



**Harford County, Maryland
Bond Rating Presentation**

**Tab 5
Harford County Business**

2ND EDITION

HOME GROWN HARFORD



FROM INTERNET TO TABLE
How farmers are tapping into new markets

GROWING AT THE GROVE
Harford's new agribusiness incubator

HOMESTEAD IN HARFORD
Two women turn agricultural lifestyle into learning

2020



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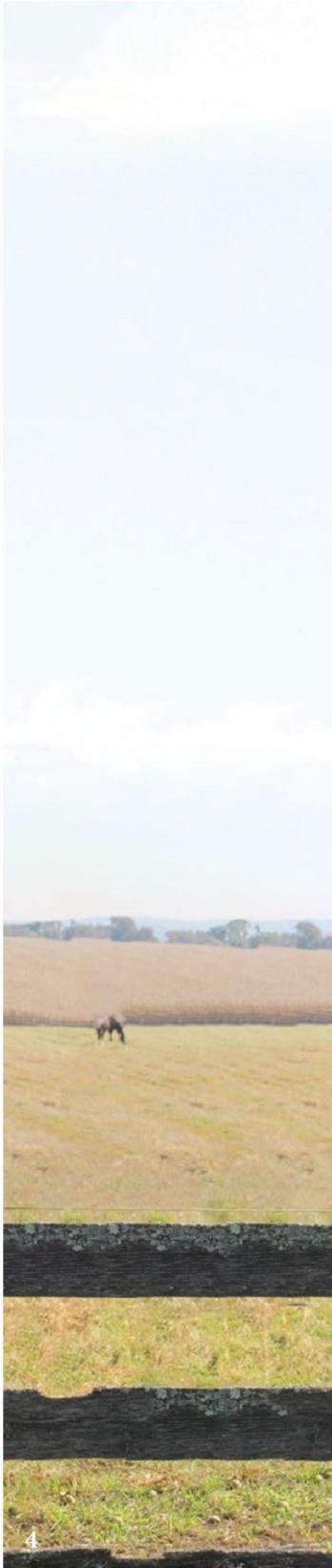
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HARFORD COUNTY

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE



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Dear Friends,

Welcome to our second edition of Homegrown Harford. In the pages that follow, you'll find captivating stories about local agribusinesses, farm fresh products and charming agricultural venues.

Harford County is proud of our farming community's rich heritage and exciting future. Thank you for your support and remember to buy local!

All my best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink.

Barry Glassman



5



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HARFORD COUNTY AGRICULTURAL CENTER

The center consolidates support services for the agricultural community to promote future sustainability of the industry and to serve as an education resource for the community.

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HARFORD COUNTY FARM BUREAU

Harford County Farm Bureau is a non-profit membership organization whose purpose is agricultural education and advocating for local farmers. As a branch of the Maryland Farm Bureau, our focus is legislation that promotes and protects rural Maryland and our natural resources. **Call 410-836-7773.**



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOREST PEST MANAGEMENT

Maryland Department of Agriculture Forest Pest Management serves the citizens of Maryland and conducts detection, evaluation, and monitoring surveys of forest pests and their damage, and conducts suppression projects on several invasive forest pest species. **Call 410-879-8034.**



HARFORD SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Harford Soil Conservation District is the local delivery system for the State's agricultural conservation programs to install best management practices on farms. They also review and approve urban erosion and sediment control plans. The primary goal is to conserve our natural resources and protect the Chesapeake Bay. **Call 410-638-4828.**



UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION

University of Maryland Extension is a statewide, non-formal education system that provides resources and problem-solving assistance to citizens in the areas of agriculture, home gardening, master gardening, nutrient management, 4-H youth development, food and nutrition, and health and wellness.

Call 410-638-3255.



HARFORD COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SERVICES

Harford County Agricultural Services serves as the liaison to the Harford County Farm Bureau, Farm Fair, and the University of Maryland Extension; promotes agriculture with the "Buy Local" initiative, which includes the county's Farmers' Markets; helps facilitate new and expanding agribusinesses in Harford County; administers an annual ag grant program; and leads the Economic Development Agricultural Advisory Board, which makes recommendations from the ag community to the county executive. **Call 410-638-3511.**



Happily Ever **HARFORD**



photo courtesy of Gina Holcomb from Southern Shutter Photography

Harford County's agricultural legacy is part of its appeal as a premier wedding destination, and its rolling farmland, historic barns, and scenic views entice couples looking for a quiet, country setting to tie the knot.

Harford is home to beautiful wedding venues that showcase its agricultural heritage, such as Vignon Manor Farm and Swan Harbor Farm in Havre de Grace and Pond View Farm in White Hall. Each has unique features, with scenic photo opportunities built right into the landscape.

The county's location between many large metropolitan areas and immediate access from I-95 are ideal for guests arriving from near and far. Its small town atmosphere combined with ample options for lodging, dining, and recreation help make it a true wedding destination.

Increasingly, brides are looking for more rustic settings for their weddings. In 2017, 15% of couples chose a farm, barn, or ranch as their wedding venue, up from just 2% in 2009, according to a survey by popular online wedding planning website The Knot. With old barns and lush green pastures, farms are an ideal setting for a rustic feel.

The intricate woodwork and layered stone frame of the inside of Vignon Manor makes for a scenic backdrop on its own, while Swan Harbor Farm features panoramic views of the water and lush foliage in seemingly every color of the rainbow. Grand, sweeping trees blanket the landscape at Pond View Farm.

"The historic and natural setting of Harford County attracts many brides to this area," Terri Glenn, recreation specialist at Swan Harbor Farm, said. "Couples love the background of our farms and local landscapes, which creates wonderful backdrops for photos. The natural setting of a barn with lush green fields and occasionally a



Greg and Kahla Leftwich were married at Pond View Farm

water view is very attractive to couples."

Kahla Leftwich, a lifetime Harford County resident, got married at Pond View Farm in June 2016. It was the only place she and her husband, Greg, considered.

"It was the only venue we looked at and we signed the contract the day we visited," Leftwich said. "My husband actually drove me past the venue and showed it to me before we were engaged and said that is where he wanted to get married."

Leftwich said the farm's scenery was the main reason she and her husband chose it as their venue, and they let it shine through as their wedding decor with minimal additions.

"The property itself is absolutely gorgeous - from the white fences, big open green fields, the pond with the trees making an archway, the barn, and of course the Smithson's stone house," Leftwich said. "Our wedding was definitely of the rustic feel and also simplistic. The barn and pavilion are already gorgeous, so we didn't go above and beyond with decorations, just a few simple flower arrangements and other

rustic touches."

Visit Harford! Executive Director Greg Pizzuto said the county's agricultural wedding venues are a way to revive a piece of the county's history, and he thinks they are increasing in popularity because they bring a feeling of comfort to couples and their guests.

"With the rich history in agriculture, we now have wedding venues that have been opened in refurbished barns to new buildings," Pizzuto said. "I think [the popularity] is attributed to brides, and mothers, looking for something unique. They are a way to offer not only the bride and groom something different, but a way to make their guests feel comfortable. It is bringing a little bit of 'home' into the wedding. Who doesn't like a beautiful view of a rolling countryside?"

For information on how to make Harford County the perfect location for your special day, contact Visit Harford! at 410-838-7777 or go to <https://visitharford.com>. For more information about Harford County's Swan Harbor Farm, visit <https://bit.ly/HCParksandRec>.



TOMATO AND EGGPLANT CAPRESE CASSEROLE

- 1 eggplant, cut into $\frac{1}{4}$ inch slices
- 2 large tomatoes, sliced
- 1 small onion, sliced
- 4-6 slices mozzarella cheese, sliced into halves or thirds
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup breadcrumbs (recommended: Panko)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp dried basil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp garlic powder
- 1 tbsp grated parmesan
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 cup balsamic vinegar
- Fresh basil, for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 375° and lightly grease a 13 x 9 baking dish.
2. Place eggplant slices on a plate and sprinkle with salt. Let stand 15 minutes. Drain/pat dry excess liquid.
3. Layer eggplant, tomatoes, and onion slices in baking dish. Top with mozzarella slices.
4. In a bowl, combine breadcrumbs, dried basil, garlic powder, and parmesan and mix well. Sprinkle mixture over vegetables and cheese. Drizzle with olive oil.
5. Bake for 25-30 minutes until top is golden brown and vegetables are tender.
6. While dish is baking, add balsamic vinegar to a sauce pot. Bring to a boil, and then let reduce for 10 minutes (the mixture should be thick enough to coat your spoon!).
7. Serve casserole with a drizzle of balsamic reduction and basil garnish and enjoy!

Barry Glassman
Harford County Executive

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photo by Eric Sander

VISIT HARFORD



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CREAM OF ASPARAGUS AND BROCCOLI SOUP

- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 tbsp flour
- 1 medium yellow onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 cups chopped broccoli
- 1 bunch asparagus, cut into chunks
- 1 large russet potato, diced
- 6 cups chicken broth (or vegetable to make vegetarian)
- ½ cup half and half
- 2 oz cream cheese, cubed

1. In a large pot or Dutch oven, heat oil and melt butter. Add flour, and cook for 1 minute. Add onion and garlic and sauté for 2 minutes until translucent and soft. Add asparagus, broccoli, and potato and sauté for 5 minutes.
2. Add chicken broth, cover, and bring everything to a boil. Turn down heat to medium and let simmer for 20 minutes.
3. Turn off heat and let mixture cool for about 5 minutes. Transfer soup to blender or use an immersion blender and purée until smooth. Add half and half and cream cheese while blended mixture is still warm and stir in completely until cream cheese melts (add salt and pepper to your liking).
4. Serve soup immediately. Soup can be refrigerated or frozen, but cool it completely before you refrigerate or freeze it!

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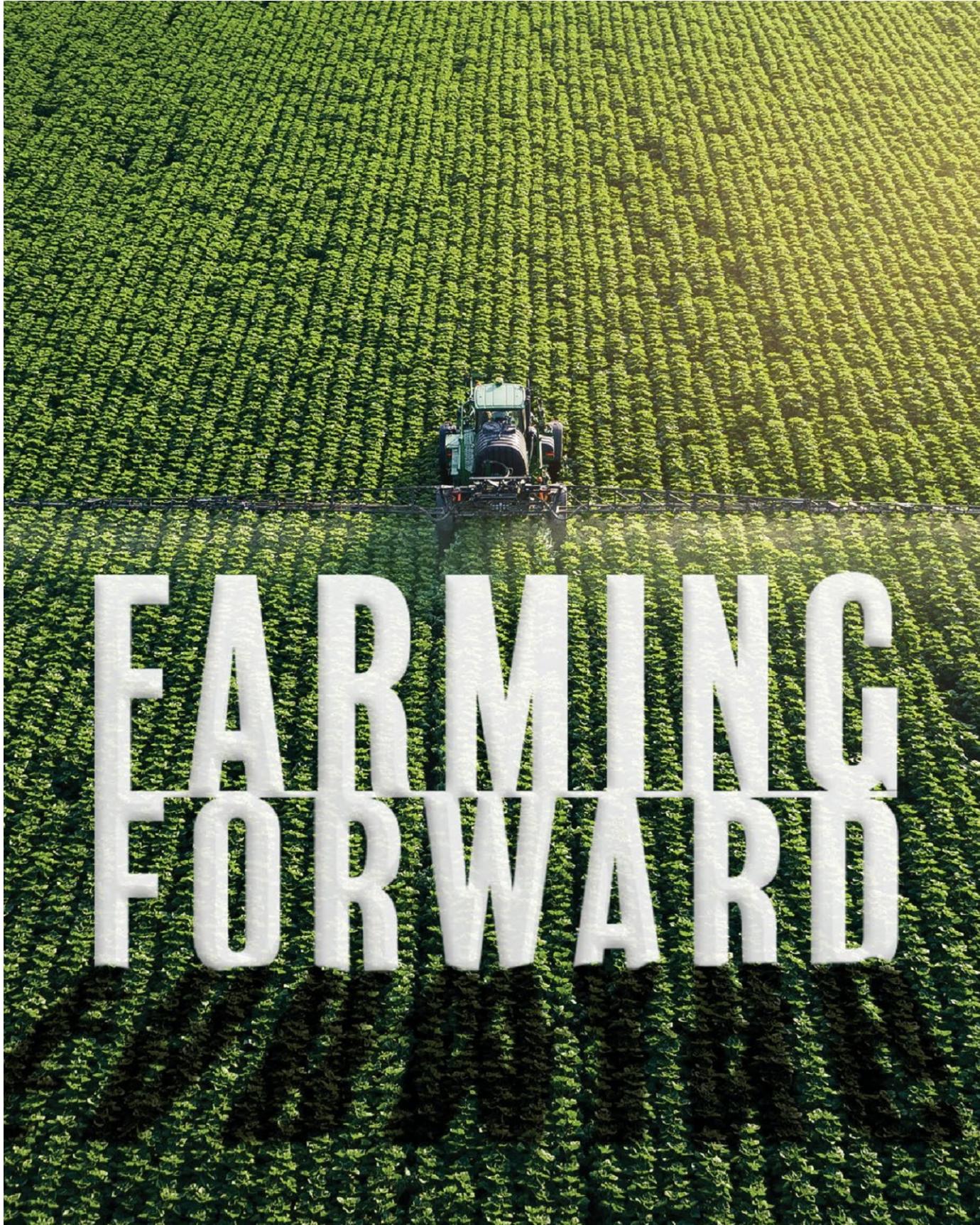


The Harford County Barn Quilt Trail

Follow our agricultural past and present in search of the 20-plus painted quilt designs on local barns and buildings in Harford's most scenic areas.

To learn more and for a map of the trail, visit:

www.barnquiltsofharfordcounty.com



What started out as a small project for a Harford Community College professor has become a community-wide push to draw together all facets of the agricultural community and grabbed national attention.

In 2018, HCC Professor of Behavioral and Social Sciences Dr. Sharon Stowers began her work on “Gathering at the Community Table: Celebrating Harford’s Farms and Food” to focus on Harford County’s rich food history and land stewardship.

From the beginning, the project combined a powerhouse of local agricultural advocates to create an agricultural delegation formally called the Farmers and Community Partnership of Harford County (FCPHC), to gather farmers and community members to address issues facing producers and consumers.

“We are dedicated to supporting our local agricultural community in addressing the critical economic, regulatory, cultural, and environmental challenges they face in today’s world,” Stowers, a nutritional anthropologist studying the local food system, said.

The Gathering at the Community Table project has facilitated the creation of the Farm Finder GIS map and created an agricultural history exhibit; engaged HCC students to develop marketing plans for farmers and conduct focus groups of local food consumers; engaged in legislators’ meetings; and has been part of county events to inform consumers on the important work of local farmers.

FCPHC again partnered with HCC and North Harford High School for this year’s annual farming symposium, “Food, Farmers & Community: Farming Forward,” to reach even more people. Attendance more than doubled from last year and topics included agritourism; farm-to-table cooking; farm land stewardship and science; and



The agricultural symposium, “Food, Farmers & Community: Farming Forward”, was well-attended and offered a variety of resources to Harford County’s farmers

guest speaker Joe Ligo, series producer of “Maryland Farm and Harvest” on Maryland Public Television. The event supported our local agricultural community: the menu included locally-sourced food and was prepared by Laurrapin Caters who donated their time and expertise to support of our farmers.

The work of the Farmers and Community Partnership of Harford County has not gone unnoticed.

The National Society of Descendants of American Farmers (NSDOAF) wants to tour the county to learn more about its agricultural history and practices. The group, with members from across the country, had planned to be here April 7, 2020, a follow-up to the national caucus in Washington, D.C., on April 6. The

caucus, a collaboration by the USDA, National Society of Descendants of American Farmers and Farmers and Community Partnership of Harford County, and tour were postponed until next spring because of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

“We have only heard good things about all you’re doing,” Davena Liepman, co-founder of the organization, said.

Liepman and co-founder Janisue Rigel, sisters who live in Texas, were introduced to Stowers through William F. Martin, a NSDOAF board member and former deputy secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy who has a home in Havre de Grace. Upon speaking with Stowers, they organized the tour, which was to be a busload of board members visiting local farms and eating local foods.

"You attract people to your area and farmers all the time are at the forefront," Rigel, the president of the organization, said.

The group is very much looking forward to next year's tour, Liepman said.

As the partnership awaits next year's events, Stowers will continue to reinforce the mission of the group, which meets monthly at agricultural sites across the county to learn more about what farmers are doing and to discuss how residents can support the farming community and address the county's food consumer trends.

Besides local farmers and community members, representatives from Harford Community College, Harford County Government's Agricultural and Community & Economic Development Offices,

Harford Soil Conservation District, Harford County Farm Bureau, University of Maryland Extension Office of Harford County, Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation, Healthy Harford, Visit Harford, North Harford High School and Harford Technical High School regularly attend.

"We hope to work together so that our agricultural producers not only survive but thrive in our abundant and beautiful landscape," Stowers said.

Among their concerns are to help farmers develop the technological online marketing skills to sell directly to community members, as well as how climate change could affect the local food supply.

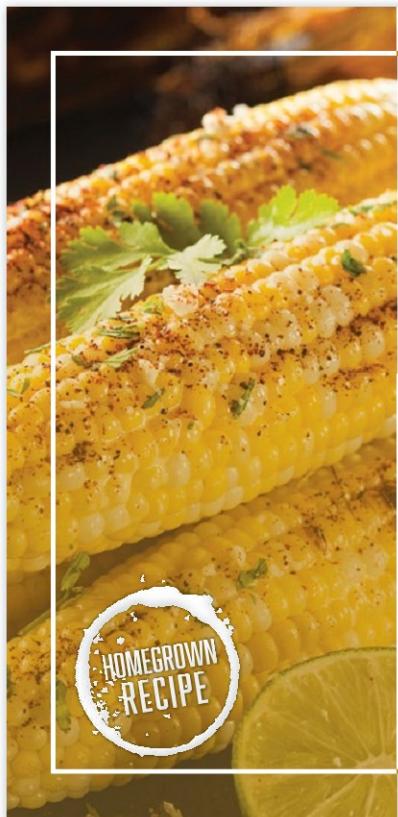
"There are so many issues that we can educate the public about concerning our local food system and there are so many concerns that farmers are having



Karla Simon eats Keyes Creamery ice cream during this year's farming symposium

that we can help advocate for them," Stowers said.

Anyone interested in attending FCPHC meetings or who wants to become a regular member of the group is asked to contact Dr. Sharon Stowers at sstowers@harford.edu.



CILANTRO LIME CORN

- 2 tbsp butter
- 4 cups corn (freshly cut from 5-6 cobs)
- 1 tsp salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp garlic powder
- 1 tbsp lime zest (1-2 limes)
- 2 tbsp freshly squeezed lime juice
- Pinch cayenne pepper
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped cilantro (reserve some for garnish)
- Optional: $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Cotija cheese*

1. Melt butter in a skillet over medium heat.
2. Add corn, salt, and garlic powder and sauté 7-8 minutes.
3. Add in lime zest, lime juice, cayenne pepper, and cilantro and cook for another 3-4 minutes until corn is cooked.
4. Optional: toss in Cotija cheese
5. Serve warm with fresh cilantro on top for garnish!

COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

Farming is part of the lifeblood of Harford County, and community supported agriculture (CSA) programs are one way residents can preserve that tradition.

Through CSAs, participants pay a fee before the harvest and regularly (weekly, monthly, etc.) receive boxes of seasonal crops. They could contain fruits, vegetables, meats, dairy, baked goods, flowers, or a combination thereof, depending on the farm.

Community members learn about locally-grown produce – which crops grow best in different seasons and best practices in farming. They form a direct connection with the farms and farmers, getting to know them personally, in return for fresh, healthy food.

In Harford County, farms that offer CSA programs are family-run operations dedicated to feeding the community the best quality products.



HARFORD COUNTY HAS A RICH AND DIVERSE AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE.

From farmers markets to CSAs, there are many opportunities to support our farmers. When you buy local produce and products from Harford County's farms, you are:

COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE (CSAs)

- Ahswanee Farm
- Third Way Farm
- Brad's Farm Market
- Crooked Creek Farm
- Harman's Farm Market
- Wilson's Farm Market
- Jones Family Farm
- One Straw Farm
- Rousedale Farm
- Newark Farms

- Buying fresher, healthier food.
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- Supporting a local family.
- Growing the local economy.
- Preserving our agricultural heritage.
- Helping to keep taxes down.
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Harford County farms aren't just about raising and selling meats and produce – many of them are choosing unique products to appeal to niche markets.

Amy Vaughan-Roland and her family live a “modern-day homesteader life,” living off their land in White Hall as much as they can. She’s turned her canning lifestyle into a business.

Bobbie Lowe, of Pylesville, started to grow gourds for something to hold the flowers she sold. She still uses them for vases, but she’s expanded to include raw gourds, painted gourds, gourd seeds and gourd classes.

Both are retired Harford County Public Schools teachers offering different types of education these days.

Other farmers and their unique farms can be found on Harford County’s Farm Finder app, bit.ly/HCFarmFinder.

‘FOOD SECURITY IS INCREDIBLE’

Amy Vaughan-Roland, who was one of Lowe’s students, taught in Harford County Public Schools for 13 years until she retired in 2019 to begin a new kind of teaching career – canning fruits and vegetables.

“I jokingly say I’m the instructor of lost arts,” Vaughan-Roland said. “But canning is so important. Look at the situation we’re in [with the pandemic] – being able to have food security for my family is incredible.”

Vaughan-Roland has been canning since she was in 4-H. In her early 20s, a woman scoffed at her canned jam at a local fair and told her “people of your generation don’t know how to do this.”

“That’s when it became my life’s mission to pass those skills along to others,” she said.

She is teaching her students to be more self-sufficient, to take their crops out of the garden and put them up for a year. She teaches canning of salsa,



Amy Vaughan-Roland uses homegrown produce to teach canning classes

jellies, jams and canned tomatoes, reliant, you have do it in a way that’s among other things.

“Being able to give that to other families is very important to me,” Vaughan-Roland said.

Most of the items she cans are grown on her farm in White Hall, where she lives on her family’s dairy farm.

“Teaching canning is part wizardry, part science – part is superstition and part is what science tells us,” Vaughan-Roland said.

She teaches her classes once a month in a space at The Farmyard in Parkton in Baltimore County – there hasn’t been much interest for such classes in Harford County, but she’s hoping there will be, she said.

Vaughan-Roland encourages her students to use what they grow in their gardens, but recognizes it’s not always possible to grow everything – sometimes you have to buy things from the grocery store.

“You have to do it in a way that’s economical. If you can get 50 pounds of carrots for \$3, there’s no point in gardening to get 50 pounds of carrots,” Vaughan-Roland said. “To be self-

In last year’s eight sessions, her students canned jelly, spaghetti sauce, whole tomatoes, apple butter and made homemade cheese. This season will be products like carrots, beans and soups. Classes were to have started in the spring, but they have been delayed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

At her home, Vaughan-Roland grows grapes, tomatoes, potatoes, elderberries, blackberries and strawberries and has a greenhouse for salad greens.

On her shelves at home are canned tomatoes (250 pounds a year), soups and stews (40 to 50 quarts), enough to feed her family of four for about 18 months.

Most of her family’s protein also comes from the family farm, including deer, pork, steer and chickens. Her home is heated exclusively with wood.

“We are living a modern-day homesteader life, for sure,” Vaughan-Roland said. “My 6-year-old wonders why everyone is so worried about the grocery store. She thinks you just go on the back porch to get your food.”

With the help of Vaughan-Roland's classes, maybe more people will be able to the same.

GOURDS ARE 'FASCINATING'

When Bobbie Lowe retired in 2003 after teaching for 30 years, her mother thought she needed a job, so she started growing flowers at her home and sold them along the road.

She realized, however, the mason jars she was putting the flowers in weren't practical, especially bouncing around in the front seat of a farmer's pickup truck. She looked for an alternative to the jars and found gourds – more sturdy and less expensive.

The first year she planted gourds, Lowe thought she would have 50 of them. She got 500.

"I didn't know a lot about them, obviously," Lowe said.

Over the years, she dabbled with gourds – learning about the many varieties, how to grow them and what to do with them.

Eventually, she gave up the flower business and is exclusively raising and selling gourds and their byproducts. Her business, Benjamin's Landing (www.benjaminslanding.com), has blossomed into growing and selling raw gourds; painting gourds and hosting paint nights and classes; visits with garden clubs and Scout troops to discuss raising gourds; and selling hand-pollinated gourd seeds.

Each year Lowe plants two acres of seeds that produce about 4,000 gourds in 56 varieties.

In mid-April, Lowe plants yearly crops in her greenhouse, and a month later she moves them out to her field. In mid-July to early August, she hand-pollinates seeds she will sell – mostly the hard-shell gourds - using a paint brush to transfer the pollen from the male blossom onto the female blossom, which ensures a true breed of the seeds.



Benjamin's Landing also hosts gourd paint nights and painting classes

The other blossoms are pollinated by bees, butterflies and ladybugs, among other insects.

Lowe uses an 8-foot-wide drone to spray her fields and crops with herbicide, insecticide, fungicide and fertilizer. Using the drone, which weighs about 100 pounds when fully loaded, has cut down her spraying time from four hours to four minutes.

Lowe sells gourd seeds online to customers in almost every state. This spring, by the third week of April, she was selling seeds to her 170th customer since January. She harvests the seeds from the raw gourds, which are ready in early November.

The gourds that will become decorations remain on the vine until after the first frost. Typically that's the second week in November, but sometimes Lowe leaves them in the field until February or March.

"If you take them off the vine before the vine is dead, the gourds will

rot because they're not mature," Lowe said. "A lot of people make that mistake and take them off too early."

But it doesn't hurt to leave them on too long – gourds are 90 percent water and need to be in open air to dry. Once they're picked, they are stored for several months in corn cribs. Sometime after July 4, Lowe starts to wash them to remove the mold.

Once they're dried, the gourds become like wood, and can be turned into all sorts of creations.



Bobbie and Benjamin Lowe run Benjamin's Landing, raising and selling gourds

"If you can think it, you can do it because there's so many shapes and sizes," Lowe said.

They can be carved using various tools into birdhouses, ornaments, keyrings and other items. One particularly large gourd - 3 ½ feet tall that had to be brought in from the field using a skid loader - became a firefighter statue for her son, a volunteer fireman. She also makes jack-o-lantern luminaires.

She paints them, using acrylic paint, Adirondack paint and memory ink. One Lowe has been using more of

lately is marble paint from Germany, which gives the paint a swirled look.

When Lowe started out growing gourds, people would tell her that "a gourd talks to you about what it wants to be," she said.

"I thought they were nuts, but I'm not sure anymore," Lowe said. "When I'm looking to make a particular vase, or put a particular picture on something or for a gourd with a special use, I will stand in the box, look at them and then see one and think, 'that's it.'"

In a class at her barn with 30 people, each person can paint the same picture

on the same variety of gourd, and every one will look different and have its own personality.

"And they're all beautiful," Lowe said.

The Lowes sold their dairy cows several years ago, but her husband, Ben, continues to grow small grains and hay and helps Lowe tend to her gourds.

She never set out to make money with them.

"I wanted a carrier for flowers," she said. "But gourds have taken over my life, and I love it." ■



HOME GROWN
RECIPE

BACON WRAPPED JALAPEÑOS

- 12 fresh jalapeños, sliced in half (24 total) with seeds and membranes removed
- 8 oz cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup Cheddar Jack cheese*
- ½ tsp paprika
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- Pinch salt and pepper
- 12 slices bacon, cut in half (24 total)
- Toothpicks

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Lay out jalapeños on a sheet pan (tip: line the pan with aluminum foil for easier cleanup!).
3. Mix cream cheese, Cheddar Jack cheese, paprika, garlic powder, salt, and pepper together in a small bowl. Fill each jalapeño with a spoonful of cheese mixture.
4. Wrap a half a slice of bacon around each jalapeño. Secure with a toothpick.
5. Bake for 20-25 minutes until bacon is crisped to your preference!

* If you would like to make this extra spicy, use ½ cup Cheddar cheese and ½ cup Pepper Jack cheese!



Harford County's 33rd Annual Farm Fair **SUMMER 2020**

July 27 - August 1, 2020

*Monday - Thursday: 3 - 10 p.m.
Friday & Saturday: 10 a.m. - 10 p.m.*

SAVE THE DATE!

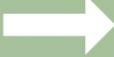
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- **Bel Air High School (FREE)**
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(Monday - Thursday)

\$8/Adult
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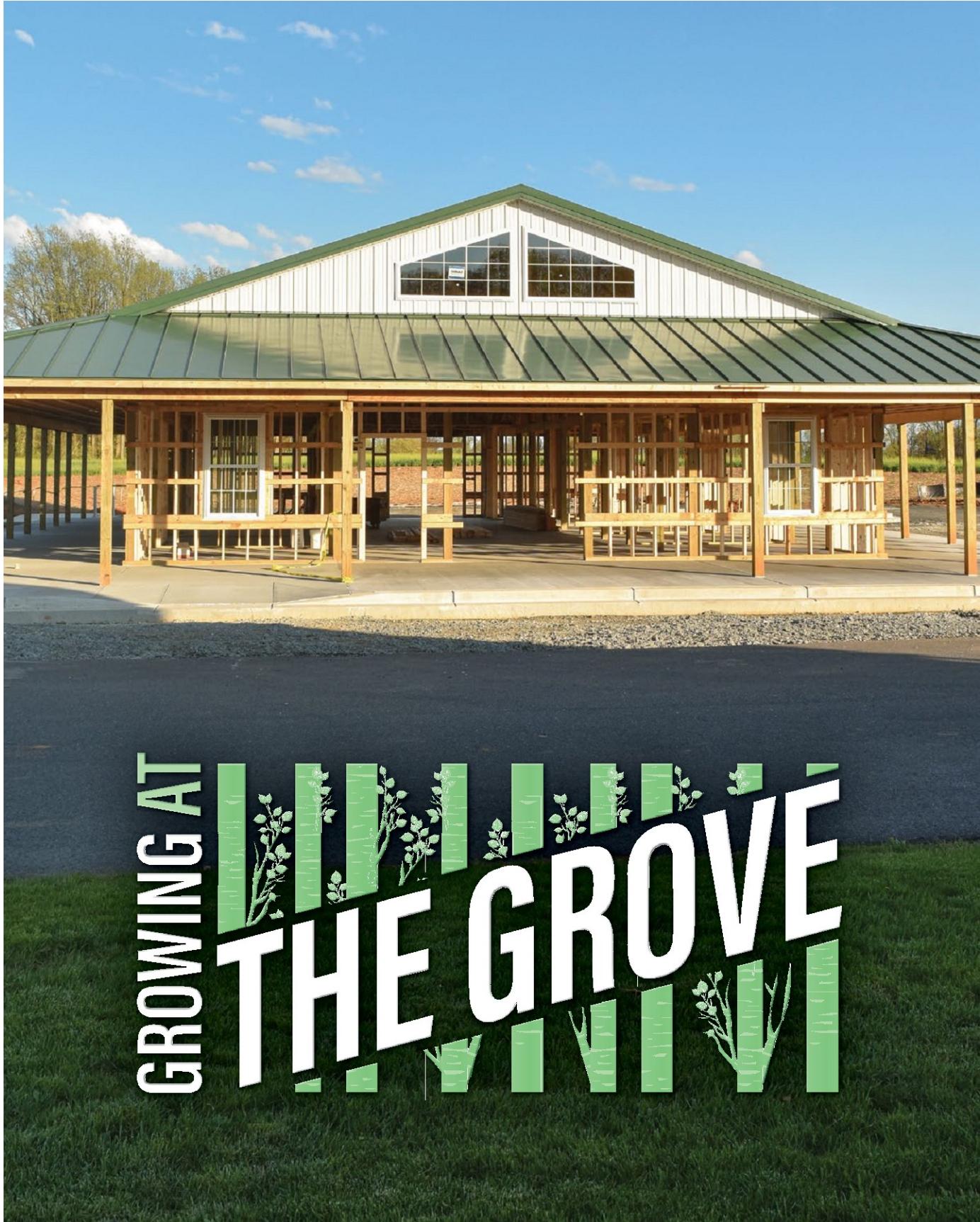
Free/Child
(Every day, ages 5 and under)

\$5/Military
(Every day, with ID)

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS

CARNIVAL EVERY DAY!
And don't forget that Saturday is Kids Day

Every day has: FREE Kidway games and activities (open until 8 p.m.) ■ Wildlife Adventures ■ 4-H animal shows and exhibits ■ home arts and farm & garden exhibits ■ local performers ■ vendors ■ buy local showcase ■ and more!



Purple Rain Lavender Farm is getting in on the ground floor of The Grove in northern Harford County to share her family's homegrown and homemade lavender and herb products.

"There are so many things that are made in Harford County that people don't know about," farm owner Pam Fry said. "We want to help get the word out that this is a great opportunity to showcase what goes on in the community and be part of that."

Fry is one of several vendors registered at The Grove, the county's new agricultural outlet for local area farmers, artists and food processors to sell their products directly to consumers. The new incubator in Street will promote commerce and provide education to the public about Harford's strong agricultural businesses.

