

# Community Forum

## Read about those who gave all

As Memorial Day approaches, we ask our readers to pause and remember those brave servicemen and service-women who have given their lives in the fight to protect and uphold our country's freedoms. We ask you to do no less this year — and we are even doing a little bit more ourselves.

Our subscribers will receive in the mail a special Saturday, May 26, edition of the Maryland Independent. This 38-page extra issue will be entirely dedicated to Memorial Day, and the reasons we mark it. It will also be available on newsstands throughout Charles County, just like every other edition of the Independent. The single-copy price will be the usual 75 cents. In this special Memorial Day issue, you will

### Our Opinion

read about:

- How a St. Mary's family recalls the legacy of Army Sgt. Ryan Patrick Baumann, who was killed by an improvised explosive device 10 years ago in Afghanistan;
- How a young Army private, Francis DeSales Wills, led a new youth chapter of the NAACP in Charles County before he went missing in action in 1966 in Vietnam;
- How former state senator Bernie Fowler still mourns the loss of his older brother, Army Staff Sgt. Howard Fowler Jr., 74 years ago in Europe in World War II;
- How a La Plata tobacco farm native, Air Force 1st Lt. David Bowling, was shot down in Vietnam in 1969, just two weeks before he was due home.

- How a Lusby woman has done exhaustive research to learn the stories of the 18 Calvert men who died in World War I, and whose names are listed on a monument that stands in front of the courthouse in Prince Frederick; and
  - How naval aircraft carrier the USS Lexington, namesake of Lexington Park, was recovered earlier this year from its resting spot deep in the South Pacific, scuttled there by U.S. forces after the carrier had been torpedoed by the Japanese in the battle of the Coral Sea in 1942 in which 216 crew members were killed.
- The names and faces featured in this special Memorial Day edition of the Maryland Independent are just some of the men and women from Southern Maryland who, throughout our nation's various military conflicts, gave their

lives for their country and the freedoms we enjoy today. The least we can do for our part is offer a means of recording and sharing their stories.

So, as we enter into a three-day weekend famous for its cookouts, swimming pool openings and family gatherings, we once again ask you to reflect on the true reason behind the holiday, and — if you would please take some time — to read the stories about and pay respect to some of our region's bravest service members who never made it home.

All those of any era who serve in this nation's military accept the risk that their lives may be cut short during their time in uniform. They honor their comrades who have fallen. They remember the human cost of war. So should we all.

## Letters to the editor



Inside your county government

## May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Mental health is essential to everyone's overall health and well-being. Everyone struggles from time to time. If you or someone you know need help, local resources are available. In support of Mental Health Awareness Month, our Charles County Department of Health would like to remind residents about the many out-patient services provided through their Division of Behavioral Health.

The Department of Health provides therapy treatment for those age six and older and medication management services to clients ages 18 and older. Conditions treated range from severe reactions to stress, bereavement, partner or parenting problems, domestic violence, treatment of depression, bipolar disorders, anxiety disorder, psychotic disorders, trauma treatment, anger management, and many other situations leading to stress and reduction of enjoyment of life, such as chronic pain conditions. The Department of Health also supports clients living with substance use conditions by collaborating closely with treatment and recovery programs both inside the department, as well as outside resources.

Services offered include individual, group, and family psychotherapy, as well as psychiatric evaluations, medication management services, and an Anger Management Program. All our treatment approaches are evidence-based and include, but are not limited to, cognitive behavioral therapy, brief solution-based therapy, mindfulness and stress reduction, eye movement desensitization and reprocessing, and many others. All our treatment approaches utilize a person-centered, trauma-informed approach.

The Department of Health has licensed clinicians that can refer clients, if needed, to community resources. Some of these services include supported employment, psychiatric rehab programs, housing programs, and case management agencies. These referred services help craft the strongest possible support network, allowing for a full and meaningful life in the community. The Department of Health accepts Medicare, Maryland Medicaid, and other insurance plans or self-payment fees. Call the front desk at 301-609-6700 for a full listing of insurance plans accepted.

If you suspect you or your loved one has a mental health or substance-related illness, early identification and treatment is vital. If you are interested in beginning your treatment process, call 301-609-6700 to schedule an intake assessment appointment by our clinicians. Evaluation for psychiatric services are scheduled following the clinical intake assessment. All referral sources are accepted. You can also stop by the Department of Health (4545 Crain Highway, White Plains) clinic front desk to obtain information regarding treatment and eligibility. To learn more about all the Department of Health services, visit their website at [www.CharlesCountyHealth.org](http://www.CharlesCountyHealth.org), or call 301-609-6900. For all life-threatening emergencies, call 911.

