



Since
1856



THREE GENERATIONS

A member of the Austin family has led Trinity Lutheran since 1922.

pp&t AA1

SWEET MISTAKE

A robber makes off with candy, not cash

NEWS A2

'When will they get here?'

With varying response times and fewer volunteers, a paid Harford Co. fire service is being studied

BY RACHEL SEAWELL
rseawell@theaegis.com

For generations, Harford County has relied on its volunteer fire companies to deal with emergency situations, but in recent years, especially in areas where the majority of working age people commute out of the county to work, the foundations of the all-volunteer system have been shaken.

With average response times for volunteers ranging from 4:42 in Havre de Grace to 9:18 in Jarrettsville, there is talk of the system going to a partially paid model, comparable to the paid-volunteer ambulance service that

has come into being in recent years. But that talk often stops as soon as the multi-million dollar price tag is mentioned.

The epicenter of this seismic shift in fire service is the territory served by the Abingdon Volunteer Fire Company. The territory includes some of the most densely populated parts of the county — southern Bel Air into Edgewood — which, not coincidentally, are home to a large commuter population. The large population center generates a lot of emergency service calls, but the reality of a commuter-oriented community means a lot of potential fire

company members are out of the county when there are calls for service. And that doesn't include those who are disconnected from the community where they live, often to the point they don't realize they aren't protected by a paid fire service.

In response to Abingdon — generally among the three busiest of the county's dozen volunteer fire companies — having relatively slow on-scene times and increasingly missing fire calls altogether, neighboring fire companies have lately been alerted to respond alongside the Abingdon company



NICOLE MUNCHEL | AEGIS STAFF

Between June 2007 and June 2008, the fire service responded to 16,855 calls to protect the county's 244,130 citizens, with an average response time of 7 minutes and 15 seconds.

Please see **RESPONSE, A9**

Voters get say on slots

Ballot question set

BY AMANDA BRENNER
abrenner@theaegis.com

With counting down the days to the presidential election occupying much of the political discourse, there's another election issue of much local import — the slot machine question.

Should Maryland voters approve slots? That question is yet to be answered, but those who support slot machines for Maryland say it will bring much-needed cash to the state's horse racing industry. And horse racing is an important component of Harford County's farming industry.

The county's legislators say Harford's voters will say no to slot machines.

The ballot question, a proposed amendment to the Maryland Constitution, which has already survived a court challenge: "Authorizes the State to issue up to five video lottery licenses for the primary purpose of raising revenue for education of children in public schools, prekindergarten through grade 12, public school construction and improvements, and construction of capital projects at community colleges and higher education institu-

Please see **SLOTS, A12**



MATT BUTTON | AEGIS STAFF

A House of Delegates Bill passed in the 2008 legislative session allows for additional hunting on private land in Harford County on the first Sunday of November and the first Sunday of the two-week deer firearm season. Traditionally, Sunday had been an off limits day for hunters. Please see story, Page A17.

Harford says funds are safe

County has \$400 million

BY ALLAN VOUGHT
avought@theaegis.com

Meltdown. Catastrophe. Bailout. Takeover. Recession.

They're all words that have come to characterize the nation's economy the past few weeks amidst the collapse of several major Wall Street investment banks and the further deterioration of the housing, mortgage and credit markets.

But much closer to Main Street, an institution like Harford County government is not exactly a small fish when it comes to handling hundreds of

millions of dollars each year collected from taxes or the sale of bonds to finance construction projects, much of which in turn has to be invested to hedge against inflation until the money needs to be spent.

The county government has more than \$400 million in a variety of mostly short-term investments. The officials in charge of handling those funds and placing them in the marketplace say none of the investments is risky, even in such turbulent times, and they are on track to meet projected earnings for the

Please see **MONEY, A3**

Zoning proposal to face changes

BY AMANDA BRENNER
abrenner@theaegis.com

Though the public hearings have come to an end, the proposed changes to Harford County's zoning code are still a long way from passing.

Introduced to the Harford County Council Aug. 19, the bill proposing

a new zoning code after 26 years has been picked apart by critics and is awaiting council input.

Council members have until Oct. 7 to make amendments to the bill and some are expecting a load of changes.

Councilman Dion

Guthrie, a Democrat representing Joppatowne and Edgewood District A, said he's been talking to other members of the council and all have alluded to making some changes.

"All of them are going to have a number of amendments and when you

add them all up, it may be from 50 to 100 of them," he said, noting that after review, some amendments may be repeated by other council members.

Guthrie said whether there's more or less than 50, there are "lots of problems with split zoning, transfer

of development rights and some of the things that go on at DAC hearings."

With at least one police representative and one fire and ambulance association representative on the Development Advisory Committee, or DAC, Please see **ZONING, A18**

Parents tell school leaders

Patterson Mill complaints arise

BY RACHEL KONOPACKI
rkonopacki@theaegis.com

Parents are raising concerns to senior staff of the Harford County Public School System regarding the newest school in the county — Patterson Mill Middle/High School.