For the Frys, The Grove is attractive because they will be with other vendors who are also making their products with items grown, raised or crafted in Harford County.

"We want to be in a venue with other vendors, farmers, and artisans that are really passionate about what they do," Fry said. "We like to explain what we do, how it's made or grown, talk to people, educate families and youth, and be a source for them to come to for assistance."

The Grove is a barnlike structure at the 86-acre Harford County Agricultural Center site, what the county is planning to become its destination for "all things ag-related."

Already at the Agricultural Center are the Harford County Soil Conservation District (state and local offices), University of Maryland Extension Office, Maryland Department of Forest Pest Management and the Harford County Farm Bureau under one roof. The Joesting-Gorsuch House, believed to be one of the oldest



Purple Rain Lavender Farm is one of the vendors already signed up at The Grove

homes in the county that will one day become a visitors' center, also sits onsite.

Two educational hiking trails are expected to be built beginning next spring and an agricultural-themed playground is also planned.

Vendors at The Grove can rent 16-by-12-foot indoor and/or outdoor spaces quarterly, semi-annually or annually. Each one has a dedicated electrical outlet and can accommodate a small refrigerator. The inside stalls are secure, the outside are not.

Indoor stalls are \$250 per month, outdoor are \$150 per month or the combination of both indoor/outdoor is \$300 per month.

"We haven't had anything like this in Harford County," County Executive Barry Glassman said. "We have farmers markets, but no steady, routine space that a small startup agricultural business could use."

At The Grove, ag entrepreneurs can operate the space as they desire seven days a week, 12 hours a day, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Built on the success of The GroundFloor incubator in Havre de Grace, The Grove will let small business

owners set up shop and test the market.

They also can take advantage of the many services and seminars offered through the Harford County Office of Community and Economic Development and its partner organizations, such as the Maryland Small Business Development Center, Harford Chamber's Venture Access entrepreneurial programming, local small business lenders, the U.S. Small Business Administration, the State of Maryland Small Business Assistance and the Governor's Office of Minority Affairs.

The Grove is open to farmers, artists and food processors who grow and make their products in the county.

"With the mix of products being created by Harford County citizens in Harford County, this will be a good opportunity for businesses to collaborate with one another and be a one-stop-shop for consumers," County Executive Glassman said.

Plenty of spaces are available for other agricultural entrepreneurs, and Fry would encourage them to take advantage of what The Grove offers.

"You can have a footprint in the county that's more permanent

than seasonal markets, and an alternative to selling in a consignment venue or trying to start out in a commercial lease setting, which most start-ups don't have funding for," she said.

Whether it's a product they've sculpted, knitted, sewn or grown, vendors will be able to choose what they want to showcase and how, rather than leave that up to someone else.

"A year-round market setting will give you more opportunity to interact directly with customers, get their feedback, and improve upon what you sell and products you carry," Fry said. "Farmers, artisans, and crafters put their heart and soul into what they do and it's hard to find start-up locations that give you flexibility and allow you to customize your space to your product lines or crafts. The one-on-one feedback is critical in growing a business."

The Frys sell some of their products at their farm stand and at other locations, but envision expanding what products they sell by trying them out at The Grove.

Their foundation is fresh and dried lavender, which they also use to make bath and body products – soaps, lotions, bug sprays and linen sprays – for humans and pets, including horses.

They also make wreaths and sachets from lavender and other flowers grown on their farm and give DIY classes on crafts and products that can be made from their lavender, flowers and herbs.

At The Grove, they will be able to do demonstrations as different flowers come into season – from lavender, herbs, eucalyptus and hydrangea, as well as wheat and other dried flowers later in the fall.

"We'll make them from fresh materials, and our customers can take

them home and dry them," Fry said.

"Our farm fresh lavender products are handmade one-by-one using fresh natural ingredients, locally sourced when possible. You can see our plants in the field and learn how products get made on the farm I grew up on," she said.

While the farm has turned from crops and horses to lavender, flowers, herbs, and other products, Fry wants to continue to share it with the community.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to be part of showcasing what entrepreneurial farming can be in Harford County," she said. "The preservation of farming is critically important in our community and this county has so many things to offer that many people might not be not familiar with."

If interested, call 410-638-3255, or visit bit.ly/HCTheGrove ▀





INDOOR RENTAL

- 8 secured indoor stalls (16x12)
- One dedicated duplex electrical outlet
- Maximum 4.5 cu ft. freezer/refrigerator may be used
- Goods may be left in secured stalls

SITE AMENITIES

- Visible from Route 1
- Adequate parking
- Access to indoor and outdoor water
- Hours of operation: 7 days a week, 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.
- Annual, semi-annual, and quarterly rentals
- 86 acres
- Home of the Harford County Agricultural Center
- Future educational trails and playground

SECURITY

- Camera surveillance
- Access control cards with back up key pad

OUTDOOR RENTAL

- 8 unsecured outdoor stalls (16x12)
- One dedicated duplex electrical outlet
- Maximum 4.5 cu ft. freezer/refrigerator may be used
- All goods and staging items must be removed daily

SCHEDULE & RENTAL RATES

- Annual (Apr-Mar)
- Semi-annual (Apr-Sep, Oct-Mar)
- Quarterly (Jun-Aug, Sep-Nov, Dec-Feb, Mar-May)
- Indoor: \$250 per month
- Outdoor: \$150 per month
- Indoor/Outdoor: \$300 per month
- Rental rates are due on the 1st of each month commencing on the second month of occupancy

Vendor responsible for their indoor and outdoor area to keep clean and neat. Harford County will provide custodial services for common areas.

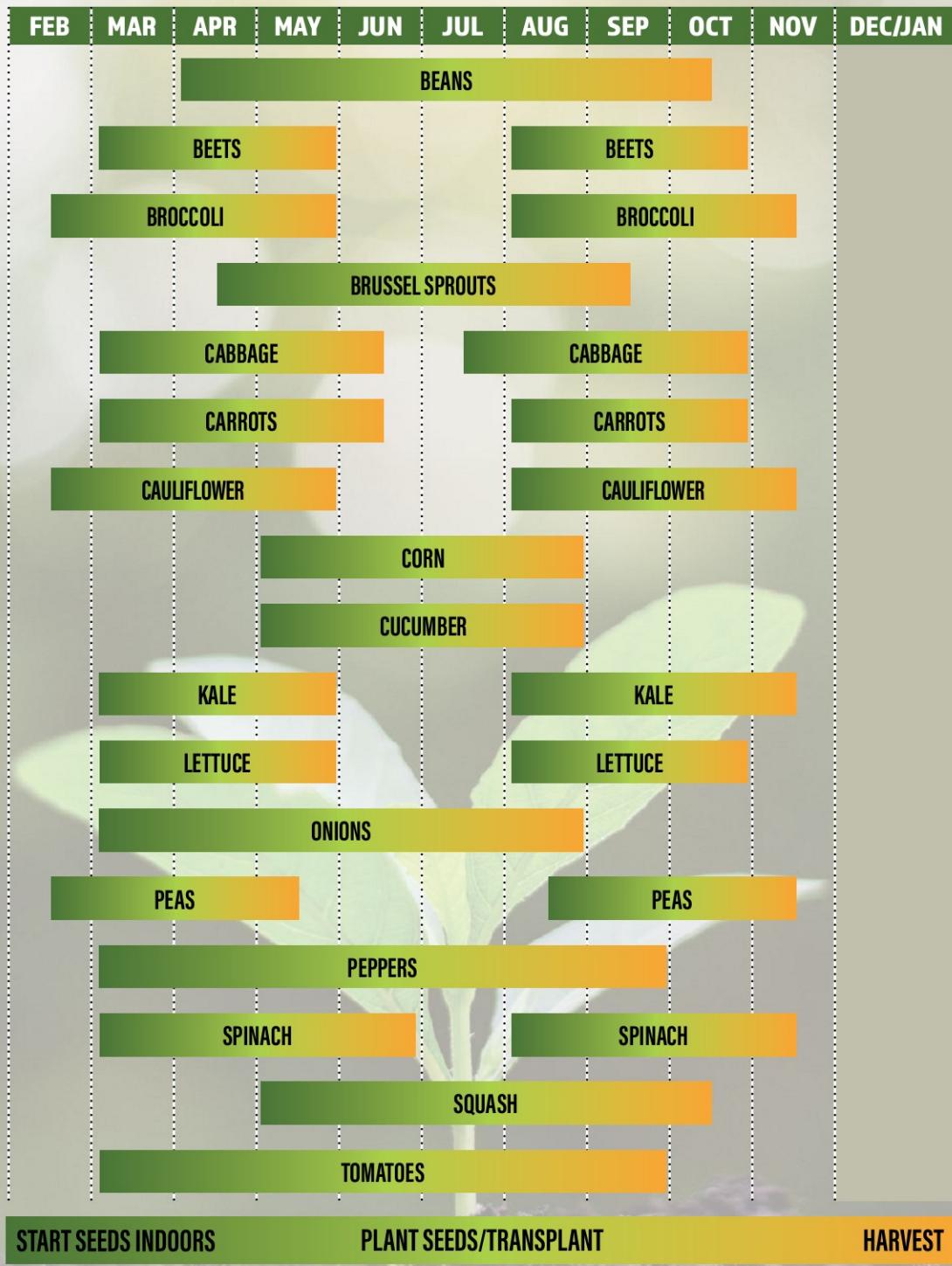


WATERMELON & SPINACH SALAD WITH GOAT CHEESE

- 6 cups baby spinach
- $\frac{1}{2}$ small red onion, sliced thinly
- 3 cups diced seedless watermelon
- 4 oz goat cheese, crumbled
- Optional: $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped nuts (recommended: pecans for a sweeter flavor, or pistachios to go saltier and more savory)

1. Mix all ingredients together and toss with your favorite red wine or citrus vinaigrette!

WHEN TO PLANT YOUR VEGETABLES





BERRY & PEACH CRISP

Filling:

- 2 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup corn starch
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
- 3 cups peaches, peeled and sliced
- 2 cups strawberries, sliced (can substitute or add blueberries, blackberries, or raspberries for enhanced flavor)

Topping:

- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup oats
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup packed brown sugar
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (1 stick) COLD butter, cut into cubes

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees and butter an 8x8 baking dish.
2. Whisk together the lemon juice and corn starch. In a larger bowl, toss the peaches, strawberries, and sugar together. Add in corn starch mixture, and mix everything together well. Add fruit mixture to greased baking dish and set aside.
3. For the topping, add the flour, oats, brown sugar, cinnamon, and salt to a bowl and mix. Add in cubed butter, and cut in butter until mixture is crumbly.
4. Sprinkle crumbles over fruit mixture. Bake for 40 minutes until the top is golden brown and mixture is hot and bubbly.
5. Let the crisp cool for 10 minutes and then serve with your favorite ice cream from a Harford County creamery!



ABERDEEN

Farmers Market

May 7, 2020 - October 29, 2020 | Aberdeen Festival Park

Thursday Evenings: 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

The Official City of Aberdeen, Maryland

For more information, call: **410-272-1600**

FRESH PRODUCE & BAKED GOODS
LOCAL WINES, HONEY, HANDMADE CRAFTS






From Bel Air, to Havre de Grace, and everywhere in between, local brewers, winemakers, and distillers are crafting their products and enhancing the visitor experience using their respective locations to their advantage. Spend a few leisurely hours at a vineyard in the countryside, stop in for a quick beer after a bike ride on a trail -- either way, you are guaranteed an authentic experience with a quality beverage crafted in your own backyard.

The county's vineyards use the vast green spaces here to grow their grapes, and reward visitors with picturesque country vistas to enjoy with a glass of wine in their hands. Some county breweries are based in the countryside as well, growing their own hops and letting residents see firsthand the meaning of farm to table, or in this case, taproom. Other breweries and distilleries take advantage of a more urban setting, giving people a place to walk to after work for happy hour or make a quick stop for a local beer or cocktail while out running errands.

Harford County's locally produced beer, wine, and spirits tap into the diverse landscape, both geographically and culturally, that the county offers.

FARM TO TAPROOM

Harford County's three countryside breweries - Falling Branch, Hopkins Farm, and Slate Farm - let visitors see firsthand the agricultural element that goes into local craft beer production.

Falling Branch Brewery is in Street and was Harford County's first farm brewery. The Galbreath family has been farming on the property, named Highland Heights Farm, since 1924. The farming operation on the property has evolved over time, from swine, to dairy, to a now mixed-use process producing the hops and beer sold by the brewery. The family started Hawks Hill Creamery in 2004, and beer



Harford County Director of Administration Billy Boniface at the county's newest brewery, Double Groove Brewing in Forest Hill

production for Falling Branch Brewery started in 2015. They even grow some of the ingredients used in seasonal or specialty beers, like pumpkins, blueberries, and lavender, on-site. Visitors to Falling Branch get a true feel for the farm's history when they step inside the brewery's taproom, which is housed inside a renovated barn built in the 1800s. In addition, the view from the beer garden directly overlooks the hops that will eventually be found in a guest's beer glass.

Hopkins Farm Brewery is expected to open summer 2020 on a spacious stretch of land right outside Havre de Grace. Also home to Chesapeake Malting Company, Hopkins brewery will use homegrown hops, and the beers will be inspired by the farm's harvest. Wood from an old hay barn and stone from an old foundation on the property were used to construct the brewery's taproom, so visitors can enjoy a blend of a modern atmosphere with the authentic touch of

the building's rustic style.

Slate Farm Brewery is a small farm brewery in Whiteford. What began as a home brewing passion project eventually evolved into a commercial operation, with 15 unique beers featured in the taproom at all times. The farm grows an assortment of herbs, fruits, and vegetables in addition to the hops for the beers. The lush fields serve as the quintessential farm brewery backdrop in the open air beer garden.

Kiel Brown, part-owner of Slate Farm Brewery, said learning about the agricultural element of making beer is what attracts a lot of guests to visit the brewery and what differentiates local farm breweries from any corner bar.

"Agritourism is something people are really interested in," Brown said. "That's what people really come out here for - to see exactly how the beer is made, get out of the city, and sit outside and have a beer."

DOWNTOWN DRAFTS

The county's four remaining beverage crafters - Alecraft Brewery, Double Groove Brewing, Independent Brewing Company, and White Tiger Distillery - take a more urban approach to disseminating their products.

AleCraft Brewery settled into its home on Main Street in 2017, when they needed a bigger space to house the business' microbrewery, home brew supply shop, and taproom all in one place. They had occupied two smaller spaces previously, all in downtown Bel Air, but as their business grew so did their need for more square footage. This localized, one-stop-shop approach culminated from their steady stream of regulars' requests for a place to buy AleCraft beer and how to recreate the process at home.

Double Groove Brewing's name comes from Craig Willig's vinyl record collection of more than 3,000 recordings. Specifically, it comes from the part-owner's two "double groove" records, a rare form of vinyl record that has more than one groove and plays a different set of songs each time. The walls in the brewery's taproom are also decorated with murals and memorabilia that portray the company's name, a fusion of music and beer. The brewery is a cozy, intimate space in the heart of the Forest Hill business community, located directly next to White Tiger Distillery. The owners say this choice was not on purpose, but the happy accident gives the two businesses great synergy and helps make the two a centralized destination for the surrounding community to enjoy local, handcrafted beer and spirits.

White Tiger owner Itsara Ounnarath brings to life his family's traditional Laotian recipes in an industrial building in the middle of Forest Hill. White Tiger's specialty is rice whiskey, but spirits such as brandy,

rum, and rye whiskey made with Maryland grain are also distilled and bottled onsite. Ounnarath is a Harford County resident, and he and his family moved the distillery to Harford from Queen Anne's County in 2018, wanting a location close to home and in the heart of their own community. The distillery is open for tours and tastings and gives county residents a chance to experience the flavors of Laos in their own backyard.

Independent Brewing Company truly embraces its location in the heart of Bel Air. Their downtown site is easy to walk or bike to, only steps from the Ma & Pa Trail, and has a spacious, dog-friendly patio that can comfortably accommodate large groups. In late 2019, Independent added a second building called "The Funk House" to stock new, original craft beer creations as well as more bathrooms for the sizable crowds that gather on the patio. The brewery has 26 rotating beers on tap, so it is easy for any beer lover to find a local brew they enjoy.

Stephanie Herman, an Abingdon resident, chose Independent Brewing Company as the location for her son's first birthday party. She said she and her husband, Tony, considered other locations, including other breweries, but selected Independent primarily because of its central location and community feel.

"Downtown Bel Air is the closest for our guests," Herman said. "It's so easy to go there to meet up with friends, and they have such a great atmosphere, great beer, and games."

THE VINEYARDS

Harford County's three winemakers use the county's mineral-rich soil and natural terrain to enhance the flavor of their locally-crafted wines as well as their visitors' experience.

Fiore Winery & Distillery started out as a farm with horses, cows, and pigs, among other animals, and a big garden. When the Fiore family's focus shifted solely to grapes, they researched what grapes would grow best on their property in Pylesville. Dedicating acres to commercial growing, landscaping the property to fit their needs, and renovating the farm's barn to house the vineyard's tasting room and additional space for bottling were DIY projects and labors of love for the family. The distillery (co-located on the grounds) was recently added to give customers additional local spirits to enjoy. Fiore's ample beverage options, rural setting, and outdoor capacity of 1,000 people make it a popular destination.

Harford Vineyard & Winery started out as a small production in 2003, when only two types of grapes were planted - Vidal and Traminette. As production increased and other grapes were added, like Merlot, the vineyard has maintained its focus of creating finely-crafted wine from only carefully selected grapes that grow well in this region's soil. There is also a tasting room on the property, which promises an intimate, authentic setting to enjoy the vineyard's wines.

Mount Felix Vineyard & Winery is in Havre de Grace, where the Susquehanna River meets the Chesapeake Bay. The constant breeze from the water aids in the growth of the grapes by regulating the soil's moisture content, and its location gives the vineyard a beautiful view of the water for visitors to enjoy as a bonus. As Mount Felix describes on their website, with "long sunny days, cool autumn nights, and a constant Chesapeake breeze, we simply seek to convert these sweet juices, produced from rays, into bottles of wine for life, love, family, and friends." ■

HARFORD'S RAISE A GLASS TOUR



FOIRE WINERY & DISTILLERY



SLATE FARM BREWERY



FALLING BRANCH BREWERY



HARFORD VINEYARD & WINERY



WHITE TIGER DISTILLERY



DOUBLE GROOVE BREWING



INDEPENDENT BREWING COMPANY



HOPKINS FARM BREWERY



ALECRAFT BREWERY



MOUNT FELIX WINERY

ALECRAFT BREWERY

319 S Main, St Bel Air, 21014

DOUBLE GROOVE BREWING

1659-D Robin Circle, Forest Hill, 21050

FALLING BRANCH BREWERY

825 Highland Rd, Street, 21154

FOIRE WINERY & DISTILLERY

3026 Whiteford Rd, Pylesville, 21132

HARFORD VINEYARD & WINERY

1311 W Jarrettsville Rd, Forest Hill, 21050

HOPKINS FARM BREWERY*

3853 Level Rd, Havre de Grace, 21078

*opening Summer 2020

INDEPENDENT BREWING CO.

418 N Main St, Bel Air, 21014

MOUNT FELIX WINERY

2000 Level Rd, Havre de Grace, 21078

SLATE FARM BREWERY

2128 Whiteford Rd, Whiteford, 21160

WHITE TIGER DISTILLERY

1659-E Robin Circle, Forest Hill, 21050



CITRUS CANTALOUPE FIZZ

For the purée:

- 1 small cantaloupe, cubed
- ½ cup water
- ½ cup freshly squeezed orange juice

For a drink:

- Ice cubes
- 1 ½ oz citrus vodka
- 1 oz simple syrup*
- 4 oz cantaloupe purée
- Seltzer (recommended: citrus)

1. To make the purée, blend cantaloupe, water, and orange juice into a blender and blend completely. **
2. To make a drink, add ice cubes to a glass and add vodka, simple syrup, and cantaloupe. Stir. Top with seltzer and enjoy!

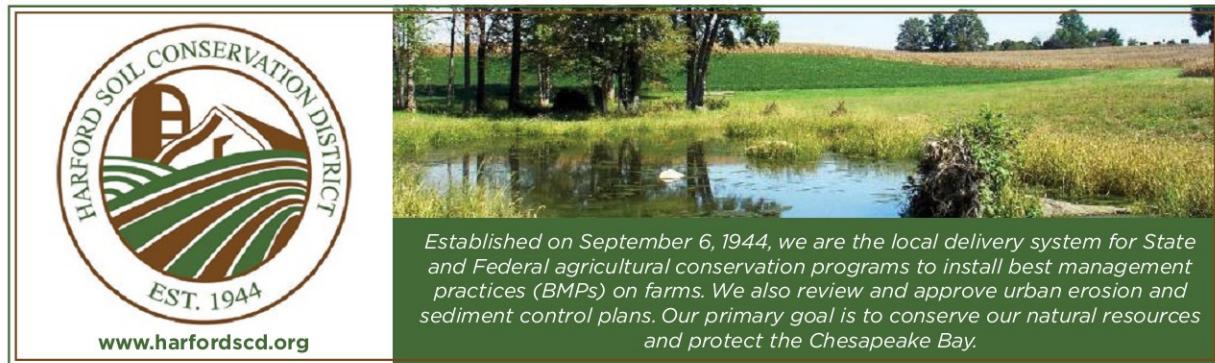
* To make simple syrup, add 1 cup water and 1 cup sugar to a sauce pot and bring to a boil. Stir constantly until sugar dissolves completely and mixture reduces slightly. Let cool, and mixture will thicken more as it sits. Simple syrup can be stored in the refrigerator in an airtight container.

** If you would like a smoother consistency, run purée through a strainer after step 1.

 <p>Fiore Winery & Distillery 3026 Whiteford Rd, Pylesville, MD 21132 fiorewinery.com</p>	 <p>Mount Felix Vineyard & Winery 2000 Level Rd Havre De Grace, MD 21078 mountfelix.com</p>	 <p>Harford Vineyard & Winery 1311 W Jarrettsville Rd Forest Hill, MD 21050 harfordvineyard.com</p>	 <p>Royal Rabbit Vineyards 1090 Jordan Sawmill Rd Parkton, MD 21120 royalrabbitvineyards.com</p>
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GunpowderWineTrail.com



SINGLE STREAM RECYCLING GUIDE

Put all of your paper, plastics, cans, glass, and cardboard together in the same container of your choice.

	ACCEPTABLE	NOT ACCEPTABLE
PAPER	newspapers, magazines, and catalogs ♦ junk mail, envelopes ♦ phone books ♦ hardback & paperback books ♦ office paper (writing, copy, computer, fax, letterhead, etc.) ♦ cardstock ♦ paperboard boxes (cereal, frozen food, shoes boxes, etc.) ♦ corrugated cardboard ♦ milk, juice, ice cream cartons and boxes ♦ paper bags ♦ greeting cards ♦ non-foil gift wrap ♦ shredded paper (place in cardboard box or paper bag. NO PLASTIC BAGS)	facial tissues, napkins, and paper towels ♦ used paper plates or cups ♦ foil gift wrap ♦ waxed or laminated paper or cardboard ♦ food-contaminated boxes ♦ pizza boxes ♦ photo paper
PLASTIC	bottles and jugs (milk, water, detergent, salad dressing, cooking oil, shampoo, spray products, etc.) ♦ disposable plastic cups ♦ flower and nursery pots ♦ plastic toys ♦ buckets and pails with handles ♦ wide-mouth containers (margarine, yogurt, peanut butter, etc.) ♦ plastic lawn furniture ♦ plastic coolers ♦ trash cans ♦ laundry baskets ♦ NO PLASTIC BAGS	bags and sheeting ♦ Styrofoam™ (plates, cups, packing material, etc.) ♦ cutlery (knives, forks, spoons) ♦ straws ♦ CD cases ♦ motor oil bottles ♦ pesticide or solvent bottles ♦ K-cups ♦ VHS tapes ♦ plastic electronics (alarm clock, coffee maker, etc.) ♦ piping ♦ vinyl siding ♦ clam shells (bakery, salad bar, etc.) ♦ beverage can rings ♦ candy bar and food wrappers ♦ bubble wrap
METAL & GLASS	aluminum and steel/tin cans (drink, food, and pet food) ♦ EMPTY aerosol cans (EXCEPT PESTICIDE AND SPRAY PAINT) ♦ aluminum foil ♦ aluminum foil bakeware ♦ glass, food, beverage bottles and jars (any color)	propane cylinders ♦ metal lawn chairs ♦ pots and pans ♦ scrap metal ♦ window glass ♦ dishes and cookware ♦ ceramics (plates, bowls, mugs, etc.) ♦ drinking glasses ♦ crystal ♦ light bulbs and tubes (incandescent, LED or fluorescent) ♦ mirrors

For updates, tips, and more, follow us at www.facebook.com/HarfordCountyRecycling

Harford County Office of Recycling

FROM INTERNET to Table



HOW FARMERS ARE TAPPING INTO NEW MARKETS

Nick Bailey, Caroline Sorrell, and the team at Grand View Farm in Forest Hill realized a few years ago the future of local food would likely be online, and they began building their presence through social media.

In 2017, they started taking orders through their website for beef, pork, eggs, and produce. Their customer base grew steadily, but within four weeks this spring – at the height of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic – online orders skyrocketed more than 1,000 percent for the Harford County farm.

“It makes sense with everything going on,” Bailey, the farm CEO, said. “It would be wrong to say we were surprised, but in this generation, it’s what we’ve been preparing for for two years. We accelerated a year in four weeks in terms of growth of revenue and customer base.”

Online marketing and sales is an aspect of the agricultural industry many Harford farmers, especially the older ones, struggle with.

“It’s definitely a young person’s arena at this point,” Bailey, 32, said.

He started the farm in 2012 with his father, Wilson.

“They were a team and that really was smart,” Sorrell, 29, who is Bailey’s sister and the director of sales, said. “Dad has the agriculture background, but he also saw the strength of Nick in marketing and communication.”

SOCIAL MEDIA

Emmy Dallam, who started her poultry business in Churchville in 2018, said a social media presence is important.

“It’s the new way people see things. I think [online] is where everyone is gathering their information,” Dallam, 23, said. “And it leaves it there. People can go to your page and look it up.”

Many long-time farmers struggle with the idea of being online, whether



Emmy Dallam uses social media to promote her business and products

it be a web page or on social media. They’re busy in the fields and pastures all day and don’t have time for it.

“When farmers are in the field, our first thought is not to take a picture or shoot a video,” Sorrell said. “We really have to stop and make an effort when we’re out there. But customers want to see your daily life and your activity. It’s a whole change of perspective.”

It’s time consuming, but Dallam knows it’s important.

“When I do it, I try to make it worth it,” Dallam said.

Technology can also be frightening for a lot of people who have to learn something new.

“But once you get into it and start to understand, it makes sense,” she said. “But it’s the hesitation – technology is unfamiliar to most farmers, that’s why most have not switched to this.”

Grand View Farms didn’t go all online all at once. They started with a photo here and there of them working in the fields or with the animals, posted on social media – Instagram mostly (@gvfarm) as well as Facebook (Grand View Farm). From there,

they moved to their online platform and started online sales in 2018 at www.grandviewfarming.com.

“You don’t have to dive in all at once and overwhelm yourself,” Sorrell said.

Dallam maintains active Instagram (@homelands_poultry) and Facebook (Homelands Poultry) pages. She’s pleased with how they’re doing so far, with about 80 followers on Instagram and an ever-growing Facebook page.

“I’m not an influencer, by any means, but I get responses and people share my posts,” Dallam said. “It’s a few hundred every time, which makes me feel good.”

Instagram is a great way to show consumers that she does more than just deliver a product. She also works on her parents’ farm.

“I can show off projects we do in the off-season, like building a butcher shop on the farm,” she said. “We do more than just feed the animals, and we want people to see that.”

To get the butcher shop built, this off-season she’s had to cut down a tree and pour mortar in a wall to seal cracks.



Caroline Sorrell helps promote Grand View Farm through online marketing and sales

“It’s not just taking care of the cows,” Dallam said.

She uses Facebook as an avenue to push her meats, letting consumers know where they’ll be available – Brad’s Farm Market or her parents’ store on their farm, Broom’s Bloom Dairy, among others.

She also used it to announce her new website, www.homelandspoultry.com, and that this year she’s adding chickens to her flock and by mid-summer should be selling whole and half-chickens, breasts, and wings.

When Dallam started her business she had two flocks of turkeys, about 100 of them. She’s up to 225 and plans to keep her flock right around there.

GOING ONLINE

Grand View Farms was started as a way for the family to use its land to provide the community with an alternative to the industrial food system, Bailey said. Eight years ago, there weren’t many alternatives, and there still aren’t.

“We serve customers who are looking for nutrient-dense local food. It’s clean food, raised on protocols we believe in and they’re really looking for,” Bailey said.

Their products are offered in three ways – the farm store open Fridays and

Saturdays for customers to browse and shop; order online and pick up at the farm store; or order online and deliver to Harford County and Baltimore County and City or ship anywhere from New York to southern Virginia.

To be successful online, Bailey and Sorrell knew they had to have a simple process.

“We have to have the most frictionless experience for our customers. We can serve them with exactly what they want, quickly and easily,” Bailey said.

“We’re taking the farmers market, putting it online and delivering it to their door,” Sorrell added.

A simple online ordering system also makes the packaging, processing and delivery more efficient from a business standpoint. Customers also know the precise status of their orders from the moment it’s submitted. Much like large corporations, Grand View sends a verification email and customers can watch as their orders are fulfilled and know when it will arrive.

“Customers never have to ask what’s next because they already know,” Bailey said.

The online ordering technology isn’t difficult, but it can be tedious and it takes some time to understand. It also needs to be updated.

Before the family began focusing on online ordering, they were serving 200 to 300 customers through the farm. Now they’re serving thousands through the website and other outlets.

“We didn’t predict anything like what we’re seeing now, but we were ready for it,” Bailey said.

When shutdowns began in mid-March because of the COVID-19 pandemic, orders began picking up. The first thing Bailey and Sorrell did was use social media to create a blogpost to tell their customers not to panic.

“We have a supply chain to serve customers that works as long as you don’t overwhelm the system for no reason,” he said. “We got out ahead of it. We told everyone to remain calm, that we’ll be here, we won’t run out of product and we’ll ramp up as the orders come in. And sure enough, they did.”

Unlike larger businesses that need to coordinate through brokers, Grand View Farm is “the whole ship” in one place.

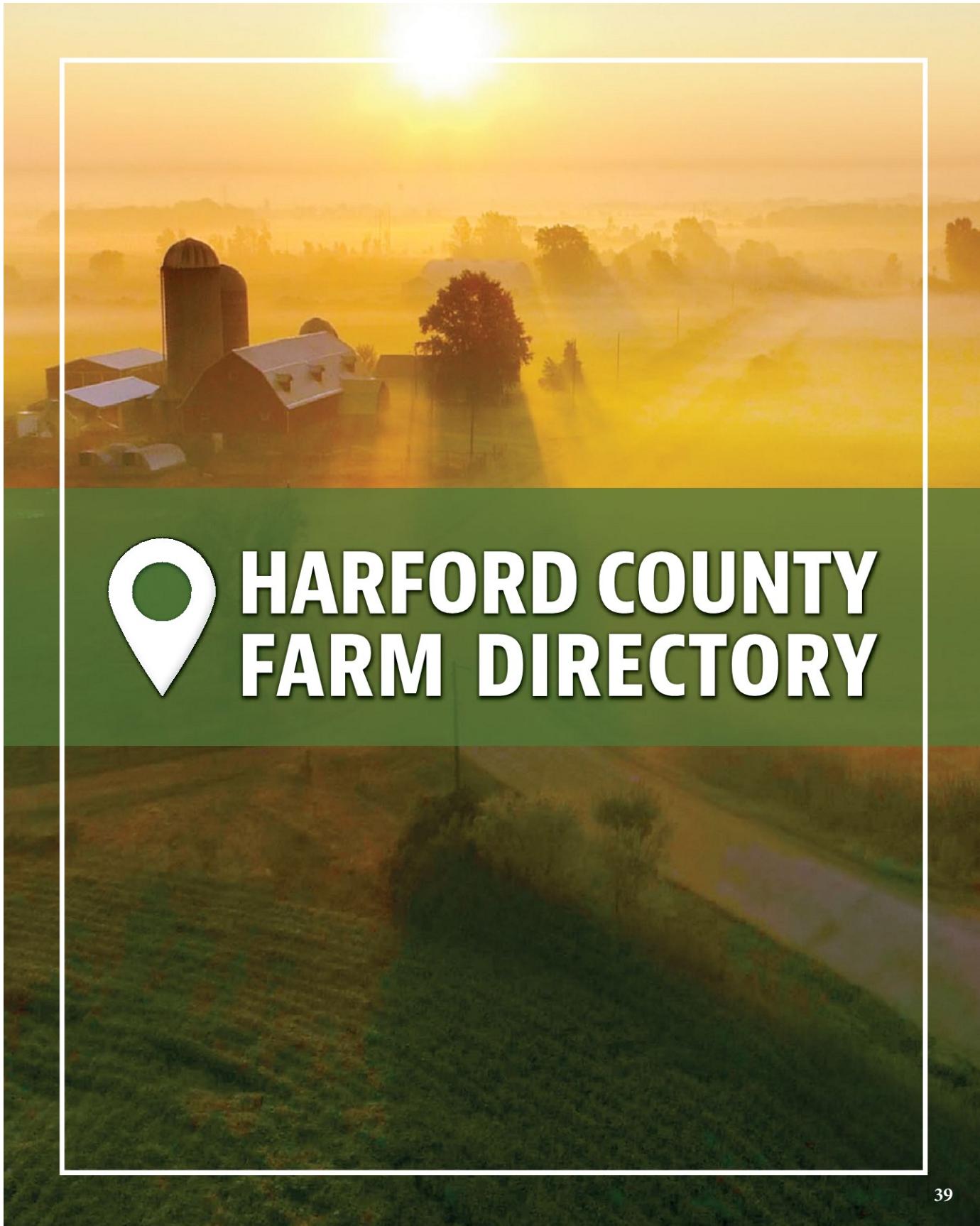
“We can all sit down in one room and make decisions to meet the new demand. In an hour or two we can completely pivot,” Bailey said.

