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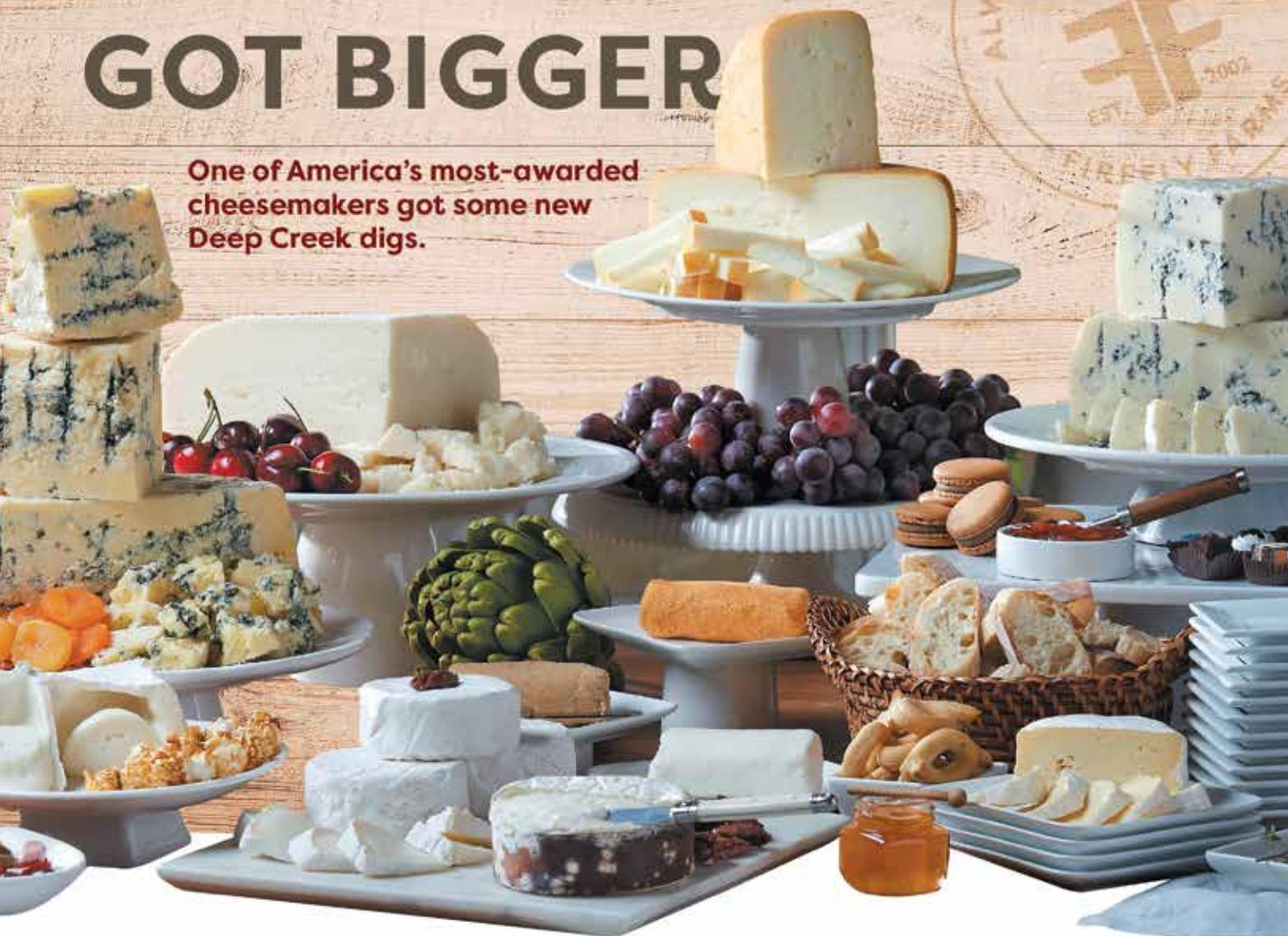
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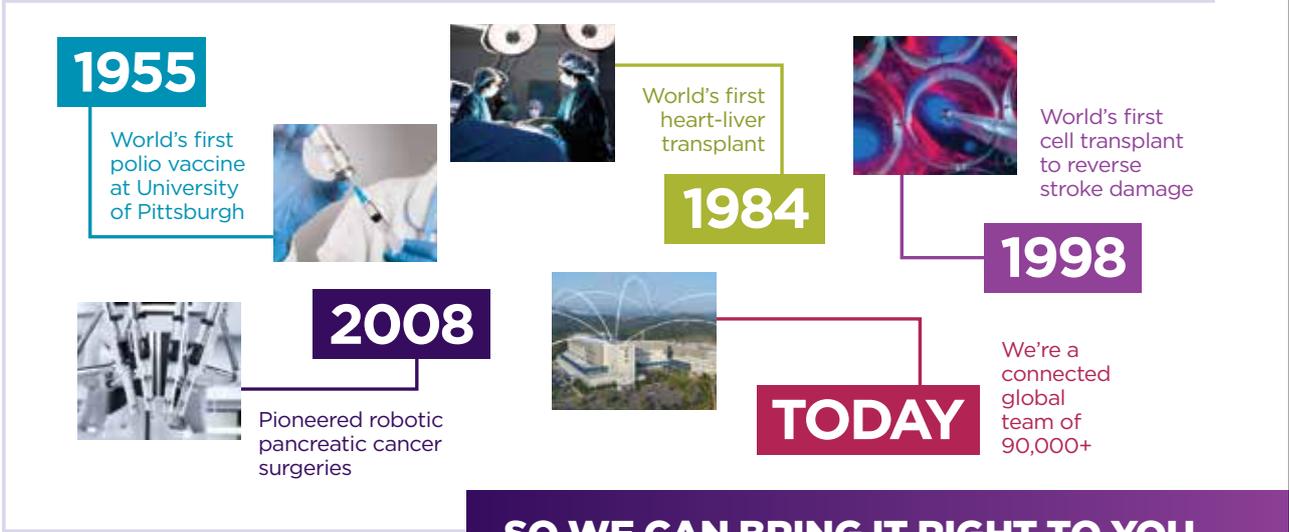
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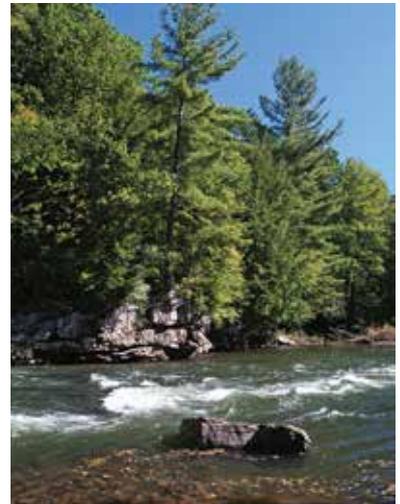
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ON THE COVER

The Youghiogheny River in Garrett County, Maryland.

See "Garrett County Celebrates Its 150th Anniversary" on page 8.

PHOTO BY LANCE C. BELL



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HAGERSTOWN BMX

Offers family fun!



Written by: **Sara Mullins**
Photography by: **Scott Canter**



Let the races begin!

Since 1999, Hagerstown BMX has offered young athletes the opportunity to compete in the exciting sport of Bicycle Motocross. The city's track is located in the Fairgrounds Park complex, at Fairground Avenue and N. Cannon Avenue.

BMX, a sport invented by kids for kids, began in Southern California when young cyclists persuaded a park attendant to let them ride their bikes on dirt motorcycle trails. Word

spread, and riders were ready to race. Thus the American Bicycle Association (ABA) came into being. By 2011, USA BMX racing was established to ensure that the sport promoted fairness and provided fun family entertainment.

As with most sports, specialty equipment is required. BMX bicycles feature single gears and wheels that allow for quick acceleration and safe landings on the dirt tracks.

Because wheel sizes vary, riders should be fitted when selecting a bike and, ideally, try out several models and sizes. Protective gear is a must, including a helmet, goggles, gloves, protective pants, knee pads and specialty shoes.

“We’re one of the only tracks that offers riders free practice time once per week,” says Scott Cantner, who serves as the track’s media relations specialist. “We also provide bikes and safety equipment. It’s our way to give back to the community.”

The Hagerstown BMX racing season is weather-related and runs from March to November, with local races generally held twice weekly. The number of participants ranges from 30 – 50 per local race, 500 – 600 per regional event, and 500 – 1,000 for large-scale and national competitions.

Riders occupy eight lanes at the BMX starting gate. The ultimate goal in BMX racing is to ride the #1 plate — #1 in your district, state, region, national age group and nation. Riders are classified by age, gender, proficiency and the wheel size of their bikes.

“It’s an amazing environment for kids and their families,” says Dan Spedden, President of Visit Hagerstown & Washington County. “It’s very social and family-oriented, and an alternative to more traditional athletic events.”

City officials placed a bid for the Hagerstown Track to host the national championship BMX event in summer of 2023. “It’s a big event,” says Spedden. “People from all over the country will attend, and it elevates our profile as a BMX cycling community.” That profile will help the track attract future national and regional events.

To make this happen, the BMX track needed funds for extensive improvements. Repaved turns, surface improvements and higher banks allow cyclists to participate in Pro Series competition. Additional enhancements include lighting for night-time events, fencing, a public address system, bleachers for more seating, and handicapped accessibility.



The Hagerstown, Maryland BMX Track is a very social and family-oriented sport for kids of all ages.

“We’ve had a rapid response from the Community,” Spedden says. “We’re proud that the CVB is involved in supporting improvements to help around 1,000 athletes to compete.”

Given its strong support from the community, Hagerstown is on its way to becoming a “Hub City” for BMX racing.

Hagerstown BMX Track • 301-748-8276
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Garrett County Celebrates Its *150th Anniversary*

GARRETT COUNTY, IN THE FAR WEST
OF MARYLAND,
IS A PLACE OF NATURAL BEAUTY,
HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE, CULTURAL OPPORTUNITIES,
AND FOUR SEASON RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES.

Written by: **Mary Reisinger**



Garrett County is marking its sesquicentennial year in 2022 with special events and exhibits, commemorative coins and walking tours. Events include the National Road festival in May, the Celtic Festival in June, the Victorian tradition of Chautauqua in July, and the Garrett County Agricultural Fair the first week of August. Walking tours have been designed to showcase various places in the county.

The eight towns in the county—Accident, Deer Park, Friendsville, Grantsville, Kitzmiller, Loch Lynn, Mountain Lake Park, and Oakland—have designed coins with images emblematic of each community. Be sure to look for these coins at the festivals and open houses being held this year. A handy place to learn more about the calendar, the walking tours, and the coins is the county's anniversary website: <https://150.garrettcounty.org>.

This year also highlights the fascinating story of the region's development and the intrepid individuals who helped shape Mountain Maryland before and after 1872.

The colony of Maryland was first settled by Europeans in the mid-1600s. The colony developed quickly; within a century, Europeans had ventured to Maryland's western edge, searching for a passage through the mountains to the West.

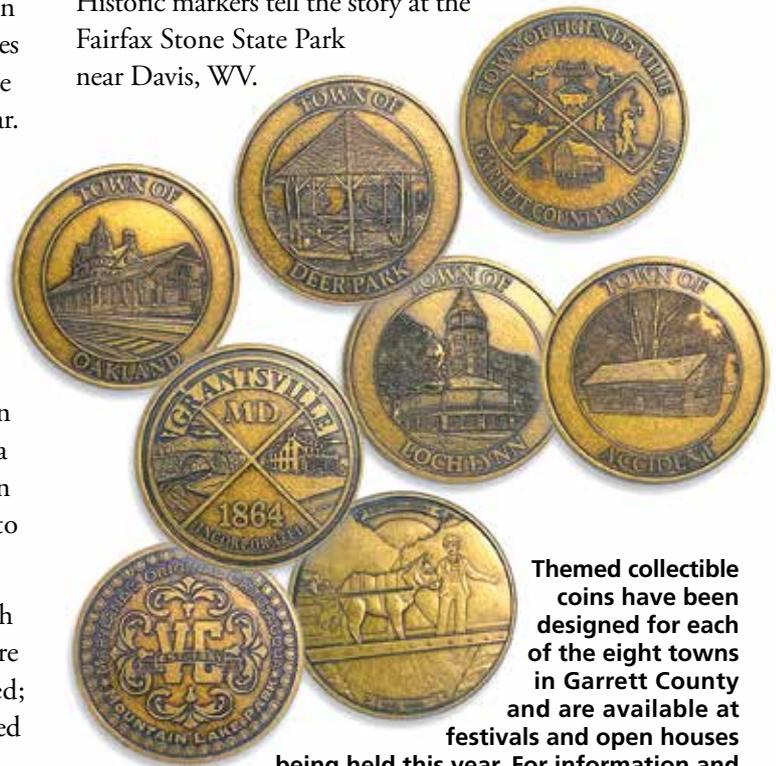
Of course the story of Garrett County didn't begin with European settlers. Indigenous peoples lived in villages here for thousands of years before European explorers arrived; however, by 1700, most Native Americans in the area used the forests, rivers, and glades as seasonal hunting and fishing grounds.

Travel and transportation of goods was challenging. The terrain was steep, heavily wooded, very snowy in winter, and filled with springs, streams, rivers, and marshy glades. Native Americans had established several viable paths through the area including Nemaocolin's Trail and the Seneca Trail, which became modern Routes 40 and 219. Traders and hunters also used the rivers, particularly the Youghiogheny (Waters Flowing in the Contrary Direction) and the Cohongoroota (River of Wild Geese), which later came to be known as the Potomac.

The first Europeans to reach Garrett County, in 1736, were mapping the boundaries of Lord Fairfax's land grant. They left Harpers Ferry in October and traveled until early December. Their food ran out and, according to historian Stephen Schlosnagle, one of the party later reported that they voted to kill and eat John Savage, a surveyor, because

his failing eyesight made him the least useful member of the party. Fortunately, Mr. Savage was saved by the timely arrival of supplies. The men then decided to name the river by which they were camping Savage River in his honor.

Ten years later, a survey party including Thomas Jefferson's father Peter returned to the area, located the blazed trees left by the earlier explorers, and set the Fairfax Stone, a more permanent marker of the colony's boundary. The original stone, vandalized in 1880, was replaced in 1910. Historic markers tell the story at the Fairfax Stone State Park near Davis, WV.



Themed collectible coins have been designed for each of the eight towns in Garrett County and are available at festivals and open houses being held this year. For information and event dates, see <https://150.garrettcounty.org>.

George Washington enters into Garrett County's history first as a surveyor and then as a soldier. He mapped land for Lord Fairfax, traveling through the northern part of Western Maryland on the Nemaocolin Trail. Because of this experience, in 1753 he delivered the English demand for the French forces to leave the Ohio River Valley. He returned in January 1754 with their refusal.

