

# Crofton - West County Gazette

## Year in review: 2012

By **JAKE LINGER** Community Editor | Posted: Thursday, January 3, 2013 1:00 pm

So, 2012 happened ...

There was so much that took place in Crofton and west county last year.

So much, in fact, that it would be tough to duplicate — much less exceed — such news-making events as the opening of Waugh Chapel Towne Centre, the continuing emergence of Crofton country music artist Ashley Forrest or the West County Chamber's 50th anniversary bash, which took place on the site of the old Nevamar plant, soon to be the home to the Flats170 at Academy Yard apartment complex.

West County Chamber of Commerce President Claire Louder said 2013 will “be a continuation” of the growth which took place in 2012. “But it’s just gonna get bigger and better,” she said.

Historic growth had an effect on nearly every aspect of west county life: more than ever people want to live, work, invest and go to school here.

West county is where it’s at.

The past 12 months made for “a fabulous year for west county,” Louder said. The area has been on a meteoric rise and 24-hour gambling with added table games at Maryland Live! in 2013 will have all eyes on Arundel Mills.

Crofton has remained a top destination for home and business owners. Once shuttered buildings are again being occupied by new businesses and the town’s residents are actively participating in the community.



*West County growth is “just gonna get bigger and better,” said Claire Louder, President of the West County Anne Arundel County Chamber of Commerce. The area has been on a meteoric rise...*

Greater Crofton Chamber Executive Director Judy Wilson said she is happy with the growth of 2012. She referred to 2013 as a year of “new beginnings,” and said her main goal from the point of view of the chamber is to continue supporting existing businesses and welcoming new ones.

“We want to continue that ‘Buy Local’ aspect,” Wilson said. “Despite some challenges, I think 2012 overall was a successful year for new and existing businesses.”

Crofton residents Adelene Dillon and Kristin Gatling, along with their 12-year-old daughter Paige, organized a pair of food and clothing drives for victims of Superstorm Sandy. Several local businesses stepped up and donated items, storage space or financial assistance to help the family achieve its goals.

As far as Wilson is concerned, she said, there should be no surprise at how the Crofton community comes together.

“That kind of action speaks volumes,” she said. “Crofton residents continue to prove why it’s a good place to live and work.”

Here are five of the top stories that affected west county in 2012:

**1. Crofton “Joker”** — Neil Edwin Prescott, 28, gained national attention when police raided his Crofton apartment after he allegedly threatened to shoot up his Prince George’s County workplace and referred to himself as a “joker.” The reference to the movie theater shootings in Colorado by a man wearing make up like the “Batman” villain and Prescott’s legal gun collection was enough to take the story nationwide, even if police ended up charging Prescott with just one count of misdemeanor phone misuse.

**2. Odenton Gateway** — The mixed use complex, seen as a linchpin of the Odenton Town Center, marked an important milestone with the opening of its centerpiece in December, an Anne Arundel Medical System-Johns Hopkins joint venture medical office building. The Haven at Odenton Gateway opened in April with 252 apartments.

**3. Redistricting of Crofton schools** — After months of study, county schools Superintendent recommended a plan to deal with growth by dividing students who Crofton Meadows Elementary School between the South River and Arundel high schools’ feeder systems. Crofton-area schools are divided between the two high school districts, and students at Crofton Middle School already attend both schools after leaving the eighth grade. But this would be the first time Crofton students at the same elementary school would be on track to attend different high schools.

**4. Kaufmann’s Tavern becomes J. King’s** — On April 2, 75 years of history came to an end when owner James King changed the name of Kaufmann’s Tavern in Gambrills to J. Kings. King timed the change to \$350,000 in renovations, an updated menu and a whole redesign in the presentation of the restaurant. “I’ve put my blood, sweat and tears into this restaurant for the last 10 years and I think the name change alerts the general public there’s some changes going on,” he said.

**5. Rieve’s Deli** — National drugstore chain Walgreens opened its seventh store in Anne Arundel County, time settling in Odenton. In order to make room for the new drugstore, Rieve’s Deli, known for its homemade sandwiches, was moved approximately 30 to 40 feet backward and another 20 to 30 feet

to the right of its current position, which sits at 8374 Piney Orchard Parkway. “It’s pretty cool,” Rieve’s owner Sunny Patel said in regards to watching his business physically moved. “I’ve never seen it before.”

Here are five of the most anticipated storylines of 2013:

1. Will a looming “fiscal cliff” have an effect on further west county growth such as Odenton Town Center?
2. Should Koch Homes be allowed to build its proposed housing complex and a new Odenton elementary school?
3. Will the Crofton rubble landfill controversy finally be decided?
4. Could 2013 finally be the year that CRCC gets a full head of steam?
5. What business will anchor Odenton Shopping Center?

Stay tuned — even the Mayans can’t predict what 2013 will bring to Crofton and west county.