



The Bel Air Bond Newsletter

A quarterly newsletter published by the Town of Bel Air, Maryland www.belairmd.org



The **Bel Air Volunteer Fire Company** seeks recruits for their new live-in program. To read how this project brings firefighters and EMS personnel faster to your next emergency, go to **page 9**.



Karen Jacobs, owner of **Tiny Toes** and new president of the **Bel Air Downtown Alliance**, believes that the Bel Air Arts & Entertainment District is good for businesses - and vice versa.

Read about her vision of fun, culture and a lively business community in Bel Air on **page 4**.



A familiar face has moved on. **Joyce Oliver**, long-time Director of Human Resources & Administration for the Town of Bel Air, retired at the end of the year. See **page 8**.



Drivers can now access the Bel Air Parking Garage from Main Street. Pull into the new parking lot between the Main Street Tower Restaurant and the Harford County Sheriff's Office. Tower Restaurant Manager Kevin Jasper (l) and Jim Welch, Town of Bel Air's Public Relations Manager, point the way. See more details on page two.

Dear neighbors:

It takes a lot of personnel to make Bel Air a great place to live. Not all of them punch in from Monday through Friday and from 9:00 – 5:00.

Department of Public Works (DPW) employees hit the streets on trash collection days by dawn. The department is on the scene well before (and after) crowds arrive for parades, outdoor concerts and festivals.

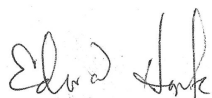
During weather emergencies, these workers report for duty while the rest of us rush home. Out of sight from most downtown workers and shoppers, DPW staff recently built a new walkway between Main St. and Burns Alley near the six-story parking garage.

Of course, Bel Air’s Police Department never closes. Its police, dispatchers and administrative support staff train to meet the same challenges that their colleagues in larger communities face.

The police department is committed to building a safe and secure community for our children. Behind the scenes, our officers mentor our younger citizens by operating summer camps and an annual cadet program. A visit to the Bel Air Police Department is a traditional part of many local camp and school curriculums.

Next time you see our men and women in blue and orange, please let them know how much they mean to this town.

Sincerely,



Eddie Hopkins, Mayor



The Department of Public Works and Bel Air Police Department are on duty before, during and after town events. Pictured at last September’s Bel Air Arts Festival are (l to r) Roy King, Sgt. Ed Smith and Michael Cornett.

Bel Air Town Commissioners



Eddie Hopkins



Susan Burdette



David E. Carey



Robert M. Preston



Dr. Robert J. Reier

ON THE COVER: A view of the Bel Air Volunteer Fire Company from atop Bel Air’s public parking garage on Hickory Avenue.

Drive this way to save steps, time in downtown Bel Air

Say you are looking for a parking spot while driving north on Main St. just past where it intersects with Churchville Road.

You could tap the brakes, scan for a street space and frantically search your memory for those long-ago parallel parking lessons.

Or - much easier – you can hang a right just before the Main St. Tower Restaurant and follow the drive into the new entrance to the Bel Air Parking Garage. Town officials also reorganized long-term leased spaces so that the public spaces are located just inside the new entrance.

This new garage entrance area is part of a larger project that will evolve for the property where the vacant BB&T Bank once stood.

Come spring, regionally recognized muralist Marshall Adams will begin a 22' x 56' wide mural on the exterior wall of the Harford County Sheriff's Office. By early summer, the parking lot created in the footprint of the former bank building will be the site of regular events that feature artists, fresh produce and cultural events. You will find details as they emerge on the Town of Bel Air Arts & Entertainment and the Bel Air Downtown Alliance's Web sites and Facebook pages.

Bel Air Town Garage



Just in case any one asks you . . .

The six-story Bel Air Garage encompasses forty million pounds of concrete - the equivalent of more than 40 miles of four-foot wide sidewalks. There are 1,042 parking spaces. The brick facade was modeled after the Old Court House and other local buildings. Source: J. Vinton Schafer & Sons, Inc., Abingdon, Builder.

Money Matters

Tips from Bel Air's Finance Department



- ◆ Paying a Town of Bel Air bill by check? Please place the check in the envelope unfolded. Our automatic mail opener tends to slice folded checks.
- ◆ You will now receive a standard size paper invoice for sewer bills. No more postcards lost in magazines or misplaced with other junk mail.

Food trucks set to roll into town

Once they were white panel vehicles that served no-frills lunches on construction sites. These days, food trucks are an everyday food haven in cities and small towns everywhere. Most boast gourmet meals and Twitter accounts.

The Town of Bel Air recently revised several ordinances that, at once, encourage food truck entrepreneurs to set up business while addressing concerns from residents and existing storefront restaurants and pubs.