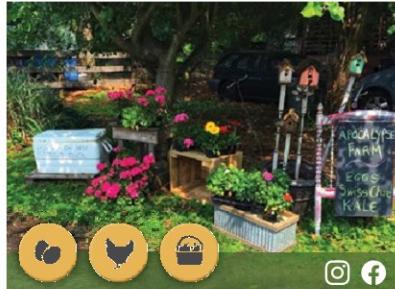
Just because the business is successful doesn’t mean there isn’t room to improve.

“We’re never complacent when it comes to our business. We’re always looking at how we can do better, how we can improve, and we’re always open to customer suggestions,” Sorrell said. “That’s why our model has been successful, because we didn’t just set it up and leave it, we’re constantly making changes to it.”

There’s also plenty of room to grow.

“This is just the beginning for us,” Bailey said. “Our vision is to take the entire local food experience and put it online and make it relevant for the next couple of generations.” ■

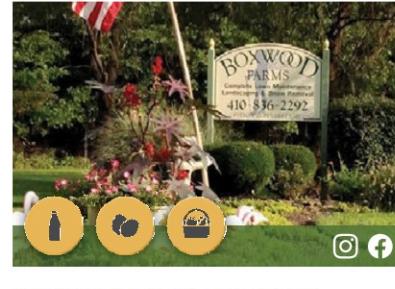




APOCALYPSE FARM

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BOXWOOD FARMS

Bel Air, MD

🏡 704 Schucks Road
✉ boxwoodfarms@comcast.net
☎ (410) 836-2292



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✉ thebrownhousemeadows@gmail.com
☎ (443) 619-3358



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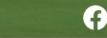
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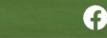
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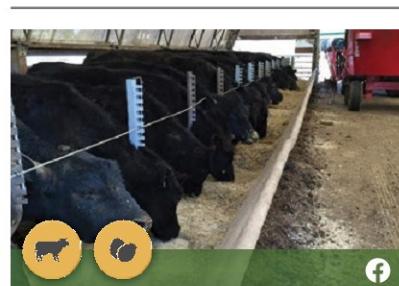
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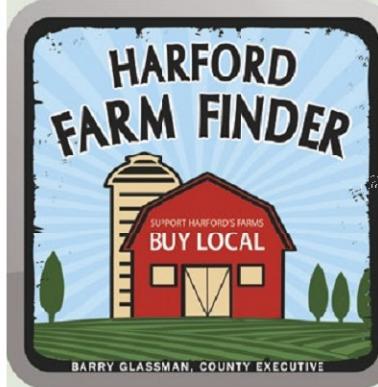
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Are you looking to put your farm on the map? Harford's Farm Finder is now up and running at bit.ly/HCFarmFinder.

Applications are available at the Harford County Agricultural Center at:

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You can also find the application forms at www.harfordscd.org, or you can contact Leslie Zink at leslie.zink@maryland.gov.



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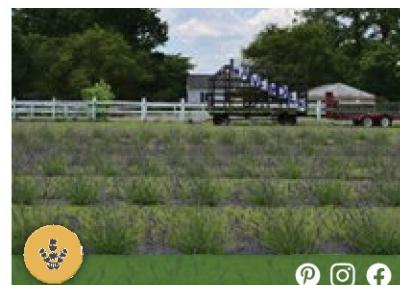
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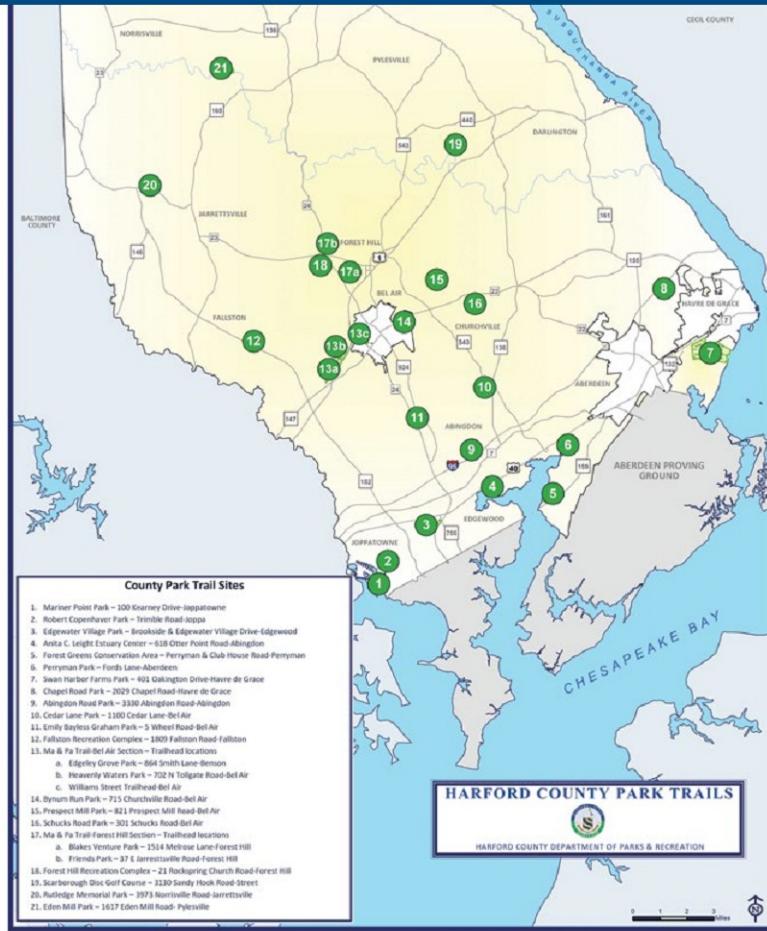


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Barry Glassman
County Executive





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Barry Glassman, Harford County Executive

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HARFORD COUNTY MARYLAND

'Best thing to come through Edgewood': Harford considering selling unused land to Coppermine for sports fields

By JAMES WHITLOW
THE AEGIS | FEB 05, 2020



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Washington Court in Edgewood sits vacant with only old roadways and sidewalks still visible. (MATT BUTTON/THE AEGIS / Baltimore Sun Media Group)

The Harford County Council is mulling a proposal to sell the Washington Court property in Edgewood to a Baltimore-based company that would build sports fields on the disused land.

Coppermine Fieldhouse has expressed interest in building eight turf fields on the 35-plus acre property to draw tournaments to Harford County and provide a space for community sports teams in Edgewood. The Washington Court property is located off Cedar Drive, behind Edgewood Elementary School and the Boys & Girls Club.

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Council will make a decision on rezoning the area for commercial amusement and recreation within the next couple of weeks, council president Patrick Vincenti said. It is currently zoned residential.

Residents and business owners took notice and turned out to overwhelmingly voice their support for the project. Over 20 people signed up to deliver their messages of approval to the council Tuesday night, with one calling the proposal “the best thing to come through Edgewood in recent memory.”

The proposed sale price for the land is \$1, a far cry from what the county paid for it near the turn of the century, but the projected gains from adding sports fields could make it worth it, officials said.

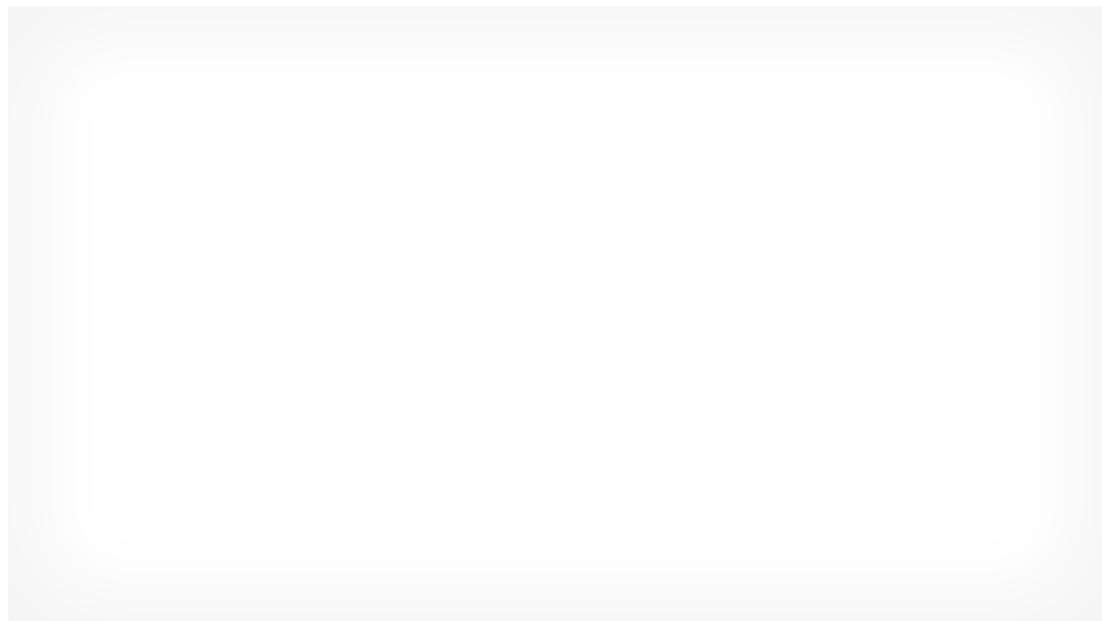
[\[More Maryland news\] Manhunt underway for gunman who shot two Anne Arundel detectives: ‘Come in and end this lunacy’ »](#)

Executive director of Visit Harford!, a nonprofit responsible for promoting the area, Greg Pizzuto said that soccer and lacrosse alone tournaments brought \$24 million a year to the county between 2013 and 2015, forecasting the project’s economic impact. Pizzuto also noted there was a dip in 2016 through 2018’s sports

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“Two things impact sports tourism, capacity and weather,” Pizzuto said. “These fields will not be as impacted by weather.”

Coppermine’s founder Alex Jacobs, who spoke to the council, said the company maintains nine properties around Maryland, and that the proposed fields could be just the beginning of a deeper involvement with Harford County.

The agreement as currently written would lock Coppermine into a 20-year contract, though it would be granted the land’s title after investing \$5 million.

One field costs about \$1.3 million to build, Jacobs said. Turf also stands up to the elements better than grass, reducing the costs of repairing wet grass fields that athletic cleats tear up.

[\[More Maryland news\] 'He fell into the money trap': Baltimore restaurant owner ordered to pay \\$8.6 million for royal con »](#)

“We look at this as a way to prove ourselves to Harford County,” Jacobs said. “We

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The county purchased Washington Court from the federal government in 2001 for \$992,000 after the military housing on it was decommissioned in 1994. From there, a revitalization effort began, but ultimately stalled after a recession hit the county and a **private developer backed out of building homes on the site in 2011.**

In 2017, **a new plan was unveiled** that made the property central to resuscitating the area of “Old Edgewood.” That plan called for homes to be built on the property.

Jacobs explained that the fields could draw over 6,000 people a week to Edgewood for tournaments or local community use. The aim, multiple business owners and members of the council articulated, is a rise in sports tourism revenue.

That tourism revenue is attractive to the county — people come, spend their money and leave without requiring civic services. And the potential gains are not small.

[More Maryland news] Baltimore rolls out illegal dumping hall of shame, naming the city's 10 biggest violators »

According to a study commissioned by Visit Harford!, **sports tourism brought the county close to \$50 million** and supported almost 650 jobs between 2016 and 2018.

Those numbers come from an accounting of youth baseball, lacrosse and soccer tournaments — primarily at three venues: Cedar Lane, Ripken Stadium, and Harford Polo Grounds.

“Based on that study that was done ... we know those tournaments bring people to the area,” Vincenti said. “We have the benefit of being able to host them.”

The fear is that Harford County could lose those dollars to neighboring Baltimore County.

With the impending closure of fields on Carsins Run Road, the county saw a need to bolster its athletic offerings. Vincenti said the approximately 36 acres near Aberdeen will stop operating around November.

[\[More Maryland news\] 2-year-old found safe in Howard County, police say »](#)

Patricia Parker, who works for Hilton hotels, said the fields were needed. Visitors from outside the county — or even state — pump money into the local economy, which works to everyone’s benefit.

“We need these fields. With the loss of Carsin’s Run, we are at a pivotal spot for our industry,” she said. “What is [Washington Court] worth sitting there vacant for the last however many years?”

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Coppermine would essentially be given the property, which it would then put up as collateral to secure funding for the fields' construction, Jacobs said. The venture is expected to generate between \$700,000 and \$1.5 million in taxes for the county over 20 years.

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Bel Air's Jay Young spends week in Miami, representing late brother George Young, a Pro Football Hall of Famer

FEB 5, 2020

Founded in 2011, Coppermine supports youth sporting activities around the state. In addition to soccer, lacrosse and baseball, they offer dance, gymnastics, football, tennis and other recreational programs and camps.

James Whitlow



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of the University of Maryland, James has also worked at McClatchy's Washington, D.C. Bureau and the Capital News Service.

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Baltimore Sun

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Chicago Tribune

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'You put a big hole in my heart': Havre de Grace woman sentenced to 20 years for killing boyfriend

Aubri Grace Pluhar, 25, of Havre de Grace, was sentenced Friday to 20 years in prison for the 2017 murder of her boyfriend, 24-year-old Michael C. Johnson. Johnson's body was found in a wooded area in the 1000 block of 10th Street in Havre de Grace.

Harford woman, 25, dead after head-on collision in Darlington; police seeking

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2 Forest Hill Companies Make Fastest-Growing List Of 2020: Inc.

Two Forest Hill businesses made the annual list released by Inc. ranking the 5,000 fastest-growing companies in the United States.

By Elizabeth Janney, Patch Staff 

Aug 15, 2020 11:58 pm ET | Updated Aug 16, 2020 5:31 am ET

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(Shutterstock)

FOREST HILL, MD — Inc. this week announced its 2020 list of fastest-growing privately-held companies in the United States. The annual list offers a look into 5,000 of the most successful small businesses led by some of the country's most inspiring entrepreneurs.

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Two Forest Hill companies were recognized on this year's Inc. 5000.

Well-known honorees on previous Inc. 5000 lists include Intuit, Zappos, Under Armour, Microsoft and Patagonia.

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Companies on this year's list achieved average growth of 500 percent over three years. Combined, companies earned about \$209 billion in revenue in 2019, accounting for more than 1 million jobs over the past three years.

"The companies on this year's Inc. 5000 come from nearly every realm of business," Inc. editor-in-chief Scott Omelianuk said in a news release. "From health and software to media and hospitality, the 2020 list proves that no matter the sector, incredible growth is based on the foundations of tenacity and opportunism."

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Here are the companies on this year's list headquartered in or near Bel Air:

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- Forest Hill
- Industry: Environmental services
- Three-year growth: 93 percent¹
- Ranking: 3,841

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- Forest Hill
- Industry: Software
- Three-year growth: 81 percent
- Ranking: 4,194

See the [full 2020 Inc. 5000 list](#). The top 500 companies will also be featured in the September issue of Inc., available on newsstands Aug. 18.

The annual Inc. 5000 event honoring the companies on the list will be held virtually Oct. 23-27.

— By Megan VerHelst and Elizabeth Janney



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Woman Last Seen In Bel Air Has Been Found: Officials



Crime & Safety | Aug 24

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We Remember

Fri, Sep 11, 2020 at 7:00 PM
Bel Air, MD

Featured

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Thu, Sep 10, 2020 at 7:00 PM

Kores 3rd Year Anniversary FREE Bootcamp Class

Sat, Sep 12, 2020 at 8:00 AM

Homeward Bound Vet Open House

Sat, Sep 12, 2020 at 10:00 AM

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Sat, Sep 12, 2020 at 6:00 PM

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Sun, Sep 13, 2020 at 10:00 AM

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Linda Mcdeshen, Neighbor
Bel Air, MD | 15h | Edited

Looking for lost 1 year old gray Tabby. He's been gone from Box Hill North for 36 hours, his name is Jaxie. \$50 reward for safe return but if you see him please call 443-257-6800 my name is Linda Mcdeshen

Thank

Reply (1)

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Sandy, Neighbor
Bel Air, MD | 1d

When are they going to open movie theaters

Thank

Reply (3)

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Local Question

Elizabeth Janney, Patch Staff
Bel Air, MD | 3d

Have you volunteered at a Bel Air area food bank or helped to address food insecurity or hunger in the community in some other way? Tell us about your experience.

Thank

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Local News Tip



Kushi Schusterman, Community Contributor
Bel Air, MD | 3d



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Local Question

 **Marcie Dawson**, Neighbor
Bel Air, MD | 5d

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 Thank  Reply (8)  Share



Elizabeth Janney, Patch Staff
Bel Air, MD | 6d

As Maryland enters stage three of reopening Friday, is there anything you are looking forward to doing that you couldn't do before? <https://patch.com/maryland/belair/s/h895d/all-maryland-businesses-can-reopen-friday-hogan>

 Thank  Reply (29)  Share



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Bel Air, MD | 6d

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2 Harford Sewing Businesses Get State Grants For Mask Making

Two Harford companies were awarded state grant funding for manufacturing personal protective equipment during the coronavirus pandemic.

By Elizabeth Janney, Patch Staff

Jun 10, 2020 10:02 am ET | Updated Jun 10, 2020 1:52 pm ET

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Two sewing companies will be making masks to help during the coronavirus pandemic, thanks to a state manufacturing grant. (Shutterstock)

HARFORD COUNTY, MD — Two Harford County businesses have been awarded state grant funding for manufacturing personal protective equipment (PPE) during the coronavirus pandemic. Both companies will contribute sewing.

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Homestyle Workroom of Jarrettsville and Spilled Paint Design of Kingsville are among 25 grant recipients through the Maryland COVID-19 Emergency Relief Manufacturing Fund, which has been created to enable businesses to switch over to or expand the production of PPE.



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The program received more than 200 applications.

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"There was an overwhelming response to this program and each and every company that applied for this grant saw a need and wanted to contribute in any way they could," Maryland Commerce Secretary Kelly M. Schulz said in a statement. "We are pleased that this program not only helped to support the production of much needed PPE, but also provided companies with funding to keep their employees working during this challenging time."

Here's the full list of grant recipients:

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"We are proud to provide support to the dozens of Maryland companies that stepped up during this global pandemic to produce the most critically-needed equipment," Gov. Larry Hogan said in a statement. "Our top priority is to protect our essential and front line workers, and having a steady and reliable supply of items that are still in high demand will ensure we can continue to keep them safe."

Patch editors Alessia Grunberger and Kristin Danley-Greiner contributed to this article.

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Aberdeen leaders hope proposed mixed-use development is the 'spark' to kick off downtown revitalization

By JAMES WHITLOW
THE AEGIS | MAR 10, 2020



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A mixed use development featuring 24 apartments above 4,000-square-feet of commercial and retail establishments for Franklin Street in downtown Aberdeen, shown in this rendering.(Courtesy City of Aberdeen)

A proposal to build 24 apartments above commercial and retail space along Franklin Street will move to a public hearing after Aberdeen city council members

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members of the council — Sandra Landbeck was absent — were enthused to sponsor it. Mayor Patrick McGrady said that Landbeck told him she wished to sponsor the bill as well. Unfortunately, city clerk Monica Correll told them they could not all leave their mark on the ordinance. Councilmen Jason Kolligs and Tim Lindecamp ended up as the bills sponsors because they spoke first in the formal process.

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The apartments would be built along 11, 15 and 19 Franklin Street, across the street from the Aberdeen Festival Park and City Hall.

The three-story units would be for mixed use, with commercial and retail proposed for the ground floor and residential planned for the upper levels. The apartment units would have one, two or three bedrooms, and the lower floor would supply at least 4,000-square-feet of retail and commercial space.

Steven B. Horne, who is purchasing and developing the property, said he wanted to invest in the community because he has lived in Aberdeen for a long time.

[\[More Maryland news\] One Maryland family collected \\$100,000 of taxpayer money through an education savings account loophole. Others are benefiting, too. »](#)

A local business owner, Horne mused he might want to move his headquarters of his company, Horne Concrete Construction, to one of the commercial spaces below the apartments, which he hopes to complete in less than three years.

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According to the contract of sale, the city would sell Horne the property for \$1, but Horne estimates the construction to cost \$3 million if approved by the council. Additionally, the contract calls for the developer to make some improvements to Festival Park across the street.

"If you are going to be part of the community, you need to give back and be part of the progress," Horne said. "Eventually, somebody has to step forward and make the first move."

And Horne's move was "exactly what the city had in mind when [it] land-banked this property," McGrady said.

Aberdeen put out notices in June of last year that the property was for sale or open for a long-term lease. It was actively marketed and had its deadline extended twice, City Manager Randy Robertson said, but no developer bit until Horne submitted a proposal Oct. 4.

[\[More Maryland news\] Two Baltimore-area eateries are coming to downtown Columbia in Howard County »](#)

Horne said that times are changing for Aberdeen. Once, canning was its main industry and small businesses proliferated through the city. But today, people commuting through or living in the city are of a different bent — more tech-savvy

and higher-skilled workers drawn by Aberdeen Proving Ground and the millions of dollars it represents.

To that end, he thought updated living spaces, like those seen in Baltimore or the District of Columbia, could be a "spark" to spur development around the park.

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of that type. The units will be rented at market-rate, not subsidized or Section 8 housing, he said.

It also comes with the added bonus of returning the property to use, generating tax revenue for the city, Horne's attorney Joseph Snee said at the hearing.

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5h

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The next step for the proposed complex will be a public hearing scheduled for March 23.

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HARFORD COUNTY MARYLAND

Aberdeen movie theater set to open Friday

By S. WAYNE CARTER JR.
THE AEGIS | MAR 05, 2020



The Horizon Cinemas movie theater in Aberdeen is set to open this Friday, March 6, according to an announcement on the business's Facebook page.

When reached by phone Thursday morning, Robert Weinholt Sr. said he couldn't talk because was busy getting the space ready for the Friday opening.

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[Tickets are on sale](#) for showings to eight films at the theater Friday, starting with 2:40 p.m. showing of Disney Pixar's "Onward."



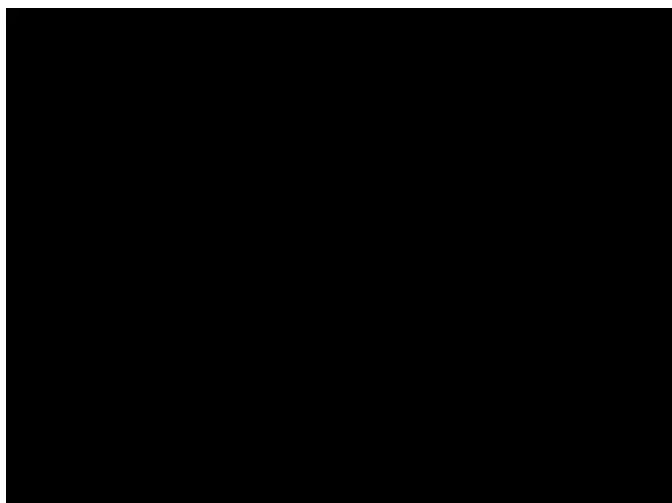
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Horizon Cinemas Aberdeen
 8 hours ago

34 8 180

Last May, [Weinholt told members of the Aberdeen City Council](#) that he and his sons signed a lease to open the theater, with recliners, a bar and food choices in the vacant space that was Mars grocery store in the Aberdeen Marketplace shopping center on Beards Hill Road. He had initially hoped to have the theater opened by January.

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Weinholt built and opened the Beards Hill Theater in Aberdeen in 1986. The theater closed in 1997 because of competition from new Regal Cinemas in Constant Friendship.

In 2017, Weinholt and his associates opened the Horizon Theater in the Fallston Village Shopping Center, which became the [first theater in Harford County to have a liquor license](#).

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Aberdeen Movies, Inc., was scheduled to appear before the Harford County Liquor Control Board last month for a hearing on a new license, but it was postponed, according to the meeting's agenda.

LATEST HARFORD COUNTY

Aberdeen movie theater set to open Friday

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5:00 AM

The liquor license has not yet been issued for the theater, said Mary Sporre, the administrative assistant for the liquor board, but it is on the agenda for the board's March 11 meeting.

S. Wayne Carter Jr.



Wayne Carter is a senior content editor in the Baltimore Sun Media Group's community newsroom, overseeing The Aegis and The Record in Harford County, where he grew up. Wayne previously was the editor of the Carroll County Times, where he worked for 12 years. He graduated from Salisbury University in 2002.

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Amazon hiring 4,400 employees in Maryland as e-commerce booms during coronavirus pandemic

By HALLIE MILLER
BALTIMORE SUN | SEP 14, 2020



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Amazon is hiring up to 4,400 employees for its Maryland facilities, the e-commerce giant announced Monday, as part of a massive **company-wide expansion** accelerated by booming sales during the coronavirus pandemic.

The planned new hires will add to the Seattle-based online retailer's 17,500-person work force in Maryland, it said in a news release Monday.

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The company has more than two dozen delivery, fulfillment and sortation centers, as well as Whole Foods Market stores, in Maryland, including large facilities in Baltimore, Sparrows Point, BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport and Cecil County. The state ranks among those with the most employment opportunities within the tech leader, according to the news release.

The company wants to bring on a total of 100,000 new full- and part-time workers across the United States and Canada to handle shipping, packaging and customer orders. That's in addition to 33,000 new corporate positions Amazon announced last week.

Separately, Macy's announced Monday that it is seeking Marylanders for jobs at its fulfillment center in Joppa as part of a push to hire 1,000 people company-wide. The retailer, which has stores in Bel Air, Columbia, Perry Hall, Security Square and Towson, is holding three hiring events at the Joppa facility in September.

[\[Most read\] Apparent murder-suicide in Bel Air leaves father and 3-year-old son dead, police say »](#)

Workers will assist with customer orders placed online and available jobs include warehouse staffers and forklift drivers. Candidates can apply by visiting [macysJOBS.com](#).

With more people confined to their homes during the public health outbreak, online retailers — especially those with the infrastructure already in place — have met [**unprecedented demand for service.**](#)

Amazon has opened 75 facilities already this year and plans to add 100 buildings to its network this month alone, said Dave Clark, senior vice president of worldwide operations at Amazon, in a statement.

In July, Amazon reported a 43.4% increase in North American sales in the second quarter and 33.5% worldwide revenue growth.

FEEDBACK

The company pledged to maintain salaries of at least \$15 per hour for all workers and include benefits from day one. Some employees will be eligible for up to \$500 in signing bonuses, Amazon said in its news release.

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Interested candidates can visit [amazon.com/apply](https://www.amazon.com/apply) to learn more and apply.

Hallie Miller



Hallie Miller is a business and health reporter at The Baltimore Sun. She joined the audience engagement team in 2018 after graduating from the University of Maryland, College Park, where she served as an editor for The Diamondback. She is a Maryland native but is always looking for story ideas.

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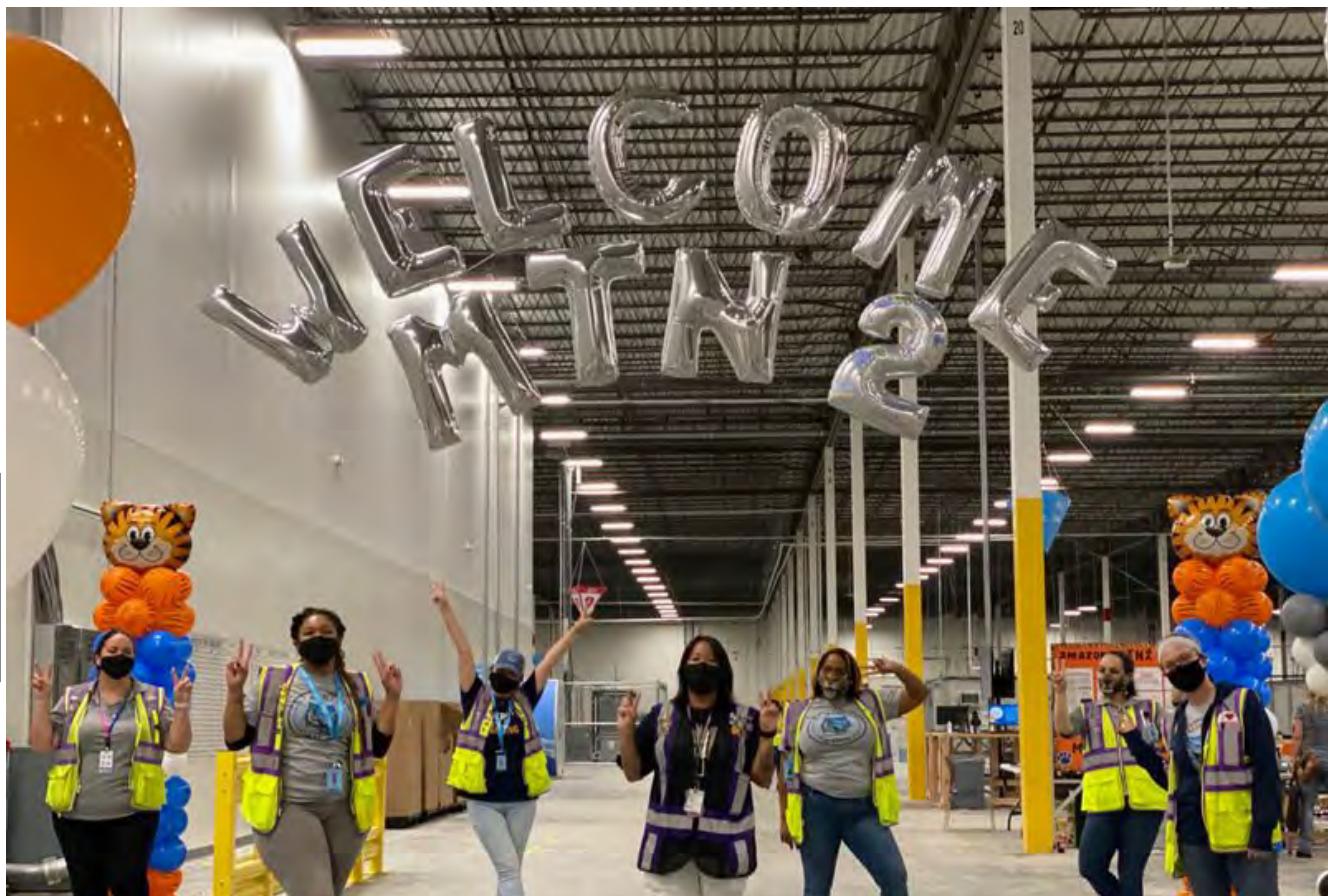
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HARFORD COUNTY MARYLAND

Amazon opens new sorting center in Aberdeen, bringing more than 1,000 jobs

By JAMES WHITLOW
THE AEGIS | NOV 10, 2020



FEEDBACK

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Amazon's local leadership team welcomed new associates into the Aberdeen sorting center. (Photo courtesy of Amazon)

Tech giant Amazon has opened a new sorting center in Aberdeen, the company announced Tuesday, bringing more than 1,000 full- and part-time jobs to the area.

The nearly 300,000 square-foot center is the company's third sort center in Maryland, in addition to numerous other centers and delivery stations across the state, which employs over 17,500 full- and part-time workers. The center's first day was Oct. 22 and the more than 1,000 positions added are also permanent, Courtney Norman, a spokesperson for Amazon, said in an email.

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At Aberdeen's station, employees will sort packages in preparation for their delivery, the company said, and the new center should speed up deliveries for Harford County customers.

In a statement, Harford County Executive Barry Glassman praised the company for investing in the county.

“Logistics and distribution centers are a growing and crucial part of our local economy,” Glassman said. “We are excited to have a global company like Amazon making substantial capital investments and creating jobs in our community.”

[\[More Maryland news\] Half a century ago, a U.S. Army soldier escaped armed captors in Africa. He's still seeking the recognition many say he's due. »](#)

Amazon has more than two dozen delivery, fulfillment and sortation centers, as well as Whole Foods Market stores, in Maryland, including large facilities in Baltimore, Sparrows Point, BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport and Cecil County.

Positions at Amazon's Aberdeen and White Marsh sortation centers are open, and prospective employees were encouraged to apply, as the positions are filled on a rolling basis. Those interested can apply on the company's [website](#).

