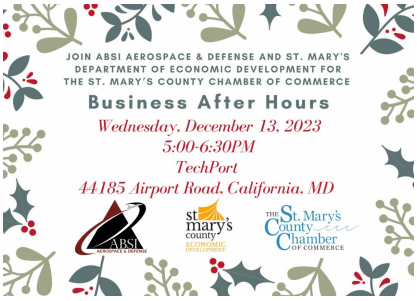
CHAMBER NEWS & UPDATES

Wishing you and yours a Happy Holidays!

We have lots of new events planned for 2024. Be on the lookout for special updates.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- December 12 -Women's Lunch – Holiday
- December 13 -Business After Hours - ABSI Aerospace & Defense & DED
- January 24 - Business After Hours – Escape Rooms Southern Maryland
- February 10 - Spirits of Maryland
- February 12 - Zoom with State Elected Official
- February 28 - Business After Hours – Chesapeake Staging Interiors, LLC
- February 29 -State of the Schools Luncheon
- February 29 - Ride the Chamber Bus to the Md Legislative in Annapolis
- March 2 - National Civics Bee Live
- March 8 - Chamber 50th Anniversary



Business After Hours: ABSI Aerospace, Defense, & DED

December 13
5 - 6:30 PM

St. Mary's Airport
TechPort Building
44185 Airport Road
California, MD 20619

Celebrate the holiday season with old friends and new!
Register here

Portal now open for National Civics Bee for Middle School Youth essays.

The St. Mary's County Chamber of Commerce is partnering with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation to host a first-of- its-kind civics competition that encourages young Americans to engage in civics and contribute to their communities.

Being a sponsor of the Bee allows your business to support an exciting opportunity for your customers, and to demonstrate your commitment to civic engagement in our community.

The Bee gives students an opportunity to share their thoughts, ideas and voices about our community. All middle school age youth are invited. The deadline for submission is January 8, 2024.

Middle school students from across our region are invited to take part in the first-round civics essay competition. A cross-section of community leaders (including government officials, business leaders and educators) will review each of the 500-word essay submissions. The top 20 students will be selected to move on to the final round of competition: a live quiz event to test their civics knowledge. The finalists and top winners will receive various prizes, including $500 cash for the first-place student. The top 3 winners will then have a chance to compete at the State level.

We are looking for local businesses to support the National Civics Bee® event in St. Mary's County or to sponsor tablets and/or additional prizes for our Finalists and Winners.

Essay submissions are open now on our website and will be accepted through January 8, 2024. The Live Bee will take place on March 2, 20

More info about the Bee here or call 301-737-3001 to learn more.Sponsor registration here.

Women's Lunch Series

Tuesday, December 12, 2023
12:00 PM

Celebrate the holiday season and our first year resuming the Women's Lunch series!

Clean out those closets and bring clean clothes in bags to donate to the Women's Club of St. Mary's clothing drive. All funds support local charities.

Light Lunch provided. Limited Availability.
Must pre-register here.

Calling all Chamber Non-profits NOW!

Submit your games for the Kentucky Derby Fundraiser

Chamber non-profits: Would you like to be involved in our 1st annual Kentucky Derby fundraiser May 4, 2024? We are looking for non-profits to run one game of chance at our event. If your charity is interested in raising money, running one game of chance, and having fun - this is for you. We're looking for one game from each charity.

We are now accepting charities. Your charity provides everything needed to run the game and all personnel entering to run game must purchase a $40 entry ticket to join in on the fun. Only 1 game per charity and no like games from other charities to compete.

Send your game proposal and specifics, along with the size requirements to info@smcchamber.com.

First come, first serve!!

Day of Event: May 4, 2024

Calling all Chamber Members NOW!

Join the Derby and support your favorite non-profit!

Chamber members: Looking for a fun filled competition with other chamber members while supporting your favorite non-profit? Our 1st Annual Kentucky Derby event is for you. For $250, you can join in competition, purchase keychains ($1 each), and start selling our memorable chamber 50th Anniversary keychains/bottle openers. You set the price you would like to sell them at to raise money for your charity. Keychain/bottle openers sold in packs of 50.

To make it fun, the company that raises the most money for their charity will be able to choose the top horse at our Derby party. Competition results announced at every BAH starting in January 2024.

Day of event tickets: $40 per person.
Prizes for best dressed, best hat, best jockey outfit!

Day of Event: May 4, 2024

Sponsorships and keychains here. Tickets here.

