

the Country Chronicle

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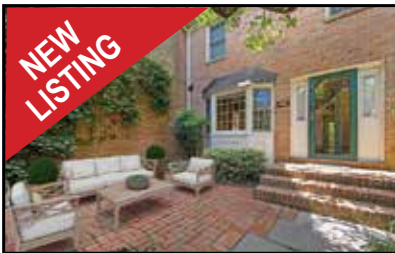
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In two randomized, double-blind trial studies, subjects receiving Tryptyr experienced “significantly increased tear production,” according to researchers. Many patients’ positive results started as early as day one. Tryptyr is the first eye drop medication that stimulates the eyes’ natural tear production process and requires application just twice a day. Common side effects included a burning or stinging sensation when being applied.

Dry eye disease happens when a person’s tears can’t keep the eyes wet enough, sometimes as a result of the side effect from medications, getting older or hormonal changes—especially with pregnant or menopausal women, or even prolonged viewing of computer screens. Symptoms include burning, itching and a gritty feeling in the eye. If left untreated, DED can result in eye irritation, infection or vision problems which can affect a person’s quality of life. Approximately 16 million Americans suffer from DED, according to the American Academy of Ophthalmology.



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News

Balt. Co. GOP Flexes Early Muscle for 2026

by Michael Ruby

A funny thing is happening on the way to the 2026 elections: Baltimore County’s Republican party is getting its act together, which is unusual, powerful and definitely surprising given the group’s perennial minority status.

The most prominent, public and possibly predictive evidence of this galvanizing effort was (intentionally) on display last week when three GOP candidates united for a pep rally-type campaign kickoff, each one formally announcing their candidacies for various local offices all affecting in some way northern Baltimore County residents.

The event was held at the Maryland State Fairgrounds on September 25 before a standing-room only crowd of 400 supporters who ventured out on

a rainy, Thursday night. That’s more than five months before the candidate filing deadline, nine months before the primary and more than 13 months prior to the general election.

For a political rally this early in the election cycle, that’s unusual, especially for Republicans. For a political rally involving multiple Republicans not running in the same legislative district, that’s unusual, too. And for the local GOP faithful to think they have a shot at claiming the county’s top elected office — the powerful county executive spot — well, that borders on madness but funnier things have happened on the way to an election.



Patrick V. Dyer

Photograph by Michael Ruby

Historic disruption

Party loyalists were called so they came to the campaign kickoff, brav-

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the Country Chronicle

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News



Del. Nino Mangione emphatically stated he would not move the URDL.

Balt. Co. GOP Flexes Early Muscle for 2026

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ing lightening, sheets of rain and occasional fierce gusts of wind for no other reason than to celebrate what they hope will be an historic disruption of the one-party grip on county-wide offices.

The coming-out party featured:

- Patrick V. Dyer, an investment broker from Lutherville announcing his quest for the County Executive seat;

- * Kevin Ford, a White Hall farmer and lieutenant with the Baltimore County Fire Department, declaring his candidacy for the soon-to-be vacated state Senate position in Legislative District 42;

- And, Nino Mangione, a Sparks resident who is leaving the Maryland House of Delegates after serving two terms for a seat on the Baltimore County Council, representing the rural north central section of the jurisdiction.

Stranglehold

Registered Democrats outnumber Republicans 2.5-to-one in Baltimore County. Not surprisingly, a Republican hasn't served in a county-wide office since 2006 when Sandra O'Connor ended her 31-year stranglehold as the Baltimore County state's attorney. A Republican hasn't been county executive since 1990 when former school board president Roger Hayden won because he wasn't incumbent Dennis Rasmussen, who

created a much-vilified imperial rule freely spending taxpayers' dollars while constituents were suffering through a recession.

And it's been at least 65 years since anyone can remember a Democrat not serving as the register of wills or sheriff for Baltimore County.

But county GOP party members are emboldened and optimistic thanks to Dyer sitting atop the party's ticket, giving them what could be their strongest county executive candidate since Spiro Agnew.

'Make the tough decisions'

Both Dyer and Ford are first-time candidates, emerging from the private sector to provide, what Dyer called, "new leadership in Baltimore County" who "have the courage to make the tough decisions." Ford said he would lead his community into "a more prosperous future."

Mangione forcefully repeated what every one in northern Baltimore County wants to hear: he will not move the Urban-Rural Demarcation Line, protecting the environmentally sensitive, agricultural area from unwanted development.

So far, only Towson resident Kim Stansbury has said she will be running again in the 2026 primary race for the GOP county executive nomination. Ford also is facing a primary challenge from Hampstead Mayor Christopher Nevin for the Legislative District 42 state Senate seat that is being vacated by Sen. Chris West (R), the Ruxton resident who is retiring after two terms in the upper chamber.



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Mangione earlier had stated his plan to succeed West in the state Senate then switched his attention and intention to the County Council after current Councilman Wade Kach (R-3) announced his retirement. The Council seat, according to Mangione, allows him to better wage a crusade against the proposed Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project power line extension across north county farmland. No other GOP candidates are expected to contest Mangione in the primary race.

Resurgent local GOP

Need more proof of a resurgent local GOP? At the campaign rally, the special guest was former Maryland Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., who, in 2002, became the first Republican elected governor for the state in 36 years. The recent event in Timonium was as much a homecoming for Ehrlich who had been a neighbor of Dyer, then represented the central Baltimore County area in the Maryland House of Delegates (with then Delegate Kach) and later in Congress before claiming the governor's mansion in Annapolis.

Ehrlich supplied the necessary MAGA element required of any Republican rally held these days, including handing out free, autographed copies of his latest book, "Trump 2.0," to everyone in attendance.

