

# LAUREL *LIVING*

The Official Newsletter for the City of Laurel



## A Message from Mayor Keith R. Sydnor

As the school year comes to a close, I want to take a moment to congratulate all of our students—from kindergarten through 12th grade—on completing another year of learning, growth, and achievement. I also want to thank the parents, guardians, teachers, and school staff who have supported our youth every step of the way. Your commitment and care make all the difference.

As we look ahead to summer, I'm proud to share the return of **Safe Summer Nights**, a program that has proven to be a powerful resource in our community. In a time when young people face increasing pressures and distractions, programs like this are more important than ever. Safe Summer Nights offers teens ages 13 to 17 a safe, engaging, and educational environment every Saturday night from **July 12 through August 16**—a space to have fun, connect with peers, and gain valuable life skills. Each night features games, music, food, and the guidance of community partners who offer tips and tools to help teens grow into confident, responsible young adults.

In addition to this program, the City's Department of Parks & Recreation has a full calendar of exciting activities planned for families of all ages. I encourage parents and guardians to visit their website and discover all the ways your child can stay active, creative, and connected throughout the summer.

As we gear up for a season of learning outside the classroom, **Safe Summer Nights remains one of the ways we keep our young people inspired, supported, and safe.** I encourage all eligible teens to sign up, show up, and make the most of this experience—and I thank our community partners for their continued support of our youth.

**SAFE**  
*Summer*  
**NIGHTS**

 REGISTER NOW

### Inside this Edition



Fiscal Year 2026 Balanced Budget Approved



New Speed Cameras  
LIVE Keeping Laurel Safe



Safe Summer Nights  
returns with fun, food,  
and life skills!

Have a safe, joyful, and fun-filled summer!



## Proudly Serving You!



**Council President**  
Kyla Clark  
Ward 2



**Council President Pro Tempore**  
Jeffrey Mills  
Ward 2



**Councilmember** Christine Johnson  
At-Large



**Councilmember** Adrian Simmons  
Ward 1



**Councilmember** James Kole  
Ward 1



**Office of City Administrator**  
Christian L. Pulley, CPM  
City Administrator  
Ext. 2242



**Office of the City Council**  
Sara Green, City Clerk  
Ext. 2120



**Budget and Personnel Services**  
Michele Saylor, Director  
Ext. 2248



**Communications**  
Natalie Williams, Director  
Ext. 2208



**Emergency Management**  
Christina Cornwell, Director  
Ext. 2232



**Economic and Community  
Development**  
Monta Burrough, Director  
Ext. 2301



**Fire Marshal and  
Permit Services**  
Danny Selby, Director  
Ext. 2195



**Information Technology**  
James Cornwell-Shiel, Director  
Ext. 2240



**Human Services**  
Marchelle LeBlanc, Director  
Ext. 2723



**Parks and Recreation**  
Bill Bailey, Director  
Ext. 2233



**Police Department**  
Russell Hamill, Chief  
(301) 498-0092



**Public Works**  
Thomas Helms, Acting Director  
Ext. 3205



June 25, 1951 - June 7, 2025

# Remembering Marilyn

To the Family, Friends, and Colleagues of Marilyn Johnson,

On behalf of the City of Laurel, we would like to extend our deepest condolences on the passing of Marilyn Johnson. This news comes with great sadness to all of us who had the pleasure of knowing and working alongside her.

Marilyn was much more than the President of the Laurel Board of Trade — she was a tireless advocate for Laurel's business community and a true champion for our city's vitality. Her leadership, dedication, and unwavering commitment to supporting local businesses touched countless lives and helped shape Laurel's economic and cultural landscape.

As Chair of Laurel's Main Street Festival, Marilyn poured her heart into creating one of the city's most cherished traditions. Through her vision and hard work, the festival grew to be more than just an event — it became a celebration of community spirit and local pride that brought residents, visitors, and businesses together year after year.

Marilyn's unexpected passing is an immense loss for Laurel. We will remember her energy, her generosity of spirit, and her love for this city that she served so well. Her contributions will continue to resonate in the lives of those she touched and within the thriving Main Street corridor she helped cultivate.

We extend our heartfelt sympathy to her family, her colleagues at the Laurel Board of Trade, and to all who called her a friend. May her memory be a blessing, and may we honor her legacy by continuing to uplift and support the community she cared for so deeply.

Thank you for your service to our community!

