

"Always Ready"

Division 26 — Western North Carolina District Fifth Southern Region

Lakes Badin, Hickory, Norman, and Wylie

March 2025

Division 26 Holds Change of Watch



Guests of Honor (from left): CDR David Otani; Amy Thomas, VFC, Flotilla 33; COMO Jim Thomas; Z Nazif, DCDR; Mayor Chris Gray; Kim Curry, DCAPT; Lorena Curry. Photo by H. Briggs

On 1 February 2025, members of Division 054-26 conducted their 2025 Change of Watch (COW) and 2024 Awards Ceremony at a restaurant in Tega Cay, South Carolina. It was well attended by approximately 50 members, guests and dignitaries. Compliments go to David Ray, VCDR; Tony Marciano, VFC, Flotilla 26-04, Lake Norman West; and Beverly Butlin, VFC, Flotilla 02, Lake Wylie for expert planning. Honorable mention goes to David Wascher, 26-02, FSO-OP, for providing the setup of a screen and projector.

Master of Ceremonies, Tony Marciano, introduced guests, including Tega Cay Mayor Chris Gray, Tega Cay Fire Chief Glyn Hasty, Darryl and Melissa Lackey, Commander Otani,



DIRAUX, and William Curry, DCAPT-SNC. The Missing Man Ceremony was conducted and the Gastonia Civil Air Patrol presented colors escorted by the Loch Norman Pipe Band, who played the "National Anthem." Rick Croasdale, SO-HR, SO-PE provided the invocation.



The oath of office by all incoming Division staff officers was led by District Commodore James Thomas, who was supported by William "Kim" Curry, DCAPT-SNC. CDR Otani, DIRAUX, offered remarks and verbalized

appreciation of the contributions that members of the Division make toward the mission of the Coast Guard.

Kim Curry, DCAPT-SNC, complimented the members of Division 26 for all the work they do in the Lake Norman and Lake Wylie areas. It is much appreciated that he referred to Division 26 as a stellar group.

When District COMO Thomas spoke he shared that District 26 fulfilled over 12,000 volunteer hours, including observation hours, member training, vessel safety checks, program visits and paddle craft inspections. He acknowledged the contributions by members of Division 26.



COMO Thomas shared that starting 1 January 2025 all elected officers must pass the Auxiliary Administrative Procedure Course (APC) and Auxiliary Flotilla Leadership Course (AFLC) in order to fill elected positions. In an effort to help members meet the requirement, the April 2025 D-Train will offer 36 fully-funded seats for those courses.

Division 26 Welcomes 2025 Bridge and Staff Members



Dave Ray, VCDR, presents the Trident Award to Ziad "Z" Nazif, DCDR (on left), for his significant dedication and professionalism in supporting the Coast Guard's Marine Safety and Environmental Protection Missions. Z exclaimed that he is a collector of medieval weaponry and this would be a great addition to his collection. Z was also commended for a successful year in moving District 26 along and promoting the Auxiliary. Photo by H. Briggs

2024 PRESENTATIONS

- ◆ Ziad Nazif: Trident Award.
- ♦ Steve Riggan: Auxiliarist of the Year.
- Beverly Butlin:2024 Stewart Family Memorial Award.
- ◆ Coast Guard Meritorious Commendation Kayaking 101 at NC State Parks 2023:
 - ♦ Mark Wilson
 - Mark Valdes
 - ♦ James Cortes
 - Michael Parks
 - ♦ Moses Pettigrew
- Alan Fitzpatrick: Award for providing Connectivity at the Joshua Murray Center at Blythe Landing.
- Flotilla 26-02: first place flotilla for VSCs in District
 5th Southern and 29th Nationally.
- Darryl and Melissa Lackey: Support of Recreational Boating Safety on Lake Norman

