

SHLES Field Trip, p.12



More fire photos, p.6

Council Kicks Off 2026 Budget; Discusses Future Budget Process

by Maurice Crawford

On Monday, March 24, the Greenbelt City Council heard a report from the city's auditor of last year's budget and began the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 budget process with a presentation by the City Manager Josué Salmerón.

The recent audit of FY 2024, conducted by Mitchell Titus, gave the city a clean bill of health. Daniel Kenney, engagement partner for Mitchell Titus, gave a presentation on their findings. No deficiencies or weaknesses were found in the audit for the period ending June 30, 2024.

Mayor Emmett Jordan expressed gratitude to the team supplying the data with special thanks to City Treasurer Bertha Gaymon.

2026 Budget Presentation

Salmerón went over the proposed FY 2026 budget for the city and discussed the changing budget projections due to the current atmosphere in the federal government and the state's constrained budget. (For the recent FY 2026 budget worksession

see page 8). Currently, the total budget for 2026 stands at \$52.5M and is composed of \$40M in the general fund, \$7.4M in capital projects, and nearly \$5M in other funds and supports 234.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. The 2026 general fund estimates revenues will be \$40,221,600 and expenses will be \$40,215,900 with a positive difference of \$5,700. Compared to last year's budget, revenues are expected to increase by 5.76 percent and expenses by 5.69 percent. In addition, the number of positions will be reduced by 13.2 FTE which includes both unfunded and vacant positions plus having some positions funded by American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money (changes in ARPA rules have allowed this shift). Also, the Recreation and Parks Department will have a reduction of \$129,500 (or 2 percent) compared to last year's budget through reduced staff hours, unfilled positions, fewer uniforms/equipment and other actions.

See **BUDGET**, page 8

Women of Greenbelt

Fiona O'Brien, 13, Joins U.S. Acrobatic Gymnastics Team

by Diya Shah

At just 13 years old, Fiona O'Brien of Greenbelt is already balancing more than most: school, international travel and a rigorous gymnastics schedule that would make even the most dedicated athletes sweat. This year, all that work paid off. Fiona was officially selected to be on the 2025 U.S. Acrobatic Gymnastics National Team – an incredible honor for a gymnast of her age and a major step forward in her already impressive gymnastics journey.

"It's exciting ... it's really cool," said Fiona about making the team. Currently an eighth grader at the Key School in Annapolis, Fiona has a packed schedule ahead: she'll travel to Arizona in April for a national team training camp, compete in Canada in May, head to Bulgaria in June for the International Acro Cup and just weeks later, return

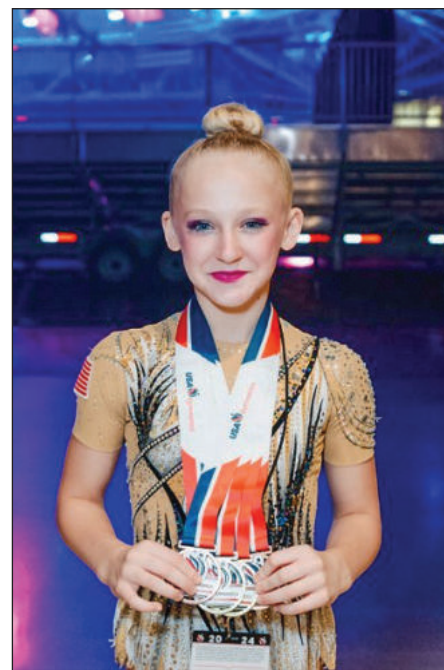


PHOTO BY ANDREA HANKS

Fiona O'Brien poses with her medals from the USA Gymnastics Championships in June.

to the U.S. to compete at the 2025 USA Gymnastics Championships in Rhode Island.

That busy competition schedule comes on the heels of a standout performance at last year's National Championships in Minneapolis, where Fiona and her teammates Gabby Zsakany and Juliet Hanks medaled in every event (see the July 10, 2024 issue). They placed gold in Balance, bronze in Dynamic, bronze in Finals and gold in All-Around, placing them just 0.08 points ahead of the bronze-winning team in a nail-bitingly close competition.

Despite the significance of the accomplishment, Fiona and her mom, Jamie Krauk, speak about it quite humbly. "It's been a steady progression,"

See **FIONA**, page 12

Brush Fire Burned Across Acres Of BARC Fields Behind GES

by Anna Bedford-Dillow



PHOTO BY FRANK GERVASI

A brush fire broke out at multiple locations in Beltsville Agricultural Research Center fields and the North Woods in Greenbelt on Sunday, March 30.

At 3:16 p.m., on Sunday, March 30, Prince George's County Fire Department (PGFD) responded to a large brush fire reported to be outside 162 Research Road, one of the homes on Research Road that back onto the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center's (BARC) fields and the woods there. Residents reported the fire was spreading in fields behind Greenbelt Elementary School (GES), through BARC and toward Powder Mill Road. Fire department responders set up a large staging area at GES on Ridge Road. Firefighters also cut a hole in the fence between

Greenbelt Homes, Inc. (GHI) and BARC property to access the fire and ran hoses along the fence on the GHI side to another access point. Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services, as well as U.S. Park Police and Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Forestry Services joined PGFD in their response.

The first fire in the area behind the school actually occurred Saturday, March 29. A resident on Laurel Hill Road called in the fire between 8 and 9 p.m. when it was visible from their

See **FIRE**, page 6

Council Votes No on New Bus Stops Scuttles WMATA's Route Plans

by Maurice Crawford

On Monday, March 24, the Greenbelt City Council voted not to approve the installation of two new bus stops along Crescent Road, which means Metrobuses P20 and P21 (the new designations for the G14 and G12 buses) will follow the same routes within the city as they do today rather than the altered routes planned by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). The lively and long discussion began with a review of the Better Bus process by City Planner Jaime Fearer and the input provided by the city and its residents.

The main objection to the Better Bus plan was routing of the P20/P21 buses along Westway rather than Gardenway (which

is the current bus route). However, residents were concerned about safety, accessibility, noise and the loss of on-street parking. These and other comments were taken into consideration by the WMATA Board who made its decision on the routes in November 2024. The Better Bus Plan is to take effect on June 30 and WMATA needs to update maps and other information regarding the changes. At the council meeting WMATA asked the city to install two accessible and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant bus stops along Crescent Road to accommodate the new routes.

William Jones in WMATA's

See **BUS STOPS**, page 7

What Goes On

- Monday, April 7**
7:30 p.m., City Council Worksession: State Highway Administration, Municipal Building
- Wednesday, April 9**
7:30 p.m., Council Worksession: Tribes Presentation (Reparations Commission), Municipal Building

See the city ad on page 5 or the meetings calendar at greenbeltnmd.gov for more information.



PHOTO COURTESY GREENBELT HONKI SITUATION

The Greenbelt Honk! Situation was in Austin, Texas, March 28 to 30 for a community street band festival called HONK!TX. They brought an issue of the News Review with them.

Letters to the Editor

More on Energy Town Hall

I would like to make three comments about information in the March 13 News Review issue.

The first two are in reference to the article on page one entitled, Utility Bills Town Hall Skirts Energy Cost Woes.

Readers should understand that Pepco does not produce much of its own electricity but rather has to buy it from the grid. They make their profit by selling electricity at a rate higher than what they buy it for.

I asked whether the EmpowerMD law assumed that the utilities would eat the cost of the program rather than passing on the large fees to the consumer. The Pepco representative didn't have an answer for that.

I believe I also asked why only about 7 percent of our electricity is coming from renewable energy sources whereas the 2022 law, Climate Solutions Now Act calls for 50 percent renewable energy by 2030 and 100 percent renewable energy (net zero) by 2045. We are nowhere near reaching those goals. Again, no answer was given.

Finally, I would like to make an addition to the box on page 8 entitled Absence of Choice that accompanies the town hall article. I did a little research and was surprised to find that Marylanders no longer are able to sign up for wind energy through Clean Choice or WGL.

However, Maryland residents in the Pepco catchment area still have the option to sign up for Community Solar meaning they subscribe to a nearby solar array and only pay for the amount of

electricity they use. For example, Neighborhood Sun offer a 5 to 10 percent discount off the Pepco rate. For those people considered low to moderate income, they are offered a discount of 25 percent off the Pepco rate.

*Lore Rosenthal
Former coordinator of the
Greenbelt Climate Action
Network and former part-time
employee of Clean Currents
and Neighborhood Sun*

An Unexpected Fire Drill

Walking the dogs Monday morning, the day after the wildfire behind Greenbelt Elementary School, we noticed several smoldering logs re-ignite, flaming up in the brisk morning breeze. Is that a problem or not? Greenbelt police didn't know, instead referring us to the Prince George's County non-emergency service number, which is just a recording. That wasn't reassuring – a sudden wind shift could spread flames right back toward Greenbelt houses!

So we called 911. Eventually, 30 minutes after the first call, a fire truck from College Park arrived at Greenbelt Elementary. The firefighter explained that State of Maryland firefighters had jurisdiction over the burn site, and were actively monitoring it. That was reassuring. But couldn't the Greenbelt police or county 911 service have just told us that from the start?

Maryland may not be as prone to wildfires as western states. But Sunday's fire in Greenbelt shows one can happen here too. A drought combined with high

See **LETTERS**, page 6

News Review Hosts Open House April 12

Current and potential members, friends and families are invited to an Open House at the News Review office on Saturday, April 12 from 1 to 4 p.m.

The News Review hasn't missed an issue since our first issue on November 24, 1937. Come learn how the weekly miracle occurs.

Meet the people who make it happen – writers, copyeditors, layout, ad desk, emailers, proofers, business desk and myriad other members. How do they produce a paper full of stories, photos, letters, cartoons and advertising each week? And how can you get more involved? Come find out!



PETE REPERT



"GULLY WON'CHA JOIN US 1 - 4:00 PM?"