Each candidate and Ehrlich were introduced to the crowd by local radio political commentator Kimberly Klacik, who lost in the 2024 Maryland 2nd Congressional race to former County Executive John A. Olszewski, Jr.

Quite a line-up for the free event — not a fundraiser — designed simply to showcase a portion of the budding talent filling the local Republican ranks and the cooperative support promised to all. And a far cry from the 2022 election when the GOP candidate for the Baltimore County Executive office refused to accept donations from others even in his own party or to campaign forcefully for himself or fellow party members.

Tip of their iceberg

Still, even with all the state and local GOP dignitaries in the house at the recent kick-off rally and the hoopla for the three candidates present, county Republican leaders are claiming this is just the tip of their iceberg when it comes to the 2026 election season. Politicos are crediting a years-long recruitment effort and enhancement of electioneering resources for optimism heading into the 2026 vote.

Now that the councilmanic redistricting has been completed and new district boundaries are settled, county Republican leaders are predicting they will secure the three east side council seats, with Councilman David Marks being re-elected in the new Council District Seven (Perry Hall - White Marsh), an all-but-announced popular community activist running in the newly-created and vacant Council District Eight (Middle River - Essex), and a familiar but still uncommitted name to replace outgoing Councilman Todd Crandell (R-7) in the new Council District Nine (Dundalk).

And the GOP operatives say they are buoyed by the demographics in the new Council District One (Catonsville and Arbutus), awaiting former Gov. Ehrlich, an Arbutus native, to convince a viable candidate and make the west side possibly tilt red.

When combined with the fundraising abilities and name recognition of Mangione in the new Council District 5 (Timonium to the Pa. line), local Republicans have visions of five GOP representatives on the nine-member Council after the votes are tallied in November 2026, giving them their first majority on the local legislative body.

Maryland had a surplus

County GOP party members are further encouraged with the rumblings of former Gov. Larry Hogan possibly running again, giving Republican voters all the more reason to venture out and vote (or mail in their ballots) though Hogan had little, if any, coattails in his 2018 race for re-election. That's okay; they'll settle for an expected anti-Gov. Wes Moore (D) surge at the ballot boxes.

Like Hogan did successfully, Dyer is expected to tout his business acumen and connections to help restore Baltimore County's revenue base along with renewed economic development efforts instead of just increasing taxes and fees on local residents.

Plus, Dyer also is expected to attack those tactics employed by Gov. Moore, who is running for re-election in 2026. Ask any Republican and he/she will recite that Maryland had a \$5 billion surplus when Hogan left office; today, Maryland is suffering from a deficit.

So all Republicans — in Baltimore County and statewide — will be running against any and all Democrats who are deemed inherently fiscally irresponsible, have allowed crime to run rampant in our streets and won't co-

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Balt. Co. GOP Flexes Early Muscle for 2026

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The Sept. 25 rally featured three GOP candidates.

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Emerge bloodied

Again, Dyer has the advantage of being a political neophyte, without the baggage or stigma of being a politician — unlike his likely Democratic challenger in the general election. The front runners for the Democratic county executive nomination are three members of the County Council who are gearing up for a slugfest known as the June 23, 2026, primary. Any winner will emerge bloodied, staggering and much poorer with little time — or resources — to change gears and engage a credible GOP challenger in time for the November 3, 2026, general election.

Dyer, on the other hand, has considerable fundraising ability from close associates and other well-heeled businessmen. Plus, unlike most local candidates, Dyer is in the enviable position to self-fund most of his campaign, which he estimated will total about \$1.6 million.

And, without a formidable primary challenger, Dyer can campaign continuously from last Thursday night attacking "the Democratic establishment" straight through to the general election while helping to lift other Republican candidates standing by his side.

Madness rampant

Is madness rampant in the local GOP party? Definitely, but with good reason and a large helping of optimism. Yet, sometimes a person's or party's reach extends beyond his/her grasp.



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be done without the effort.

In the most telling incident of just how crazy the local Republicans are getting, they are targeting the ouster of Del. Michele Guyton (D-42B), who has served northern Baltimore County since 2019, and is an embarrassing blue stain on an otherwise red area that is represented by a Republican congressman, a Republican state Senator and a Republican councilman.

A developmental psychologist and disabilities advocate, Guyton is well known for her excellent constituent service and community outreach. But in 2016, she committed the unpardonable sin of deciding to run for elected office following the results of the 2016 presidential contest.

After a squeaker of a finish in the November 2018 election, she was re-elected by a more than 20 percent margin in 2022.

Symphonic attack

But Republicans are mounting a concerted effort to unseat her in 2026 and have enlisted a candidate, Larry Novak, to challenge her. However, it's more than just a concerted effort but a full-blown symphonic attack.

At the September 8 meeting of the Baltimore County Republican

District 42B, putting considerable resources — including repeat door canvassing by volunteers, targeted mailer lists and frequent solicitations, even employing the considerable skills of Kim Klacik's former team — focused on unseating Guyton while also maintaining a Republican in the one-person Legislative District 42A, which is being vacated by Mangione.

"We're going to go after them hard," said Patty Fallon, chair of the local central committee.

Though it is surprising that Baltimore County GOP officials are expending so much time, effort and money to remove Guyton, it is even more surprising they would commit so much time, effort and money on such a quixotic battle when more fertile ground is ready for sowing.

But such is the mindset of local Republicans: newly energized; flexing new-found muscle; madly chasing possibilities that not long ago were considered out of reach. The September 25 campaign kickoff rally may prove to be the launching pad for an unusual election season, full of surprises. How successful the Baltimore County GOP faithful are — as determined by the results of the 2026 elections — may surprise even them.