Division Commander

Ziad "Z" Nazif

David L. Ray

Flotilla Commanders

Flotilla 26-01

Lake Norman

John Heenan

Flotilla 26-02

Lake Wylie

Mark Briggs

Flotilla 26-04

Davidson

Flotilla 26-04

Lake Norman West

Flotilla 26-05 Flotilla 26-07

NC Western Foothills Badin Lake

Larry Mallonee Moses Pettigrew

Sydney Newcombe

Darrin Sanchez

Division Staff Officers for 2025 Auxiliary Scout James Barton Patrick Hughes Communications **Communications Services Beverly Butlin Culinary Assistance** Mark Born Stephen Whittaker **Finance** Richard Croasdale **Human Resources Information Systems Christopher Craig Materials** Michael Silva **Member Training Scott Wigginton Navigation Systems** Gary Eifried **Operations Gary Eifried Public Affairs** John Heenan **Public Education** Richard Croasdale **Sharon Eifried Publications Program Visitor** Sydney Newcombe Secretary/Records **Beverly Butlin Vessel Examination** Mark Briggs

Highlights: Division 26 Change of Watch 2025

Photos by H. Briggs and T. Edwards









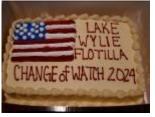






Lake Wylie Flotilla Conducts Change of Watch Submitted by Beverly Butlin, VFC

A Change of Watch was conducted by Flotilla 054-26-02 on 9 December 2024 in Tega Cay, South Carolina. Mark Briggs recited the oath of office for Flotilla Commander and Beverly Butlin for Vice Flotilla Commander for the second consecutive year.

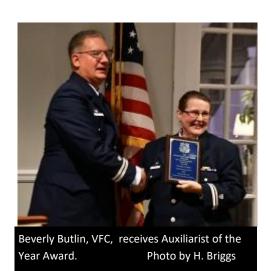




Division 26 Vice Commander, Dave Ray, conducts the Change of Watch for Beverly Butlin, VFC, (center) and Mark Briggs, FC. Photo by H. Briggs

Mark shared the following Mission
Statement for the Lake Wylie Flotilla. "Our goal is to continue the work of building our flotilla into a professional, competent, and willing-to-serve team. Through our initiatives we will provide superior community service, and foster boating safety, thereby reducing boating injuries and fatalities. To that end, we will continue the on-going process of rebuilding our operations team by qualifying coxswains, crew, and TCOs. We will continue our outreach to the public and boating community through vessel exams, public education, program visitation, and all aspects of public affairs. Finally, our flotilla will strive to be sharp and relevant ambassadors for the USCG on Lake Wylie and in the Western North Carolina Division."







Mark Briggs, FC, receives Paddle Award in honor of his leadership. Photo by H. Briggs

Flotilla 26-07 Badin Lake Conducts Change of Watch on 7 December 2024



Mike Mise (on left) accepts the position of Vice Flotilla Commander, and Moses "Top" Pettigrew (center) the position of Flotilla Commander.



Newly elected staff officers of Flotilla 054-26-07 gather together to accept the responsibilities of their positions.



Top receives Recruiter of the Year Award from Brad Simpson, outgoing Flotilla Commander of Flotilla 26-07. In photo below, Mike Mise (right) receives Program Visitor Award.



Top addresses the members and guests during the Change of Watch.





A Fond Farewell to our Shipmate **Timothy "Tim" Ray Nall**

As Lord Tennyson writes, our friend and shipmate, Tim Ray Nall, has "put out to sea" and seen his "Pilot face to face." Tim, a member of Flotilla 26-07, crossed the bar on Monday, 6 January 2025, and will be missed.

Tim was a resident of Trinity, North Carolina, and owner and operator of a company that boasted a motto of "Tim Nall, One Call Does It All." Tim's family and friends would say that Tim worked hard and was always devoted to his family, friends and clients.

Tim joined the Auxiliary in November 2022 and was FSO-PV in Flotilla 26-07. He held certifications as Vessel Examiner and Recreational Boating Safety Visitor. His dedication and perseverance were the very essence of "Honor, Respect, and Devotion to Duty."



In addition to his family, Tim leaves behind one of our own, his fiancée, Kim Curry. Kim joined the Auxiliary in October 2022 and also serves in Flotilla 26-07. Flotilla 26-07 was represented at Tim's funeral by Moses "Top" Pettigrew, who offered the following words.

To Kim Curry and the Nall Family,

I wish there was something I could say or do to comfort you. I say this to you with a heavy heart. Tim was a grand of a person. When I met Tim and Kim, I was the Flotilla Human Resources Staff Officer and I got to bring them both into the Auxiliary.