After several drafts and consideration of public feedback, new Ordinance 757-12 allows food trucks to operate on specific streets in Bel Air. Authorized areas also include several town-operated parks as well as a smattering of church properties.

These locations minimize impact on restaurants and pubs while encouraging food truck entrepreneurs to locate in places where workers and visitors can't easily access a quick meal. Generally food trucks would be allowed to operate between 9 a.m. and midnight.

Town officials will review each applicant for an "itinerant dealer" license and issue permits with an eye on location and how the business supports economic growth and vitality. For example, food trucks on Rock Spring Avenue (north of Broadway) will attract potential customers to businesses in the area as well as walkers coming off the MA & PA Trail and walking toward town.

"The regulations are a work in progress," says Kevin Small, Director of Planning, who adds that the town will monitor how these food trucks make living and working in Bel Air more convenient and enjoyable.



Business plus the arts add up to one creative future for Bel Air

Karen Jacobs, owner of Tiny Toes and newly elected president of the Bel Air Downtown Alliance, has a vivid picture of how Bel Air's Arts & Entertainment District and its retail and professional services community will one day fit together.

"Start walking down Main St. from Preston's and Two Sisters," she says. "People will discover more art galleries, shops, street art and unique places to eat. Swing around to Bond Street, up past the Bel Air Bakery, Whitehouse Trading and Courtland Hardware. Top off your day of shopping, walking and snacking with a drop-in visit to the Harford Council Art Gallery.

On weekends and during special events, says Karen, she dreams of a Bel Air where arts festival meets farmer's market with live music with space for impromptu dancing, craft demonstrations and walker friendly paths. To top it all, Karen also wouldn't mind seeing all of this wrapped up in twinkling white lights.

"This is good for every kind of business. All of a sudden, you have crowds of people congregating on the street, lingering in front of your store. Right now, people tend to come to Bel Air with a specific destination in mind. They shop a particular store or meet a lawyer and go home. When arts & entertainment mix with businesses, people will come to Bel Air when they have nothing to do and then stay. Everyone profits."

Follow the Bel Air Downtown Alliance as it promotes the arts in a unique way during each of its 2013 regular and signature events: **The NEW Chocolate & Art Walk (February 22), Chocolate & Candy Festival (March 2), First Fridays, Summer Outdoor Movies, BBQ Bash and the Bel Air Downtown Music Fest (October).** www.downtownbelair.com. Use Facebook to get regular updates.



The Center for the Arts and the Harford County Cultural Arts Board are partnering with WHFC 91.1 FM to produce a new arts-focused radio show called ArtBeat. It airs each Tuesday at 12:30 p.m. For up-to-date details and to listen to archived shows, visit www.centerfortheartsharford.com and click on News: TV and Radio.



Karen Jacobs, who owns Tiny Toes at 4 N. Main St. and is the parent of two school-aged children, sees Arts & Entertainment districts as a boon to families as well as to retail and professional business owners.

Hometown author takes readers to a time we shouldn't forget

Some authors have a story to tell and won't be at peace until they write it.

That describes Harford County native Patrick Spicer, who wrote and self-published *Spooze's Shack: A Story of Harford County*. The cover was designed by his aunt and local artist Joan Preston.

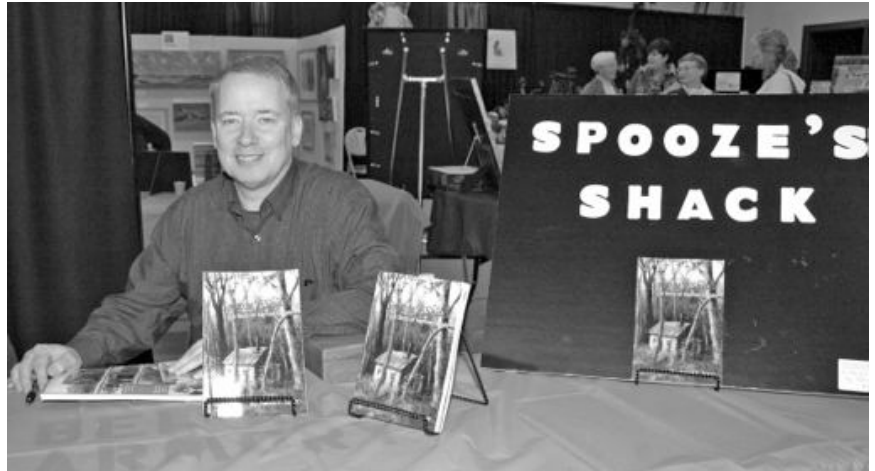
As a teenager in the 1960s, Patrick and his friends explored the woods, barns and streams that surrounded his grandparents' farm in Carsin's Run. During one expedition, they discovered a shack. Though abandoned, it contained a stove, old calendars and other evidence of a long-ago inhabitant. His mother later told Patrick that the shack's former resident, Spooze, was a local African-American man.

