

The E-Advocate

formed grassroots groups and launched a petition demanding a moratorium on data center approvals, quickly gathering over 10,000 signatures.

In the June 23, 2026, primary election, Calvert County voters ousted three Republican county commissioners who had previously opposed a pause on data center development. This strong political and community resistance caused AWS to formally withdraw its application in August, 2026. Following the withdrawal, Calvert County officials moved forward with plans to implement a temporary six-month freeze on all future data center site plans.

The data center debate has now come to Anne Arundel County. Under the current code, data centers are generally allowed on parcels zoned for certain commercial, industrial, and mixed uses. Councilmember Nathan Volke has introduced Bill 63-26, which seeks to sharpen the definition of data centers to exclude the massive power- and water- hungry installations as conditional, permitted, or special exception uses in areas with commercial, industrial, or mixed-use zoning. Their exclusion means that they are not allowed under the zoning code. Many organizations have in-house computer servers and similar equipment to support their in-house needs. These are allowed as accessory uses, and any equipment used by government organizations is also excluded from treatment under the bill. Bill 63-26 will be introduced on 9/21 and will expire on 10/23.



Local Artists Recognized – At the 2026 Cherry Blossom Festival, the Rivers of the World Foundation (ROW), held a watercolor painting contest for kids ages 2 to 14+. The contest drew 36 entries, and the theme was World Water Day. ROW arranged for the art to be reviewed by an international panel that included:

- Jeff Huntington, an internationally known Artist and Mural creator.
- Sanjit Dutta, Rivers of the World ROW Foundation member and lead organizer for running the painting competition at the Cherry Blossom Festival.
- Subijoy Dutta, Founding member, ROW Foundation
- Sudhir Nautiyal, ROW member, Founder, Himalayan English School, Ghansali, Uttarakhand, India. Mr. Nautiyal has been judging many arts and Crafts works in Uttarakhand, India.

Here are the winners and honorable mentions with notes from the judges:

Group C (Ages 9 to 14+)

1st place – Nora (Age 10)

Nora's painting utilizes the entire page to communicate a strong sense of nature while employing few elements. A strong horizontal line just above the center point of the composition signifies a landscape and distinguishes the sky and earth. The sky portion is light in color and more open, suggesting daylight, clouds, and open space, broken up by vertical trees reaching out of the earth. The lower portion suggests solid ground with green color depicting grass and a large blue egg shape referencing a body of water.



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2nd Place – Emily (Age 9)

Emily's painting allows the brain to read this composition as a seascape, with a sharp horizontal line dividing the lower third of the page and filled in with blue to signify water. The top two-thirds of the painting is softer, with an assortment of colors that resembles a rainbow, or sunrise or sunset. A piece of land to the left of the composition resembles a cliff with trees, allowing a resting place for the eyes as we travel across the vastness of imagined oceanic space.



3rd Place – Jeannie Freiland (Age 12)

To me, Jeanne Freiland's piece stands out from the other paintings in that it is constructed from minimal elements, focusing on one powerful subject – a tree. More specifically, it references a cherry blossom tree with its falling petals suggesting a force of gravity.



Special Place – Noah Mazza-Bell (Age 18)

Noah's painting appears somewhat abstract, utilizing loose, whimsical strokes, suggesting movement, and arbitrarily placed shapes and color that suggest a kind of order out of chaos. A vertical blue shape in the central area suggests a body of water that allows the eye to travel between a purple ground at the bottom and a row of trees at the top.



Group B (Ages 5 to 8)

1st Place – Alexandra Tuangco (Age 8)

Alexandra's painting has a conceptual lean – a beautiful array of rainbow-like colors suggesting sky tinted by the sun and water vapor, with a weight of blue at the bottom to anchor the painting while suggesting water. Without being too overt, the words "No Throwing Trash" appears faintly through the blending of the water-based medium, delivering a conscientious message to care for the planet.

