



County Executive Bob Cassilly eNewsletter

October 2024

We were all shocked and saddened by the terrible act of violence at Joppatowne HS, resulting the death of a 15-year-old student. I would like to thank our first responders, courageous school staff, and the community members who came together to render aid and to assist law enforcement. Our hearts are broken for the victim's family and friends as we pray for healing and peace in our community.

**Bob Cassilly**

Harford County Executive

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## Featured Stories

- [High-tech assistance for school safety](#)
- [Impact fees reduce burden on taxpayers for expanding school capacity](#)
- [PFAS and safe drinking water](#)
- [October "SOCKtober" donation drive benefits Harford's veterans, homeless](#)
- [Darlington Apple Festival Saturday, Oct. 5](#)
- [Volunteer Fire Company Open Houses](#)
- [Harford United Charities Bull, Shrimp & Oyster Roast Oct. 11](#)
- [Maryland BBQ Bash Oct. 11 - 13](#)
- [Prescription Drug Take Back Day Oct. 26](#)
- ["Inside Harford County" - Eden Mill](#)
- [Coming soon: Veterans' Family Resource Fair Saturday, Nov. 9](#)



## **High-tech assistance for school safety**

Following the tragedy at Joppatowne, my administration met with the school superintendent and his security team to offer county assistance in securing our schools. We immediately moved to Joppatowne HS a high-tech security demonstration that had been scheduled to roll out at our emergency services facility in Hickory. That demonstration will help our school system evaluate firsthand some of the latest technology to assist in school safety. Harford County government will continue to support and collaborate with our schools as they work to keep our children safe.



## **Impact fees reduce burden on taxpayers for expanding school capacity**

New home construction naturally leads to increased student enrollment, which then requires additions to school capacity. Harford County charges impact fees on developers who profit from new homes, and the revenue is directed by law toward school expansion projects that would otherwise be funded entirely by taxpayers.

For too long Harford's impact fees have failed to reflect the true cost of school construction, unfairly adding to the taxpayers' burden. In response, my administration convened a workgroup and hired a consulting firm experienced in analyzing impact fees for counties in Maryland and nationally. Reflecting their recommendations, I have sent legislation to the County Council to ensure developers pay their fair share toward capacity projects such as the new Homestead Wakefield Elementary School and Harford Academy. I encourage the council to support this essential legislation.



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## PFAS and safe drinking water

PFAS, or per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, are a group of man-made chemicals used since the 1940s in consumer, commercial, and industrial products, and have been detected in water supplies throughout the nation. The EPA recently set limits on PFAS in drinking water as low as 4 parts per trillion and required public systems to test by 2027 and comply by 2029.

Customers of Harford's public water system can be assured that all recent testing shows PFAS safely below the EPA limits. To assist other water systems in the county, I recently established a PFAS taskforce and published a website with information for those on well water. [Click here to learn more.](#)



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## October "SOCKtober" donation drive benefits Harford's veterans, homeless

Warm socks, mittens, and hats are greatly needed items for veterans and homeless citizens, but they're the least-often donated. To fill the gap, my administration is joining with Harford County Public Library and the nonprofit WeCancerve to collect items for local veterans and citizens in need. Collection boxes for our "SOCKtober" donation drive will be available in October at library branches, county government buildings and other participating locations. [More information is here](#) on the county website.





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## **Darlington Apple Festival Saturday, Oct. 5**

This Saturday, bring the family for a day of apple-filled fun in the charming village of Darlington with music, artwork, crafts, and of course, tasty apple delights. Join the fun from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 5. There will be plenty to see and do and proceeds support local nonprofits including the Darlington Independence Day Parade & Fireworks, the local rec council, Boy Scouts, PTA, Lions Club and local churches. Learn more at [www.darlingtonapplefestival.org](http://www.darlingtonapplefestival.org).



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## **Volunteer Fire Company Open Houses**

October is Fire Prevention Month and many of our volunteer fire companies are hosting open houses. Stop by and see for yourself what these wonderful volunteers do to protect our communities. Climb inside a fire truck, tour the stations, and watch demonstrations. While you're there, learn about volunteer opportunities for fire/emergency medical services and administrative support. For a list of open houses this month, visit [https://bit.ly/HCVFA\\_events](https://bit.ly/HCVFA_events).

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## Harford United Charities Bull, Shrimp & Oyster Roast Oct. 11

Enjoy delicious food, live music, and a fun time for a good cause at Harford United Charities' Bull, Shrimp & Oyster Roast from 7 - 11 p.m. Friday, Oct. 11 at Jarrettsville Gardens. Try your luck at the money wheel and raffles; all proceeds benefit nonprofits serving Harford County citizens in need. A few sponsorships are still available; [buy tickets and learn more here.](#)

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## Maryland BBQ Bash Oct. 11 - 13

One of the biggest events of the season will be the [Maryland State BBQ Bash](#) in downtown Bel Air on October 11 and 12. Come for the live music, food and beverage vendors, a barbecue competition, artisan shopping, axe throwing, and more. Admission is free for all ages.

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## Prescription Drug Take Back Day Oct. 26

Unused prescription medications can fall into the wrong hands and harm our environment if they're not disposed of properly. Drop off your expired or unwanted medications, no questions asked, at our next Prescription Drug Take Back Day, Saturday, October 26, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at [various county locations](#). This event, held in partnership with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and local law enforcement, helps to keep harmful medications out of circulation.

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## “Inside Harford County” - Eden Mill

This month on “Inside Harford County” we’ll take a virtual tour of Eden Mill Nature Center and Grist Mill Museum in Pylesville. Park manager Aimee Dunn will join me and our host, Mark Vernarelli, as we explore the wonders and mysteries of this Harford County gem. “Inside Harford County” is [HarfordTV’s](#) half-hour community affairs program airing at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays on Armstrong channel 7 & HD 101, Comcast channel 31 & HD 1084, and Verizon channel 31.





## Coming soon: Veterans' Family Resource Fair Saturday, Nov. 9

Mark your calendar for our annual event offering information about veterans' healthcare and benefits; printed guides to veterans' resources and discounts at local businesses; giveaways, and more. Harford County veterans, all military, and their families are welcome to attend; a free lunch will be provided. This year's fair will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, November 9 at the Bel Air Armory, 37 N. Main Street. Save the date!

## Want more?

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