The company said its starting wage in Maryland was \$15 an hour and that full-time employees are offered health, dental and vision insurance. The company also offers a program that pre-pays 95% of tuition for courses in high-demand fields like game design, visual communications, nursing, IT programming and radiology among others.

Amazon is also hiring for 7,200 seasonal roles across Maryland, the company announced.

Aberdeen Mayor Patrick McGrady said he was glad the site of the former Pier One Imports off Old Philadelphia Road, where the Amazon sortation center is now operating, has a new tenant.

[\[More Maryland news\] CCPS could reassess hybrid learning at Nov. 11 school board meeting after recent spike in COVID-19 cases »](#)

“It is good that the City of Aberdeen will not have a vacant warehouse,” he said.

Norman indicated that the decision to locate in Aberdeen was to ensure it was close to customers, among other considerations.

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“There are a lot of contributing factors that go into our thought process on where to place a new fulfillment center. Most importantly, we want to make sure a fulfillment center is placed as close to the customer as possible to ensure we can offer a great Prime service and fast shipping speeds to customers,” Norman replied in response to questions.

James Whitlow



James Whitlow covers Harford County crime and county government for The Aegis. Prior to joining Baltimore Sun Media in 2020, he was a reporter at the Danville (Virginia) Register & Bee. A 2018 graduate of the University of Maryland, James has also worked at McClatchy's Washington, D.C. Bureau and the Capital News Service.

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From the Baltimore Business Journal:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/baltimore/news/2020/09/14/amazon-macys-announce-hiring-sprees-in-baltimore.html>

Amazon, Macy's hiring thousands of workers in Greater Baltimore

Sep 14, 2020, 12:29pm EDT

Amazon and Macy's separately announced hiring sprees on Monday that will result in more than 5,000 new permanent and seasonal jobs in Greater Baltimore over the next few months.

The online retailing giant said it plans to add more than 4,400 permanent jobs in the Baltimore region as part of a plan to recruit 100,000 new full and part-time employees across the country. This is the fourth national hiring spree for Amazon this year as it looks to keep pace with increasing demand for e-commerce amid the coronavirus pandemic. Last week, the company also announced it planned to hire for 33,000 new tech and corporate jobs, with an average pay of \$150,000.



AMAZON.COM INC.

Amazon plans to hire more than 4,400 new workers in Maryland in the next few months.

Amazon (NASDAQ: AMZN) has already opened more than 75 new fulfillment, sortation centers, regional air hubs and delivery stations in the U.S. and Canada

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The new Baltimore-area jobs have a starting minimum wage of \$15 an hour, and Amazon is also offering signing bonuses of up to \$500. The web retailing giant

already has a workforce of 17,500 in Maryland. Full details are available at amazon.com/apply.

Meanwhile, Macy's is already ramping up for what is expected to be a busy holiday season of online orders by hiring for more than 1,000 seasonal positions at its Joppa fulfillment center in Harford County. The retailer will host hiring events for the full- and part-time jobs on Sept. 15 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and on Sept. 19 and Sept. 26 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the warehouse at 3300 Fashion Way.

Macy's noted in a release that it offers a "competitive wage" and that seasonal workers are often hired for permanent positions. The company has also implemented new health and safety precautions in light of the pandemic, including providing face masks and conducting daily wellness checks. More details are available at macysJOBS.com and candidates can interview over the phone for most positions.

The pandemic has not been kind to national retail chains as more customers switch to online shopping, and Macy's has not been immune. In June the company announced it would cut approximately 3,900 corporate and management roles in addition to reducing in-store, supply chain and customer support staff. Macy's, which has 15 stores in Maryland, filed a notice with the state in June saying it would lay off 234 workers at its Columbia and Annapolis stores.

But Macy's (NYSE: M) has so far avoided the same fate as many of its contemporaries, with [many long-standing retailers](#) including Lord & Taylor, J.Crew, Neiman Marcus, Ann Taylor, Men's Wearhouse and Jos. A. Bank, among those filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection this year.

Jessica Iannetta

Managing Editor

Baltimore Business Journal



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Army to research additive manufacturing with University of Maryland

By U.S. Army CCDC Army Research Laboratory Public Affairs October 19, 2020

University of Maryland at College Park enters into cooperative research partnership with Army's corporate research laboratory

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. -- The U.S. Army launched a five-year cooperative agreement with the University of Maryland at College Park Oct. 1. The alliance will focus on additive manufacturing science to foster and accelerate cutting-edge foundational AM materials and technology development to advance hybrid materials research capabilities.

The \$22.8 million initiative between the Army and the alliance will leverage advances in agile expedient manufacturing to advance Army modernization efforts.

“This collaboration will establish the critical foundational knowledge base to enable the next generation materials discovery and new products,” said Army researcher Dr. Jian Yu, the Cooperative Agreement manager for the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command’s Army Research Laboratory.

The joint effort will combine resources, creativity and manpower from UMD and the laboratory’s Adelphi and Aberdeen locations to create “a synergistic research environment to enable seamless knowledge transfer, personnel exchange and opportunities for student interns,” Yu said.

Successful research will see advances in hybrid electronics additive manufacturing, robotics for hybrid manufacturing, 3D printed metal hybrid processes, digital manufacturing data management and workforce development.

Department of Materials Science and Engineering.

According to the agreement, Integrated UMD-ARL research teams will be formed to strengthen joint research opportunities, refine research strategies as needed and accelerate the research progress utilizing jointly developed intellectual properties.

Research will be conducted in five yearly phases to pursue stated objectives through materials synthesis, generative design, AM processing and fabrication, hybrid materials testing and characterization, as well as data curation and data management to ensure adaptable continuity of the program outcomes.

Since 2016, the laboratory has pursued its Open Campus business model to create a dynamic, cooperative science and technology ecosystem that links government assets with the global research community.

“Because of UMD’s close proximity to both the Army’s Adelphi and Aberdeen locations, we will be able to take full advantage of the laboratory’s Open Campus initiative with the goal of building a science and technology ecosystems that will encourage groundbreaking advances in basic and applied research areas of relevance to the Army,” Zhao said.

In its 2019 Army Modernization Strategy, Army leadership elaborated its investments in realigning the Army’s capabilities to conduct Multi-Domain Operations across scenarios with multiple threats. The Materials Research Campaign identified emergent additive manufacturing materials development, technology and discovery platforms that will enable Army’s rapid response by creating a manufacturing science engine to ensure combat supremacy of the future.

“The envisioned program outcomes will enable revolutionary AM technology and concepts to expedite national readiness to respond to future challenges and demand,” Yu said.

University officials said this joint research venture in additive manufacturing will further stimulate innovative experimental designs and prototyping, computational modeling and simulations, as well as to institute a solid workforce development pipeline bridging talent between academia and the Army.

“We aim to achieve the kind of deep knowledge creation that will have long-lasting impacts on the U.S. national defense capabilities on land,” Zhao said. “As one of the world’s premier research

partnerships with federal and state government agencies and businesses, actively building a vibrant and interactive research innovation ecosystem.”

Visit the laboratory's Media Center to discover more Army science and technology stories

CCDC Army Research Laboratory is an element of the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command. As the Army's corporate research laboratory, ARL is operationalizing science to achieve transformational overmatch. Through collaboration across the command's core technical competencies, CCDC leads in the discovery, development and delivery of the technology-based capabilities required to make Soldiers more successful at winning the nation's wars and come home safely. CCDC is a major subordinate command of the Army Futures Command.

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As Valentine's Day arrives, Bel Air florist Petals 'N Posies has provided 'quality that's remembered' for 40 years

 By DAVID ANDERSON
 THE AEGIS | FEB 14, 2020

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Petals & Posies 40th anniversary

Petals and Posies owner B.J. Frew, front right, and her team of dedicated employees, from left, Bonnie DeBree, Aleah Levinson, Karen Watkins and Sandy Trimble have been providing quality flowers and gifts to the community for 40 years. (Matt Button / The Aegis/Baltimore Sun Media)

1 / 15

Walk into the Petals 'N Posies flower shop in Bel Air, and you will experience a feast for your eyes and nose – the sight of flowers of many colors, such as pink, white, red, yellow and purple, and the smell of fresh flowers on display throughout the store.

Petals 'N Posies is owned by Betty Jean "B.J." Frew, of Street, and the business turns 40 years old in 2020; the shop has been in the Del Plaza shopping center at Conowingo Road and Moores Mill Road for all four decades.

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Frew, 76, and her staff stayed busy Wednesday afternoon as they helped customers, received deliveries and processed orders ahead of Valentine's Day, which falls Friday.

Customer Matt Jergensen came in seeking a Valentine's Day floral arrangement for his wife. He has purchased flowers for the holiday from Petals 'N Posies each year for the past six years.

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"I like the fact that it's a local business," the Bel Air resident said. "When you come in, everyone is very nice, very knowledgeable; it's a very pleasant experience."

[\[More Maryland news\] Harford County family to appear on Lifetime's 'Supernanny,' airing Friday at 9 p.m. »](#)

He praised the staffers who typically have "some really good ideas" for floral arrangements, and noted that "they usually seem to have a good selection" of flowers. Jergensen also praised Petals 'N Posies' delivery service, noting the Valentine's Day arrangements are delivered to his wife while she is at work.

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Frew said her business has the motto: "quality that's remembered." It was not a certainty, when she opened the shop in 1980, that it would remain viable for 40 years, though, and it would be the only original business in Del Plaza.

"My father said to me, when I told him I wanted to start my own business, he said, 'You've done a lot of dumb things in your life, but this is the dumbest,'" Frew recalled.

Frew's father, Arthur Sawyer, helped her get the store up and running, despite his reservations. The facility was "just concrete block" when she acquired it in late 1979, and father and daughter worked to install drywall, paint, hang wallpaper, decorate, even build the service counters, before opening.

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The shopping center has seen many tenants over the years; Frew recalled when entities such as Harford Pharmacy, which is now in Hickory, and the Social Security Administration — now in Abingdon — were in Del Plaza.

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“Forty years later, I’m still here,” she said.

Tucked in the corner of the Del Plaza at the intersection of Conowingo and Moores Mill Roads in Bel Air, Petals and Posies Florist is celebrating 40 years of business in the same location. (Matt Button / The Aegis/Baltimore Sun Media)

Petals 'N Posies is meant to be a “destination store,” according to Frew. The location off of Moores Mill, one of the busiest east-west roads in Harford County, and its proximity to several schools, is ideal, she noted.

The store typically has six employees, including Frew, although the workforce goes up to nine during busy times of the year. Those include Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, prom and wedding seasons in the spring and summer and high school homecoming season in the fall.

"If you get winter like this [year], and there's no snow or ice to keep people in, we pretty much stay busy," Frew said.

Her store also provides floral arrangements for funerals, plus people buy flowers for birthdays, to let someone know they are thinking of them, when meeting someone for lunch, and many men will come in to buy flowers for their wives.

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"Men still love to take their wives flowers ... romance is not dead yet," Frew said.

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Her business has, in the past, provided decorations for parties and holidays in the form of floral arrangements. She and her staff would, during the early years, also go out to events in costumes with balloons and sing and dance; Frew noted that service "really put us on the map."

Frew grew up in Towson, and her family moved to Harford County in 1966, building a house in the High Point Manor community in Forest Hill.



Petals and Posies employee Aleah Levinson adds a few finishing touches to an arrangement at the Bel Air flower shop Wednesday afternoon. The store is celebrating 40 years of business in the same location. (Matt Button / The Aegis/Baltimore Sun Media)

An inherited love for flowers

Frew said she inherited her love of flowers from her mother, Josephine Sawyer, who was a master gardener, raised flowers and gardened around the family home.

"You have to be born with it," she said of qualities, such as artistry and creativity, required for creating floral arrangements that please customers.

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Frew held several jobs before opening the flower shop, including working as cancer lab technician at the University of Maryland

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She decided to open her own flower shop after working at The Greenery for four years, Frew said. She taught floral design courses at Harford Community College for eight years, holding classes and demonstrations at her store.

The business sponsors a state-champion men's recreational softball team, named Petals 'N Posies after the store.

Frew's shop has been a past sponsor when NFL games on "Sunday Night Football" aired on the Comcast network in the Philadelphia area — Frew recalled when she and her husband, Barney, were selected to travel with the Philadelphia Eagles when the team played on the road in Arizona.

"They just wined and dined us for four days," Frew said.

[\[More Maryland news\]](#) Harford teen wanted for November murder in Edgewood arrested after walking in front of police in Baltimore »

Barney and B.J. Frew were married in 1986; Barney is retired after having worked for *The Aegis* for 40 years, serving as circulation manager, in the printing section and many other duties. Barney Frew also helps his wife with her shop.

"He's helped me through a lot of it," she said. "It's not easy to own a business."

Frew said she still loves the business after 40 years, describing her staff as "very creative, very talented."

"We give good service, we deliver and we try to make our customers happy with what they want," she said.

Long time employee Bonnie DuBree works on a Valentine's Day bouquet of red roses at Petals and Posies in Bel Air Wednesday afternoon. The local flower shop is celebrating 40 years of business in the same location. (Matt Button / The Aegis/Baltimore Sun Media)

'All family here'

Manager Bonnie DuBree has spent 25 years with Petals 'N Posies and praised the "family feel" of the business.

"We're all family here, and it's comfortable and it's hometown," she said. "We want to treat all of our customers like family."

DuBree said she enjoys interacting with customers, noting that "they want to be able to come in and tell you their story about what's going on, and hope that you can give them some happiness." She said she loves to see customers brighten when flowers are delivered to them, whether they are arrangements for weddings, or sent to express sympathy during times of grief and loss.

"It's great to see people smile and know they're getting what they're paying for," she said.

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DuBree, 48, of Aberdeen, said she started working in the florist business when she was 17 years old and in high school in Baltimore County. Petals 'N Posies is the third flower shop for which she has worked.

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"I love this business — I love it — I'd be lost if I didn't do it," she said.

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Johns Hopkins student found dead on campus identified as 19-year-old Stella Chung

Baltimore police say 19-year-old Stella Chung was found dead inside her suite at Johns Hopkins University on Saturday.

Baltimore Sun

Homesense and Saladworks are the two newest tenants in Bel Air's Tollgate Marketplace

There are two new tenants in the Tollgate Marketplace shopping center in Bel Air: the Homesense retail store and a Saladworks restaurant.

Baltimore Sun

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“I’m bringing them all back,” said Gromacki.

Or to the barber shop...

“I’m bringing back two full-time barbers,” added Monico.

Even at half of their capacity, they look forward to being back in business.

As we previously reported, the county also recently got \$22 million in federal COVID grant money and will begin accepting applications from small businesses next week, helping them to get back on their feet.

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Back in business for Harford County

Harford County shops prepare to reopen

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He's in the business of cutting hair, but Angelo Monico is splitting time between cutting hair and scheduling cuts now that Towne Barbers on South Main Street in Bel Air is preparing to reopen at 50 percent of its capacity.



By: [Jeff Hager](#)

Posted at 4:41 PM, May 14, 2020 and last updated 5:33 PM, May 14, 2020

BEL AIR, Md. — He's in the business of cutting hair, but Angelo Monico is splitting time between cutting hair and scheduling cuts now that Towne Barbers on South Main Street in Bel Air is preparing to reopen at 50 percent of its capacity.

“It’s ringing all the time, nonstop, and text message and emails,” said Monico. “I can’t keep up with it to be honest with you. I just can’t.”

Two doors down outside The Nest gift shop, Kathi Gromacki and her daughter are doing a little spring cleaning, both inside and out, as they prepare to reopen its doors.

“We’re lifting things up for people to see better and not have to walk around, and they can feel comfortable with the distance between each customer,” said Gromacki.

Harford County Executive Barry Glassman says social distancing, face masks and hand washing will be crucial for the reopening businesses to protect their employees and customers, alike, and the county is easing code restrictions to provide additional distancing.

“I’m going to sign an order this afternoon that will also loosen county standards so retailers can use their parking lots and outdoor spaces as retail areas too, if they choose to do that,” said Glassman. “Most of the research

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HARFORD MAGAZINE

Brothers bring hospitality group and restaurant to Harford County

By JOHN-JOHN WILLIAMS IV
BALTIMORE SUN | AUG 19, 2020





Chef Josh Vecchiolla, right, grew these Heirloom Black Cherry Tomatoes, clockwise, Purple Ruffles Basil, Jimmy Nardello peppers and other herbs in his backyard garden to be used at the new concept burger restaurant he and brother Brad planned to open in Bel Air later this year or early 2021. (Kenneth K. Lam)

Brothers Josh and Brad Vecchiolla sold lemonade as kids. At ages 7 and 5, they operated their own snowball stand, with syrups made from Kool-Aid packets. When they got older, they would host meals for friends and family on the deck of their parents' Bel Air home to try out new food and drink concepts.

The brothers dreamed of one day going into business together. Despite the coronavirus pandemic, that dream is expected to become a reality this year.

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Josh, 33, said he was laid off as the executive chef for two Michael's Café locations due to COVID-19. He was waiting for the green light from state officials for the restaurants to re-open.

Brad, 31, who had been living in New Orleans, where he was general manager of a bistro in the French Quarter, said he came back to their parents' home temporarily to ride out the pandemic.

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Chef Josh Vecchiolla grew Heirloom Black Cherry Tomatoes, clockwise from left, Purple Ruffles Basil, Jimmy Nardello peppers and other herbs in his backyard garden hoping to use at the new concept burger restaurant he and brother Brad planned to open in Bel Air later this year or early 2021. (Kenneth K. Lam)

“I didn’t feel great about coming back,” Brad said. “And more and more things started happening. I decided to step away and focus on something with my brother and move back to the East Coast.”

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Josh added: “Through this whole COVID thing, we decided now was the time. We were brought back together. Having this time together, we figured: Why not do this now?”

The result of their most recent collaboration will be a burger place named Fuzzies.

Their first restaurant together is a nod to their childhood and the good memories they had while enjoying a good burger.

“Honestly, it was kind of a no-brainer based on overhead and ongoing costs and the ease of execution,” Brad said. “We went through many names. Hundreds and hundreds. We kept going back to this idea of nostalgia and the warm fuzzies you get.”

The restaurant will have “a few different burgers,” a couple of vegetarian options, French fries, onion rings, pimento cheese dip, classic bottled sodas and ice cream options — depending on the space.

[\[More Maryland news\] ‘A little underdog’: A rediscovered log cabin with a mysterious past in Hagerstown showcases a forgotten Black community »](#)

Josh said he wanted to bring something different to his home county.

“There are a lot of chain restaurants in Harford County,” he said, adding that he wished Harford had more independent “fun” concepts like Hampden, a popular Baltimore neighborhood.

Heather Murphy, vice president of the Harford County Chamber of Commerce, has worked closely with the brothers. She connected them with mentors, potential financial backers and other key individuals through her organization’s Venture Access program.

“They are very well on their way,” Murphy said. “They just needed those special local connections to make that impact.”

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She said the brothers bring a big-city vibe with their concept.

“They are young. They have a new energy and a fresh take,” she explained. “The more that we can get entrepreneurs like Josh and Brad, they’ll set a great example to attract more entrepreneurs.”

By mid-July, the two said, they were close to finalizing a deal on a space and even had menus mocked up for Fuzzies. They declined to share further details at that time.

Chef Josh Vecchiolla expanded his culinary repertoire working at a variety of restaurants. He tended bar at El Rodeo in Towson and the now-closed Parts and Labor, the butcher-centric restaurant in Remington. He was there for two years before becoming the executive chef at Towson Tavern, seen here in this file photo. Eventually he led the two Michael's Café restaurants, where he remained for two years (Jen Rynda/BSMG)

Building on years of experience

Nostalgic Hospitality is the name of the brothers' hospitality group. The two want to create concepts based on memories from growing up in the '80s and '90s, according to Josh.

They also will pay homage to the South. Josh lived in Savannah from 2008 to 2010 while attending Savannah College of Art and Design. He studied industrial and automobile design before deciding to pursue a career in the culinary industry.

[\[More Maryland news\] These are the new speed and red-light cameras headed for Baltimore City »](#)

Back home, he put the knowledge from working with his neighbor and mentor Mark Anderson to work doing private chef dinners.

He also expanded his culinary repertoire working at a variety of restaurants. He tended bar at El Rodeo in Towson and the now-closed Parts and Labor, the butcher-centric restaurant in Remington.

He was there for two years before becoming the executive chef at Towson Tavern. Eventually he led the two Michael's Café restaurants, where he remained for two years.

Meanwhile, Brad earned his restaurant chops in New Orleans' famed food scene.

He worked primarily for the LaBlanc + Smith restaurant group and their French bistro concept, Meauxbar, where he held positions of bartender, bar management, and general manger before serving as the director of operations.

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During his seven years in New Orleans, Brad also furthered his training as a sommelier after becoming a certified sommelier in 2017. In addition, he had stints working in Massachusetts and completed a grape harvest in southern France.



Brothers Josh, left, and Brad Vecchiolla are teaming up to open a new concept Burger-themed restaurant in downtown Bel Air later this year or early 2021. (Kenneth K. Lam)

Their joint business endeavor was a long time coming, according to Brad.

“I wanted to be further along in my career and learn more about business and finances. I wanted him to do the same before really diving in — have some experience under our belts,” Brad said.

They say their company will work to create a positive work experience for their employees by offering employees two days off in a row, resources for mental health

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“We’re working to develop a training program by encouraging and advising people to develop the necessary tools to work themselves up just like we did,” Josh said. “We want to see more success stories of dishwashers who become chefs.”

John-John Williams IV



John-John Williams IV has worked for The Baltimore Sun since 2005. He joined the paper as an education reporter covering Howard County, then Baltimore City and state and national education stories. He joined the features staff as the fashion reporter in 2011. His role in features has expanded to covering home, food, travel and popular culture.

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By TOM IRUDIMBELL

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"It's Going Great" Businesses Back Open In Harford County

by Shelley Orman

Saturday, May 16th 2020

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Search Site*"It's Going Great" Businesses Back Open In Harford County*

Customers are back in stores in Harford County.

Many came as soon as doors opened Saturday morning as part of phase one of the governor's reopening.

A Bel Air jewelry store is modifying how they interact with customers to stay safe.

"It's going great so far. It's only been an hour. We've probably had 20-25 customers already," says Vic Pierorazio with Saxon's Diamond Centers in Bel Air.

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new safety measures.

"As soon as a customer leaves the area, we're lysoling it, wiping it down. We're trying to be as cautious as we can," he says.

All jewelry is cleaned before being tried on.

Employees have faceshields. Everyone wears a mask, and they're spreading out in the store.

"We're trying to keep everyone far apart," he says. "If we're in a case, we have to wait a few minutes til that case is availalbe to go into that case."

He says people are still coming in to shop and many are getting repairs which will take a little longer because they're holding them a week.

"For protection, mainly for the jeweler himself. He's going to be working on tons of jewelry," he says

Saxon's is offering sales to get people back.

"20% off of almost everything in the store," he says. "And 24 months no interest."

They're expecting lots of Marylanders to make the drive outside of Harford County.

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Business

Children's Urgent Care Is Coming to Bel Air

A new business coming to the Tollgate Marketplace will specialize in pediatric urgent care.

By Elizabeth Janney, Patch Staff 

Jan 21, 2020 10:26 pm ET | Updated Jan 22, 2020 11:25 am ET

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BEL AIR, MD — A new pediatric urgent care facility will open in the coming mon
Bel Air. The clinic will be located at Tollgate Marketplace.



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Children's Urgent Care will be in a 3,500-square-foot space next to TGI Fridays.

Currently, the area is under construction.

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The clinic will treat issues typically covered by urgent care facilities. Testing for strep, mono and flu will be conducted. X-ray services will be offered on-site, and some blood work will be done in house as well.

"Our staff is trained specifically to work with pediatric populations," Katie Prevas, director of marketing for Children's Urgent Care, told Patch Tuesday. "Catering to children specifically, we understand their anxieties and can alleviate them as best as possible."

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While those under 18 are the focus, "in the off chance a mom would want to be seen," Prevas said she could be treated too.

Initially, Prevas said there will be a staff of about five, including a health care provider, medical assistant, x-ray tech and front desk personnel.

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Children's Urgent Care in Bel Air will be the "only one of its kind," Prevas said, and the company is "looking to open more." It's a division of Expresscare Urgent Care and Life Bridge Health.

The company chose to launch its first pediatric urgent care clinic in Bel Air and the Tollgate Marketplace location because it's a "busy area with lot of children, school and moms groups," Prevas said.

Children's Urgent Care will accept all major insurance providers and operate on sliding scale for those who are not insured, according to Prevas.

She said the center plans to open in late March or early April and will operate from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Children's Urgent Care will be at 615 Bel Air Rd, Suite Y, Bel Air, MD 21014.

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HARFORD COUNTY MARYLAND

Construction on Upper Chesapeake's Aberdeen medical facility, marketing of Harford Memorial to begin this fall

By DAVID ANDERSON
THE AEGIS | OCT 07, 2020



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Construction is slated to begin this fall on Upper Chesapeake Health's free-standing medical center in Aberdeen, as well as the health system's planned expansion of Upper Chesapeake Medical Center in Bel Air, the organization's leaders announced this week.

University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health is also working with global commercial real estate firm Cushman & Wakefield to begin marketing and ultimately sell Harford Memorial Hospital in Havre de Grace.

Harford Memorial is slated to close once the health system's new free-standing medical center and special psychiatric hospital open in Aberdeen in the spring of 2023. Officials with the nonprofit Harford County health system are preparing for a virtual ground-breaking ceremony expected to happen in November.

The expansion of the Bel Air hospital, a three-story bed tower, also is expected to open in 2023 — the new facilities also are being designed with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in mind, according to UCH officials.

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The announcement comes 25 years after Upper Chesapeake Health submitted its application to the state to build Upper Chesapeake Medical Center, said Lyle

Sheldon, UCH's president and CEO.

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"Twenty-five years later, and we're talking about another transformational event in health care in Harford County," Sheldon remarked.

The health system made its formal submission to the state, seeking approval to build a new hospital at Route 24 and MacPhail Road, in the fall of 1995. The \$60.6 million, 225,000 square-foot Bel Air hospital, meant to replace Fallston General Hospital, [opened five years later in late October of 2000](#).

Upper Chesapeake received approval from the [Maryland Health Care Commission this spring to close Harford Memorial](#) and consolidate its medical and surgical beds with existing beds at Upper Chesapeake Medical Center.

State officials also approved UCH's applications to build the free-standing medical center, with a full-service emergency room, and the 33-bed psychiatric hospital on the Merritt Properties corporate campus off of Route 22 in Aberdeen, during the health care commission's meeting in mid-April.

The special psychiatric hospital, which is meant to address the growing need for mental health services in Harford and western Cecil County, is being designed with extra space to accommodate seven more beds if needed. Inpatient and outpatient behavioral health services will be provided at the facility, according to UCH's Your Health. Our Mission [web page](#) on the overall project, which the health system announced in early 2016.

[\[More Maryland news\] Man arrested, charged with attempted murder in Columbia double shooting at music video shoot, police say](#) »

People can visit the Your Health. Our Mission site, as well as Upper Chesapeake Health social media pages, for updates on the project. The Aberdeen campus at 650 McHenry Road is seeing use this year, as UCH is operating a COVID-19 testing facility on the grounds.

Testing for people age 5 and older is available free of charge; patients should register for an appointment online at

<https://crisp covid19.powerappspportals.com/new-patient>.

“It’s another way we want to continue to be an integral part of health care delivery and taking care of our patients here in Harford County,” Sheldon said.

The new facilities will be designed with features to help prevent the spread of infectious diseases, such as “touchless” doors and bathroom and laboratory fixtures and negative-pressure rooms with regulated airflow to better isolate patients who have contagious diseases or are vulnerable to contagious disease, according to UCH spokesperson Martha Mallonee.

The new three-story bed tower in Bel Air, which will be built on top of the Kaufman Cancer Center, will be designed so the fourth story is a “cohort floor” for patients with similar conditions and the fifth story can be converted to serve as an intensive care unit if needed. The fourth and fifth stories will be “negative pressure ready.” The third story of the building will serve as shell space for expanding the cancer center, according to Mallonee.

Upper Chesapeake Health officials said they have partnered with Cushman & Wakefield to market and ultimately sell Harford Memorial Hospital in Havre de Grace. (Matt Button / The Aegis/Baltimore Sun Media)

'Highest and best use'

The closing of Harford Memorial, a fixture in downtown Havre de Grace for decades, has been controversial among city residents and elected officials who represent the city and surrounding area, as they are concerned about the loss of local health care services and the economic impact in the downtown area.

Cushman & Wakefield was hired by Upper Chesapeake Health about four years ago and was initially charged with conducting a “highest and best use study and analysis” of Harford Memorial’s existing attributes and how the site could best be redeveloped, according to David Baird, the Baltimore-based managing director of the firm’s strategic advisory services team.

Baird, along with Sheldon and Leonard Parrish, director of community and economic development for Harford County, testified before the Maryland House of Delegates’ Health & Government Operations Committee in early March.

Parrish said, during the hearing, that the county is “fully supportive” of Upper Chesapeake proceeding with its new Aberdeen facilities and celebrates “the \$13 million in wages that will be created by that and \$39.5 million in capital investment that’s going to be a part of that transition” from Harford Memorial.

Democratic Dels. Steve Johnson and Mary Ann Lisanti, whose district includes Havre de Grace and Aberdeen, sponsored a bill during the General Assembly’s 2020 legislative session — which adjourned early because of the pandemic — regarding public notification when a hospital is closed or partially closed.

[\[More Maryland news\] Harford County Council harshly criticizes executive for supposedly denying access to information »](#)

Johnson, who is a member of the health and government operations committee, expressed concern during the March 2 hearing that closing Harford Memorial could have a major impact on businesses in the surrounding neighborhood, plus it could affect city utility revenues with the loss of such a large water and sewer customer.

“While one community is going to benefit, the whole point is, we don’t want another community to suffer,” Johnson said of Aberdeen and Havre de Grace — he and Lisanti reiterated those concerns while giving a legislative update to the Havre de Grace mayor and City Council last month.

Baird, in response to Johnson’s concerns, said the economic impact of redeveloping the hospital site “would be shifted,” because “the highest and most appropriate

reuse of the property would be for a residential town center to fill that gap, which would create additional retail and service and commercial jobs, in addition to the construction jobs.”

Sheldon acknowledged during the hearing community members' concerns about closing the hospital.

“Upper Chesapeake Health leadership and the board have and will continue to be working collaboratively with the City of Havre de Grace, as well as community representatives on our community relations council as it relates to the future reuse of Harford Memorial Hospital,” he told legislators.

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Sheldon, along with Bryan E. Kelly, chairman of UCH’s board of directors, highlighted Harford Memorial’s significance to the community Monday — Kelly noted he was born at that hospital in 1970, and Sheldon said two of his children were born there.

“We have an engaged community board around this whole transformation that’s happening in our world,” Kelly said.

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Sheldon said the hospital “and the caregivers there have a very, very close affection in my heart as well, and as we make this transition, we want to honor the past and respect the past.”

David Anderson



David Anderson has been with the Baltimore Sun Media Group since January of 2013 as a reporter for The Aegis. He covers a little bit of everything in Harford County, including education, municipal and county government, business, features, breaking news and community events.

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COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

Coppermine planning expansion to Harford County



Coppermine Fieldhouse is expanding into Harford County with plans for new turf fields and a pool.

JACLYN BOROWSKI

 **PANIS**ody Simmons
Reported by Baltimore Business Journal
Jan 17, 2020, 12:08pm EST
Updated Jan 17, 2020, 12:21pm EST
Coppermine Fieldhouse
Baltimore, MD

Coppermine Fieldhouse is planning to expand its reach into Harford County by 2021 with eight new turf fields for youth sports tournaments.

County of Harford

Bel Air, MD

The Baltimore-based sports group is negotiating a deal with officials in Harford County [See full profile >](#) to convert a portion of publicly owned land in Edgewood into a \$12 million youth sports complex to open by spring 2021.

The move is being hailed as a major step in a push to renew Edgewood, a peninsula off Route 40 near Interstate 95, that for years has struggled with poverty, blight and image

woes. The area is framed by the Bush and Gunpowder rivers just north of Joppa.

Coppermine's growth there would be the company's ninth expansion in the Baltimore area. The group recently halted its plans to expand and open a 120,000-square-foot indoor sports facility in Middle River at Aviation Station, a 2-million square foot former industrial plant where Martin B-26 Marauder bombers were made during World War II, said Alex Jacobs, Coppermine's founder.

That reversal was made about four months ago, he said, as the Harford County plans began to gel.

"We're really excited about the I-95 corridor and we want to expand up in that area," Jacobs said Friday. "I think we have a great opportunity to be working with Harford County and the Cedar Lane Sports Foundation putting together a comprehensive strategy plan to help enhance sports tourism there. We want to help them grow that market."

The Harford County Council is expected to vote on a zoning change and economic development bill in February for the Coppermine expansion.

County Executive Barry Glassman detailed some of the plans on Thursday during his annual State of the County address in Belcamp.