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BY RENEE HAMIDI

We also have secret weapons: the audible eye roll that shuts down lame excuses and unreasonable requests; knowing where the good scissors are at all times (touch them and risk death); and, maintaining a stash of presents for random occasions so — quick as a flash — no one feels forgotten.

My sweet tooth: a sweet tooth. It helps me deal with the stress of “the holidays,” a.k.a. celebrations spent with people who share my DNA though otherwise have nothing in common.

My secret weapon gets me through tough times spent with or without family. Becoming older has never bothered me because birthdays mean cake — preferably chocolate

with chocolate frosting but any cake will do. I'm never sad to be alone on Valentine's Day; it means I don't have to share my candy. I don't celebrate Christmas but won't decline a holiday cookie or three or four when offered.

My secret weapon is at the ready as Halloween approaches. As the biggest candy-based holiday of them all nears, my pulse races and I can feel my blood sugar rising as if I'd just eaten an entire bag of fun-sized Snickers. Ask me how I know how that feels.

Milk duds aren't safe

As an adult with money of my own, I can buy candy anytime which is all the more tempting when Halloween candy appears in the grocery stores during August. But as an adult with a doctor who makes a frowny face when reviewing my blood work, I try to restrict my overall annual candy consumption. After all, she reminds me, I'm an adult with a dwindling amount of time on this earth. The negative effects of candy on my health scare me more than any haunted house or 12-foot skeleton.

Come October 31, though, with symbols of ghosts, goblins and death

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lurking around every corner and on every doorstep, any thoughts of my own mortality fly out of my head like a witch on a broom. To be sure, there may be so little time but there is also SO MUCH CANDY! In 2024, \$3.5 billion worth of candy was sold in the U.S. during Halloween with M&M's topping Reese's Peanut Butter Cups for the first time as the best seller nationwide. Candy corn was the top candy in Maryland, M&M's the favorite in Pennsylvania and Butterfingers the first choice in Virginia.

I'm not fussy, especially when it comes to chocolate. Even the oddly-named Milk Duds aren't safe around me. (Milk Duds don't contain any milk, just some powdered whey — a byproduct of cheese making. Of the first six ingredients listed



Doll's eye plant

on a Milk Duds box, four are some kind of sweetener ranging from corn syrup to dextrose.

(And they are called duds because the manufacturer failed to make perfectly round chocolate-covered caramels so they were considered "duds". Still, The Hershey Company, which has produced the confection since 2000, claims the odd shapes are "part of the candy's charm." How's that for marketing? Ironically, the more of them I eat, the rounder I get.)

Pretty scary stuff

Until the flood of candy overtakes me during the Halloween season, I distract myself somewhat in the garden where there's always plenty to do but also some pretty scary stuff.

Earlier this year, a friend texted me a picture of a ghost plant in her garden. I had never seen or heard of this parasitic perennial native to much of the United States, northern South America and large parts of Asia. *Monotropa uniflora* is aptly named; it's ghostly white, though some rare variants are red.

Ghost plants are fairly small, growing just a few inches tall, and bear a single small white flower on each curved stem (*Monotropa* is Greek for "one turn" and *uniflora* means "one flower").

Because a ghost plant doesn't contain chlorophyll, it can't photosynthesize food. Instead, it gets its energy from fungi and often is associated with fungi that thrive around the base of beech trees. The relationship between ghost plants and fungi is complex — even complicated — and this makes propagation difficult.

Forest depths

Ghost plant leaves look more like scales. A casual observer would be hard-pressed to immediately identify a ghost plant as a plant. Also, ghost plants are ephemeral, popping up unannounced when it rains after a dry period. With no need for sunlight, ghost plants can even sprout in very dark areas, including the depths of a forest.

Another name for the ghost plant is ghost pipe or Indian pipe.

I suppose the tubular shape of the stems could make one think of a pipe but why specifically an Indian one? The legend bears repeating. A group of Native American chiefs were quarreling, passing around a pipe as they did so. The Great Spirit was displeased, as they should have waited to smoke the sacred pipe until after coming to an agreement. So He/She (please substitute your choice of pronouns) turned the chiefs into the plant.

continued on page 12

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Garden Glories



Elephant ear plants

Candy May Be Dandy But Gardens Can Be Scary

continued from page 11

It's said the plant grows wherever friends have quarreled.

Creep a person out

I haven't seen any ghost plants in my garden; quarreling with friends isn't my idea of a good time. But this year, in an acquaintance's garden, I saw a variety of an elephant ears plant with leaves of purple so dark that they appear black. They're also glossy, like they've been dipped in oil, and huge to boot. I'm not sure what variety this is, but "Black Coral," is my best guess.

I've only seen "Black Coral" elephant ears (*Colocasia esculenta*) in the daytime, when it is eye-catching and quite striking, begging for closer inspection. I imagine, though, that on a dark night when ghouls are roaming the land, giant shiny black leaves could creep a person out.

Elephant ears need a lot of food, a lot of water as well as a lot of sun. Prune off dying leaves to avoid covering any companion plants. Before the first frost, dig up the clump, cut

the stems down to about five inches, cover with straw or wood shavings, and store in a cool location until spring. Then you can plant it again, giving it plenty of water and fertilizer to prod it back into life.

Like a yellow eye

Ears aren't the only body part that plants are named after. I've grown something called an eyeball plant, whose appearance clearly gave rise to its nickname. *Acmella oleracea* is one of a few species of herbs in the daisy family, originally native to South America.

I grow it as an annual (lots of sun, a normal amount of water) strictly because it looks so strange. Its flowers don't have normal petals. Instead they consist of a bright yellow round head, about the size of a grape, with red or maroon florets situated at the top, right in the middle. It looks like some weird yellow eye with a red iris.