A few months later, Washington was sent to drive out the French forces. He made some improvement to the Nemaocolin Trail for easier movement of troops. This campaign turned out to be a military disaster for Washington, ending in the only surrender of his career. Washington's failed mission effectively started the French and Indian War. When the British sent General Edward Braddock to take charge in 1755, Washington joined Braddock's forces. Braddock's forces were defeated by the French. He died

as a result of his injuries, and was buried in the road he had built so that the passing of troops would obscure his grave's location.

Nevertheless, Braddock's efforts left two enduring legacies. One was the road, which came to be called Braddock's Road. This was the basis for the first federally funded highway, the National Road, begun in 1811. Much of the National Road was later incorporated into Route 40. Traffic along this highway contributed significantly to the development of the northern part of Garrett County, especially in the Grantsville area. Today, stone markers and historic plaques along the road identify significant spots such as the campsites used by Braddock's army.

The other important result of the French and Indian War was that it led to a broader struggle in Europe, the Seven Years' War. When the conflict ended in 1763, the English emerged as the winners. The king of England proclaimed that there would be no English settlement west of the Appalachians, but his order was largely ignored. Settlers poured into the mountains and many continued westward.

In August 1764, John Friend, with his brother and his young son, walked from his Virginia plantation over the Eastern Continental Divide of Western Maryland. His Virginia farm having been destroyed by floods, he was looking for a more promising place to live. When he encountered a friendly group of Native Americans, he stayed several days, watched their celebration of the corn harvest, and obtained their agreement that he could settle in the fertile land along the Youghiogheny River, giving them the gift of an iron kettle.

The next year, he returned with his

wife Kerrenhappuch (John Friend's wife and her sisters seem to have been named for the three daughters of the biblical Job: Jemima, Keziah, and Kerrenhappuch) and his extended family. His holdings developed into the town of Friendsville, still a lively community. John's father and brothers settled up and down river from him on other properties in Garrett County and in nearby Pennsylvania. A decade later, both John Friend and his son Gabriel served in the war for independence.

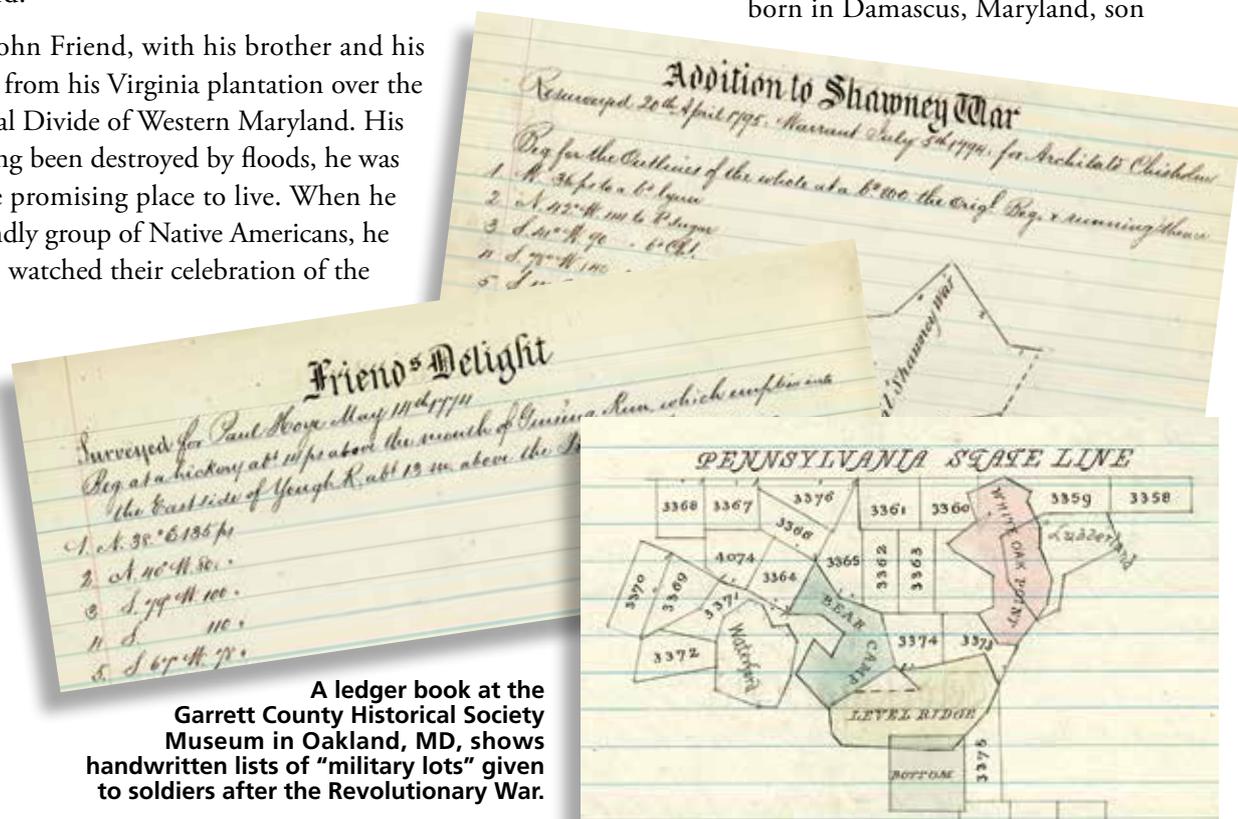
In an effort to recruit soldiers for the Revolutionary War, the Maryland legislature passed a law promising to reward soldiers with 50 acres of land. All the "military lots" assigned to eligible soldiers after the war were in what is now Garrett County. Some soldiers lived on these properties after their service, but many sold their lots. Thomas Johnson, the first governor

of Maryland, bought a large section of military lots that included Braddock's fifth campsite.

In 1781, Mary McMullen was born in Blooming Rose, near John Friend's property, and Meshach Browning was born in Damascus, Maryland, son



This likeness of George Washington (by Charles Willson Peale, 1772) depicts the uniform he wore during the French and Indian War. It is the earliest known painting of Washington.



A ledger book at the Garrett County Historical Society Museum in Oakland, MD, shows handwritten lists of "military lots" given to soldiers after the Revolutionary War.



The Drane house, 1797, is the oldest standing structure in Garrett County. It has been restored and can be seen in Accident, near the Zion Cemetery. PHOTO BY LANCE BELL

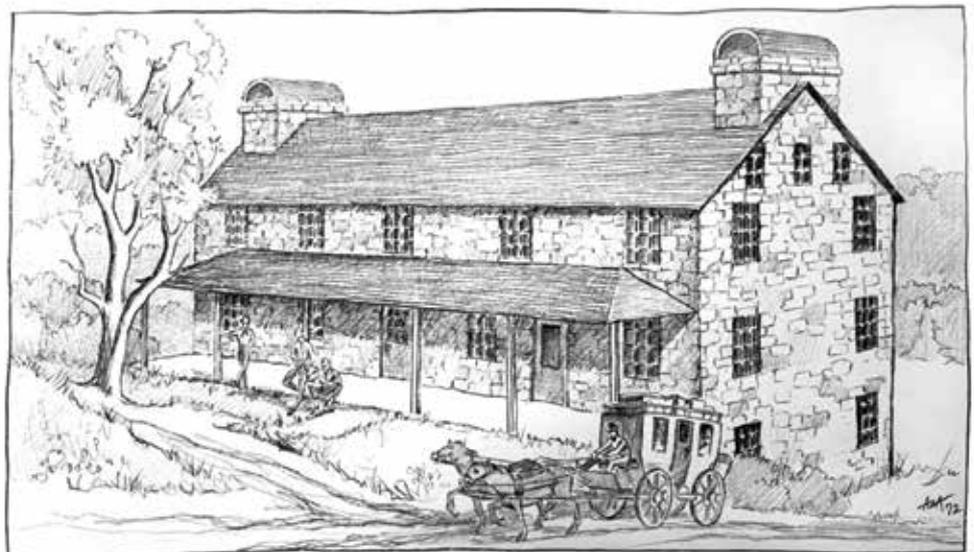
and grandson of British soldiers who had served with Braddock's forces. Mary and Meshach were destined to meet and marry and raise a family of eleven children. Late in life, Meshach recorded his memories with a turkey quill pen. His account is still considered a classic of literature about early frontier living. Meshach and members of his family are buried in the Hoyes Cemetery on Friendsville Road, not far from Route 219. The Oakland Historical Society Museum exhibits many artifacts of his life.

The Brownings at one time lived near the James Drane family. The Dranes, like several others in the area, tried tobacco farming, but the cool climate thwarted them. Unlike the disappointed growers who left, the Dranes stayed and adopted farming practices better suited to local conditions. The Drane house, built in 1797, is the oldest standing structure in Garrett County. It has been restored and can be seen in Accident, near the Zion Cemetery.

There are at least two different accounts of how the town of Accident acquired its unusual name, but the common feature of the stories is that two surveying parties "accidentally" chose and surveyed the same land. Accident is a charming small town with businesses such as an automobile shop that is over a hundred years old and a shop opened in 2002 that manufactures and sells cheese made from locally-sourced milk.

As Braddock Road's traffic increased, and the National Road took shape, inns and taverns were built to serve travelers. The Fuller Baker House, a log cabin constructed around 1815 on the site of Braddock's fifth campsite (on the land purchased by Governor Thomas Johnson after the Revolutionary War) is large enough that it may have been built as a tavern.

A few years later, at Little Meadows, on the site of Braddock's fourth campsite, Jesse Tomlinson built the Stone House Inn, with walls two feet thick and ten fireplaces. The first county post office was located in this building from 1822-1834; the inn was also used as a polling place. Presidents-elect James K. Polk and William Henry



Tomlinson's Stone House Inn on the "National Pike," east of Grantsville, erected about 1818. Drawing by Aza Stanton.



LEO BEACHY PHOTOGRAPHY

Born in 1874 Leo Beachy was a school teacher and poet who at the age of thirty-one, turned to photography to express his love of the environment and his community.

Fighting through a crippling illness Beachy was compelled to reflect what he saw in the everyday life of his community. Upon his death in 1927 tens of thousands of his glass plate negatives were destroyed with only 2,887 plates known to remain.

The photographs in the collection range from individual studio portraits to beautiful and expansive landscapes. These pictures taken between 1905 and 1927 are an expressive and eloquent window into Garrett County's past and represent the life's work of Leo J. Beachy.

Photos: Overlook area called "The Cove" along US 219 South in Garrett County; the stone bridge at Grantsville, MD, is on the original National Road; a bygone chore of harvesting ice in Grantsville.

COURTESY GARRETT COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



The beautiful Cove overlook today hasn't changed much since Leo Beachy's photo from more than 100 years ago. Inset: The Casselman Bridge has been preserved and is now a park open to foot traffic only.

PHOTOS BY LANCE BELL

Harrison were guests at Tomlinson's Inn. The Stone House continued as an inn through the 1800s. Both the Fuller Baker House and the Stone House Inn, though privately owned, remain along Route 40.

Another National Road business, the Casselman Inn, opened in 1842 and still offers rooms and meals. A short distance away, the Casselman Bridge, built in 1813, was at the time the longest single-span stone arch bridge in the country. It was an important part of the National Road until 1933. Today, visitors can walk across the bridge in its four-acre state park.

The area around the bridge is known as Little Crossings because it is where Washington and Braddock forded the Casselman River. Near the bridge are a 1797 gristmill known as Stanton's Mill; Penn Alps, a restaurant, craft shop, and concert space using a former log stagecoach stop; Spruce Forest Artisan Village, a collection of old and new buildings that serve as studios and shops for traditional artisans; and other small businesses. Penn Alps and Spruce Forest Artisan Village were the brainchild of Alta Schrock (1911-2001). The Little Crossings businesses are well worth visiting.



The National Road made the mountains more accessible and enabled thousands of settlers to head west. Mail delivery expanded to rural areas. The Chesapeake & Ohio Canal expanded on the earlier Potomac Canal built by George Washington's company, but the canal system could not compete with the B&O Railroad. The routing of the railroad through Western Maryland was the single most significant factor in the growth of what is now Garrett County.

After some impressive engineering feats such as the aqueduct required for the 17 Mile Grade from Piedmont, West Virginia, to Altamont, Maryland, the B&O Railroad reached Oakland, Maryland, opening a station there in 1851, and continued expanding to Wheeling, West Virginia. The



trains carried lumber, coal, and other freight, but they were also a way for people to travel long distances in less time than had ever before been possible.

The B&O Railroad played a vital role in the Union cause during the Civil War, continually repairing the lines and keeping supply routes open. When the railroad bridge outside Oakland was burned during a raid, the railroad's president John Work Garrett had the bridge rebuilt within ten days.

Garrett's other major influence on the area was to promote tourism. Under his leadership, the railroad built grand hotels along its lines and advertised the delights of these vacation spots. Other hotels, inns, boarding houses, and restaurants also flourished in the towns where the trains stopped.

In Oakland, the Glades Hotel, thought to have been the first railroad-oriented hotel ever built on a mountaintop, was constructed in the mid-1850s by Perry Lyles. It was purchased in 1859 by John Dailey, future father-in-law of Union General George Crook, and father to a member of McNeill's Raiders who kidnapped General Crook during the Civil War. The Glades Hotel burned in 1874 and was reconstructed near its original location in the same year.

In 1873, the B&O Railroad built an elegant hotel in Deer Park, just a few miles from Oakland. In its heyday, the Deer Park Hotel had 200 rooms, ten cottages, fine dining, tea dances, bowling, billiards, golf, tennis, archery, trap shooting, and two indoor swimming pools under a glass roof. The Deer Park springs supplied water to the hotel, and each winter blocks of ice were packed into the hotel's ice house. John Work Garrett had his own cottage on the grounds.

Top to bottom: The Glades Hotel in Oakland was constructed in the mid-1850s and served as the meeting place for county business for several years before the first courthouse was built.

The Deer Park Hotel, built in 1873 by the B&O Railroad, was a favorite resort for wealthy and prominent tourists.

The boardwalk along the railroad in Oakland with the B&O station in the background. Circa 1890s by amateur photographer, W.E. Shirer.

The Loch Lynn Hotel, opened in 1895, offered a ballroom, indoor pool, bowling alleys and a casino.



By 1875, another railroad hotel began construction in Oakland. The Oakland Hotel had a telegraph office with a line connecting it to the Deer Park Hotel. In the late 1890s, the telegraph line was connected to telephones, creating the first telephone line in the county.

Both the Oakland and the Glades Hotel were on Railroad Street, the busiest street in Oakland, with boardwalks lined with businesses on both sides of the tracks. These hotels were torn down in the early 1900s. Though the boardwalk and the two hotels are no longer there, the same view of the train station is the subject of many photographs.

The Deer Park Hotel did not survive the advent of car travel and the financial crash of 1929 and was razed in 1942, but some of the other vacation homes of the era are still in Deer Park. One such gem is the former Pennington Cottage that is now a small inn and restaurant named the Deer Park Inn.

The original railroad station house in Oakland burned in 1874, and was eventually replaced with a grand new station completed in 1885. The station has been preserved and is now a museum, complete with antique rolling stock out front.