Glassman said the new Coppermine youth sports complex would be located where the Washington Court apartment complex once stood. That property is a 26-acre site that once held military housing and was purchased by the county in 2000. Other plans to redevelop it have failed over the past two decades.

"We've been marketing that to try to get some kind of economic development in there," Glassman said. "Coppermine, through our agreement, would come in and build fields, a swimming pool and a sports facility. In return, we would turn that land over to them after he has completed his investment."

Glassman said the deal was needed because Harford's youth sports tourism market has expanded over the past several years. The county's location off I-95 attracts youth soccer, lacrosse and field hockey teams to its sports fields each season for large

tournaments that draw from neighboring states like Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

"We desperately need more fields for our sports tourism," Glassman said. "And Edgewood has been desperate to get some investment. When you add tourism and people and bring them into a community, the restaurants and other small businesses follow.

"This is the first glimmer of hope that we've had for Edgewood in a long time."

Coppermine's other expansions have included the acquisition of the Green Valley Swim & Tennis Club in Owings Mills in early 2018 and the former Northwest Ice Rink in Mt. Washington. The group also owns Bare Hills, the Cross Keys Tennis Club and the Du Burns Arena in Canton.

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HARFORD COUNTY MARYLAND

Fallston Village expansion approved by Harford County Council with some changes

By JAMES WHITLOW
THE AEGIS | MAR 05, 2020



The Harford County Council approved a 51,000-square-foot expansion of the Fallston Village Center with a few caveats Tuesday night.

The council adopted the hearing examiner's recommendation in a near-unanimous vote — six councilmen voted in the affirmative and councilman Joseph Woods abstained from the vote. When council president asked for a motion to take up the matter, there was a longer than usual pause before councilman Robert Wagner motioned for the project's approval.

The expansion would include new buildings as well as additions to the existing ones to the shopping center, formerly known as the Fallston Mall. Located at the intersection of Routes 1 and 152, the center is home to Harvest Fare supermarket,

Horizon Cinemas, Ace Hardware and Uncle's Hawaiian Grinds restaurant, among other businesses.

In November, [**the expansion project was approved**](#) by Harford's associate zoning hearing examiner. In December, a request for a final argument before the county council, sitting as the Board of Appeals, was filed by Wagner.

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According to the company's Board of Appeals application, the center's expansion would enable it to better serve the community around it. The company provided figures showing the population within 5 miles of the shopping center grew by almost 16,000 people between 2000 and 2018.

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The project was given approval to move forward, but Wagner still had concerns after Tuesday's meeting. Some potential issues he saw with the development did not fall under the county council's jurisdiction — the issue of traffic-light placement, for example, falls to the state — so the council addressed what it could within its purview. The council looked at changing other provisions but determined it did not have the authority to do so, Wagner said.

“There was not a whole lot there we could do,” he said after the hearing, “short of remanding it back to the [hearing examiner].”

The Arlington, Virginia-based company's request for "flexibility" on the footprint of one piece of property, coupled with the parcel slightly overlapping a floodplain, concerned the council when it heard the original request. [At a prior hearing](#), Wagner worried that the flexibility language gave the company too much latitude on where the building could be constructed.

Though the company stressed it was not seeking variances — special dispensations to change where a building can be constructed on a parcel of land — mention of flexibility was removed from the proposal and the council made sure to specify some restrictions.

The council modified the hearing examiner's decision slightly, requiring buildings to be in compliance with the Board of Appeals' site plan and a building to the property's northwest satisfy "all floodplain regulations." That building shall also be subject to final approval by the planning director.

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The northwestern building's lot overlaps slightly with the floodplain. The company said it wanted to tear the building down to replace it with a car wash, which would be smaller than the existing building in the space. A bank currently sits on that piece of property.

The process is still not complete, though. A traffic study has already commenced per the county's zoning guidelines.

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Zoning Hearing Assistant Dottie Smith explained that the council's decision will become final 30 days from the vote unless it is appealed. From there, the planning and zoning department will be able to begin the permitting process.

James Whitlow



James Whitlow covers Harford County crime and county government for The Aegis. Prior to joining Baltimore Sun Media in 2020, he was a reporter at the Danville (Virginia) Register & Bee. A 2018 graduate of the University of Maryland, James has also worked at McClatchy's Washington, D.C. Bureau and the Capital News Service.

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Business

Farmhouse On Main Opens In Downtown Bel Air

A new business is open on Lee Street.

By Elizabeth Janney, Patch Staff 

Jul 8, 2020 9:27 am ET | Updated Jul 8, 2020 9:32 am ET

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BEL AIR, MD — A Darlington business has relocated to a space the owners say is ~~times the size of its previous store~~ >

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Farmhouse on Main sells farmhouse-inspired home goods including furniture, décor and gifts.

"We're really excited to be part of Bel Air. That's where we live. That's where our kids are going to go to school," owner Kate Schwab said in announcing the [move](#) to Bel Air on Facebook. Previously, the store was on Shuresville Road in Darlington.

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Owners Kate and George "GW" Schwab hosted town officials for a ribbon cutting and welcomed customers over the holiday weekend for a grand opening celebration. The [store](#) opened July 3 on East Lee Street.

In addition to home goods, the shop holds [workshops](#) on things like [how to paint your own furniture](#).

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Farmhouse on Main is at 20 East Lee Street, near the Bel Air Armory.

Photo by Angela Robertson/Bel Air Economic Development.

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JOB CREATION / DISTRIBUTION AND LOGISTICS

Ferraro Foods selects Maryland for new distribution center

By Amanda Winters / January 13, 2020

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Harford County, Md. is the newest addition to Ferraro Foods' growing presence across the East Coast.

Ferraro Foods, an Italian food distributor based in New Jersey, established its first distribution facility in Maryland last year and has grown to nearly 60 employees since becoming fully-operational. The site, located at 1501 Perryman Road in Aberdeen, allows Ferraro to easily work with additional Italian restaurants, pizzerias, and other specialty food establishments throughout the Mid Atlantic.

"Ferraro Foods is extremely excited to establish a new distribution center in Aberdeen, Maryland. This location will further enhance our already respectable presence in the state and will further allow our logistical network to be even more efficient in serving our customers," said Dean Barcelona, vice president of Ferraro Foods. "Maryland has always been a great state to do business in and we now look forward to being a good partner and neighbor with the establishment of Ferraro's satellite distribution center in Harford County."

With four facility locations – New Jersey, Connecticut, North Carolina, and Maryland – the food distributor serves the majority of the East Coast, from Georgia to Maine, and stretching west to Tennessee and Kentucky.

"We are thrilled that Ferraro Foods chose Maryland for its new distribution facility, where it will have convenient access to the I-95 corridor and just an overnight drive to one-third of the U.S. population," said Maryland Commerce Secretary Kelly M. Schulz. "We look forward to working with the company as it continues to grow in Harford County."

Founded in 1975, Ferraro's mission is to be the leading Italian food distributor in the marketplace, known for quality food products, value, and reliable customer service. The company has more than 400 employees in the U.S. throughout its sales, logistics, warehouse, and transportation divisions, among others, and currently has more than 3,500 customers throughout 16 states.

Photo courtesy of Ferraro Foods

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HARFORD COUNTY MARYLAND

Harford agri-business incubator The Grove offers new terms to accommodate prospective vendors

By JAMES WHITLOW
THE AEGIS | FEB 28, 2020



FEEDBACK



The new Harford Agribusiness Incubator building located at the Harford County Agricultural Center in Street is under construction. (Matt Button / The Aegis/Baltimore Sun Media)

Harford County has changed the terms and regulations of its pending agri-business incubator to make it easier for people to rent space and sell their products there.

With construction expected to finish in April, “The Grove” is Harford County’s \$1 million venture into an agri-business incubator — a space where smaller agricultural enterprises can get their start and build up before moving to more permanent office spaces.

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When it was introduced, the incubator offered only 12-month leases on its 16 stalls and required businesses to be open at least 12 total hours across three days of the week to qualify for use of the county-owned property.

But those terms were ill-suited to some county farmers and producers — some of whom are only part-time farmers and hold non-agricultural jobs — so the county changed the terms after taking input from the community.

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FEEDBACK

Now, businesses do not need to be open a minimum number of hours a week to qualify for the stalls, and they can select between quarterly, semi-annual and annual leases on space in the building, Director of Harford County Governmental and Community Relations Cindy Mumby said.

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“We got some feedback from the community, and in an effort to be more responsive to their needs, we have shortened the time commitment and provided options,” she

said. "Folks wanted to participate but did not want to make a year-round commitment."

Mumby said the overhead costs associated with the building will be low; the county will effectively only pay "to keep the lights on." That alleviates concerns that the quarterly leases might attract farmers for a short time in the growing season but not keep business during the off season, sticking the county with the bill for an empty stall.

The space will also allow artists, food processors and other agriculture-adjacent vendors who may want to use the stalls outside of the growing season.

"There are other kinds of entrepreneurs who can make use of this space," Mumby said. "[Occupancy] will certainly vary with the seasons."

The Grove draws inspiration from the GroundFloor, a shared office space on Pulaski Highway in Havre de Grace hosting businesses that mostly cater to Aberdeen Proving Ground. Though the idea is the same, the Grove differs from the GroundFloor because it deals with agricultural products, Mumby said.

[\[More Maryland news\] 'A little underdog': A rediscovered log cabin with a mysterious past in Hagerstown showcases a forgotten Black community »](#)

It is the first government-owned agri-business incubator in Maryland that the county knows of.

"This is a new concept," she said. "We are not aware of it existing anywhere in the state as a partnership with county government ownership."

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Because it is a new arrangement, Mumby said that adjustments to the terms may be made over the lifespan of the space. If there is a shortage of space, the stalls will go to the highest bidder.

So far, Mumby said, four of the 16 available spots have been taken by three people.

The Grove, which is located alongside the Harford County Agricultural Center at 3525 Conowingo Road in Street, will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. every day of the week.

Indoor and outdoor stalls are available to lease for \$250 and \$150 respectively, but prospective tenants can opt to rent both an indoor and outdoor space for \$300 a month. Rents are due at the beginning of the month, which is a change from the original payment plan.

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Application forms can be [found on the county's website](#) and submitted to Erin Schafer at 611 N. Fountain Green Road in Bel Air, or emailed to elschafer@harfordcountymd.gov.

FEEDBACK

James Whitlow



James Whitlow covers Harford County crime and county government for The Aegis. Prior to joining Baltimore Sun Media in 2020, he was a reporter at the Danville (Virginia) Register & Bee. A 2018 graduate of the University of Maryland, James has also worked at McClatchy's Washington, D.C. Bureau and the Capital News Service.

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Business

Harford County Businesses Can Apply For CARES Act Funds

Small businesses in Harford County can apply for grants to help with operating costs and social distancing due to the coronavirus pandemic.

By Elizabeth Janney, Patch Staff

May 15, 2020 3:58 pm ET | Updated May 15, 2020 4:14 pm ET

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BEL AIR, MD — Harford County business owners can apply for COVID-19 relief starting Monday. Small business owners can apply for \$7,500 grants, while some farmers can apply for \$2,500 grants.

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Money for the grants will come from Harford County's portion of the funding granted to Maryland through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. Harford County is eligible to receive \$44 million of the state's \$364 million, according to County Executive Barry Glassman.

Applications for the grant funding will be posted to the Harford County website at 8 a.m. Monday, May 18, according to officials.

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Harford County will begin accepting applications Tuesday, May 26.

Here's who is eligible:



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- Small businesses with 2 to 50 employees can get \$7,500 grants to go toward personal protective equipment, payroll, operating costs and social distancing.
- Farmers with more than 10 acres can apply for \$2,500 grants.

Check are expected to be issued sometime in June, according to Harford County officials.

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ARTS ENTERTAINMENT

Harford County communities unite during pandemic

By PATTI RESTIVO
BALTIMORE SUN | JUN 17, 2020





Gaby Frank, printing one of the custom Havre de Grace Strong 2020 t-shirts that she prints at her business, Stickdesign Embroidery & Garment Printing Studio. The logo was designed by Paula Casagrande of Big House Designs. She has had the business for twenty years. (Editors: note that she prefers to be called "Gaby," not Gabriele.) May 12, 2020 (Amy Davis)

Light displays brightened homes even though it was spring. The lights were an answer to Havre de Grace Mayor William T. Martin's call to show unity in the face of COVID-19.

Throughout Harford County, residents and businesses came together — from holding food collections to creating inspirational T-shirts and banners honoring their graduating seniors — while hoping to emerge from the pandemic.

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Len Parrish, director of Harford County Community and Economic Development, says there's no shortage of stories about how people came together to help each other.

Visit Harford, the county's destination marketing group, shifted from promoting tourism to focusing on local businesses, Parrish said.

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Custom Havre de Grace Strong 2020 t-shirts printed by Gaby Frank at her business, Stickdesign Embroidery & Garment Printing Studio. The logo was designed by Paula Casagrande of Big House Designs. (Editors: note that she prefers to be called "Gaby," not Gabriele.) May 12, 2020 (Amy Davis)

“I’ve found our business community to be very responsive … prioritizing health over bottom profits,” Parrish said. “I am super-impressed with the Harford County spirit.”

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For instance, as soon as COVID-19 struck, several local manufacturers began making 3D personal protective equipment. They donated and delivered essential personal supplies to first responders and emergency services.

Veteran-owned-and-operated White Tiger Distillery in Forest Hill started distilling alcohol to make hand sanitizer instead of whiskey.

The business supplied some to organizations at the Aberdeen Proving Ground, sold the product in-house and wholesale to local retailers, and donated some to senior-assisted living centers and first responders, including Abingdon Fire Company.

“Our communities are working together,” Matt Shea of White Tiger’s leadership team said in April. “It’s like my motto from the military — iron sharpening iron — where each team member does their part.”



Gaby Frank, wearing one of the custom Havre de Grace Strong 2020 t-shirts that she prints at her business, Stickdesign Embroidery & Garment Printing Studio. The logo was designed by Paula Casagrande of Big House Designs. (Editors note that she prefers to be called "Gaby" than Gabriele.) May 12, 2020 (Amy Davis)

Aberdeen Businesses, Nonprofits Partner

When Karen Salmon, State Superintendent of Schools, announced the closure of schools on March 12, the Harford Community Action Agency [HCAA] and WebIXI—a digital marketing consulting firm in Aberdeen—sprang into action.

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HCAA emptied its community food pantry on March 13 to prepare 200 emergency take-home care packages for delivery the next day to four schools with high numbers of low-income students, according to WebIXI President P. J. Chambers.

HCAA and WebIXI launched a virtual food drive, raising more than \$20,000 by the end of April to restock the pantry, which quickly escalated to serving around 500 families a week during the height of the pandemic.

“Benefield Electric donated \$10,000,” Chambers said. “I love Harford County because of the giving nature of the small businesses who’ve stepped up.”

WebIXI also created a “Keep Calm and Carry Out” T-shirt. It was sold on the Harford County vs. Coronavirus page of the company’s website. The proceeds benefitted the Community Foundation of Harford County’s Help Your Neighbor Fund and promoted local restaurants during the shutdown. A virtual tip jar facilitated donating “tips” to customers’ favorite servers.

As businesses shifted to operating remotely, WebIXI established a \$100,000 matching grant program — awarded in \$500 increments to eligible applicants — that matched its fees for designing new websites and other online marketing services hour by hour.

Helping Beyond Downtown Bel Air

Downtowns were often the first centers of the supportive activity that quickly spread through each community.

Christopher Pineda, executive director of the Bel Air Downtown Alliance, said his organization partnered with Visit Harford to promote small businesses beyond downtown Bel Air.

The alliance published and maintained a directory with links to carryout and delivery services and online shopping options.

Pineda also said the alliance helped with communications between hard-hit businesses and their landlords discussing requests to defer or waive rent payments.

Meanwhile many Bel Air businesses made changes in their operating models to adapt to the governor's mandates.

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Looney's Pub sold its Orange Crush drink in take-away coffee cups, Buontempo Brothers Pizza Shop created take-home pizza kits, and Main Street's Sunny Day Café served as a market offering kitchen staples at cost with its carry-out food orders, Pineda said.

In mid April, WebIXI and 18 business partners organized an employee appreciation breakfast for 635 employees at the University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health Medical Center that was catered by Sunny Day Café.

Donations exceeding costs, Chambers said, went to the Southern Harford County Rotary Club to write a matching-funds grant to help the HCAA with COVID-19 related expenses.

As the conversations to reopen Maryland started, the Bel Air Downtown Alliance created an online 10-week recovery program outlining strategies for small businesses to navigate the changing economic climate.



Paula Casagrande, with her dog Buster, in front of the Havre de Grace Strong sign that she designed, which is on display near the entrance to her sign business, Big House Signs. May 12, 2020 (Amy Davis/Baltimore Sun)

Havre de Grace Strong

In Havre de Grace, Director of Economic Development Erika Quesenberry says there was “a fountain of compassion and caring” there.

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John and Susan Muldoon of Vandiver Inn cooked and donated hundreds of meals to feed kids at the Boys and Girls Club, and Rory White of Edward Jones Investments started a fundraiser in support and donated \$1,000 in matching funds, Quesenbery says.

A colorful “Together We Are Havre de Grace Strong” logo embodying the community’s spirit could be spotted on storefronts and residential lawn signs.

Paula Casagrande, owner of Big House Signs, designed the logo that she also printed on hundreds of 3-by-4-inch bumper stickers that were sold for \$5.

Half of those sales supported the American Legion Post 47 food pantry, which opened in response to COVID-19. It cost about \$250 each day to restock the pantry, according to Alma Orive, post adjutant.

Gabriele “Gaby” Frank, who owns the Stickdesign Embroidery & Garment Printing Studio, said she was swamped in early April sewing fitted face masks for family and friends and for sale to the public for \$5. And when Frank spotted Big House Signs’ “awesome HdG Strong logo” on social media, she asked her friend for the design.

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Casagrande gave her use of the logo pro bono, and Frank began selling custom tees aiming to donate 50% of the sales to essential workers.



A sign to unite residents during the coronavirus pandemic, "Together We Are Havre De Grace Strong," displayed on N. Union Avenue, is popping up around town. It was designed by Paula Casagrande of Big House Signs. May 12, 2020 (Amy Davis/Baltimore Sun)

Looking to the recovery

As some businesses began reopening in late May, they were able to turn to various agencies to help them figure out how they might recover from the pandemic, how to plan for their next steps.

For instance, Parrish said, his partners with the Chamber of Commerce's Harford County Chamber Business Resilience Task Force continued to support the business

community.

The task force works closely with Visit Harford and local business associations to develop and recommend solutions to challenges of economic resilience and recovery, as well as ongoing labor and employment challenges.

The Department of Community and Economic Development and the Chamber of Commerce also focused on connecting businesses to state and federal resources.

“In our role as the voice and advocate of business, helping distraught business owners is tremendously satisfying — the wins are priceless,” said Chamber President and CEO Angela Rose.

When the economic fallout from the pandemic settles, Parrish said, loan programs funded by the county with some federal funds passed down through the state are planned to help local businesses.

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Businesses will continue to work with their communities — the same ones they supported — to figure out the next steps to begin to recover.

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HARFORD COUNTY MARYLAND

Harford County Council changes zoning of Washington Court, paving way for Coppermine to build sports fields

By JAMES WHITLOW
THE AEGIS | FEB 19, 2020



The Harford County Council voted to change the zoning of Washington Court in Edgewood from residential to commercial amusement Tuesday, paving the way for a Baltimore company to potentially buy the property and develop sports fields there.

Officials expressed consternation, however, at the sale price of \$1, that the county hadn't been able to find a more productive use for the land over the years, and that the council was under the gun to replace about 36 acres of fields off of Carsins Run Road near Aberdeen that are set to stop operating around November.

“We felt like we were being pushed into a corner because we know that we’re losing fields at Carsins Run and we know that our tournament season starts in the spring,” Council President Patrick Vincenti said in an interview Wednesday.

Coppermine Fieldhouse, a Baltimore-based sporting company, expressed interest in building eight turf fields on the approximately 35-acre property off Cedar Drive, near Edgewood Elementary School and the Boys & Girls Club.

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As it is currently proposed — but not agreed to — the county would essentially give Coppermine the property, selling it for \$1, which the company would then put up as collateral to secure funding for the fields' construction. The council voted 6-1 in approval of the zoning change.

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At Tuesday's meeting, Vincenti stressed that this was only the beginning of the process at the public meeting, and many members of the seven-man body acknowledged the property could have been better managed from the time the county purchased the land nearly two decades ago.

The county purchased Washington Court from the federal government in 2001 for \$992,000 after the military housing on it was decommissioned in 1994. From there, a revitalization effort began, but ultimately stalled after a recession hit the county and a private developer backed out of building homes on the site in 2011.

Since then, it has, effectively, sat fallow.

Director of Administration Billy Bonniface first brought the resolution to the county council on Jan. 2, and it was placed on the council's agenda for their Jan. 7 meeting. Any property surplussing has to be brought before the council, Director of Community and Government Relations Cindy Mumby said.

Coppermine was the only entity that submitted a letter of interest to the county for the property and plans to invest \$15 million in the property, but if the deal fails to go through, the property will revert back to the county, Mumby said.

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County Executive Barry Glassman, in a February presentation to the council, advocated for the project on the merits of the revenue it can bring businesses in the area.

Councilman Robert Wagner said Coppermine's project would not fit in with the residential neighborhood it is planned for. There is no reason to change the zoning for one project like this, which he said was a product of "backdoor zoning."

"This is exactly what spot zoning does," he said. "It is only for one entity's gain."

Wagner ultimately voted in favor of the project, saying he hoped the venture would succeed and bring money into the Edgewood area, but others echoed his criticism.

Councilman Joseph Woods, who voted against the rezoning, said the sale price of \$1 bothered him considerably.

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Even with the promise of increased sports tourism revenue and attracting business to Edgewood, the proposed sale price to Coppermine was not enough, he said, and

the details of the agreement are too fungible.

The deal as written locks Coppermine into a 20-year contract with the county. Although Coppermine's founder testified before the council to assure them he would not build apartment buildings after the contract ends, Woods questioned what will happen after that mandated period expires.

"We could have better served the community by using taxpayer money and [building] a park there ourselves," he said. "We should have done it; we could have done it, and I am just as guilty about everybody else here."

"My conscience cannot let me sell a piece of property for \$1 in Harford County," he continued.

The venture is expected to generate between \$700,000 and \$1.5 million in taxes for the county over 20 years and potentially draw 6,000 people a week to Edgewood. That translates into sports tourism revenue — people spending money at local corollary businesses — which a study commissioned by Visit Harford! said supported 650 jobs in the county and net almost \$50 million in revenue between 2016 and 2018.

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Councilman Curtis Beulah advised patience; the project will take some time to bear fruit, he said.

"What I would say is I hope for the best here and I really think this is a good opportunity, but ... I too feel squeezed on this," he said.

Coppermine now has to commission and complete traffic studies and other preliminary steps before it can move forward, Vincenti said.

"I agree that we are in a tight pinch to save — not to bring more — but to save the sports tourism business that we have in Harford County today, but at the same time I agree that this is the opportunity that our Edgewood community needs," he said.

"We are doing the right thing here if this is approved, but I am cautious. This is the first step."

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James Whitlow



James Whitlow covers Harford County crime and county government for The Aegis. Prior to joining Baltimore Sun Media in 2020, he was a reporter at the Danville (Virginia) Register & Bee. A 2018 graduate of the University of Maryland, James has also worked at McClatchy's Washington, D.C. Bureau and the Capital News Service.

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Politics & Government

Harford County Earns Two National Association of Counties Awards

NACo has recognized Harford County in 2020 with two awards for innovative and effective county government programs.

By Cindy Mumby, Local Official  Jun 17, 2020 1:20 pm ET

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The National Association of Counties (NACo) has recognized Harford County in 2020 with two awards for innovative and effective county government programs. The county was honored with Achievement Awards for its Halloween costume workshop for children who use wheelchairs and the anti-drug Pledge Program for youth, presented in partnership with the Harford County Sheriff's Office.



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The Glassman administration has earned a total of eleven NACo awards over the past five years.

"I would like to thank our community partners and sponsors, and our creative county employees, for these outstanding programs," County Executive Glassman said. "Together we were able to help children learn early on about the dangers of drugs and alcohol and give all kids a chance to share in the joys of childhood."

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Halloween Costume Workshop

For some children who use a wheelchair, dressing up in a costume and trick-or-treating in their neighborhood can be a challenge. Traditional Halloween costumes often don't fit and the physical inaccessibility of neighborhoods leaves many children with disabilities home on that magical night. Imagine a place where every child who uses a wheelchair can not only trick or treat with their siblings and peers, but be the star of the evening in a unique costume designed specifically for them. In most communities around the country, this does not exist. In Harford County, Maryland it does.

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Rachel Harbin in the Harford County Department of Community Services developed the region's first Wheelchair Costume Workshop, held at Ripken Stadium in October 2019. Over two days, more than 100 community volunteers designed, built and painted completely original costumes that fit securely on 12 children's wheelchairs. Once the costumes were fitted, the children joined over 300 children of all abilities for inclusive trick-or-treating at the stadium, providing an important example to the community that ALL children should be able to have fun, play with their peers, and enjoy Halloween! The Wheelchair Costume Workshop is an outstanding example of a public-private partnership—with over 30 local businesses and community organizations coming together to provide volunteers, donate building materials, and sponsor trick or treat stations.

Pledge Program

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The Pledge Program was developed by Tara Lathrop in Harford County government's Office of Drug Control Policy and by the Harford County Sheriff's Office. The program for children ages 8 to 11 years old educates young people before they are exposed to substances and trains them to use refusal skills to resist drugs and alcohol. The interactive program incorporates guest speakers, including a doctor, an individual in recovery, and a parent who has lost a child to drug use. Children also have the opportunity to participate in role play scenarios with local high school theater students to experience mock-peer pressure and practice refusal skills. Another important component of the Pledge Program is the participation of parents and guardians. Parents and caregivers are provided topics to discuss with youth to continue the conversation at home and encourage discussion among family members. Since its inception in January 2019, the Pledge Program has partnered with five Harford County elementary schools with a total of 153 participants. Each participant received training and information that help expand their understanding of drugs and drug use in order to make positive and healthy choices in the future.

"Our community has been rocked by addiction and the overwhelming loss of life to opioid overdoses," Harford County Sheriff Jeffrey R. Gahler said. "It isn't enough to lock up dealers, we must find a way to prevent the overdoses from occurring. When Sgt. Aaron Penman approached me with the idea of the Pledge Program, it was an easy 'yes' from me. We know that early intervention is the key to preventing drug use and this program offers us one more tool to prevention and reaching our most vulnerable population, our children. I am exceedingly proud of this program, our partnerships to get this accomplished, and for the young people who are so willing to participate and learn."

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CORONAVIRUS

Harford County executive hoping Gov. Hogan gives some small business the green light to reopen soon

By S. WAYNE CARTER JR.
THE AEGIS | MAY 11, 2020



On the heels of Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan allowing some outdoor recreational activities to resume last week, Harford Executive Barry Glassman is hoping small businesses are next — perhaps as soon as this Friday, at least in his county.

“I’m hopeful that [May 15] is a good step for at least personal services and some small businesses, that we begin to take those first reopening steps,” Glassman said in an interview with The Aegis last week.

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Glassman recognizes he can't do that without approval from the governor. In making his case, he notes that Harford is on the lower end of confirmed coronavirus cases per capita among the state's most populous counties.

As of Monday, the state Department of Health was reporting 605 confirmed cases and 25 confirmed or probable deaths related to COVID-19 among Harford's roughly 255,000-plus residents. Glassman noted nearly half of the fatalities and almost a third of total cases were tied to a pair of nursing homes.

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County leaders have been regularly participating in conference calls with the governor since the coronavirus pandemic took hold in Maryland. Glassman, who is also the immediate past president of the Maryland Association of Counties, said he and other county executives and commissioners get an opportunity to ask questions and bring up matters they think need to be discussed and resolved.

Still, Glassman was among seven county executives and Baltimore's mayor who signed a letter dated April 29 asking to be included in reopening discussions with Hogan.

Those leaders, including Glassman, said they were **caught off guard when the governor announced** last week that beaches and parks would reopen, and golf and recreational boating were again permitted in less than 24 hours.

"Yeah that's true," he said. "We heard it when everyone else heard it."

When it comes to reopening businesses, Glassman emphasized the need for local leaders to be involved in the decision-making.

"I think counties are the closest to their businesses and we actually have to carry out many of the executive orders on a local level," Glassman said. "So it doesn't hurt to get us in the loop a little earlier."

Glassman said he's been pushing during the conference calls with Hogan "to get our small businesses open by mid-May at the latest. Some of the other counties feel the same way, some feel differently. But we would like to be in the discussion."

About 90% of the calls Glassman receives these days are from small business owners who are beginning to struggle and want to reopen to some degree, he said.

A majority are smaller retail establishments frustrated about losing business while big box stores are allowed to stay open. He gave the example of a carpet and flooring store forced to closed while Home Depot routinely has packed parking lots and a steady flow of customers.

Glassman said beauty salons, barbers and other service-based businesses have also been contacting him about when they might be able to reopen.

He emphasized that business would be expected to operate differently than they did prior to the pandemic.

“They realize, I think everyone realizes, that the new normal, even when they open, is going to be social distancing and following all the CDC guidelines as far as face masks and all the protections for employees and customers that they can provide,” Glassman said. “I think everyone wants to do that, but there is an urgency for those small businesses to get back open.”

And Glassman is hoping to help some small businesses make those adjustments by using some of the funding Harford County is set to receive through the federal CARES Act.

Harford is due approximately \$44.6 million in federal funds. Half of that is for reimbursement to local governments and the health department to cover expenses like personal protective equipment for first responders and other health-related costs due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The county plans to use the remaining \$22.3 million to offer business support grants to help with reopening.

“Meaning they can buy and get installed that Plexiglas at the cashier’s [station], signs, cleaning equipment, PPE — we want to provide some grants that actually provide help and cover costs for those small businesses as they start to open back up,” Glassman said. “That’s going to be an additional expense for them and it comes at a bad time, when they probably do not have the money or they’ll have to borrow money to try to get those safety devices and precautions in place.”

CARES Act funding had been directly distributed to jurisdictions with 500,000 or more residents. In Maryland, that meant Baltimore City and Baltimore, Anne Arundel, Prince George’s and Montgomery counties. The 18 other counties — including Harford — had to appeal to the governor to receive their funds or settle for reimbursement, Glassman explained.

With the help of MACo, they were able to work with Hogan’s budget secretary David Brinkley to get that federal funding released to medium- and small-sized counties

without having to front the money then seek reimbursement, he said.

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Harford County has not yet received any CARES Act funding from the state as of Monday, said Cindy Mumby, the county's Director of Governmental and Community Relations. The state is setting up the process for receiving the funds, she said.

Guidelines and an application form for the small business grants are being developed by Harford's Department of Economic Development, and Mumby said the applications will likely be posted online by next Monday. Some sort of help line or email address will also be established to assist business owners in filling out the forms.

"The idea is we want to help them fill it out right the first time," Mumby said.

Applications will be able to be submitted the Tuesday after Memorial Day, she said. Grants through the county will serve as a safety net for businesses that were not able to receive state or federal COVID-19 related funding.

"The county executive's intent is to make the process flexible for businesses and let them use the money where they feel they need it most," she said.

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AUG 30, 2020

***CORRECTION:** A previous version of this article incorrectly stated Glassman's role with the Maryland Association of Counties. The article has been updated to reflect accurate information.*

S. Wayne Carter Jr.



Wayne Carter is a senior content editor in the Baltimore Sun Media Group's community newsroom, overseeing The Aegis and The Record in Harford County, where he grew up. Wayne previously was the editor of the Carroll County Times, where he worked for 12 years. He graduated from Salisbury University in 2002.

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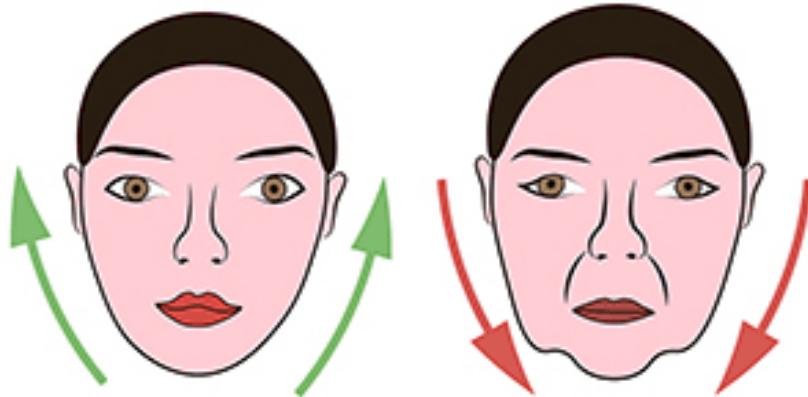
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Posted on May 26, 2020 by Chris Montcalmo

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FALLSTON, MD—Harford County residents can get [free Internet access](#) from the parking lots at five county buildings where public Wi-Fi has been expanded.

County government expanded the service in response to the statewide shutdown of businesses, schools and other public facilities due to COVID-19.