Tim was the model shipmate that every Human Resource Staff Officer desires to bring into the Auxiliary. Tim wanted to learn about vessel examinations and the recreational boaters safety program. He recruited a few members because he loved what he did, and gave his full support! It was a joy to have him. I can go on and on. He supported the Charlotte Boat Show in 2023 and the Greensboro Boat

show in 2024. When I would do four hours in two days; Tim would do eight hours for two days.

Another time after Tim first got on board with us, I said to Tim, "our next monthly meeting is coming up." Tim said, in a kind and humble manner, "Top, I don't know if I can make that." I said it is OK, "Tim you just got on board with us" Tim replied "I know, but I may not be able to make that!" I said why? He said I have to be there for the kids at the hospital. He went on to say, "You have to see the smiles on those kids' faces when I am there at the hospital."

Tim was just my hero, that type of a mentor that teaches you how to enjoy life and cautions you to not take things too seriously.

Kim and the Nall family: On behalf of the U. S. Coast Guard Auxiliary at Badin Lake, thank you for sharing Tim with everybody! You have our sincere condolences and our deepest sympathy.



Flotilla 26-04 Lake Norman West Conducts Change of Watch on 16 February 2025

Postponing the Change of Watch for weather issues did not cancel the celebratory atmosphere for Flotilla 26-04. Finally, on 16 February 2025, members were able to gather at the Event Venue in Denver, North Carolina, to enroll elected and appointed officers in their 2025 positions and thank many members for their contributions to the Auxiliary in 2024.



Sandra Stewart administers oath of office to Tony Marciano, VFC, and Sydney Newcombe, FC. Photo by E. Burk

Recognition of Service Awards

- Steve Riggan: Auxiliarist of the Year Award
- Tony Marciano: Flotilla Commander's Award
- Scott Wigginton: Vice Flotilla Commander's Award
- Hap James: Exemplary Service Award
- John Dibbins: Exemplary Service Award
- Pierre Rheeder: Rookie of the Year Award
- Jarrett Rheeder: Rookie of the Year Award
- Gary Eifried: Guiding Light Award
- Sharon Eifried: Go To Award



Darryl and Michele Lacky receive award for their generosity in supporting recreational boating safety on Lake Norman

Photo by E. Burk

Activity Awards Based on Total Numbers Recorded in AUXDATA II in 2024

- Coxswain Hours: Gary Eifried
- Boat Crewmember Hours: James Barton
- Program Visitor Visits: Sydney Newcombe
- Public Educator Hours: Scott Wigginton
- Watchstander Hours: Sharon Eifried
- Vessel Examiner VSCs: Steve Riggan
- Most Activity Hours: Scott Wigginton



From left, Pierre Rheeder, FSO-HR, FSO-VE; Jarrett Rheeder, FSO-AS; James Barton, FSO-MT, SO-AS; Sydney Newcombe, FC, FSO-PA, FSO-PV, FSO- IS, SO-PV; John Dibbins; Gary Eifried, FSO-NS, FSO-OP, SO-NS, SO-OP; Holly Schneeman, FSO-MA; Dave Schneeman; Sandra Stewart, D-AD-COC-R, SRPPCA; Steve Riggan, FSO-FN; Kimberly Riggan, FSO-SR; Tony Marciano, VFC.

Photo by E. Burke

Flotilla 26-04 Lake Norman West Recognition for Exemplary Service Means Happy Faces!

Steve Riggan, Auxiliarist of the Year



Kimberly Riggan, FSO-SR



Pierre Rheeder, Rookie of the Year



Jarrett Rheeder, Rookie of the Year



Sandra Stewart , Superior Performance of Duty



Gary Eifried, Coxswain of the Year



John Dibbins, Exemplary Service

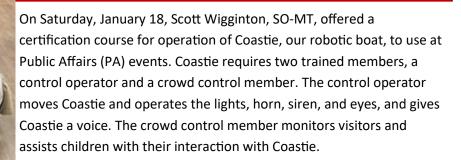


Holly Schneeman, FSO-MA



Coastie Comes to Town

Future Operators Show Up to Learn the Ropes! Information submitted by Tom Edwards, FSO-PB, 26-02 Photos by S. Eifried



The attendees at the class learned about safe movement with a handheld remote control box and wore a wireless headset to activate Coastie's microphone and speaker. Members practiced operating Coastie and finished with a test moving the boat around a figure eight course while operating



Attendees (from left), Dave Ray, Mark Briggs, Dave Ludlow, Adam Deluca, Tom Edwards, Bev Butlin, Dave Washer, Scott Wigginton, Sharon Eifried, Gary Eifried.