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Adults \$7, Kids \$5

OC = Open Captions
CC = Closed Captions
DVS = Descriptive Video Service

SHOWTIMES:
APRIL 4th - 10th

The Friend (R) (CC) (DVS)
(2025) (120 mins)
Screen 1 - Main Auditorium
Sat. 5:00 PM, 7:45 PM
Sun. 2:15 PM (OC), 5:00 PM
Tues. 7:30 PM
Screen 2 - The Screening Room
Fri. 5:15 PM, 8:00 PM
Mon. 3:00 PM, 5:45 PM
Wed. 7:30 PM
Thurs. 7:45 PM

Death of a Unicorn (R) (CC)
(DVS) (2025) (108 mins)
Screen 1 - Main Auditorium
Fri. 5:30 PM
Wed. 8:15 PM
Screen 2 - The Screening Room
Sat. 8:00 PM
Sun. 5:15 PM
Tues. 8:15 PM

The Penguin Lessons (PG-13)
(CC) (DVS) (2024) (110 mins)
Screen 1 - Main Auditorium
Fri. 8:15 PM
Mon. 3:30 PM (OC), 6:00 PM
Wed. 5:45 PM
Thurs. 5:30 PM
Screen 2 - The Screening Room
Sat. 5:15 PM
Sun. 2:30 PM
Tues. 5:45 PM

Sullivan's Travels
(NR) (1941) (90 mins)
Free Cinema Classic
Screen 1 - Main Auditorium
Mon. 1:00 PM
Thurs. 8:00 PM

On Screen at Greenbelt Cinema

The Friend

The comfortable, solitary New York life of writer and teacher Iris (Naomi Watts) is thrown into disarray after her closest friend and mentor (Bill Murray) dies suddenly and bequeaths her his beloved 150 lb. Great Dane. The regal yet intractable beast, named Apollo, immediately creates practical problems for Iris, from furniture destruction to eviction notices, as well as more existential ones, his looming presence constantly reminding her of her friend's problematic choices in both life and death. Yet as Iris finds herself unexpectedly bonding with the animal, she begins to come to terms with her past, her lost friend and her own creative inner life.

Death of a Unicorn

A father (Paul Rudd) and daughter (Jenna Ortega) accidentally hit and kill a unicorn while en route to a weekend retreat, where his billionaire boss (Richard E. Grant) seeks to exploit the creature's miraculous curative properties.

The Penguin Lessons

The film was inspired by the true story of a disillusioned Englishman who went to work in a school in Argentina in 1976. Expecting an easy ride, Tom (Steve Coogan) discovers a divided nation and a class of unteachable students. However, after he rescues a penguin from an oil-slicked beach, his life is turned upside down. Said critic Neely Swanson of the Beverly Hills Courier, "The true star of this tale, the one who's in the title of the film, is the penguin. Never pass up an opportunity to interact with penguins, and this one is no different."

Sullivan's Travels

In this screwball comedy, successful movie director John L. Sullivan (Joel McCrea), convinced he won't be able to film his ambitious masterpiece until he has suffered, dons a hobo disguise and sets off on a journey, aiming to "know trouble" first-hand. When all he finds is a train ride back to Hollywood and a beautiful blonde companion (Veronica Lake), he redoubles his efforts, managing to land himself in more trouble than he bargained for when he loses his memory and ends up a prisoner on a chain gang.

Letters Policy

Deadline for letters is 6 p.m. Monday. Submission does not guarantee publication. Letters should be no longer than 300 words (shorter letters are more likely to be published).

Letters may be edited for clarity, grammar, civility and space constraints. The News Review may add a comment from the editor if deemed necessary.

All letters must include the letter writer's name, physical address, and telephone number. Only the name will be published; the News Review will consider requests for the name to be withheld.



Greenbelt News Review

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

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PUBLICATION DEADLINES:

- Monday 2 p.m. Articles/photos over 700 words, Display ads (not camera ready).
- Monday 6 p.m. All letters to the editor (300 word limit).
- Tuesday 2 p.m. Articles/photos under 700 words, photographs not associated with a story.
- Tuesday 6 p.m. Classified ads and camera-ready display ads.
- Email submission is available. Hardcopy submissions (delivered by respective deadline) may be mailed to the address above or left in the Co-op grocery store drop box or GNR external office door mail slot, as shown below.
- Payment must accompany ads except by prior arrangement.

MAIL SUBSCRIPTION: \$55/year

Greenbelt Community Center at 15 Crescent Rd.
OFFICE HOURS: Monday and Tuesday, 2 - 4 p.m.
GNR external office door mail slot is located up a few stairs 25 yards left of the Community Center's east door near the Municipal Building.

Community Events

At the Library

Greenbelt Library's regular hours are Mondays 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Tuesdays and Wednesdays noon to 8 p.m., Thursdays and Fridays 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturdays 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sundays 1 to 5 p.m.

Storytimes

Friday, April 4, 11:15 a.m., ages 2 to 3. Register at pgcmls.info/event/12988939.

Wednesday, April 9, 12:15 p.m., ages 3 to 5. Register at pgcmls.info/event/12988852.

Thursday, April 10, 10:15 a.m., ages newborn to 2. Register at pgcmls.info/event/12988919.

Ride and Read

Thursday, April 3, 11 a.m., ages 16+. Get some physical activity while at the Library. Sign up for an hour ride on a stationary bike with great free apps from PGCMLS like Libby, Kanopy and Hoopla to enjoy while working out. Participants must be 16 or older, sign a waiver before beginning to ride and be wearing loose-fitting clothing and closed-toed shoes. Register at pgcmls.info/event/12989062.

Passport Services

Greenbelt Library serves as a U.S. Passport Acceptance Facility. Applications are accepted by appointment only; schedule a 30-minute appointment by calling 240-455-5451 or visiting pgcmls.info/passport-services.



Library Special Events On Saturday, April 5

Telling Our Greenbelt Stories!

Saturday, April 5, 10:30 a.m., ages 9 to 14. In this program, attendees will create and reflect on their personal stories while connecting them to the stories of past Greenbelt residents in the Tugwell Collection. This experience is perfect for children ages 9 to 14. Parents or guardians are encouraged to attend as well. Register at pgcmls.info/event/13259024.

Are Co-ops Right for Today?

Saturday, April 5, 2 p.m., ages 18+. Through examining documents from the Tugwell Collection, Greenbelters' views of co-ops over time will be discussed. Can these types of businesses help solve the problems of today? Register at pgcmls.info/event/13259057.

Both programs will be presented by students in the University of Maryland College of Information and Center for Archival Futures.

Greenbriar Communities Elect Boards of Directors

Greenbriar Phase III had their Annual Meeting on March 19, and the results of the election are as follows: Angeline Butler, president; Carol Adams, vice president; Mary Thomas, secretary; Jane Mullaney, treasurer. The position of director is vacant.

The Greenbriar Community Association had their Annual Meeting on March 25, and the results of that election are as follows: Jeanette Gordy, president; Dorothy "Didi" Peck, vice president; Carol Adams, secretary; Therese Benedik, treasurer; Jaime Gonzalez, director and Glen Oaks Apartment representative.

Greenbelt Museum Welcomes Spring

Join the Greenbelt Museum to welcome spring on Sunday, April 6. Come by the grounds of the Museum house (10-A and 10-B Crescent) between 2 and 4 p.m. and plant a seedling to take home. The Museum will have a small selection of seedlings including flowers, vegetables and herbs. All supplies will be provided, one seedling per person, while they last. No pre-registration is required.

In addition to planting, visitors are encouraged to take a free quick tour of the Museum house to see spring decorations and the start of a small demonstration victory garden on the grounds. Greenbelters would have gardened for victory in their allotment plots, not in their yards, but many households across the United States did have gardens growing just outside of their doors, as the Museum's garden demonstrates.

This will be the Museum's second victory garden. The first was in 2011 in conjunction with the exhibit, Green from the Start: A History of Gardening in Greenbelt. To learn more about exactly where Greenbelters gardened, view the recent lecture given by Stephen Oetken, Unearthing Greenbelt's Historic Gardens now available on YouTube.

The Museum house will be open from 1 to 5 p.m. and the seedling activity will run from 2 to 4 p.m. If it rains, the activity will take place under a tent.

Golden Age Club

The Golden Age Club meets most Wednesdays at 11 a.m. in Room 201 of the Community Center. Annual dues need to be paid.

April Schedule

April 9 – Spring Ticket Auction

April 16 – Spring Luncheon, noon, Holiday Inn, 10000 Baltimore Avenue, College Park

April 23 – Bingo

April 30 – Special presentation by Tina Alston: When You Make a Mess, You Clean it Up

Sign Up for May's Arthritis Walk, ERHS

On Saturday, May 3 from 9 to 11:30 a.m., the Eleanor Roosevelt High School track will host the 21st Annual Walk to Cure Arthritis in Prince George's County, to benefit the Arthritis Foundation. Funds raised help in finding solutions, better treatments and a cure. To register for this event, or to donate, go to events.arthritis.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.event&eventID=1744.

Greenbelt Chess Club Meetings for April

The Greenbelt Chess Club will meet on Tuesdays, April 8, April 15 and April 22. The meetings will take place at the Youth Center from 6:30 to 8:45 p.m. The club welcomes people of all ages and skill levels. To be added to their mailing list, go to tinyurl.com/ycy2nz4m and complete the brief form. Email questions to greenbeltchessclub@gmail.com.

Laureate Reads Poetry in the Garden



PHOTO BY CLUB MEMBER

Poetry in the Garden

The poetry group will meet next on Sunday, April 6 from 3 to 5 p.m. in the clubhouse of Schrom Hills Park on Hanover Parkway.

The guest speaker is Zeina Azzam, a Palestinian American poet, writer and community activist. She was selected as the Poet Laureate of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, for 2022 to 2025.

She will be reading some of her poems and share her writing experience in the past and present time.

The public is invited. Light refreshments will be served. For details, call Effie at 443-415-1053.

More Community Events are located throughout the paper.

Artful Afternoon Offers Art, Music

Enjoy a free all-ages art workshop and music event at the Community Center on Sunday, April 6. Paint koi fish with local artist Barbara Joann Combs while listening or singing along as local musicians jam on ukuleles, led by Artist-in-Residence Rachel Cross. The event will take place on the back lawn between the Community Center and the Aquatic Center fence, near the Three Sisters Garden, weather permitting. The rain location is inside the Community Center Ground Floor East. Pre-register at sugeni.us/VqeA for one of two sessions: 1 to 2 p.m. or 2 to 3 p.m.. Walk-ins are welcome.