Are you considering hosting a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for your business?

The Chamber is here to help you

Interested in Joining the Chamber?

By joining the Chamber, you can boost your business's visibility and gain access to exclusive perks such as promotion for your business or organization, access to our events, networking, and educational series, opportunity to weigh in on legislative bills, use of our conference room as meeting space, and more!

For more information click here.

make it happen! These ceremonies are perfect for celebrating a special anniversary, launching a new product or service, or expanding your business. We will advertise the event, invite county government officials, and provide the giant scissors and ribbon. Get in touch with us to discuss scheduling for your event.

301-737-3001 or **info@smcchamber.com**

Pay It Forward Partnership with the Chamber

The "Pay It Forward Partnership" initiative simplifies offers with a one-time annual payment, making it easier to budget and support promotional benefits for the Chamber's regular annual events, and it includes annual dues. You can choose which events you would like to sponsor and have your name associated with, and, of course, you always have the option to sponsor any event you prefer.

- **Platinum Partner** $10,000 Annual Investment
- **Gold Partner** $7,500 Annual Investment
- **Silver Partner** $5,000 Annual Investment
- **Bronze Partner** $2,500 Annual Investment

Call or visit the Chamber website for more info.

SAVE THE DATES!

Now Announcing Croatia, the Pearl of the Adriatic Trip with the Chamber

Discover the stunning beauty of Croatia, the Pearl of the Adriatic, with Ci Destinations. Experience 7 nights at a luxurious 4-star hotel, scenic tours, and more on October 16, 2024. **Book your trip before March 31, 2024, and enjoy this incredible offer for only $3649**. For more

information, don't hesitate to contact the Chamber at 301-737-3001. Take advantage of this fantastic opportunity!

Airfare included! Application and more info here.

MEMBER NEWS

Maryland SBDC December 2023 Training

Overcoming Your Biggest Cybersecurity Risk-Empowering Your Workforce As Your First Line Defense
Alieu Kamara, AmaraTech Solutions
Dec 6 | 10:30-11:30am
Register here

The Do's and Do Not's of Digital Advertising
Pieter Bickford, HighRock
Dec 6 |1:00-2:00pm
Register here

Business Interruption, Planning & Recovery-Getting Ready For 2024
Matt Johnston, Johnston Law Group
Dec 7 | 10:00-11:15am
Register here

How To Build A Winning Marketing Strategy To Lead You Into 2024
Antonio Guerrero, Systematic Business Marketing
Dec 7 | 1:00-2:15pm
Register here

Home-Based Business...Why Should You Do It?
Richard Bock, FranNet
Dec 11 | 1:00-2:00pm
Register here

SEO Demystified
Dave Barnhart, Manning Media and *Treavor Loeschen,* AdCellerant, Inc.
Dec 12 | 1:00-2:00pm
Register here

Pay Yourself From Day One of 2024
Bev Stitely, Saunders Tax & Accounting
Dec 13 | 1:00-2:15pm
Register here

Open Learning Online Library
Open Continuously | 24/7
Register here

Maryland Department of Commerce Upcoming Events

Ready, Set, GROW! Procurement Connections Workshop
Dec 8. 2023

Learn how to participate in procurement programs for small, minority, women, and veteran-owned businesses, and identify agencies that purchase your products. Stay for the networking session to meet buyers. Register at the following link: https://whova.com/portal/registration/iembe_202310/

Maryland's Best Expo

Southern Maryland Job Source Upcoming Workshops

Southern Maryland Job Source is organizing workshops for job seekers in December. The Schedule includes:

- Dec 5, 10-11am: Career Planning Info Session
- Dec 6, 10-11am: Workforce Readiness Workshop
- Dec 7, 10-11am: Job Club
- Dec 13, 10-11am: Workforce Readiness

Jan 9

The department's platform connects farmers, small business owners, and buyers based in Maryland. They bring together produce, dairy, meats, seafood, and agritourism producers with buyers of all sizes. The expo will showcase booths from our exhibitors, sponsors, and the Maryland Department of Agriculture. New this year - buyers can host 1:1 meetings for those interested in working with larger chain stores. Sign-ups for this feature will be available in the app closer to the event. Register at the following link: https://whova.com/portal/registration/iembe_202310/

Free VIP pass to AI Sales Summit. Virtual event Dec 6-7

Revolutionize customer engagement and revenue with AI insights and automation.
See agenda and speakers. Register today.