Even weirder is that it's also known as toothache plant. Flower heads contain spilanthol, a compound that also is present in the foliage. Spilanthol is easily absorbed through the soft tissue of the mouth and produces a localized buzzing sensation along with a numbing and

**Ears aren't the
only body part
that plants are
named after.**

cooling effect.

Toothache plant can be used as an herbal remedy to deal with mouth pain. It also is used to flavor salads and soups and can be mixed with chilies in hot sauce.

It's supposedly perfectly safe to ingest but I haven't tried it yet. Despite a long history of candy consumption, I have just a few fillings and very little oral pain. Also, it's tough for me to get past the idea of eating eyeballs.

fruit develops. White berries about a half-inch in diameter have a black stigma scar (the remains of the sticky part of the flower that receives pollen). So the berry looks very much like an eye. Multiple berries are attached to a pedicel, the stalk that carried the individual flowers, which turns red. Imagine being faced with masses of "eyes" scattered along a red stem.

Cardiac toxins

While eyeball plants are edible, a native wildflower called doll's eyes most definitely is not. Also known as white baneberry — its Latin name is *actaea pachypoda* — doll's eyes is an herbaceous perennial that likes loamy upland soils and is often found in forest stands. It grows up to 30 inches high and has foot-long, toothed compound leaves. Give it regular water with good drainage and plenty of shade, and it will happily reproduce.

In spring, the doll's eyes plant produces white flowers crowded together on a four-inch-long raceme. Nothing weird about that until the

I haven't seen
any ghost plants
in my garden;
quarreling
with friends
isn't my idea
of a good time.

As if the visual image isn't bad enough, the berries and every part of the plant are poisonous. Berries contain cardiac toxins and are the most poisonous part of the plant. Consumption can lead to cardiac arrest and death.

Between ghost plants that rise from the shadows, elephant ears the size of umbrellas, and flowers that look like they're staring back at you, the garden can be a scary place. Almost makes eating Milk Duds seem like part of a balanced, well-rounded diet.

Contact freelancer Renee Hamidi at gardenglories1@hotmail.com with your gardening questions or to swap Halloween candy.



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Nature's Notes



Fall Is Acorn-ucopia Of Colors, Activities & Nuts

As the calendar flips to October, our landscape begins the notable shift from summer green to winter browns and grays. Along the way, delightfully, this colorful transition adds excitement to the fall season.



BY JOHN CANOLES

Before the deciduous leaves cover your lawn, choke your gardens, clog your rain gutters and create several weekends worth of chores, they will treat us all with a brief but colorful spectacle. The autumn colors are exposed as the chlorophyll, the dominant pigment that creates the typical summer green of leaves and assists in photosynthesis, is lost as deciduous trees prepare for the reduced sunlight of winter.

The loss of chlorophyll reveals basic yellow and orange coloring that was previously masked by the strong green pigment. The red and purple coloration of the fall leaves develop as sugars breakdown and the

phosphate levels reduce in the dying leaves. The strength of these colors can vary from season to season and from place to place.

Leave now

If you leave now (sorry for the pun), you can still catch peak foliage time in Vermont and New Hampshire. Or catch the colors now through the end of October in New York, with the Adirondacks and Catskills considered the best viewing areas in the Empire State.

Wait until mid-October before traveling to a Penn State home football game and catching the reds, oranges and yellows as you are bumper-to-bumper heading into Happy Valley in central Pennsylvania. To avoid the traffic jam (or if you're not a Big Ten fan), head out to Garrett County in western Maryland. But around the mid-Atlantic region including your backyard, late October and early November is considered the best viewing season, same as Virginia though the mountains become more flamboyant before the coastal areas.

And don't go for just the leaves.

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TO BECOME A VENDOR: The Hereford Fall Festival benefits the many volunteers who make up the local fire company. To be a part of the festival and support the HFVC, call Chris Lang 410-977-7816 or email Herefordfallfest@gmail.com.

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Nature's Notes



Fall Is Acorn-ucopia Of Colors, Activities & Nuts

continued from page 11

Apple picking season is in full swing, pumpkin fields are dotted with the bright orange gourds and get lost in a myriad of corn mazes that are carved into the countryside. Who's got time to sit and watch a football game?

Perfectly packaged

Fall also is a season of feasting for our local wildlife as acorns, seeds, walnuts and berries have ripened. The fall forage season is critical as it helps animals build up fat and energy to survive the coming winter or to support them along their migration to warmer regions.

In particular, acorn production is critical to many species such as turkey, deer, squirrels, chipmunks, blue jays, woodpeckers and even bears. These nuts are packed full of nutrients including protein, carbohydrates, calories and fiber and are a perfectly packaged food source.

Oak trees come in two groups: the white oak group and the red/black oak group. Acorns from the white oak group (white oak, chest-

nut oak, post oaks) have less tannin and are sweeter to eat. The acorns of the red/black group (red oak, black oak, scarlet oak, pin oak, willow oak) have higher tannin levels and are less desirable to eat, despite having higher nutrient levels than the white oak group acorns.

As acorns drop in the late summer and early fall, the favored white oak group acorns are gobbled up quickly and the red oak group acorns are left behind to become a critical, if less tasty, staple for winter feeding. Conveniently for our local

wildlife, red oak group acorns don't germinate as quickly as do the white oak acorns and will remain dormant and available for forage into the spring.

Dramatic effect

In fall and early winter, acorns can make up as much as 75 percent of a deer's diet. Hunters are well aware that deer and bear movements will change in the fall to take advantage of the acorn production.