**Dr. Dianna E. Abney** is the health officer for Charles County Department of Health.

**Michael D. Mallinoff** is the county administrator for Charles County Government.

## Despite weather, Bike to Work a success

The Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland would like to thank all sponsors, presenters and participants that helped to make this year's Bike to Work/Wellness Day a success. This year's event was wet and raining but went on anyway on May 18 at the Village Green in Indian Head.

Bike to Work/Wellness Day was hosted by the Town of Indian Head and the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland's Commuter Assistance Program.

This annual event stresses alternative transportation modes available to all citizens, and the focus of the Bike to Work/Wellness Day is to remind citizens that biking is one way to stay fit and healthy. The annual affair also aims to promote wellness and preventative measures, such as healthy eating habits, and the importance of alternative modes of transportation which promote cleaner air and cleaner air initiatives.

Through activities such as Bike to Work/Wellness Day, the Tri-County Council has County adopted best practices that encourage an environmentally friendly transportation alternative that reduces road conges-

- tion and encourages healthier lifestyles.
- A hearty Thank you to the following:
- Bicyclists from the Southern Maryland Region;
  - Maryland State Senator Thomas Mac Middletown who read an Official Citation from his office and another one from the Maryland General Assembly;
  - Charles County Commissioner Debra Davis;
  - Town of Indian Head Mayor Brandon Paulin;
  - Nancy Huggins with MDOT/MTA;
  - World Gym of La Plata;
  - Bike Doctor, Waldorf;
  - Southern Maryland Martial Arts;
  - Chick-fil-A;
  - Charles County Sheriff's Office;
  - Charles County Public Facilities, Parks Division — Indian Head Rail Trail;
  - The Henry E. Lackey AFJRRJROTC;
  - Indian Head Elementary School — 5th Grade;
  - Maryland Department of Transportation;
  - Maryland Transit Administration;
  - Spring Dell Center Inc.;
  - Town of Indian Head; and
  - Volunteers/citizens of Indian Head.
- Thank you all.

**George Clark**, Hughesville

The writer is the transportation specialist for the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland.

## Wilkie should be next VA secretary

This letter was sent to President Donald Trump. A copy was sent to the Maryland Independent.

As the duly elected national commander of American Veterans (AMVETS), representing the interests of more than 20 million veterans and their families, I salute you for your nomination of Mr. Robert Wilkie to become the next secretary of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Mr. Wilkie has proven himself capable and willing to fulfill this extraordinarily important leadership position within your presidential cabinet. We have called upon the U.S. Senate to conduct a thorough and speedy confirmation process once the nomination is official.

When the nomination becomes official, of course, Mr. Wilkie will need to step down as acting secretary, as which he has conducted himself admirably.

It is crucial for all veterans relying on the VA now and in the future that the agency continues moving forward in the right direction. That will, of course, require another strong leader be appointed to serve as acting secretary until the new secretary is confirmed and sworn in.

Mr. President, I urge you to appoint retired Marine Colonel Thomas Bowman, the current VA deputy secretary, to be acting secretary when Mr. Wilkie is formally nominated.

Colonel Bowman is immensely qualified and al-

ready working as Mr. Wilkie's right-hand, so I have complete confidence he can be an outstanding steward of the federal government's second largest agency while the Senate considers your nomination.

Appointing your deputy secretary to acting secretary is also in line with the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998.

The women and men who have put their lives on the line for our freedom depend on you to make the correct decision. Thank you for your leadership and absolute support for veterans.

Yours in service to our nation's veterans.

**Marion Polk**, Alexandria, La.  
The writer is the National Commander for AMVETS.

## Maryland Independent

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Maryland Independent (USPS-331-820) is published twice weekly on Wednesdays and Fridays, except holidays, at 4475 Regency Place, Suite 301, White Plains, MD 20695 by APG Media of Chesapeake, LLC.  
For further details about APG, go to [www.chespub.com](http://www.chespub.com).

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Classified advertising: Monday and Wednesday, 5 p.m.  
Editorial submissions: Monday and Wednesday, 4 p.m.  
Obituaries: Monday and Wednesday, 5 p.m.

Members: MDDC Press Assoc., Inland Press Assoc., LMNA, NNA, & AFCP

Periodicals postage paid at Waldorf, MD 20695 and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to the Maryland Independent, P.O. Box 600, Easton, MD 21601.

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The Maryland Independent welcomes letters to the editor from our readers. Letters must include the writer's name, address and telephone number. The phone number will not be published; it is for verification purposes only. We reserve the right to edit or reject all letters and each submission has a 600-word limit. The opinions expressed in letters and submissions are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Maryland Independent. All rights reserved. Please email letters to [letters@themarylandindependent.com](mailto:letters@themarylandindependent.com) with "Letter to the Editor" in the subject line. Letters may also be mailed, faxed, or dropped off in person at our office (see below for details).

### All other submissions

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