Blue Catfish Recipe

October was National Seafood Month. Governor Wes Moore and Secretary of Agriculture Kevin Atticks created a 5-minute cooking video promoting Blue Catfish.
Watch here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LMVjnWcem04.

Looking for a Grant?

There are various ways to discover small business grant opportunities, ranging from state and federal agencies to private companies. Use these strategies from the U.S. Chamber to find the best options for your business.

Workshop
- Dec 19, 10-11am: Career Planning Info Session
- Dec 20, 10-11am: Workforce Readiness Workshop
- Dec 21, 10-11am: Job Club
- Dec 27, 10-11am: Workforce Readiness Workshop

These workshops are in-person and provide job seekers with free career training, job search strategies, interview techniques, and networking opportunities. For more information click here.

Vendor Networking Event for Information Technology & Professional Services

December 7, 2023
9-10am
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032

Networking event for IT and Professional Services vendors to meet state representatives, prime contractors, partners, and subcontractors in person.

To register click here.

Agenda:
- 9:00 am - Check-in and Early Networking
- 9:30 am - Welcome & Introductions
- 10:00 am - Open Networking

Questions?

Contact Xavier Frink at xavier.frink@maryland.gov.

TPP Upcoming Events

Dec 7, 2023
8:30-9:30am

TPP and the Patuxent River Council of the Navy League of the United States present "Before the Base - Cedar Point Before the Patuxent River Naval Air Station".

Location: USMSM, Building 2, Center Hall.

Register here.

Dec 13, 2023
5-7pm

The TPP/ANA Panel will discuss "Project Eagle: The Marine Aviation Roadmap to 2040". Panelists include BGen "Beast" Lightfoot, Col "MOG" Marvel, Col "Huk" Joyce, BGen "Angus" Walsh, and Ms. Erin Lesko from NAVAIR PEO(A).

Holidays at the St. Mary's County Museums

Prepare for a festive holiday season as every museum organizes exciting events for everyone to enjoy. For more information, click here.

Holidays at Piney Point Lighthouse
Nov 26-Jan 1
10am-5pm

Celebrate the holidays at Piney Point Lighthouse. Enjoy family activities, refreshments, and a unique Christmas setting inside the museum and Keeper's Quarters. Free admission for all visitors.

Kids Countdown to Noon at Piney Point: A New Year's Eve Family Event
Dec 31
10am-1pm

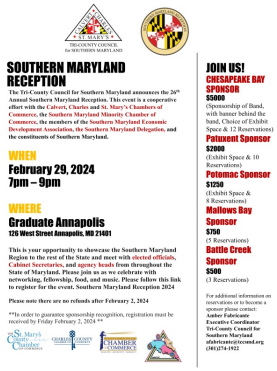
Celebrate New Year's Eve at Piney Point with your family! Enjoy a special party just for kids with a countdown to noon, crafts, a sock skate, snacks, and a

[Register here](#).

colorful ice "ball drop"! Your ticket also includes full admission to the museum, lighthouse, and historic park.

St. Clements Island Museum Christmas & Doll Exhibit
Dec 1-Jan 1
10am-5pm

Enjoy a festive holiday display featuring antique dolls, classic trains, and vintage toys. Write a letter to Santa, browse holiday books, and operate model trains. . For more information, call 301-769-2222.



Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland is Hosting the 2024 Southern Maryland Reception Feb 29, 2024!

The 2024 Southern Maryland Reception will take place on February 29, 2024, at The Graduate (Previously known as The Hotel Annapolis and the Loews Hotel). This event provides a great opportunity to experience the warm hospitality of Southern Maryland, with delicious food, networking opportunities, and live music. For tickets and more information, email afabricante@tccsmd.org.

Ride the Chamber Bus!

Why drive to Annapolis when you can ride! Register now to ride the St. Mary's Chamber bus! Tickets here. Sponsorship for the bus opportunities here.

St Mary's Health $100 Grocery Drawing!

St. Mary's Health is running a campaign for its new Health & Wellness Portal. New users who complete the Social Wellness Assessment will be entered into weekly drawings for a $100 Weis gift card. The portal connects users to free or low-cost community services for better healthcare, mental health, and more.

SMRLA Is Seeking New Board Memebers!

Are you fond of public libraries? The Southern Maryland Regional Library Association (SMRLA) is currently looking for new members to join its board of directors. SMRLA serves as a regional hub for the public libraries of Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's counties and is in search of a new board member who resides in St. Mary's County. If you are interested, please let SMRLA know. Visit https://smrla.org/about-us/governance/ for full details.