He never met Spooze, but Patrick's imagination was captivated by the life that Spooze must have led during years that Harford County (and much of the country) was segregated. In *Spooze's Shack*, Patrick weaves together fact and fiction to tell readers about his own life in 1960s Harford County, as well as that of Spooze.

"Harford County, and we often don't realize this, was a place and culture that had a very strong Southern influence," says Patrick. "We were dominated by agriculture and horse farms. African-American people were segregated by law and did a lot of the everyday work on these farms." Patrick called upon his own knowledge of rural Harford County in the mid-century and added what he imagined Spooze's life was like.

Patrick, General Counsel for Harford County Public Schools, has also written extensively about the topic of desegregation in Harford County Public Schools in a two-volume Harford Historical Society Bulletin, published in 2008.

It was important to him that these stories are not forgotten, he says: "I grew up at the end of that era. Now we have two generations who didn't experience these things. It makes me realize that I've lived through history in the same way that my grandparents saw things that I never saw. That just fascinates me. It's important to pass these things on."



Purchase a copy of *Spooze's Shack* at the Historical Society of Harford County or by contacting the author at spiceratty@aol.com. The price is \$5.00.



Now through February 24, 2013
Support your local artists. Treat yourself.

All original art \$99.00 and under. Stop by Tuesday through Friday from 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.; Saturday 12:00 - 5:00 and Sunday 12:00 - 4:00.

Location: Caretaker's Cottage, Rockfield Manor, 503 Churchville Road.
 Phone: 410-420-9499. www.artinharford.org

Harford Artists Association 2013

Addicted to Art

Art Lottery
 February 17
 Rockfield Manor, 12 - 3 pm

Reception: July 13
 1 - 4 pm

Curves & Angles

February 28 - April 28
 Harford Artists Gallery
 Reception: March 2,
 1 - 4 pm

Bel Air Festival for the Arts

Sept 15, 10 am - 5 pm

Art at the Library

April 27 - May 3
 Bel Air Public Library
 Reception: April 27,
 1 - 4 pm

Pictures at an Exhibition

Regional Juried Art Show
 Harford Artists Gallery
 Sept 5 to October 27
 Wine and Cheese
 Reception: Sept 7, 1 - 4 pm

Impressions

May 2 - June 30
 Harford Artists Gallery
 Reception: May 4
 1 - 4 pm

Holiday Art Show and Gift Sale

Harford Artists Gallery
 Oct 31 to Dec 22
 Reception Nov 2nd 1-4 pm

Lazy Days of Summer

July 11 - Sept 1
 Harford Artists Gallery

Holiday Open House Harford Artists Gallery

December 7, 1 - 5 pm

FEBRUARY

Friday 1
HALFWAY TO FIRST FRIDAYS
 Main Street Tower, 29 S. Main St.
 5 pm – 9 pm.
www.downtownbelair.com
 443-823-1797

Friday 1, Saturday 2, Sunday 3
BEL AIR GUN SHOW
 Bel Air Armory, 37- 41 N. Main St. Friday
 5 pm – 9 pm; Saturday 9 am – 5 pm;
 Sunday 9 am – 3 pm.
 Displays, sales, trades, antique and
 modern firearms, decoys, knives, coins,
 books. Sponsored by the Izaak Walton
 League, Harford County Chapter.
 Admission \$5. 410-877-1785

Saturday 2
PRUNING WITH THE MASTER
GARDENERS
 Bel Air Public Library; 10:15 am – 12:00
 pm
 February is not too early to think about
 the garden. Learn how and when to prune
 trees and shrubs. Bring your own hand
 pruning tool if you have one for hands-on
 practice. Registration required. Grades 4
 and older with an adult. 410-638-3151

Saturday 2
READING WITH KARMA DOGS
 Bel Air Public Library; 11 am – 1 pm
 Searching for a way to increase your
 child's interest in reading and self-
 confidence? Children are invited to read
 with a calm and loving Karma Dog.
 Registration begins one week prior to
 each session. 410-638-3151

Sunday 3
BEAT THE WINTER BLUES BINGO
 Bel Air Public Library; 2 pm
 Liven up your winter with fun games of
 bingo. Prizes! Families are welcomed.
 Registration required. 410-638-3151

