

Emmitsburg NEWS-JOURNAL

VOLUME 14, NO. 1

"EXALTING THE IMPORTANCE OF IDEAS AND INFORMATION" —EDWARD R. MURROW

JANUARY 2022

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Omicron variant throws everyone for a loop

Anticipating a resurgence following close holiday gatherings, Frederick County Executive Jan Gardner implored the use of masks for all indoor public spaces, regardless of immunization status.

Frederick County is also currently experiencing a high-volume influx of COVID-19 hospital patient admissions, according to the December press release issued by the Frederick County Government.

Adams County Commissioner Randy Phiel encouraged everyone to receive vaccinations, noting with the rise of the Omicron Variant, the imperativeness of immunization. Adams County Phiel said, "has a dismal vaccination rate of only 49.6%. 100% of WellSpan's patients on ventilators are unvaccinated, 100% of COVID intensive care patients are unvaccinated, and 85% of hospitalized COVID patients are unvaccinated."

Although immunizations do not prevent contraction of COVID-19, they have been shown to be highly effective in lessening acute symptoms, hospitalization, and

death by the respiratory virus.

The outbreak is so bad that even Emmitsburg's own Village Idiot, who is recovering from COVID, is recommending people take the virus seriously.

Mount Saint Mary's President Timothy Trainor said that the Mount "had very, very few cases all semester," noting that 91 percent of the Mount community are vaccinated including students, seminarians, and employees. On a weekly basis, the University sees between zero and two cases, although there was an influx of seven cases at the beginning of December. "But I kind of expected that after travel at Thanksgiving," he said.

Trainor noted no severely ill cases and almost all faculty and students have returned to campus with few working remotely. Students continue to wear masks while in class due to the close environment and fans are invited to the stands for all University sports.

The possibility of resurgence comes at a time when many local restaurants and businesses are undergoing their busiest time of the year,



The last day of the year is synonymous with celebrations of the New Year. But this year, with the COVID-19 pandemic raging once again, many will be glad to put 2021 into the history book and forget it.

a holiday sales boost that often gets them through the rest of the year.

Although well underway for the holiday season, Emmitsburg's Carriage House Inn has noted an uptick in canceled reservations, due to sickness in a party, according to owner Sharon Hance.

Thurmont businesses however have not seen a significant change during the holiday season, according to Vickie Grinder, Economic

Development Manager. Attendance at the town's annual pop-up market was steady throughout December, even as the news cycles boiled over with Omicron stories.

The resurgence however has put pressure on local EMS responders. "You have to approach every call as if the patient has COVID," said one EMS responder, "after awhile, always being on 'a state of alert' begins to take its toll. I'm tired."

Giving Spree sets record for individual donations

At last month's Adams County Community Foundation Giving Spree, 2,465 local residents donated \$3.08 million dollars to support 94 county nonprofit organizations—giving that set a national record for per capita donations!

Locally, the Fairfield Alumni Scholarship Fund received \$1,735 and Strawberry Hill Foundation, which runs the Strawberry Hill Nature Center, received \$17,920, and the Adams County Land Conservancy which received \$147,278.

Fairfield Alumni Association Treasurer and Class of 1961 Nancy Wenschhof credited many of this year's generous funds as made in memoriam of the Association's former Vice President David Metz, who passed away in December 2020. Metz was also the former Chairman of the Fairfield Borough Planning Committee and a member of the Fairfield Pippinfest Committee.

Metz established a name for himself as a dedicated member of the Association. "He was doing it longer than I've been involved, and I've been doing this 12 years," she said.

For the first year the Alumni Association is now able to provide a \$1,000 scholarship for a stu-

dent's higher education, whether university or technical school, through the Adams County Community Foundation. Before collaborating with the Community Foundation, Fairfield Alumni Association Scholarships were \$500, she said.

Wenschhof credited the community's strong support and the Community Foundation for making the scholarship possible.

Strawberry Hill aims to utilize the funding toward overall organization of its animal upkeep and education programs, as well as maintaining the beautification of the campus, according to Executive Director Dan Brannan. Brannan was grateful for the community's support year after year, "It's great to participate," he said.

One of the key recipients of public donations was the Adams County Land Conservancy, which received over \$147,278. According to the Conservancy, over the past five years the Conservancy has preserved approximately 295 more acres of rural land in Adams County, solely from Giving Spree contributions.

The Conservancy also received nearly \$8,000 in donations to its Forever Funds, which will be used to grow their endowment and ensure that they will be in the financial position to monitor



Strawberry Hill's #1 Animal Ambassador, Strix, a Barred Owl, handled by Lizzy Ryan, will be one of the beneficiaries of the donations given to Strawberry Hill.

and defend the conservation easements that protect this land well into the future.

The Land Conservancy board said they were deeply humbled by the donations that would allow them to continue their "work of preserving our community's rural character."

Thanks to sponsors, nonprofits pay nothing to participate in the annual spree, and 100 percent of

donor gifts support the nonprofits of their choice. As an incentive to donors, a "Stretch Pool" is distributed to the participating nonprofits in proportion to the amount raised during the Giving Spree.

Serpe marveled that "Each of the top 15 organizations raised more individually than we raised 8 years ago in total." "We are home to the largest per capita giving day in the country," he said.

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EMMITSBURG NEWS

Town to acquire speed cameras

Drivers in Emmitsburg are encouraged to use extra caution if they don't want an unwelcome ticket starting this season. A grant for three license plate readers was awarded to the town in December from the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention in the amount of \$98,000, according to Emmitsburg Town Mayor Don Briggs.

The topic of town speed traps has been discussed repeatedly, most recently at its August meeting.

Noting that downtown Emmitsburg continues to grow into a hub of activity, Commissioner Burns brought up the possibility of speed enforcement cameras, "to alleviate some of the speeding issues coming through town," he said. Burns, who had been collaborating with the school officials for information about speed traps, said, because of "two schools easily accessible to Main Street and South Seton Avenue," both of which are state highways.

"The safety of the community should come first," Burns said. Although cameras are an earnest tool to quell speeders, it is not as simple as taking a picture of a speeding car, Deputy Jason Ahalt said, citing his previous experience with speed cameras.

Speed cameras are a multistep process that requires certified officers to review footage and sign off on the alleged speeding vehicle before a notice is sent out to the individual involved. Most of the fees acquired from speeders would then go back into the town.

According to the State Highway Administration, speed cameras can only be placed in a school or work zone; school zones, by definition, are designated as a one-half-mile radius around a school. The primary goal of utilizing the speed cameras is ultimately to ensure the safety of the children, residents, and visitors to the area.

Commissioner Frank Davis said he had been in contact with the Thurmont Police Department about their use of speed traps – saying that the equipment lease is based on the number of fines. The equipment leasing company is responsible for acquiring the certifications, and in addition to the police department, also receives a "percentage of the fines."

"It's really not about making a lot of money," said Davis, "Thurmont makes maybe six-seven hundred dollars a month – but, it has helped to make it a safer area. We have a lot of travel traffic, especially during ski season. We're obviously going to be in need of support of anything that makes the town safer. The only problem I see with them is that people memorize where the cameras are," but added that, "Strategically placed moveable cameras could be an asset to quelling speeders."

Audit finds minor discrepancies

At its December 7 meeting, the Emmitsburg Town Council was presented with the results of the town's FY-21 audit.

A first in many years, Emmitsburg's audit was found to have misstatements for the fiscal year 2021 regarding payments and vendor information, according to Addie Blickenstaff of DeLeon and Stang CPAs and Advisors. One significant deficiency was discovered within the town's internal controls over vendor payments.

The town's accounting system utilizes a 'resident' vendor category to

address any vendor that does not require a 'full set up', such as for one-time and miscellaneous payments to a resident, Blickenstaff said. This is done "in order to avoid a multitude of vendors within their accounting system who may never be used again," she said.

The town's accounting system was also discovered to have not been accurately storing vendor payment information, specifically for grant related projects, she said. Material misstatements regarding the water fund and sewer funds, as well as cor-

rections to the Bay Restoration fee were also found and corrected by the audit team.

The audit team recommended tracking vendor activity within the accounting system to ensure complete records for tax and reporting procedures. They also recommended that checks should also be printed with vendor name and address to avoid misappropriation and payments should not be requested and received by the same Town employee.

No material weaknesses in internal controls were identified and no

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P.O. Box 543
Emmitsburg, Maryland 21727
301-471-3306
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Covering the news, events, history; and culture of the Historic Toms Creek Hundred geographical area: Emmitsburg, Zora, Carroll Valley, Fairfield, Greenmont, Harney, Rocky Ridge, Detour, St. Anthony's, Zentz Mill, Taneytown and Thurmont. The Emmitsburg News Journal is published the first day of every month by Toms Creek Hundred LLC.

Senior Advisors:

Eric Glass, Taney Corporation
Greg Reaver, Emmitsburg Glass

Executive Editor: Michael Hillman, editor@emmitsburg.com

Managing Editor: Harry Scherer, MSMU Class of 2022

Assistant Editor: Emmy Jansen, MSMU Class of 2023

News Editor: Andrea Grabenstein, news@emmitsburg.com

News Reporter: Shannon Amos, news@emmitsburg.com

Graphic Design and layout: Brian Barth, timebombstudios.com

Advertising: Sharon Graham, advertising@emmitsburg.com

Letters to the Editor, notice of upcoming events, news stories, and interesting and creative articles are welcome and may be submitted via regular U.S. Mail to P.O. box 543, Emmitsburg, MD 21727, or by email to editor@emmitsburg.com.

Council approves water/sewer rate fee study

At its December meeting, Emmitsburg Town Council approved a water rate, sewer rate, and tap fee study.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has said it would be unable to provide additional funding for any of the town's water infrastructure projects "because our rates cannot sustain the yearly maintenance of what we currently have and would not be able to sustain any future infrastructure projects," Town

Manager Cathy Willets said.

From the USDA's recommendation, town staff researched services in order to perform studies on the town's water/sewer rate and tap fees.

Although the study was not required, it came highly recommended by USDA in order to establish accurate rates

"What you have to look at is current rates and future rates. Typically, water and sewer rate studies are done every three to five years and Emmitsburg is particularly overdue.

"To the best of my knowledge there has not been a water rate study for 15 years at the very minimum," she said.

Three competitive bids were received, and NewGen Strategies and Solutions of Annapolis was approved for the study in the amount of \$35,000. Although not the cheapest option, the company came highly recommended, and their bid package contained details the town was looking for.

Utilized by the City of Freder-

ick Town, Taneytown, and Union Bridge, Willets called NewGen "extremely qualified."

"It's good to do local here in Maryland," Council Vice President Cliff Sweeney said.

"We currently have a five- or six-tiered system which is kind of difficult at times," Willets said.

"Sewer rates were raised many years back to sustain [pay for] the wastewater treatment plant project with rates that were set in house with no independent study done," she said.

As for the direction of water rates town residents pay, Willets said: "You have to look at current

transactions were entered by the

that have zero debt," she said.

Council President Tim O'Donnell acknowledged the hard work put into the audit all around and the ability to put the report in accessible terms for anyone to understand. "It seems like we've gone a great distance from going from the original reports where they were a little more professional driven to layman driven [in readability], and that's very much appreciated," he said.

rates, future rates, and future projects for the [proper] water rates."

"The water fund in particular has shown a loss for five years," she said. Although the town currently charges a tap fee for all new homes, which help funds water system maintenance and upgrades, the town would be in trouble if those were to dry up.

As costs for everything continue to rise, the town's water infrastructure is unable to sustain without the study.

"Everything's getting more and more expensive, maintenance is expensive, ageing infrastructure is failing, it has got to be done... unfortunately it's [a rate increase] a necessity to continue to provide the service," Willets said.



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FAIRFIELD/CARROLL VALLEY NEWS

Carroll Valley sees no tax increase

At its December meeting, the Carroll Valley Borough Council adopted the Fiscal Year 2022 budget and 2022 Tax Resolutions without tax increase.

The Council passed the Tax Levy Ordinance, which fixed the Tax Rate at 2.45 mills or 24.5 cents on each one hundred dollars of assessed valuation for 2016.

No tax increase means the property tax rate is proposed to remain the same. The Borough portion of a property tax bill is only a small por-

tion of the total property taxes paid by residents each year, according to Borough Manager David Hazlett.

"The borough has not seen a tax increase in several years," he said.

This lack of tax increase is unlike municipalities such as Liberty Township, who implemented a .5 millage tax rate increase, equivalent to \$50 tax per \$100,000 of assessed property value.

In turn, to offset the rising cost of operations, Liberty Supervisors regretfully had to make between 40

and 60 percent increase in costs to provide township services.

In 2021, the Borough is expected to collect \$1,033,834 in property related taxes, \$90,000 from the real estate transfer tax, \$102,000 from the fire tax, \$61,000 from the Comcast cable franchise license, and \$600,000 from income taxes.

In addition, the Borough balance sheet was increased by \$114,000 from 'public safety' related revenue streams including a \$76,000 reimbursement from Fairfield for police

service, \$11,000 from sewage and storm water permits, and \$2,500 from vehicle impoundment fees.

The Borough also benefits to the tune of \$115,000 from various state shared revenue sources like police pension aid (\$30,000), employee pension aid (\$54,000) and payments from the Foreign Fire Insurance program (\$30,000).

When all the miscellaneous revenue streams are totaled, the Borough expects to take in \$2,342,157 this year. However, only 13.6 percent, or ~ \$318,512 of that goes

to the Borough government to cover the Borough's operating cost. The remainder goes to the Fairfield School District ~ \$1,446,653 (61.77%) and Adams County siphons off ~\$542,515 (23.25). Only 1.39% of the total revenue, or ~\$32,535 goes to support local Fire and EMS services

By far, the main portion of borough expenditures goes toward police at \$522,273; Borough, non-police, employee salaries - \$341,828, and streets and infrastructure at \$522,573. The borough also paid \$164,474 for pensions.

Recreation park goes 'gaga'

Carroll Valley welcomes families and park enthusiasts for interactive games with a new gaga ball pit this season.

Played similarly to dodge ball except in an enclosed octagon or hexagon arena, gaga players bop a ball with their palms in an attempt to strike the other players' shins.

The game requires a minimum of two people but can fit multiple people at once in the pit. A versatile game, gaga players can free-for all against each other or can form teams. The simple game can be easy to pick

up and become very competitive.

The project to create the new gaga pit for Carroll Valley Park was presented at the council's March meeting by Fairfield Area High School student Brody Holz of Boys Scouts Troop 230.

The project was part of Holz's journey to become an Eagle Scout within Crew 230, a venture scout crew chartered by the Greenmount Volunteer Fire Department. Holz currently serves as the president of the crew.

Holz was inspired by another

Eagle Scout gaga pit completed at Mother Seton School in Emmitsburg and the sense of community it brought to the area. Holz presented the gaga pit project as a way to connect the community through a simple but engaging game, he said.

The council gave unanimous approval and support for the promising Eagle Scout's gaga development plan and fundraising quickly went underway. Pledges to fund the approximately \$1,900 project were immediately provided from on-line viewers during the March meeting

Zoom presentation. "I have never seen that before," Borough Manager Dave Hazlett said.

Donations were also collected through Scout fundraisers as well as the project's Go Fund Me account throughout the summer.

As part of his mission to acquire his Eagle Scout Badge, Holz was at the forefront of the design and creation for the recreational park's gaga pit. "We adapted as we went along and figured out better ways to complete certain aspects as we encountered them," Holz said.

Components of the project came from supplier Coach Cliffs GaGa

Ball Pits and Lumber and were generously donated by Allen Beckett Construction.

Completed in November, the gaga pits were envisioned to be long term additions to the offerings of Carroll Valley Park. "This addition will not only serve the community for years to come, but it would be a very good addition to the park in general for everyone to use for a very long time," he said.

"We had a great deal of technical experience within the crew to help out and I cannot express my gratitude enough for everyone that came to help," he said.

News Briefs . . .

Liberty Gets New Police Officer And Tasers

At its November meeting, Liberty Township Board of Supervisors received a new part-time police officer and approval for new tasers.

Ryan Morris was welcomed as a new part-time Liberty Township police officer. Due to the Liberty Township Police Department covering Freedom Township and taking on a new contract with Highland Township in the near future it was imperative the township have qualified and experienced officers, according to Board Chairman Walter "Mickey" Barlow.

"I am very much in favor of adding experienced people to our police force," Vice Chair Bob Jackson said. Jackson noted that two crucial aspects of a local municipality government is maintaining quality roads and a capable police force "And I think we do it the right way," he said.

The board also approved the purchase of a new taser bundle from Axon Enterprise for a total cost of \$4,344. The police department currently has two tasers available for use and "one is practically out of service," Barlow said.

The quotation requested was for the newest device model that are state-of-the-art and "far more effective," he said.

Outdated tasers are unreliable and have potential to misfire. "If we have tasers that are unreliable we can't have our police officers pull them in an incident," Barlow said.

Understanding the essentiality of a well-equipped police force, the Fairfield AmVets Post 172 donated \$500 towards the purchase, according to Barlow.

Hamiltonban Budget Approved

At its November 3 meeting, Hamiltonban Board of Supervisors approved the proposed draft 2022 budget. Hamiltonban's total income is slated to be \$887,074 and total expenses are estimated to be \$1,027,310. The net deficit of \$140,236b will be made up by transferring money from the Townships capital reserves and from the Township American Recover Act fund.

The township's capital improvement plans for 2022 to 2026 were also presented. The capital improvement plan is a long-range proposal that identifies future capital projects and equipment purchases. The plan is reviewed by the supervisors on an annual basis.

Anticipated projects for 2022 include driveway paving, resurfacing, office meeting room enlargement, and lighting as well as vehicle and equipment reserve upgrade.

Proposed projects for 2023 include construction of a fuel station canopy and equipment pole barn for the township educational campus as well as the enlargement of the office meeting room and removal of two bathrooms for the township municipal building. Projects for 2024 include upgrading computer, printer, and township electronic systems. Proposed projects for

2025 include professional wall map hanging and lighting.

Highland Supervisor and Road Master Retires

At its December 14 meeting, Highland Board of Supervisors honored the retirement of longtime township Supervisor and Roadmaster Ed Steinour. A reception was held prior to the meeting honoring Steinour's years of dedication to the community. Steinour is still expected to attend and participate in Supervisor meetings going forward, just from an audience seat from now on.

William Baldwin was welcomed as a Supervisor beginning this month. Baldwin is the owner of Land of Little Horses located in Gettysburg.

Highland Township's 2022 budget was also approved with no tax increase. Highland's proposed 2022 budget included a total income of \$274,735 and a total expenditure of \$274,735.

Adams Regional Emergency Medical Services Names New CEO

After an extensive search that stretched for months across the county, Adams Regional Emergency Medical Services (AREMS) named Brian Wheeler as new Chief Executive Officer effective February.

Wheeler fills the role from former and founding chief Eric Zaney who accepted a position with Penn State Health Emergency Medical Services.

Wheeler retired as Fire Chief of Fort Detrick after over 26 years of service. Subsequent to that, he was Susquehanna Area Regional

Airport Fire Chief since 2018.

Wheeler's extended experience will be instrumental in providing organizational leadership, according to Kevin Moul, chairman of the Board of Adams Regional EMS.

Wheeler along with his wife and children have been residents of Carroll Valley since 1999.

According to a December press release, Wheeler looks forward to joining the AREMS team as a

crucial organization serving the Adams County community.

Formed In 2015 through cooperative efforts with Fairfield Fire and EMS, Gettysburg Fire Department, and United Hook and Ladder, Adams Regional EMS is a non-profit ambulance service for more than 20 municipalities throughout the Adams County region.

More information about AREMS can be found at <http://www.arems.net/>.

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THURMONT NEWS

Colorfest results lower, but officials optimistic

At its November 30 meeting the Town Council held a Colorfest workshop comparing festival income and expenses.

The total revenue for Colorfest 2021 was \$50,827, which was down 8 percent from 2019's total of \$63,265, according to Chief Financial Officer Linda Joyce. In 2019 Colorfest "just about broke even" while this season's Colorfest was in the red by \$25,707, Joyce said.

Total expenditures for 2021 were \$76,534, which was up \$12,000 from 2019, she said.

Rises in expenditures were due in part to the addition of two additional buses per day to transport patrons and an increase in sanitation measurements.

"It's a general trend everywhere that prices on everything are going up," Mayor John Kinnaird said, citing materials for his own business as an example.

President of Catocin Colorfest Carol Robertson had anticipated a loss and said COVID-19 was not the only factor. Along with health concerns "A lot of vendors had to go out of business because of

COVID, because that was their major source of income and they had to take other jobs." Many performers also like to book a year in advance and the decision to hold the festival wasn't made until springtime, she said.

Although Robertson estimated Colorfest had approximately 30 less vendors this season, requests for vendor permits kept being received up until the day before the event.

Many of this year's vendors also saw an increase in sales on Saturday than they had years previ-

ous, she said. "If the vendors are happy, then I'm happy," Robertson said.

"Already, the applications have started coming in for next year," including potential new vendors, "So I really do look forward to an increase again next year," she said.

"We got into this this year knowing full well that there could be a loss this year, but I personally think it was important we got back into it to see what's going to happen so we could make some decisions on it," Kinnaird said.

Discussing what could be done

to offset costs for future events, Kinnaird considered the festival's bus services a necessary expense to keep streets clear of cars and provide transportation for visitors parking in the outer lots. Council member Bill Blakeslee suggested increasing event parking fees, noting as it hasn't been raised in several years.

More discussions involving the possibility of increasing parking fees for Colorfest '22 are expected to be held at a later date and a meeting in August or September is anticipated to discuss possible permit fee increases for 2023 Colorfest as well.

Stormwater ordinance approved

At its December 9 meeting, Thurmont Town Council approved a stormwater ordinance. The ordinance outlines components including right of entry for Municipal stormwater activities, noncompliance enforcement, illicit discharge detection, and elimination construction and post construction controls, he said.

The town did not have a previous stormwater ordinance and this ordinance will have to be reviewed for adoption in 2022.

The Town of Thurmont is categorized as a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) designated by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) under the Clean Water Act and associated regulations.

Thurmont holds a storm water permit and operators under this permit must implement and enforce management programs for controlling all stormwater discharges. The town must also effectively prohibit stormwater discharge pollutants into the MS4 to comply with Maryland's receiving water quality standards.

Thurmont's stormwater MS4 program is part of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) national pollutant discharge elimination system general permit covers small municipal separate storm sewer systems in certain portions of the state of Maryland.

In presenting the town's quarterly MS4 status update, Andrew Tuleya of ARRO Consulting,

said the public is reminded to be mindful of products used on property including salt and fertilizer and use them sparingly, noting that in the winter, "A cup of salt can effectively treat a 20-foot driveway," he said.

Property owners are responsible for their own yard waste and pool draining which is also a common occurrence related to stormwater. "All that stuff does accumulate over time and does have an impact on the stormwater system," he said.

Illicit discharge can include household cleaners, lawn products and trash, and animal waste. Reports of illicit discharge can be made by calling the town office, he said.

The town's Watershed Imple-

mentation Permit (WIP) specifies the nutrient and sediment load reductions required to address the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load by 2025.

The five-year permit term requires permittees to develop planning strategies and work toward water quality restoration planning strategies. Under the permit, Thurmont has a 69.2

impervious acre restoration requirement by 2025 and must update or create a new stormwater best management practice to account for treatment of 69 acres. There are currently about two acres from tree planting efforts. In addition, ARRO is currently providing survey and design services to refit five town storm water management facilities.

News Briefs . . .

Thurmont receives playground funding

In December, phase two of Thurmont's Woodland Park Playground replacement was approved for \$160,000 through a statewide program to provide \$5 million for outdoor recreation in fiscal year 2022.

The Maryland Board of Public Works approved the last of 31 Community Parks and Playground projects for this fiscal year, totaling \$5 million in grants for new and upgraded outdoor

facilities in communities across Maryland.

Governor Larry Hogan's 2022 budget included funding for these projects, through which the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) provides flexible grants to municipalities to rehabilitate, expand, or improve existing parks, create new parks, or purchase and install playground equipment.

"The Community Parks and Playgrounds Program funds important investments across

Maryland," said Maryland DNR Secretary Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio. "These projects create greater access to outdoor recreation including nature trails, accessible playgrounds, skate parks, splash pads, and gathering spaces that connect us with our community and our natural surroundings."

"We sincerely appreciate the support from the Community Parks and Playgrounds program and look forward to the completion of this amazing playground planned for Woodland Park," Thurmont Mayor John Kinnaird said.

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TANEYTOWN NEWS

COVID relief money to be spent on sewer upgrades

The City of Taneytown will be utilizing its COVID recovery funding for water, sewer, and storm water improvements.

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds were distributed and provided to municipalities by the federal government in response to the pandemic. ARPA funds have set acceptable uses in aspects they may be spent, including toward water and sewer infrastructure.

As part of its Capital Improvement Plan, the city has identified \$4.3 million worth of projects that are water, sewer, and stormwater focused.

One criterion used to prioritize projects was if the projects helped the city's wastewater treatment plant meet compliance requirements, thereby avoiding permit violations and penalties. "We're trying to focus on things that will reduce wild-water flow at the treatment plant," Wieprecht said.

The City has been budgeting for incremental infrastructure improvements on Roberts Mill Rd. for several years, but now that ARPA funds are available to fund the water, sewer, and stormwater portions of the project, the work can begin in earnest, he said. This includes

installation of new water, sewer, and storm lines, as well as upgrades to road surfaces and installation of new curbing.

"So instead of all of cost being paid by City funds, now only repairs not related to the water & sewer infrastructure will have to be paid out of pocket," he said.

The City's water and sewer improvement efforts are needed to reduce wild water flow at the treatment plant to help regain compliance. The goal is to "save the city money by processing less rainwater as opposed to sewage," according to Wieprecht.

During the extreme rain events, the inflow of water into the storm water system has been at times so great that it was coming out of man-holes "So much rainwater gets into the system and ultimately the volume of liquid exceeds the capacity of the waste treatment plant to handle it," he said.

At the December City Council meeting, the council approved CDM Smith, the City's contract engineering firm, to perform the design of the Roberts Mill Rd. and Broad St. reconstruction project and to help the town review bids for the actual re-construction work. The project

design phase will cost \$298,300.

Broad St. was included in the project because it connects Robert's Mill Rd. to East Baltimore St., along which the sewer line runs to the wastewater treatment facility.

Before the distribution of the ARPA funding, funding for the initial phase of the project had been budgeted in this year's City's Capital Improvement Fund, Mayor Wantz said. "Now with ARPA funds available, we intend to fund the majority of the project with ARPA funds. In doing so, we save funds in the City's Capital Improvement Fund for other needs."

Sewer compliance updates presented

At the Taneytown City Council December workshop, City Engineer Brian Lubenow of CDM Smith presented progress, since September, to the Public Works Department's compliance with the wastewater treatment plant and the sewer collection system's state consent agreement.

The City's wastewater treatment plant, built in 2000, was upgraded in 2016 for enhanced nutrient removal (ENR) through funding and under a consent agreement with the Maryland Department of the Environment

(MDE). "Compliance related issues are stemming from the issues at the wastewater treatment plant," he said.

When plant flows increase due to wet weather, it results in higher loads of nitrogen and phosphorus and under those conditions, the plant has struggled with meeting total nitrogen and total phosphorus limits.

The plant's average flow of one million gallons per day can go up to 7 million gallons in inclement weather, Lubenow said. Through the plant's dilution system, more nutrients are

discharged during wet weather when maximum flow accrues resulting in the plant discharging more pounds of nitrogen or phosphorus than normal or if the sewer collection system was tighter. Minimizing the nutrient out-flow Lubenow said, is critical to the health of the Chesapeake Bay.

As the plant is most challenged when 'inflow' is greatest, minimizing unnecessary inflow into the sewer system from groundwater leaking into old piping is a primary focus of Lubenow.

The Public Works' sewer system sur-

vey is currently 90 percent complete and has identified all suspected terracotta piping. Identifying the terracotta piping is crucial as it is "more prone to allowing that inflow and infiltration into the system," Lubenow said.

Another key component of the 'wild water' reduction program is the upgrading of the Meadowbrook Interceptor, which runs from the Meadowbrook Development to the York Street Pump Station.

The Meadowbrook Interceptor was cleaned and televised in June 2020 and

is to be rehabilitated by a combination of replacement and lining where possible. Construction is anticipated to begin in February.

Construction for the Micro-C Bulk Storage and the waste treatment plant's sludge dewatering upgrade have also both been delayed due to equipment and delivery delays, Lubenow said. By the spring of 2022 Lubenow hopes to identify additional inflow and 'wild water' reduction projects and will brief the town council on the potential reductions in 'wild water' flow, and in doing so, move the city closer to meeting mandatory waste water runoff limits.

News Briefs . . .

Memorial Park Court Bids Reissued

At its December 13 meeting, Taneytown City Council approved resubmitting bids for the Memorial Park improvement project.

After both received bids were deemed incomplete for construction to Park's ball courts, the council reached a consensus to rebid the entire project. Both proposal packages were found to be missing "significant information," Mayor Bradley Wantz said.

Requests for Proposals (RFP) bids are for contracted services to furnish all labor, materials, equipment to install a new acrylic court surface for the park's three tennis courts, one pickleball, and one basketball court.

Due to the winter season, no work is scheduled at the moment and the rebidding is not anticipated to put the project behind schedule, Wantz said.

RFP bids can be obtained at the town office and must be submitted by January 21.

Engineering Support Rate Schedule Change Approved

Taneytown City Council approved a rate schedule change for 2022 for the city's engineering firm.

Happy with the services provided by the engineering firm, the Council approved a "minor increase in the rates" with CDM Smith, Mayor Bradley Wantz said.

"Not unlike what we've seen in past years," he said.

The council credited the different experts utilized by CDM Smith to the city's advantage.

The firm is not only familiar with

requirements of public works but are very acquainted with the city's wastewater treatment plant as they are the ones who designed it, he said.

"I am personally very pleased with the level of service we get from CDM Smith," Wantz said.

The firm's client manager Brian Lubenow works to delegate tasks to the proper staff level, ensuring the city is not paying for senior personnel to perform a more mundane task, according to City Manager Jim Wieprecht.

"So we're not paying a more senior person for a review that could be done by someone at a lower hourly rate," he said.

Water Allocation Plan Approved

The Taneytown City Council also approved the City's monthly water allocation plan. The plan details where the city's water usage caps and how much can be pumped for project management.

Any more usage and the City would have to seek permission from Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), who informs Taneytown how much water can be pumped, City Manager James Wieprecht said.

The city has implemented a voluntary water conservation for some time and continues to ask residents to be mindful and conservative of water usage in general.

The city's well levels are measured

regularly and are at healthy capacities, he said.

According to the water allocation plan, the city has 58,960 available gallons per day.

A total of 15,375 gallons per day have been allocated to City projects including Meade's Crossing and

Meadowbrook phases.

There are 43,585 gallons per day less allocated available and 13,750 gallons per day are available for projects with preliminary plan approval, with a total of 29,835 gallons per day remaining.

The allocation plan will expire this month.

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FROM THE DESK OF...

County Councilman Michael Blue

On Tuesday, December 21st, the Frederick County Council approved, by a 7-0 vote, the Redistricting Commission's recommendations concerning our Council Districts. This is a requirement that has been mandated in our Charter, Section 214, and adopted by the citizens of Frederick County.

The Commission was charged with reviewing the Frederick County Councilman districts to ensure that they are compact, contiguous, substantially equal in

population, and have common interests as a result of geography, occupation, history, or existing political boundaries. They met six times between June 2021 and October 2021, investigated and reviewed the 2020 Census numbers, received public comment, and prepared a final report.

This report proposed a new Council District map that moved two precincts from District 2 - Precinct 08-001- Libertytown with a population size of 2,600, and Precinct 19-001 -Unionville/

Linganore Grange Hall with a population of 1,830, into my district, District 5. Their proposal was transmitted to the County Council for further discussion.

The really miraculous part of this entire process is that the nine-member Redistricting Commission, that we established with three Republicans, three Democrats and three independents, voted unanimously to recommend the new map to the Council. Then after review and a public hearing, the Council voted unanimously

with four Democrats and three Republicans in favor of the new map and included it in the ordinance. This was a wonderful collaboration of all parties to come to an accord that provides a fair and equitable map of the Council districts with a fair representation of the citizens of Frederick County.

If you have seen the news lately around America, redistricting has become a very dirty and political process. In Frederick County, we successfully put our partisan wishes aside and worked for the voters. This shows that serious people can

successfully go about the public's work and obtain success.

To the new residents of Council District 5, I am honored to represent you and to serve you at Winchester Hall. Should you ever have any concerns, issues, or problems with Frederick County Government please feel free to reach out to me. You can call my office at 301-600-1034, or email me at MBlue@FrederickCountyMD.gov.

As we welcome 2022, I want to take this opportunity to wish you all the best for a happy and healthy new year!

County Councilman Phil Dacey

I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. There are two topics I would like to cover for this month's article. The first is the Department of Justice report into the Frederick County Public Schools and the second is the creation of two new County Departments – the Department of Climate and Energy and the Department of Stormwater.

First, the issue of schools. Frederick County has an independent elected school board that is responsible for managing the

school system. However, because Frederick County Government devotes half of its budget to send to the Board of Education (BOE) to pay for schools and teachers, we have an important interest in, and check on, the BOE.

The Department of Justice found that physical restraint was improperly utilized against students, and that in thousands of instances these children were systematically and maliciously secluded in violation of state and federal law. This major policy violation harmed countless stu-

dents and there needs to be further investigation into how these violations were sanctioned by the BOE. Frederick County policy used these extreme techniques in cases where they should not have; in fact, hundreds of times more than any other jurisdiction in the state.

As a consequence of this report, the Superintendent of Frederick County Public Schools Theresa Alban resigned. However, even in resignation, the BOE failed the public. The BOE voted unanimously to approve a resigna-

tion package of over \$800,000 to the Superintendent – an unprecedented and outrageous sum. This payment is simply unacceptable. This money represents public tax dollars that should be used in the classroom, on staffing, and on educating the children directly. We need to take steps with changing state law or otherwise to make sure this type of compensation abuse cannot happen again. The BOE is not a private entity with golden parachutes.

Finally, the County Government has proposed creating two new Departments – the Department of Climate and Energy and

the Department of Stormwater. Along with the Department of Social Justice and Equity, this would make three new Departments created in the past few months. I am not in favor of creating these three Departments in the last year of our term, thereby binding a new future County Executive and Council. Creating new Departments inevitably requires new staff and a growing county government. If these functions are necessary, we should find a way to do it without requiring creation of new Departments and growing county government.

Mayors. . .

Thurmont Mayor John Kinnard
I hope that 2022 brings everyone some relief from the last two years of uncertainty and worry. Covid-19 continues to cause widespread sickness and I recommend that everyone get a vaccination or the booster if you can. The Frederick County Health Department offers free testing, vaccinations, and boosters at several locations throughout the county. A list of locations and times is updated regularly at: www.health.frederickcountymd.gov/629/COVID-19-Vaccine

The Town of Thurmont fiscal year begins on July 1st each year and with the arrival of January 1st, we find ourselves halfway through the 2021-2022 Fiscal Year. I am happy to report that Thurmont is in sound fiscal health. We are on track with our budget projections and the next two quarters should be as on target as the first two.

I know we have not seen any snow yet, but we all know it is coming. Please drive carefully on our street when we are experiencing snow or icing. Our snow crew is made up of workers from all our departments and they are always at the ready to tackle any snow event. When it does snow please keep the following thoughts in mind. If you can, please park your vehicles in your driveway to keep the street clear for the plows.

Streets with no cars can be plowed to the curb and will be passable as opposed to streets with cars parked on the curb. Be sure to leave the snow at the ends of your driveway until after our plows have completed their work. It can be aggravating for residents when the snowplow comes back around and plows your driveway shut. I experience this issue with my sidewalk every year!

Speaking of sidewalks, snow must be removed from all side-

walks within twenty-four hours of the cessation of any fall of snow, sleet, or freezing rain, or within thirty-six hours when the accumulation exceeds eight inches, the owner, tenant, occupant, lessee, or person responsible for a lot or part of a lot abutting a paved sidewalk shall remove or cause to be removed any snow and/or ice from the abutting sidewalk for a width of three feet, or the width of the sidewalk, whichever is less. These regulations can be found in Thurmont Code, Chapter 84 Property Maintenance.

The year 2022 will see some much-needed water and sewer infrastructure projects including replacement of mains and laterals on North Church Street. We expect to start the bidding process for this project in the early spring. There will be work on several stormwater basins on Frederick Road and some upgrades to our high-pressure water system. Improvements are on the way to several parks through Project Open Space Funding and a new softball field is in the works for the East End Park.