Other communities grew as part of the summer resort trade. The Chautauqua Movement, designed to provide wholesome refreshment for mind and body, inspired the creation of Mountain Lake Park. Today, many of Mountain Lake Park's Victorian summer cottages are being maintained as permanent homes, and Chautauqua summer activities continue to be held.

Prominent visitors to Garrett County during this era include President Cleveland and his bride, who honeymooned in a cottage on the grounds of



Top Left: Drawing of first Courthouse, built in 1877. It continued as a courthouse for thirty years and then was used for other purposes.

Top Right: The 1907 Courthouse, as seen from Third Street, was constructed just a block away from the original courthouse.

Middle: Courthouse with nearby Sheriff's House and Jail.

Bottom: Modern view of Oakland with St. Peter's Catholic Church (completed in 1904) and the Courthouse in the background, and the B&O Railroad Station and the Historical Museum in the foreground. The original B&O Station burned in 1874 and in 1885 was replaced with this station, now a museum. The Historical Museum (yellow building) has replicated the Deer Park Hotel's front porch on its side. The original gas house and gazebo from the Deer Park Hotel are in the park space next to the museum. PHOTO BY LANCE BELL



Henry Ford, left, camping with friends (Thomas Edison, President Warren G. Harding, and Harvey Firestone) in Garrett County, MD, 1921.

the Deer Park Hotel. The Clevelands worshipped in Oakland at what is now St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, often called the Church of the Presidents because Presidents Grant, Garfield, and Harrison also attended services there.

While summer visitors enjoyed vacationing in Garrett County, a growing number of year-round residents found success on farms and in small towns. Coal, lumber, and other industries strengthened due to better access to markets. The disadvantages of remoteness and cold winters had been overcome by much improved transportation and the attractiveness of the cool, refreshing summer weather.

With this increased population and prosperity, momentum grew to break away from Allegany County, which had encompassed all of the western part of the state since 1789. Residents felt the revenue generated in their area benefited Cumberland and other parts of Allegany County, and they found it inconvenient to travel to Cumberland to transact government business. This part of the state also met the requirements the state had set for a new county: an area of at least four hundred square miles and a population of ten thousand or more.

In response to the growing demand to form a new county, the Maryland General Assembly set a referendum for November 4, 1872, and citizens voted to create a new county, narrowly choosing Oakland as the county seat. On December 4, 1872, Garrett County officially became the final county in Maryland. The name Garrett was chosen to recognize John Work Garrett's significant contribution to the region.

Garrett County used the Glades Hotel for court proceedings and other meetings (with a brief interruption when the hotel burned down and had to be rebuilt) until a courthouse was constructed in 1877 on the corner of 4th and Green Streets.

Design and construction of the modest new courthouse proceeded quickly despite a few problems. The *Republican* newspaper reported one incident that could have been tragic. Three officials went to test newly-installed vault doors in the courthouse under construction. Two boys, 4 and 6, sons of one of the men, went along to watch. When pulled open, one of the seven-foot-tall, 1450-pound doors fell toward the children. Fortunately, the three men redirected the massive door as it fell so that the children were unhurt, and

the men received only minor injuries themselves. A later article noted that because of the B&O Railroad strike, no trains had run for over a week and the town was growing short on flour and sugar. Furthermore, "the workmen on the courthouse are idle" due to running out of materials such as coal to fire the brick kiln. Work resumed, and the building was finished by fall. The final accounting, published in November 1877, showed that the net proceeds from the bonds and the expenditures on the courthouse were exactly the same: \$14,275. The first courthouse remained in place for thirty years. Then it continued to be used for different purposes, including schools and board of education offices, before it was torn down. A church now occupies the site. A second, much grander courthouse was built in 1907, just a block away from the first courthouse. An addition in 1977 was constructed for additional office space. This has obscured the view from the street, but the original courthouse remains in use.

During the transition from the 1800s to the 1900s, more plentiful print and media sources record the county's development. The Historical Society Museum in Oakland has recently received glass plate negatives from an amateur photographer, W.E. Shirer, who took pictures primarily in Oakland in the 1890s. Leo Beachy, a school teacher from Grantsville, documented the early part of the 1900s in the northern end of the county with his skillful photography. Though many of his glass plate negatives were discarded after his death, the hundreds remaining give us a wonderful window into the era in which he lived. A museum in Grantsville exhibits his work.

Tourism by train gave way to vacation travel by car. One of the men who made this possible, Henry Ford, enjoyed road trips with friends. In 1921, Ford drove through Garrett County with Thomas Edison and Harvey

Firestone. The party, who called themselves the Vagabonds, lunched along a creek in Deer Park and then camped next to the highest waterfalls in Maryland, Muddy Creek Falls. This property is now Swallow Falls State Park, named for one of the other two waterfalls within the park. A hundred years later, this is still a popular place for day-trippers and campers. Visits by travelers such as the Vagabonds were factors in the development of the park system. Today there are ten state parks in Garrett County.

In 1925, another significant influence on modern Garrett County took place. The Youghiogheny Hydro Electric Company decided to create power from damming the water of Deep Creek, a tributary of the Youghiogheny River. The resulting Deep Creek Lake, with 65 miles of shoreline and covering 3900 acres, is the largest freshwater lake in Maryland. The lake is celebrating its 97th anniversary with special events June 2-5, 2022. Deep Creek Lake quickly drew summer visitors, some of them quite famous. Albert Einstein spent two weeks at the lake in September 1946. Betty O'Brien Mattingly recalls meeting him that fall while on lunch break from Oakland High School, but Einstein's visit was not known to the public for several decades. Garrett Countians also respected the privacy of another renowned visitor when Jonas Salk and his family spent summers at a lakefront cottage.

The Heise family and others sought to increase year-round tourism by opening the Wisp Ski Resort and promoting winter sports. Their hopes were realized as the mountaintop became a four season vacation destination.

Many artists have reflected Garrett County in their work. The hymn "There is Power in the Blood" was

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Maryland **BIG TREE** Program

Written by: **Dan Whetzel**

Maryland's Big Tree Program has been a big deal for nearly a century. Residents across the state have enjoyed the program by identifying and documenting their favorite trees in useful and productive ways. It is also interesting to know that Maryland lays claim to the first Big Tree Program in the country—no small matter. As the 100th anniversary of the program approaches, we celebrate a century of forestry stewardship by reflecting on the origins and future of “Big Trees” across the state.

Fred W. Besley, Maryland's legendary state forester and father of Maryland's Big Tree Champion Contest, organized the first event in 1925. He noted that Maryland's forests were exceptionally rich in trees with more than 250 identified species. Besley's passion for the forest led him to organize a volunteer event designed to measure and photograph distinguished trees in all counties. Apparently, prior to 1925 Besley attempted to accomplish the momentous task without assistance.

A formal program grew from Besley's idea when the Maryland Forestry Association announced a statewide Big Tree Champion contest. Besley published rules and standardized methods of measurement which were divided into three categories—circumference, height, and crown spread. Entries were to be judged according to species, so that small trees would not have to compete with larger ones.



Maryland's most exceptional tree, the Wye Oak in Talbot County, was recorded as a champion in the 1925 contest and later as the largest White Oak ever recorded.

COURTESY STATE OF MARYLAND BIG TREE PROGRAM

Publicity from the forestry association spread word about the Big Tree event. The forester realized that public involvement was crucial if the competition's goal of “obtaining a complete description and registration of all the beautiful trees of the state,” was to be realized.

The premier Big Tree Champion Contest proved to be successful as 450 entries identified 155 species from across Maryland—only one county failed to participate. Besley later noted that he also acted in the role of umpire during the initial event by certifying the measurements of competitive trees. This required extensive travel by the State Forester who personally inspected and

photographed the prize winning entries. Maryland's most noteworthy tree, the Wye Oak in Talbot County, was recorded as a champion in the 1925 contest. The tree would later be recognized as the largest White Oak ever recorded.

Besley expanded Maryland's Big Tree contest by seeking partners on the national level who would implement the program. His enthusiasm proved to be inspirational, as additional entries were realized in 1940. The national contest not only challenged Maryland's winners, but also simultaneously enhanced the nation's knowledge of its forests. Over the years, Besley's system of measurements became the standard for all competitions, thereby establishing his reputation on a national level.



Above: Volunteers and officials measure a Pin Oak tree on Ella Avenue in Cumberland, Maryland, for nomination to the Big Tree registry in Allegany County on a very cold February, 2022 morning.

Top right: Matt Voithofer measuring the circumference of a Sawtooth Oak tree on Mary Street, with Dan Hedderick, Andrew Roman and author, Dan Whetzel.

Inset (left to right): Harold Hipsley, Cumberland Shade Tree Commission; Anita Simmons, City Forester; Dan Hedderick, MD DNR Forester; Heather Haines, another Ella Avenue “big tree” owner; Andrew Roman, Cumberland Shade Tree Commission; Matt Voithofer, Big Tree Program volunteer; and Champ Zumbrun, Allegany County Forestry Board member and retired Forest Manager of Green Ridge State Forest. Property owner, Monica Wilt, was unavailable for this photo.

PHOTOS BY MIKE CALHOUN

Residents may build on the tradition started by Fred Besley by looking about their neighborhoods for exceptional trees. Probably the first thought that comes to mind when discussing big trees would not be local sites, but rather possibilities found in remote forests—the farther from development the better would seem to be a good recommendation. Surprisingly, that is not necessarily the case as many state champions are located in urban settings, sometimes in back yards. According to John Bennett, Volunteer Coordinator for the Maryland Big Tree Program, “About

90% of our registered trees are ‘backyard’ trees, as opposed to forest-grown trees.” Mr. Bennett concludes that backyard trees are likely to have less competition and receive more nutrients and water from property owners than trees found in dense forests. So, looking for a champion may be easier than you think.

The City of Cumberland welcomed the program about two years ago under the direction of Anita Simmons, City Forester, and Cumberland’s Shade Tree Commission. Anita explains, “I have been contacting property owners when



This Black Oak tree, owned by Roger Robinette, near Jolly Roger Liquor store along National Highway in LaVale, MD, is estimated to be between 300 and 380 years old. PHOTO BY CHAMP ZUMBRUN

I see a possible Big Tree Champion. We provide information on the background and benefits of the program and assist in getting it listed on the registry. I have been amazed at the number of big trees that are found within the city limits.”

“Since we just started advertising the Cumberland Big Tree Program Contest early in 2020, we have only three trees (Sawtooth Oak at 137 East Mary Street and two Pin Oaks at 1315-1317 Ella Street) to date that have been nominated

for the contest. However, there are a couple more trees in the city which may be records for the city and possibly the county.”

Cumberland has organized its Big Tree Contest for 2022. Winners will be honored at the City’s Arbor Day Celebration in April 2023. Information can be obtained from the Shade Tree Commission at 215 Bowen Street in Cumberland. See anita.simmons@cumberlandmd.gov

Dan Hedderick, Executive Secretary of the Allegany Forestry Board and Maryland Department of Natural Resources Forester, works closely with the volunteer members that oversee the local program. According to Dan, “We have a group of dedicated volunteers that are enthusiastic about the Big Tree Program. Many of them have a background in forestry and wildlife—retired teachers and others who want to stay engaged in providing stewardship to forestry programs. In Allegany County, we currently have 10 volunteers on the Forestry Board.”

Matt Voithofer, an Allegany County volunteer, became involved in forestry programs after purchasing a cabin and 24 acres of forested land. “The previous owner was involved in managing the forest, so trees remained healthy. My

property had a lot of tall oak trees and I continued to take an interest in them. After researching the Maryland Big Tree Program I started submitting entries—some of them made the county list. John Bennett sent me additional information and invited me to meetings, and one thing led to another. Big Trees became a hobby.”

He now certifies Big Tree entries for Allegany County—a task that begins after entries are submitted by property owners.

Matt notes, “I enjoy the outdoors, promoting stewardship and conservation in Maryland’s forests. Last year, 32 trees were added to the state list, so it is a rewarding and fun activity for me.”

The Big Tree lists referred to by Matt now include county, state, and national champions—a giant leap from the first contest nearly one hundred years ago. Maryland is well represented on the national registry with 19 trees and Allegany County has 59 registered trees on the state list.

Additionally, Allegany County has four state champions, while Garrett and Washington counties have one and nine respectively.

An enthusiastic local supporter of Big Trees and environmental programs is Francis “Champ” Zumbun, retired Forest Manager of Green Ridge State Forest and Forestry Board member. “I volunteer to measure trees for the Big Tree Program. Most of us on the board have a background in environmental work and all are supportive of the program.”

Champ also has an interest in local history that blends uniquely with his forestry background and searching for exceptional trees. Champ recalled, “I noticed a Black Oak tree near Jolly Roger Liquor store along National Road in LaVale that we estimated to be between 300 to 380 years of age. It is a survivor of the virgin forest that witnessed General Braddock pass by, and anyone else who has traveled the historic road since the French and Indian War days. A nearby tree of the same size was sheared off by a wind storm and had to be removed. I approached the land owner and received permission to cut a “tree cookie” (i.e. small slice of a tree) that was later examined by scientists who



This Cottonwood tree at Woodmen of the World on Virginia Avenue in Cumberland, MD, was also measured for nomination in the Big Tree Program.

PHOTO BY DAN HEDDERICK

dated it. That is how we are estimating the living tree’s age at the Jolly Roger site.”

Another related event promoting recognition of trees is also sponsored by the county forestry board in partnership with the Allegany Arts Council. According to Dan, “We hold a photo contest every year and it is for a single tree in Allegany County. Photos are entered in the contest as part of the Allegany County Fair and that week is when the judging takes place. Although separate from the Big Tree

Contest, the photo competition is great fun and promotes an awareness of our forests.”

Identifying historic or champion trees in your neighborhood makes for a topic of conversation and source of pride. In addition to the aesthetic and intrinsic value of enjoying trees, it has been noted that in a landscaped setting trees may also significantly increase the value of a dwelling on the retail market.

Trees have also come to the forefront in the effort to mitigate climate change and promote biodiversity because they shelter birds and a variety of other species while removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. To the home owner, trees offer the financial benefit of reducing energy costs during the summer heat.

Fred Besley’s Big Tree Program continues to generate interest as current environmental challenges confront our way of living in the 21st century. It is also interesting to realize that Besley’s contest created nearly a century ago continues to grow and highlight a number of relevant environmental, aesthetic and economic purposes. But perhaps the best reason to experience Maryland’s Big Tree Program is the fun in doing it. Look around your neighborhood and talk with neighbors—a Big Tree Champion may be waiting.

