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# The Greater Olney News

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## Army sergeant has a new home thanks to FDNY hero

by Terri Hogan  
Senior Staff Writer

In honor of the sacrifice of a heroic fire-fighter who lost his life saving others during the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, a local hero has a new home.

The Tunnel to Towers Foundation, created to honor the memory of New York City Fire Department firefighter Stephen Siller, who saved lives at the World Trade Center, recently celebrated the first responder's life and legacy by welcoming Army Sgt. Jonathan Harmon into his new home on Hawkins Creamery Road, north of Laytonsville.

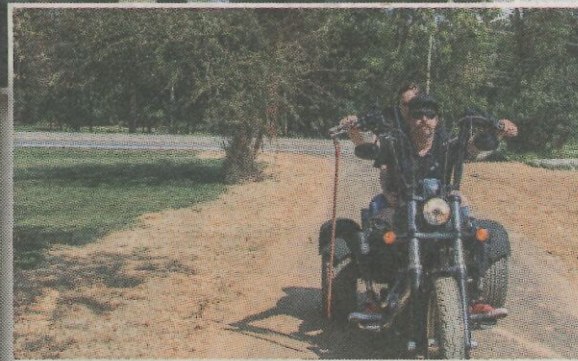
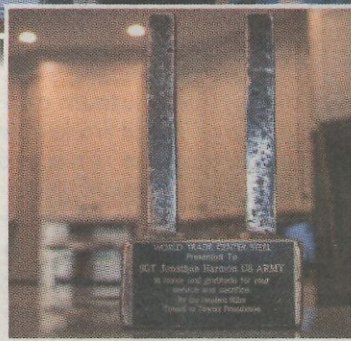
Harmon was the recipient of a brand-new, custom-built, mortgage-free smart home.

"I am still blown away by this place," he said. "When I drive down the street and see this house on the corner, I say, 'Oh my God, that is my house.' It still hasn't really sunk in."

On Sept. 11, the 18th anniversary of the attacks, Harmon received the keys to his new home at a dedication ceremony that began at 9:30 a.m.

A moment of silence was observed at 9:59 a.m., the moment the South Tower of the World Trade Center collapsed in New York

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Tunnel to Towers Foundation

Army Sgt. Jonathan Harmon accepts the keys to a new, customized home from the Tunnel to Towers Foundation, created to honor the memory of New York City Fire Department firefighter Stephen Siller, who saved lives at the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001.

## Holocaust survivor Eva Schloss to bring her message of hope

by Audrey Partington  
Special to The Greater Olney News

For Holocaust survivor Eva Geiringer Schloss, the life and death of Anne Frank is woven into the fabric of her personal history.

The girls were playmates in Amsterdam before their families went into hiding from the Nazis.

Both families were discovered and deported to Auschwitz. Eva and her mother Elfriede survived.

While searching in vain for her father and brother, they reconnected with Otto Frank, the sole survivor of his family. They travelled together back to Holland, where he learned the terrible fate of his family.

Otto and Elfriede bonded over their loss, and eventually wed, making Eva the posthumous stepsister of the famous diarist.

Forty years would pass before Eva would emerge from Anne's shadow and tell her own story. At the age of 90, she continues to speak all over the world, in hopes that the events of the Holocaust will never be repeated.

On Nov. 25 at 7 p.m., she will appear at Col. Zadok Magruder High School in Derwood, in a program presented by the Olney Chabad.

"I wanted to talk when we came back from Auschwitz, but everyone said, 'we know it was terrible, but we have to go on.' So, I suppressed it. I had nightmares and nervous illnesses," Schloss said during a trans-Atlantic telephone call.

Eva moved to England where she met and married Zvi Schloss, with whom she had three daughters and five grandchildren.

"Otto was a wonderful stepfather and a very good grandfather,"

Schloss said. "I loved him as a person. But I was very close to my father, so he couldn't replace him. I often wondered if Otto looked at me and wondered why did this little girl survive and not my little girls."

Otto was given Anne's diary by a former neighbor, Miep Gies, who had hoped to return it to Anne.