The Planning and Zoning Commission is still working on the Master Plan and Comprehensive Zoning updates. If you are interested in this process please keep an eye on the P&Z Agenda published available on the town website in advance of their monthly meeting. Due to a large amount of project review, the month of January will have two P&Z meetings.

Please contact me at 301-606-9458 or by email at jkinnard@thurmont.com with any questions, comments, or suggestions.

Emmitsburg Mayor Don Briggs

Lots of things to unwrap in our town Christmas stocking for 2022.

To add to the Christmas decorations adorning the square is the new façade improvements on the building located in the northwest corner. From the impetus of becoming a State recognized sustainable community leading to downtown upgrades now the properties on three corners of the square have benefitted from grants offered through the town.

The construction work along Irishtown Road (I know, I am tired of talking about it too) is moving closer to completion. On more than one occasion the contractor has said the delays have been because of the opacity of the rock. The impermeable nature, the igneous rock family, of the rock bed along Irishtown Road has caused the installation challenges of water and sewer lines. This groundwork could not be accomplished through dynamiting but only by more tedious labor-intensive drilling.

The Boys and Girls Club after school program has grown its student body. This is a much-needed program for the community. There have been discussions about providing a before school program if it can find the volunteers.

Development in town continues to move forward. The long awaited Rutters store is moving along to a now scheduled completion and opening in late summer 2022. Federal Stone, relocating to Emmitsburg, is still planned for groundbreaking spring 2022 off Creamery Road east of US 15 for

their new home, 50,000 sf office-warehouse.

The repairs to Brookfield Drive caused by construction traffic are scheduled to be completed spring 2022. Work continues on major Infrastructure projects with a waste water pump station upgrade (~\$1,000,000), the water clarifier replacement (~\$800,000), and repair of the DePaul Street water line (~\$1,000,000) scheduled for 2022.

There is also a possibility for development of the Emmitt Ridge II single family subdivision off Irishtown Road. The development process could begin spring 2022. With the development will come the long awaited second entrance into Northgate.

Mount president Tim Trainor confirmed that the Mount, in partnership with Daughters of Charity, will open a Professional Health Graduate School in town. The school will occupy a two-story wing off the Basilica. The initial focus of program offerings will be a graduate Physician Assistant degree. The first class of 40 students is planned for September 2023. Other graduate programs planned for later include one for Applied Behavior Analysis and another for Athletic Training and the possibility for several more.

The Frederick Health and Mount St. Mary's Partnership medical facility is now under construction and planned to open summer of 2023. The facility services will be available to the community as a whole.

Even with COVID-19 out there we will move forward to add to our wonderful life here. Happy New year.

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GOVERNMENT—SOUTH OF THE BORDER

County Executive Jan Gardner

Happy New Year! As 2022 gets under way, I want to reflect back on some of the great things that happened in our community in 2021.

Frederick County has an amazing story to tell. It is a story of hard work and determination. It is a story about people – people who care for each other and care about community and our environment. It's a story of rich history, opportunity and transformative change. Above all, our story is a story of resilience. Working together, we make Frederick County a great place to live, work, raise a family, and call home.

Here are some of the highlights from 2021:

Health

Frederick County is focused on protecting people's health and well-being. The Frederick County Health Department has and continues to provide COVID-19 testing and vaccinations. The health department administered more than 91,000 COVID-19 vaccinations in 2021 through high-volume clinics as well as smaller pop-up clinics in Emmitsburg, Thurmont and elsewhere, as well as at events around the county to meet people where they are. These efforts continue today.

Frederick County can be proud that we have vaccinated a high percentage of our community though there is still more to do. Over 94% of our residents over the age of 65 and 83% of adults received a COVID-19 vaccine in 2021. However, as the pandemic continues and a new variant increases cases in our county, it is more important than ever for everyone to get vaccinated and get a booster. I also encourage everyone to wear a mask at indoor public places. Our healthcare workers are tired and our hospital is close to being overwhelmed. We want people to get the medical they need and everyone needs to do their part to ensure it.

Our focus on community health paid off. Frederick County was recognized as one of the nation's Healthiest Communities in 2021 by U.S. News and World Report.

I was excited to implement a 24/7 Mobile Crisis Unit last year. Social

workers and mental health experts can now respond to calls for help alongside law enforcement or separately. Mobile crisis brings the right services at the right time so people facing a crisis have the assistance they need to achieve the best outcomes. Mobile Crisis has been welcomed and embraced by our law enforcement agencies.

We know that mental and physical health can be boosted by spending time outdoors walking, biking, hiking or enjoying nature. Frederick County's parks and trails are popular spots. In fact, 2021 set a new record. More than 4 million visitors came to a one of our county parks last year.

We were excited to offer a new adaptive recreation program at the new Rock Creek School in Walkersville. The gymnasium allows our Division of Parks and Recreation to offer therapeutic programs for hundreds of residents with disabilities and special needs, because every child deserves a place where they can play.

A helping hand

Our focus on people has included providing rental assistance, food assistance, and a wide range of support for people who have experience lost wages or reduced hours due to the pandemic. Rental assistance continues to be available. If you or anyone you know needs assistance, they should contact the Religious Coalition at thereligiouscoalition.org.

Feeding Frederick connects people with food resources and nutrition. An interactive map, available on the county's home page, helps people to find the closest food distribution site from more than 80 participating locations, such as the Seton Center, churches and schools. For more information, go to www.feedingfrederick.com. Our Senior Services Division delivered groceries to seniors and expanded food delivery by over 600%.

Some of our local and small businesses also needed a hand up during a most difficult time. Frederick County distributed over \$17 million in grant support to our local businesses and agriculture community, including childcare providers,

restaurants and hospitality businesses, and small main street businesses. These efforts have helped our community's economic recovery.

Economy

While some industry sectors and businesses have struggled during the pandemic, Frederick County's economy has weathered the storm. We actually experienced strong and stable revenue growth, including in the life science and technology sectors, robust construction, stable manufacturing, and an incredible amount of new economic development interest. Why is Frederick County doing so well? Because our businesses know what we know. Frederick County is a great place to do business! Even during a pandemic, we saw new businesses launch, existing businesses expand, and new companies relocate to Frederick County and in our towns.

An Australian company, Ellume, announced plans to open their first manufacturing facility in the United States, and they chose Frederick County. Over time, Ellume will add about 1,500 jobs making diagnostic kits for infectious diseases, including at-home tests for COVID-19.

We also laid the groundwork to create a Mobile Career Center. The high-tech van will bring technology and training for job searches to the rural areas of our county, where people may not have access to reliable broadband or transportation. We are also working on plans to expand broadband to unserved and underserved parts of the county.

Agriculture

One of my priorities is to ensure that we leave a legacy of agriculture for future generations. Frederick County farmers proudly produce food and fiber for our region. To make sure our rich history of agriculture remains part of our bright future, we launched our first-ever Agriculture Innovation Grant Program this year. The program, which helps farmers to diversify, was recognized with a Sustainability Award for Conservation from the Maryland Department of Planning in December.

Leaving a legacy of agriculture means not only making sure that

agriculture remains an economically viable industry, but we have to preserve our best and most productive farmland for future farming. I often say that what we do outside our growth areas is just as important as what we do inside our growth areas. Our agriculture preservation initiatives have significantly accelerated, adding more than 2,800 acres in the past year. We have now preserved over 70,000 acres!

Education

We know outstanding public education lifts our students, their families, our property values, and ensures our long-term economic prosperity by delivering a well-educated pipeline of workers for the future.

My administration made a record investment of \$21.5 million in public education last year. Education is the path to future prosperity. Providing adequate school facilities and addressing school overcrowding is a top priority. School construction and renovation projects continue to move forward. In August, we opened two new schools, and we are advancing a limited renovation project at Thurmont Elementary School.

Frederick County Public Libraries are truly loved by our community. Library services were in high demand during the pandemic, as Frederick County Public Libraries pivoted to expand digital content, online programming and story times, and curbside pick-up. The statistics are amazing: 2.3 million items

checked out in person and digitally, including more than half a million items picked up curbside. The library hosted over 140,000 wi-fi sessions, and issued 12,500 new library cards. Close to half of all county residents are active library users!

Equity

We believe every resident should be free to experience the full benefits of living, learning, and enjoying the privileges and opportunities available in Frederick County. This year we formally created the Office of Equity and Inclusion and created an advisory committee to ensure an ongoing community voice.

County Government should lead by example. That is why we launched studies to look at our hiring and procurement processes. We also expanded our program to support minority businesses within our Office of Economic Development.

Finances

Frederick County Government is well-managed and our fiscal outlook is positive. We are investing in what matters – our people, education, public safety, and human needs – and living within our means. The nation's bond rating agencies reaffirmed Frederick County's AAA bond rating last year, evidence of our strong fiscal management.

You can watch my State of the County video with more highlights from 2021 on FCG TV or at [YouTube.com/FrederickCountyMD](https://www.youtube.com/FrederickCountyMD).

Have a blessed New Year!



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FROM THE DESK OF...

Carroll Valley Mayor Ron Harris

At the December 2021 Borough Council meeting, the Council passed the Tax Levy Ordinance, which fixed the Tax Rate at 2.45 mills or 24.5 cents on each one hundred dollars of assessed valuation for 2022. There is no tax increase for the residents of Carroll Valley Borough. Also, without increase, the council passed the fixed tax in the amount of .25 mills appropriated for fire and emergency services operation for 2022.

Our community ended 2021 on a theme of happiness and caring for others. Had the opportunity to attend three-holiday events where Santa made an appearance to the delight of the children in attendance. Three-holiday events were Milk and Cookies with Santa at the Liberty Worship Center, Cookies with Santa at the Carroll Valley Borough building, and Lunch with Santa at the Fairfield Fire & EMS. Over 300 images were taken. Watching the special moment when the child looks at Santa and expresses a personal wish for a gift because they tried to be good is a very personal moment of intimacy I attempt to capture through pictures. To see the images, go to www.ronspictures.net.

You can copy/download the photo(s) free from the site.

The Carroll Valley Borough partnered with the Fairfield Fire Company to provide Christmas to 3 local families. They also brightened the Holiday for 11 children by granting many of their Christmas wishes. Holiday meal kits providing all the items for a traditional Turkey dinner were also supplied to 18 local families. Carroll Valley Borough and Fairfield Fire Company wish all our neighbors a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season. Robin Dicken of Fairfield Neighbors Helping Neighbors (NHN) said they had another successful year helping our neighbors.

Some of the ways they have helped our neighbors are with two clothing giveaways, monthly themed bags with additional treats for the food pantry, community day to help with outdoor chores, and several times throughout the year, NHN did something special for the elderly in the local nursing homes and Meals on Wheels recipients. Robin said, "We couldn't perform these activities without the generous support of so many in our community!" She asks you to follow

them on Facebook for future activities and meeting dates at Fairfield Neighbors Helping Neighbors. Thanks to Robin and the NHN members for their investment in helping us all.

January, and you all know what I am about to share – my resolutions. Well, not all of them. Some are personal. However, here is one. I am going to try to do my best to help others. To let those around me know how important they are in the lives of others. And to be sure to thank those who assist others. Remember, "Give out what you most want to come back." With January comes snow. It would be best if you made sure that you winterized your car. If you haven't, you need to get it done. Check the car's tires and tire pressure, the heat/defroster, and wipers. Please slow down. Those antilock brakes will not help you reach a smooth stop if you drive too fast. When driving behind another car, remember to leave more space between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you. Some experts tell us that this distance is four car lengths for every ten mph you are traveling.

If the Borough declares a snow emergency, it is unlawful to park a

motor vehicle or to allow that vehicle to remain parked on any Borough road or in any Borough right-of-way in such a manner as to impede or obstruct the snow and ice removal efforts of the Borough or to create a hazardous condition. Also, it is unlawful to drive any motor vehicle on the Borough's snow emergency route unless that vehicle is equipped with snow tires or chains.

If you are trying to figure out if your residence is on the emergency route, launch the Carroll Valley website at carrollvalley.org. Type snow emergency in the search text box and click on Road Classification Map for Snow Plowing. Whether you are on the emergency route or not, please help our maintenance crew clear our trails after a snow storm by parking your vehicle, not to impede the snow clearing process. Looking for a fun evening, attend the "Dancing with the Local Stars" event being held at the Gettysburg's Historic Majestic Theater in partnership with Gettysburg YWCA on Friday January 14 at 7 p.m.

Unfortunately, the pandemic continues into 2022. As of December 14th, the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in zip code 17320, which includes the municipalities of Carroll Valley and Fairfield Boroughs

and Freedom, Hamiltonban, and Liberty Townships, is on the rise. Well-Span reported in mid-December that their hospitals are reaching total capacity. They were postponing elective procedures at many of their facilities to ensure enough space for those seeking emergency care. Please do what you believe needs to be done to protect you, your family, and your fellow neighbors to lessen the impact on all of us. Because of the pandemic, the digital era exploded in 2020, continued through 2021, and will carry on to change our lives in 2022. For example, it is a near certainty that there will be substantially more remote electronic communication used in our daily lives dealing with work, education, medical care, and transportation. The new norm continues to be defined. Keep well in 2022!

Borough meetings in January are Reorganization Borough Council Meeting (Jan 3rd), Borough Council (Jan 11th), Sewer/Water Authority (Jan 24th), and Parks/Recreation Committee (Jan 26th). Please reduce your speed to make sure you, your loved ones, friends, and neighbors will be safe. Don't Drink and Drive. If you have any questions, call me at 301-606-2021 or email me at MayorRonHarris@comcast.net.

Liberty Township Supervisor Walter Barlow

Brandon Lowe officially will be sworn into office and become the new Liberty Township Supervisor at the Re-organization meeting on January 3. We would like to graciously thank Bob Jackson for his years of service to the township in his various roles and we wish him the absolute best in the future.

At our budget meeting workshops we had to tackle fiscal spending hurdles. Everyone in our township is feeling the crunch of the economy and inflation. In 2022 we are looking at a 40-60% increase in cost to the township to provide services. Unfortunately, the township had to make a tough decision to offset the

rising costs of operation.

The Board implemented a .5 millage tax rate increase, which is equivalent to \$50 tax per \$100,000 of assessed property value. We do apologize for having to make that decision, but the township is limited on options for generating revenue to continue to properly maintain the roads and provide much needed services to our residents.

Second Notice Septic Pumping letters went out to the residents in early December. If you pumped and you received a second notice, please advise the township. It is possible that we just have not received your pumping inspection form from your hauler. We

thank everyone who has been complying with the pumping and inspection program.

We signed a contract with Highland Township for Police services in 2022. Our police department is proud to provide services to Freedom, Highland, in addition to Liberty Township.

Road projects slated for 2022 consist of blacktopping Sanders Road, and both Upper and Lower McGlaughlin Road. We plan to do more tree canopy opening in 2022. We again thank Hamiltonban Township for helping us in 2021 and we look forward to continuing a working relationship with them.

The road crew continued to deal with picking up trees this past month from high windstorms on Bullfrog, McGlaughlin, Liberty Hall and Stoops roads. The trucks were inspected last month, a new carbide plow blade was put on the large plow truck as well as the salt spreader and tire chains. If we get snow and ice on the roads this winter, we will try to tend to those issues as quickly as possible.

At the December Board of Supervisor meeting, the township awarded donations to the EMS and fire departments that service our township. Fairfield Fire Department received a \$10,000 donation, Vigi-

lant Hose of Emmitsburg, received \$10,000 donation, and Fountaine-dale Fire Department received \$5,000 donation. Additionally, Adams Regional Emergency Services received a \$2,500 donation.

Starting in January, The Board of Supervisor meetings will begin at 6 p.m. and will continue to be held the first Tuesday of each month. Please note the change as we previously held our Board of Supervisor meetings at 7:30 p.m. The Planning Board will continue to hold meetings the third Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. All meeting dates are posted on our webpage.

Have a wonderful 2022! God Bless!
Walter Barlow, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors

State Representative Dan Moul

Grants Awarded to Adams Historical Societies

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission announced Cultural and Historic Support Grants for three entities in our legislative district. The grants provide general operating support to Pennsylvania museums and official county historical societies not directly supported by other state agency support

programs. They are: Adams County Historical Society (\$4,000); Gettysburg Foundation (\$14,919); and Seminary Ridge Historic Preservation Foundation (\$7,282). As a life-long resident of Adams County and a member of the House Tourism and Recreational Development Committee whose district includes Gettysburg and the historic battlefields, I appreciate the work these organi-

zations do to maintain and promote our county's proud history.

Farmers to Benefit from Agri-Link Investment Program

As chairman of the House Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee, I am pleased the Agri-Link low-interest loan program is once again available to our farmers. The program offers low-interest loans to Pennsylvania agriculture operations implementing best management practices to improve soil and ensure clean water.

I was proud to support improvements to this program in the historic 2019 PA Farm Bill because our farmers often operate on slim margins, making investments in improvements more difficult. By relieving the burden of the interest from private loans to implement best practices, Agri-Link is critical to ensure Pennsylvania's agricultural producers continue to enhance their operations and provide the highest quality food and products. Open to farmers in all 67 counties, Agri-Link offers low-interest loans up to \$250,000 with terms no longer than 12 years.

Joint Hearing Examines Problems With 2017 Fireworks Law

The House and Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs committees and the House and Senate Local Government committees held a joint hearing on the effect of a 2017 law legalizing certain consumer fireworks in the Commonwealth. Representatives of associations testifying on behalf of Pennsylvania townships and boroughs said the law has resulted in numerous problems among neighbors and has negatively impacted farm animals, veterans suffering from PTSD, and has resulted in fires, injuries, deaths, noise violations and nuisances. They cited significant challenges for residents and law enforcement since the law went into effect. As chairman of the House Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee, I am working with my colleagues on the committees to examine the law to determine what changes may be necessary to address the issues raised and protect the public.

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GOVERNMENT—NORTH OF THE BORDER

County Commissioner Randy Phiel

As COVID-19 roars back into our lives at a dizzying pace with the Omicron Variant, it is highly recommended by the vast majority of medical experts, that short of total isolation which is impractical, that Adams County residents consider vaccination.

Pennsylvania was one of six states combined to account for 60 percent of COVID-19 hospitalizations. Here is some data to back that up. WellSpan reported they have gone from 321 COVID-19 positive patients in their hospitals on December 2nd to 399 on December 8th. They expected those numbers to continue to rise, and they were correct, they are rising. All the WellSpan hospitals are well over 100% capacity. In addition, urgent care visits are up 200 percent and patients hospitalized with COVID-19 up 20 percent. Adding to the COVID-19 surge are increased volumes for influenza and other respiratory diseases because of the lack of masking and social distancing this year compared to last year.

WellSpan is greatly concerned with the influx of more patients in the coming days and weeks. WellSpan had previously reported that over 100% of their patients on ventilators are unvaccinated, 100% of COVID intensive care patients are unvaccinated, and 85% of hospitalized COVID patients are unvaccinated.

Reaching and passing medical facility capacity constraints don't just impact COVID-19 patients, but also anyone else seeking emergency care for heart attacks or strokes. WellSpan and other providers are striving to make sure they have beds available for all who seek emergency care. Thus, WellSpan and most other providers, announced they are also postponing elective procedures at many of their facilities to ensure enough space for those seeking emergency care. We are individually beginning to hear the impact on individuals being made to postpone procedures that may be elective, but significantly impact the quality of their lives.

At this time Adams County has a dismal vaccination rate of only 49.6%. It is easy to get a vaccination appointment for initial vaccinations or the booster. I recently had my booster. Get an appointment now! The WellSpan COVID -19 testing center continues to operate daily at

the Adams County Department of Emergency Services next to the Adams County Correctional Facility.

Citizens in Adams County can now send a short message service (SMS) text message to 911 for emergency help when unable to make a 911 voice call. This service is available to all wireless customers beginning on December 15th. According to Adams County Department of Emergency Services Director Warren Bladen, Text-to-911 was not developed as a replacement to a voice call to 911 in an emergency situation, but rather as an enhancement to reach 911 services in three specific situations: 1) The caller is hearing/voice impaired, 2) a medical emergency renders the person incapable of speech, or 3) when speaking out loud would put the caller in danger, such as a home invasion, a domestic violence incident, or an active shooter scenario.

When in an emergency, all wireless callers should remember to "call if you can; text if you can't". Using a phone to call 911 is still the most efficient way to reach emergency help. Texting is not always instantaneous, which is critical during a life-threatening emergency. It may take slightly longer to dispatch emergency services in a text-to-911 situation because of the time involved: Someone must enter the text, the message must go over the network, and the 911 telecommunicator must read the text and then text back. As with any 911 call, the texting function should only be used for emergency situations that require an immediate response from police, fire, or emergency medical services. For non-emergency situations, customers should contact their local public safety agency via a 10-digit non-emergency number (717-334-8101).

The Adams County Community Giving Spree shattered previous years giving by bringing in \$3.08 million to be distributed among 120 local non-profits. That total surpassed last year's \$2.14 million. It was also announced that the Adams County Giving Spree raised more money per capita than any other Giving Day organization in the country. The Adams County Historical Society was the largest recipient with \$789,533. They are in the process of raising \$10 million for a new museum and

artifact storage facility, adjacent Barlow's Knoll, just north of Gettysburg. SCCAP was next with \$395,294. The Adams County Land Conservancy ranked 3rd with \$155,187, that will go directly to conservation of farmland, wildlife habitat, open spaces, and water sheds. Adams County should be proud of their generosity toward all these worthy causes and valued organizations! A shout out to the Staff and Board of the Adams County Community Foundation for their vision, work, and contributions for improving the quality of life in Adams County!

Adams County was pleased to share the groundbreaking on December 9, of an affordable housing unit, Meadow View, in Cumberland Township. Meadow View Townhomes are being developed by Luminest Inc, a not-for-profit Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) with the support of Adams County. According to the Central Adams Joint Comprehensive Plan, "New housing should be specifically targeted to Suburban Residential and Neighborhood Mixed Use areas" and "Accommodate at least 75% to 80% of the new housing demand within Designated Growth Areas," which includes Cumberland Township.

The construction of Meadow View Townhomes will provide the Market Area with new, high quality rental housing units. Each home will be one or two stories with a front porch, rear patio, garage, and driveway; the two-bedroom units will have vaulted living/dining rooms ceiling and the three-bedroom units have an area for play/study. The

community building will provide additional amenity space consisting of a community room with a full kitchen. Meadow View Townhomes is designed to achieve National Green Building Standard Silver Level and Zero Energy Ready Home Program certifications. Affordable Housing is one of Adams County's most significant needs and the Adams County Board of Commissioners applaud this project!

The Pennsylvania Dairy Association is on a path toward facilitating a "Pennsylvania Ag Discovery Center" most likely to be located in South-Central Pennsylvania. Several counties, including Adams County, are in the process of making presentations to the association's search committee to illustrate the appropriateness of the facility in their county. On Friday, December 10, an Adams County collaborative group made an outstanding presentation to the search committee. The presentation group included the Adams County Commissioners, Adams County Planning, Adams County Economic Development, and Destination Gettysburg. Congressman

Joyce's office, Representative Ecker and Representative Moul (Chris Kimple) all were in attendance. The Pennsylvania Ag Discovery Center would result in economic benefits, as well as educating the public to the diverse agriculture industry that Pennsylvania offers.

We believe that Adams County offers outstanding potential sites, diverse county-wide agriculture, Gettysburg National Military Park, an existing tourism industry to draw from, partner and expand, + easy access from urban centers. The collaborative effort between the groups for the presentation with such short notice is to be applauded. The group understood that to be the recipient of this complex would be both significant and meaningful given our Agricultural, Historical & Tourism heritage. We will keep residents informed of this exciting project as it develops.

The Adams County Board of Commissioners wishes you and your family a Happy, Blessed and Healthy New Year! No matter what you do get out there and experience all the historical, recreational, agricultural, natural, and cultural opportunities that beautiful Adams County has to offer!

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COMMENTARY

Words From Winterbilt

The more things change...

Shannon Bohrer

Last year I said that some events in 2020 had been unexpected. How we experienced the pandemic through a political lens was unpredictable. I predicted that 2021 would be even more bewildering and not in a subtle way, at least from my perspective. Well, get ready for 2022 and the continuing series, “Do we keep our democracy?”

Since the attempted insurrection at the capitol in 2021, the political discourse and divisiveness have grown and exposed differences, some that were unexpected and frankly incomprehensible. Differences existed before the pandemic and before the January 6th attempted insurrection. However, dealing with Covid and what has happened after January 6th has exposed differences that could question the future of our democracy.

While the pandemic was not a political creation, it became politicized because of the responses from one side of our political spectrum, not just ignoring science but creating alternative realities that included fake science. Some would say these alternative ideas were created to differentiate themselves from their perceived opponents. When the scientific community recommends personal masking to reduce the spread

of a virus, and the one side prohibits individual masking, you wonder -why? Is the response for the sole purpose of opposing the other party? The disinformation is literally killing people, and it continues.

Moving forward with the disinformation, we had the January 6th attempted insurrection, which seemed like a continuum of the politics of 2019 and 2020. Prior to the election, we were forewarned that if Biden won, the election would be labeled as being rigged. Of course, if Biden lost, it would have been deemed a fair election. When the leader of one side tells everyone if he wins, it is fair, and if he loses, it is fixed; that should have been a clue, a significant clue. The primary reason for the attempted insurrection was the big lie and the disinformation that continues.

The reality is that the pandemic response and the attempted capital insurrection are interrelated with our politics and our divisiveness. While these events are serious, what has occurred post-Covid (although Covid is not over), and post-January 6th is the real threat we face. If we just stayed with the big lie prior to the election or the lie(s) following the election, our democracy might not be in danger. However, the lies and misinformation following what occurred on January 6th are not just

disturbing; it is outright antithetical to a democracy, which questions the foundation of our future as a democracy.

After January 6th, one side dismissed the event and said the insurrectionists were only normal tourists. One Senator said he was not worried about the protest; however, if the protesters had been Black Live Matter or ANTIFA, then he would have been concerned. When over 140 police officers are injured and people die, that is not a tourist visit. Comparing January 6th to a regular tourist visit and or a first amendment right to protest is tortuous and perverted thinking. Everyone saw the videos, we saw the officers being assaulted with chemicals, we saw officers beaten with American flagpoles, one officer was beaten with a Blue Lives Matter flagpole. How can anyone believe the lies, comparing them to what they saw on the hundreds of videos, many of them recorded by the insurrectionists? It seems incredulous for any rational being to justify the actions on January 6th, in essence saying, “Do not believe your lying eyes.” Unless - one is advocating the overthrow of a government.

After the January 6th event, there were numerous persons in the Senate and in the House that renounced the perpetrators and held the President responsible, at least for one day, some for only a few hours. Most of

them changed their position after some deep meditation. They seem to suffer from rare amnesia, called Party Over Country or (POC). To hold onto their beliefs, they do not see anything – they do not want to see. To not see something that can affect and challenge our democracy - is the threat we face.

Those who do not see a threat are so entrenched in their refusal to admit the truth that they hope to win back the House in 2022. If they win, they can eliminate the House Committee investigating the January 6th insurrection. After eliminating the committee, they think the investigation would go away. The reality is that to make everything that has been documented disappear; they would need a Harry Potter spell to erase everyone’s memory. I wonder if they also plan to ban the books and videos that exist. Of course, the videos and books that exist basically describe a failed coup attempt. Many books have been written describing the players and giving the details that incriminate those involved. They could try to ban the books, but since they are not in school libraries, it could be difficult. There are a few problems with their strategy, the first being – what happens if they do not win the House? Not to worry, they have a plan for that.

The strategy for the party out of power is to win the next election cycle is through voter and election reforms. They have passed enough

laws, that if not challenged, give them a high probability of success. Some of these laws allow state representatives to change outcomes and even appoint different electors for presidential elections. These laws, along with the gerrymandering of election districts, should ensure their success in 2022. It is like stealing your votes while you watch, knowing that if accomplished, there is nothing you can do. They call this, Stealing the Democracy, or (STDs).

The only way to prevent the loss of our democracy is through voter reforms that include access to the polls, control of gerrymandering, and trust in government. I do not give these reforms a high probability of success, in my personal opinion. I think the POC’s (Party over Country) has a high likelihood of success with the STDs (Stealing the Democracy.)

I predict that our divisiveness in politics and our democracy will be the predominant topics in 2022. Secondary topics will include equity, racism, women’s rights, and our public education system. These secondary issues are directly related to the Party Over Country belief and how they are addressed. Of course, with the survival of our democracy on top of the list, global warming might solve all of our problems, but not in a safe way.

To read past editions of *Words From Winterbilt*, visit the Authors section of Walkersville.net.

American Mind

Judeo-Christian nation or not?

Mark Greathouse

The United States of America is not a Judeo-Christian nation. Nope. It’s founded on Judeo-Christian principles, but we are not a theocracy. Our Founding Fathers made certain of that. Of course, they surely never intended for our nation to stray so far from the morals grounded in those Judeo-Christian principles.

What do we mean by Judeo-Christian? The term Judeo-Christian can be best explained as an adjective that describes the common basis of morality, law, and ethics found in Christianity and Judaism and which in turn has shaped the socio-cultural bedrock of many Western nations, especially the United States.

The Founders were so concerned that there be no state religion imposed on the citizens that they emphasized in the very first amendment to the Constitution our freedom to practice the faith of our choice. Along with free speech, freedom of religion was a key ingredient in our nation’s formulation. The Founders felt that it was critically important for us that certain essential natural rights be protected from being imposed upon citizens by the national government. They wanted no repeat of the theocratic predations of King George under his Church of England.

Much is made of Thomas Jefferson’s exchange with the Danbury Baptists and his “wall of separation” as justification for keeping religion out of the public square. It ostensibly

defined separation of church and state. Yet it’s notable that the very Congress that passed the Constitution in 1787 also passed the Northwest Ordinance which held in its Article 3 that, “Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged.” Even George Washington reemphasized the precepts of the Northwest Ordinance in his farewell address.

Notably, Thomas Jefferson’s wall of separation metaphor was distorted by the Supreme Court to meddle in issues concerning religion at the state level whereas Jefferson’s “wall” was intended to only apply at the federal level. In his second inaugural address, Jefferson clarified state jurisdiction, “In matters of religion, I have considered that its free exercise is placed by the Constitution independent of the powers of the general government.”

Religious principles represent the heart and soul, the bedrock, of America’s undergirding political philosophy, drawing from John Locke, Sir William Blackstone, and other great thinkers to inseparably weave together religion and freedom...to place them on equal footing.

It’s less about Judeo-Christianity and more about protecting citizens from an overbearing government, whether by religion or a host of other incursions upon our rights. It’s also notable that Ben Franklin and Thomas Jefferson among others saw

Magna Carta as a symbol of liberty and natural (not government given) rights of man against an oppressive or unjust government. This thinking was woven throughout our Declaration of Independence.

Why are morals and ethics grounded in Judeo-Christian principles so critically important to our nation? Because they do exactly that: establish morals and ethics on solid bedrock. They place a premium on individualism, private property, freedom of thought, and seizing opportunity to achieve success. Adam Smith, whose *Wealth of Nations* stands as testimony to capitalism, noted, “Religion, even in its crudest form, gave a sanction to the rules of morality long before the age of artificial reasoning and philosophy.”

However, the corruption of Judeo-Christian principles through overt efforts at secularization are rather spectacular in their utter conceit. The frequent outcome of an amoral secularized society tends to be a profusion of lies, deceptions, and myths. Slowly over time, secularization and resulting corruption of the Judeo-Christian faiths has seeped into America’s ideology-driven politics. Philosopher Ayn Rand, who escaped Soviet Russia in 1925 and is famed for her seminal novel *Atlas Shrugged*, noted the importance of morality in her 1963 essay, “Racism.” Rand noted, “Racism is the lowest, most crudely primitive form of collectivism. It is the notion of ascribing moral, social, or political significance to a man’s genetic lineage – the notion that a man’s intellectual and characterological traits are produced and transmitted by his internal body

chemistry. Which means, in practice, that a man is to be judged, not by his own character and actions, but by the characters and actions of a collective of ancestors.” Reminds me a bit of Rev Martin Luther King’s later quote, “... live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character...” Rand goes on to say that by this determinism, “...a man’s convictions, values, and character are determined before he is born, by physical factors beyond his control. This is the caveman’s version of the doctrine of innate ideas – or of inherited knowledge – which has been thoroughly refuted by philosophy and science. Racism is a doctrine of, by, and for brutes.” Judeo-Christian principles place the natural principles of reason and choice or of mind and morality over some chemical predestination embedded in our DNA.

The fabric of Judeo-Christian principles in recent decades in the United States has been slowly wearing thin. According to Christian pollster George Barna, U.S. “born again Christian” adults declined from 44 percent between 2006 and 2010 to fewer than 36 percent today. Only 27 percent of Democrats claim to be born again and 45 percent of Republicans. For the curious among readers, 33.3 percent or 2.6 billion of the world population is Christian, while 21 percent is Muslim, 13.3 percent Hindu, and 14 percent non-religious. Pew Research tells us that 70 percent of Americans (233 million) claim to be Christian, while 23 percent are atheist or unaffiliated. That leaves a very small number divided among other faiths.

I find it of particular note that the

slipping of the Judeo-Christian faiths into secular beliefs went into overdrive with Supreme Court decisions like *McCullum v. Board of Education District 71*, *Engel v. Vitale*, and *Wallace v. Jaffree* driving religious practices from the public schools and nearly stopping religion itself from being taught as part of history curricula. The venerable flag of the “Establishment Clause” has been waved high repeatedly to exclude anything resembling religion from the public square. Even the establishment clause has sown confusion. A proposed curriculum designed by teachers in a local Pennsylvania school district a few years back actually defined the establishment clause as “the government established religion.” Sad but true. The error was caught by school board members and corrected. Religious faith is but a generation away from being lost, and there are ever fewer places for our children to learn of it as our core values and beliefs are attacked and eroded.

The Constitution, the same governing document that some folks want to significantly change to “keep up with the times,” makes it clear that we are not a Judeo-Christian nation, as that would effectively be establishing religion. However, we are quite clearly a nation founded upon Judeo-Christian principles that we deny at our peril. While morals and resulting ethics are bellwethers of the application of Judeo-Christian principles, the element that perhaps matters most is hope, hope for the future. People must know.

To read past editions of *American Mind*, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.

COMMENTARY

Country First

Memorable days for American patriotism

David Marshall

As Americans, the fourth of July has always been a special day symbolizing national unity and American pride. It is a festive time typically celebrated with parades, fireworks and family gatherings. Somewhere between the festivities, a moment should always be given to remember the reason why people of all walks of life celebrate this special day. In part, we do it in appreciation for patriots from our past. Those who vigorously supported their country and were prepared to defend it against enemies and detractors. But patriotism requires courage. At times, it becomes a self-sacrificing courage.

Since the 9/11 attacks in 2001, September 11 of each year has become another day worthy of our special recognition. We remember that day to honor the innocent victims killed during the attacks, as well as the hundreds of emergency workers who lost their lives fulfilling their duties. Most people immediately associate 9/11 with the World Trade Center and the Pentagon attacks carried out by three hijacked planes. But we should never allow any amount of time to fade our memories of all of the events which occurred on that day. Particularly the courageous actions by the passengers and crew members on board United Airlines Flight 93. Fortunately, the fourth aircraft never reached its intended destination. What is known about the last minutes of Flight 93 is a story of heroism and courage.

United Airlines Flight 93 was a regularly scheduled non-stop flight from Newark to San Francisco. When the plane was hijacked, passengers and crew learned about the three other

hijacked flights in New York and Washington DC by way of cell phone calls with family and officials on the ground. The flight data recorder showed that one of the hijackers, Ziad Jarrah, reset the autopilot turning the plane around to head back east. Realizing their plane was part of a terrorist plot, passengers and crew members decided to fight back and regain control of the aircraft.

A struggle with the hijackers ended in a high-speed crash in a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Every person on the plane lost their lives, but their heroic actions possibly saved many more lives. The 9/11 Commission Report concluded the plane's target was Washington D.C. The report also stated, "Jarrah's objective was to crash his airliner into symbols of the American Republic, the Capitol or the White House". The Senate and House were both in session in the Capitol building at the time.

As we approach January 6, 2022, it becomes the first anniversary of the attack on the U.S. Capitol. The Capitol was spared in 2001, but was attacked and breached in 2021 in a manner which U.S. law qualifies it as being a domestic terrorist attack. The images and sounds from that day were profound. The haunting image of a makeshift gallows and noose erected on the west front of the Capitol building along with rioters chanting, "Hang Mike Pence" is shameful. We saw images of insurrectionists actually hunting for lawmakers throughout the corridors of the Capitol while shouting, "Where are they?" Having the highest elected officials in our nation hunted down in their place of work was devastating to see regardless of your political affiliation.

