

**SMAC wrestlers hit the mat to start new season**

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**CSM welcomes 153 Promise Scholarship students to campus**

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# Maryland Independent

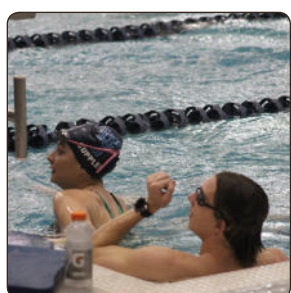
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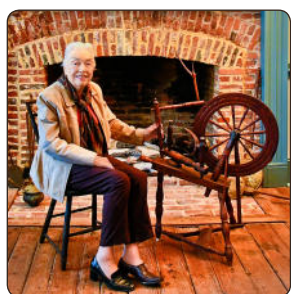
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Lily Mellott, surrounded by her troupe of young helpers named Lily's Loves, stop for a water break along the 2.4 mile course of the 17th annual Walk to End Homelessness last month. Mellott was praised for providing the largest and youngest individual donation of over \$2,100 for the event. The youngsters helping Mellott are schoolmates from T.C. Martin Elementary School, members of her soccer team and cousins.

PHOTO BY ADDISON LIKINS

## Third-grader raises large donation for homeless

'I just want homeless people to have a home,' 9-year-old says

By ADDISON LIKINS  
Special to the Maryland Independent

Unlike many children her age, for her ninth birthday Charles County native Lily Mellott wanted to do

something for the homeless. She gathered the largest individual walk donation ever for the 17th annual Lifestyles of Maryland Inc.'s Walk to End Homelessness last month, according to Sandy Washington, executive director of Lifestyles.

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## Riverkeeper: discharges problematic

Group says issues go back 5 years

By LINDSAY RENNER-WOOD  
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The alleged actions that may lead a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit organization to sue the county's department of public works are not new items of concern, a representative of the organization said in a recent interview.

Last month, the Maryland Independent reported on the Potomac Riverkeeper Network's announcement that it intends to sue the Charles County Board of Public Works in federal court, saying the Mattawoman Wastewater Treatment Plant is not operating in compliance with the federal Clean Water Act.

A letter to Board of Public Works director William Shreve alleges that the county's public works board has failed to comply with the stipulations outlined in

its pollution discharge system permit. Additionally, the letter says, the plant has been "discharging wastewater from the county's sewers into Mattawoman Creek without a permit."

In a press release announcing the intention to sue, riverkeeper Dean Naujoks said the plant's alleged illegal discharges have been ongoing for at least five years. In a follow-up interview, Naujoks elaborated on the problems the pollution can create for both the environment and the community.

"They've had some pretty big sewage spills," Naujoks said. "This isn't the first time we've responded to them. We took a tour of the plant three years ago, and they were making sup-

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## Commissioners get update on broadband

Consulting firm highlights rural issues; intention letter being drafted to SMECO

By JOHNATHON CLINKSCALES  
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Consultants from CTC Technology and Energy briefed commissioners Tuesday on the status of their work as it pertains to developing the county's broadband strategic plan, having discovered through research that a substantial portion of rural areas do not have access to broadband and that 5G wireless will not address this problem.

During her presentation, Joanne Hovis, president of CTC, a Kensington firm that specializes in networking projects for public sector and nonprofit clients, gave an update on efforts to identify and understand gaps in broadband service; recommended

technical approaches to providing broadband service and quantified the cost of each; and talked about strategies to maximize the use of federal and state funding.

Hovis, who was accompanied by information technology chief Evelyn Jacobson and deputy county administrator Debra Hall, said economics do not favor rural development. Even though 5G wireless technology is capable of delivering broadband speeds, it requires close proximity to users and deployment is likely only in densely populated areas, at least in near term, according to the presentation.

"The work that we were commissioned to do by the county was to understand where the

county is currently with regards to broadband," Hovis said. "Now that we know where the gaps are, what is it going to take to fill those gaps under a range of different technical scenarios."

The methodology that CTC used for determining unserved areas, according to Hovis, entailed analyzing service availability data provided by the county to include GIS maps, survey results, citizen-reported service gaps and infrastructure analysis, as well as conducting extensive desk and field surveys which included inspecting more than 200 miles of roadway in representative portions of Charles County.

"For the most part, there's almost no county in the United States that has ubiquitous broadband," said Hovis. "Infrastructure in low-density areas is challenging. At its core, we're talking

about building stuff in roads, on towers, on poles, crossing highways, crossing train tracks [and] crossing rivers. Like all kinds of infrastructure, it is costly and difficult to do."

In addition, although the federal government puts a lot of money into broadband technology, it's going mostly to private-sector companies that are capable of producing bigger profits. The core issue in Charles County, like everywhere else throughout the country, is that "low-density areas are struggling with broadband service issues," Hovis said.

"We can't change that economic picture," she said. "This is why we have federal support mechanisms."

Fortunately, Hovis said

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## Reclaimed water focus of Md. Extension workshops

Sessions held in Bel Alton this week for farmers

By JOHNATHON CLINKSCALES  
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Farmers and local officials learned about issues associated with water quality research, new water filtration and treatment technologies, as well as updates on re-

claimed water regulations for Maryland agriculture, during a series of free half-day workshops held Wednesday at the historic Bel Alton High School.

The workshops, hosted by the University of Maryland Extension Charles

County Office in partnership with CONSERVE, were themed "The Water Reuse for Agriculture: What Growers Need to Know," which focused on

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STAFF PHOTO BY JOHNATHON CLINKSCALES

Farmers and officials participate in a discussion with an expert panel Wednesday following a series of half-day workshops on water reuse for agriculture held at the historic Bel Alton High School. The event was hosted by the University of Maryland Extension Charles County Office in partnership with CONSERVE.

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