Kind Regards,  
The City of Laurel



## *Special Announcement* **Council Approves Balanced FY 2026 Budget with No Tax Increases or Service Cuts**

We are pleased to share that the Laurel City Council has unanimously approved the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget, which takes effect on July 1, 2025, and runs through June 30, 2026.

This budget is both balanced and financially responsible, with no increases to real property or business taxes and no cuts to City services. It represents a strong investment in Laurel's future—prioritizing public safety, infrastructure improvements, economic development, and quality of life for all who live and work in our community.

With this unanimous vote, the Mayor and City Council reaffirm their commitment to responsible stewardship of public funds and to meeting the needs of Laurel's growing and diverse population.



**Hear from Mayor Keith Sydnor—click here to watch his citywide message on the passing of the FY2026 Budget.**

## **Important Notice** **Passport Photo Price Adjustment Coming Soon**

As the new fiscal year approaches, the City's Passport Office will implement a small pricing adjustment. Beginning July 1, 2025, the cost of passport photos will increase from \$10 to \$15.

While this is a modest change, the new rate remains competitive—still lower than many other providers. With the added convenience of having your photo taken on-site during your appointment, it continues to offer exceptional value for our residents.

[Click Here for more information on our passport services.](#)



## Award Winning Feature

### Laurel's Communications Department Receives International Telly Award for Spotlight on Mayor Keith Sydnor's Life of Service



The City of Laurel's Department of Communications is pleased to announce that Laurel TV has been honored with a prestigious International Telly Award for its production, Laurel Community Spotlight: Mayor Keith R. Sydnor – “A Life of Service.” The feature was recognized in the 46th Annual Telly Awards, a record-breaking year with over 13,000 entries submitted by top video and television content producers from around the world.

This compelling video profile chronicles the distinguished service of Mayor Keith R. Sydnor in the United States Navy, celebrating his decades-long commitment to public service. Through the Mayor's own words, the program offers viewers a personal look into Mayor Sydnor's leadership journey, from his naval career to his role in local government.

The Telly Awards honor excellence in video and television across all screens. Winners are selected by The Telly Awards Judging Council, comprised of industry leaders from television networks, streaming platforms, and production companies. Laurel TV's recognition places it in esteemed company, with other 2025 honorees including Pixar Animation Studios, Hearst Media, ESPN, LinkedIn, NATO, MTV Entertainment Studios, NASA, the LA Clippers, Telemundo, and more.

“This award affirms our commitment to producing meaningful, community-centered programming,” said Natalie Williams, Director of the Department of Communications. “We are proud to share Mayor Sydnor’s story—a testament to service, leadership, and resilience—and to see our local efforts recognized on an international stage.”



**Laurel TV's powerful feature, A Life of Service, takes you inside the remarkable journey of Mayor Sydnor—from the U.S. Navy to City Hall. See why this heartfelt profile earned international recognition and a 2025 Telly Award.**



## Special Announcement

### Speed Cameras Now Active in Designated Enforcement Zones

As of June 9, 2025, new speed enforcement cameras are officially active in select areas of the community. This initiative is part of a broader effort to improve traffic safety and reduce incidents of speeding on local roadways.

"Photo Enforced" signs were installed in advance of the cameras on June 2 to notify drivers of the upcoming enforcement. The following locations are now under active speed monitoring:

Camera Locations:

- Southbound Route 1 at Main Street
- Route 198 at Tenth Street



[Click here to see how Laurel is stepping up efforts to keep our roads and residents safe.](#)

Speeding remains one of the leading causes of traffic accidents nationwide. These cameras are intended to promote compliance with posted speed limits and to enhance safety for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists alike. "With the installation of these new speed cameras, our goal is simple — we want our sidewalks, roadways, and, most importantly, our pedestrians to be safer," says Laurel Deputy Chief Mark Plazinski. "These locations were chosen based on a survey conducted by the Department of Public Works, and we're committed to using every tool available to reduce speeding and enhance public safety."

Residents and visitors are encouraged to remain alert and drive within speed limits, particularly in these newly enforced zones. The city thanks all motorists for doing their part to support a safer and more responsible driving environment.