The images of the physical damage being inflicted on the Capitol building itself was sad and shocking to watch. Seeing the crowd crashing through windows and prying open doors to what is considered to be a respected and sacred symbol of the Republic was an embarrassing low moment for our nation. The outside world was watching and taking note. The European Union Foreign Policy Chief, Josep Borrell, strongly condemned the riots by saying, "This is not America." How many of us share his sentiment?

From those typically on the front lines, it is natural for true patriotism and courage to thrust forward and confront the immediate challenge. The 2021 insurrection had its share of heroes among Capitol and D.C. police officers. Many of them suffered serious injuries at the hands of the rioters. On the anniversary of the attack, they should all be remembered and honored. Capitol Police Officer Eugene Goodman was awarded the Congressional Gold Metal for his actions in likely saving the lives of senators and staff. It is the highest civilian honor given by the Congress. Unfortunately, America is a far different nation today from 2001.

Throughout the history of the Gallup poll, no American president received a higher rating than George Bush after the 9/11 attacks. As a Republican president, polls showed Bush with greater than 85 percent approval rating while peaking at 92 percent. Two weeks after the attack, nearly 9 in 10 Democrats and independents approved of the Republican president. The majority of the American public found a way to put aside partisanship in the time of crisis. They rallied behind the nation's president when attacked by a foreign adversary. Twenty years later, the depth of national unity and patriotism among elected officials and the general public is not the same



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when the attackers are domestic.

Regardless of the politics, the American people have a right to know why the Capitol was attacked, who was responsible for the planning and execution and to see that all parties are held accountable for their action. It takes unwavering patriotism to defend our nation from both foreign and domestic detractors. It takes a degree of political courage from lawmakers to demand that the truth be fully exposed in this toxic political environment. It takes a degree of moral and self-sacrificing courage to insure that justice and the rule of law is carried out to the fullest.

The passengers and crew on Flight 93 knew there were consequences if they failed to properly act. Our nation needs lawmakers who have the same self-sac-

rificing courage to make the right decisions. When history looks back on these two memorable days (Sept. 11 and Jan. 6), what will be the final story? When future generations look back on the events surrounding both days will they have an appreciation for the patriots who ultimately made the right decisions during challenging times?

David W. Marshall is founder of the faith-based organization, TRB: The Reconciled Body and member of 'Country First.' Country first is focused on recognizing that Republicans, Democrats or Independents don't have to be enemies just because they have different experiences and perspectives. To learn more about Country First visit www.country1st.com.

Down Under

What a year 2021 was

Submitted by Lindsay Melbourne, Australia

*Sport that wrinkled care derides,
And laughter holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it as ye go
On the light fantastic toe
-John Milton, 1645*

Well, what a year it was. Pandemics, riots, storms, threats an stand-offs. Fake news, conspiracies, both theoretical and real; amazing discoveries and new goals. And let's not talk about the weather – it's almost too much to take in.

I had hoped you'd fare as well as we did here in Australia, but know you didn't. We have one huge advantage over you: We are an isolated, large, underpopulated country. Your expertise, your industry and resources are way beyond ours, and your current government is so far ahead of ours that we envy you, and you have enough people who know the truth and are not afraid to tell it.

But from space it looks as though there is no light anywhere, just doom and gloom, but oh my! That it so wrong. Technology is exploring so many ways of dealing with at least one big prob-

lem: that of greenhouse gas emission. The virus has been brought to its knees, largely because of your strength in the Pharma group. This is leading to a society that can continue on its way with a little confidence, maybe even a smile or two. For some. For those who have enough money to pay for it.

Things are so different here. We have a weapon that we have always had, and will continue to use in all situations of national stress and trauma, and even in personal misfortune. It is one you do not, and cannot have, yet it is simple: The ability to laugh at yourself. To find relief in irony. The slogan 'She'll be right, mate' is no fiction, but one that came with our pioneers who faced an inhospitable country, often unfriendly aboriginal people, and extremes in weather.

Our settlers were British, Irish and Scottish, who brought their own values and customs, which have survived and flourished. We now have people from every country in the world, and they have become part of the fabric, (regretfully, that stopped during COVID, as no one could come), and, except in a very few cases, are happy to share and join in.

Whatever happened to this self-depreciation attitude in the

States is a puzzle. Sure, the pilgrims – I cannot bring myself to say 'Pilgrim Fathers' – contributed a studied dourness, a puritan straight-jacket, but the rest – the Europeans who came and opened up the country – were the opposite, with their own brash ways and over-the-top customs.

Yet they too didn't bring the idea of laughing at themselves, or if they did they lost it under the weight of conformity. And when Hollywood got going it reflected societal norms. Romance, westerns, and adventure – they were the themes, always idealised, always with the real grit removed. Bedroom scenes were as daring as flower shows; the goodies always won, the baddies always got their come-uppance. Abbot and Costello held the laughter machine; Buster Keaton and slapstick were the way the English music hall was interpreted. Great stories, such as *Gone with the Wind*, became pretty, romantic – and so far removed from reality that such an idea was buried once and for all.

Laughter came from a can, and all real life was suppressed. Even the word 'Damn' was said softly, bedroom scenes were so stupid that they could only produce smirks, and all because Hollywood knew that anything else would not attract audiences.

Anger and revulsion were deleted,

and in their place came such things as 'The Roast'. This was surely the most demeaning and cringe-worthy practice ever introduced to decent people.

If only you had been able to appreciate a subtle joke, hilarity at a play on words, the sideways glance that says it all. And that is a great pity, because you need it more than ever in the present world. A world that is heading down one of the highway to hell. No, don't stop reading, this is not doom and gloom, it's a solution.

The reality is that no leader of any country can tell the truth: That climate change is here to stay. Not all the technology in the world or the future can change that. The tipping point, the last time things could be reversed, was passed about thirty years ago. This was not understood then, and is now ignored. But wow, has it produced new heights in spin, unique diversions and blamings. It has made those versed in word-making quite scarce, introduced pseudo-science and the queer statistic brigade to the media, and we all feel so relieved. Carbon-capture; Carbon-credits; greenhouse gas-trading, cattle burbs. The list that has been created to cover reality is amazing, and does the job of lulling the populace into knowing smiles of acceptance. The horse, however, has bolted, and will finish the race in the foreseeable future.

At that point no one will be able to summon up even a chuckle.

Apart from that, you have a different kind of problem, one of your own inadvertent making: Hyper-capitalism. If ever anything killed laughter, it was this. The serious business of making money is no forum for merriment except when the oligarchs laugh their way to the bank. But us, poor schmucks as we are, stay infected and an antidote is both useless and not available.

Can anything be done? Of course it can, but not if our sources of information are part of the problem. Things like Breitbart news, all of Rupert Murdoch's outlets, and all the far right's spin doctors have one common aim: To make money, to get their own name in the headlines, and disguise anarchy – it's so much fun to play with.

But responsible journalism does exist, and, wonder of wonders, it is alive and well in the United States. This journal is, of course, one of them.

Yes, that is something we can all laugh about. Laughs of delight and relief. Let the vaccines against the infections of madness do their work.

Have a wonderful and, dare I say, truthful year – ha ha.

To read past editions of the Down Under, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.

THE PASTOR'S DESK

The Epiphany

Father Elias Yelovich,
Orthodox Mission of the Entrance
of the Theotokos into the
Temple, Emmitsburg

The Great and Ancient Feast of Epiphany is upon us! One of our contemporary saints in the Orthodox Church is St. Sophrony, a founder of the Monastery of St. John the Baptist in Essex, England. A spiritual son of St. Silouan of blessed memory from Mount Athos, St. Sophrony describes the condition of our earthly lives with these choice words:

The whole of our earthly life, from birth to our last breath, in the end will look like one concise act. Its content and quality will be seen in a flash. Imagine a glass of the clearest crystal full of water. A glance will tell whether the water is clean or not. So will it be with us when we have crossed into another sphere.... (St. Sophrony. His Life is Mine. Chapter on Concerning Repentance and Spiritual Warfare.)

When I first read these words of St. Sophrony, I realized that they would stay with me forever. The quality, purpose, intent, motivation, substance of our lives is seen by God clearly; a mere glance reveals all. Who among us can claim that He will see no impurity within us? Who among us dares to think that his or her life will be revealed as clear, as clear as an unpolluted glass of water? I am reminded of a science experi-

ment we once conducted with one of our children. A glass of water with red dye is presented; a drop of some purifying agent, some substance like peroxide or bleach, is put into the dyed water; immediately it clears up and the water is pure again.

The Great and Ancient Feast of Epiphany, on which Orthodox Christians commemorate the Baptism of our Lord, is now upon us. I smile to think of how many of us miss the point of it. So many from every corner of Christianity debate the issue of why our Lord submitted to Holy Baptism when He is clearly without sin.

*The Great and Ancient
Feast of Epiphany, on which
Orthodox Christians
commemorate the Baptism of
our Lord, is now upon us.*

The issue needs no debate; the Holy Tradition of the Orthodox faith understands and proclaims it clearly. The Lord submits to Holy Baptism not to be cleansed, but to cleanse. He allows the Holy Forerunner to baptize Him in the River Jordan, not to be purified by the action, but to purify. The Lord enters the water to make it pure by virtue of His Own Divinity, so

that His purification of creation itself can flow through the rivers and streams even as they flow into the sea and throughout the world; He comes for baptism not for His sake, but for ours.

There is no way in which any of us will ever be able to claim to be whole, or pure or spiritually healthy without Him. Without the purification of His presence, His oneness with us, we will all be like the clouded or stained water described by St. Sophrony. One glance will reveal who and what we are and have been. But the presence of the Lord can, does and will purify us. Only if we submit to Him and allow Him into the chamber of our heart and follow

the guidance of the Holy Forerunner to "decrease that He might increase," will any of us be healed, purified and made whole.

In the Divine Rites of the Eastern Orthodox Church, we gather at the Divine Liturgy on Epiphany to celebrate these truths within the Gospel accounts of our Lord's Baptism. The priest calls down the Holy Spirit on plain, ordinary tap water to sanctify it, just as Christ Himself entered the waters of the Jordan to sanctify it and the vast entirety of His fallen creation so long ago. Christ does not need baptism, but we need Him! We need the purification of His Divine Presence to sanctify, to purify and to save us. Without Him, we can do nothing; without Him, a single glance will reveal the impurity within us. Only He can make clean that which we have soiled.

In the history of the ancient Church, Epiphany was one of the earliest celebrations, universally observed in both the Eastern and



Western traditions of our faith. It is a powerful reminder that there is no Life or Salvation without the Grace of God, the Grace of His own Self-giving for the Life of the World. Our gathering in His Name is a participation in that very self-giving which He demonstrated in the incarnational presence of the One Whose Birth we have just celebrated.

The Child born of the Virgin and laid in a manger came to save by uniting Himself to us Who have drifted away from our destiny to be united to Him and become evermore like Him. He gives freely of Himself, so that we might give freely of ourselves to one another. This is the faith we profess. It the vibrant message of the Feast of Epiphany!

Note: The Orthodox Church of the Entrance of the Theotokos (Mother of God) into the Temple is a congregation of the Russian True Orthodox Church, Metropolia of Moscow. Our rector is the V. Rev. Elias Yelovich, who serves under the Omphorion of Bishop NICHOLAS of PA and Metropolitan ALEXY of MN. Founded in 2010, our congrega-

tion meets for the Divine Services at 306 W. Main St. in Emmitsburg. We follow the canons and liturgical practices of the Eastern Orthodox Churches, which represent a huge segment of world-wide Christianity.

Eastern Orthodox Christians trace their beginnings back to the Day of Pentecost, when the Lord Jesus Christ sent from God the Father the Grace of the Holy Spirit. The Church grew and spread throughout the world particularly in those lands east of the ancient capital of the Roman Empire. Orthodox Patriarchs (Popes) preside in Christian Sees such as Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Moscow and many others.

It is the goal of our faith to follow the Will of the Master, Jesus Christ, and to realize and honor the Divine Image within us so as to become ever more like Him. We believe that God became a human being, incarnate in Jesus Christ the Savior, so that we might become divine – ever more like Him as we grow in union with Him. Our Divine Services are all in English and we welcome visitors with open arms. Visit our website at: www.EntranceMission.org.

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THE BOOK OF DAYS

Bread, its making and sale in the Middle Ages



In the chronicles and records of the Middle Ages that have survived to us, we find many items of curious information relative to the supply in those days of what was, from the absence of the potato and other articles of food, even more than now, the staff of human life. We cull a few of these particulars for the information—and, we trust, also the amusement—of those among our readers who care to know something about the usages of the olden time.

The bread that was in common use in England from five to six centuries ago, was of various degrees of fineness (or 'bolting' as it was called) and colour. The very finest and the whitest probably that was known, was simnel-bread, which (in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries at least) was as commonly known under the name of pain-demayn (afterwards corrupted into payman); a word which has given considerable trouble to Tyrwhitt and other commentators upon Chaucer, but which means no more than 'bread of our Lord,' from the figure of our Saviour, or the Virgin Mary, impressed upon each round flat loaf, as is still the usage in Belgium with respect to certain rich cakes much admired there. This bread of course was only consumed by persons of the highest rank, and in the most affluent circumstances.

The next in quality to this was wastel bread, in common use among the more luxurious and more wealthy of the middle classes, and the name of which it seems not improbable is closely allied to the old French gasteaw, 'a cake.' Nearly resembling this in price and

quality, though at times somewhat cheaper, was light bread, or puffed, also known as 'French bread,' or 'cocket,' though why it was called by the latter appellation is matter of doubt. Bread of a still inferior quality was also sometimes known as 'cocket,' and it seems far from improbable that it was so called from the word cocket, as meaning a seal, it being a strict regulation in London and else-where that each loaf (at all events each loaf below a certain quality) should bear the impress of its baker's seal. The half-penny loaf of simnel was at times of the same weight as the farthing loaf of wastel or puff; the relative proportions, however, varied considerably at different periods.

The next class of bread was tourte, made of unbolted meal, and the name of which has much puzzled the learned. It seems not improbable, however, that this kind of bread was originally so called from the loaves having a twisted form (torti), to distinguish them from those of a finer quality. Tourte was in common use with the humbler classes and the inmates of monasteries. Trete bread, or bread of trete, was again an inferior bread to tourte, being made of wheat meal once bolted, or from which the fine flour at one sifting had been removed. This was also known as 'Us,' or brown bread, and probably owed its name to the fact of bran being so largely its constituent, that substance being still known in the North of England as 'trete'. An inferior bread to this seems to have passed under the name of all-sorts, or some similar appellation, being also known as black bread. It

was made of various kinds of grain inferior to wheat.

In the reign of Edward III we find mention made of a light, or French, bread, made in London, and known by the name of 'wygge,' an appellation still given in Scotland to a kind of small cake. Another kind of white bread is also spoken of in the reigns of Edward II and III, under the still well-known name of 'bunne' (or boun). Horse-bread also was extensively prepared by the bakers, in the form of loaves duly sealed, beans and peas being the principal ingredients employed.

The profits of the bakers from very remote times were strictly a matter for legislative enactment. A general regulation was in force, from the days of King John until the reign of Edward I, if not later, throughout England (the City of London perhaps excepted), that the profit of the baker on each quarter of wheat was to be, for his own labour, three pence and such bran as might be sifted from the meal; and that he was to add to the prime cost of the wheat, for fuel and wear of the oven, the price of two loaves; for the services of three men, he was to add to the price of the bread three halfpence; and for two boys one farthing; for the expenses attending the seal, one halfpenny; for yeast, one halfpenny; for wood, threepence; and for wear and tear of the bolter, or bolting-sieve, one halfpenny.

In London, only farthing loaves and halfpenny loaves were allowed to be made, and it was a serious offence, attended by forfeiture and punishment, for a baker to be found selling loaves of any other size. Loaves of this description seem to have been sometimes smuggled into market beneath a towel, or beneath the folds of the garments, under the arms. For the better identification of the latter, in case of necessity, each loaf was sealed with the baker's seal; and this from time to time, and at the Wardmotes more especially, was shewn to the alderman of the Ward, who exacted a fee for registering it in his book. In London, from time to time, at least once in the month, each baker's bread (or, at all events,

some sample loaves) was taken from the oven by the officers of the assayers, who seem to have had the appellation of 'hutch-reves,' and duly examined as to quality and weight; it being enacted, however, in favour of the baker, that the scrutiny should always be made while the bread was hot; the 'assay,' or sample loaves, which were given out to the bakers periodically for their guidance as to weight and quality, being delivered to them while hot.

In the City of London, if the baker sold his bread himself by retail, he was particularly forbidden—for reasons apparently not easy now to be appreciated or ascertained—to sell it in his house, or before his house, or before the oven where it was baked; in fact, he was only to sell it in the 'King's Market,' and such market as was assigned to him, and not elsewhere. The foreign baker, however, or non-freeman, was allowed to store his bread for a single night. In the market, the loaves were exposed for sale in bread-baskets, or in boxes or chests, in those days known as 'hutches,' the latter being more especially employed in the sale of tourte bread. The principal days for the sale of bread in the London markets seem to have been

Tuesday and Saturday.

Keepers of inns and lodging-houses were not allowed to bake bread. Private individuals who had no ovens of their own, were in the habit of sending their flour to be kneaded by their own servants at the 'moulding-boards' belonging to the bakers, the loaves being then baked in the baker's oven. Persons of respectability also had the right to enter bake-houses to see the bread made. Bakers were allowed, in London, to keep swine in their houses at times when other persons were forbidden, with a view probably to the more speedy consumption of the refuse bran, and as an inducement to the baker not to make his bread of too coarse a quality. The swine, however, were to be kept out of the public streets and lanes. No baker was allowed in the city to withdraw the servant or journeyman of another, nor was he to admit such a person into his service without a licence from the master whom he had previously served. The frauds and punishments of English bakers in bygone centuries, we may perhaps find an opportunity of making the subject of future investigation.

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ECOLOGY

Enjoying the outdoors all winter long

Amanda Markle
Strawberry Hill Nature Preserve

So far this year our mid-Atlantic winter has been on the mild side, but chances are, at some point over the next few months, we will hit a stretch of true winter weather. Cold, wet, and—if you aren't properly prepared—miserable. When it comes to braving the cold, it's best to look to the experts—the animal experts that is. Animals have spent millions of years developing effective strategies to face frigid temperatures and luckily, we can take inspiration from their hard-earned survival techniques without having to do all the evolutionary work ourselves. With a little planning and a lot of layers, the outdoors can be enjoyed comfortably all year long.

Clothing choices are key when it comes to keeping out the cold. Outerwear can get expensive, especially from some of the trendier brands, but the most important thing when considering a winter coat is that puffiness will serve you well. Consider the animals you see active during the colder months, with extra thick winter coats of fur, or feathers fluffed up; all that bulk traps a layer of air close to their bodies, which is exactly what you want to do. Puffy coats filled with down or Primaloft can hold in a

lot of air. Your body heat will get trapped and held within, helping to keep you warm.

Length is important when it comes to choosing a winter coat as well. Longer coats keep in more heat; look for something that extends down at least past your hips. Be extra aware of parts of your body that touch the ground. You lose heat much faster through conduction (direct contact) than you do from heat simply radiating off your body. Penguins will lean back and balance on their feather-insulated tails to keep their feet off the frozen ground. Humans lacking a feathered tail can add extra insoles to their shoes to put another layer between their feet and the ground. If you stop to rest, make sure you sit on a blanket or use your backpack to keep your body off the cold ground.

Any moisture next to your body will chill you quickly, so it's important to keep dry any way you can. Many birds have specialized oil glands they use to preen their feathers, making them essentially waterproof, but you'll need to add an extra layer or two to keep dry. A water- and wind-proof outer shell is great to keep out snow and rain, and your innermost layer should wick moisture away from your body—avoid cotton and go for synthetic fabrics, wool, or silk instead. Bring along extra gloves and a hat so you can

switch them out if they get damp, and consider using antiperspirant anywhere you know you sweat heavily. Plan your layers and activities in a way that will keep your heart rate up but minimize sweating. Remove layers as soon as you start to sweat, put them back on whenever you rest.

Carefully choosing what you put on your body isn't the only consideration to make when spending extended periods in frigid temperatures; what you put into your body is important too. Some animals, like bears, squirrels, and beavers, spend all autumn fattening up, relying on a thick layer of fat to keep them warm and store energy, but humans are typically better off with a bit more moderation. Small snacks are better than big meals when trying to stay warm. Digesting a large meal can pull blood—and warmth—away from your extremities and to your digestive system as your body focuses its energy there. Carry along small, high-energy snacks like trail mix; if you can eat it without taking your gloves off, even better.

Frogs need to pay close attention to their blood glucose levels during freezing temperatures as well but in a far more extreme way. Some frogs allow parts of their bodies to freeze over the winter. That freezing signals its liver to convert glycerol into glucose. The glucose circulates to the frog's major organs and prevents ice crystals from forming there, protecting these vital body parts even when other parts are frozen solid. Humans aren't able to pull off such a trick, but a thermos of hot choco-



With a little planning and a lot of layers, the outdoors can be enjoyed comfortably all year long.

late or sweetened hot tea can give you a burst of energy and help warm you from the inside out. Keep hydrated, but relieve yourself frequently. A full bladder will draw a lot of heat away from other parts of your body.

Socializing outdoors in the winter months can be a great way to stay connected with family and friends, especially in times when germs spread in indoor spaces is of high concern. Even solitary animals like skunks like to hunker down together in their dens when the temperature drops (though only the females—males prefer to stay solo even if it does mean no one to cuddle and keep warm with). Bonfires, winter sports, or just casual walks can all be great ways to bring people together, but remember that different individ-

uals will have different needs when outside in cooler weather. Anyone unable to keep moving consistently while outdoors will need to consider extra layers of clothing or other methods of keeping warm.

Most animals give birth in the spring so their young have as much time as possible to toughen up before winter hits, but even the smallest humans can enjoy winter with a little forethought from a protective adult. People spending time outside with children, who are more likely to get wet playing in the snow and spend more time sitting on the ground, should consider bringing along a complete change of clothes for them—or at least something dry and warm to wear on the car ride home. Children should bundle up, but not so much that they sweat excessively.

When dressing a young child to spend time outdoors in the cold, a good rule to go by is to give them one more layer of clothing than you yourself would wear. Keep puffy coats and snow pants off children riding in car seats—all that puff is perfect for trapping heat but will prevent you from pulling car seat straps tight enough to keep them safe. Use a blanket in the car or have children put on their coats backward after strapping them in. Women may need to make extra considerations when spending time outdoors as well; studies have shown that while women typically have warmer core temperatures than men, their skin temperature can run 3-10% colder than that of men, causing them to experience cold more readily than men do.

When it comes to winter weather, there's no need for humans to hibernate. Nature offers unique sights, sounds, and experiences this time of year that would be a shame to miss. Whether you want to take a quiet hike on a snowy day, cross country ski along your favorite trail, or even just birdwatch at your backyard feeder, don't let the cold keep you inside. With proper planning and a few tips and tricks borrowed from the animal kingdom, you can stay warm and comfortable outside all season long.

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IN THE COUNTRY

The critical role of Red Foxes in our environment

Tim Iverson, Naturalist

“The Fox went out on a chilly night. He prayed for the moon to give him light for he had many a mile to go that night before he reached the town-o... He ran till he came to the farmer’s pen the ducks and the geese were kept therein. He said a couple of you are gonna grease my chin before I leave this town-o... He grabbed the great goose by the neck. He threw a duck across his back and he didn’t mind the quack, quack and the legs all danglin’ down-o... Well the old gray woman jumped out of bed. Out of the window she popped her head, cryin’ John, John the great goose is gone the Fox is on the town-o...”

rodents, fruits, grasses, reptiles, birds, invertebrates, and more. This fox is a generalist, and can make do with many types of potential surroundings. However, not all species are so tolerant of urban encroachment.

The Gray Fox was once the most common fox in the eastern United States. It prefers dense forest, and is actually capable of climbing trees! With retractable claws it can scramble up trees to avoid potential predators and obtain food hiding in the forest canopy. This fox is more intolerant of urbanization, and will be located primarily in rural areas. Numbers for this species of fox are beginning to dwindle due to the ever increasing loss of habitat, and displacement from other predators, such as coyotes. The main threat to this species though is man.

That’s a small excerpt of lyrics from a song called “The Fox” by a popular bluegrass band, Nickel Creek. The song illustrates a contentious history between farmers and foxes, more or less from the foxes’ perspective. The fox is an integral part of the ecosystem, and has been for centuries vilified in both literature and sport.

Dating back centuries fox hunting has been a popular past time. In the 4th century BCE Alexander the Great is known to have hunted foxes. The Persians thought that hunting fox was part of “a cultured man’s education” and encouraged killing them because they were vermin and distracted the dogs from the hares. This notion carried forward through the Romans into the Dark and Middle Ages in Europe. Eventually, they lost their appeal as strictly parasitic pests and grew into a stately game.

Maryland is lucky to call two species of fox its own, the gray and the red. Both the Gray Fox and the Red Fox are native to Maryland. Similar, yet distinct; each covers a separate niche. The Red Fox is quite resilient and adaptable. This fox is fond of open fields, wetlands, wooded lots, and is increasingly being found thriving in major metropolitan areas. Truly not being too proud to turn its slender nose up at an easy meal there are an estimated 10,000 living in London, as of 2006. The Red Fox does just as well, if not better, in an urban environment via scavenging than it’s more rural counterparts. About a year I ago I saw a red fox bounding across the street just outside the Shady Grove Metro station! The Red Fox is truly an omnivore, known to eat small

By the end of the 1600’s England had been carved into distinct fox hunting territories with fox hunting clubs growing up around these lands. The cry “view halloo” could often be heard by fox hunters once the fox had been spotted out in the open. The hunting tradition carried on into the new American colonies where American tobacco farmers in Virginia and Maryland promoted the merits of hunting the two species offered here:

The grays furnished more fun, the reds more excitement. The grays



The Gray Fox was once the most common fox in the eastern United States. Numbers are dwindling due to the increasing loss of habitat and displacement from other predators like coyotes. The main threat to this species, though, is man.

did not run so far, but usually kept near home, going in a circuit of six or eight miles. ‘An old red,’ generally so called irrespective of age, as a tribute to his prowess, might lead the dogs all day, and end by losing them as evening fell, after taking them a dead stretch for thirty miles. The capture of a gray was what men boasted of; a chase after ‘an old red’ was what they ‘yarned’ about.

This excerpt from The American Turf Register from around 1830 crystallizes the perspective from the time. Subsequently, the sport was banned in Scotland in 2002, and England and Wales in 2004 for being cruel and unnecessary. The notion of the fox as a noble pursuit soon lost hold as the farm culture dominated the new American economy.

Fox proved to be quite a problem for farmers who raise various forms of livestock, and continue to do so. By and large lambs are the target of livestock predation. In Australia this is a particular problem. There are various methods of controlling such

issues, most of which can be handled in a non-lethal manner to the fox. Erecting perimeter fences sealed with mesh or wire netting will generally solve the problem. Poison baiting methods are extremely common, but pose significant risks to pets, livestock, potential fox predators, and other wildlife. Baiting and relocation are also extremely effective methods of predator control when dealing with fox issues, but these solutions were not always so common.

To many in the past, and still many in the present, fox are vilified. They are treated as vermin, and as such ought to be exterminated is the thought process. While what a fox may need to do in order to survive can cause economic damage to people extermination should not be the first conclusion jumped

to. Fox serve a vital role in the overall ecology and health of an ecosystem. Often times when livestock or property is compromised a predator species is singled out and hunted without much confirmation. The best solution to prevent predatory animals is to secure any valuables that may be lost by predation prior to anything else. When you take any members of an intricate web out of the equation things get unbalanced. It’s uncertain what the future may hold for the Gray and Red Fox, but through appropriate land management techniques and human interaction they can continue to remain a sly, yet beautiful presence among our fields and even our cities!

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SCIENCE MATTERS

That insect apocalypse? Not now

Boyce Rensberger

News of an insect Armageddon, as some labeled it, burst into popular consciousness in 2017 when researchers in Germany claimed to have found drastic declines in the insect populations in two nature reserves. The news spread like the Delta variant or maybe even Omicron. Soon afterward even as sober a news organization as The New York Times ran a major article headlined: “The Insect Apocalypse is Here.”

The metaphors vary, but the message from popular media has been fairly consistent: A mass extinction of insects is underway, and the demise of this essential group of species imperils all other living things on Earth.

Whether the situation is as dire as that, the claims may have heightened your awareness if, for example, you were washing your car’s windshield and realized there are no smeared bug corpses. Or maybe it came to you when you left the porchlight on last summer and noticed that there weren’t many insects swarming around it. Or maybe 2021 was the first year in which your roses bloomed happily without the usual devastation by Japanese beetles. All three of these happened to me. No matter how it came to you, environmental activists say, such observations were your local window onto a global phenomenon.

But science matters, and a look at the totality of the evidence leads to a different conclusion. The bot-

tom line is that while populations of some insect species are declining in some places, including some highly visible species, there is no solid evidence of a wide-ranging decline nor of anything approaching imminent extinction of the whole insect class. Not even by a century from now do professional entomologists (specialists in insects) forecast that all—or even most—insect species will be wiped out. In fact, populations of some species are currently increasing.

The truth, as is so often the case in environmental matters, is complicated. Let’s step back for a moment to 2017. That’s when claims of imminent catastrophe burst into public view.

In that year two environmental activists published a study of two nature reserves in Germany in which they found some species declined more than 75 percent over the course of 30 years. That triggered the avalanche of other reports of various species in scattered parts of the world. But, as critics have pointed out, those findings in Germany were based on the total weight of insects caught in traps set in different parts of the country as measured at different times of year through the decades. Incidentally, the traps caught only flying insects.

Many scientists would have found it more credible if there had been repeated trapping at the same spots. In science, you want your before-and-after comparison to have exactly the same circumstances in both cases with only one vari-

able—in this case, time. Moreover, to make a broad claim, it would have been better to use traps that also caught crawling insects.

Here’s an illustration. If you count the flying bugs that died on your windshield this week and compare it to the number of pests crawling on your roses last year, your finding will be nonsense. Even if you compare windshield bugs this last June to windshield bugs the previous June, you will still have poor methodology. Weather could have been very different, and we know insect populations are sensitive to weather. You get the point.

And yet, for all the methodological cautions, there really are many credible scientific reports of insect declines in various parts of the world and in different habitats. Entomologists and others have been sounding alarms for many years.

The Number One culprit, scientists have found, is habitat loss. Forests are cleared. Wild meadows become residential subdivisions. Streetlights disrupt the feeding and reproductive behavior of many insect species. There is no mystery about why this is happening. Human activity—most of it unavoidable where populations of our species are growing—is to blame. Urbanization, to name it in one word.

The second most cited cause is chemical pollution, especially by pesticides and fertilizers. Again, these materials are used where people live, garden and farm, thus affecting insect species that live close enough for us to notice. If they



Next to habitat loss, pesticides are the largest cause for the decline in insects.

have any effect in wild areas, we are unlikely to be aware.

Interestingly, most studies in temperate zone ecosystems find no significant effect of climate change. In the tropics the situation is different.

From at least one part of the world far from urbanization comes a worrisome report of insect declines—a World Heritage conservation site in northwestern Costa Rica called Area de Conservación Guanacaste (ACG). It is a huge area covering a range of habitats from the Pacific coast across dryland forests and up mountain slopes to dripping cloud forests. Two scientists who have worked there for decades published this conclusion in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences last year:

“As human biomonitors, or ‘insectometers,’ we see that ACG’s insect species richness and density have gradually declined since the late 1970s, and more intensely since about 2005. The overarching perturbation is climate change. It has caused increasing ambient temperatures for all ecosystems; more erratic seasonal cues; reduced, erratic, and

asynchronous rainfall; heated air masses sliding up the volcanoes and burning off the cloud forest; and dwindling biodiversity in all ACG terrestrial ecosystems.”

And yet, as alarming as such reports are, scientists who examine the totality of evidence on a global scale say that the data are not yet as comprehensive or powerful as some environmental activists assert.

“Some of the claims extrapolated from these reports in the media have been extended well past the limits of the data or have been otherwise over-hyped,” according to a statement from the Entomological Society of America, the largest organization of scientists studying insects. “The underlying science does not indicate that a global ‘insect apocalypse’ is anywhere near imminent.”

Perhaps the most common complaint of entomologists is that we don’t know enough about what is actually happening.

“There is an urgent need for more data, particularly longitudinal studies, research that looks at insect population changes over time,” says Robert Peterson, an entomologist at Montana State University and president of the Entomological Society. “Without more study to clarify the geographic scope and magnitude of insect declines, we quite simply don’t know what we don’t know. It’s true that people and all life on earth would be doomed if insects were to disappear. But that is most likely not an immediate danger.”

Uncertainty is a common state of affairs in cutting-edge science. We know that human activity is destroying insect habitats in some places, but our local windows on a possibly global phenomenon lie entirely within those damaged habitats. As individuals, we don’t see phenomena on a global scale. We must take the word of researchers who aggregate data gathered consistently from many locations over a long period of time.

While most of the habitat-destroying effects of urbanization are local, global warming and the resulting changes in climate are global. Local or global, as Pogo, the cartoon character said 60 years ago, “We have met the enemy, and he is us.”

Rensberger is a retired science journalist from The New York Times and The Washington Post. He welcomes comments or questions at boycerensberger@gmail.com.

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THE VILLAGE IDIOT

A moment of despair

Jack Deatherage

Tuesday before Thanksgiving I felt a niggling tickle at the back of my throat - the alarm to start my cold prevention regime. By turkey day I knew the cold had gotten by my effort to head it off. That's happened one other time in four years. My concern changed to possibly having bronchitis, which was going around. Come sometime Saturday the laughing gods dropped the bomb.

A friend messaged me, "Hey. We tested positive for COVID."

Having sat close enough to touch each other I knew it wasn't a cold that had gotten by my defenses. Irritated, but not frightened, I contacted my southern clan to see what they had done to weather this man made contagion when it swept through them in August and September. It wasn't long before I was overwhelmed with advice, vitamins and supplements I can't pronounce the names of. There's a tube of dewormer I never got to as I was swallowing gagging amounts of pills, capsules and tablets of stuff I did understand the usefulness of in fighting off colds and generally boosting one's immune system. It sometimes pays to have had older relatives that were into that type of medicine.

The earliest I can remember being sick was age three. Living in Florida, I come down the hall, eyes swollen shut from an allergic reaction to mown grass that had probably been sprayed with DDT, gasping as I struggled to breathe during the first of many childhood asthma attacks. Mom said I scared the hell out of her as I was blue skinned from lack of oxygen. Probably caused enough brain damage to explain much of my thinking afterward.

Sometime while in high school I missed two or three weeks as I lay abed, leg swollen and oozing infection while my fever held at 105 F for several days in spite of Doc Cadle stopping by to inject me with penicillin several times and demanding my parents get me into a hospital. (I had a hammer at hand and swore I'd kill anyone who tried to take me out of my bed.) I remember passing out from pain several times as I dragged my inflamed leg ten, maybe fifteen feet from the bed to the toilet. Bed pans were for the dying. I wasn't there, yet.

I've lost count of the summer colds that morphed into bronchitis bouts that laid me low for weeks without seeing a doctor or taking more than aspirin to fend off the worst of the fevers and aches while I waited to get better, or mercifully die. But my favorite was the cold, wet, deary day I staggered the half mile from the factory to the house, barely managing to get my boots off before crawling into bed, fully clothed-coat and hat as well - to shiver for three days. I remember the DW and the offspring checking on me - usually when I got up to piss brown and swallow a mouthful of water before collapsing again.

Oh the expression on Doc's face when I walked to her office on the fourth day for some meds and she demanded I be hospitalized. "But Doc. I'm much betterer now."

Doc's appeal to the DW actually got a chuckle out of me. I ended up going home with antibiotics to treat a severe sinus infection. (I think the DW has forgiven me for missing a few days of work that week, but who knows with DWs?)

The grotesqueries of a food poisoning that nearly had me begging for death are merely a footnote in my ability to stupidly hurt myself and survive without medical care. COVID? Here. Hold my nonalcoholic drink.

Fever dreams, perhaps.

A week into it I knew the gods had gathered to mock and kick me. To rub my nose, and every other aching part of me in my miserable excuse of a lifetime of doing stupid, immoral and just bad behaviors. My anguish wasn't physical as much as it was mental. My sins simply would not stop marching through my fevered head. Each stepped up to slap me, to demand my attention, to ridicule me, to withhold forgiveness - not that I wanted forgiveness. I own my life. I wanted a cession of the constant review of all I'd done wrong.

A time came during my weak, shallow breaths, when I realized all I had to do was not breathe in again and all the physical torment and the mental anguish would stop. The dog whined at the bedroom door. I drew a breath and got up to take care of his needs. (One of the problems with having a familiar - they know where your head is even if you don't.)