Contacts:

Big Tree Program
Matt Voithofer

voithofer@md.metrocast.net

Shade Tree Commission
Anita Simmons – City Forester
215 Bowen St., Cumb., MD 21502
anita.simmons.cumberlandmd.gov

<http://www.mdbigtrees.org>



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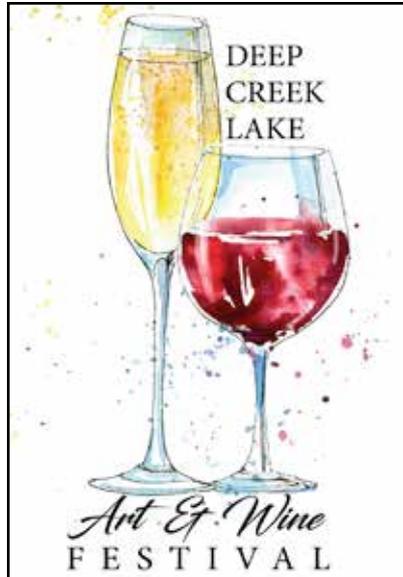
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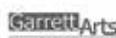
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Excitement Building Over Upcoming PAC Opening

COVID DELAY DOESN'T DAMPEN ENTHUSIASM
AROUND NEW FACILITY

Written by: **Stacy Holler**



Not even a worldwide pandemic—and all of the resulting supply-chain interruptions—can diminish the excitement around the Performing Arts Center (PAC) at Garrett College in McHenry, Maryland.

Originally scheduled to open this spring, completion of the \$21 million facility has been pushed back by delays in HVAC equipment availability. Dr. Richard Midcap, Garrett College's president, said pushing back the likely opening until late summer, "is a short-term challenge in the long-term goal of bringing a performing arts center to Garrett County." Dr. Midcap also noted, "Our community has waited literally decades for this kind of facility. From that perspective, the delay is a temporary frustration. And it certainly hasn't dampened the enthusiasm for what's going to be a wonderful community resource."

Mary Callis, the PAC's executive director agreed, "I think the whole community is excited that we are collectively

Performing Arts Center facility at Garrett College under construction at the time of publication. PHOTO BY MIKE CALHOUN

turning a long-time dream into a reality." Noting Garrett County was the last remaining county in the state without a performing arts center, Mary added, "The PAC is going to dramatically expand performing arts access and opportunities."

Enthusiasm for the facility is also apparent with the success of the Garrett College Foundation's PAC endowment campaign. The Foundation set a goal of raising \$2.5 million, which would make it the largest campaign in Foundation history. Despite launching the campaign in the middle of a pandemic, the Foundation is closing in on that goal. "The outpouring of support has been phenomenal," stated Cherie Krug, the Garrett College Foundation's executive director. "There is so much excitement and goodwill surrounding this facility."



Artist rendition of completed PAC facility at Garrett College, McHenry, MD.

The project is centered on the college's old gymnasium, which is being renovated into a state-of-the-art proscenium theatre that will seat approximately 430 patrons. It also features a 2,000-square-foot conference center that can be used as a recital hall, black box theatre, and reception venue. New educational spaces are also part of the project, including a 16-seat piano lab donated by the Community Trust Foundation, as well as a sound and lighting booth.

While construction progress is readily visible to regular Bumble Bee Road travelers, Mary Callis mentioned a lot of behind-the-scenes work has also been taking place. The first, and one of the most critical steps, was the formation of a formal partnership to support the center. Five partners — Garrett Lakes Arts Festival, Garrett County Arts Council, Garrett County Public Schools, Garrett County Government and Garrett College — have signed long-term agreements to provide financial support and guidance. "In today's world, partnerships are essential for nonprofits to survive," said Mary. "We have an unbelievable set of partners in this project. The facility will bring the partners together under one roof to present more than they could accomplish individually."

Mary communicated that both business and marketing plans are being developed for the PAC, and event scheduling is taking place. The HVAC issue has required rescheduling of some of the early events that were to be held in the PAC, but Mary is looking forward to having the center up and running prior to the 2022-23 academic year that starts in September.

Mary cited, "the center could not be more ideally located. I've always dreamed of this performing arts center being

on the campus of Garrett College. I think it increases exponentially the opportunities available to the community."

The DLR Group, an international architectural firm specializing in performing arts centers, is the architect for the project. Leonard S. Fiore, Inc., based in Altoona, Pennsylvania, and serving the entire mid-Atlantic region, is the general contractor for the facility. "DLR did a wonderful job designing a center that meets the vision we developed through the design process," stated Kathy Meagher, Garrett College's director of campus facilities and security, as well as the in-house leader for the PAC project. Kathy added, "Fiore has been a great construction partner during very challenging times, thanks to the pandemic."

Dr. Midcap lauded both state and local officials for their generous support of the project, "Governor Larry Hogan, Senator George Edwards, Delegate Wendell Beitzel and our county commissioners made this project possible." Dr. Midcap also noted that the state provided approximately 75 percent of the project funding and the county contributed the rest.

"Our partners have also been incredibly supportive," noted Julie Yoder, the College's dean of continuing education and workforce development who also provides administrative leadership for the PAC. Julie added, "GLAF, the Arts Council, the public schools and the county have worked so collaboratively with Mary and PAC administrative associate Chantel Lowdermilk. We all recognize the success of the PAC will require a collaborative effort and a team approach."

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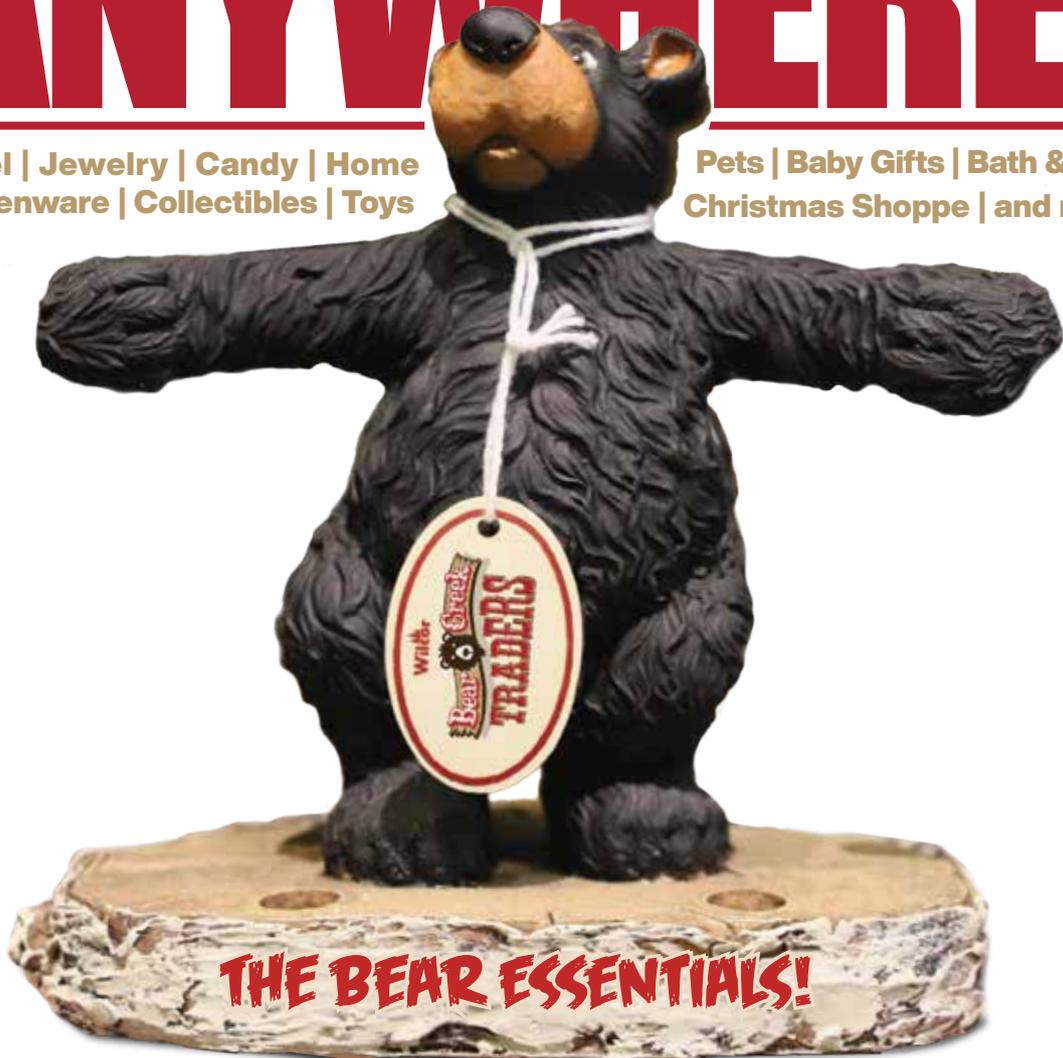


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FADE TO BLUE



FROM 1926 THROUGH 2018, ALLEGANY HIGH SCHOOL OF CUMBERLAND, MARYLAND, WAS LOCATED ON SEDGWICK STREET IN AN AREA KNOWN AS CAMPOBELLO. IN 2018, THE NEWLY CONSTRUCTED ALLEGANY HIGH SCHOOL OPENED FOR CLASSES AT 900 SETON DRIVE, THE FORMER LOCATION OF SACRED HEART HOSPITAL.

Written by: **Dan Whetzel**

Who could have imaged that a routine summer activity would spark events connecting thousands of Allegany High School alumni? And who would have predicted the Allegany community's celebration of Campobello throughout the year?

When the fate of Allegany High School's Sedgwick Street campus became widely known, graduates began to informally share memories. Through the efforts of Michael Hunter Thompson, an alumni artist, those conversations quickly focused around a series of photographs, interviews, exhibits and a book titled *Fade to Blue, A Tribute to Allegany's Campobello*. Allegany supporters rallied around *Fade to Blue* to celebrate the Sedgwick Street school's legacy even as the building was being slated for demolition. *Fade to Blue* and related community events have become celebrations of the Camper spirit.

Michael recalls the day during the summer of 2019 when the idea for what became *Fade to Blue* occurred. "I was at Allegany on Sedgwick Street playing fetch and walking my dog. There had been local news stories about the building being broken into and vandalized. So, I walked up the staircase on the side of the gym and peered in out of curiosity. What I saw in the gym sparked the idea."

While many visitors viewing the gym floor would have condemned its condition and moved on, Michael's creative eye for photographic composition saw a unique opportunity amid the chaos. "The way the light was coming into the gym and illuminating the strange pattern of thousands of footsteps in the white dust covering the basketball court caught my attention. I thought it would be interesting and emotional to stage a basketball photograph in that setting."

News of Allegany's pending demolition gave a sense of urgency to Michael's idea for a photography project inside the school—creative photos would be a way to preserve its memory. To determine if there was interest in alumni being the figures in the images, he posted the idea on Facebook. "And it just clicked," recalls Michael. "People were overwhelmingly interested."

While alumni responded favorably to the idea, the reality of completing the project was far from certain. The building was not only off limits, but in poor condition. Natural deterioration and destruction by vandals had left the interior a mess. It was also uncertain if permission would be granted to enter the building, particularly after the pandemic caused restrictions to be placed on public gatherings.

Michael contacted Jake Shade, Allegany County Commissioner and alumni, to make inquiries about granting access for a photography project. "He gave the green light and from there I worked with Adam Patterson, Director of Public Works, who established time limits and access requirements. I only had five weeks to organize and execute it before asbestos abatement work started."

Communicating through Facebook, Michael arranged for 30 photo shoots, in and outside the abandoned building, with 500 former staff and alumni as figures in the images. The photos captured as many cross sections of high school life as possible in the short time frame. The sessions also became informal reunions when classmates reminisced during the scheduled settings.



Top: Walkers and drivers arriving at the school to participate in Michael's conception. Along with other staged photos, Michael attempted to get a selfie of each group as they participated in the project.

PHOTO COURTESY DOUG SCHWAB

Middle: A group of mostly drama club alum pose for a selfie with Michael in the Auditorium.

PHOTO COURTESY JOANIE JOHNSTON

Bottom: A gathering of different age groups at the entrance to the high school. By the end of the project over 500 former staff and alumni came together to participate and reminisce in informal reunions.

PHOTO COURTESY DOUG SCHWAB

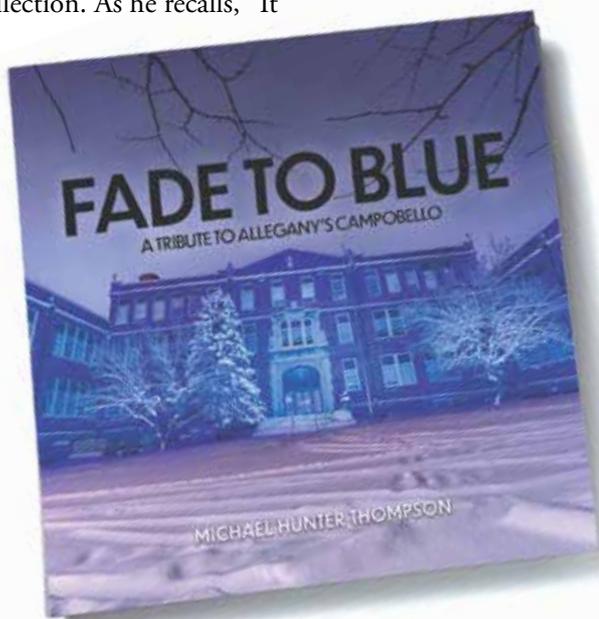
As the conversations continued, it became apparent to Michael that capturing them would be a complementary component to the photograph collection. As he recalls, “It became clear that participants wanted the project to be captured in book form and they wanted to share stories.”

Creating and implementing an oral history program took *Fade to Blue* into a different and unfamiliar realm for Michael, but over a period of months 100 interviews were recorded, reviewed, and summarized for publication. Participants’ graduating years ranged from the 1940s to more recent times.

The concept for the *Fade to Blue* publication came from a coffee table book that Michael enjoyed. “Each page has a work of art. I think that it allows the image to breathe and the reader to fully focus on that one piece. I figured that concept would work for this project...each image on its own page. A very minimalistic, clean design,” states Michael.

The book’s title is unique and generates positive comments. Inspired by film makers references to ending a scene by steadily reducing brightness until the screen turns to black, Michael’s goal was to creatively capture images of Allegany’s campus and alumni before the iconic landscape of Sedgwick

Street changed forever. *Fade to Blue* became a natural extension of the film makers term, a book title and general reference to community events.



Michael Hunter Thompson’s *Fade to Blue*, is a 148 page, full color hard bound 11” x 10” book. It contains 39 photographs from photo shoots along with 100 personal oral histories written from interviews conducted with the participants.

The present Allegany High School, located on Seton Drive, became involved in the process as Michael and Brian White, social studies instructor, discussed ideas about additional events. The conversations became more earnest as memorabilia and artifacts began to appear at photo sessions and through photographs posted on Facebook. Brian recalls, “Michael started to be the recipient of lots of Allegany stuff that was donated to the project. Michael also realized there was no way he could utilize all of the donations, but they did spark an idea—

Historical Research Methods students could create an exhibit for the Allegany Museum on the history of Allegany High School. Together with the *Fade to Blue* exhibit, the Allegany community will have an amazing opportunity this July to reflect, learn and be inspired by our legacy.”