Celebrate Third Place On Wednesday, April 9

The Bibliophiles of Greenbelt, a nonfiction history book group, invites the community to read and join in a discussion of Celebrating the Third Place by sociologist Ray Oldenburg, Ph.D., as well as the author's other book, The Great, Good Place.

Third places are places away from home and work where community members can converse, get to know each other, commune and build relationships and community.

These books are seminal for the Bibliophiles, building community, Historic Greenbelt and the New Deal Café, a third place for the micro and macro Greenbelt communities.

The Bibliophiles meet at 11 a.m. on the second Wednesday of each month at the New Deal Café; the next meeting is April 9.

For more information, visit their Facebook page at: Bibliophiles Of Greenbelt, Md., the New Deal Café Events calendar or email wvcaldwell@gmail.com (put Bibliophile in the subject line).

Concert Band Presents A Day with Disney

On Saturday, April 5 at 3 p.m. in the Community Center gym, the Greenbelt Concert Band will present a Day with Disney and its instrument garden. Attendees are encouraged to dress as their favorite Disney character and enjoy the instrument garden, a chance to meet musicians and learn about their instruments. And then hear hit tunes from all the favorite Disney films.

Greenbelt Concert Band is a volunteer adult musical organization dedicated to providing free musical performances for the community and surrounding areas. As a certified 501(c)(3) charity, the band appreciates donations to cover the cost of music, printing and equipment repair.

Learn more about the band at Greenbeltconcertband.org.

Bilingual Story Time At SHL Rec Center

On Friday, April 11, at 10:30 a.m. at the Springhill Lake Recreation Center, RUAK (Random Unselfish Acts of Kindness) with the Prince George's County Memorial Library System will present engaging, lively stories and activities for young children and their caregivers to help build early literacy skills. This monthly program is an introduction to reading aloud to children as a way to instill the love of literature. After the readings, the children can stay and play with balls in the gym. There will be free children's books and free healthy, nutritious snacks. Come, and spread the word to friends and family.

Los Niños Leen y Juegan

El viernes 11 de abril a las 10:30 a.m. en el Centro Recreativo de Springhill Lake, RUAK (Random Unselfish Acts of Kindness) con el Sistema de Bibliotecas Conmemorativas del Condado de Prince George's presentarán interesantes historias y actividades divertidas para niños pequeños y sus cuidadores, para ayudar a desarrollar las habilidades de alfabetización temprana. Este programa mensual es una introducción a la lectura en voz alta a los niños como forma de inculcar el amor por la literatura. Después de las lecturas, los niños pueden quedarse y jugar con pelotas en el gimnasio. Habrá libros infantiles gratis y aperitivos saludables y nutritivos. Como dijo un padre al irse, "Fue muy bueno!" Unete a nosotros, y corra la voz a amigos y familiares.

Toastmasters Meet

The Greenbelt Toastmasters Club invites all to join them online every first, third and fifth Wednesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. The club provides a fun and friendly environment for anyone interested in improving their public speaking and leadership skills. Learn more at greenbelt.toastmastersclubs.org.

This Week at the New Deal Café

Celebrating 30 years in Greenbelt, 1995 - 2025!

BECOME A MEMBER!*

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK!

113 Centerway, Roosevelt Center, Greenbelt, MD

Monday, 9am-9pm; Tuesday—Thursday, 9am - 10pm; Friday/Saturday, 9am – 12midnight; Sunday, 9am – 9pm

TH 4/03	FRI 4/04	SAT 4/05	SUN 4/06
FRENCH CONVERSATION, 5:30p - 6:30pm Wolf's Blues Show & Sit-In Jam 6:30 - 10p Big, bodacious boogie blues jam	ilyAIMY 8-11pm Mixing genres from folk to soul to bluegrass and more!	The Bob Band 8-11pm A faithful musical journey through the amazing Dylan catalogue	ART RECEPTION: MARK LESTER PHOTOS, 1 - 3pm Seth Kibel Quartet 6 - 8pm High-energy jazz and klezmer. WAMMIE-winners. A must see.
MON 4/07	TUES 4/08	WED 4/09	TH 4/10
MONDAY MAUVENUS KARAOKE 6-9pm With Mike Bennett INFINITE & Graye Line Band	Open Mic w/ Tom Gleason 7 - 9:30pm Sign-ups begin at 6:15pm. <small>EXPRESS YOURSELF!</small>	BIBLIOPHILES BOOK CLUB, 11a-12noon Drag Bingo w/ D'Manda Martini 7-9pm UNLIMITED BINGO!	FRENCH CONVERSATION, 5:30p - 6:30pm Free Flowing Musical Experience 7-9pm Paying homage to the Dead & other psychedelic bands
PLEASE TIP GENEROUSLY. IT'S THE ONLY PAY BANDS RECEIVE, AND WE WANT THEM TO COME BACK! [SUGGESTED MINIMUM: \$10]			

*Join NDC! Go to [NewDealCafe\(dot\)com](http://NewDealCafe(dot)com), click on "ABOUT", then "BECOME A MEMBER OR RENEW."

FUNDING FOR THESE ADS PROVIDED BY A GENEROUS DONOR.

Greenbelt STEM Enthusiasts Hike Historic D.C. Boundary

by Lesley Kash

On Sunday morning, March 23, six Greenbelt residents followed the original 1791-1792 Washington, D.C., boundary as they hiked the second leg of a 10-mile Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) hike. Michael Chesnes, Coleman Rose, Al Goyburu, Jessica Forshee, Patrick Forshee and Lawrence Hawkins climbed, forded streams and navigated rough terrain. They were on the hunt for Washington's original Boundary Stones, finding some behind fences on government installations, others obscured on private property.

The Residence Act of 1790 authorized President (and skilled

engineer) George Washington to establish a national capital. He appointed surveyor Major Andrew Ellicott, who in turn asked Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson to also hire Benjamin Banneker, an accomplished surveyor, astronomer and landowner of African descent. Assisted by 75 to 100 men, they mapped and marked the District's boundaries.

To honor this historic accomplishment and highlight the role of STEM in American history, the Guy R. Hawkins Center for STEM launched this hiking initiative to explore and document the creation of Washington, D.C.

St. John's Episcopal Celebrates Resurrection

St. John's Episcopal Church, located at 11040 Baltimore Avenue in Beltsville, at the corner of Route 1 and Powder Mill Road, invites all to a Resurrection Celebration Week, with services starting with Holy Eucharist and a Healing Service at noon on Wednesday, April 16 and Holy Eucharist at 7 p.m. on Maundy Thursday, April 17. On Good Friday, April 18, they will celebrate the Stations of the Cross beginning at noon and Holy Eucharist at 7 p.m.

Easter Sunday will bring Holy Eucharist at 9 a.m., followed at 11:30 a.m. with Holy Eucharist and music at a family service with an Easter egg hunt for children 10 and under.

All are welcome to join them in celebration.

Contemplative Prayer Group Meets Tuesdays

A contemplative prayer group meets on Tuesdays at the Greenbelt Community Church, United Church of Christ, 1 Hillside Road, from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. This gathering is a time to pray in silence for oneself, others and the world. It nurtures inner and outer peace and reinforces the oneness of all people and creation.

The format for this group is an opening introduction, 30 minutes of silence and then some sharing. All are welcome to attend from all denominations and faith traditions. For more information, email Patience Robbins at patience.robbins@gmail.com.

CARES Needs Fund Donations

The Greenbelt Emergency Assistance Fund continues to be a safety net for Greenbelters in a financial crisis whatever the reason. Those who are able can help by donating to the fund.

Make checks out to Greenbelt CARES, write Emergency Assistance Fund in the memo space and mail to Greenbelt CARES, 25 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, MD 20770 (or place in the secure drop box at that address). Or, go to GreenbeltMD.gov, click Pay Online at the top of the page and choose Charitable Donations. Complete the form, indicating the donation is for the Emergency Assistance Fund, and click submit; the payment page then will come up with a form to enter credit card or PayPal information.

Luminis' Doctors Hospital Celebrates 50 Years of Care

On Saturday, April 5, Luminis Health Doctors Hospital will host its 50th Anniversary Golden Gala, an evening of celebration and tribute to the hospital's legacy of providing care since 1975. The event will bring together healthcare leaders, community advocates and supporters to honor the hospital's legacy while raising funds to expand services, advance health equity and eliminate disparities.

Baby Shower

Luminis will hold a Community Baby Shower on Saturday, April 12, from noon to 4 p.m. The free event will provide resources, education and support for expectant and new mothers in Prince George's County, including expert-led panel discussions on gestational diabetes, preeclampsia, postpartum depression, nutrition during and after pregnancy, and lactation.

"We want mothers and loved ones to feel empowered about their health during pregnancy," said Temi Oshiyoye, Luminis Health's director of Community Health Improvement.

As part of its on-going commitment to maternal health, Luminis Health has opened an ob-gyn clinic in Greenbelt and launched CenteringPregnancy®, which offers group sessions for expectant mothers and personalized consultations with ob-gyns and midwives.

"Prince George's County has a maternal mortality rate that is twice the national average, and this is simply unacceptable," said Deneen Richmond, president of Luminis Health Doctors Community Medical Center. "Luminis Health is taking bold steps to address these disparities by expanding access to quality prenatal and postnatal care, educating families and advocating for systemic change."

Anticipated to open in 2028, the new state-of-the-art women's health center on the hospital's Lanham campus is expected to welcome approximately 2,000 babies each year once fully operational.

This article is based on a press release from Luminis.



Congratulations to 13-year-old Fiona O'Brien on having been selected for the 2025 U.S. Acrobatic Gymnastics National Team.

Send details of your news to editor@greenbeltnewsreview.com.

Senior Nutrition Program Luncheon

The Senior Nutrition Food and Friendship program provides lunch for seniors Monday through Friday at the Community Center beginning at 11:30 a.m. Meals must be reserved two weeks ahead so that enough food is ordered. Participants must complete a registration form in person at the Community Center office, Monday through Friday between 9 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. There is a suggested donation. Call 301-397-2208, ext. 4215 with questions.