There's a story of a man who died and stood before the gate

of his religion's paradise. He was deemed so banal as to have not earned a place among the good. Seek a place in hell, he was told. Standing before the keeper of the wicked and sinful, he was denounced as an embarrassment and denied hell. He ended up back among the living - a weak excuse for a man neither the sainted or the vile wanted any part of. Had the fellow been a Roman Catholic he most likely would have ended up in purgatory, a most unpleasant place from what I was told as a child being raised in that religion, but one where hope of being cleansed of one's transgressions, and eventual admittance to heaven existed.

I was in a purgatory, though being a pagan I understood that I had other options - a summer land, if I could pull myself together and work toward that. (The idea of singing praises to some god for all of eternity never did appeal to me. Better to build next season's garden and pass some knowledge, and a tasty tomato's seeds on to the next generation.)

As the aches, cough and fever dreams recede, and my senses of smell and taste mercifully return, I'm left shaken and weak. I've lost ten pounds from not eating and barely drinking. Physically, I've been through much worse. Mentally? I'm not looking forward to a rerun. People I know have died



As Jack struggled with his COVID-related health issues, he found himself wondering if the light in his window was 'the light at the end...', as in the end, end.

with COVID. Others continued their daily routines with barely a snuffle. One has lingered on oxygen in a hospital as I staggered through my worst days at home. Less than half my friends, family, extended family that have contracted this unnecessary disease were vaccinated against it. Some of the jabbed got hit as hard as the DW and I. Others shrugged it off quickly.

I've stopped watching my news sources because of the constant harangue to either get vaccinated or rebel against the governments and the drug companies that have

made excellent use of this crisis. I'm tired. Too tired to work up a heartfelt curse to hurl at those who created this nightmare.

I heard an "expert" say, early on, COVID is now with us and everyone will eventually succumb to it.

My advice - decide now how to deal with this. Either follow the government's recommendation to get repeatedly vaccinated, or start using the "unapproved" alternatives. Waiting for COVID's arrival isn't even an idiot's plan.

To read past articles by Jack Deatherage, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.

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THE MASTER GARDENER

Feeding birds in the winter

Mary Ann Ryan
Adams County Master Gardener

I'm a visual person. When a word is spoken, I visualize it. As a young adult, the term "bird watching" brought to mind an "old" person with a pair of binoculars wrapped around their neck. They would have grey hair, and a vest. But here's the thing, my husband has always been a birdwatcher — from the very day I met him when he was just 24. So why the image? Who knows, it just was.

However, now that I have entered the "empty nest" stage of my life, things like bird watching are more enjoyable and relaxing. Now I'm the "old" person. Although I'm not one to hear and see birds on a walk in the woods and be able to identify them, like my husband has been doing for 30 + years, but in the winter, I especially like to see them coming to the feeders outside our window and enjoy the challenge of identifying them as they feed. Seeing them up close, with their colors and sounds,

I find very relaxing and enjoyable.

That said, there are a few things you can do to bring in the birds to your feeders in the winter. To attract birds to your yard, you need to think the way a bird does. Is there shelter? How about food? And don't forget water. These basic needs are necessary in the summer as well as those winter days. How are you going to provide all these things for the visiting birds? As with many things in my life, I'll begin with gardening.

Building a backyard habitat is both fun and easy to achieve, especially as a gardener. Plants are the most important element in creating a backyard habitat. When choosing plants, choose those that can be a source of food or shelter. For example, shrubs that berry will provide food for the birds. Cone bearing evergreens also provide a food source and as well as shelter.

Select plants that will bear fruit at different times. For instance, serviceberry has fruit in late spring through early summer. Blackberries, raspber-

ries, elderberries and viburnums bear fruit in the summer, while winterberries, hawthorns and chokeberry bear fruit in the fall and will remain on the shrubs through the winter months. As food becomes less available, these berry plants become more important to the birds. Summer perennials also provide food. The composite flowers, like rudbeckia, coreopsis, and purple coneflowers provide seeds that many of the birds enjoy through the winter months.

"Layering" your landscape is important when planting your trees, shrubs and perennials. Most of the activity will occur in and around the plants. In order to enjoy watching the birds, you need to be sure the plants will be visible from a window or an often used outdoor sitting area. Layering simply means placing the taller plants to the rear of your backyard habitat, within the view from a window. The shrubs should be located in the middle, and perennials in the foreground. What you will be doing is creating an oasis near and around your window or sitting area, bringing the birds closer to your visibility.

Cover needs to be nearby for the birds to feel safe and comfortable. They need to be able to take quick cover if they feel they are in danger. Evergreen shrubs, like holly, pines, junipers and yews, can provide this shelter, all of which provide a food source as well. Deciduous shrubs can also provide protection for the birds as well as nesting areas. Typically, birds will build their nests 5-8 ft. from the ground.

Don't forget to use vines when



To attract birds to your yard, you need to think the way a bird does.

selecting your bird-loving plants. Vines can be a source of nesting material, as well as a source of food. Clematis is a good example as is our native honeysuckle (which hummingbirds love in the summer).

Besides food and shelter, birds need a place to drink and bathe. Something as simple as a bowl of water will provide just what they need. They are attracted to the sound of water, so a fountain that has moving water will cause a bird to stop and see what they may be missing. Small ponds and pools of water are great spots for birds to bathe. Location of birdbaths, pools or ponds should not have large plant material around the water's edge. This would provide a great hiding place for cats and other predators. They should be located near shrubbery that is within a short flight for protection, but not surrounded by large plants. In the winter months, these water sources are still needed.

If you have a small pond, consider putting a heater in that pond for the winter months. Another option is simply to set out a deep saucer of water with a few stones in it. The stones will give the birds a place to perch while they drink. Changing out that water frequently will be nec-

essary as temperatures get below freezing. Be sure the saucer isn't something that will crack, like clay or ceramic. Simply a deep, plastic saucer from a pot will work quite well. Placing it in the sun as opposed to a shady location will help keep that water from freezing as well.

After determining location and placement of the bird garden and feeding station, plant selection becomes the next important element. The closest layer to your area of visibility should be your annuals and perennials. Some choices for annuals are marigolds, portulaca, sunflowers, zinnias, cosmos and bachelor buttons. Left through the winter months provide birds with additional seeds to feed on. A short list of perennials you can choose from are black-eyed susans, butterfly weed, columbine, coreopsis, garden phlox, purple coneflowers, and native grasses. If these plants are not cut down for the winter — they will provide a great food source in the winter months as well as the summer.

Next you're ready for the middle layer of the garden. Some evergreen shrubs that are good for shelter include: bayberry, holly, juniper, and dwarf pine. Also good for shelter and food are the deciduous shrubs. Some suggestions for this group are viburnums, blackberries, red twig and silky dogwoods, witchhazel, sweetshrub, and spicebush. Trees for the tallest layer, good also for food and shelter, located the farthest away are birch, dogwood, hawthorn, maple, and oak. Some vines include honeysuckle and clematis.

When planning your habitat, be aware of the potential height and width of the shrubs and trees. This is probably one of the biggest mistakes we all make as gardeners. You must keep in mind the size of the plants when shopping in the nursery or garden center. Crowding the plants may only cause trouble in the long run. You need to allow space for the plants to grow and develop properly.

For this winter, take time to evaluate your garden area that is visible from the indoors. Consider adding plants that will provide a food source for those visiting birds, in addition to the bird food we can provide through the feeders. Ask a few questions when putting up those feeders — like: is there shelter for the birds that will protect them from predators? Is there a natural food source that will provide an additional source of food? Is there water available to quench the thirst of the birds — especially if there has been little rain or snow?

There are many steps you can take that will attract birds to your yard. With proper planning, you can have a backyard habitat for birds of all kinds. Before you know it, you will not only be a gardener, but also an avid backyard birder. And hopefully, the image of an

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The Word did not become a philosophy, a theory, or a concept to be discussed, debated, or pondered. The Word became a person to be followed, enjoyed and loved!

The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory.
John 1:14

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THE MASTER GARDENER

old person with a vest and a pair of binoculars with begin to change!

Watching birds in the winter is enjoyable and fun to do. During dreary days, we can lift our spirits by watching the little creatures flitting around the feeders and seed heads of perennials, and in and out of evergreen trees and shrubs. Our feeders are located outside our living space and we can watch the activity for quite a long time as the birds visit different feeders. Having a field guide close by helps when wondering what those little birds are – identifying them is half the fun.

Many types of birds visit in any given period of time. Red-bellied and downy woodpeckers, chickadees, juncos, white-throated sparrows, house finches, cardinals and tufted titmice grace us with their presence. An assortment of feeders and feed will attract a larger variety of our flying friends.

We can supplement the natural food source by providing seed through bird feeders. Many styles of feeders are available, from tubes and platforms to nets and hoppers. The more variety of feeders you provide, the more variety of visitors you will have. Tube feeders typically attract finches, while the platform feeders will attract larger birds like cardinals and blue jays and the netting can be filled with suet for the woodpeckers.

Probably the most versatile feeder is the hopper. At our hopper, we have finches, juncos, titmice and chickadees visiting daily. We keep it full of black oil sunflower seed. Another feeder that we use is a suet feeder. This feeder allows the birds to feed on the underside as the holes are below the suet cake. Mostly woodpeckers hang out at this feeder, literally. It's really enjoyable to watch them!

We also have a net that we fill with suet or a peanut butter mixture that

includes sunflower seeds. This attracts the woodpeckers, but we get flickers and jays flitting around as well. A piece of a wooden post with holes that we spread the peanut butter/sunflower mixture provides cardinals and blue jays as well as finches and titmice a feast to partake. Gold finches love the tube feeders. The gold finches will feed upside down, making this an interesting watch.

Just as there is a variety of feeders, so goes the types of feed. Millet, sunflowers, corn and peanut butter can all be a food source for birds. The most versatile seed is the black oil sunflower seed. This seed can be mixed with peanut butter and put into the suet feeders, and it can be used in hoppers as well as platform feeders for the cardinals, chickadees and titmice.

The least useful type of feed is millet. Typically when buying a bird feed mix, the millet is what the birds will scratch to the ground and discard. It's mostly just a filler to add weight for the bag.

Niger (thistle seed) is used in the tube feeders for the gold, purple and house finches. These are tiny seeds and are typically on the pricier side, but the finches just love it! Peanuts, whether in the shell or shelled, broken or whole, will attract birds like blue jays, chickadees, titmice and woodpeckers.

Feeder Location: When locating the feeders, whatever type you choose, remember one important element: shelter. The birds need to feel protected and have a quick getaway from any potential hunters, like hawks and cats. Be sure to locate the feeders near evergreen trees or near brush or plants that they can quickly fly to when danger is in their midst. Our feeder on our deck has evergreen

trees to one side and a dense, deciduous tree to the other. This allows them cover from potential predators.

Water: For best bird activity and bird health, not only should you provide a food source (whether with plants or store-bought bird feed) and shelter, but you should also provide water. A heated birdbath can provide that.

There are many types of bird baths and heaters on the market. Small fish ponds, or just a clean dish of shallow water set out each morning can provide this source of water as well.

My guess is when spring comes, you'll be more aware of the bird activity around you and checking out that guide even more frequently

than you have during the winter. Enjoy the quiet of the winter and the flurry of bird activity. When we get "snowed-in" again this winter season, remember to take the time to relax and watch the birds.

To read other gardening articles visit the Gardening section of Emmitsburg.net.

Small Town Gardener

Mailbox Manna

Marianne Willburn

Am I right in assuming the catalogs have come? They've stacked up on my nightstand, beckoning me to grab a cup of herbal tea at the end of the day, snuggle up under a warm comforter, and start planning next year's garden. Give me your tired, your hungry, your poor, your yearning to be free of wind chill factors below 10 degrees - and I will give them a gardening catalog, filled with tender sweet roses, blazing annuals and visions of summer splendor, guaranteed to melt even the hardest of January hearts.

Remember August? Remember the stifling humidity and the heat that didn't respect the dead of night? Remember the plants begging for a few teaspoons of water while you callously went inside and cranked the AC to sub-zero? Remember the urge to spray weed killer over the entire garden and be done with it? Of course you can't, and neither can I. A few short weeks of winter are all it takes to erase those memories and fill a gardener's head with dreams of a fresh season and a fresh new start.

This year will be different. We'll finally install that watering system with one automatic timer. This year we'll rip out the Monarda that mildews every single year without fail; and the rust spattered Hollyhock will meet the sharp end of our spades. This year we'll re-seed the lawn, re-mulch the flower beds, and re-visit the hammock constantly with all the time we'll be saving on weeding. Garden glory! Garden splendor! Garden denial.

Yet, do not chastise yourself too harshly my friend. This fla-

grant display of horticultural naïveté is not necessarily a failing of character. Those clever catalogs, stacked ten-high on the nightstand, are not exactly striving to dispel these fantasies. Sun-dappled babies laugh merrily next to the largest pumpkin on record. Straw-hatted ladies in summer dresses tote watering cans through acres of eye-popping blooms. A supremely relaxed man dressed in smart garden casual leans against the World's Best Pole Weeder. There are no signs of hungry children begging their dirt spattered mothers for sandwiches. If Japanese Beetles exist, they do so only as macro art shots which magnify their superb coloration as to appear almost attractive.

August simply does not exist in these catalogs. I know this. You know this. It is inconsequential. At the end of a long day spent hauling firewood, scraping an inch of ice off the front step, and buttoning the kids into their snowsuits for the third time, we will look forward to those crafty catalogs like a starving man sitting in the middle of a Las Vegas buffet. Try telling him that it's all an illusion.

But what a heavenly illusion! Often rich in information, they are filled with garden plans, tips on cultivation, no-fail varieties and of course, plenty of sun-dappled babies for inspiration. Here your gardening pennies will get you far more than they would at the nurseries - with a small catch. When the postman knocks in March with the proverbial brown paper package tied up with string, the segments of lifeless looking root that greet you will not remotely resemble page thirty-two of January's catalog. Do not despair. Planted as soon as you receive them, these gnarled roots and bare stems should do very well - although they won't be quite as big as their more expensive nursery cousins. If you are patient now, next year and for years thereafter, the difference will be noticeable only in the recesses of your

wallet. That said, do beware the cut-rate catalogs. You'll know them when you see them. Six roses for a dollar, fifty lavenders for a penny - and a set of Ginsu knives thrown in if you act right now. Most of the time you're going to get what you paid for - disaster in a box.

For the seasoned gardener, the catalogs beckon with fabulous photos of new cultivars. Trusted old favorites share pages with new hybrids; tempting us to find an extra square foot of space by heartlessly notifying the Phlox subulata to learn to grow vertically or get out and make room for younger, hipper plants. Still, there eventually comes a time when these Technicolor pages start to pale. Experienced plant-lovers may find themselves carefully flipping through endless photos looking for a specific cultivar to no avail. If you are among this crowd, it may be time to graduate to the serious catalogs with no pictures - the Illiads of the horticultural world. Straw-hatted ladies do not beckon from these pages, but you will be given access to varieties you've only read about and can't find in the nurseries.

Whether our thumbs are green or merely chartreuse, for those of us who buy from catalogs - spring comes early. We are planting bare roots and twigs long before the dogwoods bloom. And though August will come too quickly once again, at least our season will have started many months before - in the comfort of our living rooms, on a cold January day, with a catalog in our hands.

Marianne is a Master Gardener and the author of *Tropical Plants and How To Love Them and Big Dreams, Small Garden*. You can read more at www.smalltowngardener.com.

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PETS

Catching up on pet paperwork

Jennifer Vanderau
Cumberland Valley Animal Shelter

You know what's funny? I thought 2021 had quite a huge responsibility on its shoulders a year ago. Little did I know. It looks like 2022 has even more.

Can't you just hear 2022 saying, "I have to follow all of that?"

I saw a meme on Facebook the other day that said something like, nobody move too quickly. Let's approach 2022 slowly, without a lot of fanfare.

I also saw one that said Soylent Green was set in 2022. You know, the dystopian sci-fi film? Yeah. That doesn't seem like it bodes too terribly well.

And as I'm typing this, I just got a text from a friend that is a photo of a woman clutching her chest and the caption reads: The moment you realize 2022 is pronounced "2020 too."

It seems like everyone is feeling the worry about what the future holds.

But the thing is, just like with everything in life, we have literally no idea what the future holds at any point in time – continuing pandemic or no continuing pandemic. One of my favorite quotes about worry is: worry is like a rocking chair. It gives you something to do, but it never gets you anywhere.

It's very true. I know not worry-

ing is often easier said than done, but it really does take up a lot of energy that could be spent on much better endeavors.

Regardless of what 2022 brings, worrying about it won't change that outcome. Not one bit.

So instead of jacking up my anxiety about it, I'm going to recall the good and think positive about what's to come.

Despite how crazy the world is and has been, we have seen a lot of great adoptions and donations in this past year. We have such amazing supporters and I will be forever grateful to every one of you.

It does my heart good to know that even though things are nuts, we are still finding animals homes at CVAS and we will continue to do that no matter what 2022 brings.

With the start of each new year, I also like to remind everyone that now is a good time to consider taking inventory with the paperwork side of having animals in our lives. So let's talk vaccinations and licenses, shall we?

Every dog three months of age and older in the state of Pennsylvania must have a current, up-to-date dog license. In Maryland it's four months and older. Licenses go on sale as of January 1.

Dog licenses need to be purchased January 1 and expire December 31 each year. So even if you got a dog

license, say, in March 2020, it will expire on December 31. If you have a canine, make sure a license is on your list to start the year.

Rabies vaccinations are also a law in Pa. Any dog over 3 months of age must have a current rabies vaccination. This also pertains to cats that are inside your home for any amount of time in a 24 hour day, according to Pennsylvania state law.

In Maryland, rabies vaccinations are required for animals 4 months of age and older.

Failure to provide your pet with a license or rabies vaccination could result in fines. It's the law in Pa. and Md., so it's a good idea to make sure your furry friends are up-to-date.

I also like to talk about microchips because we've had a lot of success with getting animals home because of microchips and beginning a new year seems as good a time as any to consider them.

Every time an animal comes into the shelter as a stray, we scan him or her for a microchip. Collars and tags seem to be one of the first things to go if a pet is running for a while, but a microchip is permanent identification, embedded just under the skin between the shoulder blades.

We have a scanner that reads the number and that number corresponds with the owner. A lot of vets offices I know have the scanners,

too. Believe me, it is a happy day at CVAS when a microchip leads back to a mom or a dad and a dog or a cat doesn't have to spend any time in a kennel at the shelter.

One of the best parts about having your animal microchipped is you can qualify for a for a lifetime license, which means you no longer have to worry about getting a new one every year – it'll be good for the life of your dog. It's another way to make microchips more appealing for pet owners.

As we enter into a new year that we all are hoping has some more good in store for us than the previous years did, making sure our animals are cared for should be one of

our top priorities.

From all of us at CVAS, we wish you and your family (both two-legged and four-legged members) a fantastic 2022!

Jennifer Vanderau is the Publications and Promotions Consultant for the Cumberland Valley Animal Shelter and can be reached at cvascomm@cvas-pets.org. The shelter accepts both monetary and pet supply donations. For more information, call the shelter at 717-263-5791 or visit the website www.cvas-pets.org. CVAS also operates a thrift store in Chambersburg. Help support the animals at the shelter by donating to or shopping at the store.



Cressida came into the shelter as a stray in March 2021 and she was very pregnant. We got her into foster care and until she and her babies were ready to find a home. Cressida is a sweet, 3-year-old tortie who is a bit on the shy side and will need someone that understands that she will need some time to adjust to a new environment and may hide until she feels safe. Once she feels confident, Cressida loves attention and enjoys chin scratches. Can you help this mama out?



Crystal came into the shelter at the end of June this year when she was only 3 months old. She loves attention and loves to play, but is growing up in a shelter. We want her to find a place of her own so she can know what a forever home is all about. Could you give Crystal that?

For more information about Cressida and Crystal call the Cumberland Valley Animal Shelter at 717-263-5791 or visit them online at www.cvaspets.org or better yet, visit them in person at the shelter.

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ahhh..

Before humans die, they write their last Will & Testament, give their home & all they have, to those they leave behind. If, with my paws, I could do the same, this is what I'd ask...

To a poor and lonely stray I'd give:

- My happy home.
- My bowl & cozy bed, soft pillows and all my toys.
- The lap, which I loved so much.
- The hand that stroked my fur & the sweet voice which spoke my name.

I'd Will to the sad, scared shelter dog, the place I had in my human's loving heart, of which there seemed no bounds.

So, when I die, please do not say, "I will never have a pet again, for the loss and pain is more than I can stand."

Instead, go find an unloved dog, one whose life has held no joy or hope and give MY place to HIM.

This is the only thing I can give...
The love I left behind.

-- Author Unknown

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Holiday hazards and your pets

Dr. John Bramson
Catoctin Veterinary Hospital

I know, I know. Food=Love. This can be a dangerous thing especially at holiday time. There are foods pet parents definitely want to avoid because they can lead to upset stomachs with vomiting and diarrhea perhaps with a trip to the vet's office. The AKC has come out with a list of does and don'ts for feeding the family pet.

Please do not feed: bones, skin, and gravy, bacon, ham, fatty foods and grease drippings, stuffing, casseroles, mashed potatoes, corn on the cob or decorative corn, canned peas, desserts such as chocolate, cookies, pies, and sweets (especially anything with xylitol), yeast dough, raisins and grapes, onions, scallions, and garlic, food with spices or alcohol in beverages or in baked goods (i.e. fruit cake).

Acceptable foods in moderation are: turkey meat is (no bones, skin, or seasoning), boiled or baked potato-no sour cream, butter, or seasoning, sweet potato-no added ingredients, apples-cut-up with no seeds, plain pumpkin, plain peas and green beans-no addi-

tional ingredients.

Don't feed dogs from the table or your hand. This encourages begging. Put the food items in their food bowl. A very small amount is okay. It should not be their main meal.

When doing meal preparation and clean-up, put all the no-nos for eating in a secure trash can out of reach. Better yet, take the trash outside and secure it away from their access. These food hazards can lead to digestive upset ranging from mild to severe gastroenteritis to pancreatitis. This can lead to the need for medical attention even hospitalization with intravenous fluids.

Veterinary dentists tell us not to feed anything harder than your dog or cat's teeth. All bones and antlers can become hazards when chewed up and swallowed. They can fragment into sharp pieces that can puncture the digestive tract. Small pieces can get lodged in the mouth or esophagus or cause an obstruction that can lead to the need for surgery. Chew hooves and rawhides can also be digestive hazards. Safer alternatives are Greenies, Kongs, Nylabones, and Benebones.

Other holiday hazards to keep out

of reach: poinsettias, potpourri, holly, lilies, mistletoe, Christmas tree water, tinsel-consider leaving it off if you have cats, ribbon, electrical wires, toys and batteries.

Take precautions by securing your Christmas tree and unplug and hide electrical wires when you are not at home. Also put holiday plants out of reach. Do not leave pets unattended with potpourri, a decorated tree, or lit candles. By hanging a lemon-scented car air freshener in the tree, you may be able to deter cats from climbing up in it.

Too much commotion with people coming and going and increased sounds and noises can be disturbing to cats and dogs. Often they do better in a quiet room away from all the hubbub. Give cats one room with their food, water, and litter box away from the commotion. Dogs can benefit from a crate or being in a small room for comfort. Make sure pets have microchips and identification on a collar if they should get away from you. Contact your vet if you think your pet needs some anti-anxiety medication.

If something happens and your pet



Pooh Bear was surrendered to the shelter because his owner could no longer care for him. He's an 11-year-old terrier mix who just wants someone to cuddle. Pooh Bear has had a dental cleaning and he's doing quite well. He's a sweet older fellow who loves attention and just wants to be close to his people. He has not been around children so an age restriction for children in the home may apply, so please discuss this with shelter staff. Pooh Bear enjoys napping under warm blankets. He can be a little vocal at times, so potential adopters should be aware of this. Pooh Bear sure would like to find a place he could cuddle in his golden years.

For more information about Pooh Bear call the Cumberland Valley Animal Shelter at 717-263-5791 or visit them online at www.cvaspets.org or better yet, visit them in person at the shelter.

is exposed to some holiday hazard, contact your vet and/or Poison Control to know what action to take. The Pet Poison Helpline is 800-213-6680. Take precautions, be safe, and

stay well to all the pets and their people this holiday season.

To read other pet's articles visit the author section of Emmitsburg.net.

Winter kittens

Linda Shea
Frederick County Animal Shelter

Normally, as weather turns colder, the Frederick County Division of Animal Control and Pet Adoption Center sees fewer kittens. However, as we all know, there is nothing normal about this current period in time. For those of you who may have considered adopting a kitten, we have a number of kittens looking for forever homes. For example, Ray (affectionately known as "Ray Ray").

Ray arrived at the shelter as a stray back in September from East 7th Street in Frederick City. We brought him up to speed on vaccines and other preventatives, neutered and microchipped him, and nursed him through an upper respi-

ratory infection that is now resolved. Ray is a bit shy and would do best in a home that understands he likes to approach people on his own terms. Ray is approximately five months old. We know he gets along with other cats—he is currently at K.A.T. Café in New Market alongside a dozen other felines.

While staff members and volunteers often get to know kittens individually, we know the sheer numbers can be overwhelming to potential adopters. We have a couple of different ways to help reduce any anxiety and to help narrow down the right kitten for you, like color coding.

Each animal that comes to our shelter is evaluated for behavior and temperament, then assigned one of five color codes depending on where they fall in our personality guidelines.

Blue is assigned to our more confident shelter pets, purple for those who need work on specific manners or behaviors, green for our very active residents, and orange for pets that fall in a very "general" behavior category. Ray is color-coded yellow for his shy personality.

If you prefer, you can describe to us the type of animal you are looking for, give us some information on your lifestyle, pet ownership experience, and expectations of a pet and let us come up with some options for you to pick from. This proved to be a successful approach for virtual adoptions.

Ray is currently one of about thirty kittens available for adoption. In addition, we have forty-six felines of various ages—many underage—that will be returning to the shelter for adoption in the next six weeks or so. We encourage potential adopters to keep up with us on Facebook or sign up to visit us in person at www.visitfcac.as.me.

Community Foundation established fund for Animal Control/Rescue renovations

The Community Foundation of Frederick County has established a fund to support Frederick County Animal Control and Pet Adoption Center's planned renovations and additions. Over the next couple of years, the Frederick County Division of Animal Control and Pet Adoption Center will be undergoing a Capital Improvement Project (CIP) to plan and design, then upgrade and improve the facility's infrastructure—much of which dates back to 1978.

The Frederick County Division of Animal Control and Pet Adoption Center is the only animal shelter in the county. Each year the division takes in—and provides care for—thousands of unwanted and stray pets. Animal Control Officers respond to an average

of 10,000 calls each year that involve animal bites, sick or injured wildlife, and responses to house fires, auto accidents, or other emergency situations where animals are present.

Director Linda Shea says, "We are grateful for the ongoing generosity of the Frederick Community and appreciate the financial support of shelter advocates. This fund has been established to specifically support long overdue renovations that will help us provide better care for the animals in our shelter, our staff, and the community we serve."

The fund was created by Frederick Friends of Our County Animal Shelter (FFOCAS), a volunteer group that supports Animal Control's life-saving efforts through fundraising and education.



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HORSES

A Christmas gift for our favorite horses

Emma & Sarah Simmons

We love Christmas. We really love Christmas. What kid doesn't? All the gifts we kids get from our parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts, and, of course, from the "big guy" in the red suit. While getting gifts is so much fun, as we grow older, we've come to realize that Christmas isn't just about receiving gifts. There is much joy in giving them as well.

But this leads to one of the most challenging parts of Christmas, finding the perfect gifts for those we love. Since we are 12-years-old now and are really great at saving money, we are able to buy some of the gifts we give to family and friends. Our parents still help us, but it's actually a lot of fun using our own money that we earned from doing chores and money we get for our birthday as well.

While it makes Christmas more heartwarming to buy gifts for those we love, we've also realized that it can be very challenging to find the perfect gift for our loved ones. We never thought about that before. And in our household, everyone gets Christmas (and birthday) presents, including the more furry and scaly members of our family. In our human family we have four people, but when we add in the animal members of our family, our family count

quickly increases from four to twenty! We have two dogs (very very big dogs) who are easy to buy for since they just want dog treats. Our three cats absolutely love catnip. This year we got our ten normal size fish a new tunnel for their aquarium. We also have another fish but he's in a category all by himself since he's so big. He's like a giant piranha! He's not actually a finger-eating fish, but he does leap out of the aquarium to reach his food before it hits the water. We got him more food and a rock that now sits on top of the aquarium lid to keep him from pushing it off when it jumps up.

Now, this just leaves the horses. While they are Mike's horses, we love them as if they were our very own. This is our third Christmas with them so we wanted to get something extra special for them.

So we began to think about what Wesley, Kit, and Scotty would really love to have. We thought first about food. They do love eating. They especially love apples, carrots, grain, and grass. We thought about a super big gift basket full of their favorite fruits and some gourmet horse feed. But Mike and Audrey give them these all the time and we want to do something special for them.

We put on our thinking caps again and before long, we have a great idea. We'll get the horses

an automatic treat dispenser. Yes, it is a luxury item, but we think these three horses deserve it. They treat us so well. They never throw us. They never refuse a jump. And they've never run away with us. Well, maybe not 'never.' At least, they don't throw us very often, they only refuse a jump occasionally, and Sarah only got run away with that one time. But those are just minor details. Yes, an automatic treat dispenser is just perfect and certainly not too extravagant for our extraordinary thoroughbreds. It would have a sensor on it so that anytime they wanted a treat, like peppermints and molasses, they would just have to stand in front of it and move their heads a little and out comes their special treats. Ok, ok, maybe not such a great idea the more we think of it. Knowing how much they love treats, they would probably activate the sensor so often that we would not be able to get their girths around their ever growing round bellies. And as far as jumping, well, we don't think that horses with bellies full of sweets would be able to make it over even the tiny pony jumps.

Back to square one. Before too long, we have come up with the perfect gift for our perfect horses. We remember hearing our parents talking recently about it being an extra cold winter this year. So, we



Sarah and Emma with their horses Kit and Wesley.

will get Wesley, Kit, and Scotty, personal heaters for each of their stalls. Yes, that's it. They will be nice and cozy warm while munching on their sweet hay on those long snowy days and nights. For a few minutes, we thought we had hit upon an amazing gift for our favorite horses. But then we began to have second thoughts when we remembered how the horses like to bump around in their stalls when they get bored on those long snowy days and nights. And being straight A students, we put three and three together. Hay, bored

rowdy horses, heater. And what flashed through our twin minds was barn fire!! Oh no. No no no. Really bad idea.

What to do. We so want to do something special for those three horses. Then we remember that this is Christmas. And we remember the gift that God gave us that night so long ago in Bethlehem, the gift of love. That's what we can give our horses and everyone else that mean so much to us. We can spend time with them, give them our attention, and let them know how much we love them.

*We wish you all a very
 ✨ Prosperous and ✨
 ✨ Happy New Year!*



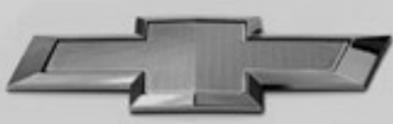


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FIND NEW ROADS™

COVID-19 care for all steps of the patient journey

Josh Faust
Frederick Health

Like healthcare systems across the globe, Frederick Health, the largest healthcare provider in Frederick County, must continually adapt to the ever-changing dynamics of the COVID-19 pandemic. Part of that adaptation is adjusting the services offered by the system and creating new COVID-19 related services from the ground up. Early on in the pandemic, Frederick Health staff realized the need for new, stand-up services. Things like COVID-19 testing, treatment, and new care options had to be developed in weeks when normally such logistical lifts would take months to develop.

As those services were developed, one thing became very clear. Every individual has a different COVID-19 experience, whether it be simply getting tested for the virus, getting vaccinated or, for those who have contracted the virus, the need for more robust, comprehensive and long term care. Frederick Health was able to develop and continues to offer services for each unique step of the COVID-19 experience.

One of the first, large-scale operations to be fully realized was the drive-through testing center located at the Frederick Health Village. This testing site, which opened in June of 2020, continues to offer COVID-19 testing and has performed over 200,000 tests since its inception.

Testing volumes have varied, but the ability to offer drive-through testing to the community was critical in the early days of the pandemic said Sara Littleton, Director of Community Health with Frederick Health.

“We are continuing to provide COVID-19 testing to our community. The testing facility at the Frederick Health Village has been a reliable asset in our response to this pandemic for nearly a year and a half” Littleton stated.

While testing was and remains a critical tool in the battle against COVID-19, clinical and scientific data shows that getting vaccinated remains the strongest, most dependable option for the public. Once the vaccines became more readily available in late 2020 and early 2021, Frederick Health was able to set up an extensive network of vaccination clinics across the county.

Throughout the spring and summer, Frederick Health worked hand-in-hand with the Frederick County Health Department to get the vaccine to as many people as possible. Frederick Health has administered roughly 86,000 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Those efforts have shown real promise with the County currently at a roughly 70% vaccination rate. However, those numbers are not where they should be.

“Vaccines and boosters remain our strongest tools in the fight against COVID-19. Our staff

remain ready to care for our community, but everyone needs to do their part in stopping these preventable surges.” said Tom Kleinhanzl, President & CEO of Frederick Health.

As has been the trend since late in the summer, the overwhelming majority of patients currently hospitalized at Frederick Health are unvaccinated. As the nation enters into the cooler months and holiday season, with people staying indoors and family gatherings becoming more likely, Frederick Health and other healthcare systems are seeing a spike in COVID-19 cases.

“We have more COVID-19 patients in the hospital than at any point and most of them are unvaccinated. The bottom line is that this was an avoidable peak being driven by the unvaccinated,” added Kleinhanzl.

As the past few months have shown, the reality of the situa-

tion is that individuals within the community are still becoming infected with the virus. For those individuals that have tested positive for COVID-19 or are experiencing symptoms, Frederick Health has numerous options available. For those individuals that are feeling ill or are experiencing COVID-19 should visit one of the system’s Primary Care or Urgent Care locations. Frederick Health has eight Primary Care locations and two Urgent Care locations in the county.

If someone has recently tested positive for the COVID-19 virus and is experiencing mild to moderate symptoms, Frederick Health has established their own Monoclonal Antibodies clinic located at their hospital in downtown Frederick. This clinic provides an infusion therapy for patients that boosts their immune system and helps fight off the COVID-19 virus.

Prior to this clinic being set up in Frederick, residents would be forced to drive to Baltimore or Hagerstown for the treatment.

“When you have COVID, you don’t feel very good,” said Alison Conway, the Registered Nurse with Frederick Health that is overseeing the monoclonal antibodies clinic, “So, driving an hour is a burden.”

“Our team was on a mission to get it done as quickly as possible so that we could start serving the public,” added Conway. “That’s the thing — doing whatever we can do to help make people feel better and reduce the spread of COVID and lessen the burden on the hospital.”

Since the clinic was established in the middle of October 2021, it has treated nearly 100 patients.

Yet some patients who have already had the virus and are no longer contagious are still experiencing symptoms long after COVID-19 has left their body. These individu-

als are called COVID-19 “long haulers.” To make sure that these patients have someone there to help on every step of the journey, Frederick Health developed a COVID-19 Recovery Care Rehabilitation clinic.

Long haul conditions include shortness of breath, extreme fatigue, headaches, joint and muscle pain and cognitive issues sometimes called “COVID fog.” Individuals do not need a referral to this program, which offers specialized ways of treating the unique side effects of the virus.

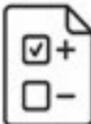
All things considered, Frederick Health offers a comprehensive and well-rounded approach for every step of the COVID-19 journey.

“We’re right here,” said Littleton. “Here to help however you need us.”

For more information on Frederick Health’s COVID-19 response, please visit www.frederickhealth.org/COVID19.

Prevent, Manage, and Recover from COVID-19

- 

Get Vaccinated
Get the COVID-19 vaccine to prevent illness and hospitalization.
- 

Get Tested
If you were exposed to COVID-19 or feel sick, testing is available.
- 

Get Care
If you have symptoms, go to Urgent Care or make an appointment with Primary Care.
- 

Get Monoclonal Infusion
If you’re diagnosed with COVID-19, boost your immune system to fight the virus quicker.
- 

Get Recovery Care
Get COVID-19 care for long-haul side effects.



Before, during, and after COVID-19, we’re here to help.

Get the resources you need.
FrederickHealth.org/COVID19
240-566-3300



Frederick Health

FROM THE DESK OF CANDIDATE ...

Colt Black (R), Candidate for State Delegate

Hello to my fellow neighbors & friends.

Our foundations of government in this country were based upon citizen legislators and not career politicians. We have all heard someone make a statement like “they should do something about that”. And while these conversations are cathartic, that’s all they are. I often thought about this very statement in my deliberations in running for office and soon came to realize the “they” could be me, maybe I could make a difference.