## Honoring Fatherhood

### Celebrating Dads Across Laurel with Special Breakfast

The City of Laurel proudly hosted its annual Father's Day Breakfast, welcoming 100 dads and father figures for a morning of appreciation, community, and connection. Held in celebration of the vital role fathers play in families and neighborhoods, the event offered a warm and festive atmosphere complete with a hearty breakfast and heartfelt remarks from Mayor Keith R. Sydnor and the event's organizer, Council President Pro Tempore Jeffery Mills, Ward 2.





## Improving Literacy Across the City Laurel Kicks Off Next Bestseller Contest

In partnership with Quill & Company Publishing, the City of Laurel is excited to announce the inaugural “Next Bestseller” contest, a dynamic five-round literary competition designed to discover and elevate local writing talent. The competition offers aspiring authors a platform to showcase their original manuscripts and compete for a publishing contract.

In partnership with Quill & Company Publishing, the City of Laurel is excited to announce the inaugural “Next Bestseller” contest, a dynamic five-round literary competition designed to discover and elevate local writing talent. The competition offers aspiring authors a platform to showcase their original manuscripts and compete for a publishing contract.

“There are many novice writers out there. They have stories to tell, but they don’t quite know how to shape and tell those stories. So, I wanted to marry those two things together and give back to my community that I lived in for over 20 years and help people tell those stories,” Quill & Company founder Robin McCormick said.

The literacy initiative underscores the city’s commitment to fostering literary talent and promoting a vibrant reading culture. For more information, visit [quillandcompany.com/events](http://quillandcompany.com/events).

### Advancing to the Next Round:

- Ja'kya Joyce- Jessup, MD
- LaTasha Snell Gatling- Riverdale, MD
- Alex Floyd- Burtonsville, MD
- Karla Talley- Bowie, MD
- Carla Dancy Smith- Silver Spring, MD
- Teaira Beasley- Laurel, MD
- Joyce Awuro-Tani- Laurel, MD
- Boris Lang- Laurel, MD
- Xerxes Olaseha- Laurel, MD
- Sam Braden- Chevy Chase, MD



good luck

 WATCH NOW

Click below to watch the stories unfold and cast your vote for your favorite aspiring author!

- [Next Bestseller Episode 1](#)
- [Next Bestseller Episode 2](#)
- [Next Bestseller Episode 3](#)

Let's celebrate!  
60

JOIN US FOR A 60th  
BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION!



The City of Laurel  
Department of Parks &  
Recreation

Granville Gude Park  
8300 Mulberry Street  
Friday, June 27th  
6 -8 PM



## **Splish Splash City of Laurel Pools Open**

Summer is just around the corner, and City of Laurel residents are making waves! The City of Laurel is gearing up for another exciting summer as its municipal swimming pools officially opened on Sunday, May 25, 2025. Whether you're looking to cool off, swim laps, or simply relax by the water, the Laurel Municipal Pool and Greenview Drive Pool Complex are ready to welcome residents and visitors alike.

This year, the city has introduced a special schedule to better serve its community. On Saturdays and Sundays from 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM, admission will be exclusive to City of Laurel residents and season pass holders. After 2:00 PM, the pools will open to the general public. The Laurel Municipal Pool, located at 9th and Main Street, features a main pool, lap pool, baby pool, diving well, snack bar, and more.

Throughout the season, the Department of Parks and Recreation will host a variety of activities, including learn-to-swim programs, water aerobics classes, and special events. Swim lesson registration began on April 16, 2025, with in-person sign-ups available at designated community centers.

For the latest information on admission fees, registration, pool policies, and holiday schedules, visit the City of Laurel Parks and Recreation website or follow them on social media: Facebook (@LaurelParksRec), Instagram (@LaurelDeptParksRec), X (@LaurelParksRec), and YouTube (City of Laurel Parks & Rec MD). Make a splash with the City of Laurel's two pools to welcome summer!

**FREE**

**Summer Concert Series  
Granville Gude Park  
8300 Mulberry Street, Laurel, MD**

Get ready for a summer filled with music and fun at Granville Gude Park!

This fantastic free summer concert series invites the public of all ages to enjoy live outdoor performances in a beautiful setting.

Don't forget to bring your lawn chair for a comfortable evening under the stars!

**Friday, June 20th | 7pm-9pm  
Hi-Fi! Soul Band**



**Friday, August 8th | 7pm-9pm  
Spanglish American Band**





## A Greener Future In Action: Laurel's Sustainability Plan Gets the Spotlight



The City of Laurel's Sustainability Manager, Michele Blair was recently featured on the Healthy Power Alliance Podcast. This podcast delves into the concept of "healthy power," exploring how collaborative efforts within organizations and communities can lead to thriving environments for both people and the planet.