Tuesday 5
MOTHER/DAUGHTER BOOK
CLUB
 Bel Air Public Library, 6:30 pm
 Book discussion and craft. *The Secret*
Garden by Frances Hodgson Burnett.
 4th grade and up. Registration required.
 410-638-3151

Wednesday 6
LET'S DO SCIENCE PALEONTOLOGY
EXPERIMENT
 Bel Air Public Library
 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm; Grades 3 – 8.
 Registration required. 410-638-3151

Thursday 7
FAMILY CRAFT NIGHT
 Bel Air Public Library; 6:30 pm
 Registration required. 410-638-3151

Friday 8
BASKET BINGO
 C. Milton Wright High School
 1501 N. Fountain Green Rd. 7 pm.
 Bingo played for Longaberger baskets
 and other prizes. Sponsored by C. Milton
 Wright Band. 410-638-4110

Saturday 9
FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY
SWEETHEART BOOK SALE
 Bel Air Public Library; 10 am – 4 pm.
 Paperback books, children's books.
 410-638-3151

Saturday 9 & Sunday 10
13TH ANNUAL VALENTINE'S DINNER
 Rockfield Manor, 501 E. Churchville Rd.
 Sat. 5 pm – 10 pm; Sun. 3 pm – 9 pm.
 Five-course dinner with wine pairings.
 Catered by Pairings Bistro. For updates:
www.rockfieldmanor.com or call
 410-638-4565

Tuesday 12
HAPPY BIRTHDAY, CLIFFORD!
 Bel Air Public Library; 11:15 am
 Clifford the Big Red Dog is turning 50!
 Celebrate with stories and other activities.
 Registration required. 410-638-3151

Wednesday 13
HOOPS FOR HEART FACULTY
BASKETBALL GAME
 Bel Air Middle School, 99 Idlewild St.
 6 pm; 410-638-4140

Wednesday 13
RANDOM TEEN MADNESS
 Bel Air Public Library; 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm;
 Play video and board games, surf the
 web, discuss new books and give input
 on library services. Snacks provided.
 Grades 6 – 12. Registration required.
 410-638-3151

Friday 15
TODDLER TALES STORY TIME
 Bel Air Public Library, 10:15 am
 Ages 18 – 35 months. Registration
 required. 410-638-3151

Sunday 17
3RD ANNUAL ADDICTED TO ART
 Rockfield Manor, 501 E. Churchville
 Road. 12 pm – 4 pm. Art Lottery to
 support the Harford Artists Association.
 \$50 per person includes a piece of art,
 spirits and refreshments. For updates:

www.rockfieldmanor.com or call
 410-638-4565

Tuesday 19
MEET CAROLINE: THE NEWEST
AMERICAN GIRL
 Bel Air Public Library; Call library for time.
 Travel back to the War of 1812 and get to
 know Caroline through crafts and
 activities. Bring your own American Girl
 doll. Grades 2 and up. Registration
 required. 410-638-3151

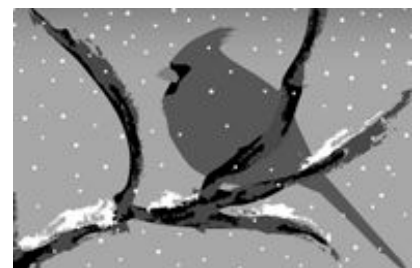
Friday 22
TEEN FRIDAY AFTERHOURS
 Bel Air Public Library; 6 pm – 10 pm
 The branch is open after hours just for
 teens! Play video and board games,
 enjoy refreshments and party.
 Registration required. 410-638-3151

Friday 22
VARIETY SHOW
 C. Milton Wright High School, 1501 N.
 Fountain Green Rd.
 School students display their talent to
 raise funds for local charity. Admission
 \$7. Sponsor: National Honor Society.
 410-638-4110

Feb. 22 thru Mar. 24
SPRINGTIME IN THE WOODS CRAFT
SHOW
 Rockfield Manor, 501 E. Churchville
 Road. 10 am – 5 pm daily.
 No Admission. For updates:
www.rockfieldmanor.com or call
 410-638-4565

Friday 22
CHOCOLATE & ART WALK
 Sponsor: Bel Air Downtown Alliance
www.downtownbelair.com or follow on
 Facebook

Saturday 23
LEGO CONTEST
 Bel Air Public Library; 10 am – 1 pm
 Use your imagination and our LEGO
 blocks to design and build an original
 creation, then enter into our contest.
 Prizes will be awarded in each of three
 age categories. Details available upon
 registration. Grades K – 8. Registration
 required. 410-638-3151