The amount of memorabilia and photographs proved to be daunting. Students became involved in cataloging, interpreting, and organizing resources for the exhibit. The hands-on approach to primary sources is the defining



feature of Historical Research Methods class that has produced a series of oral history publications, videos, public presentations, and virtual tours of the Campobello campus over the past two decades. In recent years students focused on documenting the Sedgwick Street building; digitizing class portraits, photographing rooms, and cataloging trophies were priorities. Brian credits his students for their efforts, “I am very grateful for some fantastic students in completing our work in preserving our school’s history and legacy.”

The Allegany Arts Council also partnered and supported the program from its formal inception. Michael recalls, “I proposed the show to the Arts Council exhibition committee. It then grew to having my photography, as well as parts of the Sedgwick Street school installed in the space which myself and a small team of Allegany enthusiasts removed.”

Julie B. Westendorff, Executive Director of the Allegany Arts Council, notes that, “Michael Hunter Thompson has been a long time artist member of the Arts Council and served on its photography committee. Through the years his work has changed to include more cinematic and ‘staged’ shots, so when he came to us with this idea, we knew it was going to be an exciting adventure.”



Michael Thompson with some of the memorabilia collected for the exhibition in July. He is sitting on a row of four original auditorium seats. PHOTO COURTESY MICHAEL THOMPSON

Bottom photos (left to right): Jim Cook (1968), Chad Dick- en (1998), Kevin Sellers (1967), Beth Beeman Martin (1998) and John Lange (1967) in the boy’s locker room, showing their sports memorabilia. PHOTO COURTESY JOANIE JOHNSTON

Generations of cheerleaders in front of the gymnasium coming together to help Michael with his photo project. PHOTO COURTESY DOUG SCHWAB

Wes Abrams, 90, made the trip with his daughter from Rockville to Cumberland to participate in the outdoor football photo shoot. PHOTO COURTESY DOUG SCHWAB

Arrowette alums posed for photos in the old gymnasium. PHOTO COURTESY JOANIE JOHNSTON

“Voted Most Likely to Stay Together” — 1956 graduates and high school sweethearts that remained together, Shirley and Calvin “Pete” Baker, pose for Michael at the dance photo backdrop. PHOTO COURTESY DOUG SCHWAB





Above: Some of the Allegany High School Historical Research Methods students creating the *American High School Experience* exhibits. Left to right: Phoebe Puffenbarger (artwork), Sofia Kucher (research/writing) and Chassady Redhead (quilt construction).

Right: One of the large panel displays to be exhibited at Allegany Museum in July 2022.

PHOTOS COURTESY BRIAN WHITE

Julie also realized the impact the exhibit would have on the community at large. “Although I didn’t attend school in this community, I immediately understood the nostalgia which surrounds it. For good or bad, that experience leaves an impression on all of us. Whether you attended Allegany or not, there is something special about going back to that place, wherever yours might be, even if for a little while.”

There will be several exhibitions running concurrently in downtown Cumberland venues. According to Julie, “July 2022 will feature a series of exciting exhibitions and activities for the *If These Halls Could Talk* program, featuring the *Fade to Blue* exhibit at the Allegany Arts Council and *The American High School Experience* to take place at the Allegany Museum. The photographic exhibit at the Allegany Arts Council, will include 40 images Thompson took incorporating generations of Allegany alumni, along with artifacts he salvaged from the building. The Allegany Museum exhibit is being curated by current Allegany High school students in the Historical Research Methods class, and will include



photographs, memorabilia, and even a replica of the Sedgwick Street building made of Legos.”

As demolition of the old Allegany High School progressed, the timing of the program could not have been better. Adds Julie, “The loss of such an architectural piece of our history could be very sad, but this project has taken that sadness and reinvigorated more than five generations of memories. It is a testament to the selfless work of an artist who wanted to preserve the heart of a community, and it reinforces the importance of artists living and working here. Some years ago, Michael said his long term goal was to become a full-time artist. Part of our work is to support local artists and assist them in chasing their dreams — it has been a privilege to be given a front row seat to this journey.”

The opportunities and events offered to preserve Campobello’s legacy is impressive — *Fade to Blue* and *If These Halls Could Talk* will long be remembered by alumni who celebrate the fitting farewell to Sedgwick Street memories.

Michael Hunter Thompson expressed his immense appreciation for the financial grants from the Allegany Arts Council and Maryland State Arts Council throughout the project.



Allegany High School Lego Model

Allegany’s Historical Research Methods students commemorated the Campobello campus in a unique way during the 2021-2022 school year. The idea occurred when Drake Rose, a senior enrolled in the course, observed a model of Fort Cumberland displayed at the Allegany Museum. As Drake recalled, “I thought it would be cool if we could do something similar for Allegany High School.” Acting on the initial idea, it was decided to move forward using Lego’s as building material to replicate the school building. Collaborating with classmates Daniel Gregory and Cole Fiscus, the Sedgwick Street building was photographed and later replicated on Minecraft, a video game that creates three dimensional images. The scaled-to-size Lego model stretched to eight feet in length and required 35,000 Lego blocks.

The project required interdisciplinary skills that stretched beyond typical social studies classes. “We collaborated with classmates and consulted teachers throughout the school for advice, particularly Tech Ed. A lot of thought went into the project,” recalled Drake.

Daniel added, “I started by taking multiple photographs of the exterior and found a lot of interesting oddities, like different color bricks that were used in the construction. I also focused on structural details within the building.”

Cole recalled, “This project was very different from anything else I have encountered in school. We worked for 45 minutes every day studying engineering and other aspects of the structure. It was very rewarding to work on such a creative project that a lot of people will be interested in seeing.”

continued on next page



Drake Rose and Cole Fiscus at the beginning phase of the Lego project (above). The old Allegany High School was meticulously photographed and replicated on Minecraft (inset) to create the scaled-to-size model.

PHOTOS COURTESY BRIAN WHITE

Allegany High School Lego Model *continued*

Brian White, instructor for the class, also highlighted the collaborative and interdisciplinary aspects of the Historical Research Methods course and Lego project. “We touched on so many disciplines this year—math, engineering, as well traditional historical research. It is rewarding to know the Lego replica will be preserved for all to view in the future.”

Students expressed gratitude to alumni for Lego donations. The students and Mr. White also expressed gratitude to Canal Heritage Authority, Allegany County Commissioners, Allegany Museum, Doug Schwab and Betsey Hurwitz-Schwab, and Allegany Arts Council for grants and support during the project.

Following the *American High School Experience* exhibit at the Allegany Museum in July 2022, the Lego replica will be permanently displayed on the first floor of the present Allegany High School on Seton Drive.



3 Pershing Street
Cumberland, MD 21502



Top: Cole Fiscus and Daniel Gregory working on the gym wing of the Lego model.

Inset: Completed gymnasium.
Above: Front entrance with windows in place.

Left: Auditorium wing in progress.

PHOTOS COURTESY BRIAN WHITE

If These Halls Could Talk: A Tribute to Allegany's Campobello

July 2022 Events

Fade to Blue: A Photographic Journey

Allegany Arts Council, 9 N. Centre St.,
Cumberland, MD • July 2 - July 30
Tuesday – Saturday 11 am – 5 pm

Allegany: The American High School Experience

Allegany Museum, 3 Pershing St.,
Cumberland, MD • July 2 - July 30
Wed – Fri, 1-4; Sat 11-4; Sun 1-4

Friends of Fade to Blue VIP Reception and Book Launch *Limited Ticket Event*

Allegany Arts Council, 9 N. Centre St.,
Cumberland, MD • July 8; 6 – 8 pm

Public Opening Reception

For both exhibitions, July 9; 2 – 6 pm

Allegany High School Camper Class Reunion Celebration

Canal Place, Cumberland, MD • July 9
4 – 9 pm

Fade to Blue Gallery Walk & Talk with Michael Hunter Thompson, Allegany Arts Council, 9 N. Centre St., Cumberland, MD • July 23

Michael will be available for book signings at the Fade to Blue limited ticket event at the Arts Council on July 8th and the Gallery Walk & Talk, July 23.

Michael Hunter Thompson's website:

<http://www.michaelhunterthompson.com>

Allegany Arts Council website: <http://alleganyartscouncil.org/> and

<https://www.alleganyartscouncil.org/upcoming-events/if-these-halls-could-talk-a-tribute-to-alleganys-campobello>

Allegany Museum website: www.alleganymuseum.org

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The Legacy of ANTIETAM

160 Years Later

Written by: **Sara Mullins**



September 17, 2022, is the 160th anniversary of the Battle of Antietam, when Union and Confederate troops engaged in the deadliest one-day battle in American history. By nightfall of September 17, 1862, more than 23,000 soldiers were killed, wounded or pronounced missing after 12 hours of combat.

General Robert E. Lee and his Army of Northern Virginia had attempted to invade the North as part of Lee's Maryland Campaign, but his plan was thwarted by Union General George McClellan's Army of the Potomac. Lee and his forces retreated to Virginia on September 18.

The Maryland State Monument at Antietam is about 80 yards northeast of the Dunker Church. It was dedicated on May 30, 1900, with the keynote speaker being President William McKinley, a veteran of the battle. This is the only monument at Antietam dedicated to units from both sides.

The monument is an octagonal granite pavilion roofed with a bronze dome and topped with a bronze statue of a robed female standing on a globe and holding a sword and a wreath. Four granite blocks stand in the arches of the pavilion with bronze tablets showing scenes from the battle on the outside and on the inside, information about the eight Maryland units from both Union and Confederate forces that took part in the battle. The names of those Maryland units are also carved just below the pediment on the outside of the pavilion.

PHOTO BY DALE THOMAS

This Union victory was a key turning point in the American Civil War. It ended Lee's Maryland Campaign, intended as the first Confederate invasion of the North and one of the greatest threats to Washington, D.C. It demonstrated that United States forces could prevail against the Confederates. It prevented France and England from joining forces with the Confederacy, despite both countries' urgent need for Southern cotton – neither country wished to support a pro-slavery government. It boosted the tattered morale of Union soldiers.

Most important, the Battle of Antietam provided President Abraham Lincoln with a military success that allowed him to issue his preliminary Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, thereby formally alerting the Confederacy of his intention to free all persons held as slaves within the rebellious states. One hundred days later, with the Confederacy still in full rebellion, President Abraham Lincoln issued the final Emancipation Proclamation.

By linking the Union cause with an attack on slavery, the Proclamation changed the course of the war and the future of the nation. By setting the stage to free millions of slaves, the South would lose valuable slave labor that had supported its war effort and its economy. Although the Emancipation Proclamation did not free enslaved persons in Maryland or other border states, it did open up one pathway to freedom by enabling African American men to enlist or be drafted into the Union army. And it allowed almost 180,000 former slaves and free blacks to fight the Confederates as United States Colored Troops.

"I never in my life felt more certain that I was doing right than I do in signing this paper...if my name ever



The Sunken Road, as it was known to area residents prior to the Battle of Antietam, was a dirt farm lane which was used primarily by farmers to bypass Sharpsburg. On September 17, 1862, Confederate Maj. Gen. Daniel Harvey Hill placed his division of approximately 2,600 men along the road, piled fence rails on the embankment to further strengthen the position and waited for the advance of the Union army.

Union Maj. Gen. William H. French and his 5,500 men veered south, towards Hill's position along the Sunken Road. As French's men approached the Sunken Road, the Confederate troops staggered them with a powerful volley delivered at a range of less than one hundred yards.

Union and Confederate troops dug in. For nearly four hours, bitter fighting raged along this road as French sought to drive the Southerners back. Outnumbered but with a well-defended position, the Confederates in the road stood their ground. Finally, the Federals were able to overwhelm Hill's men, successfully driving them from this strong position and piercing the center of the Confederacy's line. However, the Federals did not follow up this success with additional attacks and neither side gained a decisive advantage. The Sunken Road was now Bloody Lane.

PHOTO BY DALE THOMAS

goes into history it will be for this act, and my whole soul is in it," Lincoln said. By signing the Emancipation Proclamation, he completed what he would later call "the great event of the nineteenth century." The Proclamation freed the slaves in all states still in a state of rebellion as of January 1, 1863, and thus united the Union cause with an assault on the institution of slavery.

The war's outcome provided Lincoln with a political boost that may have helped him and his fellow Republicans to prevail in 1862's critical midterm elections by maintaining a House majority and gaining seats in the Senate.

Today the Antietam National Battlefield, located at 5831 Dunker Church Road in Sharpsburg, Maryland, is operated by the National Park Service. Visitors can explore the park by taking an 8.5 mile driving or biking tour and/or hiking 12 miles of designated trails.

"The renovation of the Museum and Historic Visitors Center is underway," says Keith Snyder, Park Ranger and Chief of Resource Education and Visitor Services at Antietam. This \$6.8 million project to preserve the 60-year-old facility and provide improved visitor services will be completed in time for fall's 160th anniversary.

Programming will feature a new emphasis on the "why" of Antietam, highlighting the political and social aspects of the battle. "It was the beginning of the end of slavery, a first step," says Dan Spedden, President of Visit Hagerstown & Washington County.

"It's an entirely new presentation," Snyder says. "We will offer programming associated with the battle."

Park events commemorating the 160th anniversary of the battle are planned for two consecutive weekends in September, beginning with the actual anniversary date of September 17 and continuing on September 18. Activities will focus on the battle itself, with hikes,



This 1862 photo by Alexander Gardner (1821-1882) is entitled "Bodies of Confederate artillerymen near Dunker Church." As the first battlefield photographed before the dead were buried, Antietam became the first battle to visually convey the carnage of the American Civil War.

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walks, tours and living history demonstrations. An evening hike is planned on September 16 in recognition of action occurring the evening before combat began. Living history volunteers will present artillery and musket firing programs on September 17 and 18 at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. near the New York State Monument next to the Visitors Center.

The following weekend's events, to be held September 24 and 25, will highlight the battle's aftermath, focusing on the care of wounded and deceased soldiers as seen in photos taken using the new technology of "wet plate" photography. Photography and photojournalism came of age during this period and conveyed the grim details of battle to a public anxious for information. Some were the first ever taken of dead soldiers on the battlefield before burial. As the first battlefield photographed before the dead were buried, Antietam became the first battle to visually convey the carnage of the American Civil War.



As in previous years, on the first Saturday of December, a Memorial Illumination will feature 23,000 luminaries representing the men killed, wounded or missing at Antietam. People can drive through the park to view the luminaries.

Frederick Douglass, the noted abolitionist, editor and orator, offered the following thoughts regarding the legacy of Antietam: “At last the outspread wings of the American Eagle afford shelter and protection to men of all colors, all countries, amid all climes [climates] and the long oppressed black man may honorably fall or gloriously flourish under the star-spangled banner.”