"Otto carried it with him all the time and showed it to everyone," Schloss said. "It wasn't so famous then."

After the diary was published in 1947, Otto Frank gave the original to the Dutch government. Today it is on loan to the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam.

"It's in a bullet-proof case, as if it's the Crown Jewel," said Schloss, who was not too impressed with it at first.

"I was still under a depression. I thought, 'She was in hiding, I was

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# The Greater Olney Community

## Olney man to rock the runway at international fashion show

Bert Defoe, 40, will be rocking the runway as a model in the Global Down Syndrome Foundation's 11th annual Be Beautiful Be Yourself Fashion Show, set to take place Nov. 2 in Denver, Colo.

He lives in Olney with his mother and father and black Labrador.

Defoe is very involved with raising funds and advocating for the Down syndrome community.

Last year, he attended the event as a greeter and decided he wanted to participate as a model this year. He submitted a video, where he walked down the hallway as if it were a runway, dancing and showing off his wrestling moves to the song, "Life is a Highway."

He was thrilled to be selected to participate.

"I am very excited and can't wait," Defoe said. "I am most excited about going to Denver and being a fashion model."

He has not done any modeling prior to this event, but has been watching the television show "Project Runway" to learn some tips.

The fashion show is the largest Down syndrome fundraiser in the world, raising over



**Our Community**  
by  
Terri Hogan

\$18 million for life-saving and life-changing research and medical care to date.

An estimated 1,400 guests, including models with Down syndrome, Hollywood and sports celebrities, philanthropists and government officials will attend, including Eric Dane, Quincy Jones, Amanda Booth and Jamie Foxx.

Defoe said he enjoys working around the house, helping to prepare the food and taking care of his dog.

His hobbies include fishing, crabbing and gathering oysters, and he is fan of professional wrestling.

### Brookeville teen is a finalist in talent competition

Peyton Aronow, a junior at Sherwood High School, was a finalist in the PBS Celebration of Music talent contest, which was scheduled to take place Oct. 24 in Baltimore, after The Greater Olney News press time.

She was one of 20 finalists from Maryland, D.C., Virginia and Delaware vying for a chance to compete on the nationally televised "Celebration of Music" show, filming in Los



Global Down Syndrome Foundation

Olney resident Bert Defoe, 40, will model in the Global Down Syndrome Foundation's 11th annual Be Beautiful Be Yourself Fashion Show on Nov. 2 in Denver, Colo.

Angeles and starring musician Ethan Bortnick.

The "Celebration of Music" concept was inspired by Bortnick and his desire to give young musicians the same opportunities PBS afforded him.

Two winners from the Baltimore event will advance. One winner was scheduled to be selected by show producers and the other by viewer votes.

Peyton, 16, is a musical theater performer who aspires to be on Broadway. She was selected as a finalist after submitting an application and videos and participating in telephone interviews.

She the daughter of Alec and Lee Aronow of Brookeville.

Peyton began singing and performing as soon as she could walk and talk, her parents said, and has starred in such roles as Audrey in "Little Shop of Horrors" with Ovations Theatre, Cosette in "Les Miserables" with Ovations Theatre, Tracey in "Hairspray" with Adventure Theatre MTC and Ovations Theatre, and Belle in "Beauty and The Beast" with Blake Summer Theatre.

Peyton also has two other passions. She is

involved in bringing awareness and help to teens with anxiety. She says musical theater provided an outlet that helped her navigate anxiety, so she strives to help other students find ways to cope. She plans on working in the mental health field as a music therapist.

Peyton is also trying to bring awareness to the hazards of vaping. Her grandmother passed away from lung cancer two years ago, which has pushed her to be an advocate against all types of tobacco use, especially amongst her peers.

For more information, go to <https://celebrationofmusic.com>.

### Sherwood Leos collect shoes to empower needy in Uganda

The Sherwood High School Leo Club, sponsored by the Sandy Spring Lions Club, recently completed its first service project of the school year.

Club members collected 98 pairs of shoes, which were donated to Rukundo International, a Gaithersburg-based nonprofit with a mission to empower Uganda's most vulnerable

# Singin' in the Rain



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