Although county buildings remain generally closed to the public, the Harford County Office of Information & Communication Technology installed external Wi-Fi access points at the Agricultural Center in Street, Churchville Recreational Center's Level Building, Fallston Activity Center, McFaul Activities Center in Bel Air, and the Havre de Grace Senior Center.

Passwords are not required, but users must agree to standard terms before proceeding to the Internet. Signals will be strongest closer to the buildings.

“For our residents who need or want Internet connectivity during this crisis, we expanded the free public Wi-Fi normally accessible inside these buildings to the parking lots outside,” County Executive Barry Glassman said. “We understand this is not the only solution, and our work continues with the private sector on rural broadband, but we wanted to bring some help fairly quickly and make it available to everyone.”

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Free public Wi-Fi is also available in the parking lots at all 11 branches of Harford County Public Library and the library administration building in Belcamp.

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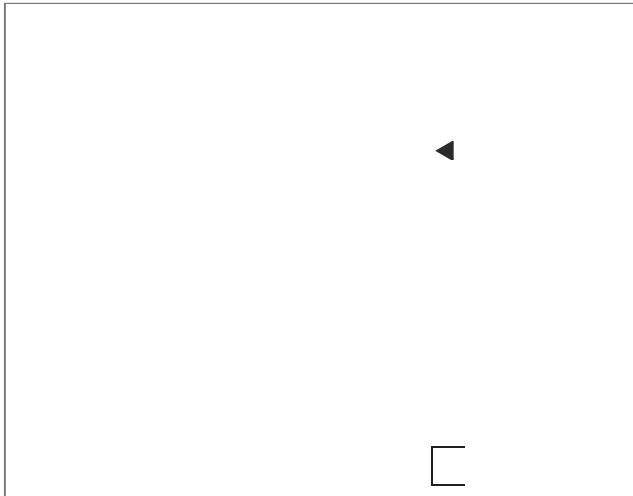
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HARFORD COUNTY MARYLAND

Harford County has spent about \$11.8 million of the nearly \$45 million in CARES Act funding it received

By JAMES WHITLOW
THE AEGIS | SEP 10, 2020



Grants for local businesses are still available in Harford as the county looks to draw down its approximately \$45 million in federal CARES Act funding, but the deadline to use the funding combined with the possibility of another wave of the coronavirus make the task more complicated.

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Harford has spent approximately \$11.8 million of the federal dollars — the remainder of which need to be spent by Dec. 31 or it is returned to the federal government, county spokesperson Cindy Mumby said. The money can be spent on coronavirus-related expenses, including grants to businesses, personal protective equipment, and equipment for employees to work from home.

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Critically, it cannot go toward recouping the county's lost revenues or anything that it budgeted for.

Harford County Executive Barry Glassman is pacing use of the funds, Mumby said, but the danger lies in saving the money too long and having to return it. In turn, spending it too fast could leave the county unprepared if a resurgence of the coronavirus were to hit, or if it needed the cash quickly. It makes for a difficult Catch-22, she said.

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“Congress may extend [the deadline] or provide some flexibility for what the funding can be used for,” Mumby said. “Those are questions that are still unanswered.”

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The single-largest expenditure came from **grants paid to small businesses**, according to data provided by the county. As of Wednesday, 640 small businesses — defined as those with two to 50 employees — had received \$7,500 grants to cover PPE, social distancing expenses, payroll and other operating costs, totaling about \$4.8 million.

Harford County also issued \$5,000 business owners assistance grants to more than 370 business owners, totaling more than \$1.8 million, according to data provided by the county. Fifty-two farms received a grant of \$2,500, totaling \$130,000.

In total, county government doled out approximately \$7.2 million in CARES Act in grant funding to businesses, including the costs of administering the grants, according to the data.

The county is still accepting applications for its business grants; instructions to apply can be found on the county’s website.

Outside of business grants, the county spent more than \$4.6 million in CARES Act funding on coronavirus-related expenses. A majority of that, just over \$3 million, was used to purchase PPE such as N95 masks, surgical masks, gowns, gloves and face shields.

[\[More Maryland news\] Man charged with attempted murder in assault of elderly woman in Columbia »](#)

Nearly \$525,000 was spent on public health expenses, such as disinfectants, hand sanitizers, renovations to facilities to allow for social distancing and signage regarding proper distancing, as well as payments to the Harford County Health Department.

Slightly more than \$351,000 was spent on medical expenses such as surge ambulances, thermometers and airway kits.

Another \$318,000 or so covered administrative costs like hiring workers for curbside payments and processing reimbursements, and about \$243,000 was spent on improving telework capabilities for public employees.

The county also paid about \$63,000 to house emergency workers who could have been exposed to the virus and spent another \$5,000 on food support for vulnerable residents, according to the data.

FEEDBACK

Glassman has long pushed for the [flexibility in using CARES Act funds](#), hoping they could be used to defray lost revenues. It is unclear how hard Harford County will be hit by the pandemic, but Mumby said county government is expecting losses to tax revenue. Absent help, losses in county revenues could impact services for county residents.

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Though the county stands to lose money, those losses are not considered coronavirus-related she said.

“That has a direct impact on our citizens,” Mumby said. “Depending on the severity of the impact, which is still unknown, it could have a significant effect on what we are able to do for our citizens.”

Mumby said it was too early to anticipate the effects of those losses of revenues.

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Aegis editor S. Wayne Carter Jr. contributed to this article.

FEEDBACK

James Whitlow



James Whitlow covers Harford County crime and county government for The Aegis. Prior to joining Baltimore Sun Media in 2020, he was a reporter at the Danville (Virginia) Register & Bee. A 2018 graduate of the University of Maryland, James has also worked at McClatchy's Washington, D.C. Bureau and the Capital News Service.

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Harford County offering \$7,500 relief grants to child care providers through federal CARES Act

By S. WAYNE CARTER JR.
THE AEGIS | NOV 04, 2020



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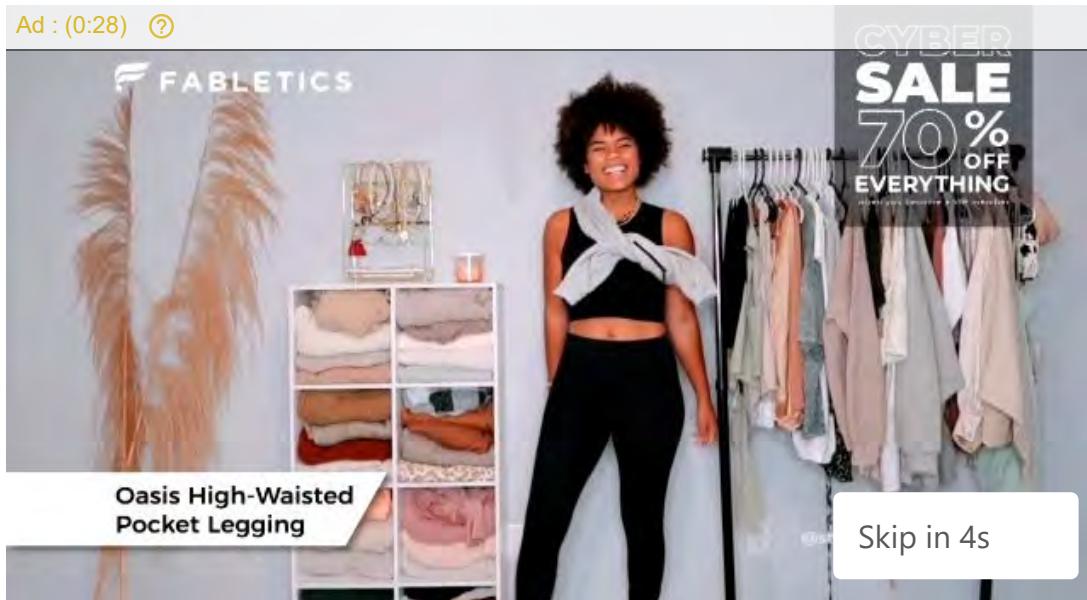
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Child care providers in Harford County may be eligible for \$7,500 grants to help offset ongoing COVID-19 expenses, county government announced Wednesday. It also announced that it would open up existing COVID-19 relief grant programs to businesses that have opened since the pandemic began.

Applications for child care grants and any business grants are due by 5 p.m. Dec. 4. Any licensed in-home, nonprofit or faith-based child care establishments are eligible for the grants on a first-come, first-served basis.

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“Many of our smaller child care providers have been adapting to COVID-19 restrictions since the pandemic started and now many of them are hosting students who are learning virtually,” County Executive Barry Glassman said in a statement. “Our newest grants will help some of those child care providers continue to provide safe and comfortable environments for our children who cannot be home with their parents during the day.”

Program guidelines and applications for child care provider grants can be found on the county's website at bit.ly/CCPRGrant. Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the guidelines before making their submission, according to the county. Questions may be directed to COVIDgrantquestions@harfordcountymd.gov.

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Funded by the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, also known as the CARES Act, the money can be used by child care providers offset expenses related to personal protective equipment (PPE), payroll, inside and outside facility enhancements such as additions or upgrades to maintain physical distancing standards and interest payments on business loans or lines of credit, according to a news release.

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Rebecca Quinn, president of the Family Daycare Association of Harford County and owner of Becky's Family Childcare in Bel Air, wrote to Glassman a few weeks ago asking for assistance. She said she was thrilled to learn the county was offering grants to providers who are struggling, but has heard from providers worried whether they should apply.

“Family childcare providers really need the help right now, due to the COVID-19 epidemic,” she said. “But a lot of providers are scrambling, trying to figure out how

we can spend that much money in that amount of time.”

Any grant funding received needs to be spent by Dec. 30, but it can be applied retroactively to any COVID-related expenses incurred after March 9, said Cindy Mumby, a spokesperson for county government.

Quinn, who applied for the grant, said her greatest costs have been PPE, cleaning supplies and additional toys for the eight infants and toddlers she cares for.

“The cleaning costs are outrageous and supplies are hard to find— there are a lot of providers who still can’t find cleaning supplies,” she said. “A month ago Lysol was like \$80 for a pack of three bottles if you have to order it online because you can’t find it in stores.”

[\[More Maryland news\] Ten within Carroll County Public Schools have tested positive for COVID-19 over past two weeks »](#)

She’s also bought an extra table to lunch and snack time, so students and spread out and social distance, and some providers have had to buy additional toys, since sharing them can also spread germs.

“You can’t just have one thing for them all to play with you have to have separate things,” Quinn said.

FEEDBACK

If she receives funding, one of the first items Quinn plans to purchase is a rug with circles on it spaced six feet apart to give the children a visual reminder to social distance.

“That money could real help out with those kinds of things,” she said.

The child care grant is the county’s fifth COVID-19 relief grant program. Harford initially offered a \$7,500 Small Business Relief grant, a \$5,000 Business Owner

Assistance grant and a \$2,500 Homegrown Harford Farm Relief grant. On Oct. 1, Glassman announced \$10,000 grants for restaurant relief.

[\[More Maryland news\]](#) [Baltimore County Police Department settles lawsuit with U.S. Department of Justice »](#)

Previously, the grants were available only to Harford businesses open prior to March 9, around the time the first coronavirus cases were discovered in Maryland. The grants are now available to any businesses that have opened since then, according to county government.

Childcare providers who have previously received a Harford County COVID-19 Business Relief Grant are not eligible for the Childcare Provider Relief Grant.

CARES Act funding must be spent by Dec. 30, although some national organizations and federal officials have been seeking to extend the deadline.

Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan recently called on county governments to consider using some of their federal money to match state relief programs meant to bolster the economy during the pandemic and officials have noted state government has authority from Congress to recoup unspent funding from counties to repurpose it for state matters.

Harford County received approximately \$45 million in CARES Act funding, which Glassman said last month he will have spent by the end of the year. About half of the money is required to be used for health-related expenses, such as PPE, and the other half to bolster local economies. The latest figures on how much funding has been spent were not immediately available Wednesday morning.

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Last week, Harford County Public Schools announced it had received more than \$5 million in CARES Act funding from Harford County government. The funds will be used to cover laptop purchases for Career and Technology education, pay for food service and Learning Support Center staff, as well as supplies and materials given to students for distance learning and PPE.

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NOV 4, 2020

Glassman has also reached out to other allied agencies such as municipal governments, volunteer fire companies and the Harford County Sheriff's Office, asking they submit priorities for CARES Act funding.

S. Wayne Carter Jr.



Wayne Carter is a senior content editor in the Baltimore Sun Media Group's community newsroom, overseeing The Aegis and The Record in Harford County, where he grew up. Wayne previously was the editor of the Carroll County Times, where he worked for 12 years. He graduated from Salisbury University in 2002.

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HARFORD COUNTY MARYLAND

Harford County restaurants affected by COVID-19 eligible for \$10,000 CARES Act grants

By S. WAYNE CARTER JR.
THE AEGIS | OCT 02, 2020



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Harford County will begin offering \$10,000 grants to restaurants affected by COVID-19 to help maintain operations through the end of the year, county government announced Friday.

Funds from the Winter Restaurant Relief Grant Program can be used for various expenses including commercial mortgage or rent payments, upgrades for carryout service, seating enhancements and physical barriers for social distancing, according to a news release.

“Our newest grant program will help Harford County restaurants with everyday business expenses and the extra costs of keeping their employees and customers safe,” County Executive Barry Glassman said in a statement. “Our online application is fairly simple and we have staff dedicated to turning funding around quickly.”

With colder weather coming, there will be less opportunities for outdoor seating at restaurants, which will bring additional challenges to those business owners, Glassman also noted.

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The grants are funded by the federal CARES Act. The county will start accepting applications for the grants on Wednesday. [Applications can be found on the county's website.](#) Frequently asked questions about the grants can also be found on the website.

[\[More Maryland news\] Maryland's hemp industry faces growing pains as more farmers try to cash in on the demand »](#)

Food and beverage service establishments in Harford County, including food trucks, are eligible to apply for the grant, so long as they were in operation prior to Oct. 1, 2020, and operate year-round. Restaurants may apply even if they received a prior COVID-19 business relief grant from the county.

Although the grants are being administered to help restaurants sustain operations through the the winter season, the grants do not have to be used for new expenses, according to the county news release.

The grants can be used to reimburse business owners for any qualifying expenses paid during the CARES Act coverage period from March 1 until the end of the year.

Harford County received approximately \$45 million in federal CARES Act funding, which needs to be spent by Dec. 31 or it will be returned to the federal government, county spokesperson Cindy Mumby previously told the Aegis.

As of Sept. 30, the county has spent more than \$12.8 million of the CARES Act funding it received. A majority of it, nearly \$7.4 million, was in grants to businesses and farms, including administrative costs.

[\[More Maryland news\] The great divide: Negro Mountain in Maryland and Pennsylvania retains its name despite controversy »](#)

Small business relief grants of \$7,500 were given to 662 small businesses, business owners assistance grants of \$5,000 were given to 396 businesses owners and

Homegrown Harford farm relief grants of \$2,500 were given to 52 farms, according to the data provided by the county.

The county is still accepting applications for its business grants; Mumby said the county receives about two to three new applications each day for those grants.

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Outside of business grants, the county spent more than \$5.4 million in CARES Act funding on coronavirus-related expenses through the end of September. Nearly \$3.74 million of that was used to purchase PPE such as N95 masks, surgical masks, gowns, gloves and face shields.

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S. Wayne Carter Jr.



Wayne Carter is a senior content editor in the Baltimore Sun Media Group's community newsroom, overseeing The Aegis and The Record in Harford County, where he grew up. Wayne previously was the editor of the Carroll County Times, where he worked for 12 years. He graduated from Salisbury University in 2002.

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Politics & Government

Harford County Stage 2 Reopening To Continue Indoors And Out

More businesses will be allowed to reopen Friday, June 12, and Friday, June 19, in Harford County, in alignment with the governor's orders.

By Elizabeth Janney, Patch Staff

Jun 11, 2020 2:30 pm ET | Updated Jun 11, 2020 2:33 pm ET

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Indoor dining can begin at 5 p.m. on Friday, June 12. (Shutterstock)

BEL AIR, MD — Harford County will follow the latest guidance within stage two of the state's reopening plan, which the governor outlined this week. Starting Friday night, indoor dining and outdoor amusements will be allowed. A week later, other businesses will be allowed to reopen, such as gyms and malls.

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"I know that Harford County businesses are anxious to get started rebuilding their business," Harford County Executive Barry Glassman said in a statement. "We will continue to interpret guidelines with as much flexibility as possible."

Soon after Gov. Larry Hogan said the state would allow more services to reopen June 12 and June 19, Glassman released a statement of support.

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"Harford County will continue reopening safely to the extent permitted by Gov. Hogan and will follow the additional steps allowed in Stage Two on the effective dates outlined in today's announcement," Glassman said in a statement Wednesday.

Indoor dining will be allowed at 5 p.m. on Friday.



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Amusement parks, miniature golf courses, go-kart tracks and outdoor areas that are subject to the state's admission and amusement tax will be allowed to reopen at 5 p.m. Friday as well, according to the [governor's guidance](#).

Which parts of the reopening are you looking forward to the most? Tell us in the comments!

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These will reopen at 5 p.m. on Friday, June 19:

- Bingo halls
- Bowling alleys
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• ~~Indoor gyms, fitness centers, dance studios and martial arts facilities~~

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- Malls, entertainment and recreational attractions
- Pool halls
- Roller and ice skating rinks
- Social and fraternal clubs (e.g., American Legion posts, VFW posts and Elks Clubs)
- Indoor areas of any other establishments subject to the admission and amusement tax

See Also:

- [Indoor Dining, Gyms, Malls: Hogan Outlines MD Stage 2 Reopening](#)
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Politics & Government

Harford County To Offer \$5,000 Grants For Small Business Owners

The grants will be paid out of the county's CARES funding and will be designated for businesses to pay commercial mortgages or rent.

By Jeff Arnold, Patch Staff 

Jun 3, 2020 4:59 pm ET | Updated Jun 3, 2020 5:36 pm ET

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Harford County is offering \$5,000 grants to local small business owners. (Shutterstock)

BEL AIR, MD – Harford County officials announced Wednesday they will offer \$5,000 grants for small businesses that may not have qualified for previous grant programs. County officials will begin accepting applications on June 10. Applications and information [about the grant programs](#) can be found on the [Harford County website](#).

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The grants are being offered to business owners who run small operations that do not meet the standards for either the county's \$7,500 business grant or the \$2,500 farm grant program. Larger businesses may apply for the \$5,000 grant program but city officials are attempting to reserve funds for small businesses.

In an email Wednesday, Harford County spokeswoman Cindy Mumby said that the \$7,500 grant program is designated for small businesses with 2-50 employees while the \$2,500 program is for farms with 10-plus acres, which began May 26 and the first handful of payments have already gone out.

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The county received 700 applications for the two previous grant programs and expects to be sending payments out to 150-200 applicants per week until all qualified applicants have been paid, Mumby wrote. >

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Mumby note that County Executive Barry Glassman's goal with all of these programs is to get help to the county's business community as soon as possible. There are no requirements for the minimum number of employees to qualify for the grant program.

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"There are plenty of mom-and-pop businesses who do not have two employees, and we did not want to leave them out," Mumby told The Baltimore Sun.

 **Harford County Gov't**
@HarfordCountyMD



New program! More help for Harford County businesses:

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According to county officials, the funds will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. The grants will be paid out of the county's first round of CARES funding, which is about \$22 million.

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County officials said that the \$5,000 grant can only be used for commercial mortgages, rent or leases.

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This post was contributed by a community member. The views expressed here are the author's own.

[Business](#)

Harford to Host Minority & Small Business Resource Day Feb. 25

25 federal, state, local, and nonprofit organizations providing free assistance specific to minority and women-owned businesses.

By Cindy Mumby, Local Official
Feb 7, 2020 8:29 am ET

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MINORITY & SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCE DAY

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2020
9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

To help minority-owned and small businesses thrive in Harford County, the Office of Community & Economic Development will host a resource day on Tuesday, February 25, 2020 in Bel Air. This second annual event under the administration of County Executive Barry Glassman will bring together 25 federal, state, local, and nonprofit organizations providing free assistance for small companies and resources specific to minority and women-owned businesses. Minority & Small Business Resource Day is co-sponsored by the Harford County Chamber of Commerce and the Harford County Caucus of African-American Leaders.



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The event, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Chesapeake Center at Harford Community College, 401 Thomas Run Road in Bel Air, will feature a panel of local minority business owners, and peer networking opportunities with established small businesses and representatives from local and state agencies. Lunch will be provided. Registration is required.

Services offered at the Resource Day include procurement and contracting opportunities, business plan writing assistance, marketing plan help, financial projections, government funding and incentives, apprenticeship programs, workforce development, employee transit assistance and veteran business assistance.

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During the morning session, each resource partner will give a "5 in 5" presentation – five slides in five minutes – about what assistance they are able to provide. Participating are the Governor's Office of Minority, Women and Small Business Affairs; MD Office of Minority Business Enterprise; Procurement Technical Assistance Center; SCORE (Service Corp. Of Retired Executives); DefTech (Defense Technology Commercialization Center); Maryland Department of Commerce; U.S. Small Business Administration; Meridian Management Group (VLT, MSB DFA state programming); Harford County Office of Community & Economic Development; Harford County Chamber of Commerce; EXIM Bank minority business programs; and Harford Transit.

The afternoon will include a panel discussion with existing small-business owners to discuss what resources have worked for them, how they approached different aspects of their business and problem-solving alternatives.

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An exhibition hall will include information from the previous presenters as well as the Susquehanna Workforce Network, Maryland Relay, Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses, Maryland Department of Labor, Town of Bel Air/Downtown Alliance, City of Aberdeen/Main Street Alliance, Seedco, Commuter Choice of Maryland, Department of General Services, Harford County Caucus of African American Leaders and APG Office of Small Business Programs.

To register, contact Traves White, tnwhite@harfordcountymd.gov, 410-638-3059 or bit.ly/MSBRD.

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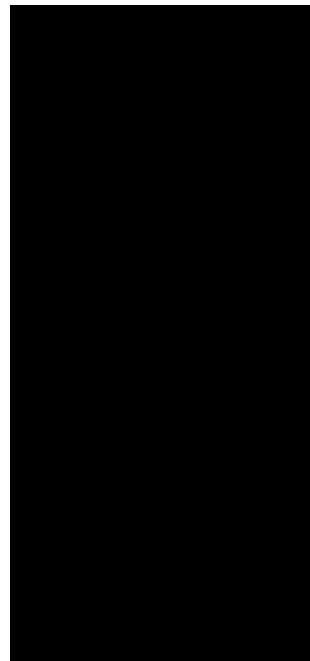
HARFORD COUNTY MARYLAND

Harford's small businesses can start applying Monday for CARES Act grants to cover coronavirus related expenses

By JAMES WHITLOW
THE AEGIS | MAY 15, 2020



0:00



Some businesses in Bel Air prepare to open their doors again now that the stay at home orders have been lifted and certain businesses are allowed to open.



Small business owners in Harford County will get their first look at applications for coronavirus relief grants Monday.

Harford County hopes to send checks to businesses in need by June. Small businesses with two to 50 employees can apply for \$7,500 grants to cover personal protective equipment, social distancing expenses, payroll and other operating costs, according to a news release from County Executive Barry Glassman's office. Farmers with 10 or more acres can also apply for a \$2,500 grant.

More guidance on who qualifies for the grants will be posted to the county's website Monday. The grants will be paid from the county's share of federal CARES Act funding, which totals approximately \$44 million.

The county indicated it would begin accepting applications after Memorial Day, but advised businesses to begin working on their applications earlier. It hopes to distribute most of the checks in June.

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The announcement of the loan program's particulars comes as Gov. Larry Hogan unveiled part of his plan to begin reopening the state.

[\[More Maryland news\] 'Superyacht' docked in Baltimore near Four Seasons Hotel »](#)

On Friday, at 5 p.m., the governor's stay-at-home order will be lifted, though Marylanders will still be encouraged to work from home and stay indoors if possible. Cloth masks and social distancing are still recommended, as well as avoidance of crowds of 10 or more people. The prohibition on gatherings will not be lifted.

Retail businesses like bookstores, car washes and clothing stores will be permitted to reopen at up to 50% capacity, according to the order, but delivery and curbside pickup will be strongly encouraged where it can be. Manufacturing will also be permitted to resume, and houses of worship can begin offering services again at up to 50% capacity. The order strongly recommends outdoor religious services.

Personal services like barber shops and beauty salons will also be allowed to open at up to 50% capacity, Hogan said, but may only be visited by appointment.

Under Hogan's newest guidance, local governments have the flexibility to decide how much they want to reopen with limits set by the governor. Glassman said that Harford County will open as much as it can under the order as other localities have indicated they would defer reopening or only relax some restrictions.

Glassman also signed an executive order temporarily relaxing some parking lot restrictions and allowing businesses to use some space in their outdoor lots for sales, reasoning that the virus can circulate more easily in closed spaces.

[\[More Maryland news\] Westminster-area residents oppose Carroll County rezoning plan, question communication efforts »](#)

Those spaces would still have to comply with social distancing, fire, safety, disability and parking requirements.

“We hope this will expand economic opportunities for our local businesses and their customers,” Glassman said in a prepared statement.

As of Friday, the coronavirus has sickened nearly 37,000 Marylanders and killed almost 1,800. About 1,500 are currently hospitalized around the state.

Harford has 671 total cases, and 28 confirmed deaths, with four more possible deaths from the virus, according to the Maryland Department of Health. The majority of those deaths stem from two nursing homes where the virus has been circulating.

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“Nursing home cases at Bel Air Health & Rehabilitation Center and Forest Hill Health & Rehabilitation Center were 36% of our total cases and 64% of deaths, according to recent reports,” Glassman said in the release.

James Whitlow



James Whitlow covers Harford County crime and county government for The Aegis. Prior to joining Baltimore Sun Media in 2020, he was a reporter at the Danville (Virginia) Register & Bee. A 2018 graduate

of the University of Maryland, James has also worked at McClatchy's Washington, D.C. Bureau and the Capital News Service.

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HARFORD COUNTY MARYLAND

Homesense and Saladworks are the two newest tenants in Bel Air's Tollgate Marketplace

By DAVID ANDERSON
THE AEGIS | FEB 04, 2020



The Homesense store at the Tollgate Marketplace in Bel Air is set to open Feb. 13. (S. Wayne Carter Jr.)

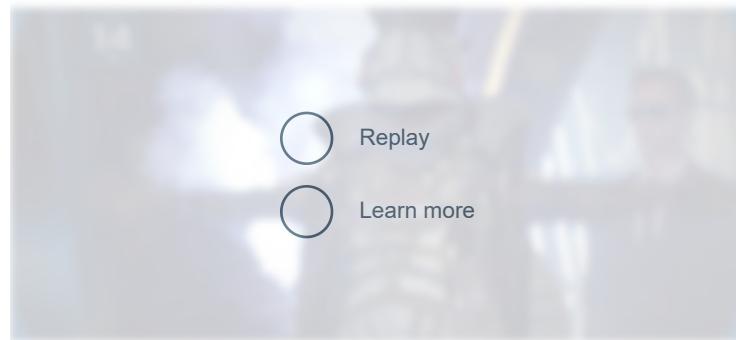
There are two new tenants in the Tollgate Marketplace shopping center in Bel Air: the Homesense retail store and a Saladworks restaurant.

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The Homesense store, which has moved into a 30,000-square-foot space previously occupied by Toys R Us and Babies R Us, is scheduled to open Feb. 13, according to a news release issued by its parent company, The TJX Companies Inc..

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"Homesense offers an expansive selection of high-quality home merchandise, from furniture to decorative accessories, and customers can discover it all at amazing prices," according to the release.

There are more than 20 Homesense stores in the U.S., and the Bel Air store will be the company's fourth in Maryland — other stores have opened in Annapolis, Columbia and Owings Mills. TJX operates multiple retail chains and online shopping sites in the U.S., Canada, Australia and Europe; some of their brands include Homesense, HomeGoods, Sierra and T.J. Maxx.

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"We launched Homesense to bring customers even more of what we know they love — beautiful, quality home merchandise at incredible values," John Ricciuti, president of HomeGoods and Homesense in the U.S., said in a statement. "We are thrilled that Homesense brings a vast and unique selection for customers to discover and curate the homes of their dreams."

[More Maryland news] ['He fell into the money trap': Baltimore restaurant owner ordered to pay \\$8.6 million for royal con](#)
 »

Saladworks offers an array of sandwiches, paninis, soups and its signature salads. Amanda and James Johnson, owners of the Bel Air restaurant, plan to open six Saladworks in the Baltimore area, according to a news release from the town of Bel Air — a ribbon-cutting ceremony is scheduled for Feb. 11.

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The Bel Air restaurant had its grand opening Jan. 20, according to the Saladworks Bel Air page on Facebook.

The operators want to offer local consumers, "who are focused on a healthy lifestyle, an alternative to traditional fast food," Angela Robertson, the town's economic development coordinator, wrote in an email Thursday.

Tollgate Marketplace is at the intersection of Route 1 and Route 24 in Bel Air, accessible either from Route 1 or via South Tollgate Road and Marketplace Drive. The shopping center has experienced turnover among some tenants in the past three years, with the former hhgregg closing in 2017 and the Toys R Us and Babies R Us closing in 2018.

[A Sprouts Farmers Market grocery store opened in the former hhgregg space in July.](#)

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The former Starbucks store closed in winter 2019 and has since been replaced by a Gong Cha bubble tea store, and the Party City moved into the former Bassett Furniture space. [Cork Wine & Spirits was seeking approval to open a liquor store](#) in Party City's former spot as of last September.

David Anderson



David Anderson has been with the Baltimore Sun Media Group since January of 2013 as a reporter for The Aegis. He covers a little bit of everything in Harford County, including education, municipal and county government, business, features, breaking news and community events.

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Suspended Bel Air Police chief allegedly attempted to choke his teenage son, protective order states

Bel Air Police Chief Charles A. Moore Jr. was served with a temporary protective order filed by his wife Tuesday. The order outlines several instances where Moore is accused of laying hands on and belittling her and their teenage son, dating back to 2009.

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Protective order against Bel Air police chief dismissed Tuesday after consent order agreed to in divorce case

A final protective order against Bel Air's Chief of Police Charles A. Moore Jr. was dismissed Tuesday in Harford County Circuit Court, pursuant to a consent order that was promptly sealed.

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Baltimore rapper Chad Focus, accused of spending millions to fraudulently boost music career, pleads guilty

Chad Arrington, who also goes by the stage name Chad Focus, pleaded guilty in federal court Monday as he faced charges that he spent about \$4.1 million with a company American Express card, which helped him maintain the illusion that Chad Focus was the "No. 1 recording artist in the world."

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HARFORD COUNTY MARYLAND

Macy's hiring over 1,000 people at its Joppa fulfillment center

By JAMES WHITLOW
THE AEGIS | SEP 14, 2020



Department store chain Macy's is hiring for over 1,000 full- and part-time positions to help with online orders at its Joppa fulfillment center, the company announced Monday.

Positions are open for warehouse workers, forklift drivers and other jobs as the chain prepares for an influx of online and mobile-app orders over the incoming holiday season, the company said.

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Packages are sorted, picked, packed and shipped from the fulfillment centers, and prospective hires will be offered flexible schedules, a merchandise discount and the opportunity to earn bonuses.

Three hiring events will be offered — the first from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 15, and the remainder from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sept. 19 and Sept. 26 — at 3300 Fashion Way in Joppa.

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Before attending the events, candidates are encouraged to apply online on [the company's website](#).

The company said it migrated 1,000 seasonal positions to full-time in 2019, and about one-third of management began their careers as seasonal associates. The average length of service for professional and hourly workers at the company is 10 and 7 years respectively, it said.

The chain has also implemented several COVID-safety guidelines, in line with recommendations from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Masks are provided; employees are screened and temperature checked daily; and high-touched areas like equipment, bathrooms, break rooms and counter tops are regularly cleaned.

James Whitlow



James Whitlow covers Harford County crime and county government for The Aegis. Prior to joining Baltimore Sun Media in 2020, he was a reporter at the Danville (Virginia) Register & Bee. A 2018 graduate of the University of Maryland, James has also worked at McClatchy's Washington, D.C. Bureau and the Capital News Service.

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Restaurants & Bars

Mucho Gusto Is Opening Soon In Bel Air

Mixologists, local art, authentic cuisine and more will be featured at Bel Air's new Mexican restaurant.

By Elizabeth Janney, Patch Staff 

Jun 25, 2020 8:53 am ET | Updated Jun 25, 2020 9:08 am ET

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BEL AIR, MD — A new Mexican restaurant is planning to open in the next week in Bel Air.

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Mucho Gusto will feature authentic cuisine as well as Americanized versions of Mexican dishes.

"We have a very authentic Mexican chef," owner Nelson Ruiz said.



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"There are a lot of people that would like authentic Mexican food, but we also realize that there are people that are more used to the typical enchiladas, tacos, burritos, chimichangas, so we're going to offer those as well," Ruiz said.

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One menu item may be a trailblazer in the state of Maryland, according to Ruiz.

