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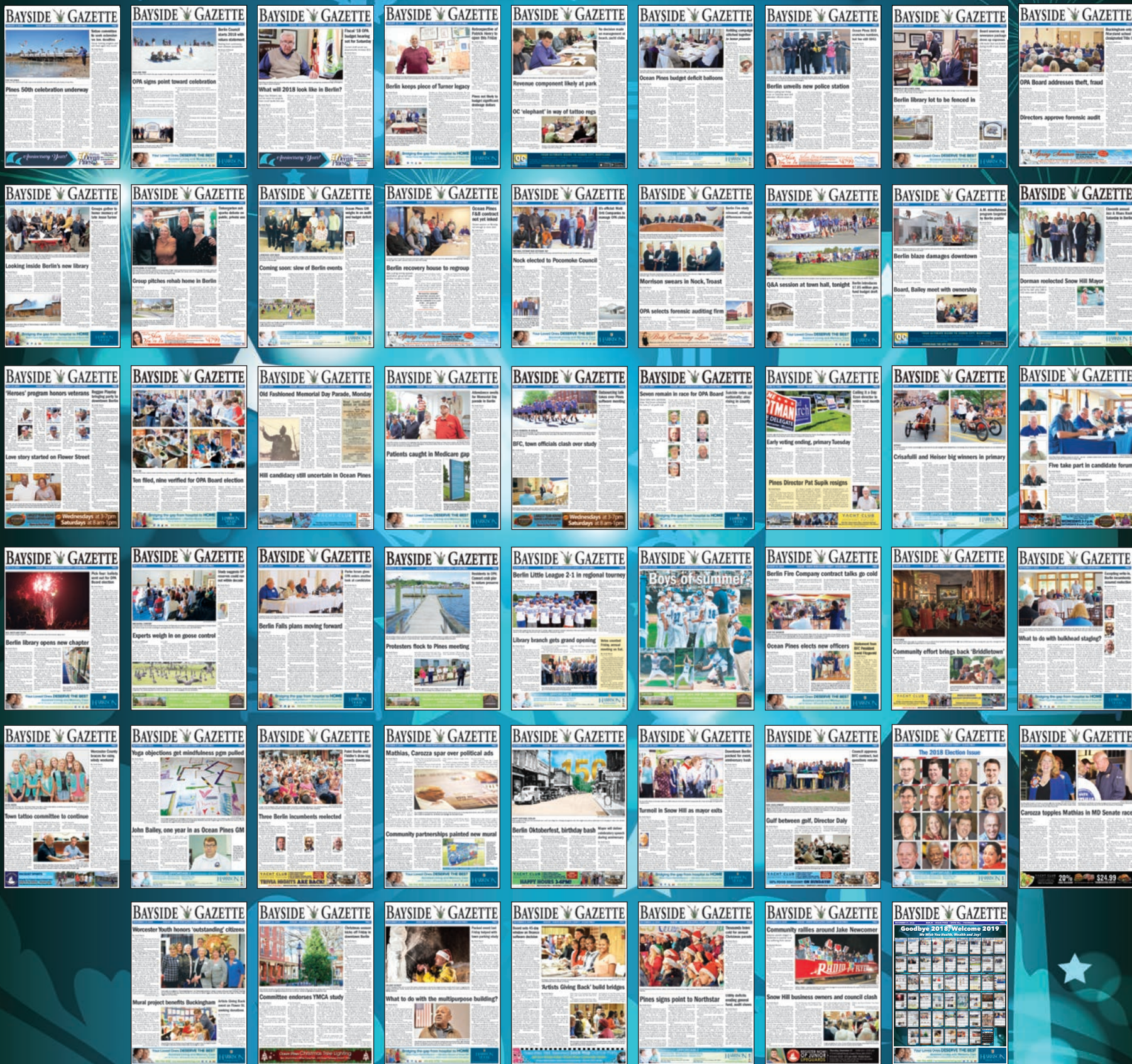
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YEAR IN REVIEW 2018

Berlin, OPA celebrate milestone anniversaries

By Josh Davis
Associate Editor

(Dec. 27, 2018) The Ocean Pines Association turned 50 this year, while the Town of Berlin celebrated its 150th anniversary.

Each community celebrated in its own way, as the association held several events throughout the year, while the town's observance was a low-key celebration during an Oktoberfest event on Oct. 13.

Ocean Pines' slate of semicentennial events began on Jan. 9 with the unveiling of a new 50th anniversary entrance sign on Cathell Road.

The sign featured a new logo created by resident Lisa Perez, who won an association-wide design contest held the previous June.

Jennifer Cropper-Rines, chairwoman of the 50th Anniversary Committee, opened the ceremony by thanking event chairpersons for planning, public works staff for installing signs at all three community entrances, and the board of directors and staff for their support.

She said Boise Cascade created the community in 1968.

"From what I understand, they were boating people over here from Ocean City, driving people over here from Ocean City, and they really had a vision," Cropper-Rines said. "They dug the canals, they built the ameni-

ties, and it's really turned into a wonderful place that houses 12,000 year-round residents and 8,000 summer people.

"I don't know if they ever anticipated we could be that big," she added.

Association President Doug Parks said it was a wonderful experience to be part of such an event. He credited volunteers with helping realize plans for the anniversary.

See SEASON Page 4



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YEAR IN REVIEW 2018

Season of events mark 50th anniversary in Ocean Pines

Continued from Page 2

“That’s what it takes to get events like this to happen ... people taking their time who care about the community, who want to contribute,” he said. “Hopefully, throughout the year we’ll have successes in running all these events.”

General Manager John Bailey closed the ceremony with a speech. “Congratulations, Ocean Pines,” he said. “Fiftieth anniversaries are celebratory times that provide the opportunity to do three things: one, to give thanks and to remember; two, to celebrate, congratulate and to party; and three, to encourage and instill hope.”

Bailey thanked staff, founding residents, board and committee members and volunteers who served “during our first 50 years.”

“Congratulations to those who make Ocean Pines what it is – a great place to live, a great place to work, a great place to work in and around, and a great place to play,” he said. “And congratulations as well to the county and the state, for Ocean Pines is indeed an asset to the larger community around us.”

“And here’s to the future. May it be said 50 years from now that we here today were responsible for recommitting ourselves to a vision of being the best place to live on the Eastern Shore,” he added.

Additional anniversary events included a parade and community day, golf tournament, beach bash, racquet sports tournament, cocktail party, and the winter gala at the yacht club.

Perhaps the lone bump in the road was the planned unveiling of a time capsule that turned out to be, well, lost in time.

Cropper-Rines, on Aug. 11, addressed a crowd by saying there was good news and bad news about the capsule, reportedly buried in Ocean Pines 30 years ago.

“The good news is, we do know where all the power lines and utilities are in the area of the southeast corner of the admin building,” she said. “The bad news is, we can’t find the time capsule.”

Cropper-Rines said the capsule was buried in 1988 to mark the occasion of Ocean Pines’ 20th anniversary. A monument to it stands near the southeast corner of the administration building.

“The first thing we did was dig where the monument was – and there was no time capsule there,” she said.

Next, members of the 50th anniversary committee tried everything from metal detectors to divining rods to find the elusive memorial.

Cropper-Rines said she even tracked down the chairman of the 20th anniversary committee and examined photos he had taken some 30 years ago.

“We looked at the photos and realized they’d obtained the monument several months after they buried the time capsule, so the pictures made it look like it was in a completely different place.”

Holes dug in the capsule quest were large – some as much as four or five feet deep, she said.

“There was one hole we saw water in,” she said. “The public works guys were wonderful. It was like a treasure hunt – everybody wanted to find the thing, but we didn’t find it.”

Executive Assistant Michelle Bennett tracked down an old press release, “so we do have an idea of what was in [the capsule],” Cropper-Rines said. That apparently included photographs from various Ocean Pine clubs, a 20th anniversary parade videotape, and an audiotape of an original song about Ocean Pines.

“To make a long story short, we’re going to do another time capsule this year,” Cropper-Rines said. “And we’re going to come up with something slightly more clever than putting it in the ground, I think, which appears not to have been a good idea.”

She added a capsule buried 10 years ago was found and would be re-located.

“We are not going to look at the contents, because we’re not supposed to for 20 more years,” she said.

“That’s it. It’s kind of a bummer, but ... it was a little bit of an adventure,” she added.

Anniversary events in concluded on Dec. 14 with an old-fashioned sock hop held at the community center.

“Every one of them served a different purpose,” 50th anniversary committee member Cheryl Jacobs said. “We tried to reach as many people in the community as possible and give them different opportunities to come out and celebrate. I think they all have been extremely successful.”

Committee member Sharyn O’Hare said anniversary events have been “the one thing to bring people together this year, which we desperately needed to do.” She said the anniversary helped spread community pride and positivity.

“We live in such a fabulous place and we exposed so many parts of the community when we featured them,” she said. “For example, the golf tournament showed off the beautiful golf course. That was sold out in January for a June golf tournament.”

“And the yacht club did an outstanding job at the gala,” O’Hare continued. “That was probably the best party we’ve ever had in Ocean Pines.”

YEAR IN REVIEW 2018

Pines parties had ‘something for everyone’

And the tennis club hosted a tennis tournament that did very well. So, every facility has pretty much been featured with events.”

She said events were all volunteer-run and paid for by sponsorships.

“It hasn’t cost Ocean Pines any money at all to do this,” she said.

O’Hare, who organized the yacht club gala, said that was her probably favorite event of the year.

“I also thought the parade was a great event and the family fun [community day] at the Veteran’s Memorial Park was awesome,” she said. “There was just a lot of fun things.”

Cropper-Rines agreed, “The gala was spectacular.

“I think it was top-notch and it was really, really just the bomb,” she said. “I also thought the history panel [in July] was very well attended for what it was, and the community day – so many people came out for that and the parade. The beach bash was also really fun, and the cocktail party was on my birthday!”

Cropper-Rines said a final wrap of financials would be done and a new time capsule would be put together in January.

“It think [overall] it’s been excel-

lent,” she said. “We achieved the goal of having something for everyone, and I think all of the events were well attended, well received and enjoyed. Everybody seems to have gotten involved and enjoyed it all, and I think it’s been really good.”