MARCH**Friday 1 – Sunday 3
DISNEY'S ALADDIN**

John Carroll School, 703 E. Churchville Rd.; Friday at 7 pm. Saturday at 2 pm and 7 pm. Sunday at 2 pm
Tickets are \$15 each; all seats are reserved. www.johncarroll.org or 410-879-5053

**Friday 1
TODDLER TALES STORY TIME**

Bel Air Public Library; 10:15 am
Ages 18 – 35 months. Registration required. 410-638-3151

**Saturday 2
TEEN ADVISORY GROUP**

Bel Air Public Library, 2 pm – 3:30 pm
Make a difference in the library, have your voice heard! 410-638-3151

**Saturday 2
CHOCOLATE & CANDY FESTIVAL**

Bel Air Armory, 10 am – 3 pm
Chocolate, chocolate, chocolate! Sample chocolate in every form at the 12th Annual Chocolate & Candy Festival. Sponsored by the Bel Air Downtown Alliance. Admission Fee \$5; kids under 6 are free. www.downtownbelair.com. 443-823-1797

**Thursday 7
OPEN HOUSE**

Harford Day School, 715 Moores Mill Rd. 9 am – 11 am
410-809-2403

**Saturday 9
PERSIAN RUG AUCTION**

Bel Air Armory, 1 pm – 3 pm
301-762-6981

**Saturday 9
IRISHMAN'S CHORALE**

Emmanuel Episcopal Church, 303 N. Main St. Doors open at 6:45 pm.
Performance starts at 7:30 pm
Amhranai Na Gaeilge is the only all-male Irish Chorale in the Mid-Atlantic region.

The Chorale is dedicated to the preservation of Irish culture and history through music. They perform both traditional and contemporary music by Irish composers and lyricists, as well as a variety of patriotic, spiritual, ballad, sea chantey, and fun songs. Sponsored by the Bel Air Cultural Arts Commission. Free admission. 410-879-2012 or 410-836-0584

**Saturday 9
SYMPHONY CONCERT**

Bel Air High School, 100 Heighe Street. Pre-concert lecture at 6:30 pm. Concert at 7:30 pm.

"Be-Knighted Masterworks" featuring works by Sir Hamilton Harty, Sr., Sir Malcom Arnold, Sir William Walton and Sir Edgar Elgar. Cellist Alexis Lee will return to the SSO to perform Elgar's Cello Concerto. Sponsored by Susquehanna Symphony Orchestra. Adults \$20. Seniors \$15. Students \$10. Go to www.ssochestra.org for ticket information or call 410-569-2602

**Sunday 10
THE JOHN CARROLL SCHOOL
FASHION SHOW & AUCTION**

703 E. Churchville Rd. 12 pm – 4 pm.
Enjoy scrumptious food from more than 20 area restaurants, while enjoying the Class of 2013 model the latest fashions from area merchants. A silent auction and wine tasting is also included. Sponsored by JC Patriot Parent Association. Contact the school for information on the admission fee. www.johncarroll.org or 410-879-5053

**Thursday 14 – Sunday 17
THE FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY
SPRING BOOK SALE**

Bel Air Public Library
Thursday is Members Night, 5 pm – 7:30 pm. Friday and Saturday 10 am – 5 pm; Sunday is \$5 a Bag Day, 1 pm – 4 pm. Books, CDs, DVDs, etc. 410-638-3151

**Thursday 14
THE FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY BOOK
SALE**

Bel Air Public Library, 5 pm – 7:30 pm
Friends members only night. Join the Friends and attend. 410-638-3151

**Friday 15
ELEPHANT AND PIGGIE PARTY
STORY TIME**

Bel Air Public Library; 2 pm
Celebrate the antics of Mo Willems' lovable Elephant and Piggie characters. Participate in fun activities, games and listen to stories featuring this hilarious duo. Grades K – 2. Registration required. 410-638-3151

**Saturday 16
EASTER EGG HUNT**

Rockfield Manor, 501 E. Churchville Road. Grounds open at Noon.
Hunt begins promptly at 1 pm. \$5 per child. No reservations needed. For updates: www.rockfieldmanor.com or call 410-638-4565

**Saturday 16
THE FRIENDS OF BEL AIR LIBRARY
BOOK SALE**

Bel Air Public Library, 10 am- 4 pm
Open to the public. 410-638-3151

**Sunday 17
THE FRIENDS OF BEL AIR LIBRARY
BOOK SALE**

Bel Air Public Library, 10 am – 4 pm
\$5 a bag day. Open to the public.
410-638-3151

APRIL**Saturday 13
KITE FESTIVAL**

Rockfield Park ballfields. 10 am – 4 pm.
Rain Date: April 14, 2013
Kite flying for kids of all ages. Sponsored by the Town of Bel Air and APG Federal Credit Union. Free. 410-838-4781