Bringing a voice among the noise in Annapolis to the members of our shared community. And that is exactly what I seek to do in my bid for State Delegate. My name is Colt Black. I am a lifelong resident of the Catoclin

community of Frederick County. I am married to the love of my life, Micheala and have 3 beautiful children. I am a small business owner of Black’s Funeral Home P.A. and Colt M. Black P.A. This is the first time I have ever ran for office and am running as a Republican. Over the course of the next few months, I will be penning a series of articles of varied interest with respect to issues that are on the minds of the voter.

Some of the topics I will be covering will be issues effecting the family, business, infrastructure & services, and law & government reform. The fact is many of these topics overlap in some way or fashion. It is worth mentioning that no matter where you stand

on the political spectrum Maryland’s government is primarily Democrat controlled. No matter who you vote for it is important to elect someone who will represent your values in Annapolis but still can work across the aisle with the other party.

This is something that I can say unequivocally I am committed to working in a bipartisan fashion to ensure our district is represented in accordance with our values while seeing legislation pass, and funding distributed to our district to address the needs of our community.

While there are always issues on which we may disagree upon, it is my goal to find common ground to see our district receive its fair share, and fight for each mem-

ber of our community to be able to prosper in business, raise their family in peace and hope for a bright future, and be free from an intrusive government. It is my belief that most of us have these shared goals, it is just a matter of how we get there.

As the campaign season comes into full swing I am looking forward to hearing from the members of the community regarding their concerns and priorities. Please stay tuned for my next installment. If you’d like more



information about our campaign, to donate to our grassroots effort, or volunteer please visit: coltblack-4delegate.com

Jessica Fitzwater (D), Candidate for County Executive

I’m stepping forward as a candidate for County Executive to make sure that progress continues in the years ahead and to ensure growth is managed in a way that benefits our families, businesses, and the environment. I will fight to strengthen our schools, build climate resilience, and ensure that every Frederick County family can live, work, and thrive in our beautiful community.

Over the last several months I have been talking with voters across the County, knocking on hundreds of doors, and continuing to build on our shared vision for a prosperous community. We’ve gained new supporters every step of the way because people know the stakes of this race and are ready for experienced and energetic leadership.

When first elected to the Frederick County Council in 2014, I

was one of only two women under the age of 40 serving in county elected government in the entire state of Maryland.

As a mom of two young kids, a public school teacher for 17 years, and a County Council Member for seven years, I know how to manage competing priorities and plan ahead. I can think on my feet while adapting to challenges, and I’m an effective communicator who gets things done- not just for my family and my students, but for our entire community. It’s this well-rounded experience that has prepared me to lead Frederick County as your next County Executive.

I have played a key role in many accomplishments since the transition to charter government, including: pay raises for public employees, adding dozens of public safety positions, and strengthening county ethics laws.

I supported tax credits for small businesses, senior citizens, and disabled veterans, and fought to provide support for farmers and new opportunities for agritourism. As a staunch advocate for public education, I supported budgets that invested record levels of school funding and accelerated the construction funds for Frederick High School and several new elementary schools.

I have sponsored and passed successful legislation through a bipartisan County Council, to: establish a Domestic Violence Coordinating Council and an Immigrant Affairs Commission, expand anti-discrimination laws, establish a Climate Emergency Mobilization Work Group, improve affordable workforce housing, enact anti-human trafficking legislation, and repeal the English-only ordinance put in

place by the former County Commissioners. I have also led a collaborative workgroup to implement a 2018 ballot question about collective bargaining for firefighters which was approved by 70 percent of Frederick County voters. My compromise legislation was enacted by the County Council in 2020 on a near-unanimous vote.

I lived in Smithsburg for 16 years. I am a graduate of Maryland public schools, hold an undergraduate degree from St. Mary’s College of Maryland and a Master’s degree from Hood College. I have served



on the Board of Directors of the Frederick Symphony Orchestra, the Frederick Arts Council, and the Frederick County Teachers Association.

Renee Knapp (D), Candidate for County Council-at-Large

I am Renee Knapp, and I am running in 2022 for a seat on the Frederick County Council as an at-large council member, representing all the residents of Frederick County. I would like to thank the editor for this opportunity to introduce myself as a candidate and share my ideas for the future of Frederick County in a series of articles over the next few months. This month I will briefly explain what I see as priorities for Frederick County: Education, connectivity, transportation, and climate resilience.

I spent over 25 years as an advocate and a caregiver for my son with special needs. When not much was known about autism and autistic children were routinely underserved, I worked with doctors, specialists, therapists, and Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS) schools to advocate for a plan to help my son become as independent as possible. I understood perseverance and the power

of incremental progress. My son proudly graduated from high school in Frederick County and has successfully transitioned to steady employment in a local grocery store. With his success, I turned to dedicating more of my time to public service.

I grew up in Middletown and now live in Adamstown with my husband and our son. Being a lifelong county resident has given me insights and a wider perspective about the where Frederick County has been and where we can go. Because we are Maryland’s largest county by area and home to The City of Frederick, this county offers great economic opportunity for businesses, farms, and new residents. The next county council must continue to preserve the natural beauty and agricultural economy of Frederick County, while maintaining responsible fiscal management and Frederick County’s AAA bond rating. These princi-

ples are necessary for each of the priorities I will expand on in the coming months.

Education is the biggest investment we make with our county tax dollars and COVID-19 is devastating education in Frederick County. Our schools must receive the necessary funding to recover from the pandemic and assure students in Frederick County continue to graduate with a competitive 21st century education.

Future economic growth of the county depends on continuing advancements in broadband infrastructure and WiFi capabilities. Connectivity accelerates business, attracts companies to the county, and helps address education access and transportation issues. Over 40% of employed Frederick County residents commute outside the county to work in one of the most congested regions in the nation. Efficient and accessible transportation drives our local

economy and contributes to the quality of life in Frederick County.

Lastly, Frederick County is starting to experience more frequent severe local weather events that disrupt roads, power, and communications. Planning for climate resilience is critical to avoiding expensive and reactionary fixes that impact county budgets and threaten property values, employment, and the quality of life. We must start adjusting our thinking about roads, water and sewer use, and electrical and communications lines, to make them more resilient in the face of weather extremes.

I look forward to expanding on these ideas in the coming



months, and hearing voters’ perspectives. Feel free to reach out. I am running to represent the interests of all residents of Frederick County, and I’d love to hear from you. renee@knapp4countycouncil.com www.knapp4countycouncil.com

Candidates begin to line up for the June primary

New faces were welcomed to the candidate pool for the Maryland Primary June 28 as two residents of Frederick County vie for separate positions within Maryland Government this election.

As much as the News-Journal tries to keep politics out of local news, this paper is committed to the notion that an informed voter is the best voter. As campaign trails begin, the News-Journal is proud to once again offer all candidates, of all political persuasions, free space in our paper to communicate their views and positions, regardless of their ability to pay for advertisement. It has been our tradition for years.

With that said, let us begin this year's coverage of candidates by highlighting three individuals who will be running for office for the first time. To say it takes courage to step out and put oneself under a microscope would be an understatement. We applaud all those who do so for the betterment of our communities.

Colt Black

Republican Colt Black of Sabillasville is throwing his hat into the ring for one of two open seats for Maryland State Delegate - District Four, which encompasses Emmitsburg, Thurmont, Woodsboro, Walkersville, and Sabillasville.

Black's motivation is to do right for the people of the communities in the District. In Black's mind, there is no sense in complaining about a situation if you are not willing to step up and do something to fix it. Too often people wait around for someone else to make positive changes for the community, he said.

"That someone could very much be you as an individual," he said.

A current challenge faced by state delegate candidates is waiting to see how the redistricting of the congressional maps will turn out, according to Black.

The re-mapping is anticipated to be completed this month in which campaigning will begin in earnest, he said. Because fundraising efforts are congruent on how district lines are mapped, "re-districting maps really affect the planning of certain events," he said.

Running for a political office for the first time, Black is motivated to make a difference in the community he has lived in his entire life.

Black said there is too much reliance on career politicians nowadays who have no investment in the heart of the community they are alleged to serve, which is not the pillars the country was founded on.

Black cited the Maryland State Delegate position as a "true citizen legislator" as it only meets three months out of the year. "I'm very excited to be part of the legislation as it is truly intended to be," he said.

If elected Black aims to focus on family and business friendly legislation. "I've seen a lot of issues that fall into that category," he said.

As a small business owner, Black has community interest at heart and

is tied to the community. Black looks to ensure the hard-earned citizen tax dollars that are sent to Annapolis are "spent wisely and appropriated properly," and that the fair share of taxes is returned to the community.

Black also aims to make it easier for businesses to start-up and to simplify tax processes for both individuals and businesses. "It's something I will work diligently toward should I be elected," he said.

Now more than ever there is a need in politics to have people who fully represent the values of the people they serve, he said. "Making a difference in my community is my main driving force," he said.

Daryl Boffman

Democrat Daryl Boffman, of Frederick, has thrown his hat in the ring for County Executive. Although this is his first time running for partisan political office, Boffman brings decades of executive experience to his campaign. Boffman considered his qualifications and chose to continue to be an asset to the people of Frederick County.

"I didn't want to sit back and wait for someone else to run... I have given my time and talents to this county for 30 years," he said.

Boffman served as executive director of public affairs for Frederick County Public Schools. He also carries extensive community board leadership, including sitting on the Boards of: the county Board of Education, the county's Chamber of Commerce, and Frederick Memorial Hospital.

Boffman's campaign of "one Frederick united," is meant to involve everyone, especially those too often overlooked and who struggled even before the pandemic including those of low income, minorities, seniors, and veterans, "We can do a lot better for those people," he said.

Challenges Boffman's says he faces for this campaign is the need to move away from traditional campaigning due to the pandemic and how to make up the resulting gaps. Boffman said he will have to place more focus on online and social media campaigning and fundraising. "I have to be creative to get the word out," he said.

One of the key values driving Boffman is his recognition that everything starts with education. "It is important whoever sits in the seat values education." With out a skilled and educated population we can't attract high paying businesses to offer high paying jobs.

Boffman also strives to do more to support local business. As a small business owner he said he "can empathize more with business owners because I've been there." "A vibrant business community is the cornerstone of a community," he said.

Boffman's focus on "smart growth" is more than just roads and building, but includes investing into the people of the county.

Showcasing that no man is an island, Boffman detailed that growth for a community does not come from

inside an office, but by discussing, meeting, and including all residents.

"Each member of the community holds a vital piece of the puzzle to make the community complete," he said. "The answers to the questions that confront us today will come from the everyday people I talk to," he said.

More information about Boffman's campaign can be found at www.friendsofboffman.com.

Renee Knapp

Adamstown resident Renee Knapp, a Democrat, is throwing her hat in the ring for Frederick County Council as Councilman-At-Large.

Knapp has been hard at work building a rapport with the communities and getting the word out about her campaign. "I am at a point in my life to do my role for public service," she said.

Knapp looks to strengthen communities of the county, and to build up and share what is best in each. Knapp is making a point to attend as many municipality meetings as possible to get to know people and businesses of the area. More than just familiarizing herself with districts but connecting with residents and businesses has been a highlight for Knapp.

A mother of a special needs son,



Grant Johnson meets up with State Delegate candidate Colt Black while out meeting residents in Thurmont.

Knapp understands wholeheartedly the importance of quality education and has made that a forefront of her crusade.

Many residents struggle to afford private access to the Internet and rely on public sources of Wi-Fi mobile smartphones. This problem only grows as older cellular networks are being phased out. As the pandemic highlighted the necessity of connectivity for at-home learning and working, Knapp's campaign aims to get the county to provide affordable broadband and Wi-Fi.

A crucial aspect of Knapp's cam-

paign is a focus on public transportation, especially for older residents and those with disabilities. Knapp aims to explore more robust transportation options, saying: "It is the government's role to address transportation needs as populations continue to increase."

Knapp strongly encourages all residents to be involved with their local government and to get to know their representatives.

"It's more than just the meeting minutes, local government affects you in the day to day," she said, adding that local government is the closest aspect of change the public has a voice in.



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Paid for by Colt Black for Delegate, Grant Johnson, Treasurer

HISTORY

History of My Own Time

William Otter Sr.
Mayor, Emmitsburg, 1835

In eighteen hundred and twenty four I removed from the city of Baltimore to the country, and fixed myself and family in the town of Emmitsburg, in Frederick county. At which place I am still residing, and very probably shall finish my days here.

The very first job I done in my line of business was to plaster the Seminary of Learning near the town, then under the Superintendence of the Rev'd. John Dubois, the present Bishop of New York. While that work was going on, I had many good hands at work under my charge, and one day one of my journeymen happened to take a seat at the breakfast table which did not exactly suit the views of an Irishman of the name of McHenry, who thought that he was the rightful owner of the place at the table, which my journeyman had by mere accident taken possession of, McHenry he began to jaw about his place, as he called it, and threatened that he would turn any body out of the room that in future would trespass upon his right in enjoying his place at the table: this menace raised my blood and I began to let him have a squall, and as my journeyman was a man who had not been by nature an athletic and robust made man, on the contrary he was delicate made and very modest, I saw the necessity of taking his part; and I walked up to McHenry and to quiet the matter, just now to put me out instead of my journeyman, and he without any further ceremony up with a bowl full of hot coffee and threw it into my face; this I considered as a war of defense on my part, and as soon as I could see, I seized a hold of McHenry and hoisted him up and threw him lengthways upon the table, after two or three ups and downs I landed him among the fish, plates, and bowls, on the table, just the right way, and the way they were mashed and ground to pieces was a caution.

This all happened in the absence of the Rev. Mr. Dubois. On his return home, a complaint was lodged against us as disturbers of the peace and quiet of the institution; the Rev.

Mr. Dubois he held an enquiry into the matter, found McHenry guilty; gave me an honorable discharge, and enjoined it on McHenry on fine of forfeiting his birth, if ever he said another word to me or any of my hands while I was there.

The next thing that happened, that had music in it, to me was, I plastered a house for a Mr. J. S. in Adams County; the way it happened was—one Sunday morning Mr. J. S. started to go to church, I was laying on the porch reading, and amusing myself. The madam had put over the fire (which was a very fine one) the dinner-pot; when she had the dinner on she laid herself down on the bed to take a nap: the chimney caught fire, at this juncture; J. S. happened to look behind him and seen that the house was on fire, he wheeled about and came running back as hard as he could, he run past me into the house and run into the bedroom to secure his valuable papers;—the noise he made in the haste wakened his better half, she rose up and in her raising herself up she asked him in these words, "why Johnny are the humblebees after you" bumble bees, said he to her, the house is on fire. She got out; and at the remark he made, I jumped up and ran out to see how the matter was. And I saw that it was confined to the chimney; I told her the chimney only was on fire; she went to the kitchen and got the salt box and landed the box and the salt into the fire; and the steam put the fire out in the chimney. After the danger was all over Mr. J. S. told me that he never had experienced a severer fright in his life.

I once was called upon by the Reverend Louis De Barth, superior of Conewago, to do a job of plastering for him in his room; it was in the winter, and he considered it a particular job: he told me he would give me one dollar and fifty cents per day, and that I must hang on until it was done. I began the job and gave it the first coat, and when that was done, I told him that it would take about two days to dry, during that time I proposed to him I would go home, and when it was ready for second coating I would return and do it—with a view to lighten his expenses; to which proposition he objected, upon the ground

that I would not return, and said that he would find me another job during the time allowed for drying. So I asked him what it was; he told me I should go along with him, and he led the way into the cellar; the repository of his wine, cider, apples and so forth: to stop rat holes in the wall.

He gave me privilege to use any thing, in any manner I pleased; so I began to stop rat holes, and while my laborer was bringing me stuff, I sat myself down on a lot of sand, and began to dig in it with my trowel, and at last I dug up a longed necked bottle, neatly sealed up. I held it up to the light, when the laborer came into the cellar, I asked him what he thought it was, he said it was wine, we agreed to decapitate the bottle and test its contents, and when we had drank it, sure enough it was wine of a very fine quality; he then asked me what was to be done with the bottle. I told him we would break it up and stuff the pieces of it into the rat hole, and in the course of an hour another bottle shared the same fate as the first, and after awhile we slaughtered a third one; by the time we had finished a third bottle, old Bunty he got pretty boozy, we also tried a few of father De Barth's apples; the cider we never disturbed it while we were stopping rat holes, we held the wine too high to have any thing to do with cider, and in the course of that day we finished stopping rat holes.

While we were in the cellar, father De Barth was called away and was absent about a day and a half; in that time I closed up all the rat holes in the cellar, and had tore away a book case which he wished removed in his room. While I was in the act of tearing away the book case I found two parcels of money wrapped up in paper, and they were both labeled in a language foreign to my own. I opened them and the one contained eighteen French crowns, and the other had five pieces of gold, the value of which I also did not know; after I had seen their contents I wrapped them up again, and put them into my pocket until he should return; upon his return, I handed the money to him, he said that they were left by some of the Priests who had been there before him, and said that he knew nothing of it, he gave me five dollars for my find-



Plaster at work in the early 1800s. Plaster not only provided an esthetic appearance, but in homes made of wood, served to seal out drafts coming through the walls.

ing it; in the morning after, he and I went into the cellar to see how I had stopped up the rat holes, he examined all as he went along, until we came into the wine cellar, he jocularly observed to me, that he hoped that I had not found out his wine. I laughingly replied, oh yes, I had found it out; he asked me did I drink any, I told him I had drank two or three bottles of it, he told me that was right, as he had given me full privilege to help myself to any thing that was in it.

I then put on the second coat in the room, and whitewashed it; after I had finished my job, father De Barth he planked down the cash, and I put out.

The next thing that came into the way that afforded me fun, was while I was plastering the big house for the Sisters of Charity; an Irishman who had just landed from the sod, who, was in the employ of the Sisters of Charity as a farm hand, came to me one day, to the house from the field next to the house, where he was engaged in harrowing, he had there came across a terapin, which was a novelty to him, he took a stick and stuck it to the spot where he found the terapin, to find it again, said he to me, Bill I found a horse's foot down here and it is alive yet. I went with him to the field and when we came to the marked spot, the terapin was gone. We hunted about, and at last I found it. I invited his attention to him and he acknowledged that was it, why said I to him, my dear fellow this is a terapin; said he I was sure it was a horse's foot, and observed that he had never seen one before.

I once worked at a job of plastering for an old gentleman near Waynes-

burg, who was excessively close and stingy. I let a war hawk slip at him, and he never felt it, but the sum and substance of the business is, that I got four chickens to eat and he got the broth; it was got up under the following circumstances: he happened to have an attack of diarrhea, and he complained to me about it. I sympathized with him and told him that I had suffered many inconveniences arising from it, and began a prescription for him; I advised that he should go to Waynesburg and get a box of Anderson's pills, and take three of them for a dose, he asked me where he could get them, I told him at Mr. Charles Smith's store, and if they did not operate in two or three hours, to repeat the dose and take three more, so off he started, got the pills, and took them as I had directed him, and they did not meet his wishes; I advised the other dose, he took them and they produced the effect desired.

I then, to get a mess of chicken, advised him to take chicken broth; he had a chicken killed, we got the chicken for breakfast, and my patient took the broth. I suggested to him to have two more chickens killed, and to continue to take broth to work off the medicine he had taken, and as he had experienced a considerable relief from the first, he had two more chickens killed, and he stuck to the broth, and at dinner we ate the two chickens. I liked the sport of eating the chickens, and he was fully as well pleased as I was with broth, he expressed great satisfaction at the effects produced. I thought to spin my yarn as long as I could. I told him that if he would have another chicken killed

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HISTORY

and take the broth of that, that I would ensure him a sound man. So we had the chicken for supper and he held on to the broth, and it produced a very happy result. He allowed that he never experienced such efficacy of medicine in his life. I finished my old tunker's job, he paid me for doing it, and I put out home.

About this time I opened a shop in Emmetsburg, and, as my circumstances were of an ordinary character, I had to buy my liquors by the gallon. I used to get them from _____, he was very kind to me; others that I also held in esteem, who are, in the main, pretenders only. At length my good old friend told me he had a ten gallon keg; that I should take the whiskey by the keg; that he would lend me the keg; that it would come cheaper to me than by the gallon. I told him I was agreed, that if he would let me have the keg I would take good care of it. I then bought of him by the keg for better than a year. One day he suggested the idea to me that I should buy the keg from him. I told him it was hardly worth while, that I had it cheap fence near the house. At last they seen that it was the gobler; they came to the conclusion that it was the smoke that had brought him down the chimney. They took him and placed him on the roost again from whence he came, when all was quiet. I slipped out from the place of my concealment, and seized the gobler a second time and souzed him down the chimney a second time, left them to enjoy the sport, and put out.

While I was engaged in plastering at the college, Mr. Dubois requested me to take his horse and ride over the mountain to Mr. Reed and Bonebreak to engage for him two kilns of lime. On my way there I overtook a white man and a black man. The black man's arms were tied behind his back with a silk handkerchief. I asked the white man as I came up to them,

if he had caught a runaway? He said no, that the black man belonged to him. I asked him the reason why he had him tied? He said that he had him tied for fear of his making his escape from him on the mountains. I asked him how far he was going on that road? He told me he was going as far as Mr. Fisbury's, that he had some business there to settle. He asked me if my name was Otter? I told him yes, Otter was my name. I suppose, said he, you don't know me? I said to him that I did not. He asked me if I ever had worked at Millerstown? I told him I had. He then asked if I ever knew one George McCullough that worked there? The moment he mentioned his name I recognized the man, and answered him that I knew him. He then told me that he had caught that negro coming down the mountain, and that he believed him to be a runaway. He asked me what I would give him for him haphazard? I told him that I had no notion to buy him, not knowing if he was a runaway or that there was any reward on him. He told me he wished me to ride along to the tavern and try to get out of the negro what he was and who he was.

I went with him to the tavern, and when I was there I called the negro out and asked him who he belonged to? He told me that he belonged to one Mr. Gelwicks, in Virginia. I asked him how many children Mr. Gelwicks had? He said he did not know. Said I to him, you belong to no such man at all; and asked him to tell the truth, to whom he belonged? He said, well I belong to Mr. Goldsborough. To find my lad out, said I, does he live in the town or country? He told me Mr. G. lived in the town. I asked him how many slaves has Mr. G? He said he had a good many. How many, said I, to elicit a positive answer from him? He said he did not know rightly how many he had. I observed that it was

not worth while to say another word to him as he was determined not to speak the truth about it. I took him into the bar room, and told George McCullough that I could get nothing out of him. He swore he would take him on to Baltimore and sell him. I told him that he dare not do that, for the laws of the country would punish him for such an act. He asked me to tie him, for, said he, you know more about it than I do. I told him if he would get me a rope that I would tie him. He asked the landlady for a piece of rope. She said she had none, but allowed that she could let him have a piece of home-made linen, if that would answer. I told her it would. She produced the linen, a strip about as broad as my hand, and I tied the negro's arms on his back.

While I was tying the negro's arms I told him to try to make his escape from that man, for sure as guns he would take him to Baltimore and sell him to the Georgia traders, and if he effected his escape to take refuge in the mountains. He got considerably alarmed at the piece of intelligence which I had imparted to him. He promised faithfully that he would try to make his escape and flee to the mountains. I took him after he was tied into the bar room. George McCullough called for something to drink. I drank, and in turn called for half a pint of whiskey, which made my good old friend pretty well how come you so. I inquired at him where he was going to. He said he was going across the country, to a Mr. Fisher's. I wanted to go to Mr. Bonebreak's to buy lime; we went together until we came to the lane that leads to Mr. Fisher's. I bid him good bye. I pursued my road, and he steered his

course for Mr. Fisher's.

In about one hour's ride I came to Mr. Bonebreak's the man from whom I wanted to buy my lime. I went into the meadow where they were making hay, and I asked if Mr. Bonebreak was there? They told me no that the old man was not there, and that his two sons were in pursuit of a runaway negro who had bent his course toward the mountains. I asked them how the negro was dressed? They said that he had no hat on, and that he had two rags on his arms. I asked which way he went? They showed me the course, and I hitched my horse and started after the boys across the country. I went about half a mile, and I met the boys on the back track. I asked them if they had caught the negro? They said that they had not. I asked them the direction he went? They showed me, and I put out after him with a dog of the spaniel breed to assist me in the pursuit, and on whom I mainly depended as he was one among the finest of that species of dog. I got on his track, and pursued him to a large barn at the foot of the mountain, the barn was of logs, and rather in a state of dilapidation. The gable ends were both open, and as I got up at the one gable end he got down at the other, and he made for the woods, and I hissed my dog Ponto on him, and as soon as the hiss was out of my mouth, my dog flew at him, and seized him, and held on to him until I came up to him.

continued next month

When I came up to him I said well you are here. He said yes. I asked him how he got away? He said that man whose captive he was, called at a house and asked if Mr. Fisher was at home,

and being informed that he was not at home, he hitched the black man to the post where horses were generally hitched, at the piece of linen which I had tied his arms with, and Mr. McCullough laid himself down on the bench, and the weather was very warm; he fell asleep, and I began chopping the linen backwards and forwards until it broke in two, and when I was free I started off and run through the orchard as hard as I could run, and lost my hat in the orchard, and did not take time to pick it up. I asked him how he liked to go home? He said he did not care much about it. I asked him if the dog had bit him? He said no, that he held him by the trousers. He admired the dog's performance, and allowed that that dog was worth money. I said yes he was so.

I then asked him, if ever he had been at Emmetsburg? He said he never was there, but that he knew a man there. I asked him who that man was? He said Mr. McBride, the constable. I asked him where he learned to know Mr. McBride? He said at his master's house, that Mr. McBride had often been there. He still stuck to it that he belonged to Mr. Goldsborough. I found that the black rascal was determined to lie. I marched him off to Mr. Bonebreaks. I engaged my lime, and then started off and crossed the mountain that night with my runaway lad. I cautioned him not to try to run away from me that if he did that my dog would tear him to pieces. He said he would not make the attempt. I told him if he did not that I would not tie him. So I marched over the mountains free from any fetters.

When I came home it was past one o'clock at night. I gave him something

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Both Justin and James remained in contact over the years and in 2021 an opportunity came that would help benefit them both. A relocation for Justin and his wife, Anne, drew their family out-of-state to North Platte, Nebraska. With this move and by the grace of God, it became a priority for Justin to transfer ownership of the funeral home to an experienced professional. He had just the right trusted friend in mind.

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TANEYTOWN HISTORY

Taneytown Presbyterian Church

David Buie

For Christians, Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus for Christians, and the next few months honor his life which is symbolically completed on the first Sunday after the Paschal full moon; this is the first full moon after 21 March, or Easter, as it is commonly known. It has been difficult to attract members to the various denominations of churches for decades. Taneytown's Presbyterian Church was among the first to be dissolved. This article follows the journey of the Presbyterian Church.

In 1820, a group of English-speaking Presbyterians in Taneytown covenanted with the predominantly German-speaking Reformed Church to create a "union congregation." These two groups combined to erect a church building that they shared – though, because of the language differences, they did not worship together in it. (There is evidence that the union congregation had hoped to secure a bi-lingual minister, but that effort was unsuccessful.) The few remaining records of the time do not indicate whether this was an arrangement approved by a presbytery. Nor is it known how (or even if) the English-speaking Presbyterian pul-

pit was supplied with trained clergy – though there were older existing Presbyterian congregations relatively close by in both Emmitsburg and Harney, Md, whose ministers might have provided some pastoral services.

However, the Presbyterian part of the union church was not yet an established congregation at the time of the union agreement, because in 1828, the Presbytery of Baltimore met in the union church building and officially organized the Taneytown Presbyterian Church, as well as ordaining and installing the first pastor. For the next 55 years, Taneytown Presbyterian Church continued to share worship space with the German Reformed Church.

The church purchased a building lot on the Hanover Pike (now MD 194) in January 1883. By selling the union church for \$300 to the German Reformed congregation, the church contracted with John A. Dempwolf, a well-regarded architect from York, PA, to design a worship facility. Mr. Dempwolf's design was accepted in late March or early April 1883, and the building was dedicated before the year was over. The congregation was housed in the sanctuary built in 1883 for 75 years without significant changes. The church building

was raised on building jacks in 1959, a new foundation was installed, and a walk-out basement was excavated that had the same footprint as the sanctuary above. In addition, a fellowship hall, kitchen, mechanical room, and restrooms were added.

Like many small churches in small towns, Taneytown Presbyterian Church was a yoked field for most of its life. Ministers who served the Taneytown church also served either the Emmitsburg Presbyterian Church or the Piney Creek Presbyterian Church in Harney – and sometimes all three. In the early 20th century, Piney Creek was yoked to the New Windsor Presbyterian Church, leaving the Taneytown and Emmitsburg churches as a two-church field. The last installed pastor departed the Emmitsburg/Taneytown field in 1982. The Rev. R. Benjamin Jones served both churches as a part-time stated supply for the next 26 years. Upon his retirement in 2006, each congregation then sought separate pastoral leadership.

The Taneytown pulpit was filled by a Presbyterian Church (PCUSA) candidate for ministry until 2009 and then by the Rev. Lloyd Fuss, a retired minister from another denomination. During this period, PCUSA ministers from nearby churches moderated the Session. When Mr. Fuss indicated his need (because of health) to cease preaching, the congregation considered its options and decided that the time had come to conclude their ministry. A unanimous congregational vote in July 2018 requested the presbytery to dissolve the congregation. The dissolution took effect after the final worship service on October 14, 2018.



The structure as it stands today. As the St. James the Apostle Orthodox Church.

On July 24, 2018, at a duly called congregational meeting, the Taneytown Presbyterian Church requested that they be dissolved. Accordingly, acting through the Steering Cabinet, the presbytery established an Administrative Commission 'to attend to any and all matters related to the closing of the Taneytown Presbyterian Church ... to remain in place until all issues arising from the dissolution' were satisfactorily concluded. The following were named as members of the Commission: Ministers of the Word and Sacrament Renee Mackey and Walter Peters; and Ruling Elder Ruth Ferrence, a member of the Taneytown church.

After viewing the property and considering several other possibilities, the congregation of St. James the Apostle Orthodox Church in Westminster made an offer of \$205,000 for the church building. After a series of stops and starts, the sale finally closed on July 25, 2019.

On July 29, 1876, Rev. William Simonton stated that, "Truly the place whereon we stand is holy ground. It

has been consecrated by the myriad earnest supplications of our pious spiritual ancestors, who through faith and patience inherit the promises. The amount of divine truth here proclaimed by a succession of God's ambassadors is very great. The communion seasons enjoyed throughout the years have been numerous. Around these what tender memories cluster! They have been times of sweet, spiritual refreshment to a succession of the living followers of the Lord Jesus. Burdened hearts have been relieved by fellowship with the precious Savior. The mourning have been comforted and assured by the tokens of His love. The weary have found rest upon the bosom of the Beloved. The fearful have been encouraged, the weak have been made strong, the faint-hearted have become courageous and unflinching soldiers of the cross."

Dave Buie is a resident of Taneytown with a deep love for the town's historical significance. He can be reached on his Downtown Taneytown Facebook page or at downtowntaneytown@gmail.com.

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100 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

January 6

Oil Indications Strong

Oil has been reached at a depth of 765 feet at the Annie Laura Oil Well Number One in Thurmont. The bailings all showed the presence of oil. It is reported that the last bailing brought to the surface showed a considerable quantity. Just in what quantities it may be found is not known but it is just as well now to find out and settle the question once and for all.

Homebrew Mash For Eggs

Another argument in favor of 'home brew' apparently has been discovered in Woodsboro. When his hens got out of the habit of laying, Edward Coyle discontinued the habit of feeding corn syrup and gave them a meal of mash, the by product of his 'medicinal home brew'.

The following day and every day since, his 12 hens have presented him with an even dozen eggs. Mr. Coyle still has the remains of his neighbors 'makings' and says he will increase his flock. The eggs are delicious and while of course, cannot legally be more than 1/2 of 1%, there is a twang to their taste and an aroma to the shells!

January 13

Snowstorm Sweeps County

Blockading county roads, paralyzing telephone and telegraph service, and tying up lines of the local railway companies, the worst blizzard in 14 years swept over Frederick County on Thursday. 'Snowbound' describes the plight of the residence in the county today. Beginning with driving sheets of rain and snow, and winds up to 40 miles an hour, the blizzard blew in early yesterday morning. Snow began to fall before 2 o'clock, coming down in huge flakes as large as silver dollars. From that time until late in the evening it snowed, hailed and blew without let up.

It is said that hundreds of telephone poles snapped off under the weight of the snow and sleet that hung on the lines. Cutters and sleighs, and some strange vehicles that flourished in all their glory back in the time before

grandma's great-daughters learned to smoke, where pulled out of dusty corners and put to use. Upsets and stuck cars and trucks were everywhere. Lucky was the family that still had a trusty horse to depend upon.

Crushed By Syrup Barrel

Leslie Fox, of Rocky Ridge, an employee of the Emmitsburg Railroad met with a very serious accident early last Friday morning. Mr. Fox was in the process of transferring a barrel of syrup weighing 740 pounds from the Western Maryland to the Emmitsburg train. He had rolled the barrel up a board and was just ready to roll it into the car, when the board slipped and threw Mr. Fox down on his back. The barrel fell upon him, breaking his right arm between the wrist and the elbow and the left arm twice between the wrist and elbow.

Escapes By Narrow Margin

Mr. and Mrs. Kanode, of near Rocky Ridge, on Saturday afternoon drove their two horse sled to within a few feet of the Western Maryland Railroad crossing before they saw the eastbound train approaching. Mr. Kanode threw the reins to his wife and attempted to go to the head of the horses while the train was passing. In doing so, his feet became entangled in his robes and he fell headfirst in the snow, inches from the wheels of the train.

January 20

Ice Cutting

Ice, 10-inches thick is being harvested by farmers throughout the county. Icehouses are being filled and farmers are hopeful of having a record-breaking yield this year. There are rumors that some of the ice is as much as 15-inches thick, but it was impossible to get in touch with the owner of any ice pond that harvested ice that thick. It is said ice forms thicker on dams than anywhere else here about.

Several farmers reported that they had harvested their entire ice crop before the recent thaw, and are hoping for a second crop, and maybe even a third crop. The surface of every

stream and creek is sufficiently frozen that women and girls are ice-skating, the boys are playing ice-hockey.

Fairfield Orders Fire Apparatus

At a meeting of the Publicity Committee in charge of collecting funds for the purchase of fire fighting apparatus for the Borough of Fairfield, the members reported that \$527 had been collected or pledged. The members immediately organized and ordered a chemical apparatus at the cost of \$400. The machine, which is hand-drawn, has a 45 gallon capacity, will throw a three-quarter inch stream a distance of 75 feet for over an hour. The new chemical apparatus is expected to arrive at Fairfield within the next 10 days when a public demonstration will be held and a volunteer fire company formed.

Man Who Left Bride Is Sued For Divorce.

Miss Ella Davis of Thurmont has filed for an absolute divorce from her husband Charles Davis. It will be remembered that in September, Mr. Davis left his bride three days after their marriage, along with a fair bit of her money, stating that he was going to Hagerstown to take part in a Red Cross play. He has not been seen since then.

On January 10, a report from York stated that a man name Charles Davis, posing as a retired army officer had disappear with \$100 less than two weeks after marrying a Mrs. Sarah Rockery of that place. Mrs. Rockery and the 'doctor' were married on December 16 and on December 28th the man was given \$100 by Mrs. Rockery for some new house fixtures he was to purchase, and disappeared. Nothing has been heard from him since.

Barn Burned

The big bank barn on the farm for Mason and Burton Kershner, about a mile east of Emmitsburg, burnt to the ground early Wednesday morning. Harry Dorsey, the tenant, went to the barn with the lantern about 5 o'clock in the morning. While at his work he noticed the lantern splatter and almost go out. When he attempted to blow out the flickering light the lantern exploded, throwing burning oil all over his clothing and on the hay. While extinguishing the fire on his clothes the blaze in the hay spread advanced beyond his control.



A rare photo of 'Cragystone' before it was destroyed by fire. The remains of the house still stand today just west of the town on the road to Annandale.

January 27

'Cragystone' Destroyed By Fire

'Cragystone' the beautiful residence of Mr. & Mrs. Isaac Annan, with the exception of the four stone-walls, was completely destroyed by fire on Wednesday morning. Smoke and flames were notice coming from the roof by some of the help around the Annan place and immediately a hurried call was put in for the fire company.

The women help around the hotel Slagle rushed one of the fire reels that have been station in the hotel garage to the scene of the fire, but before the firemen could get the hose in order the flames had made considerable headway. It was not long before the entire population of the community was on hand to give assistance and some good work was done in saving some of the furniture and household goods especially on the first floor. The fire had eaten in too far on the second and third floors to save anything. The spark is supposed to have started from sparks flying from the chimney, settling on the shingled roof. The flame spread rapidly to the two upper floors and little could be done to protect anything of value in that section of the home.