Throughout all of the events, O’Hare, who organized the 35th anniversary, said Cropper-Rines “has been amazing” as a leader.

“She made it all come together, juggling a lot of different hats in the air,” O’Hare said. “And Denise Sawyer, [the marketing and public relations director] at Ocean Pines, has kept all the volunteers from jumping off a bridge all our event events. Denise has just been wonderful through the whole thing. It’s been a great, all-around event.”

Meanwhile, in Berlin, Mayor Gee Williams delivered a speech on Artisan’s Green during the annual Oktoberfest held throughout the downtown area.

Williams’ roots in the town go back three generations. His grandfather, W. G. Williams Sr., grew up in southern Sussex County and moved to Berlin during the late 1920s.

W. G. Williams Sr. opened

Williams Tavern during the 1930s in Berlin and sold the business to his son in 1969, who then operated it until he passed away in 1987. Williams said his mother held onto the tavern until the mid 1990s.

William Gee Williams III began his local career as a journalist and newspaper publisher. He was elected to the Town Council in 2003 and became acting mayor in 2008 when then-Mayor Thomas Cardinale passed away in office.

Williams was elected mayor in 2008, 2012 and in 2016.

“There are so many stories and so many families – the Phillips family, the Harrison family, the Esham family, the Moore family, as well as the Ayres, Hall, Purnell and Whaley families, and many, many others that have deep, deep roots easily into the 1800s – if not even later,” Williams said. “Like most small towns, every generation has had to stumble to create opportunities for the next generation, but here at least we’ve always kept these core families that have been able to plant their roots here.

“That has created the core that has now made it possible for people from all kinds of background with all kinds

of diversity – who share our values – to come here and succeed. And it’s more about shared values than who your family is,” Williams said.

The story of the Town of Berlin today is a story of success. During the last five or so years, national publications almost weekly have named the small town of just 4,000-5,000 people one of the best in the country for its shopping, its robust event schedule, and its historical charm.

“It’s an unexpected pleasure, which I think also sums up a lot of peoples’ experience when they first come to Berlin,” Williams said. “Certainly, I never expected this to happen during my lifetime, and certainly not during my public trusteeship as mayor of the town.

“It’s been very gratifying, not only as mayor but as a lifelong resident, to see what a small community can do when everybody gets involved,” he continued. “Everybody doesn’t have to do everything, but I think most people have to do something to support the folks who are trying to get things done.”

Just prior to delivering his speech, Williams welcomed residents and
See TOWN Page 6

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YEAR IN REVIEW 2018

Town of Berlin celebrates 150th anniversary

Continued from Page 5
guests to what he said was a joyous occasion.

“As anyone who is familiar with Berlin’s history, our community has several different years that can all be properly termed the origins of today’s Berlin,” he said.

“So, whether you point to the 300-acre land grant that dates to 1677, known as the Burley tract, the development of the Burley Plantation and opening of the plantation’s Burleigh Inn guest house and tavern in 1683, or the many other historic markers that have endured the test of time, we see an enduring story line of an innovative, resilient, community that in good times and bad has always successfully adapted to changing times.

“Although our community’s beginning is largely owed to the creation of a successful classic southern plantation, the first major test of our endurance and determination to overcome adversity, came immediately after the end of the Civil War.

“With the plantation system gone, residents of this community determined their future rested with the creation of an incorporated town.

“After the opening of Town Hall in 1867, in less than year the Town of

Berlin was formerly chartered in 1868.

“Within a generation, Berlin built upon its agricultural heritage with the opening of Harrisons Nurseries. In just a few years, Harrisons Nurseries grew into what was the largest employer in town and for several decades the largest grower of fruit trees in the world.

“This first revitalization of our town’s economy soon led to the opening of the Calvin B. Taylor Bank in Berlin, today the largest locally owned bank in Worcester County.

“Berlin became a hub of commerce and trade through the early years of the 20th Century until the Great Depression of the early 1930s, when once again Berlin’s economy was challenged to its foundations.

“Like thousands and thousands of

towns throughout America, Berlin endured the double impact of the Great Depression, which included both the national financial crisis and the mass migration of populations from rural areas to cities across America.

“There were committed efforts to modernize in many ways, including the popular belief after World War II, that to be a modern, vibrant community, it was very important to remove, or cover over, the architecture of earlier times.

“Berlin energetically went about covering over our downtown buildings with either Form Stone – tin – or other coatings considered more contemporary in the 1950s, ’60s and ’70s. Even the Atlantic Hotel, which had fallen on very hard times, was blocked out of sight by a more modern commercial building.

“But it did not take long for community leaders and citizens of all stripes to soon realize that in our well-intended efforts to modernize, we had lost much of our historical and architectural heritage.

“There was an understanding that the more our town tried to be like the rest of the country, the less we became Berlin.

“With typical Berlin determination some Main Street property owners started restoring downtown buildings to their original, authentic architecture. The initial momentum created by the restoration, of what is known today as Renaissance Plaza, was shortly followed by effort to save the Atlantic Hotel.

“Embracing National Historic standards, a group of 10 local investors, all longtime local families, unselfishly and with great foresight, came forward to save the historic Atlantic Hotel from being demolished.

“The belief of these Berlin families, motivated not for profit but for what would be best for Berlin, became the tipping point in the revitalization of our town.

“This important investment in our town’s future created a momentum and movement towards the rediscovery



FILE PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE
Berlin Mayor Gee Williams in October speaks during a 150th anniversary celebration of the town's incorporation.

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YIR 2018

Williams: ‘We are never too small to lead by example’

ery of Berlin’s historic architectural and cultural heritage that continues today.

“The continuing story of Berlin overcoming not only change, but adversity, is very much a part of our community’s DNA.

“It is clearly evident that this can-do spirit of not only overcoming challenges brought on by change, but also the commitment to not give up our history, culture or appreciation for our natural environment, are the foundation of our Town of Berlin’s ongoing legacy, as we pass the torch from one generation to another.

“Berlin is not backward, but we are most certainly resilient.

“In the early years of the 21st Century, we have embraced a transition where we willingly share our community with people of all backgrounds and origins who also share our traditional All-American values.

“These values are based on mutual respect, tolerance and a belief that we can build a better community together than we ever could solely as individuals.

“We have a wonderful melting pot where your importance to our Berlin today – and tomorrow – is not based on how long you have lived here, but on how much you share in our common commitment to be actively involved in not only making out town a great place to live and work today, but for the generations that will follow.

“Such a commitment is often associated with traditional families, but with the complexity and speed of change in contemporary American life, our extended family of Berlin is becoming a community that is welcoming, diverse, optimistic and yes, in these early years of the 21st Century, even younger.

“Our values have influenced not only our endurance, but also by the potential for our future.

“In Berlin – we honor our past, but we don’t live in it.

“In Berlin – as long as you are not annoying anyone, or breaking the law, we will tolerate almost anything – except intolerance.

“In Berlin – we understand that just because we choose to live in a small town, does not mean we choose to live in a small world.

“In Berlin – we realize that just because we are a small town, we are never too small to lead by example.

“Looking forward to our 200th Anniversary – 50 years from now – we can truly say, based on our past and our present, with optimism and confidence, that for our Berlin, ‘The Best is Yet to Come!’”

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YEAR IN REVIEW 2018

Berlin Little League teams win state titles

By Josh Davis
Associate Editor
(Dec. 27, 2018) By all accounts, it was another milestone year for Berlin Little League.

Vice President of Baseball Operations Ron Knerr in October praised players, staff and volunteers throughout the league, saying, “It doesn’t happen by chance that in one year the Town of Berlin – tiny little Berlin on the Eastern Shore – has two state champions ... that is just a phenomenal fete.”

“It’s probably never going to be repeated. I hope it does – but I can’t see it ever happening again,” Knerr added.

The Berlin Little League girls’ all-star softball team won District 8 locally and then won the State of Maryland tournament, finally playing in Bristol, Connecticut during the Eastern Regional tournament.

It was the first state championship for a Berlin softball team, but the boys’ 11-12-year-old all-stars stole many of the headlines, also winning District 8 and the state championship, and finishing as the runner-up in the Eastern Regional tournament.

It took a perfect game to keep the

Berlin baseball All-Stars from a return trip to the Little League World Series, and that’s exactly what the Mid Island Little Leaguers from

Staten Island, New York got from their starter during the Mid-Atlantic championship game on Sunday, Aug. 12.

Pitcher Gregory Bruno was dominant for New York, tossing a perfect game in the 4-0 win that was broad-
See NEAR MISS Page 10



Berlin Little League baseball all-stars in August play in the regional championship game in Bristol, Connecticut.

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YEAR IN REVIEW 2018

Near miss for World Series return

Continued from Page 8

cast nationally on ESPN. He allowed no runs on no hits and no walks, and struck out 11 in six innings.

With the win, undefeated New York advanced to the Little League World Series in South Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

Berlin was 4-2 overall in the tournament, earning decisive wins over teams from Delaware (6-0), New Jersey (11-1), Pennsylvania (6-0) and Washington, D.C. (18-7). The Berlin All-Stars fell to New Jersey 6-2, but knocked the team out of the tournament during the semifinal game.

Overall, it was the most successful season since 2014, when Berlin made it to final game of the United States Little League World Series in Livermore, California.

During the Mid-Atlantic tournament this year, Alex Navarro led the team in batting average, .529, and hits, nine, while Owen Knerr smacked a team-leading five homers and nine RBIs, and posted an impressive 2.094 OPS.

Lukas Loring hit Berlin's only triple and tied with Navarro for the team-lead in doubles, with two. Loring was also second in RBIs (five), while Navarro drove in four.

Riley Calloway added five steals, three more than teammates Adam Gardner and Kannon Cropper, who each swiped two.

Other standouts were Case Tilghman, who batted .455 with five hits and three RBIs, and Nate Berzonski, Stephen Wade and Foster Smith, who each drove in three runs during the span of six games.

Wade led the way on the mound, striking out 21 over 9 2/3 innings and only allowing one earned run. He won twice, while Cropper and Smith posted one win each.

Knerr finished second on the team in strikeouts, fanning 10 in 8 1/3 innings.

