.

Misunderstanding closing costs can cause deals to collapse. Poor timing on mortgage applications can push buyers out of competitive markets. Misjudging down-payment strategies can drain emergency savings or lock borrowers into avoidable costs for the life of a loan. Small mistakes can compound into years of preventable financial stress.

There is, however, a bright spot. Nearly two-thirds of quiz-takers said the experience made them feel more informed or more aware of what they need to learn. Many said it prompted them to slow down, seek professional guidance, or reset expectations—short-term pauses preventing long-term regret.

The Wells Fargo Home Lending Quiz is available online. Visit the Wells Fargo Mortgage Learning and Education Center to learn more.

As the 2026 homebuying season accelerates, the takeaway is clear: confidence alone isn't enough. Knowledge—and knowing your blind spots—may be the most valuable down payment of all.

