

# Cut Above

Brady hasn't allowed game to use him

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VOL. 216 NO. 265

LOCAL

## Washington College lecture Feb. 16

Michael McDonnell, an associate professor of history at the University of Sydney in Australia, will present "Mastering Empires: The Anishinaabeg of the Great Lakes and the Making of America" at 4:30 in Litrenta Lecture Hall.

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WEATHER



Mostly Cloudy

High 66 Low 56

Cloudy skies with a chance of showers

Full Weather Page A6

LOCAL

## Accepting applications for grants

Queen Anne's County Arts Council is accepting applications for 2017-18 Arts in Education and Community Arts Development grants.

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# Telemedicine expands on Shore

By JOSH BOLLINGER  
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**EASTON** — Imagine being a patient who lives on the Mid-Shore and doesn't have to drive to Baltimore to see their palliative care or psychiatry medical specialist.

That will soon be an option for patients in the Mid-Shore's five-county region.

The University of Maryland Shore Regional Health is expanding its telehealth services in Kent and Queen Anne's counties, a measure to try and close service gaps in a rural area like the Mid-Shore.

The medical system received a \$75,000 grant from the Maryland Health Care Commission for the project, which is specifically designed to expand access to services and experts in palliative care and psychiatry

for patients in Queen Anne's and Kent counties, two counties where telehealth services in those areas are lacking.

"The MDCC grant enables UM Shore Regional Health to apply state-of-the-art telehealth technology to close difficult gaps in rural health-care," said Dr. William Huffer, chief medical officer and senior vice president of medical affairs for Shore Regional Health.

Telehealth allows patients to see doctors using telecommunications and related technologies, like video conferencing and the use of remote examination tools. It aims to reduce hospital emergency department visits and inpatient admissions and readmissions, while

See **HEALTH**  
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PHOTO BY DANIEL DIVILIO

University of Maryland Shore Regional Health officials are working to bring expanded telemedicine services to the Shore Medical Center at Chestertown, pictured above. They're also working to expand services in Queen Anne's County.



PHOTO BY DENAE SPIERING

On Thursday, Feb. 2, in a large red barn on Dave Tribbett Jr.'s, Twin Maple Farm in Ridgely, MidAtlantic Organic Resource Company began processing chicken litter into organic compost. In the beginning stages, all chicken litter will come directly from this farm which produces 1,200 tons of poultry litter a year.

# Organic company plans to produce compost from chicken litter

By DENAE SPIERING  
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**RIDGELY** — The sound of organic compost being made from chicken litter is music to many ears on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and across the Delmarva Peninsula.

Due to high phosphorus levels, the use of chicken litter (manure) on fields has long been a problem for local farmers, environmentalists and politicians. On Thursday, Feb. 2, in a large red barn on the Twin Maple Farm in

Ridgely, one dedicated group of individuals set out to change that.

The newly established MidAtlantic Organic Resource Company, is using chicken litter to create a 100 percent organic, non-leachable compost.

Dave Tribbett Jr., Joe Beacher, Robert Winn, Joey Baxter, and Tim Humphries make up the dynamic team of farmers, business men and innovators who are setting out to address not only the issue of chicken litter but also any compostable waste in the area.

"As a farmer, I wanted to make a bet-

ter fertilizer that was environmentally friendly and economically better for our fields," Tribbett said. "Why would I go out there and spread 3 tons of chicken manure if I'm losing 40 percent of it?"

Tribbett said he typically spreads three tons of chicken litter per acre of farmland; he will now be able to use just one and half tons of this compost instead. He will be saving time and

See **CHICKEN**  
Page A8

# Defense calls first experts

By SARAH DRURY  
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**CHESTERTOWN** — Defense Attorney John Garey called the defense's first two expert witnesses on Monday, Feb. 6, in the trial of Gail Dobson, a Trappe childcare provider charged with murder and child abuse in connection with the death of Trevor Ulrich, a 9-month-old in her care.



GAIL DOBSON

Trevor, who was born Nov. 29, 2008, died on Sept. 3, 2009, a day after emergency crews had been called to Dobson's home.