Coach Cameron McDonough said the team "played their butts off" during the entire Mid-Atlantic Tournament.

"We played our best baseball of the summer this past week, that's for sure," he said during a

phone interview in August. "Every team we played up there was top notch, and the kids really competed well and really did a great job. I was



PHOTO COURTESY TJ, LLC

Coach Cameron McDonough over the summer could frequently be seen dancing on national television during the Berlin Little League All-Stars' run in the regional championship game in Bristol, Connecticut.



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YEAR IN REVIEW 2018

Berlin All-Stars earn sportsmanship award

super, super happy with how we performed.”

Facing Bruno and New York during the championship game was “a challenge, to say the least,” McDonough said.

“You look at something like that you and go, ‘You know what? They just had that dude. They had that guy!’ I think we were prepared for everything short of facing an unbelievable [talent]. He’s probably the best pitcher in this tournament,” he said.

Berlin had been no slouches themselves, winning two of four games because of the Little League slaughter rule.

“ESPN said [Bruno] was the best they’ve seen this year and that’s what it took to take us out,” McDonough said. “I think anything short of that – if they would have thrown anybody else out there [things would have been different].

“It was still a good game. It was a dogfight,” he continued. “I thought we competed really hard. They scored two in the third inning and we were able to hold them off in the fourth, and then they tackled on one more in the fifth and one more in the sixth.”

McDonough said the Berlin bats started to come alive near the end of the game, when Bruno was picked up a few times by a stellar New York defense playing behind him.

“We were starting to put more balls in play, and then Nathan Berzonski comes off the bench and absolutely stroked one into right field – and he hit it too hard,” he said. “It was a one-hop laser to the right fielder, and he comes up and throws a bullet to first base.

“Waylon Hobgood had a ball that he squared up on down toward first base, and the first baseman lays out and makes the play. It’s just one of those things where you tip your hat to the other team and you say, ‘Wow, you guys did a great job.’ And you go home happy that you played well,” McDonough added.

Gathering the team behind the dugout after the game, McDonough said he invoked the 1989 Garth Brooks song “The Dance.”

“There’s a line in that song that says, ‘I could have missed the pain, but I’d of had to miss the dance,’” he said. “I asked the boys right there, ‘Would you trade it for anything? Would you trade what you just went through for the past week for anything?’ And not a single one of them said [they would].”

Although they didn’t win the tournament, the Berlin All-Stars did take home the Robert S. Watson Sportsmanship Award.

“That was unbelievably refreshing and I took way more enjoyment in that than I thought I would,” McDonough said. “I thought I was cold-hearted kind of ‘win at all costs’ kind of guy, but when they presented that to us before our game on Friday I got a little choked up. I’m really proud of those guys that they got recognized for being the good young men that they are.”

Throughout the tournament, both the team and its coaching staff could be seen having fun on television broadcasts. ESPN took notice and made sure to play Miley Cyrus’ “Party in the U.S.A.” during each of the Berlin games, while McDonough could be seen on national TV grinning and dancing unabashedly.

“It was a good time and we had a blast,” he said with a laugh. “One of the things that my coaching staff preached to the kids was about trying to be the same person whether you’re up 10, down 10, or tied. You have to be the same guy, so we had to be the same guys, too, as the coaches. We had to stay in that positive mindset. Even if things weren’t looking good, we had to continue to dance.”

McDonough said all but one of the players, Berzonski, would be eligible to move up a division into Junior League next year, with most going into seventh and eighth grades.

As for his plans?

“That’s a good question too,” he

See BASEBALL Page 13



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YEAR IN REVIEW 2018

Baseball, softball all-stars honored

Continued from Page 11

said. "It was kind of strange how this all came about anyway, me coaching this summer, but I do definitely feel like I'll be coaching in Berlin Little League next year. I just don't know exactly at what level I'll be coaching."

He hopes the success of the All-Stars inspires more people to get involved with Berlin Little League – from players, to coaches and other volunteers.

McDonough credited the overall success of the league – several baseball and softball teams this year and during recent years have competed in and won state championships – to the leadership of people like Knerr, League President Nornie Bunting, and past Vice President Eric Snelsire.

"Guys like that have poured in all their time, and then you have the folks running the concession stand – those things are just as critical as coaching. They really are," he said.

McDonough also singled out Stan and Katie Griffin for helping to reinvigorate the Berlin Softball league. Katie Griffin is the vice president of softball operations.

"They brought that up from nothing five years ago with all the hard work they put into it," he said.

"In 2011, when that first group broke through and won a state championship, they stood on the shoulders of the kids that came before them who won district championships and came close to winning states. Just like, I feel like this group gets to stand on the shoulders of those guys that came through from 2011 to 2013, cracking through and getting to regionals, and getting a game on national television," McDonough said.

"This group was able to stand on

their shoulders and take it even further. So, it just builds off itself. It shows the younger kids in the league that these things are possible and they are attainable, and it's not so much of a stretch to take things further," he added.

Both the boys' and girls' teams were honored during a special ceremony in October.

Bunting agreed the occasion of having state champions in both boys' baseball and girls' softball was a rarity – and something to celebrate.

He thanked the townspeople, saying trips to state and regional tournaments would not be possible without their support.

"We represent Berlin. We wear 'Berlin' across our chest and that's what we're about," he said during an Oct. 13 ceremony on Artisan's Green.

Bunting said the softball league in Berlin is only about four or five years old.

Sheri Smith, a team mom, said many of the girls played together on tee-ball teams and were there when the Berlin Little League Softball squads started.

When the regular season concluded, both the baseball and softball leagues form all-star teams that compete with other neighboring towns.

"This year we were lucky enough to pull 22 girls back from the regular-season team, and we had 14 girls that made the all-star team," Smith said. "All of these girls played together, I think, in year one and have stuck it out and played together."

"Every one of them are near and dear to my heart. Over the years we've built that bond with family and friends and the players, and the stars aligned perfectly for these girls this year and

they got to experience something that they may never get a chance to do again in their lifetime. We're real proud of them," she added.

When the boys played, Bunting said many Berliners watched those games on ESPN.

"And you had the joy of cheering on our team as I did. And it was a privilege once again to see that [Berlin] name across that chest," he said.

Bunting also mentioned the Robert S. Watson Award won in Bristol.

"This team was so, so special that they received the sportsmanship award," he said. "Their coaching staff, their players, they were just all winners. They're winners in our hearts, they were winners on the field ... these guys were winners everywhere they went."

Knerr said the sportsmanship award was special, because only one Little League team each year is given the honor, which is named after one of the cofounders of the Eastern Regional tournament, Robert Watson.

"These boys represented not only what us as coaches wanted them to do on the field, but also off the field," he said.

All of the players received plaques. Knerr also honored Mayor Gee Williams and the town with a one of the sportsmanship awards.

Williams said there was a different kind of "Berlin Wall" inside Town Hall made for just such an occasion.

"It's filled with plaques in recognition of the great performances and championships that the Berlin Little League has achieved in the last several years, and this will be right in the middle of that wall," Williams said. "Sometime when you're in Town Hall, look for the Berlin Wall that matters."

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YEAR IN REVIEW 2018

Ortt Companies spearhead OPA turnaround

By Josh Davis

Associate Editor

(Dec. 27, 2018) Hiring of the Matt Ortt Companies this year to oversee Ocean Pines food and beverage operations was the linchpin of a remarkable fiscal turnaround for an association entity that had lost \$1.6 million over two years.

About \$1 million of those losses were attributed to bad budgeting – and poor performance – at the yacht and beach clubs during fiscal 2018.

The Matt Ortt Company, based on early reports, led a storybook resurrection, with projections suggesting overall food and beverage operations may turn a profit in fiscal 2019.

Still, there was drama early on as membership waited on eggshells for an announcement of what could be done to right the ship.

In January, General Manager John Bailey assured members of the clubs advisory committee that things would be different. To start, he proposed hiring a management consultant to run the yacht and beach clubs.

“It’s likely to be at least a two-year type of contract ... One year is to turn things around [and] the second year you’ll start seeing different benefits,”

Bailey said at the time.

Committee Chairman Les Purcell said the association did not have a good track record with outsourcing, but Bailey countered, “We haven’t done what I’m proposing yet.”

“Don’t look for us to do things the way we used to do them,” Bailey added.

“Good!” several committee members responded in unison.

By February, the short list was narrowed down to two candidates: the Matt Ortt Companies, which run es-

tablishments such as Rare & Rye in Ocean City, and a group led by former Ocean Pines Food and Beverage Director Joe Reinhart.

The association’s board of directors met with both groups, but a decision was delayed until late March, when it was announced the board had unanimously approved a contract.

An association press release said the Ortt Companies would “manage, control and operate the yacht and beach clubs, including all food and beverage operations, janitorial serv-

ices, banquet functions (weddings, anniversaries, etc.) and special functions, and any other food and beverage function assigned by the Association, subject to the Association’s right to establish reasonable regulations with regard to the use of the facilities.”

In April, the Gazette obtained a copy of the agreement, which showed the Ortt Companies would collect \$100,000 a year for the next two years to manage the clubs.

In addition to the flat management fee, Matt Ortt Companies could earn bonuses based on performance against the budget and outright profitability.

On April 19, company cofounders Matt Ortt and Ralph DeAngelus were officially introduced to the Ocean Pines public.

Matt Ortt spoke first, joking the number-one reason his company would succeed was because “my mother lives in Ocean Pines and I’ll never hear the end of it.”

Ralph DeAngelus did most of the talking, several times promising “open and honest communications” with membership.

“I’m going to give you the good and the bad – you’re going to like hearing



Cofounders Ralph DeAngelus, left, and Matt Ortt of the Matt Ortt Companies in April discuss operational plans for the yacht and beach club during an Ocean Pines town hall meeting.

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YEAR IN REVIEW 2018

Ortt and DeAngelus met Pines public in April

some things; you're not going to like hearing other things, but you deserve to hear all of it," he said. "We need to be transparent with everything that's going on, so that there's no ambiguity going down the road."

DeAngelus said the Ortt Companies inherited a large amount of bad inventory, from a huge stock of rotten food at the beach club, to a surplus of off-brand liquor bought in bulk for both facilities that would be difficult to sell and could hurt the bottom line.