In the 17th episode, Michele discusses Laurel's proactive approach to sustainability, emphasizing the city's unique position to enact meaningful change through local governance. She highlights the development of Laurel's first-ever Sustainability Plan, structured around four key pillars: People, Planet, Prosperity, and Peace & Partnership. Michele also shares insights into engaging the community through focus groups and events, aiming to make sustainability initiatives both effective and enjoyable. Her appearance on the podcast showcases Laurel's commitment to building a greener, more resilient future for all who live, work, and visit the City of Laurel.

To listen to Michele's full interview and learn more about Laurel's sustainability efforts, visit the Healthy Power Alliance Podcast: <https://hpalliance.podbean.com/e/17-michele-blair-sustainability-in-the-city-of-laurel-maryland-usa/>

## Family, Friends, and Fun Laurel High School Holds Its First Community Day

Laurel High School hosted its Community Day on Saturday, June 7, 2025 at the school's campus.

This event is designed to bring together students, families, and residents for an afternoon of fun, engagement, and community building. Attendees enjoyed a variety of activities, including games, performances by Laurel High School groups, live book readings, opportunities to learn about community resources, and speeches from Mayor Keith R. Sydnor, District 1 Council Member Tom Dernoga, the principal of Laurel High School, Mr. Dinkins, and more.

Whether you're a current student, prospective family, or community member, Community Day offered a chance to connect with the Laurel High School family and celebrate the vibrant spirit of the Laurel community!



## Employment Opportunities Residents Turn Out for Job Fair

The City of Laurel hosted a successful Job Fair on Monday, June 9th, 2025 at the Craig A. Moe Laurel Multiservice Center. The event connected job seekers with opportunities in state and local government as well as private sector jobs across DC, Maryland, and Virginia. Those in attendance benefited from free resume assistance, professional headshots, and a variety of resources aimed at enhancing employment prospects.



[Missed the Job Fair? Here's What You Missed!](#)

## The Mansion at Laurel Where Historic Charm Meets Modern Elegance - Book Your Event Today

Looking for the perfect place to hold your wedding or shower? The City of Laurel's newest event space, The Mansion at Laurel, located at 13910 Laurel Lakes Ave., offers a stunning blend of historic charm and modern elegance. With separated ballrooms, a wraparound porch, and beautifully landscaped grounds, it's an ideal setting for indoor or outdoor ceremonies.

The Mansion recently held an Open House to showcase its versatile space. From elegant indoor celebrations with exclusive access to the bridal suite and groom's lounge, to outdoor options featuring a charming pergola, there's something for every style. They also have wedding packages perfect for each couple's unique vision.

The Mansion at Laurel is now booking for 2025 and 2026, so don't wait to reserve your date! And if you missed this Open House, Laurel Parks & Recreation will be hosting another one in September! Visit [mansion.cityoflaurel.org](http://mansion.cityoflaurel.org) or call 301-725-7800 to schedule a tour and start planning your celebration!





## Celebrating 40 Years of Inclusion

## The Legacy of the Special Olympics and Maryland's Champions



Each June, the City of Laurel comes together to support the Special Olympics and the athletes who represent Maryland in the annual games. On Thursday, June 5th, Mayor Keith R. Sydnor joined the Olympians and Laurel Police department on a five-mile run through the city to raise awareness. The group took photos with employees wearing Special Olympics shirts at the Joseph R. Robison Municipal Center and high-fived Laurel Elementary students along the path through the city.

The Special Olympics began in 1968, when Eunice Kennedy Shriver, motivated by her sister Rosemary's experiences and the unfairness encountered by people with intellectual disabilities, held the first International Special Olympics Summer Games in Chicago. Special Olympics Maryland (SOMD) was officially created two years later, in 1970. Maryland athletes compete in 27 sports on the local, state, national, and international levels.

"I am proud to be a part of the Torch Run as an officer, certified coach of Special Olympics Maryland, and as a parent of a Special Olympic athlete. The best part of the day is hanging out with Ben and Will and their families," said Captain Jordan Perretta, Laurel Police Department.

Behind every athlete is a network of volunteers, coaches, families, and donors. The Laurel Police Department has played a pivotal role through the Torch Run, raising awareness and selling merchandise to raise funds to support year-round sports programming.