The school opened at the beginning of the 2007-08 school year; it is a little more than a year old, but some parents say there are lingering construction issues.

The school has sixth through the 11th grades; 12th grade will be added in the 2009-10 school year.

Senior school staff met Wednesday with some parents at headquarters in Bel Air, where the parents outlined their concerns about the athletic fields, fencing around the baseball diamond and sidewalks.

The meeting lasted longer than expected, so the discussion will be continued Oct. 2, also at school headquarters, beginning at noon.

"Our belief is that in certain instances improvements need to be made over the finished product that is there today,"

Please see **SCHOOL, A7**



NICOLE MUNCHEL | AEGIS STAFF

Parents are concerned about what they say are some problems with Harford County's newest school — Patterson Mill Middle/High School, and are taking them Harford County Public Schools senior staff.

FRIDAY

©2008 | 152ND YEAR | NO. 78



HARFORD COUNTY'S #1 NEWS SOURCE

Classified B1
Death notices A8
Editorial A10
Happenings AA3
Open Forum A10
Religion AA4
Sports A13-15



SPORTS

Local matchups begin

High school field hockey teams begin play in their divisions.

A13

COMING WEDNESDAY

HOMEcomings CELEBRATIONS

It's homecoming time of year again, but what does that mean for local high school kids?

Man charged in roommate assault

BY AMANDA BRENNER
abrenner@theaegis.com

A man from Texas who had been sharing a room at the Best Western Inn in Edgewood was charged with first-degree assault last week after he allegedly tried to start a fight with his roommate.

John Ryan Taylor, 29, of the 500 block of Loop Drive in Seguin, Texas, has shared a room at the hotel at 1709 Edgewood Road in Edgewood with Justin

Curtis Lytle for nearly a month, according to the Harford County Sheriff's Office. On Oct. 29, deputies responded to the hotel in reference to an assault with a deadly weapon.

Taylor had supposedly been upset and under the influence of alcohol the night of the assault, according to charging documents, and asked Lytle if he was "a joke" and then jumped on him while Lytle lay in his bed.

Taylor allegedly then put his elbow up to his roommate's throat, pulled out a pocket knife and pointed it at him. He then allegedly said to Lytle, "I want to fight for your life," according to the charging documents.

After a struggle between the two men, Lytle was able to push Taylor off him and ran to the room of a coworker, who had also been staying at the same hotel.

Lytle ended up with a small cut from the knife on his right knee, according to charging documents, and Taylor was eventually transported to Upper Chesapeake Medical Center for treatment.

Both men were allegedly intoxicated; Taylor was arrested and charged last week with first-degree assault. He was taken to Harford County Detention Center and released on his own recognizance Oct. 30.



ABINGDON CONDO FOR SALE
The Pointe
\$165,000

Beautifully maintained 3 bdrm / 2 bath condo on third level of secured-entry building. Move-in condition with vaulted ceilings in LR/DR, eat-in kitchen with plenty of space, neutral colors throughout. Minutes from major highways and shopping. Listed below market value for quick sale. Call Cheryl Lightner, Prudential Carruthers REALTORS® 410-879-3880, cell: 410-404-3592.

www.cheryl.lightner.pcragent.com



Fallston woman beaten

BY AMANDA BRENNER
abrenner@theaegis.com

A Fallston man was charged recently with allegedly beating his girlfriend after she came home too late.

Robert Gary Stevenson, 41, of the 2400 block of Harford Road, was arrested when a neighbor called police Oct. 29 and told them Stevenson had assaulted his live-in girlfriend, Jeane Lynn Kross, 47.

When police arrived, Kross had several bumps on her head and body, according to charging documents, along with a fresh black eye and several scrapes and scratches to her body.

Stevenson allegedly hit Kross several times in the head and body with a wooden cane because he was upset she came home late. Charging documents state Stevenson also destroyed the inside of the house.

Stevenson, who police said was very intoxicated, was charged with first- and second-degree assault. Temporary court orders require him not to abuse or contact Kross or enter the residence. Stevenson is being held without bail at the Harford County Detention Center.

Joppa home damaged

BY AMANDA BRENNER
abrenner@theaegis.com

A Joppa home caught fire Tuesday when an electric heating pad overheated.

Nearly 40 firefighters, including members of Joppa Magnolia, Aberdeen Proving Ground, Kingsville and White Marsh responded.

The fire in the home of James Soloman in the 400 block of Dembytown Road was reported around 7:35 p.m. Tuesday.

Upon investigation, firefighters found the preliminary cause was accidental and was the result of an electric heating pad that had overheated in the bedroom.

It took firefighters 10 minutes to control the single alarm blaze.

Damage to the house was estimated at \$300, damage to the contents was estimated at \$200, Howard F. Ewing, deputy state fire marshal, said.