He said the yacht club menu would not resemble Rare & Rye, an upscale facility in Ocean City, but would instead be created to fit the community.

"We know who we're dealing with. We know what our demographic is," DeAngelus said. "We know Ocean Pines has a large demographic, but we know that they consider this property ... home. And at home you don't want to get raided."

"It's going to be good food, great service at a good price," he added.

He said the beach club menu would largely be made up of grab-and-go items, with waiters staffed to take drink orders.

To lower food costs, DeAngelus said many of the same ingredients would be used at both facilities, and the company would also tie in food purchases with other Matt Ortt properties to further cut prices.

DeAngelus said renovations at the yacht club were done to improve the flow of the restaurant, and an interior decorator changed the wallpaper and installed new lighting to improve the ambiance.

"You're going to feel as if you're in a beautiful restaurant and not a cafeteria," he said.

He said less was done at the beach club because of a lack of funding, but several improvements were made to bring the building up to code. Leaky sprinkler systems and corroded hot water heaters were replaced, and the deck was resurfaced.

Soft openings for both facilities were held in May, and both operations were up and running as of Memorial Day.

Both were well received and the beach club immediately set records.

"So far, it really has been great. Our results have been exactly what we've hoped for," DeAngelus said after the yacht club reopening. "Sales are strong and the Ocean Pines community came out fast and furious to see us."

A week later, he said the beach club reopening "went spectacular."

"We broke the all-time single-day sales record for the beach club on Saturday – on our second day! How funny is that?" he said.

Along with record sales, DeAngelus said attendance figures at the beach

club were similarly staggering.

"At one point in time, I think I saw, between the pool and the beach and inside, maybe upwards 2,000 people," he said.

The warm weather and mostly clear skies certainly didn't hurt, DeAngelus said, but credit also goes to the new staff.

"Businesswise, we were just pre-

pared. We were staffed for the weather and the impending onslaught of people," he said. "Don't get me wrong – we had our fair share of hiccups. You

See FIRST Page 16

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YEAR IN REVIEW 2018

Controversy flocked to Pines geese

By Josh Davis
Associate Editor

(Dec. 27, 2018) To say the resident Canada geese situation in Ocean Pines was a hot topic this year would be something of an understatement.

The Ocean Pines Association announced in June it had “contracted with the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Wildlife Services for the removal of resident Canada geese as a part of the USDA’s wildlife damage management project.”

Translation: several hundred geese were rounded up and euthanized.

According to General Manager John Bailey, “because we all strive to be good stewards of the environment, it is regretful that such action is necessary from time to time in order to maintain the balance between two environmental watch-cares – the geese vs. the water quality.

“Unfortunately, the presence of resident Canada geese contributes to unacceptable accumulation levels of feces in the waters and recreation

areas of the community,” Bailey said in a press release.

The culling was recommended by the environment and natural assets advisory committee during public meetings and in published reports, and included in the fiscal year budget, but it still caught many people off guard.

What followed was a massive public outcry, including a slew of letters to the editor in this paper, and the formation of a community group meant to ensure no Ocean Pines geese were ever harmed again.

At first, some did not buy the association claim that meat from the roundup was donated to the Maryland Food Bank, but a representative from the Food Bank in July confirmed that was the case.

Environment and Natural Assets Committee Chairman Tom Janasek said goose control was nothing new, but rather a subject “They’ve been talking about ... for the last eight-to-ten years.”

“It’s been on the books ... we’ve had

[board] approval for it for the last five years, but nobody would ever sign the check,” he said. “We never had a GM that actually had the will do the right thing and get rid of them.”

Janasek said his committee and the Ocean Pines administration had already explored several other options, including egg addling, installing monofilament lines around the ponds, growing grass barriers, and then cutting them down.

He pointed to a June 29 press release that said Ocean Pines hired the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the goose removal. When contacting the agency, Janasek said he again went through the checklist.

“When I called them to set this, they said, ‘Have you done this?’ ‘Yup.’ ‘Have you done that?’ ‘Yup.’ They said, ‘Well, this is the last thing we can do,’” he said. “And they went to two other places right after they left us, to do the same thing.

“We’ve been talking about it for years,” he continued. “It was in there, See CANADA Page 17

First six months of fiscal 2019 show Pines made profit

Continued from Page 15

can’t be open just two days and set a sales record and not have hiccups, but for the most part I was very happy with the way things went.”

Success followed the Ortt Companies throughout the year. By November, the clubs committee was raving about the turnaround in its end-of-year report.

According to the report, “Bringing in The Matt Ortt Companies to manage the [yacht club] and beach club has made a tremendous improvement in all aspects of the food and beverage operations at these two locations.

“Many of the problems and issues the [committee] had been reporting on for the past several years have been addressed to great satisfaction by pretty much everyone who has frequented these establishments. The OP community as a whole has embraced the changes and improvements that the Matt Ortt Companies have made,” the report said.

“Contracting to have the Matt Ortt Company manage and run the yacht club and beach club has made a huge improvement to the decor, service, food, finances and customer satisfaction at both facilities. The committee suggests the board listen to and seriously consider any requests they make for items that will enhance the customer experience, and financial benefits to the Ocean Pines Association,” the report added.

In December, during the final regular board meeting of the year, Assistant Treasurer Gene Ringsdorf confirmed the incredible turnaround.

While the overall fiscal year 2018 budget finished in the red to the tune of about \$1.2 million, the first six months of fiscal 2019 reportedly finished more than \$100,000 in the black.

Ringsdorf said for the six-month period ending on Oct. 31, overall revenues were over expenses by \$118,000.

He said yacht club revenues were \$317,000 over budget, while expenses were over by \$197,000, for a net positive of \$120,000. He said the beach club finished positive by about \$17,000.

Looking ahead to the end of the fiscal period, he said the association was projecting a net \$9,000 loss for the year.

Aquatics (negative \$29,000) and the yacht club (negative \$13,000) were both projected to finish in the red, while golf, golf maintenance, the Tern Grille, beach club, beach club parking, and marinas looked to finish above budgeted numbers, Ringsdorf said.



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YEAR IN REVIEW 2018

Canada goose flap dominated much of 2018

Continued from Page 16

it in the budget [as wildlife management]. It's been there, plain as day, when we did the budget back in May."

He also rejected criticism that homeowners were not adequately notified prior to the removal.

"I don't know how much publicizing did you want? Did you want riots out there? Did you want a bunch of people with signs chasing these guys from USDA or Maryland Department of Natural Resources around the park? I didn't want any of that," he said. "I didn't see any other way to do it ... frankly, Ocean Pines has a problem now with everybody having to give their opinion and nothing getting done."

Wildlife experts also weighed in, saying maintaining such a population can stress systems that people spent a long time in getting just right.

"The lawns, parks and golf courses we create makes ideal Canada goose habitat," Josh Homyack, waterfowl program manager for the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, said in July. "When we insert those into areas with water access, that just makes it more inviting."

Homyack said he didn't believe

those conditions developed together, but were just a coincidence that makes goose management a concern.

He said the geese were brought here about 100 years ago for hunting opportunities, adding, "When they got rid of that, the geese just stayed," he said.

Genetically, Homyack said, these birds are a subspecies of the migratory ones and bring their own problems to the areas they claim as their home.

"Generally, problems arise when their numbers or density has increased in an area that is incompatible. These problems include: overgrazing of grass, ornamental plants and agricultural crops; accu-

mulation of droppings and feathers; disease; attacks on humans by aggressive birds; and the fouling of reservoirs, swimming areas, docks, lawns and recreational areas," Tanya Espinoza, public affairs specialist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, animal and plant health inspection

See COMMUNITY Page 19



Geese that once flocked to the Worcester County Veteran's Memorial in Ocean Pines were removed in June through a program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The resident population was said to be too large and, as a result, damaging to the local environment.



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Opinion

Please send all letters and other editorial submissions to editor@baysidegazette.com by 5 p.m. Monday.

Plenty will go wrong, but how we respond is key

The natural order of things isn't all that orderly, as random events can connect in so many different ways that it's impossible to predict the outcome.

That's called Chaos Theory, a branch of mathematics that looks at how one thing can, incongruently, lead to another ... and another to produce an unpredictable result.

Scientists call it The Butterfly Effect, which maintains that a butterfly in China flapping its wings at a precise moment under the right circumstances can lead to a hurricane in the Caribbean.

Obviously, not all unanticipated consequences are bad or as extreme as that. Negative events also can lead to positive outcomes, depending on how people react.

In Ocean Pines, for instance, bad oversight, bad management and bad business practices led the board of directors to take a chance on an outside operator for its food services. Result: an immediate turnaround everyone raves about.

In Berlin, the closing of a poultry operation threw hundreds of people out of work and left a shell of a compound that could have been a blight on the town for decades. Result: the opportunity to create a park that could be among the biggest and best of any small town in the country.

Ocean City's history brims with negative situations turned positive — the August 1933 storm that cut the island in two gave rise to an outstanding sportsfishing industry. It also spurred more development and tourism, the creation of the motel industry, new restaurants and entertainment, all of which combined to create billions of dollars of wealth in the northern county.

That generated an amazing level of personal generosity that helped to create a hospital, a new hospice center, respite housing for critically ill children, and support for every worthy charity imaginable.

Maybe the storm that cut the inlet was caused by a butterfly in China and maybe not. It doesn't matter, because the important thing to recognize as we go into the new year isn't that problems will arise; it's how we respond to them that counts.



New Year's Eve celebrations in Berlin

Two events planned;
5-6 p.m. for children
and later for adults

By Josh Davis
Associate Editor

(Dec. 27, 2018) The busy Berlin events season — and calendar year — concludes with a New Year's Eve celebration downtown on Wednesday, Dec. 31.

Kicking things off from 5-6 p.m. is a special event for children and families that is timed to coincide with the New Year's countdown in Berlin, Germany.

Town Councilman Thom Gulyas asked Economic and Community Development Director last year to spearhead the earlier bash.

"I enjoy the more family-oriented atmosphere," Gulyas said. "We can restrict any kind of public consumption of alcohol, and it's centered and geared around children — me included — because we all can't stay awake until the New Year."

