



# NEWS RELEASE

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*For Immediate Release*

## **Sold-Out Taste of Harford Welcomes More Than 450 Guests**

*Harford County Public Library Foundation's May 19 event connected farms with restaurants and eateries in support of "buy local"*

**Belcamp, Md., May 22, 2024** – More than 450 guests attended Harford County Public Library Foundation's sold-out Taste of Harford on May 19 at Vignon Manor Farm in Havre de Grace. A buy local, taste local event, Taste of Harford celebrated the diverse flavors and skills of the Harford County agricultural and culinary communities.

Taste of Harford showcased local restaurants and agricultural producers, including farmers, breweries, and wineries, in addition to a farmer's market, live music and art. Each of the restaurant participants provided guests with a "taste" of a specialty item determined by the agricultural producer or restaurant. All participants were encouraged to incorporate locally sourced ingredients in their recipes.

"Taste of Harford was an incredible afternoon filled with amazing food, drinks and music but, most importantly, a profound sense of community. Our 450 guests, sponsors and 140 partners – including farms, restaurants and other small businesses – came together to bring this event to life and support the Library," said Mary Hastler, CEO of Harford County Public Library. "Farms donated produce to restaurants to support their tastes; restaurants shared tables, equipment and even staff to help one another despite being competitors. The spirit of community and collaboration made Sunday truly extraordinary."

A group of VIP judges, led by Master Chef John Shields of Gertrude's Chesapeake Kitchen, selected the winner of the Restaurant Association of Maryland's Seafood Golden Ticket Award to attend the World Food Championships in Indianapolis. Chef Michael Everd, chef de cuisine at The Local, received the honor for a sushi roll that incorporated blue catfish into the recipe.

All the participating restaurants competed in the "Best Bite" competition, voted on by guests at Taste of Harford. The winners were Latitude Seafood Company for seafood; Pairings Bistro in the meat category; Mr. Souvlaki in the vegetarian category; Tropical Smoothie Café for the non-

alcoholic beverage category, Broom's Bloom Dairy for desserts; and Newberry Café and Bakery for baked goods.

Sponsors of Taste of Harford were American Design and Build Ltd., American Sentry Solar, Freedom Federal Credit Union, Harford's Heart, Keene Dodge Chrysler Jeep Ram, Gemcraft Homes, Klein's ShopRite, KCI Technologies, Harford County Trash Services, Reliant Fish Company, ThinkBig Networks, Frederick Ward Associates, OceanFirst Bank and Proliant.

Partners of Harford County Public Library Foundation's Taste of Harford were Maryland Department of Agriculture, Maryland's Best Seafood, Restaurant Association of Maryland, Harford County Chamber of Commerce, Harford County Farm Bureau, Vignon Manor Farm and Visit Harford!.

Taste partners included The Abbey Burger Bistro, Brad's Farm Market, Broom's Bloom Dairy, Char Hope Foundation, Coffee Coffee, Conrad's Seafood Food Truck, Crossroads Bistro, Das Beirhalle, Earth, Wood & Fire, Falling Branch Brewery, Fallston Barrel House, Fawn View Farm, Fiore Winery, Flavor Cupcakery & Bake Shop, Fresh Source Farms, Full Circle Boards, The Grazing Room at Boards by Dana, Granova Poultry Partners, Harford Vineyard and Winery, High View Farms, Hickory Chance Beef, Independent Brewing Company, Island Spice Grille and Lounge, Jones Family Farm, J'Ville Grille, Latitude Seafood Company, Level Volunteer Fire Company Ladies Auxiliary, Lib's Grill and Catering, The Local, Lohr's Orchard, Maison Intimate Catering, Market Street Brewery, Mr. Souvlaki, Newberry Café and Bakery, One Eleven Main, Parings Bistro, Pond View Farm, Pat's Pizzeria, Say Delicious Confections, Slate Farm Brewery, Sondor's Event Catering LLC, Tropical Smoothie Café, Uncle's, Vandiver Inn and Vodka Salad.

In addition, the following small businesses participated in the Taste of Harford Artisan Market: A&W Art and Design, Crooked Creek Farm, DA. Jennings, Danny's Robinhood Farm, Faye Daniel Designs, Fire Beard Forge, The Firelight Farmgirl, Grid Iron Hill Farm, Heartfelt Florist, Highview Farms, Lit Ladies, Opulent Suds and Vanity's Edge.

Taste of Harford raised more than \$15,000 in support of the Library's Rolling Reader, a bookmobile dedicated to bringing Library programs to children in under-resourced communities. The Rolling Reader's mission is to foster a love of reading and enhance school readiness through interactive learning and targeted outreach.

Harford County Public Library Foundation is a charitable organization that raises funds to augment the financial resources of Harford County Public Library and promotes awareness of its services. Harford County Public Library operates 11 branches located throughout Harford County, offering access to ideas that inform, entertain and inspire. Last year, the Library interacted with its residents more than 12 million times – borrowing free materials, visiting branches and the website, using free WiFi, and attending classes and events. In 2023, Harford County Public Library received Graphic Design USA's American Inhouse Design Award™ for graphic excellence, the third time in five years. For more information, visit [HCPLOnline.org](http://HCPLOnline.org).

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