'Cragystone' was built by Mr. Isaac Annan, father of the present occupant and was constructed more than 20 years ago. It was one of the finest homes in Frederick County being surrounded with

one hundred acres of land.

It was one of the hardest fires that the local fire company has been called upon to combat in a great many years. They worked hard but were handicap for the lack of equipment and it must be said that they accomplished much under the existing circumstances. Realizing the difficulties under which the men were working, the Emmitsburg baseball team had hot coffee and sandwiches dispatched to the scene which stimulated the firefighters to greater efforts in trying to get under control the biggest fire that has hit Emmitsburg in many years.

Cold Wave Continues

This week was the coldest week of the entire winter, the mercury in the official tube sliding down as far as the 4° mark. Once before during the month of December the temperatures went down to the 6° position, but for continue cold weather this weeks holds the record to date this winter. Country roads in many rural sections, are still barely drifted and places close to traffic from the storm of two weeks ago. In some localities rural mail carriers are unable to reach homes and the mail is still being relayed from one house to another. Drifts on the southbound roads have become frozen and hardened. It is reported that many the roads will hardly be open before spring.

To read past editions of 100 Year Ago this Month, visit the History section of Emmitsburg.net.

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COOKING

Baby, it's cold outside!

Kay Hollabaugh

I personally love winter. Perhaps it's because for us – as growers/farmers – there's a bit of a respite from the long, hard (often very hot) days of spring, summer and fall! But I'm also inclined to think I like winter because of the different type of foods that I prepare – and enjoy – in the winter months. Although I love the ease of grilling meats and steaming yummy vegetables in the summer, I equally enjoy the wonderful smells that come from my oven and crockpot in the winter! And how to describe the smell of baking bread? Heavenly is the word that comes to mind!

Also – the month of January is often touted as the month for new beginnings. It's a new year, after all! I tend to bunker down and clean! I'm a "pitcher" (my husband is a keeper so it leads to some interesting conversations!) and I try to go through piles of recipes and cookbooks – pitching what I haven't touched in ages!

My family's very favorite recipes – proven to be good for heart and soul type recipes – that have been in our family for generations. And the reader must also know that my mom passed away in 2017 – at the ripe 'ole age of 100! The recipes are hers and she would be so tickled to know that I am sharing them with you. I hope you enjoy them as much as our family has enjoyed them over the years.

Filled Meatloaf

Ingredients:

3 Lb. Ground Beef, Lean
3 Eggs
1 ½ to 2 C. Bread Crumbs
1 C. Milk
2 Tsp. Salt
¼ Tsp. Pepper
1 Loaf Day-Old Bread,
Cut into Small Pieces
(Stale bread is best!)
1 C. Butter
1 Medium Onion, Diced
½ to 1 C. Celery, Diced

Preparation directions: In a large bowl, hand mix the ground beef, eggs, bread crumbs, milk, salt & pepper. Put half of the mixture in the bottom of a 9x13 pan. Press into the pan. In a large saucepan, melt the butter and saute onions and celery until soft. Add the bread and stir to combine. Put filling mixture on top of the meat and pat down. Add remaining burger mixture and flatten with hands to cover the bread. Bake at 350 for 45 minutes, or until ground beef no longer produces pink when poked.

Baked Apples

Ingredients:

5 Golden Delicious Apples,
peeled, cored and
pared
2 T. Tapioca
3 T. Butter
1 Tsp. Cinnamon
Cider or Water

Preparation directions: Prepare your apples and finish by cutting in half, and placing in baking pan with cored side up. Into the hole created by coring the apple, place the butter, tapioca and cinnamon – equally among all the apples. You may add just a bit of cider or water to the bottom of the pan. Bake for about 15 minutes and then turn the apples over. The goo formed in the cavity will now be in the bottom of your pan and you can scoop it up and over the apples. Bake until done. Entire process – using golden delicious apples – should take about 30 to 45 minutes.

Mom's Apple Fritters

Ingredients:

2 Apples, peeled and diced fine
½ C. Flour
½ Tsp. Salt
1 Egg
½ C. Milk
¾ Tsp. Baking Powder

Preparation directions: Mix all ingredients together and drop by spoonful into hot, lightly greased griddle or fry pan. Brown quickly on both sides and sprinkle with powdered sugar before eating. This was a family favorite. One batch was NEVER enough.

Hot Milk Cake

(Mom grew up in the depression and would comment that this was a relatively inexpensive cake to make as her family farmed and she had the butter and eggs at her fingertips!

Ingredients:

4 Eggs
2 C. Sugar
2 ¼ C. Flour
2 ¼ tsp. Baking Powder
1 Tsp. Vanilla
1 ¼ C. Milk
10 T. Butter

Preparation directions: Beat eggs at high speed until thick and light in color. This should take



about 5 minutes. Gradually add sugar, beating until mixture is light & fluffy. Add combined flour and baking powder with vanilla. Beat at low speed until smooth. Heat the milk and butter just until the butter melts, stirring occasionally. Add to batter until combined. Bake in a 9x13 inch pan at 350 degrees for about 40 minutes or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean. Serves 15 to 20

Mom's Fried Chicken

Mom swore by using an electric fry pan – so I do too! If you don't have one, I'd say a large skillet on the top of your stove would work.

Preparation directions: Spray Pam liberally on bottom of pan. Set pan to 340 degrees. Roll chicken in flour. Put in hot pan and salt. It will brown on one side in about 10 minutes. Turn and brown the other side. Turn fry pan to 280 degrees. Just before serving, turn heat back up to brown the chicken. Allow about one hour, depending on how much you're frying at a time.

Twice Baked Potato

Ingredients:

2 whole baking potatoes or sweet potatoes, rinsed
EVOO, Montreal Steak seasoning, lemon pepper, fresh garlic and rice wine vinegar
Low-fat cheese of your choice
Green onion, thinly sliced on the round

Preparation directions: Pierce holes in potatoes and rub with EVOO and Montreal Steak seasoning. Wrap in foil and bake in a 350-degree oven for approximately 45 minutes. Once potatoes are fork tender remove foil and slice in half lengthwise. Gently scoop out inside of potato and place in a mixing bowl. To desired taste, add Montreal Steak seasoning, lemon pepper, garlic, white wine and low-fat cheese. Once mixed together scoop back into potato skin, top with a little cheese and melt in oven. Remove from oven and garnish with green onion.

Grandma's Christmas Cut-out Cookies

Ingredients:

2 cups white sugar
1 cup butter (softened)
3 eggs
1 cup cream
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon soda
5 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon vanilla
4 cups flour

Preparation directions: Combine in order given. Chill dough at least 8 hours. Roll out to ¼ inch thick. Bake at 325 until cookie is set (8 - 10 minutes). Don't over-bake. Cool and frost and enjoy! Yield: 5 dozen

For Frosting: whip 1/2 cup melted butter, 1/4 cup milk, 2 teaspoons vanilla & 4 cups powdered sugar and spread on cookies. For extra flavor try replacing the milk with prepared coffee.

To read other cooking articles, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.



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MOMS' TIME OUT

Everyone has a story

Mary Angel

Why are you reading this newspaper? Are you looking for information, a specific article, or just a good story? Everyone loves a good story, if this wasn't true we wouldn't have many of the television channels we have today. Story telling is at the heart of every great comedian and best-selling novel. We all have a story to tell, and to each of us that story has helped to make us the person we are today. Moms, dads, and our children are no different. So, what is their story? Learning someone's story is only the beginning.

When you ask someone their story you are inviting them to share a part of themselves. When your husband gets home from work and you ask him how his day was or did anything interesting or different happen, you are asking for a part of his story. He may have had a rough day or an extra-long day, or even an absolutely amazing day. By asking a simple open ended question maybe you will get to hear a fun story, or maybe you will be the person who allows your husband to vent and make his day a little brighter. In either case that brief encounter will lead to a wonderful memory and strengthen a relationship.

The same thing is true of a story from your kids, only on a larger scale. Have you ever noticed how much a child's face lights up when you ask them to share a story? Okay, maybe you aren't specifically going to ask them, "How was your day?" Depending on your child's age you might ask how their day at school went or if anything funny happened. You could ask about lunch, or a specific friend. Ask anything, just ask. All you have to do is start the conversation and you will get the story.

You will be amazed at the stories you will hear, especially from the elementary and high school aged child. Don't be too upset with your middle schooler when they don't always want to share. This is the age when they become a little less talkative and a little more private, but it is still very important that you continue to ask those questions. I might suggest that with this age group you so not ask yes or no questions, but rather ones that require more than a one word answer.

With elementary school kids you might even read something they wrote in English class and find a starting off point. My kids wrote some of the most amazing things in elementary school, from comedy to adventure to mystery. They were still elementary level writing, but a blast in their own right. I remember when my oldest son was in fourth grade and I was in a parent teacher conference with his teacher and the GT teacher and they were actually debating over the meaning of his paper. His English teacher insisted it didn't make any sense and the GT teacher told her she

was missing his creativity.

Apparently, in his story there was some sort of monster (he has always loved a good villain) chasing the hero. During the chase scene the hero ducks behind a boulder and crouches down to hide. As he is hiding, he feels drops of water on his head and he wonders to himself, "When did it start raining". It goes on from there, but this is the point the two teachers are debating. In this scene it wasn't actually raining, the monster had found our hero and he was standing over him drooling, getting ready to pounce! My point here is that every story has at least two participants, a story teller and a listener. If you are a good listener you will get so much more out of the story. Had my sons English teacher invested in the story she might have found herself on the edge of her seat wondering what fate was about to befall our hero.

When you are engaging with your kids be sure you are actually fully engaging. If you want them to tell you their story, or any story for that matter, be sure you are looking them in the eye and giving them your full attention. As I say to my husband, you can't follow their story while you are golfing on your phone. Consequently they aren't going to keep telling you their stories if they don't feel you are fully listening. Another key piece to being the listener is to engage in the dialogue. There is nothing worse than when a child bears their heart and the response they are given is,



"That's nice", or "Okay, now go do your homework". Make sure you are interjecting with some, "So, what happened next?" or "You are kidding me" or even, "That is crazy". Any interjection will let them know you are listening and interested, and this can only lead to more conversation and more sharing.

Ultimately, the story isn't the only thing you are after. The story is an ingredient in the dish you are making; it is only one piece of how you build your relationship with your children. Letting them, encouraging them, to tell their fictitious stories in elementary school will help build a relationship that will allow them to share their non-fiction stories in high school and beyond. There is nothing I appreciate more

than the fact that my kids have always felt comfortable sharing so much with me. Albeit sometimes it can seem like they are sharing too much, but that is worth the shock factor to know that they feel they can talk to me about anything.

It is an amazing two way street of give and take where you both benefit in the end. You both are cultivating a relationship that will

grow and last a lifetime. It is also important because it teaches your children that everyone has a story; their parents, their friends, the grocer, the hairdresser, the homeless man on the corner, we just need to take the time to listen!

To read past editions of Mom's Time Out, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.

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SCHOOL & LIBRARY NEWS

FASD lax quarantining requirements

At its December meeting, Fairfield Area School District (FASD) school board altered its quarantining policy to provide flexibility for asymptomatic students. The change to the health and safety plan comes in response to administrative recommendations to help reduce the number of district students absent.

The revisions were established in order to provide a safe environment for students and staff and increase the likelihood to allow for in-person instruction. "The basis of all of this work has been keeping kids in school," Interim Superintendent Larry Redding said.

Conversations throughout the district between administration and school nurses developed a framework to address needs specific to Fairfield.

The school district's new quarantine plan details quarantining guidelines and provides parents options for students to be exposed without symptoms. Quarantining will be optional for exposed students that are symptom free. Any return to school within 14 days of exposure will require a mask, regardless of exceptions.

Upon the lifting of the state man-

dated requirement to wear masks, the Board approved the continued usage while the Adams County COVID transmission rate is at the high levels.

"We are currently in a very high rate of transmission. We are opting to say masks required," he said.

The new policy also states it will strengthen quarantine requirements, "If more than one positive case is noted in the same classroom within 14 days or if there is an increased trend in positive cases at school,"

The school district does not currently follow the CDC's recommendation to quarantine for 14 days after potential exposure and currently implements a 10-day quarantine, with the option to test and end at day seven, Ebaugh said.

The quarantine procedure does not have approval from the department of health. The district also does not implement social distancing, due to limited classroom spacing. "So we are already compromising on that point," she said.

Masks played a role in the quarantine decision as well.

Requiring masks in district buildings is essential to keeping students in the classroom during periods of

higher rates of transmission, School District Nurse Kristi Ebaugh said.

The fact that students in school spend time in close proximity to others for hours on end is a distinguishing factor in the mandate. "We know we are putting kids at risk by being close," Redding said.

"We have a history of what happened before masks, while we've had masks, and where we potentially will go," he said.

Prior to the mask mandate, the district saw 12 positive cases and 62 quarantines. Since the mask mandate we've had 54 positives who have been present at school and we've only had to quarantine 83 of those students, she said. However, within the last two weeks of the board's meeting, there were 37 quarantines, which parallels with the current COVID outbreak across the country.

"I think we should make an educational decision based on all of the data that we have, which has definitely changed since the beginning of August," she said.

Redding noted that parents and guardians have to understand the risks and higher levels of infection possi-

Thurmont Grange's "Words for Thirds"

The Thurmont Grange #409 recently presented dictionaries to all third grade students at Lewistown Elementary School. This is a community service project called "Words for Thirds" and all of the third grade students in the Catoctin feeder pattern have also received dictionaries (Sabillasville, Lewistown, Thurmont and Emmitsburg Elementary Schools)

The Grange is an agricultural organization, which is deeply rooted in the community. Many of our members are farmers, business men and women, and our focus is on community service, legislation, education and agriculture. Many of our members hold local, county and state

offices to promote the Grange.

Every year our Grange helps at events such as the Thurmont & Emmitsburg Community Show, the Frederick Fair (where we put in an exhibit at the Farm and Garden Building), the Catoctin Colorfest, help with the annual Cookie Walk in December, to name a few. We hold a Veteran's Appreciation Night in October and have also donated funds and items to the Thurmont Food Bank, Catoctin FFA, Boy Scouts, Catoctin Safe and Sane, etc.

The dictionary has many features, such as the history of the Presidents of the United States, the solar system, sign language and also the longest word in the United States.

bilities associated with not wearing a mask, and must submit mask exemption forms to district officials including administration and the school nurse for approval.

"Our intent is encouraging the continued use of masks," Redding said.

In order to establish the safest environment that allows students in the

classrooms, only once county rates reduce to low risk will the school district implement masks as optional.

"In these confined spaces, we should be doing everything possible," Redding said.

FASD's updated quarantine policy can be found on the district website at www.fairfieldpaschools.org/fasd.

Library events

Blue Ridge Summit Free Library

While the Blue Ridge Summit Free Library's doors are open, they have less hours but may be available to bring out materials to your car during closed hours. Please call to make arrange-

ments. The library's new hours are Tuesdays & Thursdays 3 - 6 p.m., Wednesday 4 - 7 p.m., 2nd & 4 Saturday of the month 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. The Library is closed on Monday and Friday.

Adult Story Time with Joan - Mondays and Wednesdays starting at 7 p.m. Joan will be sharing short stories from several books virtually.

In the Kitchen - Wednesday, 1 p.m. Weekly program of recipes that are delicious and easy to prepare. Prior programs are also available.

Musical Thursday with Dave - Thursdays, 3 p.m.. Join Dave and his friends and listen to music from many different styles and genres.

Family Friendly Friday Night Fun - Friday, starting at 7 p.m.. Family Friendly Friday Night Fun can be a little bit of everything. Poetry, Music, or something else.

Saturday Story & Craft - starting at 11 a.m. Listen to a good book and make a really fun craft. Then spend some quality time with Wee Build Imagineering, there are no limits to your creativity!

To join these events live, on line, or learn more about them, visit the Franklin County Library System's website at www.fcplspa.org/events, or you can call the library at 717-74-2240.

Frederick County Library

Welcome 2022 - good bye 2021; wow what a year it has been! This time of year always provide a crossroads of reflection and opportunity; looking back to where we've come from and forging ahead to a yet to be determined future. We have faced much adversity in the last year, including the ongoing pandemic, but we've also had many blessings and unexpected surprises. 2021 gave us the chance to slow down, reflect, and re-connect, and this was especially true in the library.

We started the past year with our buildings closed to the public and offering curbside service for access to library materials. Summer came, and we were able to open our doors to the community after more than twelve months of being closed. Along with welcoming you into the building, FCPL went fine free and all accounts were wiped clean to provide greater access to all. Outdoor storytimes and programming were a huge hit, and it was so much getting re-acquainted with our youngest library patrons and meeting new ones! September rolled around and we expanded our hours to our regu-

lar, pre-pandemic ones, and November brought our new catalog!

With the holidays behind us and winter settling in, January is a great time to visit the Emmitsburg Branch Library and the Thurmont Regional Library. Did you set a goal of learning something new or reading more? How about trying a new recipe or even watching a foreign film? The library has a vast amount of materials to answer these questions, and if we don't have it available through FCPL, we are always happy to put a request in through Inter-Library Loan. In addition, all library resources are free with your library!

Outdoor programming at Thurmont Regional Library, and virtual programming dates, including FCPL closures dates for January (Please visit FCPL for more information):

January 1 - closed for New Year's Day

January 4 - Virtual Program: Dungeons and Dragons: Let's Play (ages 13-18), 4-6 p.m.; please visit FCPL.org/library calendar for more information and to register.

January 6 - Virtual Teen Library Council (ages 13-18), 6-7 p.m.; please visit FCPL/library calendar for more information.

January 11 - History Hike along the Thurmont Trolley Trail (Elementary and Teens), 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

January 11 - Study and Snacks (Teens), 3-4:30 p.m.

January 12 - Donut Taste Test (Teens), 3-4:30 p.m.

January 16 & 17 - closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day

January 18 - History Hike at Catoctin Mountain Park Blue Blazes Whiskey Still Trail (Elementary and Teens), 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

January 25 - History Hike at Catoctin Furnace African American Cemetery and Trail (Elementary and Teens), 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Warm wishes for a happy and healthy new year and we cannot wait to see you in the library in 2022!



The Institute for Learning in Retirement (ILR) is the premier knowledge and discovery destination for adults age 55+ in Frederick County. We get together to explore and enjoy a variety of topics and interests including:

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SCHOOL NEWS

Frederick County Schools

Karen Yoho
Frederick County
Board of Education

The year 2021 seemed poised to be better than 2020 proved to be. The return of students was imminent, after months of being out of our school buildings for most of the calendar year. Vaccines were on the horizon. Could the end of the Coronavirus pandemic be far behind?

A year later the answer is still murky. The summer arrival of the Delta variant brought with it renewed mandates for mask-wearing in schools. And now we have the Omicron variant, about which we are still learning new information daily. We know it is highly transmissible. It is still unclear whether or not the vaccine can stand up to this new variant and how severe the symptoms are, vaccinated or not. We are all a bit COVID-weary and would appreciate if things stopped changing so quickly. Science, however, has to do its best to keep up with a rapidly moving novel virus. As more information becomes available, scientists change their hypotheses and conclusions.

School systems must try to be proactive. Complicating this is the fact that the state health department website was hacked early in December, making it difficult to know what the actual data is for the state. Several Maryland counties decided to err on the side of caution. Prior to winter break, some had postponed extracurricular activities, while others had already put into place plans for their students to return to virtual learning for a week or more to cover the anticipated surge period expected after holiday get-togethers.

FCPS is watching the numbers, conferring with local health experts, and trying to be ready for whatever situation COVID brings. Our Board always looks to

the health and safety of our students and staff as a priority. But we know what a toll virtual learning, with its inherent isolation, took on our students. So, as I've often enough written, none of these decisions is easily made.

You might have expected that this article would have started with the headline news that Dr. Alban is no longer the superintendent of Frederick County Public Schools. With a year and a half to go on her current contract, the third four-year contract with the school system, Dr. Alban and our Board decided to end our partnership. This decision came soon after the revelation in the Frederick News-Post that FCPS had signed an agreement with the Department of Justice over the use of seclusion and restraint with students in three specialized programs. Part of the issue for the DOJ is the disproportionality that involved African American boys.

When looking at the data, one can see that FCPS was lessening the use of these practices even before the DOJ began its investigation in the fall of 2020. New buildings that include features such as calming rooms and sensory areas, are resources that can be of great assistance to students trying to learn to self-regulate. The DOJ agreement from November 2021 states that FCPS must hire additional behavioral specialists and train our instructional assistants to better handle the needs of our students. These are caring people who are often doing the best they can in difficult situations.

The other side of this is the student perspective. I was able to meet with one of the students who had been subjected to these practices as an elementary and middle school student. Now in high school, the student explained how it was difficult to trust someone who had just restrained you in a manner that made it hard

to breath. The student's mother talked about having "wait time" expressly stated in her child's IEP because sometimes the student just needed more time to make a decision. The mother recognized that giving this extra time could be difficult in a school setting, but still realized the need for her child to have this accommodation in writing. With the mother's advocacy, this student was, to their knowledge, the only one who had been released from this specialized program for students with behavioral issues back into a regular school and program. This was one of the prime recommendations they had for the Pyramid program – students need to know there is a way out if they can achieve certain goals. They also felt that restorative practices could be beneficial to help mend the relationship between the school system personnel and the students.

The DOJ ordered seclusion to stop immediately. There are still instances where restraint can be used, such as when the student is in imminent danger. This can occur when a student might try to run in front of a moving bus, as but one example. The DOJ currently has investigations for the use of restraint and seclusion of around ninety school systems in the country. Fairfax County received their judgment in November 2021, as well, and seclusion is not allowed even in non-public placement facilities.

Once Dr. Alban decided to retire early, our board needed to work out the details of the financial settlement. The amount also was a media headline. While teachers, support staff, and admin-

istrators have unions to negotiate their contracts, superintendents negotiate their own. This was done each of the three times Dr. Alban signed her new contract. As superintendents' salaries go, the Frederick County one tends to get a middle of the road salary. Similar sized school districts in Texas pay their superintendents more than one and a half times the \$250,000 annual salary Dr. Alban received. The item that made the end price tag jump was the payout for unused leave. Dr. Alban did not take off much, especially in the last few years during COVID. The board negotiated paying the final amount in two fiscal years. We wish Dr. Alban well after more than a decade of service to our school system.

And by way of comparison, to fire a superintendent in Maryland requires a finding of one of the same five reasons for which tenured teachers can be dismissed – immorality, misconduct in office, insubordination, incompetence, and willful neglect of duty. Once a cause is agreed on, the local board would send a letter to the State Superintendent. The process could then

be expected to last a minimum of nine months, with attorneys' fees adding up. All the while, the superintendent maintains his or her position as the CEO of the school system.

Our Board decided to appoint Dr. Michael Markoe as interim superintendent. His previous position was deputy superintendent, which will remain unfilled at this time. We determined it was in the interest of FCPS to maintain consistency. We will soon be starting the process of advertising for a new superintendent to begin July 2022. Our Board and Dr. Markoe have pledged to look to the future and work to rebuild trust between FCPS and the community. All of this while trying to deal with the vagaries of the Covid virus that will not be ignored.

In December, the board elected Brad Young as president and Sue Johnson as vice president. I will be devoting a great deal of time to keeping the board apprised as the Blueprint for Maryland's Future legislation is implemented. The Frederick County Board of Education hopes that you and yours are having a healthy and happy start to the year 2022.

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FOUR YEARS AT THE MOUNT

This month, we asked our writers to consider the true nature of education, with a look back to older days.

Freshman

Hard times make strong schools, good times make weak schools

Jack Daly
MSMU Class of 2025

One of the defining features of my time in school was the distinct lack of a clear mission. Sure, every student has ambitions. Jimmy wants to be an astronaut and little Sarah is an aspiring veterinarian, but when they are sitting at their first-grade desks reading a tale about Anansi, they cannot really see what point 'A' has to do with point 'B.' Answers to the question: "Why school?" were either "We go to school to learn," as a yellow duck repeated ad nauseum on PBS Kids, or a rather vague collection of things that sounded nice which were never specific but gave the impression that school was a magical place that would train us so that we could one day usher in utopia. So, it went on that while my peers and I memorized facts, definitions, and concepts, we would continue making sarcastic remarks to one another about the futility of our endeavors. Here and there were moments of clarity, such as when I was a high school freshman and at last gained an intimation

as to the purpose of English class, although this wisdom was short-lived. Having languished in so many years of confusion, one can imagine my surprise when I recently reviewed a nineteenth-century eighth-grade final exam for a school district in Kansas and found it to be perfectly clear in its purpose. One will find with a simple internet search that the state of Kansas first implemented compulsory education in the early 1870s, about twenty years prior to the exam's use. Proficient knowledge of history will tell you that in a rural state, even in an era of budding mechanization, extra help from children was very much needed at home. While some future holders of doctorate degrees probably took the test, most children would be lucky to see instruction beyond that point. As such, the exam was designed to make sure students had received the bare minimum education that would ensure that they could become good citizens. The section on arithmetic asked questions concerning commerce and finance, physiology tested students on their understanding of their bodies and how to care for them, passing geography meant one would be able to understand the contents of a newspaper, and the history portion made sure students knew what had shaped the country. Perhaps the only subjects that seemed to be without practical value

were grammar and orthography. These areas asked questions regarding abstract rules and concepts, but a closer look reveals that students were expected to know what was at the heart of communication. One question even asked students to explain the advantages of knowing proper grammar. Even these skills were necessary, as they ensured one would be able to function in polite society, or, if time allowed, to read a book.

Since the time when the Kansas test was in use, America has seen great development. In the way of education, however, there have been clear signs of decline. One will sometimes see articles bemoaning the nation's reading ability, particularly among people who live in rural or urban extremes, and there is no shortage of videos of passersby being unable to answer elementary questions correctly.

Some might contend that education has improved in the last century, particularly in the areas of science, technology, and math. The Kansas test neglects to review any basic points of chemistry or biology, but people who did well in health class may be baffled by questions such as: "how does nutrition reach the circulation?" Questions on history are only somewhat more demanding than those currently asked, and there does not seem to be any dramatic difference in the test's math

questions and today's; indeed the contemporary questions might be harder, but there are just a few differences. No calculators were available at that time, and there is no indication as to whether or not scrap paper was allowed. Even staunch defenders of the customary system may be left scratching their heads as to how much a bushel measures exactly.

The academic elephant in the room is of course grammar, and orthography, a rather large and intimidating word. Orthography is the study of the rules which govern spelling in a particular language. The term itself is derived from the Greek words 'orthos' and 'graphia' which mean correct and writing respectively, and it is of the utmost importance when using a language where fish could jokingly be spelled 'ghoti.' You need only a cursory glance at social media to see that our present culture is considerably unorthographical.

Many blame our lack of skill in the way of words on technological advances. Television has been blamed for the decline in literacy since the 1980s, and now there is, of course, social media, the hated character limit, and ever-diminishing attention spans. The fault does not lie with machines; however, they are merely temptations, the siren song of expediency. All blame rests with us for lacking the integrity, the grammatical and linguistic

gusto to speak and write properly. We have moved down the slippery slope from replacing 'all of you' with 'y'all,' to shortening 'I'm going to,' to a horrifying 'Imma.'

Perhaps the problem is simply learning retention. Maybe most people do fine in school and would have passed the Kansas exam very easily if their curriculum had just devoted a couple of hours to syllabification and the principal parts of verbs. Perhaps the Kansas farmers would forget most of what they had learned after just a month or two of plowing the north forty. This seems unlikely: math was critical for anyone handling the finances of a business, and knowledge of history is essential to everyone who participates in the civic life of a nation.

During my time in high school, my peers and I would often complain of the intensity of our courses, but I would often realize the absurdity of our complaints through a simple reflection on stories from Victorian institutions: poor schoolboys made to memorize French vocabulary and Latin grammar, the inmates of Oxford and Cambridge expected to write series of essays, each one three hours at a time. Compared to those before us, we have an obvious need to resume our studies.

To read other articles by Jack Daly, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.

Sophomore

The big questions

McKenna Snow
MSMU Class of 2024

When someone asks you a question, the way you answer depends firstly on the type of question being asked. The types of questions can vary dramatically, from, what did you have for dinner yesterday, to, can you "name all the republics of Europe and give the capital of each"? This second question is taken from the 1895 test that kids had to take to pass the eighth grade. Do most people these days know the answers to these questions? Given that one question on the test was, "Give four substitutes for caret áúä," I'm going to go ahead and guess that most people are like me, and don't know the answers.

The questions are from subjects like geography, history, and math; that's all good and well, but are these subjects the only sort of ones that people should invest in learning about? In the context of all these questions, from the "what's 3+3" to, "list every state capital," there's a very specific type of question that few public institutions, back then or present-day, have taught people to approach well: these are the "Big Questions," like, is there an objective meaning to life?

Judging from the questions in the eighth grade exam, it doesn't seem that the kids then were being taught how to think about these Big Questions much either. Largely, we are left to fend for ourselves on these questions, do our own research, and make our own opinions on it. After all, science can't

test and prove questions like if God exists or not, so why teach anyone how to think about a question like that one?

If I were to ask you if there is such a thing as objective morality, or what determines "personhood," what might you have ready in your back pocket to answer with? Would you use any curriculum resources from eighth grade? What about twelfth?

We are taught how to answer questions in the hard sciences; we are even taught how to analyze a beautiful poem or novel according to a given prompt. But on the Questions that really have weight to them over the course of our life, we have been implicitly taught to shy away from them in a public setting because science and material proof allegedly have little to do with answering them.

This 1895 test, and standardized public testing these days, both reveal a startling truth: we have been left to ourselves to answer the biggest questions of all. These curricula largely say, "these topics have little empirical or tangible evidence to work with, so we are not going to teach you anything about how to think about them with yourselves and with others." Now, I am not criticizing public institutions that don't teach a sort-of "what to think"; I am calling to attention the fact that these public institutions teach us very little about how to think and talk about morality, religion, philosophy, or any of these other "subjective" matters. It's not about the "what to think" they are not teaching; it's the "how to think" that they do not teach.

The problem is that curricula like these implicitly declare that there is nothing objective to teach about Big Questions, the answers of which matter enormously to us. Instead, curricula heavily dependent on the hard

sciences foster a deep relativism about Big Questions, leaving everyone on their own in the journey to find the Questions' answers. We have been taught shockingly little about how to approach these questions, both on our own and as a whole society, and there have been consequences. Consider all the bickering, name-calling, arguing, and deep divide between disagreeing groups. We know very little about having a conversation with the people we disagree with, especially on the most important topics.

We should not treat the Big Questions as though our decided answers are inconsequential to others around us. What we believe affects one another, and the way that we live it out affects one another. We should encourage conversation about the Big Questions, because they matter the most. Their answers matter far more than if I can name "four substitutes for caret áúä" off the top of my head.

If we don't know how to talk about them, or if we are too afraid to ask one another about them, we should start learning. Where our curricula taught us little about how to think, we can learn how to engage in dialogue that challenges ourselves and others. We can offer new perspectives and give charitable interpretations of the other side's opinion, but we shouldn't stop there. Don't be intimidated by relativism's ironically unapproachable stance. Approach it and ask if it is the code we should all live by (but if relativism claims to be the true stance we should universally take, is it self-defeating since it proclaims nothing we believe is objective?)

The Mount's core curriculum is a

place that is counter-cultural to this relativistic mindset; it draws on ancient and modern philosophies and theology courses, challenging students to approach Big Questions head-on, together as a class—in which most come from differing viewpoints—instead of shying away from them. Liberal arts curriculums like the Mount's equip people to become comfortable talking about the Big Questions. I deeply appreciate its efforts to embrace challenging topics and to seek the truth. It has shown me the importance of rejecting relativism, pursuing the truth in deeper questions, and showing the goodness of science and that which is empirically verifiable—but teaching me not to stop there.

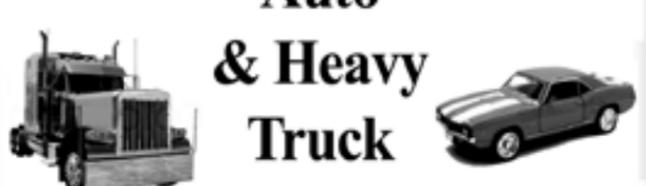
Go seek out the truth about the Big

Questions, maybe even with the very people you disagree with. Go find common ground with them to start on. Don't be afraid of disagreeing, be afraid of giving up in the pursuit of answering the Big Questions we were never taught to handle. Don't be fooled by relativism's charade that says when something isn't immediately empirically verifiable, it isn't worth your time. The Big Questions are out there with answers, and they're worth learning how to think about them, how to talk about them, and how to find their answers. Their answers are worth a lot more than if you can name the Principle parts of a verb.

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ON THE NATURE OF EDUCATION

Junior

Learning for its own sake

Emmy Jansen
MSMU Class of 2023

I have always loved to learn. Even at a young age, I loved the rigid structure of schools, especially when I was old enough to have multiple classes a day and got to be told where to go and what to learn. I grew up in a family of history buffs, spending every summer at American battlefields and crawling inside restored tanks and planes. We watched documentaries instead of the latest Hollywood blockbuster and I remember reading a John Wilkes Booth biography in the sixth grade, for fun.

Imagine my surprise upon coming to college and realizing that that was not the norm. I came face to face with the truth that education is not equal across the United States, or even in the same town. I was public schooled, which often gets a bad rap for its quality of learning, however I strongly disagree. During college, I interacted with a healthy mix of public, private, Catholic, and home schooled students, and there isn't a noticeable pattern in the knowledge and education of any of the groups. It seems less that there is one sure way

to receive a well-rounded education and more that education is as diverse as the people in this country.

Upon first glance of the 1895 Kansas eighth grade test, I loved how regional it was: common knowledge of the size of a bushel of wheat, emphasis on the inventions of farm machinery, focus on extreme Kansas climate, and deep understanding of the state's history. Many years of my primary and secondary education were spent on state history, which I am very thankful for. I hope this is the trend at all types of schools around the country because it provides a rich background that serves as a foundation for how we live our lives. Our environments shape us, but we have to understand them in order to utilize them to their fullest.

There are, of course, some stark contrasts in the 1895 test and the curriculum I and other students experienced, no matter what type of school in which we found ourselves. It does ring true today that schools do not teach us things that are necessary and sometimes teach us things that are even unnecessary. I'm not intending to go into a STEM field, yet I was in upper-level math and science classes all through high school. I took a year of organic chemistry in junior year, even though I had already declared in the liberal arts. These facts and skills

have proved all but useless to me, while I also graduated high school without an understanding of personal finance, car mechanics, or first aid. There are evident lapses in education today.

But that doesn't necessarily mean that the past is to be preferred. This test is from a period during which education was for only a privileged few, especially in a rural farming community where most children would've worked on the family farm. Today, secondary education is expected for youth. It's more accessible, so it's logical for things to be left out of the curriculum in order for the general population to acquire high school diplomas. Would we rather have more rigorous education and less people educated or more people educated with a less rigorous education?

This might not even be a choice between which we must decide. If we account for cultural and regional differences between 1895 and 2021, there isn't much that's different. The arithmetic section seems unrecognizable at first, but if we translate it into terms this generation would understand (for instance, what the size of a bushel is) the technique is the same as what is taught in basic algebra classes. Just because something looks different doesn't mean it is, or that it's any worse because of it. The same goes for U.S. History; I aced that

section, as long as you change Kansas history to Virginia history, which I was taught starting in the second grade.

Most of the inconsistencies in today's knowledge and yesterday's is just how it's packaged. I know what the fundamental rules of arithmetic are, but I don't know them by that name. I know how to use capital letters but I wouldn't be able to verbalize nine rules for their use or explain why they're used. This marks a change in how we view education, with less emphasis on memorization and rules and more focus on applications and use.

Some things do not, and should not, change. Grammar and literacy are foundational and need to be taught, arguably more rigorously than they are being taught now. I'm an English major, yet I struggled in the sections on grammar, writing, and diction. Another interesting part of this exam is that penmanship was graded. Cursive has stopped being taught in schools. There are great arguments as to why: unnecessary, time consuming, less critical than other information. But we've also lost an art in the meantime; quality of handwriting, and therefore communication, have also suffered.

But, there are things we have gained since 1895. There is no section on biology, chemistry, or physics. The closest is

physiology. From early in elementary school, I learned about stars, planets, plant cycles, weather, chemical reactions, and energy. Not only are these subjects important today, but they're also enjoyable. I can vividly picture learning about planets in third grade, with the entire class hanging onto every word my teacher spoke about moon landings, space expeditions, and rocket ships. Arguably, this is a lot more interesting than syllabification.