"It works out very well that way and kids have a great time," he continued. "Ivy Wells ... does a fantastic job and I'm so pleased that she put this together for the town, because it's just a lot of fun."

Gulyas said the debut event last year was "just awesome."

"We had no idea what do expect. We didn't know if we were going to have six or 60 kids, but I remember there were well over 200 people in attendance that were children and parents," he said. "[Downtown store] Heart of Gold Kids was also really instrumental in getting things pulled off, and making sure the kids had stuff to do and were enjoying themselves. It was a blast."

A portion of Main Street was closed for the event and, at one point, volunteers handed out several large sheets of bubble wrap for children to enjoy stomping on.

"It was so loud at one time from kids jumping on it and popping it," Gulyas said with a laugh. "I looked at the mayor and said, 'We're going to need headphones next year.'"

"But they were really having a blast. That's the kind of hometown stuff I like to see done," he added.

The celebration for adults is set to run from 10 p.m. until 12:30 a.m., with a light show from the balcony of the Atlantic Hotel and a countdown clock shining on the Town Center Antiques building.

Burley Oak Brewing Company will provide beer, with some proceeds benefiting the Lower Eastern Shore Area Heritage Counsel. Sessa's Vending and Catering will provide a food truck.

Holiday events in the town started in November with a tree-lighting ceremony and this month included a town-wide parade, free carriage rides, and several fine art and arts and crafts events — not to mention many busy shops and restaurants.

Throughout the season, the downtown sported a serious holiday makeover courtesy of town staff. Wells said the economic impact was significant.

"People want to go and shop in a beautiful place," she said. "There's a lot of repeat customers that come downtown, because they know what to expect. They know the shop owners, and the shop owners know what a lot of the people are looking for: beautiful and unique items, and a lot of handmade gifts made right here in Berlin."

"You just see people that you know, and it's very warm and welcoming downtown," Wells continued. "And people want to be part of something special."

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YEAR IN REVIEW 2018

Community was divided over culling of geese

Continued from Page 17

service, said.

Nationally, these geese have increased in population from 230,000 in 1970 to 3.89 million in 2009, she said.

“The resident population in this area is too large,” she said. “When formulating management strategies, Wildlife Services specialists consider protected species, environmental impacts, the cost effectiveness of methods, and social and legal concerns. Management strategies may include the application of one or more techniques and consideration is first given to nonlethal methods.”

Espinoza provided some context to what is now being kept out of local waterways.

“Canada geese deposit one half to one full pound of feces per bird per day, which can significantly accumulate during molt season or on small properties with large flocks. In comparison, an average size dog drops about one half pound, which responsible owners clean up,” she said.

That’s almost 300 pounds of poo per day — more than one ton per week.

“The geese were humanely collected and euthanized, using methods approved by the American Veterinary Medical Association. The meat from the geese is processed and donated to local food pantries,” she said.

Public outcry continued, although not everyone was critical of how the association acted.

Outside a regular board meeting in late July about half a dozen women held up signs reading “SECRET Slaughter,” “SHAME ON YOU” and “A Community THAT KILLS WILDLIFE!? NOT FOR ME!”

Inside, Bailey again addressed the issue.

“No one — and I repeat no one — wants to euthanize geese, including the police, the United States Department of Agriculture and Wildlife Services agency, the members of the association’s environment and natural assets committee, the OPA staff and the board of directors, nor this general manager,” Bailey said. “However, sometimes things of this world simply do not match up with our desires.”

He said geese could be “nice to look at ... [but] they also produce a lot of crap” that pollutes association ponds and flows into nearby creeks, rivers and bays.

“The main solution is simple: do not feed the geese,” he said. “I know it’s cute and fun to do, however it’s not healthy for the geese and it’s not helpful in the prevention of another population growth, which none of us want to see happen.”

“Ultimately, any mitigation efforts that involves association funding

and/or fiscal replacement of association property must be coordinated with the association. The environment, the ponds, the creeks, the river, the bay and the geese should be protected — all of it — just as we humans are all stewards of it,” Bailey said, drawing applause from those in attendance.

Reaction on goose control efforts during the public comments portion of the meeting was mixed.

Anne O’Connell said, “Destroying almost the entire flock was wrong” and it seemed the association did not want community involvement.

“The fact that it was done in secret was appalling to a lot of people in Ocean Pines,” she said. “People woke up on Friday [June] 29th and wondered where the geese went. This should never have been done in secret.”

Dick Nieman commended the board “for having the courage ... to control the population” of geese, to which many in the audience applauded.

Nieman said the topic had been controversial since he moved to Ocean Pines in 1984 and also invoked the dangers of “blue-green algae” that is sometimes attributed to goose feces.

“Some of it is actually deadly,” he said. “Do we want to have a legal case of blue-green algae killing a kid? ... From a legal aspect, I think you all made the right move.”

He added Bob Abele, a former board member and former chair of the Maryland Coastal Bays National Estuary Program and Coastal Bays Fishery Advisory Committee, received death threats for his goose-control efforts.

“If we’ve got deranged people like that because of a goose, something is wrong,” he said.

Doris Lloyd introduced herself as a former environmental scientist and complimented the board for “taking care of the geese.”

“The geese were polluting the lake and killing the fish ... and also preventing children from fishing here because of the pollution,” she said. “I like to say ‘conservation is wise use of the environment’ and that’s what you are doing, and thank you.”

Her comments were also greeted with applause.

A resident goose group, dubbed “The Ocean Pines Geese and Ecology Brain Trust Initiative: Securing a Balance,” met for the first time in August at the Ocean Pines library.

Mary Deborah Wilson addressed the more than two-dozen attendees, not counting media and association officials.

Wilson, a mental health and geriatric nurse practitioner, formed the group.

She said about \$125 million had

been spent nationally “for the eradication of thousands of geese, for years without a sustained impact.”

Several times she dismissed claims that geese contributed to pollution of area waterways.

“If a body of water is polluted, why do birds, including Canada geese, continue to reside there and give birth to anatomically normal and functional geese?” she asked. “And why is Canada geese feces a paramount concern here? What about chicken, possum, fox, heron, egret, seagull, duck, domestic geese, turkey buzzards, eagle, mouse, snake, fish, squirrel [and] rabbit poop?”

A recurring theme in Wilson’s remarks was that chickens, not geese, were the biggest contributors locally to pollution.

“There is an investigation that indicates the Delmarva Peninsula, including Maryland’s Eastern Shore, produces 570 million chickens per year,” she said. “If you factor that, the amount of manure is beyond calculation.”

She said a 2002 national water quality study showed “agricultural runoff was the leading cause of river and stream pollution” and a 2007 EPA study revealed “excrement from factory chicken farms has contaminated groundwater in 17 states and polluted 35,000 miles of rivers in 22 states.”

“There are many sources of pollution.”

See RESIDENT Page 20

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YEAR IN REVIEW 2018

Resident group formed and leader lashed out at board

Continued from Page 19

tion and consideration is needed before we eradicate geese or other wildlife," she said.

"I don't want to see what happened to the geese happen again because, frankly, I really don't believe [geese] are the culprit. I think it's us and it's the chicken farms – and what I've cited to you tonight points the fingers at the chicken farms," Wilson added.

While that meeting was largely civil and several attending board members pledged thoughtful attention, Wilson turned on administrative officials several weeks later.

She invited the board to attend an October meeting of her goose group, but lashed out when several said they could not because of prior engagements.

"That does not send a positive message to the community," she said. "With all the negative publicity, BOD members' absence will be interpreted as assignation [and] apathy."

Association Vice President Steve Tuttle said he planned to attend the meeting. He also weighed in on his experience during the initial summit.

"At the last meeting, the presentation was well over an hour, most of which was pulled from various sites accessible via Google or other search engines. [While] it was considerable information, I did not find it particularly helpful. The information seemed to more be in support of do nothing, the geese are not the problem, people are the problem.

"What I had hoped for in attending the meeting was more discussion by the group on ways to mitigate the impact of the geese. If this meeting is more about the kind of information presented at the last meeting ... I for one do not believe this will help to move us forward."

As evidence Ocean Pines leadership was trying something different, Tuttle said a pilot program using dogs that chase away but do not harm the geese would be tried next. He said he also personally looked into several other alternatives.

"There is no easy remedy across the spectrum of opinions within OPA," he said. "I welcome constructive efforts by anyone to help provide a remedy that will move us forward."

Wilson, in an email directed at Tuttle and forwarded to several dozen others, appeared to attack the new director, who was elected two months after the culling occurred.

"Maybe you were not at the same meeting or did not hear expert-supported information," she said. "The meeting on 8/16/18 included extensive research findings which had not

been disseminated or promulgated by the [environment and natural assets committee] or [board of directors]."

Wilson added, if the meeting was "Nothing but Googled info," why had the board not reviewed that information?

"Extensive info given," she said. "Info was needed due to the hysteria and ignorance in this community about geese. The OP leadership did not explore the main concerns from SOME residents about health/water. Your leadership should have been reassuring residents, not pushing for lethal actions.

"Our group and my initial initiative/efforts filled that leadership and information vacuum. Someone had to do it no matter how much you diss or minimize the work."

She added, "I find your comments insulting, leadership-devoid and in poor taste about this meeting, the work of myself and geese committee members. This behavior is out of character for what anyone should reasonably expect from any type of Board member."

Wilson suggested Tuttle and others either didn't listen or "came in with prejudiced biases or preconceived notions."

She called "the lack of review of health and water harm ... severely irresponsible," adding, "As a well-known local politician shared with me 'the OPA BOD is on the brink of being held responsible for their actions.'"

"Your comments will not stop the intentions, passion, or interests of this committee of concerned OP residents," Wilson said.

"Do not use your negative reaction to the first meeting as an EXCUSE to not keep involved. We are NOT BUYING it," she added.

Bailey briefly addressed wildlife management during the final regular board meeting of the year, saying the pilot program with Maryland Geese Control had concluded.

The company, according to its website, provides "a safe and environmentally friendly way to control nuisance geese" by using "highly trained Border Collies to harass and control the geese without ever touching, harming or killing any goose."

Bailey said the pilot program lasted seven weeks and cost \$4,375.