Acorn production varies each year, some years have light production and others having heavy production. Some oaks can produce up to a ton of nuts per season. Because our wildlife relies so heavily on

continued on page 20

The fall forage season helps animals build up fat to survive the coming winter.



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 Nature's Notes



Fall Is Acorn-ucopia Of Colors, Activities & Nuts

continued from page 19

acorn production, this variability of production rate can have a dramatic effect on the next year's populations.

Studies have shown that deer often produce more twins the season after a good acorn year. The same increase in population likely also occurs in squirrels, chipmunks and other acorn consumers who are generally not humans. A single oak tree can support more than 1,000 different species of insects, birds, mammals and fungi, according to naturalists.

2025 is shaping up to be a mast year for acorns, meaning there is a significantly higher number of nuts being produced than usual, something that occurs every five to 10 years. Why the variation? The amount of energy required to produce the seeds is substantial so it takes a while for the tree to "recover." Also, some experts say a dry, warm spring often leads to a mast year — conditions that occurred recently.

Human consumption

Gathering acorns for human consumption is best left to nut af-

cionados. You have to find an oak tree, identify it (remember there are sweeter acorns and not so sweet acorns), and separate good acorns from those with worms (discard the ones with little holes bored in the shell).

Next comes cracking the nuts which is more easily done (individually with a hammer) after they have dried on a flat shallow pan so they don't get moldy. Boil 'em to get the skin off. Peel off the skin while under water so the meat doesn't oxidize.

Some oaks can produce up to a ton of nuts per season.

To leach the acorns — meaning remove the bitter tasting tannins, grind up the dried, peeled nuts, mix one cup of acorn meal with three cups of water. Pour this into a glass jar with a lid and put it in the fridge.

Every day you shake the jar, wait 12 hours or more, then pour off the water along with the tannins. How long? Anywhere from a week to two weeks, depending on how bitter your acorns are. Then lay out the acorn bits on cookie sheets to dry in the sun or under a "warm" setting in the oven. All that just to get the acorn flour. Instead, I prefer this recipe for "Acorn Cookies" that doesn't include acorns.

Smear a small amount of prepared cake frosting onto the flat bot-



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tom of a Hershey's candy kiss (unwrapped, of course). Press onto the flat bottom of a vanilla wafer. Smear a little more frosting onto the flat bottom of a butterscotch chip and press onto the rounded top of the cookie. Repeat until you run out of kisses, wafers or chips. Set aside to dry, preferably 30 minutes or until you just gotta try one.

Next generation

Of course, the goal of the oak tree's production of acorns is not to provide food for others but to produce the next generation of oaks. That acorns are such a valuable food source is both beneficial and detrimental to the oak's regeneration abilities.

The detrimental side of being a good food source is fairly obvious. If all of the acorns end up in the bellies of deer, bear and blue jays, then there will be no acorns to germinate into the next generation.

The beneficial side of the equation is that because acorns are such a good food source and are so perfectly designed for easy caching, many, many acorns are stored by squirrels and chipmunks and even woodpeckers for later consumption. Though many of these acorns are eaten, many are forgotten and left to germinate in their cache location.

Ecological dance

Often these caches are far from the spot where the acorn dropped and this helps to spread oaks across the landscape. Blue jays and other

birds also will aid in oak distribution when they accidentally drop acorns as they fly away with their intended meal.

The varied production of acorns also helps to promote reproduction success. A cycle has developed in which the oaks have reduced acorn production for several years, helping to reduce the population of the animals that feed on the acorns.

This is then followed by a high production year that allows the tree to out produce the consumers, leaving excess acorns on the ground to germinate. This ecological dance between the producers and the consumers ultimately benefits both parties.

'Unexpected' sightings

As the dance between acorn producers and acorn eaters is underway in the forest, the skies above are hosting a variety of hawks and eagles as they wing south on migration. Though mostly this goes unnoticed, I have recently begun receiving reports of bald eagles being seen in "unexpected" locations across northern Baltimore County. Fortunately, however, these sightings are no longer "unexpected" as eagle populations continue to rise across the area.

Each fall and winter, the Chesapeake Bay region plays host to hundreds of eagles and these birds spread out across our area in search of food sources. The local reservoirs will host many eagles through the winter and road kill deer is an important food source as well.

So keep an eye out in farm fields and roadsides for eagle sightings. As I have encouraged before, if you really want to see bald eagles, head up to Conowingo Dam around Thanksgiving for a show that you will not believe. Bring your camera and a snack — such as acorn cookies — because you may want to stay for a while but beware of the black vultures.

John Canoles is a principal in the Jacksonville-based Eco Science Professionals, Inc., an environmental consulting firm that, among other things, helps create backyard habitats and enhance stream bank stabilization. John welcomes your comments and questions. He may be reached at 410-832-2480 or email him at ccnaturenotes@aol.com.

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MISCELLANEOUS

Shop locally: Oct. 4, Nov. 1 & Dec. 6 at CRAFTS GALORE! Markets, 9:30 am - 2:30 pm. Tasty food. Handmade Goods. FREE Admission. Vendor Members Group at Timonium UMC, 2300 Pot Spring Rd., Timonium 21093. For more info, visit <http://www.vendormembersgroup.com>.

NOW BUYING FALL FASHION — Sass Resale Boutique, 9x Best of Baltimore Winner now buying ladies' clothing, designer handbags, shoes & jewelry. Buy times: Mon - Thurs, 11-5; Fri 11-4. See us at 107 Mt. Carmel Rd. in Hereford, call 443-491-3454 or visit www.shopsassresale.com.

Fall Crop Is In at Hereford Farm Market — CLOSED NOV. 8 for school event. Every Saturday, 9-noon for just-picked apples, cauliflower, tomatoes, gourds, fresh eggs, honey, baked goods, crafts and more. NOW LOCATED AT THE HEREFORD HIGH SCHOOL parking lot.