HURRY IN FOR VETERAN'S DAY VALUES

6 DAYS ONLY 11/6-11/11



YOUR CHOICE \$129 basic installation on*

- Storm Door
- Interior Door
- Over-the-Range Microwave
- Exterior/Interior Lighting
- Dishwasher (\$297 and higher)
- Garage Door Opener
- Ceiling Fan

Offer for labor only. Limited to re-connecting fixtures to existing wiring and plumbing and excludes any structural modifications. Excludes Electrolux. Additional charges and other limitations may apply. Offer valid 11/6/2008 - 11/26/2008. See store for details.

10% off MAJOR APPLIANCES



Receive 10% off in-stock and Special Order major appliances priced \$397 or more (before taxes). Offer valid 11/5/2008 - 11/13/2008. Discount taken at register. Not valid on previous sales, installation and delivery fees, extended protection plans or select Fisher & Paykel® or Electrolux items. See store for details.

ASK FOR **Zero** PAYMENTS+INTEREST **FOR 12 MONTHS***

Offer valid 11/6/08 - 11/10/08

if paid in full within 12 months on any purchase of \$299 or more made on your Lowe's Consumer Credit Card 11/6/08 - 11/10/08. See below for details.

15% off IN-STOCK PERGO LAMINATE FLOORING

Offer valid 11/5/2008 - 11/16/2008. Discount taken at register. See store for details.

\$5 mail-in rebate ON GALLON VALSPAR SIGNATURE COLORS PAINT

Offer valid 11/6/2008 - 11/11/2008. Via mail-in rebate. See store for details.

SPECIAL VALUE! now \$44.98 was \$49.98

A. 6' Folding Table #124784

B. Folding Chair #237874

SPECIAL VALUE! now \$8.98 was \$12.98

100-Count Clear Mini Christmas Lights #165137

SPECIAL VALUE! now \$4.98 was \$7.58

3-Pack 60-Watt Equivalent CFL Light Bulbs #156922

SPECIAL VALUE! now \$7.95 was \$9.37

Energizer 4-Pack AA or AAA Batteries #173385;215876

Great for digital cameras

OFFENBACHER'S
www.offenbachers.com

End Of Season Sale
Patio and Floor Model Clearance
Prices Drastically Reduced
Up to 70% Savings off List

PATIO
Fireplace
Recreation
Spas • Grills

Sterling Valley, Columbia, Rockville
410 666 2270 443 276 0331 301 881 8565

Store Hours: Monday-Saturday 10am-9pm, Sunday 11am-5pm

look for hundreds of **yellow clearance tags** throughout the store!

America Supports You, Our Military Men and Women

10% off MILITARY PERSONNEL AND IMMEDIATE FAMILIES

Offer available for all active, reserve, honorably discharged, and retired military personnel and their immediate families. Must show valid military ID or other proof of service. Offer is good for the purchase of any in-stock or Special Order merchandise only up to \$5000 (Maximum discount \$500). Offer is not redeemable for cash and is nontransferable. Not valid on sales via Lowes.com, previous sales, purchase of services or gift cards. This discount is valid in the U.S. only. Offer good from 11/6/2008 - 11/11/2008.

For the Lowe's nearest you, call 1-800-993-4416 or visit us online at Lowes.com

Prices may vary after 11/11/2008 if there are market variations. *WAS" prices in this advertisement were in effect on 10/30/08 and may vary based on Lowe's Everyday Low Price policy. See store for details regarding product warranties. We reserve the right to limit quantities. *Applies to single receipt, in-store purchases of \$299 or more made 11/6/08 through 11/10/08 on a Lowe's Consumer Credit Card Account. No monthly payments will be required and no finance charges will be assessed on this promotional purchase if you pay the following in full within 12 months: (1) the promotional purchase amount, and (2) any related optional credit insurance/debt cancellation charges. If you do not, finance charges will be assessed on the promotional purchase amount from the date of the purchase and monthly payments will be required. Standard account terms apply to non-promotional purchases. APR is 21.99%. Min. finance charge is \$1.00. Offer must be requested at time of purchase. Offer is subject to credit approval. Excludes Lowe's Business Credit Accounts, Lowe's Project Card Accounts, Lowe's Visa Accounts and all Lowe's Canada credit products. *Installation offer limited to basic installation and requires products be purchased from Lowe's for the installation category chosen. Excludes cost of products to be installed and those related to necessary permits. Extra charges apply to installation of lighting and/or ceiling fans for heights over 10 feet. Not valid on purchases made prior to 10/19/08. An in-home measurement fee (refundable upon product purchase) may be required. Offer may not be available in all markets and price subject to change without notice. See store for additional details. While Lowe's strives to be accurate, unintentional errors may occur. We reserve the right to correct any error. Product and promotions apply to US locations only. © 2008 by Lowe's®. All rights reserved. Lowe's and the gable design are registered trademarks of LF, LLC. (081191) 001/081191/003,031,036,045,054,082,083,086,088,090,091,094,095,098,104,106,115,125,136,137