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For Immediate Release

Sold Out Crowd of 550 Guests Attend 2nd Annual Taste of Harford

Harford County Public Library Foundation's fundraiser on May 18 celebrated the diverse flavors and skills of the Harford County agricultural and culinary communities

Belcamp, Md., May 21, 2025 – A sold-out crowd of 550 guests attended Harford County Public Library Foundation's 2nd Annual Taste of Harford: Back for Seconds on May 18 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.

The event raised more than $33,000 and will support Harford County Public Library, helping to sustain essential Library programs, resources and services that benefit the entire community.

Taste of Harford showcased 39 local food and drink partners, including restaurants, farmers, breweries and wineries. Each provided guests with a "taste" of a specialty item, and all participants were encouraged to incorporate locally sourced ingredients in their recipes.

"What an incredible day it was shining the spotlight on Harford County's finest agricultural and culinary businesses. The tastes were amazing, the venue was beautiful and the crowd was delighted," said Mary Hastler, CEO of Harford County Public Library. "We are so grateful to our sponsors, event partners and community members who supported the Library at this event."

Guests at Taste of Harford cast votes for their favorite local food and non-alcoholic beverages in the "Best Bite of Harford County" competition categories. The winners were Latitude Seafood Company, seafood; Maison Intimate Catering, meat; Island Spice Grille and Lounge, vegetarian; Jimmy's Famous Seafood, food truck; Newberry Café, baked good; Broom's Bloom Dairy, dessert; Coffee Coffee, non-alcoholic beverage; and Tropical Smoothie Café, smoothies.

In addition, Broom's Bloom Dairy created three flavors— Dewey Decimal Double Dutch Chocolate, Librarian Lemon Lavender and Periodical Peppermint— for guests to sample and vote on to be the ice cream flavor in honor of the Library's upcoming 80th anniversary. Librarian Lemon Lavender was the winning flavor.

Among the "taste" participants were Bacco Italian Wine Bar, Bacco Pizzeria, Broom's Bloom Dairy, Coffee Coffee, CoffeeBar Bel Air, Falling Branch Brewery, Fawn View Farm, Fiore Winery & Distillery, Flavor Bakery & Cafe, Fresh Source Farms, Full Circle Boards, Granova Poultry, Grid Iron Hill Farm, Harford Vineyard & Winery, Highview Farms, Hopkins Farm Brewery, Inferno Phil's Outpost, Island Spice Grille & Lounge, Jimmy's Famous Seafood, Kona Ice, The Ladew Café, Latitude Seafood Company, Ladies Auxiliary of the Level Volunteer Fire Company, Inc., Lib's Catering, The Local, Maison Intimate Catering, Old Line Spirits, One Eleven Main, Newberry Café and Bakery, Pairings Bistro, Pat's Pizza & Grill, Passanante's Home Food Services, Peru's Chicken II, Pompeian, Pond View Farm & Market, Slate Farm Brewery, Sweet Kings, Tropical Smoothie Café and Tutti Paella.

Taste of Harford also featured a farmer's market, artisans, author visits, a silent auction, entertainment and more. The participants included A Pleasant Shoppe, The Blended Bead, Fire Beard Forge, Heartfelt Florist, HopeWorks Global, Odd Bird Bookshop, Peppers and Pots, Southern Sol Shoppe, Sad When It's Gone Desserts and local authors D.A. Jennings, Irmgarde Brown, Kristie Wolf and K.R. Raye.

Master Chef John Shields, an author, food journalist, television host and "Culinary Ambassador of the Chesapeake Bay" from Gertrude's Chesapeake Kitchen, was on hand to meet guests and sign his cookbooks.

"Taste of Harford is more than a celebration of local flavor—it's a testament to the incredible heart of our community," said Amber Shrodes, director of philanthropy and community engagement for Harford County Public Library. "Bringing together farmers, chefs, artisans and neighbors in support of our Library's mission is both a joy and a privilege. The overwhelming turnout and generosity we witnessed reaffirms the vital role the Library plays in enriching lives across Harford County."

Event sponsors were American Design and Build, Ltd., American Sentry Solar, Harford County Government, Harford's Heart, Keene Dodge Chrysler Jeep Ram, Harford County Trash Services, Hillside Lawn Services, Klein's ShopRite of Maryland, Window Depot, Nemphos Braue, LLC, Deer Creek Exteriors, Inc., Brothers Services Company, Elite Home Entertainment, Gemcraft Homes, Harford Bank, Ivy Hill Construction Services, Anna and James Lambdin, Point Breeze Credit Union, Rainbow Restoration of Northeastern MD and ThinkBig Networks, LLC.

Event Partners of Taste of Harford were Harford County Chamber of Commerce, Harford County Office of Economic Development, Harford County Farm Bureau, Restaurant Association of Maryland and Vignon Manor Farm.

Harford County Public Library Foundation raises funding and awareness to support the Library's services, resources, capital improvements and access to information anytime, anywhere, for all people living and working in Harford County. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. All donations are fully tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. For more information, visit HCPLonline.org.

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 2024 Harford County Public

Library received the Maryland Library Association Excellence in Marketing Award for graphic excellence for the second time. For more information, visit HCPLonline.org.

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