"That leaves us about \$5,500 left in that [budget] line item, for wildlife management, to pursue other mitigation efforts in the spring," he said. "That may include continued use of Maryland Geese Control, particularly in the springtime, when their contract price includes the addling of eggs and removal of nests, so that's something I think that we want to do."

YEAR IN REVIEW 2018

More highlights in Berlin, OPA and Snow Hill

By Josh Davis
Associate Editor

(Dec. 27, 2018) Also grabbing headlines in 2018 were issues ranging from a contentious study released regarding the Berlin Fire Company, to a local church's objections to a yoga/mindfulness program in an area school:

BFC study controversial

The Town of Berlin in April released the 90-page study on the Berlin Fire Company, which was performed independently by the Matrix Consulting Group and designed to help inform future funding requests to the town.

Both sides immediately questioned some of the results and, at one point, expected funding from the town appeared to have been frozen.

Fire Company President David Fitzgerald said two items in the study stood out.

"The study does confirm what we've been saying for many years: the majority of the calls of the Berlin Fire Company are in town limits," Fitzgerald said. "You'll see the percentages in there. Those are accurate and we explain that every year to the town.

"And the other thing it clearly states ... they have it in several times

in the report that the Berlin Fire Company is not sufficiently funded for the level of services we provide," he continued. "We saw those two things that we appreciate them backing our position that we've said over the years."

Fitzgerald added he found errors in the report.

"We've made the town and Matrix aware of those for clarification, like the organizational chart is not correct [and] there's some other data there in regards to response data and our billing data that's not correct," he said. "We talked to Mayor [Gee] Williams and he agrees wholeheartedly that the report needs to be accurate as far as the data, and he's given us direction to provide that to Matrix for them to provide the necessary edits, once they validate that we're telling them the data."

Mayor Gee Williams said six items in the report needed to be addressed by the fire company: billing collection for EMS services, the authority of fire company officers and board members, the budgeting process "and lack of controls," the cash basis of operations, and the continued use of fire sirens.

"The sixth item ... is the physical

facilities and their uses and upgrades, and particularly, from our point of view, the station one, which is the Main Street Station," Williams said. "[The study] made some very clear recommendations on how needs can be met by renovating that station."

Williams likely highlighted that item because the fire company has, for several years, planned and raised money for a new fire station, while town officials have expressed concerns that taxpayer funding was going toward a station outside of town limits.

He also took issue with a workload breakdown that suggested total calls for service, from 2013-2017, were 54.4 percent (5,259) in the Town of

Berlin and 45.6 percent (4,405) elsewhere in Worcester County.

"When you go through the report, you notice that most of the calls are in the immediate vicinity of Atlantic General Hospital – overwhelmingly," Williams said. "The reason for that is ... because of calls to Berlin EMS service to the nursing home to transport them a few hundred feet away to AGH. That skews everything.

"They're getting a reimbursement from the county for that, but I think that's something we're going to have to look into in depth," he added.

A June public meeting of both parties was contentious.

Robert Finn, a senior manager

See ELECTION Page 22



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YEAR IN REVIEW 2018

Election controversies in Snow Hill and Pines

Continued from Page 21

with Matrix and retired fire and police chief from the Dallas/Fort Worth area, guided the meeting, but it was the shouting down of a Town Councilman by a fire company accountant that made a lasting impression.

Councilman Dean Burrell called for unity and said the Town Council was asking the citizens to “work with us – us and the fire department – to ensure that our fire department is funded equitably.”

“If that takes a tax rate increase or whatever it takes to fund our fire department, we are ready to do that. But it has to come under the scrutiny of the public,” Burrell said.

J Bergey, fire company CPA, had issues with some of the evening’s comments.

“I’m sitting here listening to this shit ... and you don’t know what you’re talking about,” he said.

“None of you know what you’re talking about – that’s the biggest part of it. You keep saying we move [money] around ... that’s bullshit!” he added.

Williams sprung out of his seat when Bergey again claimed, “It’s all just bullshit.”

“No, it’s not! It is not! It is not!” Williams said.

Burrell also stood up.

“I just want to say one more thing,” Burrell said. “I talked about [us] having different ideas and different opinions, and I believe that is a good thing. But for this thing to work we’re going to have to try to understand each other,” he said. “I’m going to have to try to understand where you all are coming from, and you’re going to have to try to understand where we are coming from.”

“And, to sit in a public meeting and say, ‘you don’t know shit’ – I don’t want to be in here, so I bid you good night,” Burrell said, leaving the room.

Bergey later clarified what led to his frustration.

“Those guys were standing up there last night trying to piss in the community’s boots and tell them that it was raining. It’s so disingenuous to have someone stand up there that they have fed all this crazy shit, and this guy [Finn] is a fireman – a professional fireman – and he’s trying to intertwine his good fire recommendations about response times and all that stuff, and reconcile it with a 25 mile-per-hour speed limit and no sirens – it’s so incongruent, it just pissed me off to no end.”

Talks to finalize fiscal 2019 funding levels appeared to go cold in August, but by October a deal had been struck and the Berlin Town Council approved a \$605,000 contract for services.

The contract represented a significant increase in the town’s funding for fire and EMS. From fiscal years 2015-2017, the town contributed \$1.2 million, for an average of \$400,000 per year, according to a Matrix Consulting Group funding study.

According to the terms, both the fire company and EMS will meet regularly with town officials to review recommendations included in a Matrix study. Fire and EMS are to attend council meetings in October, January, April and July to provide quarterly financial and operational reports.

Both must adhere to a fiscal year from July 1 to June 30 and submit to an annual audit, to be paid for by the town and scheduled no later than Nov. 12, 2018. In a separate section of the agreement it states, “all financial information, including the BFC audit, may be disclosed to the public.”

Also in the agreement regarding the new Station 3, on Route 50 near Stephen Decatur High School, all initial capital funds for the new building “shall be taken from a separate and distinct construction account ... which shall be kept separate from any funds contributed by the Town of Berlin; nor shall any funds from the Town of Berlin be utilized in any way” to build Station 3.

According to the contract, all parties acknowledge the terms and conditions “are necessary for transparency and accountability to the citizens and tax payers of the Town of Berlin.” Also included, “The parties hereto agree that each shall make best efforts to communicate with the other in order to have a productive relationship.”

In the event of a breach of the terms, the mayor and council have the right to suspend funding.

Snow Hill Mayor resigns

Charlie Dorman in March announced he would run for reelection as mayor of Snow Hill and in May learned he had won a fourth term in office.

However, by October Dorman made a different kind of announcement – his resignation – during a Town Council meeting.

“All their mouths flew open,” Dorman said on the following day.

“It’s just about time, that’s all,” he continued. “I made a statement and I said to them last night it’s been an honor and a privilege to serve as mayor for six years and four months. And you know when it’s time to leave – and it’s time to leave.”

A week later, it was apparent the abrupt resignation wasn’t so simple.

In a statement, Dorman said, “In July the town manager and one of the councilwomen (he later amended the statement to say “the council” instead

of “one of the councilwomen”) disagreed with me on some of my tactics to draw new business to Snow Hill. Since then, I’ve become a figurehead only as the mayor, with no authority anymore. I then decided that I would resign [effective] Oct. 31, 2018. I have aggressively sought to sell my residence and I am fortunate to have a buyer. I will be moving in November.

“I sincerely hope that the new mayor will continue to encourage new businesses and make Snow Hill a destination on the Pocomoke River.”

The council emailed a response in the form of a letter to the editor signed by Councilwoman Alison Cook, Councilwoman Jenny Hall, and Councilwoman LaToya Purnell:

“Throughout Mayor Charlie Dorman’s administration, the Town Council had faith that he was making decisions that were in the best interest of the town and its citizens and that he was adhering to the regulations and guidelines of the Town Code ... However, it came to light several months ago that there had been actions by the Mayor that we believed to be in violation of the duties of the Mayor as specified in the Town Charter.”

The letter went on to say Dorman made decisions for the town he had no authority to make, including entering into agreements with local business owners in which “Mayor Dorman directed staff to ignore the Code and laws, ignore the memorandum of agreement, and allow this business to open, fully aware it was in violation.”

Additionally, they claimed Town Manager Kelly Pruitt briefly submitted her notice to retire because of “a potential hostile work environment” and “Several other employees were seeking to leave employment because of the hostile environment and being put into situations where they felt uncomfortable.”

While the councilmembers addressed their issues and it appeared Dorman had apologized, “Mayor Dorman has continually made negative comments about the Council and town staff in an attempt to gain public sympathy. He has championed to make the Council and Town Manager look bad in the public eye. As a result, community members and business owners have stated that they feel a divide between themselves and town government. The perceived ‘divide’ stops today,” the letter said.

Former Mayor Stephen Mathews was appointed to replace Dorman. He will serve until a special election is held in May, but said he would not seek election again.

Other election news

In Ocean Pines, 10 candidates in

May filed for three vacancies on the board of directors, but only nine were verified. The tenth, former director and interim general manager Brett Hill, later filed a lawsuit claimed he was unjustly excluded.

A fourth vacancy on the board occurred in June, when director and two-term treasurer Pat Supik resigned without public comment.

In August, Steve Tuttle and Frank Daly were elected to three-year terms, and Ted Moroney and Esther Diller were each elected to one-year terms, both replacing directors who resigned before their terms were up: Supik and, ironically, Hill.

Shortly after the election, the new board convened and voted 5-2 to continue Doug Parks as association president. Tuttle was voted vice president.

Two months later, association officials confirmed terms to dismiss the Hill lawsuit had been agreed upon.

Hill, who was a political lighting rod during his nearly yearlong tenure as interim general manager, had alleged a violation of association bylaws after he was rejected as a candidate in the 2018 election. He named the association and Director Colette Horn, responsible for rejecting his candidacy in her role as association secretary, in the suit.

The board apparently voted by email to accept the terms of the dismissal and sources close to the board confirmed the following was part of the agreement:

1. Mr. Hill agrees to dismiss the case against Colette Horn with prejudice.

2. Mr. Hill agrees to forever discharge and release Ocean Pines Association Inc. from any claim or cause of action contained in the amended complaint.

3. Provided that Mr. Hill complies with the terms of the stipulated dismissal, Ocean Pines Association Inc. shall release Mr. Hill from any claim for damages directly arising from Mr. Hill filing or pursuing the complaint against Ms. Horn and Ocean Pines Association, Inc.