Some of the luminaries near the State of New York Monument at Antietam. Each year on the first Saturday in December 23,000 luminaries representing the men killed, wounded or missing at Antietam can be viewed by visitors to the park. PHOTO BY MJ CLINGAN



The Aviary at Rocky Gap State Park

Written by: **Sam Dixon**

THE SCALES & TALES PROGRAM TAKES NEW FLIGHT

There is nothing quite like the experience of locking eyes with a bald eagle or hearing the call of an owl in the early moments of dawn. While these may be everyday occurrences at the office for the park rangers at Rocky Gap State Park, they'll tell you that these experiences never lose their magic. Luckily, the Aviary within the park isn't just for the park rangers, it provides a public viewing area of the park's non-releasable birds of prey who act as ambassadors to the Scales & Tales program. One of the flagship programs of the Maryland Park Service, Scales & Tales got its start in 1986 and has grown from one central location to multiple locations throughout Maryland. The "scales" in the name represent the stories of the animal ambassadors of the program while the "tales" tell the stories of how the animals came to reside in the park, and how humans have impacted their lives. Though this program has gone through many changes over the decades since its inception, Scales & Tales has always strived to afford people the opportunity to see wildlife up close, and encourage people to enjoy and appreciate Maryland State Parks and the wildlife living in them. There are not many better ways to learn about the natural world than through meeting some of the most captivating creatures that call the ecosystems of Maryland home. Fortunately for visitors to the park, the Aviary is home to several species of raptors, including four different types of owls as well as hawk, falcon, vulture, and eagle species, all on display within the campground.

SCIENCE CREATES MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS

From day one, Scales & Tales created a space for the public to gain knowledge about the animals in its care, but the visitors haven't been the only ones doing the learning. Through the years, the program has also sought to provide a space for its animal caretakers to learn the best practices in animal welfare, and adapt to do the best they can by their animals. This constant search of knowledge has led the Rocky Gap Aviary team to forge partnerships with some incredible people and organizations in the



Mature Bald Eagle, Mo, is one of two Bald Eagles at the Rocky Gap Aviary. PHOTO BY SAM DIXON

field of avian care. Two new partners are the International Association of Avian Trainers and Educators (IAATE) and Florida based Natural Encounters Inc. (NEI). While IAATE was founded to "foster communication, professionalism and cooperation among those individuals who serve Avian Science through training, public display, research, husbandry, conservation, and education," NEI's complimentary goals are "to Engage, Inspire, and Empower audiences and animal professionals all over the world by teaching the art of training and the science of behavior change." The experts from these organizations have raised



Selma, a Black Vulture, is a very willing ambassador at the Aviary. Here she demonstrates stepping on the scale for her daily weigh-in and reward from Ranger Sam Dixon.

PHOTO BY MIKE CALHOUN

the bar on what the humans and birds involved in Rocky Gap State Park's Aviary are capable of, and the team that cares for these avian ambassadors are thriving under their mentorship. Where does a partnership between world class bird trainers, park rangers, and Scales & Tales avian ambassadors begin? Where all great partnerships start – communication.

CREATING TRUST

Rangers have long-since communicated to park visitors that avian ambassadors are the “partners” of their human caretakers, and that has never been the case more so than now. As Aviary staff started on their new bird training endeavors, they'll tell you that the art of communication has been at the basis of every other skill and technique they have learned. That new level of communication is not only with their fellow human coworkers, but the ones with feathers too. No, this doesn't mean the park rangers are actually speaking to the birds, but that doesn't mean they aren't communicating. Through the IAATE and NEI bird training mentors, who have spent decades refining their skills, the Aviary staff learned that taking the time to stop and observe the behavior of their birds provides a higher level of communication than they could have ever imagined. This moment of pause in the bird trainer also provides a

key piece of communication to the bird itself, and that is they get to choose what happens next. By always allowing the bird to choose the next step forward, or backward, a trust is formed with the animal and caretaker that allows both to gain confidence in each other and the new tasks at hand. Just like each person involved, each bird learns at a different pace and responds to new tasks with different levels of confidence. Some birds require an added level of change in their environment, also called their “antecedents,” to make learning tasks easier while other birds

work on new tasks with gusto. Regardless of how long or how many steps it takes to get to the end goal, it is the responsibility of the trainers to learn and observe the bird's behavior to help them achieve the goal at their own pace.

All of this means when you visit Rocky Gap State Park and meet the ambassadors living in the Aviary, whether they are outside presenting a program or weighing themselves on a scale, the bird chose to be there and participate. While hearing the term “animal training” may evoke images of bears on bicycles or dogs jumping through hoops, the tasks being trained in the Aviary look very different. Each task that is learned by one of the avian ambassadors provides an opportunity to increase the bird's overall quality of life as well as enhance their job as an educator. For example, easily getting a bird's weight will help trainers determine a daily diet that will keep the bird healthy and fit, while learning how to be transported in a crate allows the bird to be comfortable traveling to programs and vet checkups without stress. This new level of choice given to the Aviary residents has also led to the birds in the Aviary being differentiated into two categories – the “working” birds and the “retired” birds. The retired birds are those that will now enjoy the rest of their time in the Scales & Tales program with no daily routines other than enjoying meals and soaking up the sunshine. On the other hand, the working birds are the individuals who have shown that they are comfortable and confident working with their human partners, and are part of daily training routines and programming. What does an average day of training



routines look like? Lots of trust building, communication and, of course, rewards.

THE REWARDS BRING TRUST, TRUST BRINGS REWARDS

Every morning, the first items on the to-do list are gathering the weights of the working birds which will help determine their diet for the day, and setting the day's goals. While stepping onto a scale may seem easy to a person, the bird has to build trust in the trainer asking them to perform the task as well as gain the confidence to physically get onto the foreign object in their environment. As a bird makes progress forward in both trust and confidence, they are met with a reward every step of the way. These rewards are made up of different types of food from the specific diet that was written for the bird that morning. While daily goals for birds are likely to include large goals such as comfortability in their crate, each large goal is broken down into many small goals that will work together to make the task achievable. For instance, if a bird's overall goal is to be comfortable being transported in their crate, they have to be comfortable stepping into the crate, the crate door opening and closing, and the crate moving with



Top: Seneca, a beautiful hybrid Falcon, interacts with Ranger Mollie Kemp at his environment at the Aviary.

Inset: Notice how intently Seneca is responding to his trainer.

PHOTOS BY MIKE CALHOUN

them inside to achieve this goal. New training techniques like this mean that visitors who have been to the Aviary in the past may notice a difference in the type of programming they are seeing during their next visit. While some birds may be participating in the standard programs people are used to, other programs may be providing the visitor a front row seat to experience what a training session looks like.

Whether the avian ambassador is out and about during a program, or within their own enclosure meeting the public, their job as educators remains the same. Through meeting the birds, messages about our environment and the people who protect it are able to gain a face and a personality. One of the most charismatic residents in the Aviary is also one that many first time visitors may not take the time to meet at first glance. Selma, the Black Vulture, has taken on the representative role of misunderstood animals that our ecosystem cannot thrive without. By the end of one meeting with Selma, visitors leave with an understanding of the vital role, as “nature’s cleanup crew,” that vultures play to help rid the spaces we share of diseases such as rabies that impact humans. The change in the world around us, such as shifts in different species’ ranges due to our warming climate, can also be discussed through the black vulture. These birds, once a more southern species, can now be seen frequently in the mountains of Maryland soaring with their larger cousins, the turkey vulture.

THE POWER OF ONE

Though the staff may guide visitors to birds like vultures to allow their stories to be heard, other birds need no introduction. The Rocky Gap State Park Aviary is also home to two resident mature bald eagles, Mo and Leo. Messages of survival and a comeback set the stage for park rangers to explain the full story of how one of our most recognizable birds almost came to their end in the late 1900s. While the bald eagle’s story may start with the explanation of how man-made problems in the form of the pesticide DDT took this iconic bird to the brink of extinction, park visitors are also met with an inspiring end to the story. Tales of environmental heroes such as the biologist and author Rachel Carson, who worked to shed light on the impact of DDT, provide anecdotes for how one person can change the world and its inhabitants can be impacted for the better. In this new era, DDT may be a thing of the past but other threats face birds of prey, particularly eagles. After tremendous success in combating the consequences of pesticide



Barred Owl, Rosie, stepping on the scale for her daily weigh-in and reward.

PHOTO BY SAM DIXON

poisoning, lead poisoning from lead bullets used in hunting has revealed its devastating effects on scavengers like eagles and vultures. In addition to these pinpointed impacts, the existential threat of a warming planet reveals a larger, looming consequence for more than just birds. With a dire message tinged with doom and gloom, rangers share the threats facing these animals but are eager to remind visitors of the power of one. Just as Rachel Carson shouted from the rooftops, young people all over the world are working to bring to light the effects climate change has on our planet. The power of one gives way to the power of many.

After an in-depth look at all of the new things happening behind the scenes at the Rocky Gap State Park Aviary, it is easy to see that this is not a task that can be faced alone, much in the same way we need to work to protect our planet. The rangers will tell you that it is truly special to have the whole team on board to support the upkeep of the Aviary and welfare of the resident birds. Just like the birds in the Aviary, the park staff that provide care for their

Scales & Tales ambassadors bring a wide variety of skills and knowledge to the table. From perch making to electrical wiring for heated roost boxes, and bird training to enclosure cleaning, the to-do list of tasks that it takes to run the Aviary are met with a hard-working group of people dedicated to making the program successful. To meet the avian ambassadors in the Rocky Gap State Park Aviary, check them out in person at the park and follow the Friends of Rocky Gap State Park on Facebook for upcoming programs. More information about the amazing work being done through Natural Encounters Inc. and the International Association of Avian Trainers and Educators can be found on their websites at: <https://naturalencounters.com/> and <https://iaate.org/>.

UPCOMING EVENTS 2022

Visit the Friends of Rocky Gap Facebook page or contact the park at 301-722-1480 to learn more.

May 28, 2022 – Scales & Tales – 7:30 PM

Join rangers for a Scales & Tales Campfire Program at the Campground Amphitheater.

June 11-12, 2022 – Art in the Park Saturday 10 AM – 5 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 4 PM

Join us for the first annual Art in the Park festival at the Amphitheater in Rocky Gap State Park in Cumberland, Maryland. Along the shore of Lake Habeeb with a backdrop of Evitts Mountain, this event will include local art and food vendors as well as live music and other activities. For festival questions and vendor applications, contact Ranger Sam Dixon at samantha.dixon@maryland.gov.

October 1-2, 2022 – Hawk Watch Weekend! Saturday 10 AM – 1 PM, Sunday 10 AM – 3 PM

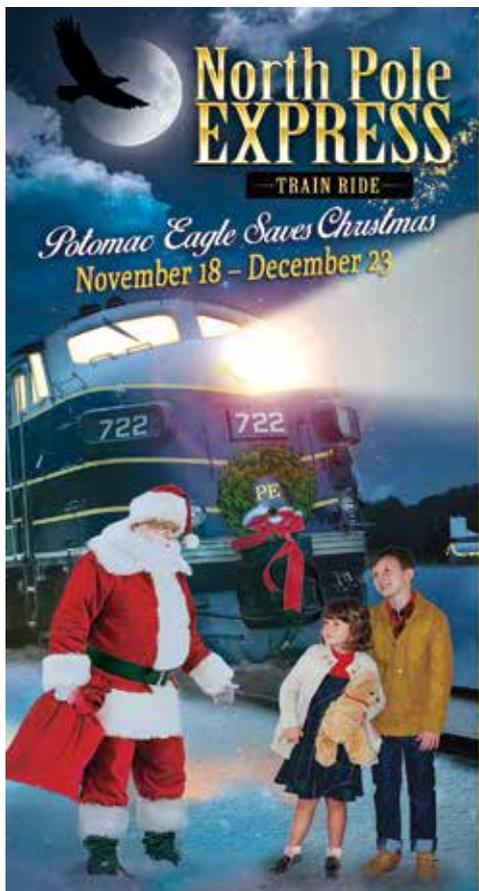
Join rangers for an exciting weekend of hawk watching! Start this journey learning how to identify raptors in flight in a classroom setting on Saturday and then take it to the skies with a field trip to a premier hawk watching location in Allegany County.

December 17, 2022 – Christmas Bird Count – All Day Activities

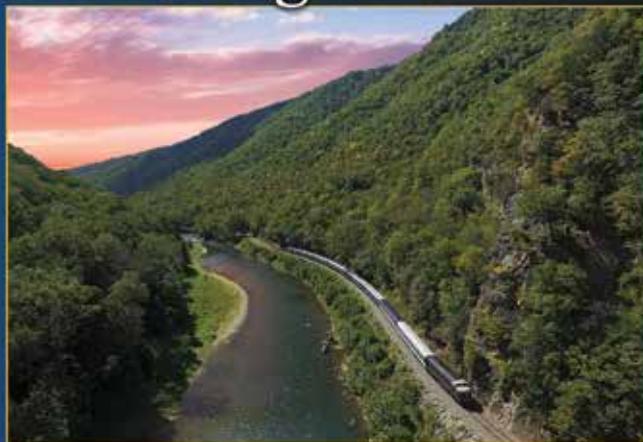
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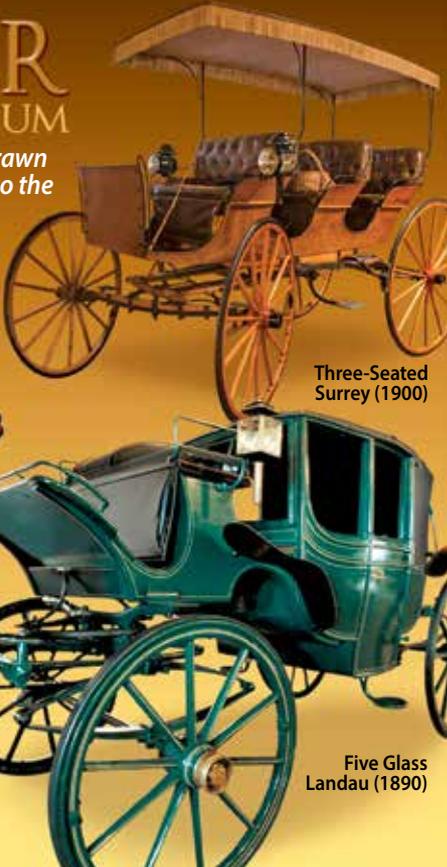
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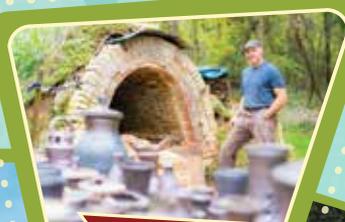
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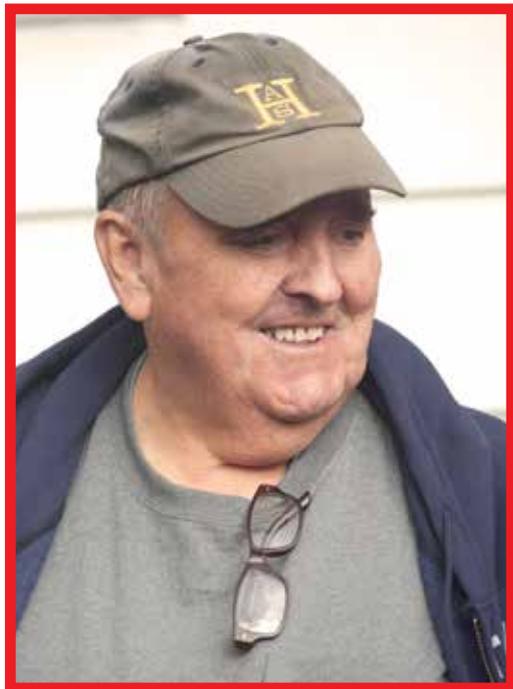
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Going Once, Going Twice, Still Going After 58 Years



Tom Henline, at a recent Estate Sale.