"In 2005, I was told to run in the annual torch run. I thought it was just a run and didn't really understand who it benefited. One year, a few of us decided to stay after the Dunk Weekend and participate in the medal presentations at the SOMD Winter Games. That week I saw firsthand the smiling faces and excitement from the athletes, that changed everything for me," said Captain Erik Lynn of the Laurel Police Department.

The 2025 Maryland Special Olympics will be held from June 20th – June 22nd at Towson University.





# Gratitude in Action

## Public Works Week Celebration Honors Dedication and Excellence

On Thursday, May 22, the Department of Public Works (DPW) gathered to celebrate Public Works Week with an appreciation lunch honoring the dedication and hard work of its team. The event recognized the vital role DPW employees play in maintaining essential services and supporting the community each day.

As part of the celebration, two outstanding team members were recognized for their exceptional contributions: Anthony Weaver received the Safety Excellence Award for his steadfast commitment to workplace safety. Anthony's proactive mindset and attention to safety protocols help create a secure environment for both his coworkers and the public. David Bowen was presented with the Service Award in recognition of his dedication and years of outstanding service. David's reliability, strong work ethic, and positive attitude have made a lasting impact across the department.

Staff enjoyed a delicious lunch catered by Mission BBQ, offering a moment to relax, connect, and reflect on their shared achievements. Public Works Week is a time to honor the often behind-the-scenes work that keeps our roads, infrastructure, and community services running smoothly. We thank all of our DPW employees for their continued service and extend special congratulations to Anthony and David on their well-earned awards!



## Congratulations! Cheers to Your Years!

On May 2, 2025, Mayor Keith Sydnor and the City of Laurel proudly honor dedicated employees for their milestone service, celebrating their commitment and contributions to our community.

### 5 Years Anniversary

Delonte Griffin, Equipment Operator I  
Petey Strange, Project Inspector  
David Kemp, Grounds Foreman  
Russell Hamill III, Chief of Police  
Bryan Hernandez, PFC - Private First Class  
Jaha Johnson, Communications Specialist II  
Donald Robinson Jr., PFC - Private First Class  
Josue Santos, Police Officer  
Austin Christ, PFC - Private First Class  
Xavier Sykes, Chief Communications Specialist

### 10 Years Anniversary

Anthony Robinson, Chief Supervisor - DPW  
Joycelyn Jackson, Deputy Director  
Edwin Monarrez, PFC - Private First Class  
Darwin Paredes, Corporal  
Jonathan Bartz, PFC - Private First Class  
Ashley Stephens, PFC - Private First Class  
Laura Sutzko, Corporal

### 15 Years Anniversary

Diane Bishop, Administrative Assistant I  
Donald Jaworski, Auto Mechanic  
Zachary Rexine, Sergeant  
James Cornwell-Shiel, Director of Information Technology  
Marcus Currie, Corporal

### 20 Years Anniversary

Andrea Pickett, Fiscal Specialist III - Revenue Coordinator  
Patrick Henson, Sergeant  
Henry Florian Martinez, Auto Mechanic  
Anthony Miskovich, Sergeant  
Brian Kolbe, Waste Management Supervisor  
Mark Freeman, IT Support Specialist

### 25 Years Anniversary

John Hamilton Jr., Major  
Calvin Harvey, Fleet Maintenance Supervisor  
Adam Miller, Facilities and Grounds Chief

### 35 Years Anniversary

Ruth Hyatt, Office Manager

**Attention All Small Businesses****Use and Occupancy Permit Required in the City of Laurel**

The City of Laurel would like to remind all small businesses that a Use and Occupancy (U&O) Permit is required to operate within city limits. This requirement applies to all businesses—including those subleasing space in executive office buildings or office suite rentals.