Scott Wigginton, provides instruction related to the electronics and voice of Coastie.





Photography Opportunity for Sydney Newcombe, FC

Toward the end of 2024, Sydney Newcombe, Flotilla Commander of Flotilla 26-04, was notified that she had been selected to record the active duty Coast Guard involvement in security for the Presidential Inauguration in January 2025. Needless to say, Sydney was very excited about this opportunity. When the day came, Sydney found herself, and her camera, front and center. She used her photographic skills to document active duty operations, Coast Guard members getting ready, loading weapons, and patrolling the Potomac River to safeguard the waterways for President Trump's inauguration.



Sydney was tasked with escorting multiple news crews, documenting and photographing the stories shared on that day. She was able to attend and photograph several media interviews attended by the Auxiliary Directorate of Public Affairs represented by Hector Corrales, AUX PA1. Auxiliarist Corrales hand picked Sydney and three other auxiliarist to participate in this mission. Sidney was briefly able to join a boat crew on a patrol before the Sector Maryland-National Capital Region Commander, Capt. Patrick Burkett, gave the order to cease operations due to the increasing ice and snow that caused worsening weather conditions. Sydney was able to sit in on an interview of Captain Burkett by Inside Edition. She worked about eight hours in nearly 20-degree weather and snow. Sydney stated that "it was a great opportunity and I'd definitely do it again in a heartbeat!"

Enjoy a few of the hundreds of photos taken by Sydney on Inauguration Day.





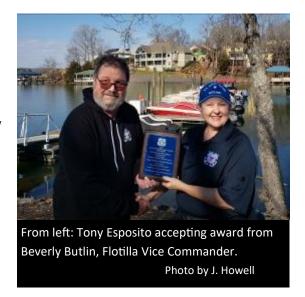




Recognizing Our Partner in Boating Safety

On 24 January 2025, Flotilla 26-02 presented a local marina in Tega Cay, South Carolina with an award for their continued support of Public Education and Recreational Boating Safety for 2024. Members of the Lake Wylie Flotilla were welcomed each month to talk to the boating public, perform free vessel safety checks, and provide brochures and information on boating safety classes, State and Federal boating regulations, and other safety information at this marina.

In addition, all of the marina staff took the Boat America Safe Boating Course taught by Flotilla 26-02 and Division Public Education Officers and Instructors. We look forward to working with this team again to promote safe boating for 2025!



Mid-Atlantic Boat Show 2025



Division 054-26 participated in the Mid-Atlantic Boat Show at the Charlotte Convention Center on 6-8 February 2025. Throughout the three days, Auxiliary members from several flotillas volunteered to meet the public and provide information about boating safety education available throughout the region. Luckily, Coastie and the boat's operators were ready to roll for the occasion.

The children loved the interaction and many children and adults were drawn to the USCAUX booth to learn about boating safety. Coastie even found a friend during the debut at the show!





Jarrett Rheeder

Excels as Auxiliarist and Sea Scout

Jarrett Rheeder, a Coast Guard Auxiliarist and Sea Scout, can be very proud of his latest accomplishment. He has earned the Quartermaster rank, the highest rank in the

Sea Scouts. Jarett is a member of Ship 459 which is chartered with the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, Flotilla 054-26-04, in Denver, North Carolina.

Jarrett is the first scout in the Piedmont Council to earn the Quartermaster Rank and adds that to his past accomplishments of earning the highest rank in the Boy Scouts, the Eagle Rank, and the highest rank in Venturing Scouts, the Summit rank. These accomplishments make him the first Scout in the Piedmont Council to earn all three of these prestigious ranks.

Since joining the Auxiliary in February 2023, Jarrett has earned his Vessel Examiner Certification and is ready for his Qualifying Examination for boat crew. This year he was appointed as FSO-AS of Flotilla 26-04. One of his goals is to recruit more sea scouts into Skipper of Ship 459. the Auxiliary. Bravo Zulo, Jarrett!