MISCELLANEOUS

Adult Choir Singers Needed -- All voices and ages welcome. Rehearsals Thurs. evenings (6:30-8) with performances on Sun. mornings Spring & Fall. Need not be member of St. Johns Lutheran Sweet Air in Phoenix. For more info, contact brian@stjohnssweetair.org or call church office at 410-592-6565.

Northwest Farmers' Market — Every Wednesday, 3-7 pm, at Hilton Garden Inn, 4770 Owings Mills Blvd, 21117. LAST DAY OCT 15. Farm fresh seasonal produce, meats & dairy, desserts, food trucks and more. Worth the drive. For more info, call 410-702-7073.

POETRY OPEN MIC — Write poems? Come share them! Love poetry? Come listen! Oct. 1, 6:30 pm at Manor Mill, Monkton. Featured poet is Unique Robinson followed by open mic. Bring an original poem to share. For more info, visit manor-mill.com/poetry

Apple Harvest Festival! — Oct. 3, 3-6 pm, at Immanuel Episcopal Church, 1509 Glencoe Rd., Sparks 21152. Silent auction, apple crisp, grill, kids' games, baked goods, live music. Tickets: \$5, at door. Sponsored by Scouting America Troop 1485 for girls.

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MISCELLANEOUS

Hereford FFA Dog Wash — Oct. 4, 9 am - noon, at Hereford HS. Services include: nail trims, teeth cleaning, ear cleaning, bathing & drying. Minimum donation: \$20. Rabies verification required; professional vet on site. Proceeds benefit Hereford FFA.

Sip & Shop Fall Festival — Oct. 5, Noon - 5 pm, at Bull House Winery, 17912 York Rd., Parkton 21120. Wine, 23 Local vendors, food trucks, live music, kid's area, raffles & Reed's Rescue. Vendor space available, contact bullhousewineryevents@gmail.com.

Apple Harvest Fest — Oct. 5, 3-6 pm, at Immanuel Episcopal Church, 1509 Glencoe Rd., Sparks 21152. \$5 per person; get apple crisp dessert. Also, baked goods, silent auction, burgers & dogs, live music, games. Proceeds benefit Scouting America Troop 1485.

A Day of Fun & Golf — Oct. 6, 8:30 am shotgun start, Hunt Valley Country Club, Phoenix 21131. \$150 per golfer includes breakfast, lunch, on-course refreshments and goodie bag. Also, awards, door prizes and silent auction. Sponsored by Jacksonville Senior Center. To register, call 410-887-8208. Sponsorships available.

FREE Online Divorce Workshop -- Oct. 8, noon -1:30 pm. Explore the legal, financial and emotional aspects of divorce while meeting expert guides, learning the resources available to help & sharing experiences. Offered for 25 years thru non-profit WIFE.org. Become empowered. For more info, visit www.northchesapeakesecondsatursday.com or call 443-377-1547.

Preserving & Protecting Rural N. Balt. County — Oct. 8, 7 pm, at Manor Mill, 2029 Monkton Rd., Monkton 21111. Featuring a history of the Ashland Iron Co from its founding to closure in 1927. For more info, visit www.sgpc.org.

Annual Gladys Marshall Scholarship Luncheon — Oct. 9, 11 am - 2:30 pm, at Hereford Senior Ctr., Summit Manor. Catered by Friendly Farms; live music. Tickets: \$35. Proceeds benefit scholarship fund. Call 410-887-1923 for reservations Sept. 25.

KVFC's 13th Annual Golf Tournament — Oct 10, shotgun start 9 am, at Rocky Point Golf Course, 1935 Back River Neck Rd, Essex 21221. \$125/golfer, includes cars, beverages, hot dogs and awards luncheon. Proceeds go to Kingsville VFC's new ambulance. To register, call Josh at 443-269-0857.

MISCELLANEOUS

Hereford Zone Cruise In — Oct. 11, 5-9 pm, at Graul's Hereford parking lot. Show off your car — muscle, antique, classic, trucks too — and get some bragging rights. Food available. For more info, call 443-392-2832.

CASH BINGO! GREAT PRIZES! — Oct. 11, doors open 5:30 pm, bingo starts 7 pm, at Summit Manor, HVFD. \$30 at the door. For more info, call 410-343-3277 (please, no texts) or email herefordalumni@gmail.com. Proceeds benefit Hereford Sparks Alumni Assn.

Monsters Invited for Breakfast — Oct 11, 8 am - 11 am, at Norrisville VFC, 2134 Harkins Rd., Pylesville 21132. FREE if in full costume, otherwise Adults \$10, Kids (5-10) \$5. AYCE pancakes, fruit, scrambled eggs, sausage, bacon, juice and coffee.

Political Discussion Without Bloodshed -- Braver Angels works to bridge the political divide through monthly in-person discussion groups with engaged, thoughtful civil discourse in a congenial atmosphere. "Family and Politics" workshop on Oct. 11, 10 am - 1 pm pm, at Miller Branch, Howard County Library, 9421 Frederick Rd, Ellicott City 21042. For more info, visit CentralMarylandBraverAngels.org or email us at central-maryland@braverangels.org.

Fall Carryout Fried Oyster & Ham Dinner — Pre-order & pre-pay by Oct. 14, pickup Nov. 1, 2-5 pm, at Ayres Chapel UMC, 3046 Ayres Chapel Rd., White Hall 21161. Choices: all oysters, all ham or 1/2 & 1/2; with choice of sides. Cost: \$30. To order, call 717-382-4319.