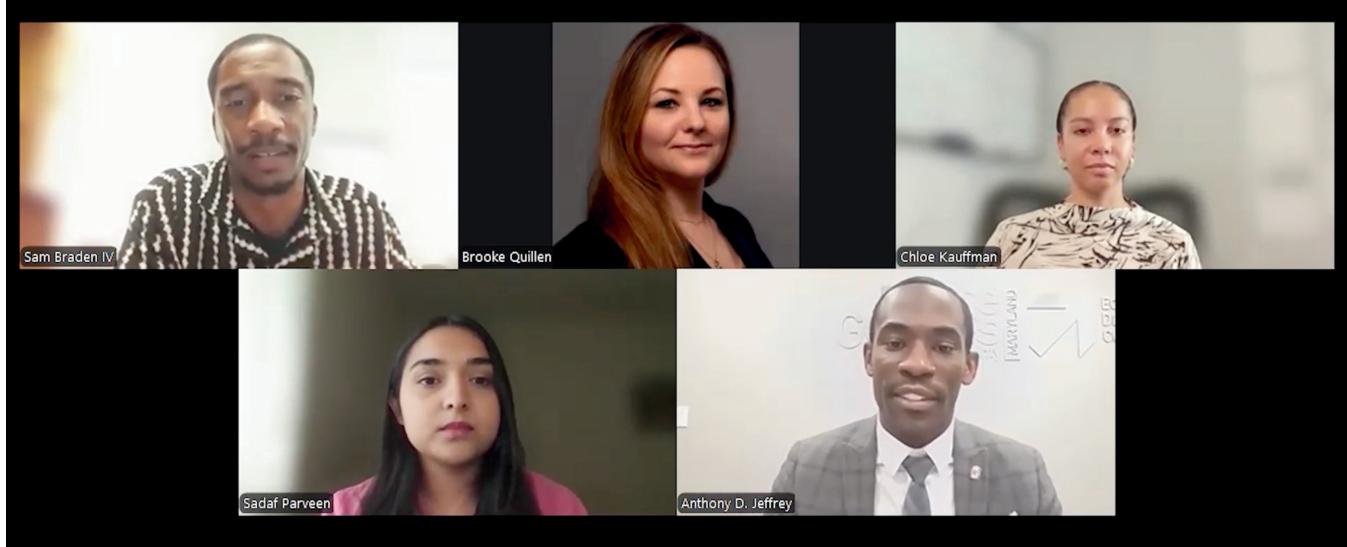
Please apply through our online portal: [https://portal.cityoflaurel.org/Energov\\_Prod/SelfService#/home](https://portal.cityoflaurel.org/Energov_Prod/SelfService#/home)

If you have any questions or need assistance, contact the Department of Fire Marshal and Permit Services via email at [fmpls@laurel.md.us](mailto:fmpls@laurel.md.us) or by phone at (301) 725-5300 ext 2238. We're here to help guide you through the process.

**ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT****Connecting Community****ECD Interviews Anthony Jeffrey, Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation**

The Economic and Community Development Department hosted a virtual Q&A with Anthony Jefferey, Business Development Manager Retail/Restaurants with Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation during Economic Development Week (5/12-5/16)! This session highlighted valuable insights on available county resources for businesses, the future of retail and dining, and the broader outlook economic development in the region.

 **WATCH NOW**



## Disaster Planning

### Planning for Your Pet: National Pet Preparedness Month

June is National Pet Preparedness Month, which was established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina (2005). This devastating hurricane highlighted the significant impact natural disasters can have on pets and their owners. Many pets were lost, left behind, or inadequately cared for. FEMA recognized the need to learn from these mistakes, improve emergency plans, and, not only ensure pet safety, but include pets as part of evacuation strategies. By integrating pet preparedness into a community's preparedness, FEMA aims to ensure that pet owners and responders have the knowledge and tools to better protect our furry, feathered, and scaly friends.

It is important to know that natural disasters, which no two are alike, can happen unexpectedly and without warning. Therefore, like human family members, pets need detailed emergency plans tailored to their specific needs. In observance of National Pet Preparedness Month, the City of Laurel's Department of Emergency Management is encouraging pet owners to develop emergency plans, build a pet emergency kit, and understand how and when to evacuate or shelter pets.



#### Pet Emergency Kit

In addition to the family's emergency kit, pets should have a kit specifically tailored to their needs. Consult with your pet's veterinarian to ensure you consider your pet's needs based on their species, breed, size, and medical conditions. A well-prepared pet emergency kit should include the following items:

- Water and portable water dish
- 3-day supply of food in airtight containers
- Medication and copies of medical records, including vaccination records
- Cat litter, litter box, and waste disposal bags
- Leashes or harnesses (even for cats)
- Toys and blankets to provide comfort and reduce stress
- Current photos in case your pet is lost
- Emergency contact information card, including contact information for your veterinarian

#### Evacuating and Sheltering With A Pet

A crucial aspect of pet preparedness is planning and knowing evacuation routes and shelter procedures. Prior to an emergency, pet owners should identify pet-friendly hotels and shelters. Determining how to safely transport a pet is also vital to the animal's safety. If needed, be sure to include a sturdy leash or carrier to the pet emergency kit. A pet emergency plan should also take into consideration the type of disaster that might occur i.e. hurricanes, floods, wildfires, etc. This might mean identifying multiple evacuation routes and conducting timed evacuation drills to ensure speed and efficiency during a real-world emergency.