Two menu options, one vegetarian, will be offered for each luncheon. All meals, which provide at least one third of recommended dietary allowances for older adults, include margarine, coffee or tea and skim milk.


Obituaries

The News Review publishes obituaries of Greenbelt residents, past or present. You write it or we will if you prefer. A photograph and service information should be included. There is no charge.

Mowatt Memorial United Methodist Church
40 Ridge Road, Greenbelt
 Open hearts, Open Minds, Open doors
 Find us on [facebook.com/mowattumc](https://www.facebook.com/mowattumc)
 301-474-5410
 Pastor Evelyn Romero
Worship Service, Sundays 9:30 - 10:30 a.m.
 Celebrate hope with us.

St. John's Episcopal Church
 11040 Baltimore Avenue, Beltsville, MD 20704
 301-937-4292 www.saintjohnsbeltsville.org
 Welcomes you each Sunday for
 Worship & Sunday School
 at 10:00 AM

We Preach Christ Crucified



Holy Cross Lutheran Church
 6905 Greenbelt Rd
 Greenbelt, MD 20770
Lenten Services:
 Thursdays 7pm
 (March 13, 20, 27;
 April 3, 10)

(1 COR. 1:18-25)

Greenbelt Community Church
 One Hillside Road
 We are an Open and Affirming Church

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Join Us Sunday 10:15 AM for Worship and Church School
www.facebook.com/GCCUCCMD
www.greenbeltcommunitychurch.org

ST. HUGH OF GRENOBLE CATHOLIC CHURCH


- Daily Mass: Mon-Fri 7:15am*, Sat 9am*
- Sunday Mass:
 - Sat vigil 5pm*
 - Sun 8am, 9:30am, 11am
- Confessions Saturday 3pm - 4pm.

Masks for the unvaccinated encouraged.

*Live streamed on Facebook and available on our YouTube page later.

CELEBRATE WITH US
 135 Crescent Rd.
www.sthughofgrenoble.org

"The supreme need of humanity is cooperation and reciprocity." – 'Abdu'l-Bahá



Greenbelt Bahá'i Community
www.greenbeltbahais.org

CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF GREENBELT

Mass Sundays at 10:00 a.m.
COME TO OUR NEW LOCATION
Community Center Room 114
15 Crescent Rd
ALL ARE WELCOME!

A Roman Catholic Intentional Eucharistic Community

OR - Join us on ZOOM!
 For ZOOM link:
CCG1985-owner@groups.io

The Bible Says...
Lent-Week #5
Your sins have made a separation between you and your God
 Isaiah 59:2a



Sunday Worship Services
 10a-11:15a @ Greenbelt Elementary School
 (66 Ridge Rd.)
MCFcc.org

Mishkan Torah Congregation




10 Ridge Road, Greenbelt, MD 20770
 Rabbi Saul Oresky, Cantor Phil Greenfield


An unpretentious, historic, welcoming, liberal, egalitarian synagogue that respects tradition and becomes your extended family in the 21st century.

Friday evening services at 8:00pm
 Saturday morning services at 10:00am
 Offering hybrid services, online and in-person activities
 For further information, call (301) 474-4223 www.mishkantorah.org
 Affiliated with these movements: Conservative and Reconstructing Judaism

Paint Branch Unitarian Universalist Church

Postal address: P.O. Box 676, Laurel, MD 20725
 Phone: 301-937-3666 www.pbuuc.org



Welcomes you to our open, nurturing community 

April 6, 2025 at 3:00 pm
The View From Here
 Anthony Jenkins with Worship Associate Carol Boston

In the spirit of our April theme (Emergence), we'll consider the concept of 'worldview.' Together we'll explore the relationship between vantage point (how and from where you see the world) and visibility (who you see – or don't see – in the world).

Streaming on PBUUC's Facebook page, on Zoom, and in person. Worship service held at University Christian Church, 6800 Adelphi Road, Hyattsville, MD



City Information & Events

The strength of Greenbelt is diverse people living together in a spirit of cooperation. We celebrate all people. By sharing together all are enriched. We strive to be a respectful, welcoming community that is open, accessible, safe and fair.

GREENBELT CITY CALENDAR

Be sure to check out the City calendar for all up to date events at www.greenbeltmd.gov/calendar.



MEETINGS FOR APRIL 7-11

Monday, April 7 at 7:30 pm, **WORK SESSION - STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION**

Tuesday, April 8 at 7 pm, **GREENBELT ARMORY SITE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT MEETING**

Wednesday, April 9 at 7:30 pm, **WORK SESSION - TRIBESY PRESENTATION (REPARATIONS COMMISSION)**

Thursday, April 10 at 7 pm, **COMMUNITY RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD, On the Agenda: CRAB Activities, Ear to the Ground**

In advance, the hearing impaired are advised to use MD RELAY at 711 to submit your questions/comments or contact the City Clerk at (301) 474-8000 or email banderson@greenbeltmd.gov. This schedule is subject to change. For confirmation that a meeting is being held call (301) 474-8000. For information on public participation for the meetings above, visit the meetings calendar at www.greenbeltmd.gov/calendar.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

In the City of Greenbelt, we remain committed to embracing and celebrating the diversity of all. As our nation undergoes change, feelings of pride, uncertainty, and even fear may arise. Yet, we stand firm in the pledge that has defined Greenbelt since its inception and will not falter.

Community Pledge:

The strength of Greenbelt is diverse people living together in a spirit of cooperation. We celebrate all people. By sharing together all are enriched. We strive to be a respectful, welcoming community that is open, accessible, safe and fair.

Learn more at <https://www.greenbeltmd.gov/government/know-your-rights-immigration-resources>.

ARTS HAPPENINGS

Visit www.greenbeltmd.gov/arts for more information and many other opportunities!

Register for Spring Circus Camp, Greenbelt Community Center, April 14-18. Ages 8-13. Join former Ringling Bros and Barnum & Bailey Circus performer Greg May for a fun-filled spring break! See page 7 of the Greenbelt Recreation spring and summer camp guide.

Sign up for FREE Artful Afternoons in April, All ages welcome!, **Sunday, 4/6**, Greenbelt Community Center, 1 - 3 pm. Make a beautiful koi fish painting. PLUS - ukulele jam and sing-a-long 1:30-2:30 pm, **Sunday, 4/13**, Springhill Lake Recreation Center, 1:30-2:30 pm, Make a beautiful koi fish painting, PLUS - an energizing modern/hip-hop dance break at 2 pm

MORE ARTS IN APRIL

- Smartphone filmmaking, 4/4
- Felted garland workshop, 4/4
- Parent's Night Out, 4/11 and 4/25
- Fused glass workshop, 4/12
- Laser-engraved jewelry workshop, 4/18
- Art Share (meet-up), 4/20
- Photography exhibit opening, 4/24

BOOK CLUB!

Sunday, April 6 at 1 pm

Greenbelt Community Center, Room 111, 15 Crescent Rd

Book Club! Calling all readers aged 55+! Come join us for engaging discussions, new friendships, and the joy of reading together. MEET & GREET: At our first meeting, bring a book you've read- one you loved or disliked- to share with the group. BOOK SELECTION: Together, we'll choose our next book to read and discuss at the following meeting. SUNDAY, April 6, 2025, 1 pm at Greenbelt Community Center, room 111 (Senior Lounge) Interested in joining but can't make the first meeting? Call or email Priya Gardner Lemieux at 240-542-2056 or pgardner@greenbeltmd.gov for more information and to join our email list to receive Book Club updates. FREE. No registration required.

TOUCH-A-TRUCK EVENT

Saturday, April 26 11 am - 2 pm

Beltway Plaza Back Parking Lot, 6000 Greenbelt Rd

The City of Greenbelt invites you to our first-ever Touch-A-Truck Event! Bring the whole family for an exciting hands-on experience to explore fire trucks, police vehicles, utility trucks, and more! You will also meet the dedicated professionals who operate these vehicles, learn how they keep our community safe, and even hop in the driver's seat! This is a free event for all ages.

Contact Gizelle Alvarez at galvarez@greenbeltmd.gov.

OFFICIAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the City Council will conduct a public hearing on the Charter Amendment Resolution of the Council of the City of Greenbelt, to amend §4, "Creation; Qualifications; Compensation" of the City Charter to Raise the Compensation of the City Council.

The City Council will hold a public hearing on this charter resolution on April 28, 2025 at 7:30 pm in the Council Room at the Greenbelt Municipal Building located at 25 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, Maryland 20770. Public testimony will be received by the City Council at the hearing on the above date. Written comments may either be presented at this hearing or sent to the City Clerk.

*** The public is welcome to attend. The Charter Resolution is available online and at the Clerk's office. For more information, please contact the City Manager's office at (301) 474-8000.**

Shaniya Lashley-Mullen, Deputy City Clerk

CHEARS FOOD FOREST

Saturday, April 26, 10 am - 1 pm

Springhill Lake Recreation Center, 6101 Cherrywood Lane

CELEBRATE EARTH DAY!

Join our community effort to rejuvenate the riparian buffer at the CHEARS Food Forest. Volunteers will work with Public Works staff to remove invasive species and install native trees, shrubs, and perennials to enhance the crucial riparian habitat.

To register, contact Environmental Coordinator, Kevin Carpenter-Driscoll at kdriscoll@greenbeltmd.gov or sign-up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F49AAA92BA6FCC34-49105067-city>.

GREENBELT JOB FAIR

Saturday, May 17 12-3 pm

Beltway Plaza Mall (Near T.J. Maxx), 6000 Greenbelt Rd

Join us for our semi-annual Greenbelt Job Fair! Learn about the latest job opportunities, connect with local employers, and get access to a variety of employment resources and training.

Contact Deji Ayoku for more information or to register your business for the Job Fair by emailing dayoku@greenbeltmd.gov.

REPARATIONS COMMISSION'S GREENBELT TOWNHALL

April 5, 2:30 - 4:30 pm

Springhill Lake Recreation Center, 6101 Cherrywood Lane

Tell us about the needs of the community!

Discuss the State of Black Greenbelt with Greenbelt Reparations Commission and Howard Law School Movement Lawyering Clinic, we want to hear from you. Light refreshments will be provided and a sign language interpreter is available if requested in advance.