Decidedly more straightforward was the Town Council election in Berlin, as three incumbents were reelected without opposition.

In fact, because no other candidates filed, the election was canceled in September.

Town code allows for the cancellation of elections for mayor or councilmembers “in the event that only one individual files for candidacy” for that office.

Per those rules, District 1 Councilman Troy Purnell, District 4 Councilman Dean Burrell and At-Large Councilman Thom Gulyas each won reelection and the Board of Supervi-

See YOGA Page 24

NOW PLAYING

BJ'S ON THE WATER

75th Street and the bay
Ocean City
410-524-7575
www.bjsonthewater.com
Dec. 28: Full Circle, 9 p.m.
Dec. 29: Chest Pains, 9 p.m.
Dec. 31: New Year's Eve Party
w/DJ Fast Eddie, 10 p.m. to 4 a.m.
Jan. 2: Old School, 6 p.m.

BOURBON STREET ON THE BEACH

116th Street, behind Fountain Head
Towers Condominium
Ocean City
443-664-2896
www.bourbonstreetonthebeach.com
Dec. 28: Randy Lee Ashcraft, 4-7
p.m.; Dave Sherman, 7-11 p.m.
Dec. 29: Chris Button & Joe Mama,
7-11 p.m.
Dec. 30: Keri Anthony, 6 p.m.
Dec. 26: Reform School, 6 p.m.;
Open Mic, 9 p.m.
Dec. 31: OHO, 4-7 p.m.; New Year's
Eve Party w/Reform School (entire
band), 8 p.m.
Jan. 1: Hangover Party 1 p.m.;
2 Guyz & A Mama, 3-7 p.m.
Jan. 2: Reform School, 6 p.m.
& Open Mic, 9 p.m.
Jan. 3: Chris Button, 7-10 p.m.

CAPTAIN'S TABLE

15th St. & Baltimore Ave.
Ocean City
410-289-7192
www.captainstableoc.com
Every Friday & Saturday:
Phil Perdue, 5:30 p.m.
Dec. 31: Phil Perdue

DUFFY'S TAVERN

130th Street in the
Montego Bay Shopping Center
410-250-1449
www.duffysoc.com
Dec. 28: Bob Hughes, 5-8 p.m.
Dec. 29: Karaoke w/DJ Chuck D,
8 p.m. to midnight
Dec. 31: New Year's Eve Party
w/DJ Rut, 8:30 p.m. to 1 a.m.

HARBORSIDE BAR & GRILL

12841 S. Harbor Road
West Ocean City
410-213-1846
www.ocharborside.com
Dec. 28: DJ Billy T, 4 p.m. to 2 a.m.
Dec. 29: Side Project/Chris Button,
2-6 p.m.; DJ Jeremy, 9 p.m. to 2
a.m.
Dec. 30: Opposite Directions,
2-6 p.m.; DJ Billy T, 4 p.m. to 2 a.m.
Dec. 31: DJ Billy T, 4 p.m.; New
Year's Eve Party

OCEAN CLUB NIGHTCLUB

In the Horizons Restaurant
In the Clarion Fontainebleau Hotel
101st Street and the ocean
Ocean City
410-524-3535
www.clarionoc.com
Every Friday and Saturday:
DJ Dusty, 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.
Dec. 28-29: First Class
Dec. 31: Power Play; On the Edge

PICKLES

706 Philadelphia Ave.
Ocean City
410-289-4891
www.picklesoc.com
Dec. 28: Beats By Jeremy, 10 p.m.
Dec. 29: Swell Fellas, 10 p.m.
Dec. 30: City Painted Green, 10 p.m.
Dec. 31: New Year's Eve Party
w/Crop Top, 9 p.m.; Karaoke
w/Jeremy, 9 p.m.
Jan. 3: Beats by Wax, 9 p.m.

PURPLE MOOSE SALOON

108 S. Atlantic Ave.
Ocean City
410-289-6953
www.purplemoosesaloon.com
Dec. 29: CK the DJ/VJ, 2 p.m.;
Green Light, 9 p.m.
Dec. 30: CK the DJ/VJ, 2 p.m.;
New Year's Eve Party w/One Louder,
10 p.m.

SEACRETS

49th Street and the bay
Ocean City
410-524-4900
www.seacrets.com
Dec. 28: Lima Bean Riot, 9 p.m. to
1 a.m.; DJ Tuff, 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.
Dec. 29: John McNutt Band, 5-9
p.m.; DJ Bobby-O, 6 p.m. to 1:50
a.m.; DJ Cruz, 9 p.m. to 1 a.m.;
My Hero Zero, 10 p.m. to 1:50 a.m.
Dec. 31: Full Circle, 4-7:30 p.m.;
New Year's Eve Bash, 4 p.m. to 4
a.m.; DJ Davie, 4:45-9:30 p.m.;
DJ Tuff, 7 p.m. to 2:30 a.m.

SKYE RAW BAR & GRILLE

66th Street, bayside
Ocean City
410-723-6762
www.skyebaroc.com
Dec. 28: Zach Project, 4-8 p.m.
Dec. 29: Ricky & Lennon LaRicci,
4-8 p.m.

WHISKER'S BAR & GRILL

11070 Cathell Road, Suite 17
Pines Plaza, Ocean Pines
410-208-3922
www.whiskersbar.com
Dec. 28: Karaoke w/Donnie Berkey
Dec. 31: New Year's Ever Party:
Karaoke w/Donnie Berkey

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Rt. 54 and The Bay, Fenwick Island DE

YEAR IN REVIEW 2018

Yoga elements in school alarms local church

Continued from Page 22

sors of Elections on Tuesday night signed the order to cancel the election.

"It feels wonderful," Gulyas said. "I'm very honored to be able to serve the citizens of the Town of Berlin for another four years. I enjoy it that much."

Gulyas was first elected four years ago, also without opposition.

With no one filing against any of the incumbents, he added, "Hopefully, it means that we're doing a good job. That's what I'm going with."

Purnell, first elected eight years ago, agreed.

"I hope it means we're doing a good job," he said. "It seems to be a good bunch that we've been working with and we work great together, so I just want to see it continue."

Burrell, the second-longest serving member of the Town Council, after Council Vice President Elroy Brittingham, said he felt privileged to continue serving the town.

"If there are no write-ins and the people of Berlin, especially of District 4, decide that they would like for me to represent them for the upcoming term, I will be honored and I feel blessed that they have this confidence in me," he said. "And, as always, I'll try to do my best to represent them and the Town of Berlin appropriately."

Burrell had several theories on why no one filed to run against the incumbents.

"It could say several things, but I choose to believe that it is because our representation has been appropriate and has been sanctioned by the citizenry – that's how come no one has filed," he said. "I think the public feels that they're being appropriately represented and they have that confidence in us to do what is right for the Town of Berlin."

"And, I can never express how grateful I am and appreciative I am of the Town of Berlin's citizens" Burrell added.

New police station and library

There was much to celebrate in the Town of Berlin this year, not the least of which was the 150th anniversary of the town's incorporation.

Also notable, Berlin welcomed much-needed upgrades to its municipal police station and the Worcester County Library branch in the town.

The new, \$3.1 million police station near the corner of Flower Street and Assateague Road opened in February.

Mayor Gee Williams said the building, which is three times larger than the old station, combined 21st century technology with the 19th century charm that highlights downtown Berlin.

"I hope most folks don't ever see

the inside of the police station except the lobby, but if you ever have a chance to drop by, it's very impressive," Williams said. "Definitely, it reflects the heritage of [the town] ... I think that means a lot to people."

The new, \$6.25 million Berlin branch of the Worcester County Library on Harrison Avenue had a soft opening in July and held an official ribbon cutting ceremony in August.

Worcester County Commissioner President Diana Purnell raved about the "gorgeous facility."

"This is what we do when it comes to our community – we partner together that we can have the best of the best, and that's what we've done here today," she said.

Williams said he and others were "awestruck by this wonderful facility."

"We certainly look forward to generations experiencing something that I think has set a new standard for informational technology in our county and in our region," Williams said.

Williams said the library provided a wealth of information, cutting-edge technology, public meeting space, and beauty inside and out.

"As a lifetime resident of Berlin, I do not believe I've ever witnessed so much excitement about a public project as I have seen for this new library," he said. "The anticipation and response is [evident] in every neighborhood within our town, but what I think is particularly rewarding is to have witnessed the genuine excitement the new library has generated among our young people."

Library Director Jennifer Ranck said the success of the new library was evidenced by the unusually high turnout during summer learning events.

"The children's programs are doing very well this summer," she said. "People in general are very excited to come into the quiet space to read and study, and there's just more room to spread out."

Yoga program cut

Perhaps the year's most unlikely controversy was a mindfulness program at Buckingham Elementary School in Berlin that drew ire of a local church, whose pastor condemned the yoga-based exercise as a product of Satan.

SonRise Church Pastor Daryl McCready stated his case against the Buckingham Elementary School morning ritual during his March 26 service and in a Facebook post after witnessing the program at the invitation of school officials.

The "Mindfulness Moments" video series was described as an extension of the morning announcements where students "participate in a mini 6-10-minute mindfulness and yoga

session to help them positively start off their day. The coping strategies learned, such as breathing and calming techniques, help provide students with a way to manage obstacles or challenges they may face throughout their day."

Mindfulness Moments was funded by a grant from the Jesse Klump Foundation and featured local yoga instructors Jayme Mahoney and Berkleigh Diaz of Little Dreamers Wellness Center in Berlin.

According to McCready, "All over this community right now, this assault is happening on who Jesus is and who we are in light of him. It's a clear assault on our community right now. I'm seeing it everywhere I turn. And, listen, I'm concerned."

He added, "I understand not all yoga practices are spiritually focused but the foundation of yoga and many practices are of unBiblical nature and to be avoided by believers. The warning for us is that we ought not be supportive of anything that leads people away from God and the truth. Stretching is not the problem – yoga is."

"Even though some exercise called yoga may not be evil, there is a whole lot of evil practices occurring in this town under the name of yoga," McCready said. "Yoga seeks to draw and recruit people and in some cases indoctrinate them to false truths and practices."