From left: Jarrett Rheeder congratulated by Tomas Dewey,



Jarrett marks the occasion with many well-wishers. From left: James Barton, 26 -04; Laurette Rheeder, Jarrett's Mom; Scott Wigginton, 26-04, Jarrett, 26-04; Tom Dewey, Skipper; Pierre Rheeder, Jarrett's Dad, 26-04 and Scout Leader; Brad Greer, Scout Leader.

Experienced Boat Crew and Coxswains Team Up To Provide a Positive Training Experience

Submitted by Gary Eifried, SO-OP



Training new Auxiliarists to become qualified crew members is always a challenge. It takes time and dedication on the part of the trainee, lots of resources, and mentoring from qualified boat crew personnel. It is especially difficult on the lakes of Western North Carolina, which are hours apart from one another, and often have only one or maybe two facilities available for on-the-water (OTW) experiences at each location. Couple these constraints with the

fact that we are many miles from the coast and have minimal on-site contact with the active-duty side. In a good year, we have been lucky to qualify one or two new crew members in the entire Division 26.



Therefore, this year, experienced crew and coxswains from across the Division's flotillas joined forces to prepare and conduct a division-level training program. Starting in January, four-hour hands-on training sessions were conducted monthly; Zoom training supplemented the in-person classes on alternate weeks each month. The goal is to provide each trainee with initial exposure to each of the tasks required for crew qualification. Some of the covered

topics include marlinspike, first aid, crew duties, man-overboard procedures, towing and navigation. These skills will be practiced and honed during the upcoming OTW training starting in April.

Twenty boat crew trainees are actively participating in the program, mentored by five experienced coxswains and four experienced crew. Our goal is to prepare each trainee with the skills and patrol time required to successfully undergo a crew Qualifying Examination (QE) before the end of 2025.

Fun with First Responders

Story and photos submitted by Beverly Butlin, FSO-PA, 26-02

On 15 March 2025, members of the Lake Wylie Flotilla were thrilled to be a part of the 2nd Annual "Fun with First Responders" event in Fort Mill, South Carolina. Mark Briggs, Beverly Butlin, Ray Webber, and Adam DeLuca were present from Flotilla 26-02.



The team enjoyed speaking with the visiting public about boating safety classes, free vessel safety checks, and life jackets. Many children visited the booth with their families and loved receiving coloring and activity books and stickers.



A highlight of the event was seeing the helicopters landing. This was a remarkable event with local police, the fire department, EMS, and other participating organizations.

Water 'n Kids Program

Story and photos submitted by Beverly Butlin, FSO-PA, 26-02

On 26 February 2025, Lake Wylie instructors Beverly Butlin, Mark Briggs, and Tom Edwards, along with Coastie, had a wonderful time presenting the Water 'n Kids program to a group of students who belonged to the 4-H Club at Clover Elementary School in South Carolina. Thirty-three students and two teachers loved Coastie and had a great time learning about boats and safety in and around the water.





The Water 'n Kids program is interactive. The instructors display safety items such as life jackets, throw rings, first aid kits, fire extinguishers, and flashlights. The children are taught how to know when a life jacket fits them properly.

The program is all about being safe in a boat and around the water. The students learn how water is a natural resource to be respected and safely enjoyed.

If you would like more information about the program contact Beverly Butlin, Flotilla 26-02.

Vessel Safety Exams Scheduled

Below is a schedule of Vessel Safety Exams planned by Mark Briggs, SO-VE. If you plan to attend, let your FC and FSO-VE know. If you need supervised first time VSC's or need to get out of REYR, this is your opportunity.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Time</u>
12 April	Tega Cay Marina	0900-1300
1 May	Allison Creek Park	0900-1300
3 Мау	Hickory Lake Marina	0900-1300
10 May	Tega Cay Marina	0900-1300
7 June	Allison Creek Park	0900-1300
14 June	Tega Cay Marina	0900-1300
12 July	Tega Cay Marina	0900-1300
9 August	Tega Cay Marina	0900-1300

Addresses of the above Marinas:

Tega Cay Marina: 28000 Marina Drive, Tega Cay, South Carolina Allison Creek Park: 2499 Viesta Road, York, South Carolina

Hickory Lake Marina: 6706 Limbaugh Lane, Hickory, North Carolina

Introducing "Suddenly in Command" Course

The <u>Suddenly in Command Course</u> is now being offered at Blythe Landing Boating Safety Center and is intended for those that boat with someone who is experienced, but they themselves are not experienced. It arms the student with some basic knowledge and encourages planning in case of an emergency that debilitates the primary operator.