Please register by visiting <https://qrify.io/eRXQCZrPU> or searching for Greenbelt Town Hall on EventBrite.

COMPOST YOUR FOOD SCRAPS

For 6 months your food scraps can be collected for free to reduce food waste and return valuable compost to Greenbelt. Compost Crew will pick up your food scraps weekly and deliver them to their Compost Outpost at Trinity.

To register, visit <https://compostcrew.com/greenbelt>.

Questions? Luisa Robles: lrobes@greenbeltmd.gov or (240) 542-2153.

Greenbelt Recreation & Autism Society of Maryland Invite You to an

AUTISM AWARENESS ADVOCACY PRESENTATION

SATURDAY, APRIL 26 AT 1 PM

Greenbelt Community Center, 15 Crescent Rd

Learn about autism awareness, acceptance, and available resources in this informative session led by the Autism Society of Maryland. We hope to see you there. Together, we can create a more inclusive world-one act of awareness and advocacy at a time!

Contact: Priya Gardner Lemieux, (240) 542-2056, pgardner@greenbeltmd.gov.

LUMINIS HEALTH COMMUNITY BABY SHOWER

SATURDAY, APRIL 12, FROM 12 TO 4 PM

8118 GOOD LUCK ROAD, LANHAM, MD 20706

This free event will provide essential resources, education, and support for expectant and new mothers in Prince George's County, featuring:

- Expert-led panel discussions on gestational diabetes, preeclampsia, postpartum depression, nutrition during and after pregnancy, and lactation
- Local vendors offering baby essentials and services
- Diaper and baby essential giveaways

Come celebrate this exciting time with us as we honor the incredible journey of parenthood. This event will be held outdoors under a tent, regardless of weather.

For more information, visit <https://www.greenbeltmd.gov/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/9355/>.

S.A.I.L. WITH GIVES

Senior Avoiding Isolation & Loneliness

The SAIL Program in partner with the GIVES aims to support older adults age 60+ or individuals 50 + who have a disability, to reduce feelings of isolation while working to increase community engagement by broadening their access to vital supports.

SAIL provides friendly, in-person visits or cphone calls, free nursing assessments, community student nursing visits, mental health counseling, case management visits, information and referral of resources, and so much more!

Contact us at (240) 244-6010 or at ngarcia@greenbeltmd.gov.

SAIL is also seeking volunteers who are deeply committed to making a positive impact on society and humanity. Call (240) 244-6010 to volunteer!

DONATE TO THE GREENBELT NURSERY PROJECT

Providing support for low-income Greenbelt parents with nursery items. You can help donate by hosting a community drive, through individual donations, or volunteering at our quarterly distribution.

Seeking donations of gentle laundry detergent, laundry detergent pods, basic thermometers, baby/child nail clippers, night lights, and baby proofing products.

Contact Katherine Farzin at (240) 542-2019 or kfarzin@greenbeltmd.gov.

FREE SENIOR PLANET CLASSES - MEDIA & HEALTH FOR ADULTS 60+. FREE. IN-PERSON, 11 AM - 12:15 PM

Greenbelt Community Center, Ground Floor East, 15 Crescent Rd

April 15. Messaging Apps

Learn about the most popular messaging apps - iMessages, Google Chat, and WhatsApp - learning how to send texts & pictures, making voice & video calls, and how these apps keep your messages secure.

April 29. Ridesharing Apps

Apps have changed the way people get around! Learn about Uber and Lyft and the pros and cons of both.

May 6. Introduction to AI

Learn basic ideas around artificial intelligence (AI), how it's being used, its limitations, and how it will shape the future.

May 8. AI & Disinformation

Explore how AI is being used to create convincing fakes and clone voices.

May 20. Everyday Uses of AI

Learn how AI is already present in everyday tasks and how its being used across industries so that you can take advantage of the technology.

May 22. Is That AI?

Learn how to differentiate real images versus AI and become a tech savvy internet user by learning to do a reverse image search of images you find online.

These classes are facilitated by Flora Li, Brendy Maddox, and Katherine Farzin. To register, email Kelly Lange at klange@greenbeltmd.gov or call Brendy Maddox at (240) 424-0302.

PUBLIC STATEMENT REGARDING PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY FIRE/EMS SUMMER STAFFING PLAN FOR GREENBELT VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Greenbelt, MD - The City of Greenbelt is disappointed in the County's decision to reassign 24 career personnel from Greenbelt Station 835 on July 1, resulting in the removal of all career personnel from our Station. County Fire Chief Tiffany Green and County leadership ordered the redeployment of 55 career firefighters from Berwyn Heights, Greenbelt, Bunker Hill, and Bowie Station. We are gravely concerned with the impact in response times of emergencies in Greenbelt and our surrounding areas.

Greenbelt will continue to work in tandem with College Park and Berwyn Heights alongside County leadership in addressing our concerns and fighting for the City of Greenbelt.

WHO CAN I CONTACT?

Office of the County Executive
countyexecutive@co.pg.md.us
(301) 952-4131

Office of the County Fire Chief
tdgreen@co.pg.md.us
(301) 883-5200

At-Large County Council Member Hawkins
At-LargeMemberHawkins@co.pg.md.us
(301) 952-2195

County Council Member District 4
councildistrict4@co.pg.md.us
(301) 952-3094

Letters of Support to keep/return career staffing to Greenbelt Station 835 can be sent to:

City of Greenbelt, 25 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, MD 20770 or council@greenbeltmd.gov.

COMMITTEES & BOARDS VACANCIES VOLUNTEER TODAY!

Volunteering for City of Greenbelt Committees & Boards is an excellent opportunity to engage with your community and make a difference. Choose from a number of committees & boards such as the **Advisory Committee on Education, Advisory Committee on Trees, Advisory Planning Board, Arts Advisory Board, Board of Elections, Community Relations Advisory Board, Ethics Commission, Forest Preserve Advisory Board, Greenbelt Advisory Committee on Environmental Sustainability, Park and Recreation Advisory Board, or Youth Advisory Committee** and make a difference in Greenbelt!

Take the first step towards making a positive impact and apply for one of these committee vacancies today!

Call (301) 474-8000.

GREENBELT WELCOME KITS!

Material Drop-Off

We're looking for materials to add to the City's *Welcome Kits* for new residents and visitors. Please drop-off at the Municipal Building to

Chondria Andrews
25 Crescent Road
Greenbelt, MD 20770

NO LATER THAN 4 PM ON APRIL 25

Stuffing Party

Thursday, May 8 at 2 pm
Municipal Building, 25 Crescent Rd

The Public Information Office will be holding a Welcome Kit Stuffing Party to help with packing all of the materials received. Stop by to help starting at 2 pm!

Email candrews@greenbeltmd.gov for more information or assistance.

FIRE continued from page 1

second-story window. The fire department responded and worked in the area for a while Saturday evening, reported residents. Then, the large brush fire in the same area broke out at approximately 3:16 p.m. the following day.

On Sunday afternoon, residents noted significant smoke, particularly along Research Road, Ridge Road and Laurel Hill Road. Helicopters and numerous emergency services vehicles responded to the fire that afternoon.

At 9:17 p.m. on Sunday evening, PGFD reported that the fire was contained and nearly extinguished and units were leaving the scene, with crews remaining to check for hot spots. DNR personnel remained on the scene overnight. There were no injuries and the fire didn't extend to homes or structures, they said via a social media post. It's estimated the fire spread over 10 acres.

Smoldering and Flames Continued

On Monday morning, March 31, resident Jeff Lemieux was walking his dogs near the burned area on BARC and noticed several smoldering logs re-ignite. He called 911 and told the News Review that it took 30 minutes from his call until the first engine responded, which was a College Park engine (see his letter to the editor this week). Other residents similarly reported smoldering and flames, which they captured on video on Monday.

The News Review reached out to PGFD on Monday and Tuesday with a request for comment and questions about any indication of a cause of the fire and about the response to it. They did not respond by press time.



PHOTO BY FRANK GERVASI

Firefighters attack the brush fire that broke out on Sunday, March 30.



PHOTO COURTESY PRINCE GEORGE'S FIRE DEPARTMENT

Firefighting equipment on the fields of BARC



PHOTO BY JOHANNA GODERRE

Emergency vehicles gather outside Greenbelt Elementary School on March 30 as the fire continues to burn in the fields and woodland behind the school.



PHOTO BY JOHANNA GODERRE

A firefighter's gear sits at the end of Research Road near the gate to BARC.



PHOTO BY DEBORAH HESS

A fire hose snakes through 15 Court Laurel Hill Road.

Letters cont'd from p.2

winds could make large parts of Greenbelt vulnerable, not just the historic center.

Are Greenbelt Police, Public Works, County Firefighters and State of Maryland fire commanders coordinated? Are notification systems in place for residents in case of an evacuation order? Hopefully, Sunday's fire will help us sharpen our response and communications, and reassure us that we're ready in case a bigger wildfire threatens.

Jeff Lemieux

Fire in the Forest

We watch on the news so many stories of devastating fires out West and even now in the South but who would expect it in our Greenbelt?

On Saturday night, March 29, our friends and neighbors Rob and Suzanne were out on their back porch facing the woods behind Greenbelt Elementary School. They noticed a light, which got brighter, and realized it was a fire. They called and the fire truck pulled out onto the playing field behind the school and promptly extinguished a relatively small area fire.

The next day they came home in the early afternoon and saw smoke and flames near the same spot, but farther into the woods that adjoin the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC) property. They called again but

this time the fire quickly spread due to windy conditions and very dry ground. It had gone into BARC property and spread to the woods behind 15 Court Laurel Hill Road.

Rob and I went down to the fire perimeter with shovels and put out some of the flames advancing toward his house as the first of the firefighters showed up to assess the situation. A helicopter also came out to survey the rapidly spreading fire.

Numerous fire trucks soon followed, coming from Beltsville and Bladensburg and other cities nearby. They came from Anne Arundel County, Sandy Spring in Montgomery County and from Accokeek in Prince George's County. One out-of-town vehicle was a narrow truck designed to penetrate the wooded area for access.

A very long fire hose was set up by about a dozen firefighters to pump from the hydrant at the foot of Research Road. This did the job and eventually put out the fire.