The first expert called was Dr. Ljubisa Dragovic, a forensic and neuropathologist from Michigan. Dragovic reviewed all of the information and records involved in the Trevor Ulrich case before testifying.

See **DOBSON**  
Page A6

# High turnout for the first of four listening sessions

By CONNIE CONNOLLY  
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**EASTON** — The turnout for the first of four listening sessions organized by the Talbot County Department of Economic Development and Tourism (TCEDT) team was even better than they had hoped. And when it was adjourned an hour later, many lingered to network, exchanging ideas and business cards.

About 80 people filled the Wye Oak Room at the Talbot County Community Center at 8 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 2, to "express their hopes and concerns about the economic future" of the county and seek input for "updating the County's strategic plan for economic development," according to



PHOTO BY CONNIE CONNOLLY

Pictured above are Economic Development Commission chairman Tim Jones, County Council president Jennifer Williams, project manager Ryan Snow, director Cassandra Vanhooser and coordinator Samuel Shoge.

the invitation sent to county business leaders.

"I'm not surprised by the turnout," Cassandra Van-

hooser, the county's economic development and tourism director, said. "We worked hard to get this turnout."

"There was a variety of businesses and so many different segments of the economy — real estate, education, agriculture, tourism," she said.

During the first listening session, attendees worked in break-out groups to list practical ideas and questions on large charts in four categories — strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Discussion followed as the groups posted their lists on the walls, and the larger session prioritized items such as festivals, high-end clients, higher education, banking and high-speed internet.

"It was excellent," TCEDT coordinator Sam Shoge said. "It was a fantastic turnout and exactly what we were going for. We

genuinely appreciate their attendance."

The next step for the TCEDT is to take the information on the charts and "digest and drill down to the major issues, identify themes, and run them by the respective town councils," Shoge said. During the next three months, listening sessions also will be held in Trappe, Oxford and St. Michaels, respectively.

A dominant theme emerged in the session, Shoge said. Workforce development is a prime concern.

"There's a disconnect between people who are looking for jobs and employers struggling to fill positions,"

See **TALBOT**  
Page A7

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**HEALTH**

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improving access to care and providing cost savings to patients, according to Shore Regional Health.

According to Shore Regional Health, a significant gap in rural health care is caused by the nationwide shortage of skilled health

care providers in key medical specialties. Palliative care and psychiatry are two arenas in which the scarcity of providers is a series issue, especially in rural areas, according to the health system.

Shore Regional Health plans to expand psychiatry telehealth services to the UM Shore Emergency Center at Queenstown and the UM Shore Medical Center

at Chestertown, which are currently without dedicated onsite behavioral health services and resources. It will also expand palliative care telehealth services to the medical center in Chestertown, and to the Shore Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, a 98-bed nursing home and healthcare facility also in Chestertown.

This is not Shore Regional Health's first proj-

ect with telehealth. The medical system currently has telehealth programs running for pediatric and intensive care patients, said Dr. Marc Zubrow, vice president of telemedicine and medical director of eCare for the University of Maryland Medical System. In particular, the hospital system's telehealth ICU program has been running the longest, for about three

years. Zubrow said it is a "very sophisticated, integrated system" that allows for "pretty much everything that we could see at the bedside, we could see at the teleICU."

"We know that with the teleICU support, the number of transfers out of the three hospitals at Shore Health has diminished considerably, with improvements in their overall mortality, their hospital length of stay, their ICU length of stay, their reductions in complications," Zubrow said.

He said telehealth is very applicable for the "not-so-sick" patients, or the patients in the emergency room who need an opinion from an expert not on site before being sent home. But, Zubrow said that's "not to say we wouldn't use it on an acutely, critically ill" patient.

"Before we had gotten into telemedicine, often times the (patient) would be sent up to Baltimore for a second opinion and, you know, it would take the whole day and the same thing would be accomplished," Zubrow said. "Whereas this way, in a 10-minute telemedicine referral and discussion, we could take care of that."