He's sold pizza ovens in Michigan and fine art in Florida. He's sold stoneware jars in Pennsylvania and mountainsides in Maryland. Except for a brief stint as a plumber with his older brother Ed, Tom Henline has spent his life in the auction business.

As a 12-year-old in Crellin, Maryland, a lumber and mining community near Oakland, Tom began working for a local auctioneer, Delmas Sanders. Tom began by moving stock and eventually moved up to doing paperwork. Even as a youngster, he was fascinated by the art of the sale.

When Delmas moved out of the area, Morgan Copeman took over as auctioneer. Tom delights in pointing out that with the change in employer, he convinced the other boys to go along with him in asking for \$3 a day instead of the \$2 they had been paid.

Some of the auctions were held at the automotive shop of local businessman Zack Gibson. Tom worked for Zack both during auctions and in Gibson's store and gas station. Once, when Tom was a junior at Southern High School in Oakland, he was working to prepare for an auction on a very snowy day. Auctioneer Morgan Copeman decided no one would come because of the inclement weather and left.

Written by: **Mary Reisinger**
Photography by: **Mike Calhoun**
Unless otherwise noted

As it happened, people did show up expecting the sale to go ahead, and Zack pressed Tom into acting as auctioneer.

After this first experience as an auctioneer, Tom continued to do auctions all over the region. Sometimes he picked up Zack Gibson's daughter Shirley, who would help out as clerk. Within a few years, Shirley and Tom were married. Together they have raised four children and developed a robust business, running auctions in various locations east of the Mississippi, from Michigan to Florida.

Tom has had many memorable auctions. In the largest sale of his career, he sold a large section of Marsh Mountain near the Wisp Ski Resort in



Vintage tin toy airplanes found at a recent auction.

Garrett County, Maryland, for 2.5 million dollars to Gene Frazee. In contrast, Tom was hired by owner Louis Stemple to sell the contents of a two-room house in Aurora, West Virginia, that had formerly been the Red Horse Inn and was listed on the Historic Register. Despite the small size of the house, it was chock full of authentic country antiques, which were very popular at that time. People came from around the country to purchase items from this sale.

Almost everything finds a buyer, and Tom has sold an amazing variety of items. He was hired to auction off pizza ovens being replaced by the man who owns Little Caesar's and the Detroit Red Wings hockey team. He auctioned off the display racks and other equipment of all the Montgomery Ward stores being closed in West Virginia and nearby states. He sold a black stoneware pitcher with a missing handle that turned out to be a rare piece from a Somerset maker and brought \$1000.

He sold the buildings and collection of the Americana Museum in Terra Alta, West Virginia, a privately owned museum containing structures such as a church, and a post office from Accident that had formerly been a two story chicken coop. The museum had exhibited such items as covered and buckboard wagons, a horse-drawn hearse, fixtures from old buildings, and antique signs. One sign advertising a Philadelphia beer brought \$16,000. From the contents of a former country doctor's office that had been part of the museum's collection, Tom sold two "iron lungs," remnants of the era when some of the many people who contracted polio had to have regular sessions in these breathing machines.

Estate sales, in particular, have led to some unusual discoveries. One man who died left a house that was meticulously clean but completely unchanged from the time of his parents. The house had never been electrified and still displayed calendars from the 1940s. In another case, when Tom and his crew went in to empty the house of someone who had died, they uncovered thousands of dollars worth of old silver coins in random places.

Tom has sold things he knows very little about, such as fine art and Oriental rugs. He learns what he can and relies on experts for advice, but ultimately, the people who bid determine the value, and Tom says a good auctioneer can sense the degree of genuine interest that a bidder has. One of his customers was reluctant to hire him for the sale of his parents' estate, and it turned out that there were some very valuable items that went for tens of thousands of dollars. The man admitted he would have accepted much less for these things; the auction convinced him that it had been worthwhile to have Tom do the selling.

For seventeen years, Tom and Shirley ran a weekly auction at the Terra Alta Stock Yard Auction Barn. During that time, it was possible to find ample stock to sell every week because small farms and their equipment and furniture were always changing hands. Today, there are very few small farms remaining in the area, and agricultural auctions depend more on farm products and livestock.



Top: Americana Museum Auction – Tom is selling one of the vehicles that had been moved outside for the auction. To the left, a large piece of farm equipment awaits its turn on the block.

Bottom: Americana Museum Auction – The cage behind Tom was originally used to hold people in the Terra Alta Town Hall until the sheriff's department could pick them up to go to jail. When the town sold the Terra Alta Town Hall and built a new one, this cage was bought and exhibited at the Americana Museum for several years.

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY TOM HENLINE

Though small farm sales are rare, the need for auctions remains strong. Since the 1960s, Tom has operated out of Crellin's former coal company store, originally built for a lumber business in 1892. With the closing of the mines, it had been sold in hopes that it would continue to be a community store, but when that didn't work, Tom decided to purchase it. He has kept or re-purchased some of the original fixtures. Today, the building is crammed with every imaginable type of merchandise, and there is a covered back porch where he stands to call for bids at his outdoor auctions.

Many sales are held at sites not designed for the purpose, but diehard fans of auctions are undeterred by rough conditions. Once when Tom was running an auction, the weight of the crowd caused the bleachers to collapse. People scrambled out of the mess, and the auction kept going. At a barn auction during a heavy rain storm, the pond above the barn overflowed, flooding the barn. People stood in a foot of water and continued to bid.

The recent pandemic restrictions have curtailed the number of people who can attend indoor auctions. At one time, the maximum gathering allowed was 12, a number that was almost reached by Tom and his crew. The auction business slowed for a while but has begun to pick up its

pace. It has been helpful that many auctions can be held outdoors, and that restrictions are loosening as the virus becomes less of a threat.

The only training Tom ever had was on-the-job. He has always operated on a payment at the time of sale basis. He doesn't bother with credit cards and rarely takes checks. He doesn't accept online bids, or use the internet for selling. He does no advertising except to run notices of his upcoming sales in the local papers and with auction services.

Despite many health challenges, Tom keeps working at the job that he loves. His entire family has been involved, and his adult children still help out regularly at auctions. He has no regrets about pursuing the only career that ever interested him. "It's been a great life, a great business. If I die selling, I'll go happy."



Former company store in Crellin that Tom has used as his headquarters since the 1960s.

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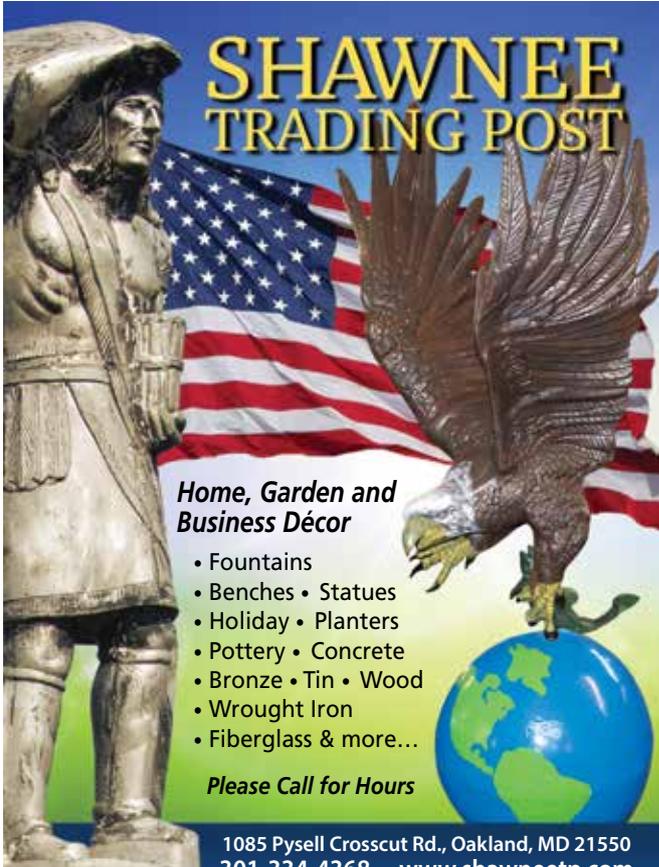


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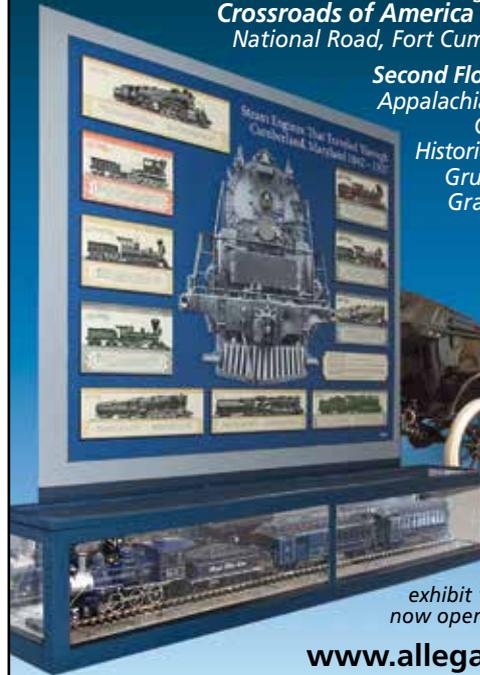
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Firewater Kitchen and Bar

A New Deep Creek Lake Gem in a Classic Setting



PHOTO BY MIKE CALHOUN

Written by: **Mary Reisinger**

For years, Brenda McDonnell and her husband Martin Heise looked at an old boathouse sitting empty on their Will O' the Wisp property. She used to say, "We've got to do something with that space." That something turned out to be Firewater Kitchen and Bar, a sparkling new addition to Deep Creek Lake's restaurants.

Brenda's experience with eateries began when she moved to McHenry, Maryland, in the 1980's, where she and her partner ran a restaurant for several years. Later, Brenda worked in food service at the Wisp Ski Resort for the Heise family, whom she describes as excellent employers interested in helping their staff develop skills. She especially credits

Martin Heise with giving her good advice on some of the practicalities of the food business such as how to regularize costs of recipes.

When the Heise family sold the ski area, Brenda launched her own place, which evolved into two businesses—Brenda's Pizzeria and Trader's Coffee House—that are still thriving.

In 2004, she married Martin Heise; they live at Will O' the Wisp, the Deep Creek Lake property his grandparents purchased when it was a modest group of rustic cottages. Martin's mother and father, Ace and Evelyn Heise, managed Will O' the Wisp, and along with some others, helped

develop winter tourism by starting the nearby ski area. As the lake became a year-round vacation spot, the Heise family transformed the original summer camp. They added a modern motel in the 1950s, a restaurant called the Four Seasons Dining Room in the 1960s, and premium condominiums in the 1970s.

When Martin decided to retire from the restaurant business in 2012, Brenda volunteered to take on the Four Seasons Room. She feels it is an enormous compliment that Martin trusted her to re-imagine a business that had been in his family for decades. By the next year, she had remodeled, expanded, and re-opened the restaurant, now called Ace's Run and Pub in honor of Martin's father.

Fast forward a few years, and that empty boathouse was calling to Brenda. Already owning and operating three restaurants didn't prevent her from contemplating adding another to the group. The first idea was a simple snack shop with a bar. However, the gorgeous setting with its water views seemed to demand a more ambitious plan, and the project grew into a restaurant and bar with ample outside and inside space.

Doug Storck of Deep Creek Design Studio and his wife Kelly put Brenda's ideas into tangible form. The old boathouse was razed, but both timber and stone were saved for reuse. A new building was designed to feature the property's expansive views of the lake at its widest point.

Construction began in the spring of 2020 on the new structure and the area around it. Driveways have been expanded and paved for easy access. Additional parking has been created near the new restaurant, and soon charging stations for electric vehicles will be added. Twenty additional docks have been installed for the convenience of boaters visiting Ace's Run or Firewater. Steps, walkways, and ramps have been put in place to connect the buildings, parking lots, docks, and beach. After a soft opening to test the systems, everything was complete and open for business by December 2020.

Firewater Kitchen and Bar, with its wood, glass, and gleaming surfaces, combines rusticity and elegance. Inside patrons can sit at a long, four-sided bar, or at tables positioned in front of windows. On the decks, outdoor



Progression of Firewater Kitchen & Bar from clearing and leveling the property to final building.

PHOTOS COURTESY FIREWATER KITCHEN & BAR



Above: Guests enjoy the outdoor deck and 32-foot long glass-enclosed fire pit while overlooking expansive views of Deep Creek Lake.

Insets: Firewater branded square cornered ice cubes and one of the specialized cocktails.

tables and comfortably-cushioned chairs provide flexible seating arrangements.

Every detail has been carefully thought out. Both inside and outside flooring is heated (no need to shovel snow!) and tall heaters outside keep patrons comfortable in cooler temperatures. Visitors are served outside in the summer, but even in winter, some suitably-attired folks take their drinks and food outdoors to enjoy. When the weather is nice, the windows open canopy-style, giving indoor guests the feeling of being outside.

A covered “bandstand” provides space for musicians, and the occasional performances from favorite groups such as Queen City Funk and Soul are compatible with conversation. The bandstand area is popular for dining at other times. Flames flicker in a 32-foot-long glass-enclosed fire pit outside, and from a smaller one inside that produces water vapor rather than smoke.

During a discussion of possible names, Doug Storck considered the fire pit’s flames and the lake lapping at



the shore a few yards away, and suggested Firewater. The double entendre of “firewater” as a casual term for alcohol was a bonus.

Firewater Kitchen and Bar features regional draft beers and in-house craft cocktails. Staff members elevate the bar’s offerings by dehydrating and juicing fruit, and making the syrups used in the cocktails. Some glasses are enhanced with a smoked aroma. Distinctive square-cornered ice cubes, delivered by a company from Annapolis and branded on-site with the Firewater logo, are used in specialized cocktails.

Whenever possible, Brenda prefers to use local sources, and she purchases regularly from area farmers and the Garrett Growers consortium. The menu changes seasonally. The



Left: Inside patrons can sit at a four-sided bar offering regional draft beers and in-house craft cocktails.

Inset: The menu at Firewater changes seasonally but there is always a variety of seafood available.

PHOTOS BY FIREWATER KITCHEN & BAR



original concept of small plates has grown into a selection of eclectic light meals with lots of seafood.