They were still at it in the dark at about 8:30 p.m. making sure all the fire was out. Their diligence and dedication are much appreciated.

My family has lived in Greenbelt for almost 50 years and this is the first forest fire we have witnessed here. Let's hope it's the last.

Frank Gervasi



PHOTO BY JEFF LEMIEUX

Jeff Lemieux sees smoldering logs in the woods while walking his dog on Monday morning.

Small Ad
BIG CLOUT
 \$32.70
www.GreenbeltNewsReview.com



PHOTO COURTESY PRINCE GEORGE'S FIRE DEPARTMENT

Firefighters work in the fields of BARC.

tick, tick... BOOM!

30:90

Book, Music and Lyrics by Jonathan Larson

David Auburn, Script Consultant

Vocal Arrangements by Stephen Oremus

tick, tick... BOOM! was originally produced off-Broadway in June, 2001 by Victoria Leacock, Robyn Goodman, Dede Harris, Lorie Cowen Levy, Beth Smith

SCAN QR CODE FOR TICKETS OR VISIT GREENBELTARTSCENTER.ORG

MARCH 21 THROUGH APRIL 12, 2025
FRIDAYS & SATURDAYS 8PM
SUNDAYS 2PM
 (FACEMASKS REQUIRED FOR UNDERSTUDY PERFORMANCE FRIDAY, APRIL 11)

TICK, TICK ... BOOM! IS PRESENTED THROUGH SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH MUSIC THEATER INTERNATIONAL (MTI). ALL AUTHORIZED PERFORMANCE MATERIALS ARE ALSO SUPPLIED BY MTI. WWW.MTISHOWS.COM

Council Approves Money for Retiree Subsidy, Cemetery Master Plan, More

by Maurice Crawford

The Greenbelt City Council met on Monday, March 24 and started off with a presentation from the county's Office of Human Rights. They then approved \$65,000 for a retiree prescription subsidy and a \$68,800 contract for a Historic Preservation Master Plan for Greenbelt's historic cemeteries. Council also reviewed the budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 (see article on page 1), voted down new bus stops, effectively blocking WMATA's new route plan for Greenbelt (see page 1), and heard legislative updates from Annapolis.

Prescription Subsidy

Council unanimously agreed to appropriate \$65K from the city's General Fund reserve to the Retiree Prescription Subsidy line item for FY 2025 (6 to 0 with Councilmember Amy Knesel absent). This is needed to cover increases in retiree prescription benefit costs that exceed the originally appropriated amount. Councilmember Silke Pope noted that the amount subsidized will grow in the future and asked how to best plan for this. Salmerón and staff will take a closer look at this expense and how to best manage it.

Historic Cemeteries

Council approved a contract of \$68.8K to develop a Master Preservation Plan for the Hamilton, Turner and Walker cemeteries in Greenbelt. The contract was approved by a 5 to 1 vote with Councilmember Rodney Roberts opposed and Knesel absent. The amount includes a \$35,000 matching grant from the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority. Under this contract Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson, Inc. (JMT) will create an inventory database and maintenance guide that will help the city prioritize restoration and maintenance needs. They will also conduct an archeological, architectural, structural, site and landscape evaluation of each cemetery.

Mayor Emmett Jordan queried Terri Hruby, director of Planning & Community Development, regarding opportunities for public engagement. She replied that they plan to hold public meetings about the project.

Roberts asked what the city would get for its money. Hruby said it would include an assessment of the conditions of each cemetery, boundaries, geographic information system layers of the areas plus recommendations on preservation and maintenance. Roberts opposed funding the project and felt the money could be better used elsewhere.

Legislative Updates

Darrell Carrington of Carrington and Associates gave an update on Maryland legislative actions in Annapolis. The State of Maryland is trying to manage a \$3.3B shortfall in its budget without increases in sales or property taxes. While some savings have been found, a shortfall of this magnitude will mean a reduction in core services provided by the state. There will be a change in income tax for those earning more than \$500K and there will probably be a Special Session later this year in October.

One significant shift is that President Trump said that the



PHOTO BY CHRISTINE DORAN

Turner Cemetery, off Ivy Lane, seen in February

new FBI headquarters would be built in Washington, D.C., rather than in Greenbelt.

Jordan moved that council write a letter of support for HB1506 which would increase from \$1,000 to \$5,000 the maximum amount of a criminal fine or municipal infraction that may be imposed by a municipality. (Editor's note: The city recently levied the maximum allowable fines on the management companies of Parkway Gardens and Crescent Pointe apartments, which left residents without heat for months (see the January 29 issue).) The motion passed 5 to 1 with Roberts opposed.

Councilmember Jenni Pompei made a motion that council write a letter of support for HB767 which would require that landlords give an evictee 10 days' notice, and another 10 days to get their property if they are evicted. The motion passed 5 to 1 with Pope opposed because

she felt it's already difficult and expensive for a landlord to evict someone and there are enough protections in place for tenants.

County Human Rights Office

Also at the meeting, Tiana Davis, outreach specialist, provided a brief overview of the county's Office of Human Rights. It has four divisions: (1) Investigations examines alleged acts of discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations and other areas, (2) Human trafficking identifies and recovers victims plus prosecutes traffickers, (3) Language Access Compliance ensures that materials are provided in residents' preferred languages and (4) Education and Outreach. The office's website is princegeorgescountymd.gov/departments-offices/human-rights.

Jordan suggested that to reach a wider audience Davis should attend the next Four Cities meeting scheduled for April 24.

BUS STOPS continued from page 1

Office of Planning described the process WMATA used to come to their decisions. He reiterated that the goal is to provide the best service possible and streamline the process by examining in a comprehensive manner bus service within Prince George's County (including TheBus) in order to provide efficient service. Jones also stated that if the city does not fund the new bus stops then "... the service [routes] would remain the same."

Council Questions

Mayor Emmett Jordan was appreciative of the overview but wanted to know when the public would learn more about the county bus plans. Jones clarified that they anticipate the service changes for Metrobus and TheBus would happen together and is hoping more information regarding TheBus service will come out this month.

Councilmember Amy Knesel asked if Metrobus would allow students in the public schools to ride for free because they are able to do that on TheBus #11. Jones replied, "... that is an effort that still needs to be worked through."

Councilmember Kristen Weaver wanted to know if someone comes out and physically looks at the situation on the ground because she can see that Westway is a steep hill and understands the visibility concerns of residents. Jones said that in this case there were visits and buses were driven along the route but that the WMATA Bus Transportation Safety staff did not raise any similar concerns.

APB View

Ben Friedman, chair of the city's Advisory Planning Board (APB), said the board did support building two new bus stops but also said the charge given to APB concerned whether or not to

put in the bus stops and not on the route change. However, they did hear concerns from the community regarding routing buses along Westway.

GHI Concerns

Stefan Brodd, president of Greenbelt Homes, Inc. (GHI), strongly opposed the new routes and felt they decrease pedestrian safety along Westway. There are parked cars along either side of Westway with dense shrubs that obstruct drivers' views. Furthermore, there are no sidewalks along Westway so residents use the road to walk between Ridge and Crescent. GHI "... is very concerned that we are setting up ourselves for a tragic accident." There is a mid-block pedestrian crossing not easily seen by vehicles on Westway. The crossing connects the main sidewalk in the west end to the center of town.

Resident Concerns

Several Greenbelt residents provided their thoughts on the route changes. Richard Shumaker, a resident on Westway, spoke to the human element of the situation. He stated that there are four disabled residents and a blind person who live along that street. They have mobility issues and the addition of Metrobuses going up and down the street endangers their safety, said Shumaker. Jim Drake suggested that one solution would be to put in a sidewalk along the length of Westway so residents would not have to walk in the street.

After much discussion on the feasibility of sidewalks along Westway and the use of the walking paths in Greenbelt, Weaver moved to not approve construction of the two new bus stops. The motion passed unanimously, which means the bus routes within Greenbelt will not change.

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BUDGET continued from page 1

Greenbelt 2026 General Fund Budget					
Revenues			Expenditures		
	\$	%		\$	%
Real Estate Taxes	\$24,884,600	61.9%	Public Safety	\$13,162,600	32.7%
Other Taxes	\$5,433,600	13.5%	Rec & Parks	\$8,465,000	21.0%
Charges for Services	\$2,496,600	6.2%	Gen. Government	\$5,394,400	13.4%
Interfund Transfers	\$1,831,700	4.6%	Public Works	\$4,793,600	11.9%
Property Taxes	\$1,565,500	3.9%	Fund Transfers	\$3,038,100	7.6%
Intragovernmental	\$1,528,800	3.8%	Non-Departmental	\$1,897,000	4.7%
Licenses & Permits	\$1,328,400	3.3%	GB CARES	\$1,591,400	4.0%
Fines & Forfeitures	\$519,000	1.3%	Planning & Dev.	\$1,403,700	3.5%
Misc. Revenue	\$333,400	0.8%	Misc.	\$470,100	1.2%
Interest	\$300,000	0.7%			
Total 2026 Revenues	\$40,221,600		Total 2026 Expenditures	\$40,215,900	

CHART COURTESY CITY OF GREENBELT

Mayor Emmett Jordan recognized that the rules for how ARPA funds could be spent have changed and asked what the implications are for shifting positions from the general fund to ARPA funds. Salmerón said that for FY 2026 it provided relief from having to use general funds but that for FY 2027 the city would need to plan to pay for those positions using general funds. Regarding ARPA funds Salmerón said the city is doing everything by the books and is prepared to be audited.

Budget Process

Council discussed but took no action on Councilmember Danielle McKinney's recommendations aimed at making the upcoming budget worksessions more efficient and productive. She had several recommendations including having council submit questions to staff two days prior to the worksession, convene a town hall specifically on the budget to allow for more public input, have members of the public submit questions prior to the worksession and allow members of the public up to two (2) opportunities to comment or ask questions during each worksession.

Jordan liked the idea of having a town hall on a Saturday and felt that perhaps a longer session on a Saturday would allow for more business to be completed. He also noted that a town hall would require staff to develop a different type of presentation.

Councilmember Rodney Roberts did not agree with limiting the public's input during a worksession and believed that not many members of the public would attend a Saturday session.

