



# Williamsless

Venus and Serena both eliminated in French Open

PAGE B1



## Museum celebrates Duke Ellington

Roaring Twenties-themed gala raises \$150,000 for museum

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# THE STAR DEMOCRAT

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**THURSDAY**  
MAY 29, 2014  
VOL. 214 NO. 185

## SMHS celebrates graduates

LOCAL

### ND Eagles soar in final high school flight

Jubilant filled the auditorium Tuesday, May 27, as the North Dorchester High School Class of 2014 made its final flight as high schoolers at the school's graduation ceremony.

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WEATHER



Chance of showers  
High 67 Low 58

Chance of showers tonight  
Full Weather Page A9

LOCAL

### LWV to hold Senate, delegate forums

The League of Women Voters organizations of Kent and Queen Anne's counties will host forums for candidates for the state Senate and the House of Delegates for Maryland's 36th legislative district on Thursday, May 29.

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By HENLEY MOORE  
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**ST. MICHAELS** — "I remember when we were all freshmen and it seemed as though this day would never come," Kennedy Lamb, salutatorian of St. Michaels High School 2014 graduating class said, addressing the packed auditorium at St. Michaels Middle and High School.

The day Lamb was referring to was graduation, and it finally came for Lamb and her 62 classmates on Wednesday, May 28.

The auditorium was filled with proud parents, families and friends to watch the Class of 2014 cross the stage, turn their tassels, and enter the next stage of their lives. "While tonight might feel like an end, it is only a new beginning," SMMHS principal Helga Einhorn said.

Although the ceremony was filled with accolades honoring those who had achieved honors, received scholarships and made achievements both in and out of the classroom, the theme of the night was the



PHOTO BY HENLEY MOORE

Kennedy Lamb, salutatorian of St. Michaels High School Class of 2014, leaves the stage after receiving her diploma along with 62 classmates Wednesday, May 28.

balance needed in an ever-changing world.

Valedictorian Anna Harrison, who graduated with a cumulative grade point average of 98.6 percent, addressed her classmates say-

ing, "The pace of change has become almost overwhelming during our lifetime, with such dramatic events transforming our lives forever."

Referring to cultural events like 9/11, and the

rapid change in technology in their lifetime, Harrison told her classmates, "We have had the privilege (of) growing up in a world with vast resources and knowledge at our fingertips."

Although wonderful things can come from the fast-changing world they have grown accustomed to,

See **SMHS**  
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FILE PHOTO BY HENLEY MOORE

In this January 2014 file photo, Talbot County and Easton Volunteer Fire Department ambulance crews respond to a car accident on Route 50 at Chapel Road. County and volunteer ambulance services face high costs of operation that revenue from billing doesn't come close to covering, according to county officials and volunteers.

## Costs taking a toll on EMS services

By ANDREW SHARP  
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**EASTON** — An ambulance ride to the hospital isn't the most economical way to travel — you, or your insurance company, if you have one, might get a bill for \$600 or more for an emergency trip.

But local volunteer fire companies and county Emergency Medical Services departments are only seeing a fraction of that money.

Fire companies and county EMS services are actually losing money, and lots of it, on ambulance runs, area volunteers and county officials say.

**So where is all that money going?**

As with the finances of the medical industry at large, it's extremely complicated and hard to track down.

"Payment, reimbursement, the billing of it, all of it is just in a state of chaos," Cathy Carter, CEO of Medical Claim Aid in Denton, said.

The company handles bill-

**Fire companies and county EMS services are actually losing money, and lots of it, on ambulance runs, area volunteers and county officials say.**

ing for many local counties and fire companies. There is no question, Carter said, that the health care system needs to be overhauled, but she said the Affordable Care Act is only going to make things more complicated.

"It's tough now, and it's going to be tougher," she said. "I get my hair dyed every six weeks for a reason ... it's a tough business."

Jeremy Goldman, emergency services director for Dorchester County, said the county budgeted about \$2.4 million for EMS services in Fiscal Year 2014, but the total revenue was about \$1.1 million. "There's no profit, there's no windfall. It's a pretty significant negative," he said.

Clay Stamp, Talbot County's emergency services director, agreed. Talbot's EMS service costs a little

more than \$3 million a year, he said, and gets about \$1.2 million back from billing.

"It's not a break even business; it's actually counties providing a service," he said.

Why is that, when ambulance services are charging hundreds of dollars per call?

Carter said they hear the question about cost every day in Medical Claim Aid's office: Why did I get billed \$800 for a ride to the hospital?

Because you didn't get a "ride," she said. "You got a state of the art emergency room on wheels."

Ambulance providers, she said, are "losing money the second they leave the bay."

David Carrier, assistant chief of the Hurlock Volunteer Fire Company, said it is difficult for the volunteer companies to maintain an

ambulance unit with all the costs.

Monthly payments for the company's new ambulance are more than \$2,000. It is going to have to replace its cardiac monitor soon, which will cost a cool \$30,000. A power stretcher the company just bought, to reduce back injuries for personnel, cost \$15,000. Even a finger monitor used to analyze a patient's blood costs \$5,000, he said.

County EMS providers, which work closely with the volunteer fire companies, also have to pay a full time paramedic staff, in addition to all the equipment, medicine, and fuel.

**Counties aren't fully reimbursed**

And then the complicated billing system kicks in — the counties don't actually receive the amount they bill.

On a \$600 ambulance bill, Goldman said, the county is lucky to get \$200. That's because Medicare and insurance companies have set

See **EMS**  
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## Wrecked rig closes U.S. 301

Second crash occurs at detour

By HAFIZ RASHID  
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**MILLINGTON** — An overturned tractor-trailer blocked U.S. Route 301 south at about 4 a.m. Wednesday, May 28, and caused the highway to be closed for several hours, state police said. A second accident occurred an hour later on the detour set up after the first crash.

In the first accident, a tractor-trailer overturned at Route 301 north of state Route 544. The truck's driver, Tamas Szalai, was arrested by Maryland State Police and charged with driving under the influence of alcohol, according to Cpl. Andrew Williams of the MSP Centreville Barracks.

The tractor-trailer blocked all lanes on Route 301 south, causing a detour to be set up at Route 544, where drivers had to turn right onto 544 west and make a left onto state Route 290 south to reconnect with Route 301 and go around the crash, according to David Buck, a spokesman with the Maryland State Highway Administration.

At about 5 a.m., the driver of a tractor-trailer stopped to ask troopers for directions at the intersection of route 301 and 544, where the detour was set up, according to police. When that tractor-trailer went to turn west onto 544, another tractor-trailer hit the vehicle on its side, police said.

The second accident closed the detour onto Route 544 and resulted in SHA setting up a second detour on state Route 291, north of the Chester River in Kent County. As in the

See **CRASH**  
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### "I want to continue to serve my neighbors."



That's why Paul Carroll, former owner of Easton's SEARS Hometown Store, is asking for your vote for Judge of the Orphans' Court. After 49 years as an employee and owner, he's now focused on helping others with fairness, civility and compassion. That's how he operated his business, led his family, and served his country.

Authority by Faith Carroll, Treasurer