Zubrow said the University of Maryland Medical System is always looking for opportunities to make

health care better and more efficient. In this instance, Shore Regional Health is matching the \$75,000 grant 2:1, which also will support research on the most effective use of telehealth technology.

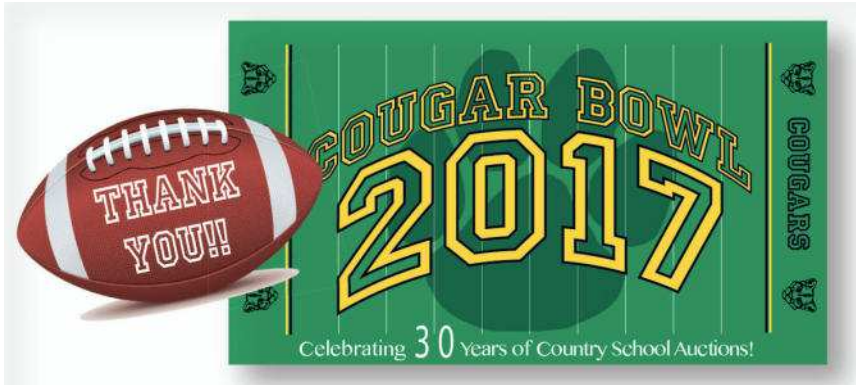
Huffner said that with any new technology, it is important to study how it is used in a way that will allow the best practices to develop.

"This grant will help us ensure that we make the best use of telehealth by addressing a number of questions, such as: What factors about a patient's condition make the use of telehealth ideal or less than ideal? What are the boundaries of telehealth, in terms of patient tolerance and satisfaction?" Huffner said.

One challenge Shore Regional Health has sought to address with palliative care is to include not only patients, but also key family members in discussions so that everyone understands the care options.

"Telehealth may prove very successful in achieving that goal by enabling the patient, the provider and family members, including those at varied remote locations, to participate in a three-way telehealth discussion," Huffner said.

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**TALBOT**

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Shoge said after the session. "There's a need to skill-up and get people motivated for jobs."

One attendee who networked after the listening session agreed.

"Educating people is key," said Garry Jakoby, an advisor with SVN Miller Commercial Real Estate in Salisbury. He said there should be an emphasis on teaching semi-skilled workers and college-level workers.

"There does need to be some incentive for young folks to stay here," Jakoby said.

Vanhooser wants to encourage young people to come out to the listening sessions as well.

"We need to establish pri-

orities and establish an action plan," she said. "This gives us a way to assess how we're doing."

The information will eventually be used to revise the county's strategic plan.

Developing a well thought-out plan for business development is key to Talbot County's future, said Tim Jones, chairman of the Talbot County Economic Development Commission. Jones would like to see participation from those in unincorporated towns as well.

"I'm excited about bringing the county together — all of the county," he said. "We live in the county together. Let's make it better for all of us."

"This planning process will allow Talbot County to develop a plan to grow our business base while maintaining the county's character that is so important to each of us," Jones said. "Through a focused approach to economic development, we will be able to provide our residents an opportunity not only to live, but also to work, in Talbot County."

"I was thrilled at the turnout and thrilled with the participation," Talbot County Council President Jennifer Williams said. "It was nice to see the enthusiasm." She said community input is vital to the strategic planning process.

"Our dynamic economic development team is looking for help in prioritizing their efforts," Williams said. "They are excited and ready to go to work, but want to make sure that the course they take reflects the wants and needs of our citizens. I urge businesses throughout the county, whether large or small, to come out and be heard and help us shape the best course possible for Talbot County."

"We're an energetic team," TCEDT project manager Ryan Snow said, "Customer service is our top priority."

The next listening sessions are slated for March 2 at the Trappe Volunteer Fire Company, April 6 at the Oxford Community Center and May 4 at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum's Van Lennep Auditorium.

For more information, contact the Talbot County Department of Economic Development and Tourism at 410-770-8058.

Follow me on Twitter @ connie\_stardem.

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