It would not be fair to say that one of these two systems we view here is correct, or better than the other. They reflect different cultural values and social conditions of their times. But there is something I see that has not disappeared from 1895 until now. Like the public-private-home school debate, it is based on the idea that education is important. Perhaps it is less about what we learn or how we are learning but that we learn. I may not use any of the formulas or notations from my year of organic chemistry, but I proved over those months that I could conceive of concepts outside of myself. Viewed in that light, 1895 and 2021 aren't that different after all.

To read other articles by Emmy Jansen, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.

Senior

On teaching how and what to think

Harry Scherer
MSMU Class of 2022

"What are the following, and give examples of each: Trigraph, sub-vocals, diphthong, cognate letters, linguists?"

As my colleagues have referenced, this is one of the questions asked of students in the 8th grade class of Saline County, Kansas in 1895. If this question was asked of those in my graduating class at the Mount (or, I would venture to guess, at almost any other American institution of higher education), the success rate would be abysmally low.

Has the standard for education changed, then, if 14-year-olds in the 19th century can successfully answer this question but college graduates of the 21st century cannot?

For the sake of context, it is worth keeping in mind that many of the children taking this exam were completing their careers in formal education. Many did not go on past the 8th grade and found themselves in the position to work on the agricultural land on which they were raised. The expectations for this exam, then, would have been higher than many others for which they had previously sat.

In addition, to be fair to us, the children taking this exam spent time preparing for it. When an article appears on The Washington Post, tempting the intelligentsia of an enlightened age to compare their knowledge with that of 19th century children from rural Kansas, the appeal is almost too powerful to overcome. When the curious reader miserably fails the exam, he clicks off disappointed. It is worth remembering,

though, that this reader did not prepare for the exam in the way that the Kansan 8th graders would have.

For this exam in particular, preparation would have made all the difference. Some of the questions require analytical skills, but many of them can be satisfied by an answer that demonstrates either basic understanding or memorization. I, for example, would not be able to successfully complete this exam today without preparation. At the same time, I do not think that I would be able to successfully complete many of the technical exams that I was given in high school today, even though I fulfilled the requirements to pass them at the time.

With all this in mind, I would be willing to venture that the majority of my graduating class would be capable of passing this exam with flying colors if they were given an evening to prepare for it. The fact remains, though, that many outside of the physical sciences are not forced to take these sort of technical exams that require knowledge of incontrovertible facts. As a student mostly focused on the humanities, I find that many of my evaluations are either analytical exams, papers, or presentations.

Those who distribute the exam that anticipates our graduation from high school, the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), say that the purpose of the test is to "measure a high school student's readiness for college." In college, one is typically taught 'not what to think, but how to think.' This tired phrase is the motto of contemporary higher education, and it indicates the key difference between the 1895 exam and our current one.

The 19th century Kansans were certainly taught what to think about certain things. They were taught to think that the way one conducts his speech, i.e., grammar, indicates the extent to which one is willing to conform himself to a certain set of social

standards. Through their education in arithmetic, they were taught that certain objective, empirical sets of data exist in the world that demand observation and analysis. Their education in U.S. history demonstrated to them that the actions of their forefathers bear a certain influence on their own lives, emphasizing the temporal effect of virtuous action for their descendants. The list goes on.

Mainstream higher education today does not have the same focus. Instead, contemporary colleges and universities repeat the worn-out 'how to think' phrase in order to excuse themselves from providing any positive cultural account for their students. The government of Kansas was willing to take the risk by including some pieces of information worth knowing and excluding others. The modern college does not take the same risk, but instead delegates the act of teaching to the student. This is a strange and ironic phenomenon. Instead of teaching students what deserves to be taught, the modern mainstream college eliminates a core set of teachings, books, and principles and leaves definitionally immature and insecure students on their own to decide what they need to learn. The 'how to think' ideal places the rather abstract reality of method in a position of priority above the reality of content. This prioritization suggests that ideas certainly have consequences, but that students should be more concerned with developing a sense of how to connect ideas with their consequences than confirming the veracity of their ideas. This notion is so preposterous that it is almost hard to believe.

It would be sensible to guess that the modern university is a mere invertebrate defender of moral and pedagogical relativism. The opposite is the case. By removing an absolute norm from a curriculum, a university does not necessarily admit that matters of

truth vary from time to time and place to place. Instead, a college removes or weakens a core curriculum in order to integrate, or at the very least allow for, more fringe ideological perspectives into the classroom. This strategy is effective in that professors become less encumbered by a set university curricular standard and become freer to engage with comparatively heterodox viewpoints in the classroom.

Thankfully, this sort of ideological transformation disguised by relativism

has not been my standard experience at the Mount. In the vast majority of circumstances, the university has stayed true to a Kansan view of education, namely one that teaches students both how to think and what to think. An institution willing to take the risk to assign value to both how and what to think is one that will last and one that might be held up as a model centuries from now.

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FASHION

Sweater weather

Valerie McPhail
MSMU Class of 2015

Without fail, the New Year brings forth optimism for fresh starts, dreams and hope for change. Holding onto the anticipation for all the magic the month of January could bring, we're pulled into the opposite direction by the cold winter carried in from December. Grounding us to turn to oversized knits and turtleneck sweaters, fashion forces us to consider the impact of our shopping habits.

In the world of fashion, what is more cozying and stabilizing than to return to a sweater? The 2.0 of dressing in 2022 could be a retreat to what leads us to live our best lives: a fashion-forward focused resolution, tied to minimalist attention and care towards lessening our carbon footprint on the planet.

The biggest struggle on my journey to discovering my personal style continues as a heart set search for a particular in-the-moment item — a dress I need for a birthday party Saturday night or

a comfortable sweater for Monday morning. After a troublesome season of searching, I've come to the conclusion: less is more. Finding the brands that support your lifestyle needs will also greatly alleviate the search involved in shopping. There are brands that are committed to practicing ethical processes to care and support Mother Earth, and they too offer the coziest sweaters.

Everlane

After a denim pop-up store in downtown NYC convinced me to leave with the purchase of a pair of boyfriend cut, navy-washed pair of jeans at \$68 dollars, I have ever since been convinced of Everlane. The San Francisco brand built in 2010 continues to thrive on a business model built on transparency and sustainability — scaling the production pricing of their classic pieces and empowering ethical factories with the best fabrics to create denim, bags, shoes and cashmere sweaters.

The cherry on top to their ethical approach to fashion is their affordable prices and simplistic

design. Everlane leads the pack of sustainable fashion brands as it offers accessibility to pronounced pieces including an assortment of designs from their 100% cashmere collection, cotton and concise variety of wool and alpaca styles. Environmental riots and demands for change should be a cause every person can relate to and engage with. Everlane is allowing the greater public to join their mission — simple and affordable fashions with an ethical approach.

Reformation

Also known by its brand followers as "Ref," the cool girl, eco-mission label from Los Angeles, California has caused a ripple within the fashion scene since its start in 2009. Beloved for their silky, girly and predominantly flirtatious dresses, the brand has a great offering of vintage denim, politically charged graphic t-shirts and cozy pullovers worth every investment.

This celebrity favored label, adored by the likes of Rihanna, Karly Kloss, Taylor Swift and Selena Gomez, is far from the flashy stores experienced on Broadway or 5th Avenue. Rather, the brand has three stores tucked in quaint spaces in the shopping districts of downtown New York City. This presence says a lot about its cool factor. Not only are their pullovers my favorite find, their sweaters are also classically designed and created for modern-day design. A cable knit cardigan given the name "Annie Sweater," mostly made of recycled cotton, or the cutesy "Daisy Sweater," made of viscose and linen, both designed in a cropped cut with animated hearts printed across the chest are two of many sweater styles Reformation sells under the umbrella of sustainability. With practices that include educating the customer on the materials used in production, their mission is to demand healthier production practices and strategically push for e-commerce



When your sweater is not in use, your cat will be more than happy to put it to good use.

sales over retail visits. Reformation is a powerhouse to be supported, and the underdog of the future of fashion.

Entireworld

Considerably the best marriage between fashion and sustainability discovered to date, I was introduced to Entireworld through my Instagram feed and quickly arrived at the understanding that this brand is silently gaining a large community of social media influencers and attention because of its mission and building blocks. Find Entireworld on Instagram and discover the universe behind its place in fashion. Click through their website and explore a novel approach to shopping and brand knowledge — the brands' "About" section is linked to a YouTube video featuring founder Scott Sternberg, previous founder of Band of Outsiders, before closing in 2015. Three years later Sternberg

opened an experimental project, Entireworld, which seeks to dig deeper into fashion and its purpose to the co-existing, interactive world we live in.

Shopable on social media and e-commerce, the brand implements popular forms of communication to the business of fashion. My first introduction to the brand was when I discovered their Dark Navy Crew Neck and read raving customer comments on its comfort. Tech is not the only form of sustainability Entireworld is committed to, scroll through the products on their website — the entireworld.com — to find organic cotton tops and recycled cotton pullovers and sweatpants. As the labels journey to exploring a new approach to fashion has just begun, Entireworld has predetermined a sustainable demand of fashion.

The purpose of a sweater changes when ethical and sustainable perspectives join its conversation on design. The ideal New Years resolution to fashion involves a challenge to consider new approaches to fashion that will influence our lives and the planet we live on. This is the bigger perspective, a hope for change, while reasonably retreating to the staple designs that keep us warm and cozy in the winter months. Everlane, Reformation and Entireworld are brands leading a new path to fashion without compromising our needs. With the demand for ethical practices in fashion, this will lead to a more meaningful understanding of fashion. I dare to consider, and demand a greater responsibility to fashion and my relationship with it — over the superficial thoughts on how clothing is valued by label and how it fits on my body. Cheers to a 2022 and fashion-forward New Years resolution this year!

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COMMUNITY NOTES

Busy offseason at TLL

Ryan Tokar
Thurmont Little League

There is no such thing as a quiet offseason at Thurmont Little League (TLL) and this year has been no exception. The Board of Directors have stayed busy with big plans for the upcoming season. When the fall season ended, the league immediately began work on its typical offseason activities such as field and complex improvements. A great deal of work has been done on the Minor and Major League fields to continue to improve upon playing conditions after they were completely re-done last year. New sod was laid down in some areas and things are on track for both fields to be in even better shape for the start of the spring season.

Speaking of which, registrations will open on January 1st for the upcoming 2022 season. Players from ages 4-13 are able to register for the appropriate division from t-ball all the way up through Intermediate. And, new for this year, TLL is happy to be adding softball programs to its list of offerings! Three levels of play will be available for a variety of ages including Coach Pitch, Minors, and Majors. We are very excited about the opportunity to offer this new program to the local community. Registration will close on February 13th,

so don't miss out. Visit www.TLLBaseball.com today.

With the addition of the new softball program, there are other changes coming including a new website. The website will be changing in the very near future to the more encompassing www.ThurmontLittleLeague.com. On top of that, TLL will be welcoming three new board members to help oversee all aspects of the new softball division. We would like to thank the following individuals for stepping up to the plate to help us get this program off the ground. Melissa Stidom-V.P. Softball, Ashley Balsley-Softball Player Agent and Heather Crummitt- Board Member at Large.

Now more than ever, TLL is seeking volunteers for the upcoming season including Managers, Coaches, Team Mom's, and Umpires. These are great opportunities for retirees looking to give back to the community with their free time, parents with flexible work schedules, or even high school students looking to fulfill their community services hours. The league offers various types of training opportunities including free umpire clinics. If you are interested in volunteering, please reach out to the league at the TLLnetwork@gmail.com.

Finally, fundraising has continued this offseason thanks to our friends at Thurmont Roy Rogers. Several successful fundrais-

ing nights have been held, with Roys donating 25% of the proceeds back to the league. The next event will be held on Friday, January 14th. We will also be selling the wildly popular TLL discount cards again this year, so be on the lookout for those in the upcoming months. Plans for opening day on Saturday, April 2nd are already under way. We can't wait to see everyone back out on the fields soon!

Cooperstown: The Dream Continues

Last year, a local group of players and coaches from Thurmont Little League teamed up to plan the baseball trip of a lifetime to participate in the prestigious Cooperstown Dreams Park Tournament in Cooperstown, New York. This tournament is well-known nationwide and attracts hundreds of youth baseball teams each summer. However, as was the case with many other things, the Covid-19 pandemic had other ideas. Unfortunately, instead of heading to Cooperstown the team had to pivot and travel to Pigeon Forge, Tennessee to participate in The Ripken Experience Tournament. It was a great experience for all involved, but the players did miss out on touring the baseball Hall of Fame and many of the other opportunities that only Cooperstown can provide.

This year, with the help of Coach Jeff Potter from the Pot-

ter Baseball Tour, the team was able to secure a spot to return to Cooperstown for this summer's event from August 3rd-9th 2022. The team, consisting of 12 players and 3 coaches from the Thurmont and Emmitsburg area, will play under the name Potter Pirates Black. The Thurmont community and TLL have partnered with Potter Baseball on several activities over the past few years including a charity kickball tournament to benefit the Fuse Teen Center, a painting project on the exterior of the Thurmont Food Bank and upgrades to the façade of the Thurmont Senior Center. They are excited to partner with Coach Potter and his organization again for this amazing opportunity.

The local team will consist of players Tucker Bryant, Chase Cregger, Brandon DeGrange, Mason Hewitt, Reed McCauley, Brody McQuay, Nate Morlan, Justice Myers, Brayden Rickerd, Graysen Strobel, Ethan Tokar and Bracen Webb. Manager Keith Myers and assistant coaches Brandon McQuay and Lane Strobel will accompany the team to Cooperstown along with umpire Blaine Young and Coach Potter.

Players and coaches get to stay on-site for a week, lodging at Baseball Village. They will be spending quality time together, meeting players from all over the country and of course playing a lot of baseball. They will be provided with daily meals and custom uniforms

for the tournament. The team will get to partake in an Opening and Closing Ceremony, skills competitions, and a minimum of seven games. Other benefits include Pin trading, personalized baseball cards for the players, tournament rings and a trip to the National Baseball Hall of Fame Museum. There will be digital webcasts of the games and highlights as well for those wishing to follow along at home.

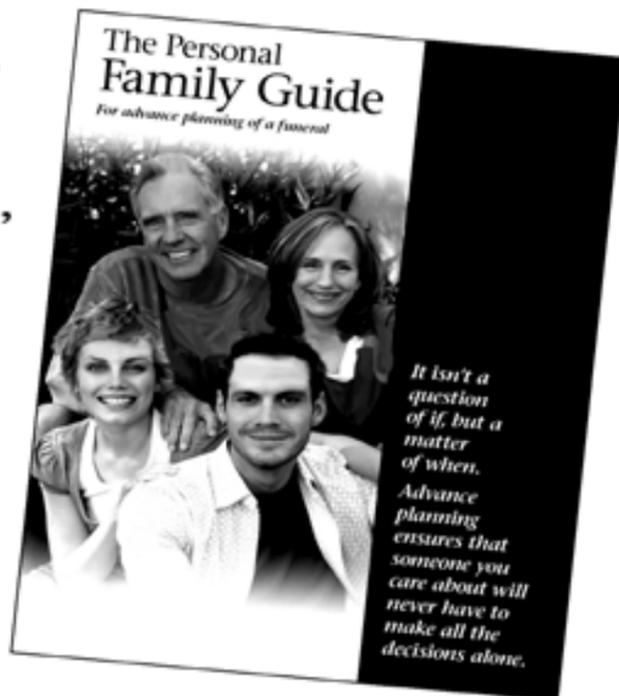
The trip comes with a hefty cost, so the team is fundraising and seeking support from the community to help them fulfill their dreams. They are asking the community to consider supporting the team at a fundraiser or by donating to the group. Many efforts are already underway such as Roy Rogers donating a portion of their proceeds from scheduled fundraiser nights on the first Friday of each month. In addition, there has also been a Tastefully Simple fundraiser courtesy of Dawn Fisher and a World Series grid fundraiser in support of the team. A MightyCause online fundraiser has also been established as a method of collecting online donations. Upcoming fundraisers include a BINGO on Sunday, January 9th at the Lewistown fire hall, selling of Super Bowl squares and a benefit breakfast at Trinity UCC on Saturday, March 19th. For more information on how you can help support this worthy cause, please contact team manager, Keith Myers at keithmyers07@gmail.com.

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LOCAL ARTS

Local author delivers westerns with broad appeal

Mark Greathouse and his family have called Carroll Valley home for better than 16 years, making it all the more interesting that it forms a backdrop for his authoring of western genre novels and biographies. Formerly a successful business executive and later entrepreneur, it was in retirement that he was able to truly focus on his passion for writing. Greathouse has always harbored a deep-seated concern for education coupled with a love of history and has found that writing about America's western frontier gives him a platform to incorporate and communicate the values that made the United States a great nation. Asked about that, he'll respond, "It's about justice and redemption, individual opportunity, close ties to the soil, toughness, determination, and passion."

Greathouse channels the inner spirit that comes with being a fifth-generation Texan whose cousins still raise cattle (beeves) on ranchlands that have been in the family since the 1850s. He found a home as author with Defiance Press & Publishing in Conroe, TX back in 2019 and has proceeded to build a substantial following of readers. His writing is inspired by his father's ancestral lineage beginning with five brothers immigrating to Texas from

County Kildare, Ireland from 1845 to 1867. Greathouse's research led him to uncover all manner of fascinating family tales as told in newspaper clippings, library archives, family journals, history books, biographies, and interviews. It turned out that his ancestors led the way in the taming of the South Texas frontier and experienced colorful true adventures that Greathouse has drawn from in his fictional stories.

With Nueces Grit: Texans Answer the Call released in print, eAudio, and eBook in December 2021, Greathouse continues his passion for weaving fiction with history as seen through this fifth gripping installment of his signature Tumbleweed Sagas. In crafting an engaging adventure featuring an ensemble of captivating characters woven into compellingly complex subplots, he's stayed true to the western story being America's story. Whether expressed in his epic western genre novels or adventure-laced biographies, he couples a soul-penetrating creative spirit with extensive historical research that attracts a broad spectrum of readers (even folks who wouldn't ordinarily be drawn to westerns).

Nueces Grit: Texans Answer the Call, absorbs readers in the events and accompanying dynamics sweeping South Texas during the early years of

the War Between the States. War has swept the nation! Texas' best men join the fight, leaving the Texas frontier vulnerable to desperadoes, bandits, and hostile Indians. Texas Ranger Captain Luke Dunn's life becomes forever entwined with the rough and tumble and increasingly treacherous prairies of the Nueces Strip of 1862 stretching from Corpus Christi west to Laredo and south to Brownsville. Dunn continues his quest to deliver justice, as murderers, swindlers, rustlers, and savages are wrapped into this exciting tale. Gritty...tough...it's all part and parcel to Luke's life as lawman and rancher. Just about anywhere he rides, death could be reaching for his reins. War brings a new dimension to the dangers lurking at every turn. The Comanche call Dunn Ghost-Who-Rides, his and young Elisa's ardor know no bounds, paid killers seek to rid the Strip of Dunn's justice, savages fight back against their certain demise, new threats to justice emerge, and everything converges at little Nuecestown, Texas.

When asked the keys to writing novels and getting published, Greathouse offers, "Talent is important, but dogged persistence and constant development of your craft is vital. Publishers provide cover artists,

editors, narrators, and more but the author must be up to doing the myriad interviews, book signings, and promotions that support the publisher's efforts. It's about author name recognition and selling books."

Asked what else readers might find interesting, Greathouse offers that he's a lover of quotes, especially "Texas-isms." Readers will find him weaving in terms like "double-struck lightning," liberal use of "y'all," or metaphorical phrases like "he's so tough he'd fight a rattlesnake and spot it the first bite" or "she looks like she was pulled backwards through a den of polecats" or "he's so high strung his boots squeak."

The first five Tumbleweed Sagas (Nueces Justice, Nueces Reprise, Nueces Deceit, Nueces Blood, and Nueces Grit) are available online in print, eAudio, and eBook at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and other popular retailers. Also get your copy of Nicholas Dunn: The Making of a Texas Legend, the true tale of an Irish lad who immigrated to Corpus Christi in 1850 and over the next 62 years was a leading figure in taming the South Texas frontier.

No surprise that Greathouse generally travels about wearing one of his cowboy hats (cattleman's crease, thank-



you) and boots (without spurs). Greathouse is an active member of Western Writers of America as well as several state and local poetry societies and writer groups. He recently had one of his short stories,

"Discriminating Treachery," included in For the Love of Gettysburg, an anthology by the Gettysburg Writers Brigade the profits from which go to local charity. He delivers life-impacting YouTube videos at Tumbleweed.me and on Facebook at Tumbleweed Sagas. He holds BA and MBA degrees. While he tries to spend ever more time among family in Texas, he does enjoy the rolling hills of Pennsylvania and the Blue Ridge Longhorns grazing just up the road apiece.

Mountainfilm On Tour return to the Majestic

Jessica Rudy

Mountainfilm on Tour returns to Gettysburg College's Majestic Theater on Friday, January 28 at 7:30 p.m. bringing a selection of culturally rich, adventure-packed and inspiring documentary films curated from the 2021 Mountainfilm festival in Telluride, Colo.

"This evening of short films is the ultimate in arm chair adventuring," explained Majestic Theater Founding Executive Director Jeffrey Gabel. "You experience all the visual thrills and chills of the adventurers without any of their spills - except maybe some delicious Majestic buttered popcorn on your lap."

Mountainfilm on Tour made

its Gettysburg debut in January 2020. With this newest tour installment, audiences can expect to enjoy two hours of short films on topics ranging from fishing to skateboarding, discussing issues of community, recovery, lifestyle, animals and more. Introductions and context for the films will be provided by the evening's emcee. The evening's films are rated PG-13 for language and themes.

Mountainfilm is a documentary film festival that showcases stories about environmental, cultural, climbing, political and social justice issues. Mountainfilm is held every Memorial Day weekend in Telluride, Colo. Along with exceptional documentaries, the festival goes beyond the film medium by bringing together world-class athletes, change makers and visionary artists for a multi-dimensional celebration

of indomitable spirit. Mountainfilm's mission is to use the power of film, art and ideas to inspire audiences to create a better world. To learn more about Mountainfilm, visit www.mountainfilm.org.

Tickets for Mountainfilm on Tour are \$15 in advance, or \$20 on the evening of the show, and are available at the Majestic Theater Box Office, 25 Carlisle St., Gettysburg, by calling 717-337-8200 or online at www.gettysburgmajestic.org.

Way Off Broadway's '22 Season

Following a tumultuous year and a half for the theatre industry due to the worldwide Covid-19 Pandemic, The Way Off Broadway Dinner Theatre is preparing to open its new 2022 Season in January with one of the installments of Dan Goggin's hilarious Nunsense Series. Kicking off the Frederick theatre's 28th Anniversary Season will be Meshuggah-Nuns. The Ecumenical Nunsense Musical, when it takes to the stage on January 14.

In Meshuggah-Nuns!, The Kunkels (the poor family living behind Mount St. Helen's School) have won the lottery and gifted the Sisters an all-expense-paid trip on the "Faiths of All Nations" Cruise. After a week at sea, several people become ill, including all of the actors in the ship's production of Fiddler on the Roof. (All except the actor playing Teyve, that is.) The ship's captain, knowing of the Sisters' show biz savvy, requests that the Sisters and Teyve put on a revue. The result: Meshuggah-Nuns! The Ecumenical Nunsense Musical.

The original Nunsense opened Off-Broadway in December 1985 and was a huge hit with audiences. The production would go on to run for ten

years, making it (at the time) the second longest running Off-Broadway show in history. Dan Goggin, the show's creator, would go on to write five more Nunsense musicals and three spin offs. Meshuggah-Nuns! is the fourth in the series, making its debut in 2002.

In 2010, a production of Meshuggah-Nuns! was released on television and DVD starring the original New York cast including Deborah Del Mastro, David Edwards, Bambi Jones, Bonnie Lee, Jeanne Tinker, and Stephanie Wahl.

Meshuggah-Nuns! Will mark the first time in fifteen years the Little Sisters of Hoboken have appeared on the WOB stage. Stepping into the habit for this production are Adele Russell as Sister Robert Anne and Megan E. West as Sister Amnesia. Tina M. Bruley who appeared in WOB's productions of Nunsense as Sister Robert Anne and Nunsense 2: The Second Coming as Sister Amnesia, will this time take on the role of Reverend Mother, Sister Mary Regina. Pam Neely, who appeared as Sister Hubert in the theatre's first two productions, will take on the role once again for Meshug-

gah-Nuns! And making his Way off Broadway debut is Rory Dunn playing Howard Liszt.

Meshuggah-Nuns! Has a book, music, and lyrics by Dan Goggin. Way Off Broadway's production is under the direction of Bill Kiska, with music direction by Zane L. Oberholzer, Jr., and choreography by Jessica Billones. Betsey Brannen serves as the show's stage manager.

The show will open January 14 and run through March 5th, with performance every Friday and Saturday evening, and matinees on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sunday of each month. Tickets for Friday evenings and Sunday matinees are \$52; Saturday evenings, tickets are \$55. Tickets can be purchased by stopping by the theatre or calling the Box Office at 301-662-6600.

To learn more Meshuggah-Nuns!, or any of Way Off Broadway's upcoming productions, which includes Hello, Dolly!, Beverly Hillbillies - The Musical, Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express, and Countdown to Christmas, visit www.wayoffbroadway.com.

MOUNT ARTS

Using the right words

Joseph Carlson
MSMU Class of 2025

I used to work at Chick-fil-A back home in Northern Virginia. The most common way people would ask for something was, “can I get a ...” I only ever noticed anything wrong with this phrase when I began learning German, and I came upon the disparity in how often they use the word for “may”, and how often we use it now. It may seem prudish, but it is a subtle and sad change that makes all the difference. The cashier is not an ATM, but “can I get a...” treats him like one. The word “may” has nuance which communicates respect for the person one is speaking to, while “can I get a...” communicates an intention and care only for the thing one is receiving.

English is possibly the most direct language to have existed. The noun and verb are always right at the front, most efficiently communicating the meat of the sentence before anything else. Our word order has always presented both insufficient for American English’s use in poetry and the challenge necessary to produce truly inspiring literature. The very sounds of the language, too, make it unique. For example, Italian has five vowel sounds while English has thirteen. How much more remarkable then is Shakespeare, who rhymed so well with the far more varied sounds of the English language. Dante makes up for this with a unique rhythm and the sheer magnanimity of his work, but it remains true that when reading his Inferno, there are only five sounds that can come at the end of a sentence.

It’s English’s unique history which has proffered it so. In American English, we have a Germanic language, which was Latinized, Germanized again, taken over by the French, is perpetually borrowing various Latin and Greek roots for scientific and religious purposes, borders Mexico and receives immigrants and their speech from all over the world, and has now entered the tech age with all of its abbreviations and acronyms. It’s entirely different than anything else which has existed. There is an extraordinarily wide vocabulary that we have borrowed from all of these sources, and it is being made smaller and smaller by the general population. According to a study done in 2012, while the English language is gaining new words at a faster rate than we have ever before, we are losing old words even faster than we are gaining them. It is not only that we are losing duplicates, such as replacing “trousers” entirely with “pants”, or shortening phrases like “Automated teller machine” to less of a mouthful, like ATM, we are forsaking nuance for ease. Words like “awesome”, “fine”, and “good” are extraordinarily common in everyday speech, and they have lost almost all of their previous nuance. “Awesome” was once reserved for things which one is actually in awe

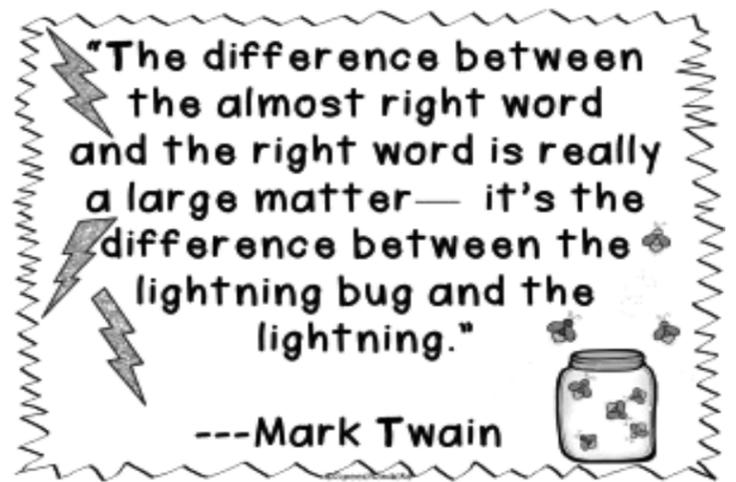
of; “fine” is no longer for fine linen, but if you ask someone how they are doing, and they answer “fine”, you know that they’re not actually fine; and “good” has little to do with “the Good.” We also often don’t know grammatically how to use these words: my peers are often confused when they ask how I am doing and I respond “well” rather than “good.”

This may seem like a rant, but it gets at the very purpose of language. The language that we use has to do with how we think. The phrase, “can I get a...” is very accurate to what the guy in the drive-thru is principally thinking about— his sandwich. When someone watches a video of someone doing a cool trick on a skateboard and they say “awesome”, it is because those are the kinds of things which they think that they are in awe of. Yet, when one ventures up a mountain and sees a truly awe-inspiring landscape, they might say that they are at a loss for words. We do the same thing with negative words. When talking to a friend about a mean thing that your boss said to you, your friend might respond, “that’s horrible!” yet we often use the same word for the Holocaust. Granted, language responds with a new path: terms which now capture the horror of genocide are “horrendous”, “evil”, and “diabolical”, although, if we used those words in common speech, they would lose their meaning too. We have narrowed our perspective. Our shallow and utilitarian word choice indicates that most of us are living the lives of the buffered self and losing sight of the transcendent.

The purpose of language is to communicate one’s ideas. The words that we use matter, because

they are reflections of the ideas which exist in our minds. It is extraordinarily peculiar that we tie a thing or idea so intimately to a particular sound we make with our mouths and throats. Language is very subjective because the particular sound which makes a particular word varies from person to person and language to language; but across all people and languages, language has the role of understanding the objective amidst a subjective experience. A word is meant to mean what it means— the most perfect words come closest to accurately reflecting the nature of the things which they are reflecting. But our society has moved away from this understanding of language because it is not how we think anymore. For example, in our modern English, we go so far as to habitually use the word “literally,” as figurative language, in order to exaggerate something. The word, “literally” literally means “taking words in their usual or most basic sense without metaphor or allegory,” and “free from exaggeration or distortion.” Even the literal meaning of the word “literal” isn’t free from exaggeration in our modern English.

There are a few solutions to this problem. The first would be to think carefully before we speak. It is a thing that we often say to children, but my theory is not that we condition them to necessarily say the proper thing for the situation as much as we condition them to not say the wrong thing. There is typically a better word or phrase to be used than our standard colloquialisms. It is also helpful to expand one’s vocabulary and to take advantage of all the nuance that English has to offer. Our language will never be elevated unless our general environment



improves and exposure to eloquence increases. Reading good literature is the way to achieve this, and the long-term trend has been that Americans are reading less and less. COVID-19 got a lot more books in people’s hands, so perhaps this has been an awakening to Americans. The most common reason that I have heard that people do not want to read is that they spend too much time reading work emails; it is therefore very important that one reads something both elevated and enjoyable according to his preference. Reading should not feel like labor.

The final point to keep in mind is keeping our speech beautiful. It doesn’t mean that it has to beat around the bush or sound British, some of the most beautiful phrases are the most direct. That is actually what I am getting at — the loveliest phrase is the one that says exactly what it means. Some ideas require more words, some require less, but we should all strive to use the right ones for the right occasion.

To read other articles by Joseph Carlson, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.

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CATOCTIN SPORTS

Catoctin winter sports rundown

Mia Ferraro
CHS Class of 2022

As we enter the new year, Catoctin High School sports teams take advantage of new opportunities. Last winter's athletic season was full of uncertainty, cancellations, delays, and other challenges that limited the teams' extent of practice and competition. This season, however, is full of promise, as we begin the second competitive month with lots to celebrate already.

Competitions for winter sports teams began Dec. 6 and continue through the third week in February. The winter season consists of the following teams: basketball - coached by Amy Entwistle (girls) and Brian Burdette (boys); unified bocce - coached by Charmane Nesbitt; cheerleading - coached by Stephanie Munday; indoor track - coached by Dave Lillard (boys) and Lois Strickland (girls); swimming and diving - coached by Will Warram (boys). Also new to the Catoctin athletic staff is Justine Wantz coaching swimming and diving (girls), and Richard Reeder coaching wrestling.

The Catoctin girls' basketball team kicked off the season with a strong start during their home game Dec. 7, at which they competed against Frederick Scott Key High School. The Cougars led 20-10 by the end of the first quar-

ter, and doubled their points by the end of the second. By the end, Catoctin had won 67-59. It was during this season-opener that Catoctin senior Emma Wivell dislocated her thumb, but nonetheless proceeded to lead the team in points during several of their following games.

The team took to Oakdale High School Dec. 10, where Wivell had 23 points and 10 rebounds. Senior Emily Williams had 10 points, six assists, three steals, and six rebounds. Freshman Taylor Smith also had 14 points. Catoctin won 64-54. The Cougars then competed at home against Middletown High School four days later. Smith scored 16 points. Williams contributed eight assists, seven rebounds, and five steals. Freshman Grace Williams had seven rebounds and four steals. Wivell scored nine points, and her late foul shot made the difference that secured a 43-42 victory. As a result of her performance, especially with her perseverance while injured, Wivell was named Frederick News-Post's Athlete of the Week.

The Cougars proceeded to dominate the next game on Dec. 17, allowing their visitor Smithsburg High School only eight points. Wivell led the team with 17 points, six steals, and eight rebounds. Emily Williams contributed five steals, and senior Paige Smith had eight rebounds.

The team emerged with a victory of 47-8. The team then traveled to Brunswick High School three days later, where the Cougars won 50-32. Wivell scored 24 points and Emily Williams scored 12 points, 11 steals, and six assists. The next and final game before Christmas break took place at Boonsboro High School on Dec. 22. Taylor Smith led with 13 points and Emily Williams had 11 points, nine steals, and six rebounds. Catoctin won with a score of 38-25, improving their record to 6-0.

The Catoctin indoor track teams have also had much excitement in the season already, with several athletes having set a personal record as soon as the first competition. Marking the beginning of the regular season was the Terry Baker Invitational, held at Hagerstown Community College on Dec. 10. The girls team set 10 personal records and two season bests, and placed 13th of 21 competing schools overall. Senior Jenna Zentz finished in first place out of 35 competitors in the women's 300-meter dash with a personal record of 43.7 seconds. She also placed third of 30 in the women's 500-meter dash with another personal best of 1:24.14. The boys team set seven personal records and placed 14th overall. Junior Alex Contreras finished in second place out of 31 runners with a personal best in the men's 3200-meter run with a time of 10:27.38. Junior Brody Buffington took second place of 35 in shot put with a throw of 43 feet and six inches.

The teams then revisited Hagerstown Community College on Dec. 18 for the Jeff Spielman Winter Classic Invitational. The girls team set 13 personal records and the boys team set nine. Both teams ran a season best time in the 4x800-meter relay: the girls had a time of 11 minutes and



CHS indoor track team celebrates early victories this season

31.71 seconds, and the boys had 9:43.33. Sophomore Jenna Conley (2:42.65) finished 12th of 35 runners in the women's 800-meter run. Buffington took third place out of 30 participants in shot put with a throw of 43 feet and 3 seconds. Senior Wyatt Davis (38-10.5) finished in seventh in the same event and freshman Ethan Robeson (34-10.5) finished in 11th. Buffington also took first place out of 40 competitors in the boys 55-meter dash with 6.5 seconds, breaking the previous record set in 2012. His 55-meter score is now the highest in Maryland and 16th in the nation.

The girls swimming and diving team has had some personal victories as well. Catoctin sophomore Kayleigh Buhrman won two events at the meet against Walkersville High School on Dec. 6, setting new team records in the 500 and 100 backstrokes. Junior Sophia Tyerar also broke the team

record for diving. Two days later, Buhrman was once again deemed a multi-event winner at the meet held at Middletown High School against Brunswick. The Catoctin unified bocce team joins in on the Cougar pride, as well as the wrestling team, with more early success. The unified bocce team won both of their two matches held this past month, first against host Oakdale High School on Dec. 8, then again on Dec. 15 against visitor Urbana High School. Catoctin also won its first home wrestling game of the season on Dec. 16, where the Cougars defeated Walkersville High School 40-30 with only nine wrestlers competing. They won eight of ten bouts contested, sealing Coach Reeder's first victory coaching at Catoctin.