**Saturday 13
FIRST ANNUAL SPRING FLING BIG
BAND DANCE**

Bel Air Armory; A night of Big Band dancing with live music and a cash bar. Tickets are available at Town Hall, 39 Hickory Avenue. \$10 per person in advance; \$15 per person at the door. Sponsored by Town of Bel Air, Harford County Cultural Arts Board, and MD State Arts Council. 410-638-5323

**Saturday 20
THE GREATER BEL AIR COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION'S 9TH ANNUAL A NIGHT
IN PARADISE**

Bel Air Armory, 7:00 pm to 11:00 pm
Enjoy live music, shrimp feast and bull roast. The Foundation raises funds for capital improvement projects in the Bel Air community. All proceeds will benefit the community. For tickets and information on how to support the Foundation, visit www.gbacf.org. Phone: 410-879-9292 or 410-836-6366

For calendar events, feature suggestions and business news, contact Kathi Santora, The Writing Studio, at 443-695-3345 or ksantora@gmail.com.

The Bel Air Bond is distributed in January, April, July and October. Deadline for calendar events is the 20th of the month before publication.

Downtown Alliance plans to mix business & art in 2013

When the Bel Air Downtown Alliance and the Town of Bel Air unveil the first "Hearts of Harford" sculpture, it will mark the start of a new chapter in weaving the arts into the everyday life in downtown Bel Air.

"The arts are an incredibly important piece of keeping the downtown revitalization going," said Scott Walker, Executive Director of the Bel Air Downtown Alliance. "Our retail stores and professional service businesses are doing amazing work, but they can't carry this momentum on their own. A focus on the arts is just the next natural step to make Bel Air a destination."

The "Hearts of Harford" public art project will take shape around town in the coming months. The Bel Air Downtown Alliance selected 15 - 20 possible sites to place custom-designed heart sculptures that will be decorated by local artists. The first, designed by the Bel Air High School National Art Honor Society, will be installed in front of the Bel Air Armory.

A sponsorship by a local business or service will support the sculpture for one year. At the end of the year, the Alliance will auction off the hearts to raise funds for the Bel Air Downtown Alliance and other future public art projects. Sponsorships range from \$1,500 to \$2,000.

The Alliance plans to include visual, performing and interactive art in all of their 2013 signature events, including First Fridays, the Chocolate and Candy Festival, the MD State BBQ Bash, Outdoor Movies at Shamrock Park, the Downtown Bel Air Music Fest as well as Girls Night Out.

The Alliance is looking for more artists interested in helping sponsors create their hearts. Contact the Alliance for more information about submitting a design or about sponsorship opportunities. Contact Scott Walker, Executive Director, Phone: 443-823-1797; swalker@downtownbelair.com



This "Heart of Harford" was purchased by Peoples Bank and will be designed by the Bel Air High School National Art Honor Society.

Joyce Oliver, thanks for a career of hometown service



Joyce Oliver. Photos here and on page one courtesy of Matt Button, Aegis Staff.

Joyce Oliver, the face of the Town of Bel Air's administration for 28 years, has retired.

At the December Board of Town Commissioners' meeting, each commissioner talked about Joyce's contributions to the town during her long tenure as Director of Human Resources and Administration. She brought a high degree of organizational skills to meetings and projects, gaining a respected reputation with "Joyce's Rule of Order."

Joyce, a Bel Air High School graduate, was described as a person who was fiercely loyal to the Town and made decisions based on what was best for all residents and the local workforce.

Joyce has relocated to a warmer climate in Savannah, Georgia with her husband, Richard.

Throughout 2013, BGE will trim trees and mow in areas where vegetation may interfere with power transmission.

BGE notifies customers prior to any work done on private property. Direct questions to Bel Air's Public Works Department at 410.638.4536 or 410.879.9507.



From bunk to truck saves response time, builds future firefighters

When a 911 buzzer sounds, firefighters and EMS personnel at the Bel Air Volunteer Fire Company stop mid-sentence and sprint to emergency vehicles. Rapid response time is a point of pride for this 175-member station.

To trim every minute from arrival time to the 80,000 people who depend on them, BAVFC has created a Live-in Program, designed to increase the number of in-house volunteers at any one time. Their focus is on post-secondary school age students looking for careers in fire and emergency response.

Live-in volunteers receive free room and board along with professional training. In turn, they are expected to be onsite and on call for four nights a week. A live-in must be either a full-time student or have the equivalent hours of school and outside employment.