Disaster organizations, such as the Red Cross, have specific protocols regarding sheltering pets. By understanding these regulations and identifying pet-friendly shelter locations in advance, pet owners can greatly reduce the stress associated with emergency pet care. Temporary and long-term options should also be considered. For more information regarding pet preparedness, visit <https://www.ready.gov/pets>.



## Hurricane Forecasting

### Flying into the Eye: The NOAA Hurricane Hunters

On Labor Day Weekend in 1935, cargo-ship generated forecast led many to believe a powerful hurricane was headed straight for Cuba. However, less than a day before the hurricane hit, a Pan Am pilot reported that the storm was further north than the ships' radars indicated. Leonard Povey, an American pilot living in Cuba, volunteered to conduct a flight mission to confirm the Pan Am pilot's report. He flew over the Florida Straits, located the center of the storm, and determined that the storm was, in fact, moving northward. Although Cuba was spared, the Florida Keys were not. The Labor Day Hurricane devastated the Florida Keys, killing over 400 people.

Povey's flight is the first recorded instance of aircraft being used to locate a hurricane. Recognizing its ability to improve forecasting and save lives, Leonard Povey became an advocate for such flights, lobbying Congress to establish a permanent organization to conduct tropical cyclone aerial reconnaissance missions. By 1944, the United States Army Air Force (USAAF) was conducting reconnaissance missions into tropical storms, with assistance from the United States Weather Bureau. In 1970, the United States Government officially established National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Then, in 1976, the NOAA Hurricane Hunters flew their first official mission in a WP-3D Orion into Hurricane Bonny.



Today, the NOAA Hurricane Hunters are based out of the NOAA Aircraft Operations Center (AOC) at the Lakeland Regional Airport in Lakeland, Florida. Their hurricane reconnaissance fleet includes 2 WP-3D Orion and 1 Gulfstream IV airplanes, which are affectionately called Mrs. Piggy, Kermit, and Gonzo. These names helped the NOAA Hurricane Hunters bridge the gap between science and younger generations. In fact, Jim Henson, of Henson Productions, liked the idea so much, he agreed to create World War II-style nose art for each plane.

In support of their mission "Science, Service, and Stewardship," the NOAA Hurricane Hunters duties include weather research and data accumulation; overseeing fleet aircraft; and providing planning services for fisheries and coastal management. From 2019 to 2023, over 762 flights missions were completed by the NOAA Hurricane Hunters. When not flying reconnaissance missions, the NOAA Hurricane Hunters participate in training and simulation exercises; review aircraft regulations and policies; and conduct community outreach to educate the public on the importance of their missions. Through their courage and dedication, the NOAA Hurricane Hunters play a crucial role in enhancing the National Weather Services' ability to develop timely and accurate forecasts, which saves lives, and protects our communities.

**For more information regarding the NOAA Hurricane Hunters, please visit <https://www.omao.noaa.gov/aircraft-operations/noaa-hurricane-hunters>.**



# COUNCIL

## Connections



The City Council is the legislative body of the City of Laurel, and as elected representatives of the citizens, consider and enact resolutions, regulations, and ordinances for the protection of rights and privileges, peace and good government, and safety and health of all citizens. Visit [www.cityoflaurel.org](http://www.cityoflaurel.org) to find out more about your representative.