NEWS RELEASE

Maryland DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Governor Moore Announces $27 Million in Device Investment to Improve Internet Access for Underserved Households Across Maryland

Maryland Governor Wes Moore announced the distribution of over 133,000 laptops worth $27.2 million to underserved households in Maryland. The Office of Statewide Broadband's Connected Devices Program provided the laptops to 27 local governments. This initiative aims to ensure that Marylanders can access reliable, high-speed internet and the technology needed to apply for jobs, complete schoolwork, and access vital community resources. The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development awarded grants to all 27 jurisdictions that used, and the distribution of

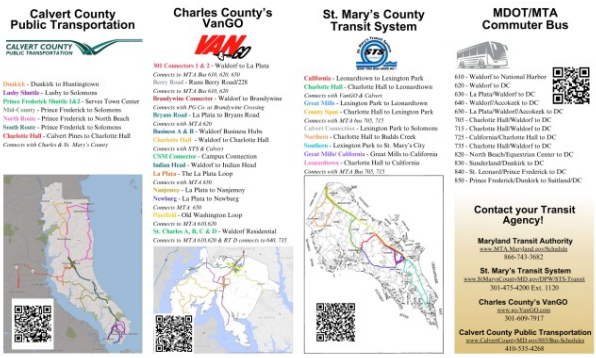
The Southern Maryland Ride Guide Receives New Brochure Makes Riding Public Transportation Easier for Residents

The Southern Maryland Ride Guide has been updated to make it easier for residents to use public transportation. The brochure includes rider maps, QR codes, and information on transportation resources for people who use wheelchairs, persons with developmental disabilities, seniors, and employment-related activities. The Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland's Wheels to Wellness Program helps patients get to non-emergency medical appointments. The Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund generously funds the program, but the need for program support continues to grow. You can find the new Southern Maryland Ride Guide on the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland's website www.tccsmd.org/transportation.

devices was made possible through partnerships with HP, Inc. and Daly Computers. The University of Maryland's TechExtension also provides free tech support to any Marylander needing assistance through its digital navigator program.

To view the full list of local governments and community partners that received devices, visit https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Documents/PressReleases/2023-OSB-Device-Awards.pdf.

For more information on the Office of Statewide Broadband, visit https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Broadband/Pages/default.aspx.



Leonardtown Seeking Developer and Investor Interest For Food Hall "The IceHouse" At The Wharf

Leonardtown is seeking developers' letters of interest for a food hall on a prime waterfront parcel referred to as The IceHouse. The location will transform into a culinary destination with authentic dining options, craft beverages, gathering spots, and family-friendly amenities. For a Statement of Interest form, contact Town Hall or visit www.Leonardtown.somd.com. The deadline is January 8th, 2024. The Commissioners of Leonardtown reserve the right to reject proposals and accept those deemed in the town's best interest.

Lexington Park Facade and Streetscape Improvement Program Update

The intent of the *Lexington Park Façade and Streetscape Improvement Program* is to create a positive visual impact, stimulate private investment, improve actual and perceived safety, and complement public community revitalization efforts in the historic commercial core of Lexington Park, delineated in the Lexington Park Master Plan as the "Downtown" and "Great Mills Corridor." The *Lexington Park Façade and Streetscape Improvement Program* will reimburse a portion of the expenses incurred by commercial property and/or business owners who complete projects that rehabilitate their buildings, storefronts, and/or the streetscapes located adjacent to their buildings and businesses. The funding for this program is provided to the County through a Community Legacy grant from Maryland's Department of Housing and Community Development.

For more information click here.

Property Tax Challange Information Update

St. Mary's County seeks to stimulate and incentivize investment in commercial real property. The Property Tax Challenge supports renovations, rehabilitation, and upgrades of commercial real property. Commercial property owners in challenged areas who invest at least 10% of the property's assessed value at a minimum of $25,000 are eligible for this program. Those who qualify will not see an increase in their County property taxes for either a seven- or ten-year period.

For more information click here.

LEONARDTOWN arts & entertainment DISTRICT

There's always something going on in Leonardtown!

Visit here to learn more.

Thank you to our Pay It Forward Partners!

GOLD

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BRONZE

Thank you to our Corporate and Event Sponsors!

St. Mary's County Chamber of Commerce
22738 Maple Rd., Suite 104
Lexington Park, MD 20653
301-737-3001

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