Country Dinners — Oct. 15, 3-5 pm, at Poplar Grove UMC, 13600 Poplar Hill Rd., Phoenix 21131. Carry out only. Adults: \$15, \$8 kids under 10. Great home-cooked food, a different meat entree each month with vegetables, salads, desserts and refreshments. Thanks for supporting the church. For more info, call 410-692-6916.

Country Dinners — Oct. 15, 3-5 pm, at Poplar Grove UMC, 13600 Poplar Hill Rd., Phoenix 21131. Carry out only. Adults: \$15, \$8 kids under 10. Great home-cooked food, a different meat entree each month with vegetables, salads, desserts and refreshments. Thanks for supporting the church. For more info, call 410-692-6916.

Bull House Winery Open Mic — Oct. 17, 6-9 pm, at 17912 York Rd., Parkton 21120. Live music with a glass of local wine. All ages and skill levels welcomed. To register, call 410-456-5265.

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Classifieds

MISCELLANEOUS

RAFFLE Tickets — \$2 each, 3 for \$5, benefits Monkto Volunteer Ambulance. Selling at Graul's on Oct. 17-19. Drawing on Nov. 22. Mail check to HVAA, PO Box 262, Monkton, MD 21111 or call 443-377-6764. Thank you for your continued support.

Fall Flea Market — Oct. 17, 8 am - 2 pm, at Fork United Methodist Church, 12800 Fork Road, Fork 21051. Free vendor spaces; bring own table and chairs.. Call 410-592-8303. Pit beef, turkey & ham, also bake table.

Fall Chicken BBQ — Oct. 18, 2-5pm, at Norrisville UMC, 2811 W. Church Ln., White Hall 21162. Carry-Out only: PRE-ORDER by Oct 15. \$15 for chicken, sides and dessert. For more info or to pre-order, call 410-692-0604.

Bull House Winery Open Mic — Oct. 18, 6-9 pm, at 17912 York Rd., Parkton 21120. Live music with a glass of local wine. All ages and skill levels welcomed. To register, call 410-456-5265.

Home-made Chili At Hereford Fall Festival — Oct. 18 & 19 at Festival, 11-2 pm. Spicy and regular: \$5 for 16 oz, \$10 for 32 oz.; larger amounts will be charged accordingly. Proceeds benefit Monkton Volunteer Ambulance. For more info, call 443-377-6764.

Vendors Wanted for Hereford Fall Festival — Oct 18 & 19. Crafts, food and specialty vendors needed for the biggest fall festival around. For more info, call 410-357-5183 or visit www.herefordfire.org/Fall_Festival.

Garden Glow at Ladew — Oct. 18, 5-9 pm, at Ladew Gardens, 3535 Jarrettville Pike, Monkton 21111. Hundreds of jack o'lanterns, live music, glowing art installations, creatures of the night, food & drinks. For tickets, visit www.ladewgardens.com or call 410-557-9570.

Cockeysville Precinct 7 Police Community Relations Council meets Oct. 22, 7 pm, at CCBC Hunt Valley, 11101 McCormick Drive 21031. Make new friends while learning what's happening in your area. Come support our officers in blue. For more info, call Norman Zickuhr at 410-666-4254.

HUGE Yard & Basement Sale — Oct. 25, 9 am - 2 pm, at Cedar Grove Church, 2015 Mt. Carmel Rd., Parkton 21120. Train garden accessories, old tins, antiques, collectables, kitchenware and much more. For more info, call 443-271-4132.

MISCELLANEOUS

Home-made Chili at Graul's — Oct. 25 at Graul's Market, 11-2 pm. Spicy and regular: \$5 for 16 oz, \$10 for 32 oz.; larger amounts will be charged accordingly. Proceeds benefit Monkton Volunteer Ambulance. For more info, call 443-377-6764.

Trunk or Treat — Oct. 26, 12:15 - 1:15 pm, at Our Lady of Grace Church, 18310 Middletown Rd., Parkton 21120. In the parking lot of the outdoor pavilion. Rain or shine.

Craft Show — Nov. 1, 9-3 pm, Fallston Sr Ct, 1707 Fallston Rd, Fallston 21047. Vendor space available: \$25, bring own table and chairs. For more info, call 410-877-9003.

Halloween & Samhain Party — Nov. 1, 1 - 6 pm, at Royal Rabbit Vineyards, 1090 Jordan Sawmill Rd., Parkton 21120. Costume contest, wine tasting and food pairings, vendors, Tarot & charm readings, bonfire and drum circle, and more. For more info and tickets, call 443-721-6692.

AYCE Breakfast Buffet — Nov. 1, 7:30 - 10 am, at Wiseburg UMC, 810 Wiseburg Rd., White Hall 21161. \$10 per person, all you can eat! Eggs, bacon, ham, pancakes, chipped beef gravy, peach French toast, sausage, biscuits, coffee, juice, fruit salad.

Holiday Craft Fair — Nov. 1, 9 am - 2 pm, at Md. Line VFC, 21631 York Rd., Md. Line 21105. Home-made candles, jewelry, sweet treats, home decor & more. Pit beef, ham & turkey available. For vendor space, call 410-357-0019.

One Maryland, One Book Discussion — Nov. 6, 10 am, Hereford library, 16940 York Rd., Monkton 21111. Discussion on "Kin: Rooted in Hope," by Carole Boston Weatherford, like many Black families, traces her history shaped by loss, erasure through slavery and ultimate reclamation.

Gingerbread Bazaar — Nov. 8, 9 am - 3 pm, at Redeemer Lutheran Church, 20040 Downes Rd., Parkton 21120. Crafters, vendors, new & nearly new gift shop, cafe, baked goods, door prizes, silent auction, children's craft corner. Vendor tables available: \$35 for 8'; \$30 for 6'. Donations of non-perishable food items for local food bank appreciated. Call 410-804-6853 or email dolalb@comcast.net.