Councilmembers Silke Pope and Kristen Weaver liked the idea of submitting council questions two days prior to the meeting but Pompei felt that not everyone would be able to meet such a deadline. She also liked the idea of a Saturday town hall. As far as the public asking questions during the session, she thought about maybe having them at the end of the meeting.

Resident and former mayor J Davis noted that every time there is a budget session folks complain and each time, council tries to change it. Council has tried before to submit questions prior to the worksession and found that some members are good at turning in questions and others are not, she said. She felt that the questions from council are much more numerous during the discussion than the number of questions submitted beforehand. She also noted that limiting public input during a session sends a message that you are biased against those who actually took the time to read the material and ask questions.

No action was taken on the recommendations and the session ended with Jordan saying that it needs to be worked out, but "... that we can't work it out right now at 20 minutes before midnight."



First Worksession on FY26 Budget Shares Outlook for Revenue, Costs

by Erik Hanson

On Wednesday night, March 26, the Greenbelt City Council held the first of several worksessions on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 (July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026) city budget. The proposed budget, presented at the March 24 council meeting, is \$52.53 million, with \$40 million in the general fund, \$7.5 million in capital projects and \$5 million in other funds (for more on the budget presentation at the March 24 meeting see page 1). Wednesday's worksession covered revenue, administrative services, support services, nondepartmental funds and fund transfers.

Property Tax

City Manager Josué Salmerón noted that while the property tax rate of 8.275 percent has not increased in seven years, some property owners might see increased property tax bills due to an increase in the assessed value of their property.

Salaries

Salmerón noted there were increases in personnel costs due to a 2 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) and a 3 percent increase in merit pay.

Election

There will be a local election on November 4; so historical costs for that are budgeted as well as an increase for voter engagement efforts, including outreach to noncitizen voters.

Armory

A total of \$27,900 has been budgeted for utilities and light maintenance at the Armory. Salmerón noted that the best way to reduce vandalism at the site is to have activity there, such as the ongoing composting work taking place there. Salmerón noted that at council's direction his staff will supply three publicly-vetted concepts for the use of the armory site.

Finance Report

City Treasurer Bertha Gaymon reported on support services of Finance, Human Resources (HR) and information technology (IT). Costs for the Finance office were basically flat as the increases in salaries were offset by a savings in eliminating the old accounting system. Human Resources saw an increase due to the purchase of Paycor, a new human resources system.

PIO Report

Public Information Officer Chondria Andrews noted that her department saw small budgetary increases due to postage and salary increases. This year they updated microphones in the city council chambers, placed an ad for Greenbelt in the Prince George's County tourism brochure and worked on the city's new website, which should be ready on or before June 30.

Economic Development

The budget for the city's Department of Economic Development was basically flat according to John Mason, the department's head. Mason noted that his department had entered 850 businesses into Salesforce, a Customer Relationship Management program used to track business retention and expansion. They have also used Environmental Systems Research Institute's geographic information system (GIS) software to create graphics and a new system that will be able to show available Greenbelt commercial properties on the Greenbelt website.

The council, city manager and finance manager went on to discuss nondepartmental funds, fund transfers, replacement funds and the process of getting a bond rating. A town hall on the budget will be held in early May.

Weekly Programs Held at The SPACE

Artrepreneurship meets Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, 5 to 7 p.m. Four-week program.

Sundays, Sewing Classes, 1:30 to 3 p.m. Open to all skill levels. A limited number of sewing machines is available; participants can also bring their own.

Wednesdays, Beginners Music Classes in Ukulele and Keyboards, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Fridays (1st and 3rd of the month), Free Art for All Game Night, 5 to 7 p.m. Play for fun and gear up for monthly tournaments.

Saturdays, Yoga with René Hood, 10 to 11:30 a.m.; Expressive Art Workshops, 2 to 4 p.m. Space Family Band Jam Session, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Rainbow Joe is back. Bring an instrument or borrow one from The SPACE and jump into the jam.

All classes are not only enriching but also free and open to the public. The program extends a warm welcome for donations to support its community initiatives.

The SPACE is located upstairs in the former Big Lots space at Beltway Plaza, 6000 Greenbelt Road. Details on upcoming events can be seen on Instagram or Facebook @ TheSPACEFreeArtForAll. For details call 240-244-6115.

GHI Spring Bicycle Social April 19

On Saturday, April 19 from 1 to 3 p.m., everyone can "Spring" back into bicycling at the Greenbelt Homes, Inc. (GHI) Bicycle Committee's bicycle social. Meet fellow cyclists in the Greenbelt community, join in the discussion and let the Bicycle Committee know what they can do to help you.

Topics for discussion will include E-Bikes: Introduction & Maintenance, Safety Tips and a Gear Swap (out with your old gear, in with the new-to-you). Snacks and refreshments will be provided. The social will take place on the GHI Grounds at 1 Hamilton Place (inside the GHI building if raining).

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Police Blotter

Incidents reported here occurred March 24-30, 2025. Readers are encouraged to contact the police if they have information that may aid in an inquiry. Call the non-emergency number 301-474-7200 or email pd@greenbeltmd.gov. Times provided are when the incidents were reported.

Incident Summary

Greenbelt Police reported one mental health diversion and five domestic incidents, three resulting in arrest, one involving a warrant. Two missing person cases were resolved.

Armed Person

On March 28 at 2:07 p.m. near 5911 Cherrywood Terrace, during an argument, a man was threatened with a gun.

Attempted Break-in

On March 29 at 2:23 p.m. near 9011 Breezewood Terrace, a woman returning home noticed a masked man dressed in all black jumping from her balcony; he did not get in, and fled on foot.

DUI Arrest

On March 28 at 11:35 p.m. near Hanover Parkway and Ora Glen Drive, a vehicle was stopped at the stoplight and sat through multiple light cycles. Officers woke the driver, who was slumped over the wheel, with a strong odor of alcohol, slurred speech and bloodshot eyes, and arrested her for DUI.

Juvenile Fight

On March 27 at 9:22 a.m. near Greenbelt Road and Frankfort Drive, a group of students were attacked at the bus stop by another group of girls from a different school. The fight appeared to be in retaliation for an earlier altercation between two of the girls. They were sent home with their parents.

Theft and Shoplifting

On March 24 at 9:56 a.m. near 6100 Greenbelt Road, someone stole merchandise, and was taken into custody and banned from the location.

On March 24 at 11:27 a.m. near 7595 Greenbelt Road, a woman stole items and loaded them into a red Hyundai before fleeing the scene. Police identified her using the store's video footage and the vehicle's owner registration. Charges were filed.

On March 24 at 2:31 p.m. near 550 Crescent Road, a loss prevention employee reported a connection between several thefts. The suspect was identified, and police filed for charges along with any theft scheme charges that may apply.

On March 24 at 4:54 p.m. near 6000 Greenbelt Road, two men grabbed a purse from behind the counter and ran.

On March 26 at 5:46 p.m. near 5819 Cherrywood Lane, a girl wearing gray leggings and gray Ugg boots ran away from a residence with a package, while carrying other packages; a Ring

doorbell camera captured the theft.

On March 27 near 8178 Mandan Terrace, a package was stolen.

Near 6000 Greenbelt Road, on March 24 at 6:14 p.m. a man stole items; on March 25 at 3:45 p.m. a man stole items; and on March 27 at 3:52 p.m. a man concealed clothing in a large shopping bag and stole it.

On March 28 at 10:38 p.m. near 7583 Greenbelt Road, a man stole several items.

On March 28 at 3:27 p.m. near 5506 Cherrywood Lane, someone stole around \$100 worth of food and fled toward the bus stop on Cherrywood Lane.

Trespassing

On March 26 at 4:27 p.m. near 7921 Mandan Road, a woman and her son were staying inside a residence that did not belong to them. The woman said she was given a key and told she could stay there by an unidentified man. They were escorted off the property, and the key was collected. The homeowner wished no further police action.

Vandalism

On March 25 at 5:06 p.m. near 9170 Edmonston Road, kids were playing soccer and one of them kicked the ball into a bedroom window, shattering it. The kids stayed on the scene, and it was determined to be an accident.

Vehicle Crimes Stolen Vehicles

Eight vehicles were stolen: on March 25 near 7302 Morrison Drive, a 2020 Kia Forte; March 26 near 6110 Breezewood Drive, a light blue 2012 Honda CRV (Md. 4GM6884); March 27 near 6113 Breezewood Court, a white 2013 Infiniti G37 (Md. 3GH8339), near 6110 Breezewood Court, a black 2011 Infiniti G37 (Md. 5GH1544), and near 7595 Greenbelt Road, a 2017 Chevrolet SS (Md. 4EP3373); March 28 near 7801 Mandan Road, a 2017 Honda Accord (Md. 1EN2149); March 29 near 7217 Hanover Parkway, a 2021 Dodge Charger (Md. 5EY6838); and March 30 near 9304 Edmonston Road, a 2011 Toyota Camry (Md. 1AM2568);

Attempted Theft of Vehicle

Two vehicles were broken into with ignition damage: on March 25 near 7120 Ora Glen Court, a 2013 Hyundai Sonata, and on March 30 near 6221 Springhill Court, a Hyundai Elantra.

Theft from Auto

Two vehicles had all four wheels stolen: on March 27 near

5921 Cherrywood Terrace, a 2025 Toyota Camry, and on March 29 near 6710 Lake Park Drive, a 2023 Toyota RAV4.

On March 24 near 6223 Springhill Court, a tag was stolen.

On March 24 at 3:18 p.m. near 7500 Greenway Center Drive, a purse was stolen from a 2016 Honda Odyssey.

Disability placards were stolen on March 25 near 5811 Cherrywood Lane and near 5819 Cherrywood Lane, from two vehicles with windows broken.

On March 25 near 7513 Greenbelt Road, someone stole several items from a locked vehicle but there were no signs of forced entry.

Vandalism to Auto

On March 25 near 7102 Ora Glen Court, a Toyota Corolla had a broken window; and a 2011 Hyundai Sonata and a 2012 Kia Optima had damaged windows and ignition.

On March 28 at 5:15 p.m. near 7595 Greenbelt Road, a man was sitting in his vehicle when an unknown woman started beating on his windshield causing damage.