“We are trying to improve the service that we provide by having crews in the station 24 hours a day,” says Assistant Chief Mike Walker, who participated in a suburban DC live-in program while he pursued a college degree over a decade ago. “It’s a give and take program. They are getting a lot of free support, but at the same time, they are expected to provide service to the people of Bel Air and Harford County.”

It’s not always glamorous. “This is not a hotel,” says Walker. “Even if you are off, the ambulance sirens here run non-stop. These guys may run calls all evening, miss dinner, sleep for two hours and get up after working a fire in the middle of the night and report to their job or to class.”

Those who embrace this lifestyle will emerge with professional level firefighting or EMS training along with their degrees or certifications. “Hopefully, they will want to stay around after graduation, and we can benefit from their experiences longer,” says Rich Gardiner, spokesperson for the Harford County Volunteer Fire and EMS Association

The intangibles, though, last a lifetime. “These guys see a lot and learn a lot in a short time,” adds Rich. “But it’s not just about going on calls. It’s about what you learn from others as to how you grow up in life.”



(l to r) Adam Siemek, Sgt. Steven Campbell and Capt. Brandon Ruble participate in Bel Air Volunteer Fire Company’s Live-in Program. The company is looking for another dozen recruits who can live rent-free while training and responding to emergencies.



The BAVFC operates five engines, two ladder towers, one rescue, four ALS transport units (medic units), one air cascade, two brush trucks, one aux service vehicle, and six utilities out of three fire stations.

They average 22 fire and EMS calls per day.

For some live-ins, a chance to obtain free housing in return for service is the key that allows them to pursue higher education and develop a career rather than to simply work in an entry level, low-paying job.

Firefighters also say that the live-in program keeps the volunteer service robust into the future, in part, by training young emergency personnel with state-of-the-art equipment and procedures and encouraging them to incorporate volunteer fire service into their lifestyles.

The Bel Air Volunteer Fire Company would like to expand the program to about 14 live-in recruits. They accept local students as well as those from out-of-state who are interested in attending one of the area’s many colleges or technical training programs. For the fire department veterans who pride themselves on quality service in an ever-growing community, the live-in program is simply another way to serve the public: “When the minutes count, having those guys in the bunk room 24 hours a day can save lives,” adds Assistant Chief Walker.

By Kathi Santora, The Bel Air Bond, WINTER 2013

CONNECT - CTY: Storms, alerts and other emergencies

Give us this number:



Not just this number:



The Connect-CTY service allows county emergency officials to send voice messages to county residents, businesses, and local agencies in mere minutes, all via a single telephone call.

These messages can also go by text to cell phones, PDAs, e-mail accounts and TTY/TDD receiving devices for people who have hearing loss.

However, residents can opt-in to provide their complete information (up to three phone numbers and two e-mail addresses) and indicate if they have a TTY/TDD device by visiting the Harford County Division of Emergency Operations website at www.harfordpublicsafety.org and clicking on the link that says "One Step Notification - Sign Up Now" to enter their information into the secure database.

Those without Internet access can have their information added into the system by calling (410) 638-4900. Residents with call blocking services can make sure to receive the county's time-sensitive calls by adding (410) 838-5800 to their approved number list.

All information added into the database will remain secure and confidential, and will not be used for any purpose other than the notification system.

Committees & Commissions	Contact Us www.belairmd.org	Town Government
<p>Board of Town Commissioners 1st & 3rd Mondays, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall</p> <p>Planning Commission 1st Thursday, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall</p> <p>Board of Appeals 4th Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Town Hall</p> <p>Economic & Community Development Commission 2nd Thursday, 4:30 p.m., Armory</p> <p>Historic Preservation Commission 4th Thursday, 6:00 p.m., Town Hall</p> <p>Appearance & Beautification Commission 2nd Monday, 7:30 p.m., Armory</p> <p>Cultural Arts Commission 3rd Wednesday, 5:00 p.m., Armory</p> <p>Tree Committee 2nd Wednesday, 4:30 p.m., Planning Department</p>	<p>The offices of the Town Administrator, Human Resources, Police and Finance Departments are located in the Town Hall, 39 N. Hickory Ave. The Department of Public Works and the Planning Department are located at 705 Churchville Rd. The Department of Economic Development and Visitors Center are in the Bel Air Armory at 37 N. Main St.. The Police Department is open 24/7. Other office hours are 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. weekdays.</p> <p>There are many free publications at Town Hall and online. Topics include business assistance, historic preservation, parking guides, a walking tour and event calendar.</p> <p>In addition to the Board of Town Commissioners meetings at 7:30 p.m. on first and third Mondays, the public may attend Commissioners' work sessions, held at 5:15 p.m. on the preceding Tuesdays. Direct questions/concerns to the Commissioners c/o Town Hall in writing or by phone: 410.638.4550 or 410.879.2711.</p> <p>For sewer system, refuse collection, recycling, street light outages, call 410.638.4545. For sewer emergencies, call 410.638.4545 during business hours or 410.638.4500 at other times.</p>	<p>Town Administrator Christopher G. Schlehr 410.638.4550 or 410.879.2711</p> <p>Human Resources & Technical Support Michael L. Krantz, Director 410.638.4550 or 410.879.2711</p> <p>Finance Department Lisa M. Moody, Director 410.638.4555 or 410.879.2712</p> <p>Economic Development Department Trish Heidenreich, Director 410.838.0584</p> <p>Police Department Leo F. Matrangola, Chief 410.638.4517 or 410.638.4500</p> <p>Planning Department Kevin Small, Director 410.638.4540 or 410.879.9500</p> <p>Public Works Department Randolph C. Robertson, Director 410.638.4536 or 410.879.9507</p> <p>Bel Air Bond Editor Kathi Santora, The Writing Studio ksantora@gmail.com 443.695.3345</p>