Classifieds

MISCELLANEOUS

Greater Jacksonville Association Meeting — Nov. 12, 7 pm, at Fairview UMC, 13916 Jarrettsville Pike, Phoenix 21131. Updates on local topics, water potability and development projects. Visit www.greaterjacksonville.org for more info.

Preserving & Protecting Rural N. Balt. County — Nov. 12, 6-8 pm at at Manor Mill, 2029 Monkton Rd., Monkton 21111. Monthly meeting of the Sparks-Glencoe Community Planning Council. Featured speaker: Victor Bennett of Wildside Nursery on “The Importance of Native Plants to Boost the Ecosystem.” For more info, visit www.sgpc.org.

Hereford Book Club — Nov. 14, 6 pm, Hereford library, 16940 York Rd., Monkton 21111. Discussion on “What Storm, What Thunder,” by Myriam J.A. Chancey, this year’s selection for One Maryland One Book. Charts with ompassion the inner lives of nine characters after the 2010 devastating earthquake in Haiti.

MISCELLANEOUS

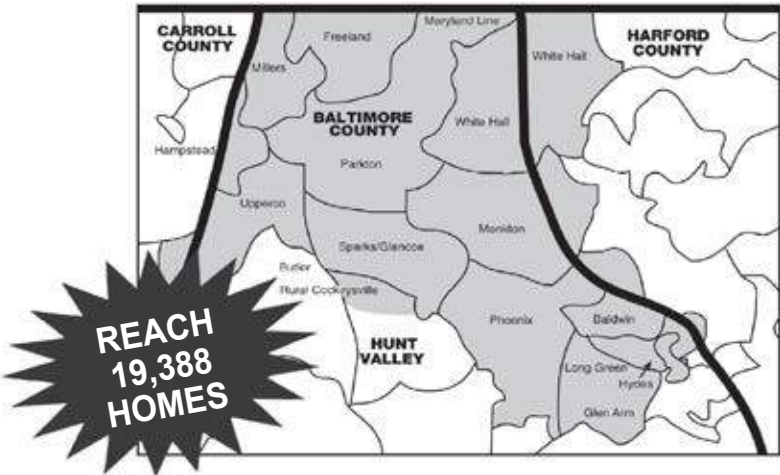
Quilt Show & Sale — Nov. 14-15, 10 am - 5pm, at Jarrettsville Gardens, 3825 Federal Hill Rd., Jarrettsville 21084. Quilting On the Line Quilt Guild presents “Besides Still Waters Quilt Show,” 120+ quilts on display and for sale, plus quilt raffle, raffle baskets, sewing-related vendors. Admission: \$10, under 12 free. For more info, visit www.quiltingonthe-line.com.

Holiday Bazaar — Nov. 15, 9 am - 3 pm, Family Center at Hereford Faith & Life Church, York & Monkton Rds., Hereford. Hand-made holiday ornaments, gifts & decorations, baked goods & candies. Credit cards accepted. Call 410-343-0660 for more info.

Crafters Wanted for Christmas Bazaar — Held Nov. 18 at St. Paul UMC, 2036 Telegraph Rd., Pylesville 21132. Spaces: \$20. For more info, call 410-808-1655.



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Classifieds

MISCELLANEOUS

BINGO at the Hereford Sr. Center — Nov. 20, 12:45 - 3 pm, at 510 Monkton Rd, Hereford 21111. Pack of 10 bingo cards: 1 for \$5, 3 for \$10. Bring lunch or buy one at the center (\$5, please RSVP). For more info, call 410-887-1923.

Pints & Pages: Book Discussion — Dec. 4, 6:30 pm., at Black Locust Hops Farms Brewery, 21305 Heathcote Rd., Freeland 21053. Join a Hereford librarian to share your latest reads while enjoying a full pour (or two) made from local hops. Register at bcpl.info.

Craft Fair — Dec. 6, 10- am - 2 pm, at Glen Meadows Retirement Community, 11630 Glen Arm Rd, 21057. Handmade items include jewelry, woven baskets, crocheted and knitted scarves, shawls, dishcloths and much more. Outside vendors needed. Call at 410-319-5000.

Lorraine's Food Pantry Is Open — In need of food? Located at Ayres Chapel UMC, 3046 Ayres Chapel Rd., White Hall, 21161. To schedule an appointment, call 717-382-4319

MISCELLANEOUS

Crafters/Vendors Wanted for Annual Christmas Bazaar — Dec. 6, 9 am - 2 pm, at Ayres Chapel Church, Norrisville and Ayres Chapel Rds., White Hall, 21161. Pit beef sandwiches, baked goods, soups. For more information or table space, call 410-357-8031 or email lynnrosier@mybluelight.com.

Fall Fitness Programs at Carroll Manor Rec Council — Cardio, Zumba & Zumba dance, strength training, yoga and candlelight yoga; weekdays, evenings and Saturday morning classes at 3605 B Sweet Air Rd, Phoenix 21131. Men, women and youth of all ages. For pricing and schedule, visit www.carrollmanor.org or contact cmrcfitness@yahoo.com.

Manor Garden Club seeks new members! Share your love of gardening, enjoy monthly presentations, garden tours and more. Second Thursday of the month, Sept. - June, 10:30 am - 1:30 pm. Call Sharon at 410-661-9242.

CPR Training — 3rd Saturday every month, 9 am - 1 pm, at Hereford VRC, 510 Monkton Rd., Hereford 21111. Cost: \$40. To reserve your spot, call Ron at 410-343-1119.



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