The course is approximately two hours in length. No boating safety certificate is awarded. At the present time, Flotilla 26-04, Lake Norman West, is offering the course at <u>Blyth Landing Boating Safety Center</u>, in the building next to the boat ramps, at 15901 NC HWY 73, Huntersville, NC. The schedule for the course can be seen below.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>
17 May	11:00 am
14 June	10:00 am
26 July	10:00 am



Boat America Classes on the Books

Location: Denver Fire Department, 3956 North NC 16 Business Hwy, Denver, NC 28037

Registration: http://uscgaux2604.org/pe

Cost: \$35 per student paid in advance, lunch included.

Date	Start Time	Sponsoring Flotilla
17 May	8: 00 am	26-04 Lake Norman West
19 July	8: 00 am	26-04 Lake Norman West
20 September	8: 00 am	26-04 Lake Norman West
15 November	8: 00 am	26-04 Lake Norman West

Location: Blythe Landing Boating Safety Center, (building next to boat ramps),

15901 NC Hwy 73, Huntersville, NC

Registration: Information to be provided soon **Cost:** \$35 per student, lunch included

Date	Start Time	Sponsoring Flotilla
3 Мау	8:00 am	26-01 Lake Norman
21 June	8:00 am	26-04 Lake Norman West
16 August	8:00 am	26-05 Lake Hickory
1 September	8:00 am	26:02 Lake Wilie

Location: Brass Pro Shop (formerly Cabela's)

1000 Cabelas Drive, Fort Mill, South Carolina

Registration: https://wow.uscgaux.info/content.php?unit=054-26-02

Cost: \$35.00

Date	Start Time	Sponsoring Flotilla
26 April	9:00 am	26-02 Lake Wylie
24 May	9:00 am	26-02 Lake Wylie
28 June	9:00 am	26-02 Lake Wylie
26 July	9:00 am	26:02 Lake Wilie
23 August	9:00 am	26:02 Lake Wilie
27 September	9:00 am	26:02 Lake Wilie

Hot Topics

- <u>Division 26 Meeting.</u> The next Division 26 meeting will be held on **19 April 2025** at the Denver Fire Department at 3956 North NC 16 Business Hwy, Denver, NC 28037.
- Grand Opening at Blythe Landing. On 17 May 2025 plan to attend the celebration at the <u>Joshua Murray</u>
 Boating, Safety, and Awareness Initiative at Blythe Landing at 15901 NC Highway 73, Huntersville, North Carolina.
- What are you planning for NSBW? National Safe Boating Week 2025 is scheduled for 17 –23 May. It is time for members of every flotilla to make plans for public affairs opportunities, vessel safety checks, public education for adults and children, postings on social media and articles in the newspaper. Many wonderful resources are available at https:// safeboatingcampaign.com/resources/ To the right is an example of resources available.



- <u>Surface Operations Workshop 2025</u> All coxswains, crew, PWC operators, paddle craft operators, and trainees <u>must complete the workshop by 30 June 2025</u>. Workshop presentations <u>must be delivered by a certified instructor</u> who is qualified in the respective program. Self-Attestation is not permitted.
- <u>Telecommunications Workshop 2025 Required</u> for operators and owners of Auxiliary Radio Facilities. <u>Must complete the workshop by 30 June 2025</u>. Strongly recommended for Telecommunications Operator (TCO), or training for TCO qualification. The workshop presentations <u>must be delivered by a certified instructor</u> who is qualified in the respective program. Self-Attestation is not permitted.

Recruitment Award for Rick Croasdale

Story submitted by B. Butlin, VFC, FSO-PA Photo by T. Edwards, FSO-PB

Richard Croasdale accepts the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Recruitment Annual Service Performance Award from Mark Briggs, FC, for having recruited at least seven new members in 2024 for Lake Wylie Flotilla 26-02. Rick worked tirelessly as FSO-HR for Flotilla 26-02 for several years and in 2025 assumed the SO-HR position for Division 26. We are proud and thankful of all his efforts in growing our Auxiliary membership.



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Feedback, articles, pictures are most welcome and should be sent to: Sharon Eifried, Editor, seifried@towson.edu.