Windows were broken on March 30, on a Hyundai Sonata near 9154 Springhill Court, and on a 2016 BMW near 9135 Edmonston Terrace.

City Notes

Constituent Services moderated a tenant rights town hall and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion hosted a voter engagement strategy meeting. Safety and Community attended a Greenbelt-Berwyn Heights ambulance meeting. Economic Development attended an Economic Development Procurement Conference in College Park and met with Greenbelt's lobbyist in Annapolis.

Public Works installed traffic arrows, crosswalks and solar-powered stop signs. Animal Control resolved 42 calls.

Recreation staff presented a Learn2Earn closing ceremony. The Aquatic & Fitness Center hosted Special Olympics swim team practice and Mishkan Torah's water aerobics. Public Works completed after-hours work on locker room showers.

Therapeutic Recreation facilitated the Senior Citizen Advisory Committee meeting, Senior Nutrition Program's monthly birthday celebration and, with IT, Senior Tech Café.

Park Rangers, Environmental and Therapeutic Recreation presented a Gardening Get Together.

Museum staff helped a volunteer digitize documents in the Museum's archive.

CARES attended Greenbelt Middle School's Literacy Night and Bowie's Young Adult Job Fair. The Bilingual Community Outreach Coordinator became a Certified Dementia Practitioner.



Along Lakeside Drive yellow and white daffodils bloom under a Magnolia Butterfly tree.

PHOTO BY MARY CORBIN SIES

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LEGAL NOTICE

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA IN THE FAMILY COURT OF THE THIRTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COUNTY OF GREENVILLE DOCKET NO.: 2025-DR-23-0001 NOTICE OF ADOPTION PROCEEDINGS TO THE DEFENDANT: CARLOS RUIZ, ALLEGED BIRTH FATHER AND JOHN DOE BIRTH FATHER YOU ARE HEREBY GIVEN THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:

1. That an adoption proceeding was filed in the Family Court of Greenville County on January 2, 2025, and in this Complaint, you are alleged to be the father of a Hispanic, female child born in Silver Springs, Marland, on December 28, 2024; and you John Doe are alleged to be the father of a Hispanic, female child born in Silver Springs, Marland, on December 28, 2024. 2. That the Plaintiffs in the above captioned Notice are not named for the purpose of confidentiality; however, the Court knows the true identity of the Plaintiffs and in responding to this notice, you are required to use the caption and the number 2025-DR-23-0001. 3. That if Notice to Contest, Intervene or otherwise Respond is filed by you with the Court within thirty (30) days of the receipt of this Notice of Adoption Proceedings, you will be given an opportunity to appear and be heard on the merits of the adoption. To file notice to Contest, Intervene or otherwise Respond in this action, you must notify the above named Court at Greenville County Courthouse, Clerk of Court Greenville County Family Court, 350 Halton Road, Greenville, South Carolina, 29607 in writing of your intention to Contest, Intervene or otherwise Respond. The above named Court must be informed of your current address and any changes of your address during the adoption proceedings. 4. That your failure to respond within thirty (30) days of receipt of this Notice of Adoption Proceedings constitutes your consent to the adoption and forfeiture of all of your rights and obligations to the above identified child. It is further alleged that your consent to this adoption is not required under S.C. Code Ann. Section 63-9-310 and that your parental rights should be terminated pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 63-7-2570 (7). This notice is given pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 63-9-730 (E). Raymond W. Godwin, Esq. (SC Bar #2162) PO Box 354, Greenville, SC 29602 PH (864) 241-2883 FAX: (864) 255-4342 ATTORNEY FOR PLAINTIFFS Date: March 6, 2025

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U.S. Education Dept. Funding Withdrawal Impacts PGCPS

by Anna Bedford-Dillow

The withdrawal of funds by the U.S. Department of Education jeopardizes some \$418 million for school districts across Maryland. Of those districts, Prince George's County Public School (PGCPS) is among the four in the state that would be most affected, stated Superintendent Millard House II in a letter to the community on Tuesday, April 1. The U.S. Department of Education announced the move in a letter 5 p.m. on Friday, March 28, which stated they are rescinding previously approved Covid recovery funds effective immediately. House described the move as "unexpected" and one that will "take back reimbursements for pandemic recovery funds that were expected to be available through January 2026."

The impacted funds may include money spent but not yet reimbursed and money already encumbered. Thus it imperils planned projects and procurements and also those already underway. House said PGCPS is still reviewing the impact on their schools but must freeze any remaining spending tied to the funds.

Among the affected programs underway are construction, teacher training and mental health services, House noted. "These funds have supported key services for students, including mental health care, vaccines, technology, building upgrades, teacher training and programs to help students recover from the effects of the pandemic," stated House.

In addition, PGCPS has made payments and is required to pay for goods and services they've already received, though they proceeded with the understanding they would be reimbursed by the federal funds. That promise of reimbursement is now retracted. "This reversal creates serious financial challenges and threatens important supports for our students," said House. "We are urging the U.S. Department of Education to uphold its commitment while working closely with the Maryland State Department of Education to determine next steps," he said. "At the same time, our team is thoroughly reviewing the financial and programmatic impact and exploring every available option to navigate the challenges ahead," wrote House.

Capital Area Food Bank Pop-up Distributions for Federal Workers

The Capital Area Food Bank (CAFB) is committed to providing food for our neighbors in need throughout the year and in unexpected moments of economic hardship.

To support those who have been impacted by recent reductions in federal jobs and funding, the food bank will be holding pop-up food distributions this spring.

Starting on Saturday, April 5, these new pop-up distributions will offer pantry items and fresh produce food boxes twice a week, on Thursdays from 5 to 7 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 to 11 a.m., or until supplies last each day. The pop-up distributions can be found in the parking lots of the following retail locations:

D.C.

Safeway, 322 40th Street, NE
Giant, 1535 Alabama Ave., SE

Maryland

Giant, 7546 Annapolis Road, Lanham
Giant, 7074 Allentown Road, Camp Springs

Virginia

Giant, 6364a Springfield Plaza, Springfield
Safeway, 4215 Cheshire Station Plaza, Dale City

Supporting the community, whatever the circumstances, is at the core of CAFB's mission. Along with a network of more than 400 partner organizations, they are prepared to help meet the needs of their neighbors.

Anyone in need of food assistance can find the times and locations of additional food distributions among the group's partner network by visiting the Get Help page. Those who have questions about food assistance or these distributions, may call Hunger Lifeline at 202-644-9807.



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Springhill Lake Students Enjoy Field Trip with Refuge Staff

Third-grade students from Springhill Lake Elementary School took a walking field trip to Springhill Lake Recreation Center over three days in March to take part in activities organized by Greenbelt Recreation Arts in partnership with the Patuxent Research Refuge. Each class created nature-themed collages with art instructor Caitlyn McGillen, and also tried fishing and archery and went on a nature walk with rangers and volunteers from the Refuge. One of the teachers reported, "I have heard a lot of excited students as they returned from their trip sharing how much fun they had, how many fish they caught and how satisfying it was to rip paper."

- Photos by Anne Gardner



A ranger from Patuxent Wildlife Refuge leads a nature walk.



Third-grade students try their hand at archery.



Third-grade students learn how to cast a fishing line.



Students play a fishing game outside the Recreation Center.



A student shows off his collage.



Art instructor Caitlyn McGillen, right, leads a collage workshop.



PHOTO BY CAITLYN MCGILLEN

FIONA continued from page 1

Krauk said when asked how it feels to see her daughter reach this level. "You kind of find it normal," Fiona added. "It's been normalized," agreed Krauk. "But we are still so proud of you."

Fiona's gymnastics journey began almost as soon as she could walk. "I was just a baby," Fiona said. Krauk recalled finding a tiny Fiona climbing furniture and leaping off the back of their couch. It wasn't long before they decided, "We've got to get this kid into some sort of activity." A mommy-and-me class quickly revealed Fiona's natural affinity for gymnastics, and she hasn't stopped since.

Fiona began with artistic gymnastics but discovered and transitioned to acrobatic after taking an injury leave. "I had no idea what acrobatic gymnastics was at first," she said. "I thought of aerial silks and front walkovers, and that's what a lot of people think it is." But acro, as the sport is often called, trades our typical notion of gymnastics, with its beams and bars, for partner-based, choreographed routines performed entirely on the floor – often involving jaw-dropping balances, flips and throws. "In acro, artistry really matters," Fiona said. "It should get more recognition." Anyone who's ever seen a routine would be quick to agree.

Fiona trains five to six days a week, logging around 22 hours in the gym and often doing intense conditioning work. She said that she finds training to be the hardest part of the whole competition cycle – along with the early mornings.

Fiona competes as the top in a women's trio – the gymnast who is lifted, balanced and thrown – alongside two bases, who are typically older and taller. The group-based nature of acrobatic gymnastics adds a layer of complexity and requires constant coordination, trust and chemistry between partners. "Artistic [gymnastics] is an individual sport.



From left, Gabby Zsakany, Juliet Hanks and Fiona O'Brien compete at the National Championships.

PHOTO BY JOHN CHENG, USA GYMNASTICS

You're with your team, but when you're out on that beam, if you fall or if you hit, it's all you," said Krauk. "[Acrobatic] is different. It's not like a team sport where they can just sub somebody in. You make or break with your group."

Come summer, after Nationals, Fiona's current trio will break up as one of her bases heads to college. To requalify for the national team, she'll need to form a new group and try out again. It's a reality of the sport that Fiona is already familiar with – and one she's prepared to face.

But despite the pressures of elite competition, Fiona is still very much a teenager. "I love to sleep in," she said with a laugh in response to what she does when she has a day off. With most days packed with school and hours of practice, she treasures her free time. "I don't get a lot of down time so when I can just do nothing, it's really nice." So on those slower days, she enjoys hanging out with her friends, jumping on her trampoline or watching a movie.

While Fiona might not know what the future looks like in terms of her gymnastics career, she does know that she wants to keep going. With her sights set high and her feet (sometimes) in the air, she's not planning on slowing down.

Diya Shah is a student at the Philip Merrill College of Journalism interning at the Greenbelt News Review.



Late afternoon sun lights trees along the lake trail at Buddy Attick Park.

PHOTO BY JEFFREY ALLEN JONES