Walking somewhere? BAPD's traffic patrols have got your back



Bel Air Police Department is increasing the use of its motorcycle for speed enforcement. Officer 1st Class Bradley Helm says the focus is on education, not writing tickets. "If one person maintains a speed limit, then everyone else around them tends to do the same. We need to pay it forward and set a good example for each other."

The Town of Bel Air's recent focus on improving walkability includes efforts to expand speed limit enforcement, particularly in neighborhoods and school zones, says Chief of Police Leo Matrangola.

"We get complaints about speeding cars from people who walk a lot," says Chief Matrangola. "It sometimes seems that drivers don't pay attention to their surroundings. Our goal is to have our officers in the neighborhoods for speed and stop sign enforcement everyday."

On a recent school day, Officer 1st Class Bradley Helm wrote 21 warnings and two tickets in one and a half hours, while observing traffic near the Harford Day School.

"We use discretion and try to educate people first," he says. When stopped, people tend to say they were unaware of the speed limit. "Ten miles over the speed limit in a school zone means that it is that much harder to stop a car if a child runs out in front of you."

Corporal Mike Clymer retires after three public service careers

When asked to help out or to take on a task, Bel Air Police Corporal Michael Clymer's favorite expression was "Not a problem, I can do that."

That work ethic will be missed, says Police Chief Leo Matrangola, since Corporal Clymer retired at the beginning of 2013 after 20 years of service.

Mike has mentored and trained many younger officers, said Chief Matrangola, and his training and mentoring will live on. "I frequently asked officers to think 'how would Clymer handle this' before making a decision," he adds.

Corporal Clymer's legacy also includes his ability to obtain confessions by talking endlessly with suspects, his teachings to fellow officers on how to investigate, his visits to Main Street shops and the Police Mountain Bike training that he provided to police agencies throughout the state.

Notably during Mike's career with the Bel Air Police Department, he served as the Community Police Officer. His duties as Community Police Officer included not only the daily tasks as the School Police Officer, but also those of the DARE Instructor at St. Margaret and Harford Day Schools. As a School Police Officer, he handled hundreds

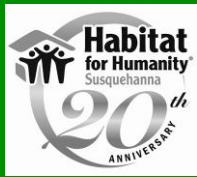
of school situations, requiring a strong sense of confidence and the ability to handle a wide variety of issues. His presence in our schools has played an important role in building a safe and secure community.



Corporal Mike Clymer, who was a well-known presence in and around schools located in the Town of Bel Air, has retired from the Bel Air Police Department.

Prior to his employment with the Bel Air Police Department, Mike was a 20 year veteran with the Baltimore County Police Department and is a 25 year veteran of the Maryland National Guard.

Coming soon to 404 Giles St.
The House That Bel Air Built



Habitat for Humanity Susquehanna, though located in the Town of Bel Air, had not had an opportunity to build here – until now.

Come February, Habitat volunteers will begin work on a 5-bedroom house at 404 Giles St. (near Bel Air High School). Construction will begin with removal of the small and outdated home that is currently on the property. The Crouse Family, who will take ownership of the home, will often be onsite, contributing “sweat equity” to the project.

“This family of eight is hard working, very involved with the community and excited to help with the construction of their new home,” says Karen Blandford, Executive Director at Habitat for Humanity Susquehanna. “Homeownership has been out of reach for them - until now.”

Habitat welcomes donations of time, services, materials and sponsorships for this project. Please contact Abrielle Willis, Volunteer Coordinator, at 410-638-4434.