Amidst celebrations of early success, Catoctin sports teams have also joined the community in celebrating the season of giving. Alongside Catoctin High School clubs and honor societies, the athletic department has been promoting and contributing to various charities throughout the month of December. The recently revived Catoctin Crazy's club, Catoctin coaching staff, and various sports teams have helped collect donations in-person and online. Athletes and coaches of the Catoctin baseball and softball teams volunteered on Dec. 13 to lend a hand to local Marines preparing children's gifts for Toys for Tots. Fans were also able to drop off donations at home athletic events. "Please bring a book to donate for Toys for Tots," the student-run boys basketball team's Instagram account posted the day of their first home game. "Bring a new teddy bear to donate," the girls basketball team advertised prior to their Dec. 22 game. Other requests for donations included hygiene products, winter clothes, and more.

To read past Catoctin sports articles, visit the Current Events section of Emmitsburg.net.

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MOUNT SPORTS

Mount baseball begins season with high aspirations

Sam Barber
MSMU Class of 2022

In 2007. That was the last time a baseball team at Mount St. Mary's registered a winning campaign. All of the players on the current roster were ranging from the ages of four to eight, so playing baseball at the collegiate level was not on their mind. Although Mount St. Mary's has not eclipsed the .500 mark in fourteen years, there is renewed hope that the complete cleaning of house during the offseason, as well as the hiring of an offensive gem, may bring them back to the glory days and beyond. His name is Frank Leoni, and he is set to be tasked with one of the hardest rebuilding jobs in all of collegiate baseball.

Leoni, who was named the fourteenth head coach in program history in July, hails from the likes of Rhode Island, William & Mary, and Division-II powerhouse, Marymount. Despite finding the most success while coaching the Tribe of William & Mary, there are two recurring themes at each of his three previous school. The first is that he inherited programs that were bottom-feeders in their respective conferences and with time, turned them into true competitors. The latter is that he led all three programs to at least one NCAA Tournament as head coach. Both aforementioned attributes are a part of the long list as to why Leoni was a hire that had experience and longevity in mind.

Any team at any level of organized sports harps on the importance of building a family-like atmosphere. That theme will be easy to achieve since Leoni decided to bring along two of his fellow coaches from Marymount, Cal Berman and Cullen Moore. Berman and Moore will both hold the title of assistant coach while Moore will also serve as the recruiting coordinator for the team. Aaron Tarr also joins the staff for the 2022 season. In his inaugural season, Tarr looks to tap into his previous Division-I experience at Coppin State and Georgetown.

Fresh off a dismal 9-28 season, which saw Mount St. Mary's post a 5-19 conference mark and end their season on a five-game slide, the team looks to double their win total from a season ago. There are plenty of offensive components on this team that could point to just that. Brady Drawbaugh, a junior outfielder, and Ryan Fisher, a senior second baseman, are expected to deliver the most offensive firepower to this roster. The former brought in 12 runs while also tallying four home runs. As for Fisher, he led the team in scoring with 23 runs through 36 games.

One of the components that has transformed the entire landscape of collegiate sports has been the advancement of the transfer portal. This addition to college sports has allowed for an easier pathway to transfer in-and-out of a program. In the beginning of this process, the benefits were merely privy to the world of college basketball and football, especially at the Power Five level. However, with the rapid developments of the transfer portal, sports across the NCAA and the Division-I level can engage with this strategy. With Coach Leoni, as well as Coach Moore, leading the recruiting trail, Mount St. Mary's has taken advantage and added a slew of transfers ranging from the Division-I to the JUCO level.

With regard to the pair of Division-I transfers, Cooper Adams (via UMBC) elected to stay within the state of Maryland to finish his collegiate career. The 6-foot-3 senior out of Potomac, MD, should play a significant role among the deep collection of pitchers. Aiden Tierney carries one of the biggest question marks heading into the 2022 season. The 5-foot-11 sophomore outfielder saw his freshman season at Longwood University cut short due to injury. The extent of Tierney's talent is not yet fully known; however, he offers one of the most exciting storylines as the season inches closer.

A recurring theme across the world of Division-I athletics is that a growing population who do not have the initial skills to play at the highest level are beginning their careers at the JUCO (junior college) level. Once athletes finish their two years, they are typically a well-rounded player that can excel at the Division-I level. Mount St. Mary's secured five transfers of that status for the upcoming season.

Junior Hunter Hebert hails from Baker, LA, and began his career at Delgado Community College, based out of New Orleans. The 5-foot-8 infielder will bring size and a potent skill set to the inner portions of the field. David Stirpe is set to bring his talents down south, as the 5-foot-11 sophomore infielder looks to excel at Mount St. Mary's after spending a year with Niagara Community College in New York. The Thunder Wolves are an A-list JUCO program in the Northeast. One of the most exciting additions to the roster is 6-foot-2 utility player Tyler Grodell. The Santa Clarita, CA, native batted .375 last season while leading Cisco Community College to a 5 West Regional Championship.

The final two transfers both have something in common: they are both from Fredericksburg, VA. Tucker Sullivan, who stands at 5-foot-11, brings his talents from Germanna Community College, which is based in Fredericksburg and will have four seasons of eligibility remaining. As for Tristian McAlister, the 5-foot-10 outfielder brings a lot of promise. McAlister racked up plenty of accolades during his time at Patrick Henry Community College, including leading the country in stolen bases (52), leading his team to the JUCO World Series All-Tournament team, and batting an impressive .353 for the Pats last season.

Bringing in new faces to the program is undoubtedly exciting, however, new players, including freshmen, are going to have to step



Head Coach Frank Leoni looks to lead the Mount to their first winning season since 2007

up to the plate to fill in for roster losses. Mount St. Mary's lost three major components to their rotation from a season ago. AJ Holcomb, Myles Nicholson, and Tommy Savastio all graduated; their absence will certainly be felt this season. Nicholson led the team in at-bats (141), hits (38), and stolen bases (15). As for Holcomb, he held top-3 status in five statistical categories in 2021. The loss of Savastio will be felt mostly on the offensive end as the Camp Hill, PA, native was second on the team in hits (34) and third in runs (19). However, with the addition of key transfers and a nine man incoming class, there are plenty of components that can lead Mount St. Mary's to an immense amount of success.

A feature to keep an eye on is how scheduling will be affected due to the continuing COVID-

19 pandemic, especially with the spread of the Omicron variant. Unlike last season, Mount St. Mary's is set to travel more often, as they have tournaments slated for Texas and Virginia. Non-conference opponents on Mount St. Mary's schedule compiled a 185-263 record during the 2021 season, as three programs, Lamar, Lehigh, and Virginia, posted winning seasons. This year's non-conference schedule includes the likes of Bucknell, Georgetown, George Mason, UMBC, Lamar, Lehigh, Navy, Penn State and Virginia.

Mount St. Mary's will begin their 2022 season in an early season tournament in Colonial Heights, VA, with a four-game series against the Lehigh Mountain Hawks.

To read past editions of Mount Sports, visit the Authors section of Emmitsburg.net.

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COMPLEMENTARY CORNER

2022 – The Year of the Tiger

Jefferson Breland

The Chinese New Year (also called the Lunar New Year or Chinese Spring Festival), one of the traditional Chinese festivals, is the grandest and the most important festival for Chinese people. It originated during the Shang Dynasty (about 17th - 11th century BC), and it is an important time for families to gather, similar to Christmas Day for Westerners. It is also a time to hope for the return of spring, to welcome prosperity, wealth, and longevity, and a time to remove any negative qi (pronounced “chee”) from the past. There is even a tradition prior to the New Year for every family to thoroughly clean the house to sweep away any ill-fortune in hopes of making way for good incoming luck.

Chinese calendar history: The Chinese calendar was originated by the Yellow Emperor Huang Ti, and has been in use for centuries. The Chinese calendar is called a lunar calendar but is really a calendar based on both the moon and the sun. The Gregorian calendar, which the world uses today (originated 430 years ago) is purely a solar calendar. (The Chinese Lunar New Year always begins on the second new moon after the winter solstice, in case you were wondering why it's on a different date every year.)

The twelve animals of the Chinese calendar: The Chinese calendar is made of five, twelve-year cycles. Each of the twelve years of the Chinese calendar is appointed one of the following 12 animal's names (in this order): rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon (the only mythological animal), snake, horse, goat/sheep/ram, monkey, fowl/rooster, dog, and pig/boar. The animal that rules the year of your birth is said to exercise a major influence over your life, and that year in general.

There is a legend of how these animals came to be in the Chinese zodiac. In it, and there are a number of versions, either the Buddha or the Jade Emperor (the Emperor of Heaven), held a competition open to all animals to see who would take their place in the twelve positions of the zodiac. How these animals competed gives clues to their strengths and their inner natures. Some people take the meanings of the animals more literally and base life decisions on their interpreta-

tion. Others, use the concept or lens of the animals' natures as a way to live more fully and become more aware of certain aspects of their lives.

(For the sake of simplicity, I shall be using masculine pronouns to refer to both tigers and tigresses.)

On January 31 the year of the Ox will come to a close. The Ox, generally speaking, represents hard work, predictability, honoring traditions, and quiet, fair, leadership. The third sign of the Chinese zodiac, the Tiger, on the other hand, represents quite a different set of qualities. The daring, powerful, and passionate personality of the Tiger can be a exhilarating presence. February 1 through January 21, 2023 is the Year of the Tiger.

I find it very interesting that the stability of the year of the Ox is followed by the dynamic, rebellious, colorful, and less predictable Year of the Tiger. This can be seen as an example of Yin Yang Theory applied on a cultural level. The Ox with its deliberate, no-nonsense nature represents qualities of Yin energy. The Tiger's less predictable, questioning, vivacious nature represents Yang energy.

The Tiger

*I am the delightful Paradox,
All the world is my stage.*

*I set new trails ablaze,
I seek the unattainable,
and try the untried.*

*I dance to life's music
in gay abandon.*

Come with me on my carousel rides.

*See the myriad of colors,
the flickering lights.*

All hail me the unparalleled performer.

I AM THE TIGER
—(Lau & Lau, 2007)

Tiger Personality: If you were born in one of the following years, your sign is the Tiger.

February 13, 1926 – February 1, 1927; January 31, 1938 - February 18, 1939; February 17, 1950 – February 5, 1951; February 5, 1962 - January 24, 1963; January 23, 1974 – February 10, 1975; February 9, 1986 - January 28, 1987; January 28, 1998 – February 15, 1999; February 14, 2010 – February 2, 2011.

The Tiger is known for being impulsive, fiery, and whole-hearted. People

rarely have a neutral experience of a Tiger. You either love him or hate him. Either way, he loves being the focus of attention. The Tiger's impulsiveness and joie d' vivre are very contagious. He represents the fullness of life on the edge of society reminding us how exhilarating it is to throw caution to the wind and live moment to moment.

Always ready for action due to their fearless and restless nature, the Tiger is treasured for being able to fend off the main threats to a home: fire, thieves, and ghosts.

Curiously, the tiger has a softer side as well. He is a lover of babies, endangered species, sick or orphaned animals, exotic plants, and anything that catches their imagination or attention. You may feel slighted by his attention to his passions if you are not one of them. He will always commit himself to whatever is in front of him.

There are no half measures with the Tiger. They are “all in” all the time unless they aren't. Paradoxically, the tiger's two main imperfections are rashness and indecision. If he is able to learn moderation, the world will be the Tiger's oyster.

When sad and dejected, the Tiger will need lots of sympathy of the most sincere kind. Don't try to rationalize with him, logic does not work with the Tiger. He will listen closely to your advice, and may not take it. It is the Tiger's nature. Simply be there for him, listen, console, hold his paw, until he is finished speaking. Once he has collected himself, he will kiss you, hug you, and you will feel as if you have saved his very being.

At his best, he is warm, sensitive, and sympathetic. At his worst, he is obstinate, unreasonable, and selfish without being aware of it. Tiger has a huge ego, great success means nothing if his ego is hurt. When wronged or defeated, the Tiger can be a mean and petty bully. He will seek revenge by any means necessary. Little slights may enrage him while letting larger issues go without a word. Tigers hate being ignored.

At heart, the Tiger is a romantic; simultaneously playful, passionate, and sentimental. They can be over-possessive and quarrelsome when jealous.

The fundamental nature of the Tiger serves them best in his younger years as he pursues his dreams and



make a name for himself. If a Tiger can learn to relax and let go of regrets later in their life, he will be peaceful. If not, look out.

Overall, the Tiger's life can be very dynamic. Every emotion will be expressed at the fullest level. Joy and laughter, despair, tears, pain, grief, anger, and sadness will be obvious to all who witness. The key here is to never feel sorry for the Tiger. He doesn't need it. Living life to the maximum is how he loves to live life. No matter what challenges befall him, he is an eternal optimist who will bounce back for more of what life has to offer.

The best Chinese zodiac animals for the Tiger to befriend are the Pig/Boar, Horse, and Dog. The Tiger will also get along well with the Rat, Sheep, Rooster, and even another Tiger.

The least compatible animal is the Ox. The Snake is also not a good friend. Though they share a suspicious nature, there will never be harmony between the Tiger and Snake. The ever wise-cracking Monkey will have a field day making fun of the Tiger who will lose his temper and make a fool of himself.

Notable people born in the Year

of the Tiger: Ludwig van Beethoven, composer; Dwight D. Eisenhower, soldier and President; Stevie Wonder, musician; Tom Cruise, actor; Marco Polo, explorer; Oscar Wilde, writer; Karl Marx, political theorist; Kenny Rogers, musician, Leonardo DiCaprio, actor; Lady Gaga, musician/actor; Kathleen Breland, my sister; Marilyn Monroe, actor; Queen Elizabeth II of England; Drake, musician; Amy Adams, actor; Agatha Christie, writer; Charles de Gaulle, French soldier, President; Beatrix Potter, writer.

General Predictions for the Year of the Tiger: 2022 will be a dynamic and favorable year for the Tiger. With proper attention, all goals are within reach, especially with monetary rewards and personal relationships. Tigers will experience good health. Vacations with family are highly recommended, though I think this is always a good idea.

Be well.

Jefferson Breland is a board-certified acupuncturists licensed in Pennsylvania and Maryland with offices in Gettysburg and Towson, respectively. He can be reached at 410-336-5876.

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HEALTH AND FITNESS

Cold weather exercise fun!

Linda Stultz
Certified Fitness Trainer

Cold winter days sometimes make it hard to continue your exercise workout routine. Because it gets dark so early during the winter it seems to be harder to get as much activity as we do during the summer. Just because it is dark outside by the time we are finished eating dinner doesn't mean we should sit on the couch and watch TV. Taking an after dinner walk is even more important in the winter because we don't have the yard work or other outside activities that are keeping us moving in the warm summer months.

Finding an exercise class or

some other organized group that will motivate you to keep active during the winter is a good way to keep moving until the summer work and activities start again. Having that scheduled appointment time will help you stay on a routine because it is very easy to say "I'll go next week" and skip the exercise. Joining a group activity is also a great way to meet new people and make new friends. Being social is important for our emotional health as well as physical health. Seclusion and loneliness contributes to depression and physical decline in our health.

While being with others is important, sometimes due to the weather or other things you cannot get out but it is still very

important to keep moving. Exercise not only keeps your body in good shape, it also keeps your mind healthy. Having a sedentary lifestyle ages the body and mind. Exercise has been proven to help lower cholesterol, blood pressure, weight and improve joint pain and many other ailments that come with age.

Exercise is not only for older people. In today's world of technology, far too many kids and young adults lead a sedentary lifestyle and it is showing up in the health of younger and younger people. Some schools are having less time for gym class and recess and that means more time sitting at a desk. Everyone needs to have some type of exercise each day.

Walking is a great way to burn some calories and lower stress.

I know I have said all of this before but I really feel it is important to say it again. It is easy to put off the things we don't like and let's face it, exercise is not on the top of most people's list. Believe it or not, if you put it on the list and commit to doing a little each day I think you will see how it makes you feel better. Sticking to a good habit takes about six weeks to instill in our routine.

Once you add a little exercise each day I hope you will keep adding a few more minutes every week and you will see the improvement and importance it makes in how you feel. Take things day by day and in a short while you will feel better and look forward to your exercise routine. It is also very

important to include your children and other family members. This will provide you with quality time and keep you closer to your family and friends. Healthy relations also keep our physical, mental and emotional health in good condition.

Start slow and work up to the exercise that challenges you. The most important thing is to start. The rest will fall into place as you see the improvement in all areas of your life. Keep trying activities until you find one that you enjoy and you know you will stick with. Don't give up after one or two activities. Something will challenge you and you will have fun along with improving your health.

Remember to Keep Moving, You'll Be Glad You Did!!

COVID-19 hospitalizations rise

As hospitalizations for COVID-19 continue to rise, the Frederick County Health Department and Frederick Health are working together to encourage county residents to take steps to enjoy the holidays safely.

"While we have been focused on the number of COVID-19 cases for many months now, this is an appropriate time to shift focus to the number of hospitalizations our healthcare system is experiencing," said Dr. Barbara Brookmyer, Health Officer at Frederick County Health Department. "We want our friends and family who need medical care to get the level of care they require without delay. We have the tools we need to reduce the number of people going to our hospital with COVID-19, tools like vaccines, testing, contact tracing, masking, avoiding crowds, and making smart choices about what activities to participate in based on the risk."

"We expect the virus to continue circulating in our community and cause significant illness through the winter, and our actions can

keep our loved ones safer through the holidays," said Dr. Brookmyer.

Increased hospitalizations are straining resources and staff. At Frederick Health, President & CEO Tom Kleinhanzl said the number of COVID patients continues to rise at an alarming rate.

"As of December 14th, we have 63 COVID-19 positive inpatients hospitalized, our highest numbers in months," Kleinhanzl said. "Of these patients, the overwhelming majority are unvaccinated, which means that this recent surge was entirely preventable."

"To not overwhelm our healthcare system, we must get ahead of this virus. The best way to assist our staff is for everyone in the community to get vaccinated, get your booster, continue to wear masks indoors, and exercise good judgment during this holiday season," added Cheryl Cioffi, Chief Operating Officer with Frederick Health.

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken an incredible toll on our Frederick County community, impacting families physically,

mentally, and financially. Local resources such as food or rental assistance are listed at FrederickCountyMD.gov/COVIDHelp. For community members who may be traveling over the holidays, CDC has updated travel guidelines, as well as tips on how to enjoy the holidays safely.

Health Department vaccination clinics are posted on FrederickCountyMD.gov/CovidVaccine.

Testing is being done Frederick Health Village, 1 Frederick Health Way. Run by Frederick Health Hospital. Hours: 8 to noon. Type of clinic: Drive-thru.

At-home testing is another

option for people who may have been exposed to COVID-19, who are having symptoms, or who want to test before visiting family and friends. Home test kits can be found in many pharmacies. Limited quantities of free test kits will be distributed at Frederick County Public Library branches when available; visit our testing website for updates on availability.

Frederick Health offers Monoclonal Antibody treatment for anyone who tested positive for COVID-19 and has had mild to moderate symptoms for seven days or less qualifies for this treatment. Potential patients can find out if they qualify by speaking directly with their provider and getting a

referral for the treatment. www.frederickhealth.org/patients-visitors/covid-19-information/monoclonal-antibody-clinic/.

Frederick Health will work to share local hospitalization data on their website FrederickHealth.org/COVID19. Frederick County Health Department has county data available on the COVID-19 dashboard at FrederickCountyMD.gov/CovidStats. Please note, currently the Health Department is unable to update case and death data due to statewide network issues.

For more information and resources, visit Health.FrederickCountyMD.gov/COVID19.



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ASTRONOMY

The night sky of January

Professor Wayne Wooten

The new moon is on January 2nd, and the waxing crescent lies just below Mercury in twilight on January 3rd. The short lived Quadrantid Meteor Shower will peak on the morning of January 3rd, but it will be better for Europe than us this year. The Earth is closest to the Sun at perihelion on January 4th. Our orbit is so circular that this slight variation does not have a major impact on our seasons...our 23.5 degree tilt is much more important.

Your last glimpse of Venus will be just to the right of the moon on the 3rd; it moves into the morning sky after this. The moon lies just below Saturn on January 4th, and below Jupiter on January 5th. The first quarter moon is on January 9th. The Full Moon, the long night moon, is on January 17th. The third quarter moon is on January 25th, and the waning crescent moon lies below Mars on January 29th, and below Venus, now in the dawn, on January 30th.

The planets are leaving the evening sky fast. Venus passes between us and the Sun on January 8th, to spend most of 2022 in the dawn. Mercury is out during the first week of January low in the SW, but also gets lost in the Sun's glare after that. It joins Venus in the dawn on January 31st. Saturn sets in the SW twilight by month's end. Jupiter will also vanish into the Sun's glare by Valen-



The iconic shape of "Orion the Hunter" is instantly recognizable and well-placed in the night sky for observers. Orion consists of seven major stars: two for his shoulders, two for his feet, and three for his belt. The two brightest stars in Orion are in the body frame of the hunter. Rigel, Orion's brightest star, is located below the belt at the bottom right. Betelgeuse, the second brightest, is located to the left, above the Belt of Orion. The most noticeable part of Orion is the pattern called Orion's Belt. This Belt contains three brightly aligned stars: Alnitak, Alnilam, and Mintaka.

entine's Day. Mars starts the year alone in the dawn, but by month's end, is joined by Venus and Mercury both.

While the naked eye, dark adapted by several minutes away from any bright lights, is a wonderful instrument to stare up into deep space, far beyond our own Milky Way, binoculars are better for spotting specific deep sky objects. For a detailed map of

northern hemisphere skies, about December 30th visit the www.skymaps.com website and download the map for January; it will have a more extensive calendar, and list of best objects for the naked eyes, binoculars, and scopes on the back of the map. Sky and Telescope has www.skyandtelescope.com/observing/astronomy-podcasts.

The constellation Cassiopeia makes a striking W in the NW. Her daughter, Andromeda, starts with the NE corner star of Pegasus" Square, and goes NE with two more bright stars in a row. It is from the middle star, beta Andromeda, that we proceed about a quarter the way to the

top star in the W of Cassiopeia, and look for a faint blur with the naked eye. M-31, the Andromeda Galaxy, is the most distant object visible with the naked eye, lying about 2.5 million light years distant.

Overhead is Andromeda's hero, Perseus, rises. Between him and Cassiopeia is the fine Double Cluster, faintly visible with the naked eye and two fine binocular objects in the same field. Perseus contains the famed eclipsing binary star Algol, where the Arabs imagined the eye of the gorgon Medusa would lie. It fades to a third its normal brightness for six out of every 70 hours, as a larger but cooler orange giant covers about 80% of the smaller but hotter and thus brighter companion as seen from Earth.

Look at Perseus' feet for the famed Pleiades cluster; they lie about 400 light-years distant, and over 250 stars are members of this fine group. East of the seven sisters is the V of stars marking the face of Taurus the Bull, with bright orange Aldebaran as his eye. The V of stars is the Hyades cluster, older than the blue Pleiades, but about half their distance.

Yellow Capella, a giant star the same temperature and color as our much smaller Sun, dominates the overhead sky. It is part of the pentagon on stars making up Auriga, the Charioteer (think Ben Hur). Several nice binocular Messier open clusters are found in the winter milky way here. East of Auriga, the twins, Castor and Pollux highlight the Gemini. UWF alumni can associate the pair with Jason and the Golden Fleece legend, for they were the first two Argonauts to sign up on his crew.

South of Gemini, Orion is the most familiar winter constellation, dominating the eastern sky

at dusk. The reddish supergiant Betelgeuse marks his eastern shoulder, while blue-white supergiant Rigel stands opposite on his west knee. Just south of the belt, hanging like a sword downward, is M-42, the Great Nebula of Orion, an outstanding binocular and telescopic stellar nursery. It is part of a huge spiral arm gas cloud, with active star birth all over the place. You should be able to glimpse this stellar birthplace as a faint blur with just your naked eyes, and the larger your binoculars or telescope, the better the view becomes.

While M-42 is an emission nebulae, shining reddish from the ionization of its hydrogen gas by hot young stars forming inside it, at Orion's right foot is brilliant Rigel, one of the most luminous blue super giants in the galaxy, about 50,000X more luminous than our Sun. Its visible light causes the nearby Witch's Head to shine as a bluish reflection nebula, visible in photos to the lower right of Rigel. Long exposure photo by Nick Fritz.

Last but certainly not least, in the east rise the hunter's two faithful companions, Canis major and minor. Procyon is the bright star in the little dog, and rises minutes before Sirius, the brightest star in the sky. Sirius dominates the SE sky by 7 p.m., and as it rises, the turbulent winter air causes it to sparkle with shafts of spectral fire. Beautiful as the twinkling appears to the naked eye, for astronomers this means the image is blurry; only in space can we truly see "clearly now". At 8 light years distance, Sirius is the closest star we can easily see with the naked eye. Below Sirius in binoculars is another fine open cluster, M-41, a fitting dessert for New Year's sky feast.

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—Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)

Mid-Atlantic Weather Watch:

Snow, rain, wintry mix (1, 2, 3, 4, 50; fair breezy, cold at first (6, 7, 8). More snow and wintry mix (9, 10, 11) turning milder with scattered rain showers (12, 13, 14); flurries, snow showers in the western part of the region (15, 16. Fair, breezy colder (17). Seasonably cold, occasional flurries and breezy (19, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24) turning fair and cold again, cold at first (25, 26, 27, 28, 29); heavy snow, mix east, then windy (30, 31).

Sever Weather Watch: Wintry mix (15) with heavy snow, wintry mix and high winds (30-31).

Full Moon: The first Full Moon of 2022 will occur on Monday, January 17th. It has been called Wolf

Moon by many Native American tribes because of the increased boldness of wolf packs venturing closer and closer to their camps looking for food. Other tribes called it Hunger Moon because of the scarcity of game at this time of year.

Holidays: New Year's Day falls on Saturday, January 1st. Martin Luther King, Jr., famed civil rights activist leader, was born on January 15, 1929. His birthday is celebrated on the third Monday of the month. In 2022, that is Monday, January 17th. This great leader will be forever remembered for the great social changes he brought about in this country and for the ultimate sacrifice he made pursuing unity and racial harmony which still eludes us today.

The Garden: Mulch landscape beds for winter if you haven't already (and if the weather allows). Mulching prevents erosion, protects against soil You can

even recycle your cut Christmas tree and use the branches to cover perennials! Begin planning your garden now. Buy an extra wall calendar and dedicate it to tilling and planting activities. Look ahead and record the last projected frost dates for your region and mark down when to plant seedlings indoor.

The Farm: Best for planting root crops (23, 24); weeding and stirring the soil (18, 19, 20); planting above-ground crops (6, 7); harvesting all crops (27, 28); the best days for setting hens and incubators (10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25); the slaughtering and butchering of meat (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8); transplanting (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8); the weaning of all small animals and livestock (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31); harvesting and Storing Grains (1, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31).

J. Gruber's Thought For Today's Living

"Resolutions are only as good as the intent to keep them"

COMPUTER Q&A

To Mac or to PC?

Ayse Stenabaugh
Jester's Computer Services

Determining whether or not you should get a Mac or a PC is a personal decision. As a repair technician I often find users feel pressured by family or friends to switch to a different platform. It's easy for a long time Apple user to say that Macs are better than a PC. A user who is more comfortable on a PC is likely to say PC's are better, so which is it? The truth is there are benefits of using either operating system and those are not the only options, many new devices come pre-installed with yet a third alternative - Google's Chrome OS. Having a little background knowledge on what to consider can be helpful while deciding what is right for you.

Know your limitations

Windows computers are going to provide the most flexibility because there is a much larger market of compatible hardware and software. Mac users often find the support offered by Apple to be superior to alternatives with Apple stores and Apple Care extended warranties. Not all software available on PC is available on a Mac, it is advised to know ahead of time what you're going to need and to ensure that you will be able to obtain any specific software that you don't want to part with. Chrome OS will offer the least flexibility since it will only run Google apps. If you're already using Google Chrome's web browser and don't require any software outside of Chrome the limited OS is a great affordable option.

Switching to a new OS

Whether or not you've had any experience with a different operating system, you will have a learning curve when getting acclimated with the features and differences between the various systems. For example on Mac OS users will find themselves with access to a variety of preloaded software including Safari, Apple Mail, Photos, iMessage, Facetime and iCloud - all developed and designed by Apple. Those who use Windows will find similar Software developed by Microsoft that provide the same basic functionality - Edge, Mail, Photos, Teams and OneDrive. The features that the software contains are different and those who are already iPhone, iPad users will be familiar with functions and software installed on Mac OS but that doesn't necessarily mean that Windows users don't have access to the same or similar functionality. Windows doesn't have iMessage (which syncs your messages between devices) but it does have My Phone which similarity lets Android users sync messages and notifications between devices. Determining which OS is right for you may be easier if you think about the compatibility between

that and your other devices. If you are not planning on using your computer in conjunction with other devices, we wouldn't recommend making your decision based on things you won't use or need.

Avoiding Problems

It is a common misconception that Apple computers get no viruses and don't ever fail or crash. In reality, all devices that are connected to the internet have the possibility to become infected. As for system crashes and issues, the most common issues among Mac users recently have been due to increased security. Macs with older OS's either can't meet the requirements to install newer compatible versions of web browsers or due to a software glitch they weren't installed properly which has caused users to be unable to visit secure websites. This means that for those users you can't visit banking websites do online shopping or even access email in some cases. While I deal primarily with PC users I've had a lot of Mac users lately who have become frustrated with the

lack of support for software that would run on older Mac OS's but not newer ones. Both Mac and Windows PC's have offered free upgrades to the latest OS's on compatible devices. Time and time again I see users frustrated with the changes that new operating systems bring, since 2001 when apple first released OSX there have been an additional 17 OS's that have been released. On Microsoft's end, Windows XP was released in 2001 and there have only been 6 operating systems released since that time.



Windows 11, Microsoft's latest OS has recently been released and for at least the first year we won't be recommending upgrading or purchasing new devices with Windows 11 pre-installed.

If you find yourself unsure of what device or operating system is best for

you or if you are looking for technology related support, consider contacting us at Jester's Computer Services located at 5135 Fairfield Road in Fairfield. For free tips and tricks as well as self-help support visit us on the web on Facebook or on our website www.jesterscomputers.com.

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HUMOR

Totally useless facts to impress bored friends

Money isn't made out of paper; it's made out of cotton.

The 57 on Heinz ketchup bottle represents the varieties of pickles the company once had.

Your stomach produces a new layer of mucus every two weeks - otherwise it will digest itself.

The Declaration of Independence was written on hemp paper.

The dot over the letter "i" is called a tittle.

A raisin dropped in a glass of fresh champagne will bounce up and down continuously from the bottom of the glass to the top.

Susan Lucci is the daughter of Phyllis Diller.

A duck's quack doesn't echo. No one knows why.

40% of McDonald's profits come from the sales of Happy Meals.

Every person has a unique tongue print.

315 entries in Webster's 1996 Dictionary were misspelled.

During the chariot scene in 'Ben Hur' a small red car can be seen in the distance.

On average, 12 newborns will be given to the wrong parents daily.

Warren Beatty and Shirley MacLaine are brother and sister.

Chocolate affects a dog's heart and nervous system; a few ounces will kill a small sized dog.

Most lipstick contains fish scales.

Orcas (killer whales) kill sharks by torpedoing up into the shark's stomach from underneath, causing the shark to explode.

Donald Duck comics were banned from Finland because he doesn't wear pants.

Ketchup was sold in the 1830s as medicine.

Leonardo da Vinci could write with one hand and draw with the other at the same time.

American Airlines saved \$40,000 in '87 by eliminating one olive from each salad served in first class.

Because metal was scarce, the Oscars given out during World War II were made of wood.

Upper and lower case letters are named 'upper' and 'lower' because in the time when all original print had to be set in individual letters, the 'upper case' letters were stored in the case on top of the case that stored the smaller, 'lower case' letters.

There are no clocks in Las Vegas gambling casinos.

There are no words in the dictionary that rhyme with: orange, purple, and silver!

The name Wendy was made up for the book Peter Pan, there was never a recorded Wendy before!

Leonardo da Vinci invented scissors. Also, it took him 10 years to paint Mona Lisa's lips.

If you pour a tiny amount of liquor on a scorpion, it will instantly go mad and sting itself to death.

If you have three quarters, four dimes, and four pennies, you have \$1.19. You also have the largest amount of money in coins without being able to make change for a dollar.

The mask used by Michael Myers in the original "Halloween" was a Captain Kirk mask painted white.

The phrase "rule of thumb" is derived from an old English law, which stated that you couldn't beat your wife with anything wider than your thumb.

The first product Motorola started to develop was a record player for auto mobiles. At that time, the most known player on the market was the Victrola, so they called themselves Motorola.

By raising your legs slowly and lying on your back, you can't sink in quicksand.

Celery has negative calories! It takes more calories to eat a piece of celery than the celery has in it to begin with. It's the same with apples.

Chewing gum while peeling onions will keep you from crying!

The glue on Israeli postage stamps is certified kosher.

Astronauts are not allowed to eat beans before they go into space because passing wind in a space suit damages them. (sorta obvious)

Back in the mid to late 80's, an IBM compatible computer wasn't considered a hundred percent compatible unless it could run Microsoft's Flight Simulator.

American car horns honk in the key of F.

The name Wendy was made up for the book "Peter Pan."

Barbie's full name is Barbara Millicent Roberts.

Every time you lick a stamp, you consume 1/10 of a calorie.

The average person falls asleep in seven minutes.

Studies show that if a cat falls off the seventh floor of a building it has about thirty percent less chance of surviving than a cat that falls off the twentieth floor. It supposedly takes about eight floors for the cat to realize what is occurring, relax and correct itself.

Your stomach has to produce a new layer of mucus every two weeks otherwise it will digest itself.

The citrus soda 7-UP was created in 1929; '7' was selected after the original 7-ounce containers and 'UP' for the direction of the bubbles.

101 Dalmatians, Peter Pan, Lady and the Tramp, and Mulan are the only Disney cartoons where both parents are present and don't die throughout the movie.

'Stewardesses' is the longest word that is typed with only the left hand.

To escape the grip of a crocodile's jaws, push your thumbs into its eyeballs - it will let you go instantly.

Reindeer like to eat bananas.

No word in the English language rhymes with month, orange, silver and purple.

The word "samba" means "to rub navels together."

Mel Blanc (the voice of Bugs Bunny) was allergic to carrots.

The electric chair was invented by a dentist.

The very first bomb dropped by the Allies on Berlin during World War II killed the only elephant in the Berlin Zoo.

More people are killed annually by donkeys than airplane crashes.

A 'jiffy' is a unit of time for 1/100th of a second.

The name of every continents end with the same letter that they start with

The strongest muscle in the body is the tongue

There are two credit cards for every person in the United States
TYPEWRITER is the longest word that can be made using the letters on one row of the keyboard

Women blink nearly twice as much as men!

You can't kill yourself by holding your breath

It is physically impossible for pigs to look up into the sky

The "sixth sick sheik's sixth sheep's sick" is said to be the toughest tongue twister in the English language

111,111,111 x 111,111,111 = 12,345,678,987,654,321
(count out the answer)*

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HUMOR

What do bullet proof vests, fire escapes, windshield wipers and laser printers all have in common? Answer - All invented by women

Question - This is the only food that doesn't spoil. What is this?
Answer - Honey

A crocodile cannot stick its tongue out
A snail can sleep for three years
American Airlines saved \$40,000 in 1987 by eliminating one olive from each salad served in first-class.

In the last 4000 years, no new animals have been domesticated.
On average, people fear spiders more than they do death
Shakespeare invented the words 'assassination' and 'bump'
Stewardesses is the longest word typed with only the left hand
An ant always falls over on its right side when intoxicated.

The electric chair was invented by a dentist
The human heart creates enough pressure when it pumps it can squirt blood 30 feet

Rats multiply so quickly that in 18 months, two rats could have over a million descendants.

Wearing headphones for just an hour will increase the bacteria in your ear by 700 times

The cigarette lighter was invented before the match
Most lipstick contains fish scales

Like fingerprints, everyone's tongue print is different
Can you guess which of the following are true and which are false?

Apples, not caffeine, are more efficient at waking you up in the morning.

Alfred Hitchcock didn't have a belly button.

A pack-a-day smoker will lose approximately 2 teeth every 10 years.

People do not get sick from cold weather; it's from being indoors a lot more.

When you sneeze, all bodily functions stop, even your heart!
Only 7 per cent of the population are lefties.

Forty people are sent to the hospital for dog bites every minute.
Babies are born without kneecaps. They don't appear until they are 2-6 years old.

The average person over 50 will have spent 5 years waiting in lines.

The toothbrush was invented in 1498

The average housefly lives for one month.
40,000 Americans are injured by toilets each year.
A coat hanger is 44 inches long when straightened.
The average computer user blinks 7 times a minute.
Your feet are bigger in the afternoon than any other time of day.
Most of us have eaten a spider in our sleep.

The REAL reason ostriches stick their head in the sand is to search for water.

The only two animals that can see behind themselves without turning their heads are the rabbit and the parrot.

John Travolta turned down the starring roles in "An Officer and a Gentleman" and "Tootsie."



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