"We will be the first, I believe, Mexican restaurant in Maryland to offer a Mexican crabcake," Ruiz told the Harford County Liquor Control Board Wednesday, as he presented the concept for the restaurant while applying for a liquor license. It was granted.

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"The drink menus are going to be a lot of fun," Ruiz said.

Mucho Gusto will not have bartenders. Instead, staff will be called mixologists.

"They're very up to date on the newest and trendiest things going on throughout the country," Ruiz said, so they will create the drink menus, which will always be evolving.

"Everything we make at the restaurant is from scratch," Ruiz said. "Even the house margarita comes with fresh-squeezed limes and agave." All drinks will be made in front of the customer.



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The chef spent 18 years cooking in New York, but Ruiz challenged him to make menu items that would appeal to the palates of people in Bel Air.

"He's never really heard of Old Bay," Ruiz said. "I've given him some Old Bay, and he's come up with some recipes ... There is a very high loyalty and importance of being local in this area, and I thought it would be a big miss if we didn't incorporate that."

The local theme is reflected in the design of the restaurant at Mucho Gusto.

An interior designer from Fallston helped shape the concept for the restaurant space.

"We have sort of an industrial-modern feel to the restaurant — minimal design, unfinished ceiling," he said.

The interior at Mucho Gusto is also "very artistic," Ruiz said.

"One of the things that was important to us was to incorporate the use of local talent and people that are relevant in the Bel Air area, so we used local artists to paint a lot of the murals and a lot of the artwork you see in the restaurant," Ruiz said.

Handcrafted bottles that are used for **lights over the bar** were also made by a local artist.



"Anywhere that we could, we used local people to create the look that we were going for," Ruiz said. "Even the chandeliers were painted by a local artist."

Pending use and occupancy and health department permits from Harford County, the restaurant could open as early as Friday but will most likely be open by the middle of next week.

Hours will be as follows:

- 11 a.m.–10 p.m. Monday to Thursday
- 11 a.m.–11 p.m. Friday
- 9 a.m.–11 p.m. Saturday
- 9 a.m.–9 p.m. Sunday

Mucho Gusto is at 1209A Bel Air Rd., Bel Air, MD 21014.



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Initially, Ruiz said the restaurant planned to open without the patio.

"Pre-COVID," the idea was to "get the kitchen up and running" before adding seating outside, Ruiz said.

Now, "with the restrictions placed on us," Ruiz said the newly built patio will be open when the restaurant opens. As of June 25, Maryland is in stage two of reopening, with restaurants allowed to have 50 percent capacity indoor dining with tables 6 feet apart.

"We understand service is very important to people in Bel Air," Ruiz said, so "we felt it was important to open the patio with some additional seating."

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N-CFT, Harford County Team Up to Provide New Space



Maj. Gen. Peter Gallagher, director of the U.S. Army Network-Cross Functional Team, center, cuts a ribbon to symbolize the opening of the N-CFT's outreach office at the Harford Business Innovation Center. Photo by Jon Bleiweis, APG News

HAVRE DE GRACE, Md. — The U.S. Army Network Cross-Functional Team has partnered with the Harford County Office of Economic Development to set up an outreach office for the N-CFT at the Harford Business Innovation Center.

Starting this week, the N-CFT will staff the office each Thursday, giving the community a chance to interact with one of the newer additions at APG. The HBIC is located in the Swan Creek Village Shopping Center on Pulaski Highway.

Maj. Gen. Peter Gallagher, director of the N-CFT, said during a Dec. 2 ribbon cutting ceremony for the new office, that it is important to have the ability to easily bring in subject matter experts from private industry to a convenient location away from the installation's gates.

"We're going to modernize the Army in a big way and it's extremely important that we do it together," he said. "Co-location and the presence and power of positive relationships is key to our approach."

The N-CFT is one of eight cross-functional teams under the U.S. Army Futures Command, which was established last year. The team is tasked to develop network solutions to allow the Army to fight and win in cyber, space and electromagnetic spectrum contests.

As the team works on developing those solutions, in addition to hosting regular weekly office coverage, it will hold large-scale events at the GroundFloor, a coworking space operated by the Harford COED, including a three-day Shark Tank-style event in February.

"The timing is absolutely critical for us," Gallagher said.



From left, Lt. Col. Brian Wong, Chief Warrant Officer 5 Chris Westbrook and Maj. Gen. Peter Gallagher from the U.S. Army Network Cross-Functional Team join Karen Holt, federal installation administrator for the Harford County Office of Economic Development, outside the N-CFT's new office space inside the Harford Business Innovation Center. Photo by Jon Bleiweis, APG News

Karen Holt, federal installation administrator for Harford COED, said the addition of the N-CFT to the NCIB adds to a continuum of small business services that encourage collaboration and entrepreneurship with the goal of supporting Soldiers.

"This is really an opportunity to think outside the box in the way we help warfighters in ways we've never done before," she said.

In addition to the N-CFT, HBIC hosts the Maryland Defense Technology Commercialization Center, an office designed to improve technology transfer between the Army and the public. The DefTech Center, which opened in February 2018, hosts offices for three organizations under the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command — CCDC Army Research Laboratory, CCDC Chemical Biological Center and CCDC Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Cyber, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Center.

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HARFORD COUNTY MARYLAND

New Homesense store in Bel Air gives shoppers multiple options for home decor

By DAVID ANDERSON
THE AEGIS | FEB 13, 2020



FEEDBACK



This new Homesense store, the fourth of its kind in Maryland, opened Thursday morning in the Tollgate Marketplace shopping center in Bel Air. (David Anderson/The Aegis / Baltimore Sun Media Group)

Shoppers took in the bright lights, illuminating an array of items they can purchase to beautify their homes, as they filed into the new Homesense store in Bel Air Thursday morning.

The store, the fourth of its name in Maryland, occupies a 30,000 square-foot space, next to the [Sprouts Farmers Market grocery store](#), in the Tollgate Marketplace shopping center at Route 24 and Baltimore Pike. The space had previously been occupied by Toys R Us and Babies R Us, which closed in 2018.

FEEDBACK

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“I think it’s great,” Bel Air Mayor Amy Chmielewski said of the new Homesense. “It’s great for the shopping center; it’s great for the area.”

Chmielewski and Town Commissioner Donna Kahoe attended the grand opening ceremony early Thursday morning. Events included a ribbon-cutting and a presentation of a \$10,000 contribution from Homesense to support Anna’s House, which supports local families in need of shelter.

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John Cropper, of Bel Air South, walked around the store with his wife, Mi, and 4-year-old son, Joseph. They and other customers could browse an array of merchandise, including home furnishings, lamps, rugs, mirrors, window drapes, dining and cookware, plus bathroom accessories. There also are shelves filled with items for decoration — many of them spring or beach themed — such as pictures and ceramics.

[\[More Maryland news\] Apparent murder-suicide in Bel Air leaves father and 3-year-old son dead, police say »](#)

“It has some really nice things,” Cropper said of the store.

He said his mother would “love” the framed artwork for her beach house, and the merchandise could spark decorating ideas for his own house, which he and his family moved into last July.

Chmielewski, the Bel Air mayor, said she was “overwhelmed” by the options, telling Kahoe that “it’s going to take me three days to go through the store.”

Chmielewski noted her teenage daughter works at the Bel Air store part-time. She also suggested that she and her husband could take a joint shopping trip to Tollgate Marketplace, with her husband visiting the Home Depot across Marketplace Drive, her visiting the Homesense and then both visiting the Sprouts to go grocery shopping.

“So many options in one area,” Chmielewski said.

[\[More Maryland news\] Amber Alert issued after police say 7-year-old Anne Arundel boy abducted by mother »](#)

Kahoe also praised Homesense, citing its “amazing” and varied inventory and “pretty good” prices.

“It’s a lot to choose from,” she said of the merchandise.

FEEDBACK

Homesense is part of The TJX Companies Inc., headquartered in Massachusetts; the parent company operates retail brands such as HomeGoods, Marshalls, Sierra and T.J. Maxx, as well as Homesense. The company has brick-and-mortar and online retail operations in the U.S., Canada, Australia and Europe.

There are more than 20 Homesense stores in the U.S., including four in Maryland — the others are located in Annapolis, Columbia and Owings Mills.

“We are thrilled that Homesense brings a vast and unique selection for customers to discover and curate the homes of their dreams,” John Ricciuti, U.S. president for Homesense and HomeGoods, said in a statement.

[\[More Maryland news\] Group of goats used to tame overgrown hill in Baltimore's Wyman Park Dell »](#)

Anna's House donation

Jennifer Crosson, resources development manager for Anna's House, visited the store with her colleagues Thursday and accepted an oversized check representing Homesense's \$10,000 contribution.

“They were so very generous this morning,” Crosson said in an interview later Thursday, noting “that kind of money can change lives for some of our clients.”

“It's a huge help, and it will make a huge difference in what we do,” she said.

Anna's House, which is one of about 80 programs in the region affiliated with Catholic Charities of Baltimore, provides multiple services to families experiencing homelessness, domestic violence and other issues that cause them to be in need of shelter. More information is available [online](#).

FEEDBACK

Homesense's contribution can help a family pay a security deposit on an apartment, cover moving expenses, or it can support Anna's House services such as rapid re-housing, life skills and self-sufficiency.

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“The donation that they gave will go a long way with those [services],” Crosson said.

David Anderson



David Anderson has been with the Baltimore Sun Media Group since January of 2013 as a reporter for The Aegis. He covers a little bit of everything in Harford County, including education, municipal and county government, business, features, breaking news and community events.

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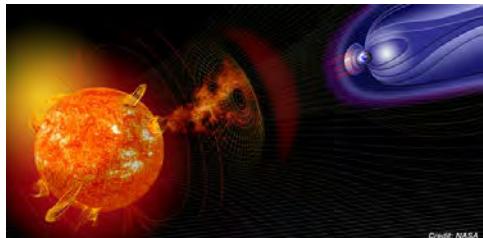
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FEEDBACK



NEXTGEN AWARDED AIR FORCE CONTRACT TO PREDICT SPACE WX



Morgantown, WV – NextGen Federal Systems has been awarded a contract by Air Force Research Laboratory Space Vehicles Directorate to predict space weather. In partnership with the University of Alabama Huntsville (UAH), NextGen is maturing the Space Radiation Intelligence System (SPRINTS). SPRINTS is engineered to be an evolutionary machine-learned software solution for predicting space weather events and converges space weather research and operations with a collaborative data-driven and model-driven environment focused on applying machine learning.

Space weather can potentially cause adverse effects in space and on Earth, and in extreme events cause detrimental damage to critical global infrastructures. Preparations for such space weather events will help provide protection to key services, structures, and activities vital to U.S. national security and the economy.

Under the effort, SPRINTS will ingest additional data sources, apply machine-learned techniques, output solar radiation event forecasts, and operate in real-time. SPRINTS will also integrate other existing state-of-the-art space weather forecast capabilities including UAH's MAG4 to extend forecast outlook times and improve forecast accuracies. The resulting forecasts can be provided to mission planners of astronauts traveling back to the Moon, high altitude flying crews, satellite mission planners, and satellite anomaly analysts.

According to NextGen's Alec Engell, Principal Investigator for the effort, "By combining the MAG4 capability with SPRINTS, we are creating a coherent prediction system that transitions from a pre-eruptive state to a post-eruptive state. This will improve forecast lead times for solar radiation events."

###

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Politics & Government

Outdoor Dining: Harford County Executive Waives Code Restrictions

Harford County Executive Barry Glassman cleared the way for restaurants and bars to open their businesses for outdoor seating Friday.

By Elizabeth Janney, Patch Staff 

May 28, 2020 2:34 pm ET | Updated May 28, 2020 2:49 pm ET

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County Executive Barry Glassman signed an executive order relaxing county code restrictions around outdoor dining, to allow restaurants flexibility as they recover from the coronavirus pandemic. (Harford County Government)

BEL AIR, MD — To allow restaurants, bars and breweries to expand their footprints, Harford County Executive Barry Glassman signed an executive order Thursday waiving parts of the county code that will make outdoor dining easier. The executive order takes effect at 5 p.m. Friday, May 29, concurrent with the order Gov. Larry Hogan issued permitting restaurants and bars to serve patrons outside.

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In announcing that outdoor dining would be allowed once again in Maryland, the governor called upon the leaders of local jurisdictions to work with businesses to reopen.

"We love the idea of closing streets for outside seating in Little Italy and Fells Point in Baltimore City, on West Street and Main Street in Annapolis, on Bethesda Row and in other towns across the state," Hogan said during a news conference Wednesday where he announced the relaxation of requirements. Hogan said he was "strongly encouraging local leaders to find innovative ways to help support our restaurant businesses."

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The executive order that Glassman signed Thursday gives restaurants more space in their parking lots for outside dining by waiving several provisions of Harford County

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code, including those that have to do with off-street parking requirements, temporary uses, setbacks, seating capacity, outdoor displays, premise signage and outdoor storage.

"This action will make it easier for restaurants to offer outside dining, similar to my prior [Executive Order facilitating outdoor retail sales](#)," Glassman said in a statement. "As with each step in reopening, everyone must follow required safety precautions so we can continue moving forward together."

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Where is your favorite place to dine outside in Harford County? Tell us in the comments!

The [new order from the governor](#) allows restaurants and bars to serve food and drinks to customers in outdoor areas if they meet the following requirements:

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- Diners must sit 6 feet away from each other, unless they are members of the same household.
- No more than six people may be seated at a table, unless they are members of the same household.
- Restaurants and bars must clean and disinfect each table between each seating in accordance with guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Maryland Department of Health, using cleaning products that meet U.S. Environmental Protection Agency criteria for use against COVID-19.
- No buffets are allowed.
- Staff members wear face coverings when interacting with each other or patrons.

Hogan also said restaurants should offer disposable, single-use menus or sanitize reusable menus between each seating, screen staff through daily temperature checks and train staff members in current COVID-19 guidelines.

The new outdoor [dining guidance](#) applies to restaurants and bars as well as social and fraternal clubs, including American Legion posts, VFW posts and Elks Clubs.

See Also:

- [Harford County Executive Relaxes Parking Restrictions For Retail](#)
- [Harford County Businesses Can Apply For CARES Act Funds](#)
- [MD Reopening Restaurants For Outdoor Dining, Stage 2 Nears: Hogan](#)
- ['I Plan To Help Our Restaurants': Harford County Executive](#)

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allen siegel, Neighbor

Bel Air, MD | 1d

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Local Question

**Ron Thoms**, Neighbor

Bel Air, MD | 3d | Edited

Can anyone tell me what's going on with trash pickup in the Autumn Run area in Abingdon? I don't know if it's just Waste Industries or what but we've missed a few few pickups and when they do come it's the next day.

[Thank](#) [Reply \(10\)](#) [Share](#)**Marcie Dawson**, Neighbor

Bel Air, MD | 4d

This is my first year doing door to door Census work. I'm surprised at how many people shy away from us. I know these are unprecedented times but we are wearing masks and we stand 6 feet away to do the 5-10 minute interview and people still hide in their cars, ignore us, are rude to us, etc. Even

[Read more](#)[Thank \(9\)](#) [Reply \(15\)](#) [Share](#)

Local Question

**Mark**, Neighbor

Bel Air, MD | 4d

What platform (zoom?) will Harford County public schools use for virtual learning?

[Thank](#) [Reply \(8\)](#) [Share](#)**Elizabeth Janney**, Patch Staff

Bel Air, MD | 5d

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 **Richard Narango**, Neighbor
Bel Air, MD | 6d

Working Lawn Mower Needed!

I stumbled upon a single struggling MOM who is in need of a working lawn mower. Any help would be appreciated.

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 **brenda**, Neighbor
Bel Air, MD | 6d

Looking for someone to help wash 10-12 second story windows on an old home. Must work up on a ladder.

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PNT Stands Up New Office for Modernization



Christopher Jais, left, accepts the charter for Product Manager Positioning Navigation and Timing Modernization from Col. Nickolas Kioutas, Project Manager PNT on Oct. 8. | U.S. Army Photo by John Higgins

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. — Speed, power and precision: this has been a core balancing act in the military for centuries. How fast can a unit bring the fight to a target?

Reliable equipment can go from “nice to have” to critical very quickly, and given the rapidly evolving world today, a reliable piece of equipment can help push the force beyond survivability and safety to victory. Every piece of military technology can make that difference.

This is especially true for navigation systems since they are critical for the Soldier on the march, the wheeled vehicle on the move, and aircraft in the sky. All of these things require reliable, cross-referenced navigation capability.

Project Manager Positioning, Navigation and Timing (PNT), an office of Program Executive Office – Intelligence, Electronic Warfare and Sensors, is moving to create an “office of speed” with the standing up of a new Product Manager for PNT Modernization.

In January 2019, Secretary of Defense Mark Esper signed a tri-services memo that made modernization of Army, Navy and Air Force systems a major military priority. Since then, Col. Nickolas Kioutas and his team have been pushing their areas of expertise, specifically in Assured PNT.

"PNT's been targeted by our adversaries, so we are moving very quickly," said Kioutas. "We're trying to get after modular open systems architectures because we see common standards as strategically relevant. When we talk strategic capability, we always talk about the big weapon systems and platforms, but PM PNT recognizes that standards are going to be a strategic capability because the more that we can work with industry hand-in-hand utilizing common standards to get technologies rapidly integrated into the force, [the more we] would be able to remain agile and pace the threat."

Christopher Jais was selected to serve as the first product manager for PNT Modernization. Jais has 16 years in acquisition, has been the deputy product manager for Dismounted Assured PNT since 2018, and assumed the charter for PNT Modernization on Oct. 8.

"PNT Modernization will quickly identify and mature technology to address operational gaps or emerging threats," said Jais, "ultimately ensuring the Soldier has an assured source of position and timing data enabling their mission success."

Kioutas' team, with Jais as a product manager, laid the groundwork by promoting open systems architectures; the first is C5ISR Modular Open Suite of Standards. These standards create a chassis that can accommodate multiple systems and capabilities.

"The more modular we can get with a common chassis, the more it allows us to then develop the internal capability to implement different PNT cards," said Kioutas. "If another PM has a radio, like a SINCGARS radio, modular open system architecture helps them create a card and plug it into the chassis. If the threat is now jamming or spoofing our radio frequency in that band of capability, we can quickly pivot to a different capability and that's how we get agility in the force."

Modularity is one piece, and another is layering radio frequency signals with PNT data from different technologies to cross-reference a location: the 'assurance' in 'assured PNT'. ALT-NAV, or alternate navigation, and any other RF signal or non-RF data sources such as chip scale atomic clocks, controlled oscillators or other timing technologies, plus vision-aided [navigation] really breaks our dependence on narrow-band RF," said Kioutas.

"ALT-NAV [and other systems are] complementary solutions that we've already begun prototyping for both Mounted and Dismounted Assured PNT systems (MAPS and DAPS)," said Jais. "They can provide the Soldier with additional sources of PNT when GPS is degraded or denied."

"We can quickly assess performance of non-RF sensors, and shift the focus to integration and a converged PNT solution. Adding multiple layers (additional sensors) will provide us a more resilient solution," said Jais.

Jais went on to say that his team will be running the Open Innovation Lab to push the modernization mission as fast as possible.

"The Open Innovation Lab is an unclassified facility with an emphasis on mature solutions located at Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland, dedicated to pursuing rapid integration of PNT technologies," said Jais. "This lab will allow us to quickly screen potential technologies and assess compliance with our open standards and architectures. It will also provide us an opportunity for collaboration and feedback with industry, academic, government science and technology."

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The PNT Modernization charter spells out their mandate: not only will they be moving technology and systems further and faster but they will be seeking out new partnerships in industry and academia, and creating common standards for those groups to ensure expediency, communication, and continuity for PNT technologies.

This is how they intend to fulfill their office's vision to "promote the rapid development, synchronization, maturation and transition of technology to deliver solutions effectively and efficiently that address PNT operational gaps."

By John Higgins, PEO IEW&S Public Affairs

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Updated: 3:17 PM EDT May 18, 2020

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BEL AIR, Md. — Small business owners in Harford County can apply for relief grants.

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Starting Monday, small business that have two to 50 employees can apply for \$7,500 in relief. The funds can be used toward social-distancing expenses, purchasing personal protective



Smiths Detection Achieves Major Manufacturing Milestone in Support of the TSA Advanced Technology X-ray Program

October 06, 2020 11:00 AM Eastern Daylight Time

EDGEWOOD, Md.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Smiths Detection Inc. (SDI) has announced it has successfully manufactured and shipped the 200th Computed Tomography (CT) 3-D Scanner from its Americas Headquarters located in Harford County, MD. The CT scanner marks a major milestone in advancing Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) initiatives and is the result of SDI's ongoing manufacturing during the COVID 19 crisis as part of the Defense Industrial Base essential critical infrastructure workforce.

In March 2019, SDI received an award from TSA to supply 300 Checkpoint CT HI-SCAN 6040 CTiX systems to airports across the US. Upgrading US checkpoints with CT technology eliminates the need for passengers to remove laptops and liquids from their carry-on bags and improves airport security, both critical components in helping passengers regain confidence in air travel.

Shan Hood, President of Smiths Detection Inc., said, "I am very proud to reach the 200th HI-SCAN 6040 CTiX deployment milestone. The deployment of this technology has revolutionized checkpoint security so US airports can be better equipped to face ever evolving threats. During these challenging times, we have been able to adapt our manufacturing processes in order to keep our manufacturing and delivery commitment."

The CTiX produces high quality 3-D images, helping expedite operators scan evaluation times and move passengers through checkpoints quicker. It is a key component of Smiths Detection's advanced integrated and risk-based screening solutions, which includes the iLane, a sophisticated checkpoint lane that automatically separates suspicious belongings and Checkpoint.Evo Plus, a digital platform enabling remote screening and business management tools.

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For more information, please visit: <https://www.smithsdetection.com/products/hi-scan-6040-ctix/>

###

About HI-SCAN 6040 CTiX

HI-SCAN 6040 CTiX is a cabin baggage screening system that uses CT technology to provide advanced explosives detection and low false alarm rates. By producing high resolution 3D volumetric images, operators can more accurately analyse a bag's contents whilst liquids and electronic devices can remain in bags.

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Smiths Detection, part of Smiths Group, is a global leader in threat detection and screening technologies for aviation, ports and borders, defence and urban security markets. Our experience and history across more than 40 years at the frontline, enables us to deliver the solutions needed to protect society from the threat and illegal passage of explosives, prohibited weapons, contraband, toxic chemicals and narcotics.

Our goal is simple – to provide security, peace of mind and freedom of movement upon which the world depends.

For more information visit <http://www.smithsdetection.com/>

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TECHNOLOGY

Smiths Detection lands another Homeland Security contract, worth up to \$379 million



Smiths Detection, part of UK-based Smiths Group, is headquartered at 2202 Lakeside Blvd. in Edgewood.

COSTAR GROUP INC.

By Morgan Eichensehr
Reporter, Baltimore Business Journal
Sep 4, 2020, 2:44pm EDT

The deal follows on another huge contract with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security that Edgewood's Smiths Detection secured last year.

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HARFORD MAGAZINE

State Theater working to become a hub for creatives in Harford County

By JOHN-JOHN WILLIAMS IV
BALTIMORE SUN | AUG 20, 2020



It was just a few months ago, January, that the State Theater of Havre de Grace opened as a 14,000-square-foot multi-purpose venue.

It might as well have been a lifetime ago, as owner Jared Noe has had to learn quickly and finds ways to keep moving forward amid the coronavirus pandemic.

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“It definitely hurt us,” Noe said. “We were ramping up very quick.”

While Noe estimates he’s losing from \$10,000 to \$50,000 a month, he has found a variety of ways to make money and keep shows happening at what he and others hope will become an arts epicenter.

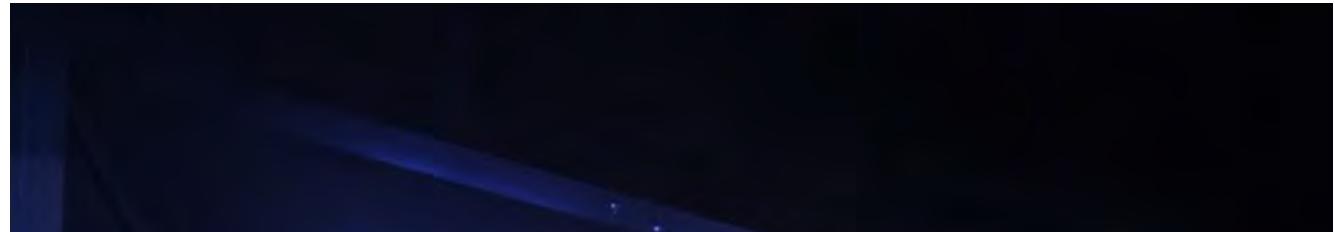
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“It’s an amazing venue. It’s a hidden gem,” Noe said. “We knew we wanted to base it in Harford County. There really isn’t anything [like this nearby].

[\[More Maryland news\] When garbage goes green: Baltimore County is converting landfill trash into renewable energy, without burning it »](#)

FEEDBACK

The 35-year-old spent two years in renovation to offer space for comedians, music acts, theater productions and film screenings. It’s also home to Noe’s media production company, Suited Four Inc.



FEEDBACK



Jared Noe, owner and GM of The State Theater of Havre de Grace, has been hosting virtual events and concerts at the venue during the COVID-19 shut down. (Kenneth K. Lam)

Having that business in the venue allowed for a seamless transition to producing and then streaming performances during the early months of the pandemic shutdown.

“That has been the saving grace,” Noe said. “We have not technically closed down.”

Live streamed online performances, which featured up to seven bands, have attracted between 5,000 and 10,000 viewers. Musical acts were able to enter the building from different doors and perform in separate areas, helping to limit the possibility of exposure.

“Everyone was bringing their own microphones so they weren’t cross-contaminated,” Noe explained.

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And although numbers have dropped to between 1,000 to 3,000 viewers per performance, those associated with the theater are confident that they are ahead of the curve on a future business model.

FEEDBACK

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Jared Noe, owner and GM of The State Theater of Havre de Grace, operates camera equipment as the Rescue Party, an 80s cover band, rehearse on the stage. Noe has been hosting virtual events and concerts at the venue during the COVID-19 shut down. (Kenneth K. Lam)

“What the pandemic has been teaching us is that the reality and the accessibilities of virtual shows isn’t going away,” said **Ed Nennan**, a musician who also volunteers at the venue. “They will become a new facet of how we as musicians and communicators connect with our audiences. Virtual shows were always lurking in the background. It wasn’t until the pandemic crept up, it carved a niche for virtual entertainment to say, ‘OK, it’s my time now.’ ”

Nennan knows that more logistics need to be worked out to keep the theater viable.

“The challenge that the theater faces will be finding the proper mix of how to monetize performances both with virtual ticketing as well as walk-up live ticketing,” he said. “It still needs to be figured out.”

Because the venue has a catering kitchen, it will eventually be able to serve food at events or offer dinner theater productions.

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Currently, the capacity for the venue is 150 people. But once social distancing rules are more relaxed, it will accommodate close to 400 people.

FEEDBACK

The old State Theater, seen here in 2014, has gone through “multiple renovations through the years,” according to Jared Noe. (photo by Scott Serio / Baltimore Sun Media Group)

There's a sense of history here

The building, which was built in 1927 as a movie theater, has gone through “multiple renovations through the years,” according to Noe.

The space was used as a church from the 1990s to the early 2000s. It has a stage “built for no-amplification acoustics.”

Noe boasts: "You can hear a whisper off that stage."

Neenan said the building also has a lot of appeal from a marketing standpoint.

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"It offers a space that is unlike anything else I have seen in the county," he said.

With its Art Deco feel, Neenan said, the venue reminds him of the theaters in the greater Philadelphia area.

"They have been successful because they have the ability to offer that more intimate experience," he said. "The opportunity is certainly there. When you match that with the quaintness of St. John's Street, it seems like a natural."

The theater helps to create an arts epicenter in Havre de Grace, according to **Neenan**.

"The growth that the area of Havre de Grace has seen — it makes for a really exciting possibility," he said.

FEEDBACK

Mike Miltenberger, from left, Ed Neenan, David Buckner and Aaron Harris members of The Rescue Party, an 80s cover band, rehearse at The State Theater of Havre de Grace. Ownership of the venue has been hosting virtual events and concerts during the COVID-19 shut down. (Kenneth K. Lam)

Much more to come

Katie Johnson, the theater's director of operations and events, plans to create a monthly 1940s jazz club concept, *Midnight at the Lafayette Lounge*, in the theater.

Johnson said the theater offers a much-needed incubator space for local artists.

“The thing that I love about the State, we are very focused on working with up-and-coming creatives,” she said. “They don’t have to jump through hurdles to thrive and perform.”

Johnson described the theater as a collaborative and open space.

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“The exciting thing is that this is a place where people can bring in their own ideas and creative tendencies,” she said. “Those are the types of people that we want to work with in Harford County. I’m excited to see what we can do for ourselves and the Harford creative community in general.”

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John-John Williams IV



John-John Williams IV has worked for The Baltimore Sun since 2005. He joined the paper as an education reporter covering Howard County, then Baltimore City and state and national education stories. He joined the features staff as the fashion reporter in 2011. His role in features has expanded to covering home, food, travel and popular culture.

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HARFORD COUNTY MARYLAND

The Grove, Harford County's new agricultural incubator, would help farmers grow their business, Glassman says

By JAMES WHITLOW
THE AEGIS | JAN 31, 2020





Workers install sections of a metal roof on the new Harford County agri-business incubator building, called The Grove, Thursday morning. The building is located next to the Harford County Agricultural Center in Street. (Matt Button / The Aegis/Baltimore Sun Media)

Harford County is constructing a shared agri-business space as part of an effort to consolidate and promote agriculture in the county.

The shared workspace, called The Grove, is currently under construction and has received attention from the governor, who allocated \$400,000 to the construction as a line item in the capital budget, which was unveiled on Jan. 15. The project is estimated to cost \$1 million in total.

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The estimated costs of running the agri-business incubator are very low for the county, because it will not staff the building, said Cindy Mumby, the director of Harford County's Office of Governmental and Community Relations. Its chief expenses will be electricity and heating.

The building will provide local farmers, food processors and artists a venue to sell their products. Its stalls, measuring 16-by-12 feet each, can accommodate 16 businesses, provided they meet the requirements for using the space. It will be located alongside the Harford County Agricultural Center at 3525 Conowingo Road.

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Interested businesses would annually pay between \$1,800 and \$3,600 for a stall and must be open for at least 12 total hours across three days of the week to qualify. Applications are being accepted through Feb. 15.

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Harford County Executive Barry Glassman said he hopes to have the center open in the spring before June's crop season. The space will be helpful for small businesses with only a few employees or new businesses just getting off the ground, he said.

The Grove is only the most recent step in a larger plan, Glassman said. Plans are also being laid to construct an agriculture-themed playground and carve two educational trails on the 86-acre property.

“It is kind of our master plan to make that our agricultural center,” he said. “That way, people can come, they [can] go to the market, they can walk the trails.”



An artist's rendering of The Grove, an agri-business incubator being built by Harford County Government near the agricultural center in Street. (Courtesy Harford County Government)

The idea was inspired by The GroundFloor at Harford — the shared office space on Pulaski Highway in Havre de Grace. Glassman said that project was successful, partly because of businesses' eagerness to service and contract with Aberdeen Proving Grounds.

The success can be measured by the number of businesses that launch from the shared space, among other factors. Mumby said several companies got their start at

the GroundFloor and have since moved on to their own offices. Many of those companies dealt with APG.

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In 2019, the GroundFloor had 13 resident businesses, serving 82 clients through its small business development center and 42 new clients through Harford's Defense Technology Commercialization Center.

The Grove will work like a more professionalized farmer's market, which producer Sarah Rider said comes with uncertainty. She manages Havre de Grace's farmer's market.

There are a handful of professional, full-time farmers who set up stalls at the Havre de Grace farmer's market, Rider said, but others have non-agricultural jobs and sell their products on the side. The time commitment and cost of selling at The Grove, she said, would not add up for some small farms — particularly the mandated 12 hours of operation a week.

"I am still a little confused on what it is going to be," she said. "I am not sure I really see it as a big, fancy farmer's market because I do not know how many farms are going to be able to be in there seven days a week, or even three."

The price could be prohibitive, too. Havre de Grace's farmer's market costs \$300 per season for a stand, she said, though the price per event increases if a vendor participates in 10 or fewer markets. Some may not produce enough to justify the cost of maintaining a storefront like what the shared space would provide.

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Still, Rider said she was looking into the possibility of selling at The Grove and would not dismiss the idea until she learned more about what it could be.

Moreover, Rider did not see the space becoming a threat to the farmer's market, which is only open on Saturdays during select times of the year.

Glassman concurred, saying that there was enough business and demand in the county to go around.

"Agriculture is still one of our number one businesses per-capita," Glassman said. "It is important to keep promoting it."

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The governor's office did not respond to questions by the time of this article's publication.

James Whitlow



James Whitlow covers Harford County crime and county government for The Aegis. Prior to joining Baltimore Sun Media in 2020, he was a reporter at the Danville (Virginia) Register & Bee. A 2018 graduate of the University of Maryland, James has also worked at McClatchy's Washington, D.C. Bureau and the Capital News Service.