Firewater and Brenda's other restaurants have wonderful synergy. For instance, pizza dough for Brenda's Pizzeria is made at Ace's Run where there is more space for the large equipment needed to mix and roll enough dough for 500-600 pizzas a day.

Similarly, staff members often work at more than one of the restaurants. With seasonal variation, Brenda employs 130-160 people, and she truly values them. Since housing is limited and expensive around the lake, Brenda has renovated cottages on the Will O' the Wisp property and motel rooms at the former Lake Breez Motel next door to offer employees more affordable accommodations. She provides pay above the usual scale for restaurant work, scholarships, and special training such as a pizza convention trip to Las Vegas in March of 2022. Brenda keeps in close contact with each of her four businesses, and pitches in as needed.

Brenda grew up in the Bronx, where there are *sidewalks*, so she was initially inclined to think of towns and cities as the logical places to locate businesses. However, Deep Creek Lake quickly won her over. She never tires of the natural

beauty of the place. Even walking home at night after a long day, she appreciates the moon shining over the water.

Brenda does her best every day to convey this appreciation of the area to her customers, especially at Firewater, a place that celebrates Deep Creek Lake's special ambience.

Firewater Kitchen and Bar, adjacent to Ace's Run and Pub and the Will O' the Wisp Condominiums, on Route 219 near the McHenry Bridge, 20128 Garrett Highway, 21550.

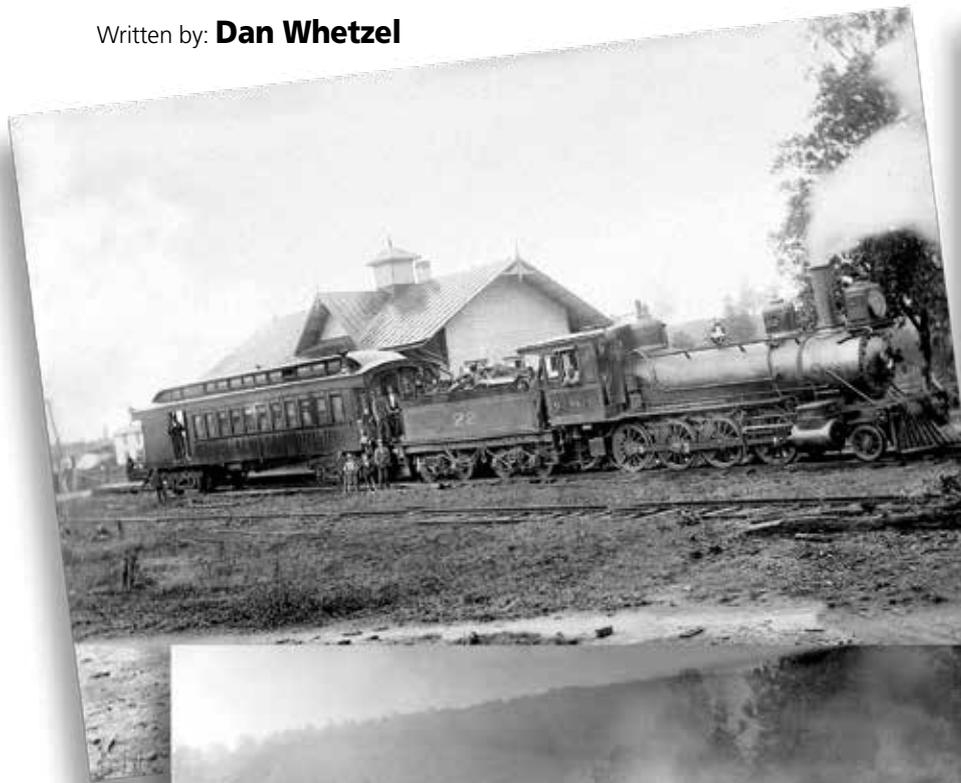
In the winter, Firewater is closed on Mondays and Tuesdays. During the summer, it opens seven days a week for longer hours.

Check the website (www.firewaterkitchen.com) or phone (301-387-6408) for up-to-date information.



Elk Garden — *Liveliest Little Mining Town in West Virginia*

Written by: **Dan Whetzel**



One Mineral County, WV, town can take pride in past events that few larger communities can match. Powerful politicians and financiers gathered there on more than one occasion, and hundreds of coal miners' wages depended on engaging the largest soft coal seam in the United States. More than 400 additional laborers blazed a railroad at the site that created an economic boom in the region. The bustling scene created news stories, as railroads shipped the black gold throughout the region and to Baltimore, MD.

Leading the economic charge at the town was West Virginia's best known politician and entrepreneur of the



Shown at left are selected photographs of recently discovered glass negatives from the Elk Garden, WV, area. The collection includes hundreds of photographs dating from the 1897-1898 time period. Approximately 25 of the photographs and related information on Elk Garden history will be available for viewing at Elk Garden Town Hall beginning July 2, 2022.

time period — Henry Gassaway Davis. His vision of developing the upper Potomac River valley brought about a need for services a town could offer. And it was Davis and associates who were responsible for developing Elk Garden, WV, a village that highlights the heyday of Mineral County coal mining. Through a chance discovery of glass negatives, a unique look into Elk Garden's past is now possible. The 1897-1898 photographs captured hundreds of images that remained untouched until recent times. Selected images from the collection will now be made available to the public.

What the photographic images and historical record reflects is a time period of growth and optimism. Mr. Davis, a former Baltimore & Ohio Railroad employee, ventured out on his own with a vision that few entrepreneurs could have equaled. While serving in the West Virginia state legislature and later the United States Senate, Davis made powerful friends and gained valuable knowledge about the workings of government — experiences that blended perfectly with his ambition.

Mr. Davis entered the railroad business as a means to bring the immense coal fields of the upper Potomac River valley within reach of markets. The state of West Virginia facilitated his plan by granting generous charters that conferred the rights to buy and sell real-estate, mine coal, extract iron ore, and harvest timber.

Davis' view of progress through nearly unbridled exploitation of natural resources has been challenged and condemned by critics in more recent times, but he was in keeping with the times.

Davis' railroad became known as the West Virginia Central and Pittsburg (no "h"), a small railroad that proved it "could." Starting near Piedmont and a connection with the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, Davis projected his railroad would wind upstream along the North Branch of the Potomac River over the most rugged territory in the region. In 1880, Davis put his plans into effect on the first segment of railway that extended from Piedmont to Elk Garden.

Davis faced a decision prior to the WVC&P reaching Elk Garden — how to access the "Big Vein" seam of coal at what was to become the town of Elk Garden. In 1871, Davis had the foresight to purchase 33½ acres from John Nethken for 46 dollars an acre — a down payment that began paying off handsomely in 1881. To capitalize on the investment, a discussion was necessary about the right-of-way for a locomotive to serve Mine #1 at Elk Garden.

Davis considered three options before deciding on the shortest route, a 2½ mile cut along a stream called Deep Run. At that point, the railroad faced a steep incline that halted construction on standard gauge rail. To surmount the obstacle, J. Wilson Humbird's company from Cumberland, MD, built a 1,500 foot inclined plane that reached the summit where a tram road completed service to the mine opening. Wages for the backbreaking task amounted to \$1.25 for an eleven hour work day.

A small community known as Mineville developed around the bottom of the plane where transfers of coal and



Left to right: Brandi Paugh, Town Clerk; Marian Droppleman, Mayor; Jody Paugh, Councilman, preview the photograph collection located at Elk Garden Town Hall.

passengers took place. Mineville was listed as a stop on the WVC&P and hosted a school, church and dwellings by the 1890s.

Residents reported events in the Elk Garden newspaper. The first shipment of coal from the Elk Garden Branch by way of the inclined plane occurred in October 1881. A formal celebration took place in Elk Garden on November 2, 1881, and highlighted the importance of Davis, his businesses and the powerful associates within his circle of influence.

Davis' written notes on the "fine Fall day" included a list of invited guests: Senator Bayard (D-DE), Stephen Elkins (lawyer, politician, later Secretary of War), J.A. Hambleton (capitalist from Baltimore), Richard Kerens (contractor from Missouri), Major Alexander Shaw (railroad executive and early business partner), and two reporters from Baltimore.

Stockholders and associates not present, but embedded in the WVC&P enterprise were United States Senators Chaffee, Blaine, Camden, and Barnum. Tammany Hall member and lawyer Augustus Schell added to the list of those involved. One author summarized the group this way: "It is doubt that any railroad in the country at any time had so many men prominent in public life and finances...as had the West Virginia Central Railway." The local railroad certainly earned the unofficial title: "Senatorial Railroad."

Upon completion of the Elk Garden Branch, the town experienced boom conditions with 480 coal miners on payroll (*Cumberland Daily Times*), saw mill operators working the river valley, and hundreds of railroad employees. The November 18, 1889, *Elk Garden Times* reported the town, "Now has a population of 2,000." This likely

included the surrounding area. Reports regularly appeared in regional newspapers about employment opportunities and coal shipments.

A remarkable account of a WVC&P train ride from Piedmont to Elk Garden appeared October 30, 1888, in the *Cumberland Daily News*. Through the author's description and news stories from the *Elk Garden Times*, the town's progress is known.

Surveyed lots were rented from the coal company at 12 dollars per year, upon which houses were built by miners. (*Colliery Engineering* identifies the housing terms as a 99 year lease). As of October, 1888, 20 dwellings were under construction, as well as an Odd Fellows Hall (seating 500 people), clothing store, and newspaper building. Fourteen stores were already in service, while three hotels and three churches

served the public. Social, fraternal, religious, and sporting events regularly occurred, providing vibrancy to the fledgling village. The November 15, 1889, *Elk Garden News* reported that the local school had increased its staff to seven teachers to serve student enrollment. According to the September 19, 1890, *Elk Garden News*, a nearby school house at Nethken neared completion in September 1890. *Elk Garden News* articles added to the list of buildings by identifying two millinery stores, two tin shops, two furniture stores, and a co-op store that paid dividends. The town's vitality became well known and was reported in the October 1888 issue of *Colliery Engineering* as "one of the liveliest little mining villages in West Virginia."

Prosperity occurred with a mark of distinction after a coal trade journal reported Elk Garden's "Big Vein" to be the thickest (14½ feet) soft coal seam in the United States at that time — certainly bragging rights for local miners.

An important transportation change focused on the Mineville incline when a company official complained that it was costing an additional 10 cents per ton to handle coal during the tram-to-incline-to-standard rail process (*Cumberland Daily News* June 25, 1888). Work was completed in December 1888 on an alternative route from Harrison, WV, a location named in honor of George Harrison who



served as supervisor of the shipping department. The new branch line avoided the more than 40% grade inclined plane service, but became a seven mile ride to Elk Garden. To gain elevation for locomotive use, the civil engineers included a switchback through Oakmont to Emoryville. From Emoryville the rail line ascended to the Elk Garden depot. This route served the town with regular passenger train service until 1934.

The WVC&P continued its trek to Elkins, WV, and beyond before being sold in 1902; it was later integrated with the Western Maryland Railway in 1905. All is not lost, however, as sections are still in use by CSX and the West Virginia State Rail Authority.

Elk Garden has been influenced by the drop in coal production and decreasing population since the boom years. But unlike many nearby towns that have disappeared, Elk Garden remains intact and hosts a school, churches, and public events.

The selected group of photographs developed from the glass negative collection provides a unique window into the town and surrounding areas along the Potomac River. Only a few are inscribed with names and locations, but they provide clues that confirm the photographer's territorial range.

The photographer's name remains a mystery, but it could be speculated that he lived in the area due to the length of time spent and negatives accumulated. Selected photographs will be available at the Elk Garden Town Hall where they will be integrated into the coal mining museum artifacts.

Also to be displayed are photographs of unidentified local school buildings. The public is invited to examine and possibly identify the locations and names of the buildings.

The photographs, coal mining museum, and related information will be available for visitors starting July 2, 2022, at the Town Hall. Visitors are welcome during regular meeting hours, Saturdays 10-2, Tuesdays 3-7, and by appointment 304-813-3450 through August 2022.



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Garrett County Celebrates...
continued from page 17

written by Lewis Edgar Jones when he attended a camp meeting in Mountain Lake Park. The drawings and paintings of Aza Stanton (1923-1981) earned him the title of “Garrett County’s Artist in Residence,” and are still in demand more than forty years after his death. *Once Upon a Mountain-top: The Improbable History of Mt. Lake Park, MD* (1987) by Mary I. Love, and the quartet of books featuring 12-year-old Emma Graham by Martha Grimes reveal insights into summers in Mountain Lake Park. James Rada, Jr., Lauren Carr, Ellen Callahan, Mary K. Tilghman, and Roger Alan Skipper are contemporary writers of books featuring local settings or stories.

Garrett College, established in 1966 in McHenry, offers many programs, including one that is particularly suited to the area—adventure sports management. Today the school has three outreach centers, a state of the arts STEM teaching center, and the Community Aquatic and Recreation Complex. A new performing arts center will be opening late summer of 2022.

In some ways, Garrett County has changed dramatically since its inception in 1872, but in other ways, it remains much the same. It is still possible to hike to Hoyer Crest, the highest point in Maryland, and to visit the Cranesville Swamp, one of the southern-most boreal bogs in the country. Travelers on many county roads are tracing the ancient Native American trails. Winters are often snowy, summer weather is pleasant, the growing season is short, the scenery is beautiful, and the people tend to be rugged individuals with strong community spirit. As John Work Garrett recognized long ago, this corner of the world is a very special place.



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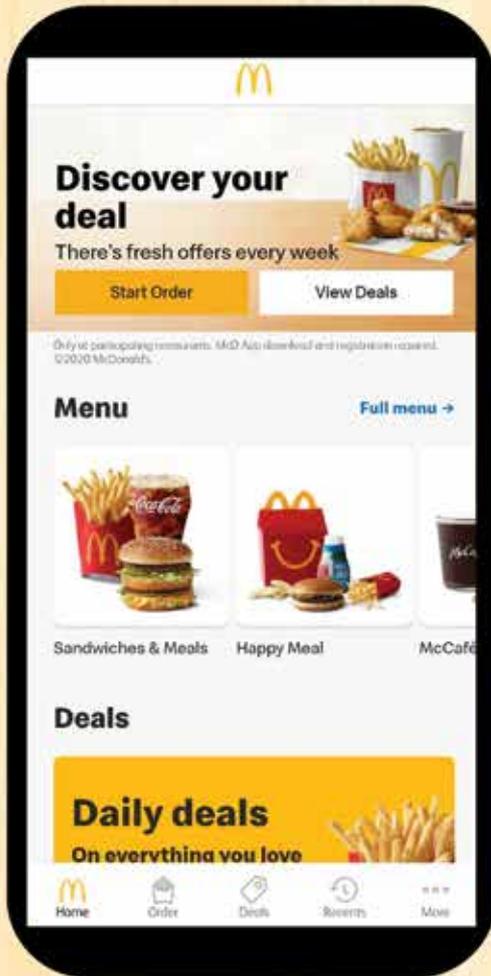
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