### The following items were approved at the June 9th Mayor and City Council meeting.

- Bid Recommendation- Van Dusen Road Improvements Phase 3
- Bid Recommendation- Stanley Place Road Improvements
- Bid Recommendation- Ammunition- LPD
- Second Public Hearing with Possible Action on Ordinance No. 2038 - Election Law Amendments

### Upcoming Meetings

- **Wednesday, July 2 @ 6pm (Virtual)**  
Mayor and City Council Work Session
- **Monday, July 14 @ 6pm (Virtual)**  
Mayor and City Council Meeting
- **Monday, July 28 @ 6pm (In-Person)**  
Mayor and City Council Meeting

 **WATCH NOW**

### Important Notice: General Election for City Council Seats

City of Laurel 2025 General Election for five (5) City Council seats will occur on November 4, 2025. The Office of Mayor is not up for election until 2027. Candidate Packets will be available by appointment only beginning on July 7, 2025. Contact the City Clerk's Office to make an appointment to pickup a packet: **Email: [clerk@laurel.md.us](mailto:clerk@laurel.md.us) or 301-725-5300 Ext. 2120.**

To watch the latest Mayor and City Council Meeting, visit our YouTube page **@LaurelTVOfficial**. All Mayor and City Council Meetings are broadcast live on Comcast 71 (SD), 996 (HD), and on Verizon Channel 12. Meetings are also live streamed on **LaurelTV.org**.



## ADRIAN G. SIMMONS

- Elected to first term on Laurel City Council on July 1, 2024
- Member, Historic District Commission; Ex-Officio Member, Planning Commission
- Born and raised in South Laurel
- BBA, Accounting/MBA, Finance - Loyola University Maryland
- Member, Laurel Board of Trade and the Maryland Association of CPAs.

A quick note that you can follow my work at my Council blog: [adrianforlaurel.org](http://adrianforlaurel.org) and also find me on Facebook at "Adrian G. Simmons". Some news of note for May: I and other members of Council were able to work with the Mayor to restore funding for The Laurel Independent paper, enabling it to continue its work for the coming year. We also passed the first part of the City election law re-write, with part two expected in June. Lastly, a note of encouragement to take advantage of the great summer activities our city has to offer - visit my blog & type "summer dates" into the search box for ideas & suggestions!



## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR BACKYARD!

- The Laurel Historical Society celebrated its 50th Anniversary at its annual gala on May 4! Strong roots make for a strong tree, and there are so many interesting things to learn about our town. E.g., Don't miss current exhibit at the Laurel Museum celebrating Laurel's historical ties to the B&O Railroad!
- A shout out to new Eagle Scouts from Troop 1250 this year: Vincent Caridi and Benjamin Pieslak! Scouting is a great way for kids to explore a breadth of experiences plus grow in leadership, teamwork, and serving their community. For those interested, check out [BeAScout.org](http://BeAScout.org) to learn more!



**Enjoying the vendors, community, & fun at the Main Street Festival.**

## RESIDENT Q&A

**Question:** Someone told me we have \*two\* pools in Laurel?

**Answer:** Yes! Many folks are familiar with our pool at 9th & Main, but don't realize as residents you also have access to our pool at 14403 Greenview Drive, which is complemented by an adjacent 2.1 acre park and tennis courts. New this year: pools will be exclusive to residents & pass holders from 12 - 2 p.m. on Saturdays & Sundays. And the City also offers swim lessons through our Parks & Rec program (one of my kiddos did last year & really enjoyed). At the end of the summer, the Greenview pool winds down with 'Doggie Dip Day'. So no excuse not to get wet this summer!



**Contribute to the new mural planned at 500 Main Street facilitated by Laurel for the Patuxent.**



# SAFE Summer NIGHTS

Together, we can make this summer safe, fun, and empowering for Laurel's youth.

→ SATURDAYS ←

July 12 – August 16, 2025

6:00 PM – 10:00 PM

Anderson-Murphy Community Center  
422 Montgomery Street, Laurel, MD 20707

**YOUTH  
AGES  
13-17**

**YOUTH CAN  
PRE-REGISTER  
ONLINE HERE**

The City of Laurel is excited to launch the 2025 Safe Summer Night Program, providing a safe, engaging, and educational environment for our youth every Saturday night from **July 12 to August 16, 2025**.

If your organization is interested in hosting a Safe Summer Night or would like to assist in any way, please contact:

✉ [laurelmayor@laurel.md.us](mailto:laurelmayor@laurel.md.us)

📞 (301) 725-5300 Ext 2124

## Program Schedule & Committed Organizations

**July 12**

**AramideGives**

Dress for Success, Mental Health Awareness, & Social Media

**July 19**

**Tau Delta Zeta Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.**

**July 26**

*More details to come*

**August 2**

**T.E.C.T.R.I.S.T.**

*(Teach Each Child That's Really In Some Trouble)*  
Mindset Development

**August 9**

*More details to come*

**August 16**

**R&R Advisory Group**

Tailored Management Strategies Through Sports