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HARFORD COUNTY MARYLAND

Three Maryland counties awarded nearly \$4.8 million to improve bus systems

By JAMES WHITLOW
THE AEGIS | AUG 12, 2020





Harford County received \$3.4 million in federal grants to replace six diesel buses with compressed natural gas buses and retrofit its fueling and repair facilities. (Robin Sommer/MidAtlantic Photographic LLC)

Harford, Howard and Carroll counties were collectively awarded nearly \$4.8 million in federal grants to improve their bus systems — the only three Maryland jurisdictions to receive that funding.

The three counties' projects numbered among the 96 transit system improvement projects in 49 states and territories to which \$464 million dollars were awarded, the Federal Transit Administration announced. The FTA received 282 applications, totaling approximately \$1.8 billion in funding requests, the agency said.

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The lion's share of the Maryland grants will go to Harford County, which was awarded approximately \$3.4 million to replace six diesel buses with compressed natural gas buses and retrofit its fueling and repair facilities to accommodate the new technology, Harford County spokesperson Cindy Mumby said.

The county's longer-term goal is to replace all of its 32 buses, many of which use diesel fuel, with natural gas-fueled shuttles, Mumby said. Natural gas is cheaper than diesel — the county expects to save \$7,500 annually per bus in fuel costs, she said. Natural gas also burns at "close to zero" emissions, she said. The maintenance costs will be lower on the new buses as well.

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Those six will be the first compressed natural gas buses in Harford County's fleet.

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“It can take up to 30 months to get the buses,” Mumby said. “When we receive the funding, we have to go through a procurement process and then the buses are actually built for us.”

The federal grant requires the county to match 10% of the approximately \$3.4 million. The Harford County transit system’s roughly \$8 million budget is funded by 90% state and federal grants funds and 10% county dollars, Mumby said.

Howard County was awarded approximately approximately \$1.2 million to improve its bus service’s reliability and connectivity, a statement from federal lawmakers said.

Funds will be used to replace three buses — likely of 2002 vintage — with new clean-diesel shuttles, said Bruce Gartner, administrator of the Howard County Office of Transportation. The new buses are similar to two others that the county purchased last year and will not require modifications to the county’s transportation infrastructure. The buses are likely to arrive in the winter of 2021 or early 2022.

Howard County will have to match the grant. The matching rate is customarily 20% of the award, with the county and state paying 10% each, Gartner explained. The county applies for the grant every year, and this year’s award was a boon, he said, but it still needs money to replace other aging buses in its fleet of 41. The county maintains a total fleet of about 60 vehicles.

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“This is above and beyond what we would normally get from the state, which is funding for about two buses every year,” Gartner said. “We could use something similar for the next three to four years to really get ourselves to where transit agencies prefer to be with their average bus life.”

The new buses would also come equipped with an electronic announcement system. Drivers are supposed to call out the stops as they arrive, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, but the announcements sometime do not make it past the protective barriers put around drivers — a consequence of the coronavirus pandemic.

“Right now the drivers are supposed to be calling out the stops,” Gartner said. “It is kind of hit-and-miss as to if people hear that.”

Carroll County was awarded about \$118,000 to purchase replacement buses for its aging fleet. The full amount will go to the Carroll Transit System.

According to a briefing submitted to the Board of Carroll County Commissioners on March 5, CTS was requesting three Ford buses to replace three older shuttles currently in its fleet of 40 total vehicles.

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The county received the amount it requested from the grant, Transportation Grants Coordinator Stacey Nash said. It is also seeking a separate grant for five more vehicles, but Nash said it was unlikely to be awarded the grant.

Carroll County will have to match funds for the three new buses with approximately \$29,500 of its own dollars, according to the briefing given to the commissioners.

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Carroll County Times reporter Mary Grace Keller contributed to this article.

James Whitlow



James Whitlow covers Harford County crime and county government for The Aegis. Prior to joining Baltimore Sun Media in 2020, he was a reporter at the Danville (Virginia) Register & Bee. A 2018 graduate of the University of Maryland, James has also worked at McClatchy's Washington, D.C. Bureau and the Capital News Service.

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HEALTH

University of Maryland Medical System acquires nine urgent care sites in Maryland



By PHIL DAVIS
BALTIMORE SUN | MAR 02, 2020



The University of Maryland Medical System has acquired nine Maryland urgent care sites from ChoiceOne, it announced Monday.

In a news release, the system wrote that it has acquired sites in Baltimore, Caroline, Harford and Talbot counties as well as two locations in Baltimore City. The transition over to UMMS is effective as of March 1, the system wrote. The urgent care centers will keep their ChoiceOne name.

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The sites were originally operated under a joint venture agreement with the University of Maryland St. Joseph Medical Center, University of Maryland Shore Regional Health and the University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health, the system wrote.

Effective March 1, the system wrote the acquisitions “allows UMMS to provide patients with integrated clinical services and a continuous care experience.”

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"This purposeful and strategic decision to invest in urgent care centers is part of our drive to transform health care delivery in our state and connect patients with the care they deserve - where and when they need it," the system wrote. "The urgent care sites will provide opportunities to reduce the total cost of care for patients via a deeper engagement with wellness programs promoting population health initiatives and working with patients to manage issues around social determinants of health."

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Those employed by ChoiceOne will join UMMS employees under a new entity called UMMS Ambulatory Care LLC, the system wrote. Non-providers will become employees May 1 while about 40 clinical providers will become employees under the agreement on July 1, the system wrote.

The acquired urgent care locations include:

Baltimore City

- ChoiceOne Urgent Care – Belvedere Square (600 E. Belvedere Ave.)
- ChoiceOne Urgent Care – Rotunda (711 W. 40 St.)

Baltimore County

- ChoiceOne Urgent Care – Dundalk (1730 Merritt Boulevard)
- ChoiceOne Urgent Care – Phoenix (14237 Jarrettsville Pike)

Caroline County

- ChoiceOne Urgent Care – Denton (8 Denton Plaza)

Harford County

- ChoiceOne Urgent Care – Aberdeen (744 S. Philadelphia Blvd)
- ChoiceOne Urgent Care – Fallston (2315 Belair Road)

Phil Davis

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Originally from New Jersey, I've worked in journalism for the past eight years, working at newspapers in New Jersey, Delaware and now Maryland. An enthusiasm enthusiast and very passionate about hockey.

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Former Baltimore Mayor Pugh hid her cell phone from FBI agents — and more details from sentencing memo

Prosecutors filed a 37-page sentencing memorandum Thursday making the case for former Baltimore Mayor Catherine Pugh to spend nearly five years behind bars for conspiracy and tax evasion. Here are five key takeaways from the memo.

Baltimore Sun

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HEALTH CARE

University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health starts construction on new Aberdeen campus



By Jessica Iannetta
Managing Editor, Baltimore Business Journal

Nov 3, 2020, 2:23pm EST

Updated Nov 3, 2020, 3:35pm EST

University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health started construction on its new Aberdeen campus last week, with plans to complete work there as well as a related renovation project at its nearby Bel Air campus by spring 2023.

The \$228 million projects in Harford County have been in the works for years as part of the health system's plan to replace the aging University of Maryland Harford Memorial Hospital in Havre de Grace, which will be shut down once the Aberdeen campus and renovated Bel Air campus are finished. Upper Chesapeake Health had initially planned the development for a 97-acre site along

Bulle Rock Parkway in Havre de Grace before deciding on the Aberdeen site, purchasing the land for \$18 million from Merritt Properties last year.

The Aberdeen campus plans have been controversial to some community members because of the system's decision to build a freestanding medical facility, rather than a full-service general hospital. Some residents have worried a freestanding medical facility with emergency services would be more like an urgent care center, and may not fully meet the medical needs of the local community as a hospital would. Upper Chesapeake Health officials have repeatedly pushed back on that assertion, saying the Aberdeen campus will offer nearly all the same services as Harford Memorial. The renovation project at the Bel Air medical center, located about 14 miles away, will also serve to fill any gaps in care, officials have said.

"It's hard to imagine that 20 years ago, we were moving into the new hospital in Bel Air. Now we are ready to begin work on our new campus in Aberdeen," said Lyle E. Sheldon, president and CEO of Upper Chesapeake Health, in a statement Tuesday. "I want to assure our community that despite the challenges of COVID-19, our medical staff and all our care providers stand united to deliver the best possible care to our community today and into the future. The lessons we have learned from this pandemic will be integrated into our planning and facility design."

The 220,806-square-foot campus on 60 acres off Route 22 near Interstate 95 in Aberdeen will include a behavioral health pavilion and psychiatric hospital, as well as a freestanding medical facility with a full-service emergency department that is twice the size of the Harford Memorial emergency department. An existing office building at the site will also be converted to offices for primary care and other medical and surgical specialities as well as more outpatient services, including rehabilitation services, a comprehensive imaging center and an infusion center.

Check out the gallery at the top of the page to see renderings of the new Aberdeen campus.

Madison, Wisconsin-based Erdman will handle design and construction of the campus.

In Bel Air, the renovation will include a parking expansion project set to be completed next spring as well as construction of an outpatient building, which will include an ambulatory surgery center and is expected to open in early 2022. Three floors will also be added above the Patricia D. and M.

Scot Kaufman Cancer Center. The additional 80,000 square feet on those levels will include separate floors of observation beds, medical/surgical private rooms and space for future needs of the cancer center, as well as medical/surgical bed expansion.

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HARFORD COUNTY MARYLAND

Upper Chesapeake hospital consolidation plans for Harford County approved by state health commission

By DAVID ANDERSON
THE AEGIS | APR 16, 2020



Members of the Maryland Health Care Commission voted Thursday in favor of plans by University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health to consolidate its hospital services in Harford County, despite [calls by some elected officials to remove the matter](#) from the commission's docket in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

FEEDBACK

Upper Chesapeake's three requests on the agenda included closing Harford Memorial Hospital in Havre de Grace and converting it into a free-standing medical facility in Aberdeen, building new bed space and increasing the number of beds in Upper Chesapeake Medical Center in Bel Air and building a special psychiatric hospital on the same campus at the free-standing medical center.

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All three requests were approved. Lyle Sheldon, president and CEO of Upper Chesapeake Health, thanked the commission for its support, noting that health system officials are working to “transform health care in an effective and efficient” manner for the communities UCH serves in Harford County and western Cecil County.

Commission Chairman Dr. Andrew Pollak and Commissioner Casi Boyer both recused themselves from voting on the requests.

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Boyer serves as a member of the Havre de Grace City Council. City leaders, members of the community and state legislators who represent the Havre de Grace area have been battling the proposal to close Harford Memorial since UCH announced its plans in early 2016. They have protested the closure of the community hospital and expressed concerns that a free-standing medical center would not have sufficient resources to serve eastern Harford and western Cecil County.

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The medical center, as proposed, will have a full-service emergency room and beds for short-stay medical needs, as well as variety of medical imaging, testing, laboratory and therapeutic services. Medical, surgical and other beds meant to serve patients requiring longer hospital stays will be consolidated with beds at the Bel Air hospital, though.

Havre de Grace Mayor William T. Martin sent a letter to Gov. Larry Hogan last week, asking the governor to issue an executive order stopping the commission from taking action Thursday on Upper Chesapeake Health's requests.

State Dels. Mary Ann Lisanti and Steve Johnson, whose district includes Aberdeen and Havre de Grace, also sent a letter to MHCC Executive Director asking him to remove the matter from the agenda. All cited the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on health care resources in Maryland.

FEEDBACK

The legislators stated, in their April 10 letter, that taking action Thursday would be “a blatant disregard for public health and a direct assault on the health and safety of the people we represent” in District 34A. They “respectfully” asked that the commission defer action “until this public emergency is over and we have a better understanding of our community healthcare needs.”

Other appointed and elected leaders in Harford County, such as County Executive Barry Glassman, Bel Air Town Administrator Jesse Bane and county Health Officer Dr. Russell Moy, sent letters to the commission urging it to proceed with the vote Thursday. Dr. Muhammad Jokhadar, president of the medical staff at Upper Chesapeake, also wrote in favor of approving the request.

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“While I recognize that it is an extremely turbulent time during this unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, meeting the current and future health planning needs in Harford County is also important,” Moy stated.

The MHCC staff included, for the commissioners’ approval, an order that Harford Memorial “shall not close” until the medical center and psychiatric hospital are built on the Aberdeen campus off of Route 22. That process is expected to take about two-and-a-half years.

The commissioners and MHCC staff met via webinar Thursday afternoon, and members of the public could hear audio of the proceedings either online or by phone.

FEEDBACK

The commissioners and staff discussed the requests to delay the vote as they reviewed Upper Chesapeake’s plans. Dr. Gerard S. O’Connor, a commissioner and private-practice surgeon in Chestertown, voted against the free-standing medical facility and psychiatric hospital proposals — he cast the lone dissenting vote both times.

“We’re in a state, national and world emergency right now, and I don’t think there are any standards for that,” he said, noting the unknown impact COVID-19 could have on health care services.

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O’Connor said he thinks there will be “a major paradigm shift in health care,” and that use of telehealth could become much more common. He suggested that the commission “wait and see how everything falls out before we do make a decision.”

Steffen, the executive director, said he has been reviewing where the greatest number of COVID-19 cases have been reported in Maryland and which hospitals have treated the most patients with the disease.

He noted that larger hospitals with more resources to provide the type of treatment needed to beat COVID-19 are in Baltimore and the surrounding area, rather than smaller community hospitals such as those in Harford County. He added that it is more challenging for community hospitals to treat people who are severely or moderately sick with a disease such as COVID-19. There is currently no approved treatment or vaccine for the respiratory disease, which can be fatal and has killed tens of thousands of people in the U.S.

Harford County Council President Patrick Vincenti, who grew up in Havre de Grace, also sent a letter to the commission ahead of its vote. He expressed his support for the order regarding the closure of Harford Memorial.

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“Closing this healthcare facility prematurely will have a severe negative impact on all residents of Harford County and [leave] them without critical care,” he stated.

David Anderson



David Anderson has been with the Baltimore Sun Media Group since January of 2013 as a reporter for The Aegis. He covers a little bit of everything in Harford County, including education, municipal and county government, business, features, breaking news and community events.

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Upper Chesapeake plans to have new hospital facilities open by early 2023

By DAVID ANDERSON
THE AEGIS | APR 22, 2020



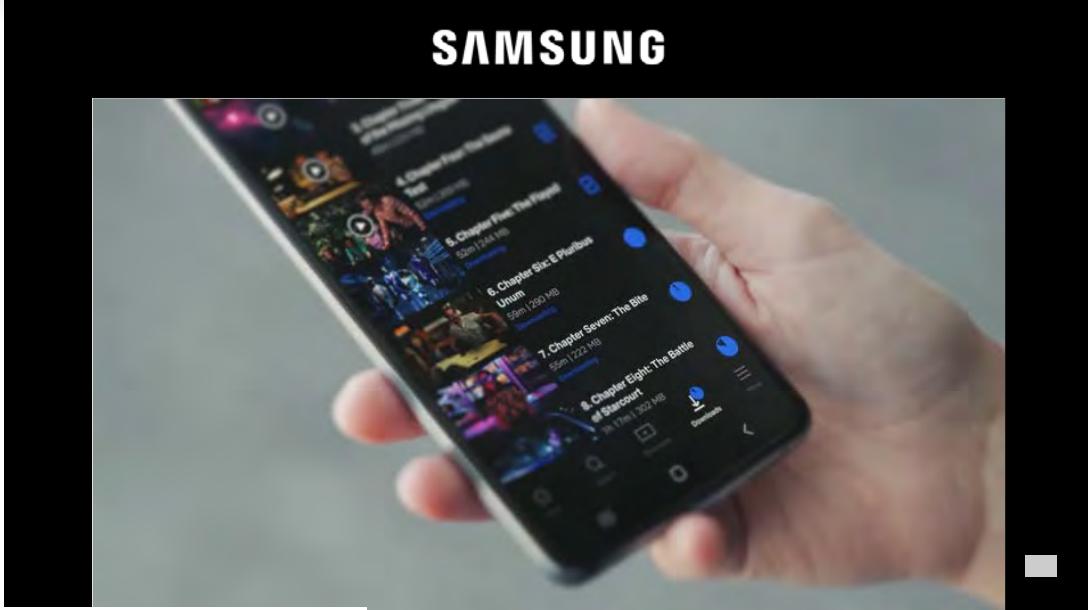
Three new facilities proposed as part of University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Health's extensive plans to reconfigure hospital services in Harford County — an expanded Upper Chesapeake Medical Center in Bel Air, a special psychiatric hospital in Aberdeen and a free-standing medical facility in Aberdeen to replace Harford Memorial Hospital in Havre de Grace — are expected to be open by early 2023, according to Upper Chesapeake officials.

That timeline depends on multiple factors, though, including any impacts the ongoing novel coronavirus pandemic has on the economy, Lyle Sheldon, president and CEO of Upper Chesapeake Health, noted.

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The next phases of a project announced in early 2016, phases which include completing design work, obtaining local permits and starting construction, come on the heels of the Maryland Health Care Commission's approval of the project last week.

Upper Chesapeake leaders, its board of directors, medical staff and others affiliated with the health system "are ecstatic about this decision" by the state commission, Sheldon said Tuesday.

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“The fact that we now have clarity on the timeline, [that] we now can start more robust planning on the service delivery model, is just so important for us,” Sheldon added.

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The project includes an emphasis on behavioral health services as more and more people in Upper Chesapeake's service area in Harford County and western Cecil County deal with mental health issues and drug addiction, as well consolidating long-term inpatient hospital services in Bel Air.

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The free-standing medical center, slated to be built on the Merritt Properties corporate campus off of Route 22 in Aberdeen, includes a full-service emergency room as well as short-stay medical beds for patient observation, beds reserved for emergency mental health patients, medical imaging and rehabilitation services, plus space for primary care doctors and outpatient medical services.

The 33-bed psychiatric hospital — which will include shell space for seven more beds — will be built on the same Aberdeen campus and offer inpatient and outpatient behavioral health services.

Harford Memorial Hospital, which has been part of downtown Havre de Grace for decades, will be closed once the Aberdeen facilities are constructed and approved to open. Its medical and surgical beds, meant for long-term inpatient needs, will be consolidated with existing beds in the Bel Air hospital.

Three stories will be built on top of the Kaufman Cancer Center at UCMC; those new stories will include space to accommodate the growing services provided by the cancer center, 42 short-stay medical observation beds and 30 medical/surgical beds, according to Upper Chesapeake's Your Health. Our Mission. [web page](#) on the project.

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Plans to close Harford Memorial have prompted strong objections from Havre de Grace residents, city leaders and state legislators who represent the Havre de Grace area in Annapolis. The city government has pushed Upper Chesapeake to commit to building a full-service general hospital, initially when the plans called for building it on property the health system owns near Bulle Rock and later when plans shifted to building it in Aberdeen, rather than the free-standing medical center to replace Harford Memorial.

City officials wrote to Gov. Larry Hogan and the director of the Maryland Health Care Commission upon learning that the project would be on the MHCC's April 16 agenda, citing concerns about voting on such a significant change to local hospital services in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"They took a years-old application, based on the needs of health care from 2016 or '17, and they consider that the current needs of Maryland right in the middle of a global pandemic, the biggest health care crisis of a generation," Mayor William T. Martin said during a City Council meeting Monday, as he and City Council members vented their frustrations at UCH, the state health commission and Harford County leaders who supported the project despite Havre de Grace's objections.

Health commissioners and staff acknowledged the city's concerns during their meeting last week but noted the project has been in the works for a number of years — Sheldon said that UCH has been working with the agency since the fall of 2014.

One commissioner, Dr. Gerard O'Connor, raised concerns about taking action and noted the pandemic could have a major impact on how medical services are delivered in the future and the community's behavioral health needs as people deal with anxieties about the disease, their economic prospects and the challenge of stay-at-home orders. O'Connor cast the only vote against approvals of the free-standing medical center and psychiatric hospital.

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Sheldon noted O'Connor's concerns Tuesday and said the pandemic could affect some aspects of how health care is delivered through Upper Chesapeake's new facilities, such as a greater emphasis on telehealth services and how some patient rooms are designed as "positive pressure rooms" versus "negative pressure rooms."

Negative pressure rooms allow hospitals to regulate the airflow in and out of a room in which a patient is isolated for treatment of an airborne infection, thus avoiding contamination in the rest of the hospital.

There are patients in Upper Chesapeake hospitals “every day, independent of the pandemic, that have flu or have another type of virus,” Sheldon noted.

“There may be more patients that, for example, may have a flu or a virus and how do we anticipate, from a design standpoint the flexibility to handle those [cases] going forward,” he said.

Sheldon also encouraged people to remain in contact with their primary care doctors during the pandemic, and stressed that telehealth options are available so patients can talk with their doctors remotely.

He also encouraged them to visit their local emergency rooms if they feel the need to do so.

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APR 21, 2020

“Now more than ever, Emergency Departments are the nation’s safety net,” Sheldon stated. “[Upper Chesapeake Health] is always open and here for every member of our community who needs health care service.”

David Anderson



David Anderson has been with the Baltimore Sun Media Group since January of 2013 as a reporter for The Aegis. He covers a little bit of everything in Harford County, including education, municipal and county government, business, features, breaking news and community events.

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Battlefield Tech

US Army launching new PNT Modernization Office and Open Innovation Lab

Nathan Strout

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Project manager for PNT, Col. Nickolas Kioutas, stands in front of a Stryker vehicle outfitted with the Gen 1 Mounted Assured PNT System. (John Higgins/U.S. Army)

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Army is opening a new office and laboratory to develop agile position, navigation and timing solutions in an attempt to reduce soldiers' dependence on GPS.

“We are standing up a new product office called PNT Modernization. So this will be the newest PM shop in the Army,” said Col. Nickolas Kioutas, program manager for position, navigation

and timing within the Army's Program Executive Office Intelligence, Electronic Warfare and Sensors.

The Army is keen to develop and deploy solutions that can keep soldiers operating in **areas where the GPS signal has been denied, degraded or spoofed**. The PNT Modernization Office — which will open Oct. 8 — will lead the Army's efforts to develop solutions using an open-systems architecture.



The Army's position on next-generation navigation

Col. Nickolas Kioutas, the Army's PNT program manager, shares what the service is learning about navigating in denied or degraded environments.

By: Nathan Strout

As it stands up, the PNT Modernization Office will launch a new Open Innovation Lab, a space where commercial entities can work with the Army to develop PNT solutions. Within OIL, the Army has set aside space for the CMOSS [C4ISR/EW Modular Open Suite of Standards] Lab and the Network Cross-Functional Team's Orion Forge. Located at Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland, the lab will be physically separated from the more classified areas of the site to encourage more engagement with industry, said Kioutas.

“We’re opening the doors, so to speak, for being a host of vendors — anyone smart on the technologies that we’re looking at,” he said. “And we’re looking at a whole host of technologies.”

Those technologies include radio frequency systems, GPS, Alt-Nav, **chip-scale atomic clocks**, other timing technologies and celestial navigation, among others. The point is to break the Army’s dependency on GPS. Most importantly, these technologies need to be fielded fast, so rather than spending a decade developing technologies that are meant to last 20 years, the Army wants to release new solutions every five years, ensuring soldiers can always overmatch adversaries' capabilities.

That's too slow for the service. Instead of having to custom install each capability upgrade, the Army wants a plug-and-play system that allows it to quickly and easily install the latest capabilities. The key technology at the center of that effort is the **C4ISR/EW Modular Open Suite of Standards, or CMOSS**.

With CMOSS, the Army is building a common bus or chassis that can be installed on Army systems. In turn, this box hosts a variety of cards that are plugged in to provide different capabilities. Now, instead of replacing the whole box every time the Army wants to upgrade a capability, all it needs to do is swap out the relevant cards.

The Army recently tested the CMOSS capability at White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico. The CMOSS chassis was installed on a Stryker vehicle with a PNT card and an integrated anti-jam antenna. While the Army is still assessing that test, Kioutas said so far it appears to have performed as expected.

Industry partners will work within the Army's recently released PNT reference architecture and other open standards to develop solutions that are compatible with CMOSS cards and this plug-and-play approach, said Kioutas.

“We’re going to enter an environment where it’s not a one-vender-take-all environment. We’re gonna open it up to all kinds of industry to allow us to really take the best-of-breed technologies and optimize solutions on whatever cards we develop,” he said. “We’ll leverage whatever industry brings.

“The Army never wants to fail another program. Failure in the past happened because it took 10, 15 years to get the capability out. By the time it got out, it was failed technology and the soldiers maybe didn’t like it.”

The PNT Modernization Office will launch a new website Oct. 29, with an industry day slated for Nov. 17.

About Nathan Strout

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“We’re looking at a continual rolling upgrade of our technologies,” Kioutas said.

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“It’s all about getting our agile-iterations-speed-of-technology development up,” he explained. “We’ve got threats out there that we are trying to pace — to keep ahead of these threats or outpace them — so we need industry’s help to keep inventing new technologies in order to maintain that speed of relevance.”

Of course, implementing that vision isn’t easy. Take for example the Army’s Mounted Assured Position Navigation and Timing System. While a version of that technology could help war fighters continue operating in GPS-denied environments, installing it on existing platforms has proven difficult.

“It can take two or three years to even take what we’ve got and implement it onto different weapon systems platforms such as Bradley [Fighting Vehicles] or Abrams tanks,” Kioutas said.



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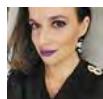
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HARFORD COUNTY MARYLAND

Virtual public meeting on Route 152 park-and-ride relocation scheduled for June 11

By JAMES WHITLOW
THE AEGIS | JUN 04, 2020



The Maryland Transportation Authority will host a virtual public meeting June 11 to solicit and present public comment on the relocation of the Route 152 park-and-ride lot as part of its extension of express toll lanes in Harford County.

The meeting will be held from 7 to 8 p.m., and an option to pose questions or make comments in advance of the forum will be posted on the [department's webpage](#) by June 4. The agency will also reveal site options for the park-and-ride at the meeting.

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“Such online presentations are important tools to facilitate participation from community stakeholders during the COVID-19 emergency,” according to a news release announcing the meeting.

The MDTA had proposed an alternate location for the park-and-ride, but residents and the Harford County Council opposed it, with the latter unanimously approving a February resolution encouraging the organization to reevaluate the lot’s proposed relocation from the intersection of I-95 and Mountain Road to where Route 152 crosses Franklinville Road.

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Residents took issue with the proposed location, according to the resolution, because it would increase traffic on Franklinville and Old Joppa roads beyond their capacities. Those areas are already congested, the council’s resolution states, and adding a parking lot would make it worse.

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The proposed location did not have a traffic light, nor was one planned for installation. Residents of the area contended that could make for a dangerous traffic pattern. The resolution also notes the environmental impacts the construction could have on the area.

The relocation of the park-and-ride is part of a \$1.1 billion multi-year project to extend I-95's express toll lanes into Harford County, according to the MDTA.

The agency says extension of those lanes will alleviate delays and improve travel between Baltimore and Harford counties. As part of the project, the MDTA said that several aging bridges — some over 50-years-old — would be replaced, and noise walls would be added for adjacent communities.

The comment period will remain open through June 25, according to the announcement.

As part of express toll lane expansion, the stretch of I-95 before exit 77A was divided with a concrete barrier, allowing MDTA to add an 8,200-foot auxiliary lane on northbound I-95 that will connect the Route 152 on-ramp with the Route 24 off-ramp, "providing better traffic operations and a safer transition for vehicles using these interchange ramps," the agency said. Northbound I-95 will also be resurfaced in that construction area.

Afternoon traffic delays are typical in the area, especially on Friday afternoons in the summer. That traffic will be split through June, the organization reported.

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MDTA did not respond to questions in time for the publication of this article.

James Whitlow



James Whitlow covers Harford County crime and county government for The Aegis. Prior to joining Baltimore Sun Media in 2020, he was a reporter at the Danville (Virginia) Register & Bee. A 2018 graduate of the University of Maryland, James has also worked at McClatchy's Washington, D.C. Bureau and the Capital News Service.

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CORONAVIRUS

White Tiger Distillery in Harford County switches from spirits to sanitizer to combat coronavirus

By JAMES WHITLOW
THE AEGIS | MAR 31, 2020





Amanda M. Jones

From left, Bel Air Police Officer L.F. Walsh, Bel Air Mayor Amy G. Chmielewski and Mike Pyon, the chief operating officer of White Tiger Distillery, show a box of spray sanitizer the distillery made using the alcohol it makes and is donating to the Bel Air Police Department during the coronavirus pandemic. (Amanda M. Jones)

A Harford County distillery has gone from making spirits to high-proof sanitizer to help local first responders, medical facilities, day cares and senior living centers respond to the novel coronavirus.

The White Tiger Distillery in Forest Hill has begun cranking out hand sanitizer made from its own alcohol and donations from other county producers, Chief Operating Officer Mike Pyon said. The process of getting the sanitizer to production began March 24, and the first batch ships out to Patient First in Aberdeen on Tuesday, where it will be distributed to other medical centers.

White Tiger has also donated sanitizer to the Bel Air Police Department, among other community institutions, and is working to provide more to other first-response agencies in the county, the distillery's owner Itsara Ounnarath said.

"We will continue to supply them free of charge," he said. "It is our way of saying thank you to the community."

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Spokeswoman for Bel Air Patti Parker said the town was thrilled that the distillery took steps to support its municipal workers.

"We are so grateful to White Tiger for responding to the needs of the community. It's amazing to see businesses adjust in these uncertain times and support our law enforcement and public works personnel," she wrote in an email.

The distillery was hit hard by the economic effects of the coronavirus, making much of its money through tastings, Ounnarath said. It was searching for a way to stay afloat when someone tossed out the idea of making hand sanitizer, Pyon said.

"We kinda rolled that idea around, and next thing I knew the mayor [of Bel Air, Amy Chmielewski] was at our door," Pyon said. "We figured, you know what ... we could really do something to impact this community."

So the rush began. Pyon set to work finding investors, who saw the urgency in producing hand sanitizer and "threw their money at [him] and said 'we need to do this,'" Pyon said.

White Tiger Distillery in Forest Hill has shifted gears from making spirits to spray bottles of sanitizer during the coronavirus pandemic. (Amanda M. Jones)

The company had to use two-and-a-half barrels of its own whiskey to start the first batch of sprayable sanitizer. Each of those barrels, Pyon said, can cost about \$3,000 to produce, on the lower end, and sell for even more, but the monetary concern was only part of the decision. Pyon also works as a lab manager for Aberdeen's Patient

First and knows the strain medical supply chains are under. He saw a niche to fill in producing hand sanitizer, which he said could become scarcer as the pandemic goes on.

The distillery employs others who work in the medical field and many veterans; they saw making hand sanitizer as a way to pay it forward to the community, he said.

“We are a business ... but we do have compassion, and we do care,” Pyon said of the decision. “We are all part of your community ... we have to show that.”

The process for making hand sanitizer from whiskey is not as complicated as it would seem, Pyon said. Under state and federal regulations, along with guidance from the World Health Organization, some distilleries have been given permission to make hand sanitizer as part of a push to increase production of medical supplies. Distilleries making hand sanitizer have to make sure their product is at least 80% alcohol per Food and Drug Administration guidelines, Pyon said, which the distillery is fully equipped for.

“Alcohol is alcohol,” Pyon said. “When you distill any kind of mash with fermentation, you are going to get alcohol.”

The problem, Ounnarath said, is that the alcohol cannot be diluted down as it is in whiskey or other spirits. It needs to remain highly concentrated to make hand sanitizer, which can be made in about 10 minutes with high-proof alcohol and a couple of other ingredients, he said. That lowers the yield and turns an expensive barrel of alcohol that can take years to produce into something comparably cheap.

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"With the hand sanitizer, you cannot dilute it down at all ... that is how we are losing profits," Ounnarath said. "We are actually taking our good stuff we were hoping to sell."

The whiskey they used for the first batch was already double-distilled, and one more round of distillation brought it up to standard for use as disinfectant. The 80 gallons of whiskey yielded about 40 gallons of high-proof alcohol, Pyon said. He expected that would translate to 50 gallons of sanitizer.

The sanitizer White Tiger now produces is sprayable, making it ideal for police officers and medical workers who may need to disinfect steering wheels, seats and a variety of other objects as well as their own hands.

Other local organizations have stepped in to help as well, Pyon said, and White Tiger has given help other distillers, too. Harford Vineyard donating hundreds of gallons of wine to the distillery to use for sanitizer, and White Tiger donated one of its 1,000-gallon fermentation chambers to Twin Valley Distillers in Rockville to help them produce hand sanitizer.

"It was hard to part with it," Pyon said, "but they needed it."

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The Maryland Department of Health has confirmed 1,413 cases of coronavirus in the state as of Monday, with the bulk of the infections occurring in Montgomery and

Prince George's Counties. There are 24 confirmed cases in Harford County, according to the same data.

James Whitlow



James Whitlow covers Harford County crime and county government for The Aegis. Prior to joining Baltimore Sun Media in 2020, he was a reporter at the Danville (Virginia) Register & Bee. A 2018 graduate of the University of Maryland, James has also worked at McClatchy's Washington, D.C. Bureau and the Capital News Service.

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