McCready continued speaking on the subject during an April 8 sermon in Berlin.

"Boy – people did not like me saying that. I took about a week and a half of everybody's feelings. Some were angry – I mean, real angry. And they let me know it," he said. "Some took offense, because they did not agree with my opinion or how I expressed it, or they felt judged or condemned. Some had no idea about the connection or the background of yoga, and thanked me for bringing truth and speaking on it."

"I heard a lot of people [saying] 'you were so angry' I wasn't angry – it was called passion. When I see God's people being swept out by false teachings and heresies and things that God calls detestable, yes, I get angry. It's my job. That's my calling," McCready said.

Mindfulness Moments continued throughout the spring semester, but did not return when the new school year began in September.

"The Mindfulness Moments program was reevaluated after its pilot year in our school," Buckingham Principal Karen Marx said in a statement. "Interpreting the variety of feedback we received, Buckingham has decided to re-implement the research-based program called 'Second Step' moving forward. 'Second Step'

still provides our students with the critical components of social-emotional wellness that students and families loved about the previous mindfulness program. However, 'Second Step' provides a robust, Department of Education-endorsed curriculum as well as supporting materials for the home."

"We are incredibly grateful for the partners that helped us bring to life the 'Mindfulness Moments' pilot program last year, as it gave our school the opportunity to more fully address a critical need for our students. We look forward to continuing our work with social-emotional wellness with 'Second Step.'"

Some parents, including PTA President Jeffrey Smith, said they were sad to see the program go.

"I am concerned that, on the surface, it appears as though Worcester County Schools caved to a religious organization," Smith said. "To me, this sets a precedent in which any church can come to the county and complain about some program or another and expect change."

"No outside person or organization should be allowed to dictate curriculum or educational policy either at the county level, or at any individual school," he continued. "Doing so does a disservice to the students, teachers, and administrators at Buckingham Elementary and to Worcester County's exceptional school district as a whole."

Kim Klump, founder of the Jesse Klump Memorial Fund, in March said her nonprofit hoped to fund a program similar to "Mindfulness Moments" for the Worcester County Board of Education to implement next school year for all elementary schools.

At the time, Klump said, "All of Buckingham (administrators, staff, teachers, and guidance counselors) were onboard with this program. I, myself, teach once a month along with my outreach coordinator, Shawntel Hall. So, I personally fully support the program."

In a later statement after learning the program had been pulled, Klump said she was saddened.

"We at the Jesse Klump Memorial Fund Inc. supported this program financially and helped by teaching some classes," Klump said. "We received feedback from teachers, parents and students that convinced us that the program was making a difference in how these kids handled negative emotions and how it reduced friction in the classroom. Learning these valuable coping skills at a young age, we hope, will reduce the occurrence of mental illness in the future, which should reduce suicide rates as well."

Puzzles

LABOR CONTRACT(ION)S
BY DAVID ALFRED BYWATERS / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

ACROSS

1 English guy

5 Partner in indecision with 5-Down

8 Alternative to pavement

14 What leads many people to say, "Let's face it"?

19 Spanish greeting

20 G.I.'s address

21 California's motto

22 Like a truck descending a steep hill

23 Sources of Manchego cheese

24 How polka bands get their start?

27 Org. with an annual Help a Horse Day

29 Big suit

30 Harvard University Press's _____ Classical Library

31 Hundredths: Abbr.

32 Pontiff's gold treasure?

37 Performed creditably

39 Word with store or sign

40 Value

43 Like powwows

46 Register things

48 Star bursts

49 Summer hat

50 Enthrones

Online subscriptions: Today's puzzle and more than 4,000 past puzzles, nytimes.com/crosswords (\$39.95 a year).

53 Query about the Freedom Caucus or Berniecrats?

56 Noted beauty-contest loser

57 Most remote of the Near Islands

59 Irish port, county or bay

60 "Shame!"

61 Sushi eel

63 Improvised

67 Some refuges

69 Figure in Jewish folklore

70 Like some factories ... or, in a different sense, like 90-, 109- and 119-Across (but not 24-, 32- and 53-Across)?

73 Potentially unhelpful answer to "Who's there?"

77 Speed

79 The 21st Amendment, e.g.

80 Biblical spy

81 Wonder

84 Dutch cheese

87 Pas sans

89 Awestruck

90 Nickname for a hard-to-please girl?

95 Room to maneuver

97 Certifiable, so to speak

98 Bygone office position

99 Unctuousness

101 White part of pearly whites

102 Offshore sight, maybe

104 Vexes

107 Arabic name that sounds like a polite affirmative

109 Data maintained by competitive dentists?

112 Envelope abbr.

114 That's right!

117 Italian article

118 Intentionally lost

119 Speakers' searches for just the right words?

125 Halliburton of the Halliburton Company

126 Buckwheat cereal

127 Restroom sign

128 Antidiscriminatory abbr.

129 Iago or Othello

130 It notably has two bridges

131 Bleachers

132 "x" in $5x = x^2 \div 2$

133 Tit for tat?

9 Series

10 Word with you but not me

11 Main ingredient in Wiener schnitzel

12 Kitchenware brand

13 Like corsets

14 Russian "peace"

15 Terminus

16 Online enticement

17 Codger

18 Botanical bristles

25 Evidence left by a moth

26 Dead reckoning?

28 _____ Alcorn, creator of Pong

33 Wood for a raft

34 "And who _____?"

35 Texter's transition

36 St. Petersburg's river

38 Unduly harsh

41 Has a 42-Down

42 See 41-Down

44 _____ Lee, singer with the 2011 No. 1 album "Mission Bell"

45 All limbs

47 Audit a class, say

50 Move slowly (along)

51 City near the Sierras

52 What comes before "B"?

54 Islamic mystic

55 Tinker (with)

58 Align

62 Doesn't really see

64 Gift-tag word

65 Lansing-to-Flint dir.

66 Brief swim

68 Protective sorts in showbiz

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19				20			21						22				
23				24		25						26					
27				28		29				30			31				
32				33			34	35	36		37		38				
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61				62		63		64	65	66		67			68		
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81	82	83		84		85	86			87		88		89			
90				91				92	93	94			95	96			
97						98					99	100					
101						102					103		104			105	106
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112	113				114		115	116				117			118		
119				120					121	122	123			124		125	
126						127						128				129	
130						131						132				133	

71 Fervor

72 Some runoff sites

74 BBQ side

75 What can go before watt

76 Rare success story from the dot-com bubble

78 More pulchritudinous

81 Beau's girl

82 _____Dixie (grocery chain)

83 It's not as simple as a), b), c)

85 "Go ahead!"

86 Italian wine city

88 Trolley sound

91 Bee, e.g.

92 Introvert's focus

93 Cross inscription

94 Seethe

96 Max at the MoMA

100 Sea cow

103 Need for a model

105 Flowering herb also known as devil's nettle

106 Woman's name that means "star"

108 Banisters

110 Not loose, as a diamond

111 4-0 series, say

112 Some refuges

113 Like panang curry

115 "Git!"

116 "I did it!"

120 It fits in a lock

121 Architect Maya

122 Mathematician's 116-Down

123 Inits. before many state names

124 Jesus Christ, with "the"

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HARD - 19

Fill in the blank spaces in the grid so that every vertical column, every horizontal row and every 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9, without repeating any. There is really only one solution to each puzzle.

Answers to last week's puzzles

1	3	6	8	4	7	5	2	9
8	2	5	6	3	9	1	4	7
4	7	9	1	2	5	3	6	8
7	5	4	2	8	1	6	9	3
3	6	2	9	7	4	8	1	5
9	8	1	5	6	3	2	7	4
6	9	3	7	5	2	4	8	1
2	4	7	3	1	8	9	5	6
5	1	8	4	9	6	7	3	2

		2	1					
	5						7	
		1			5	6		8
		4	3		7			9
				9				
3			8		6	4		
2		6	4			8		
	7						1	
					8	3		

Calendar

Please send calendar items to editor@baysidegazette.com by 5 p.m. Monday. All community-related activities will be published at no charge.

Thurs., Dec. 27

STORY TIME ‘HAPPY NEW YEAR’
Ocean Pines library, 11107 Cathell Road, 10:30 AM. Enjoy stories, movement, songs and crafts. For ages 2 to 5 years. <http://www.worcesterlibrary.org>

FAMILY MOVIE ‘MARY POPPINS’
Ocean City library, 10003 Coastal Highway, 1:30 PM. Watch the original 1964 movie Marry Poppins starring Julie Andrews and Dick Van Dyke. <http://www.worcesterlibrary.org>

STROKE SUPPORT GROUP
Atlantic General Hospital, Conference Room 1, 9733 Healthway Drive, 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM. Providing physical and emotional support for survivors and caregivers to share personal experiences and challenges. Coping strategies also discussed. Anne Waples, awaples@atlanticgeneral.org, 443-614-5720

FIRESIDE CHAT
Berlin library, 13 Harrison Ave., 3:00 PM. Join this lively chat about favorite good reads and get some ideas for exploring new authors and genres. <http://www.worcesterlibrary.org>

FAMILY TIME ‘STICKER PAINTING’
Berlin library, 13 Harrison Ave., 4:30 PM. Enjoy the area’s newest art form. All materials provided. For school age children and adults. <http://www.worcesterlibrary.org>

Fri., Dec. 28

FIBER FRIENDS
Ocean Pines library, 11107 Cathell Road, 10:00 AM. Bring your lap work and join this informal group. Knitters, crocheters, embroiderers, etc. are welcome. Victoria Christie-Healy, moonlightknitting@gmail.com, 703-507-0708, <http://www.worcesterlibrary.org>

LAP TIME
Berlin library, 13 Harrison Ave., 10:30 AM. Stories, rhymes, songs and finger plays for children up to two years of age and their caregivers. <http://www.worcesterlibrary.org>

AFTERNOON CRAFTS
Ocean City library, 10003 Coastal Highway, 1:30 PM. Some crafty fun during the long break from school. <http://www.worcesterlibrary.org>

HOME SCHOOL BOOK CLUB
Ocean Pines library, 11107 Cathell Road, 2:00 PM. Join the group to discuss books chosen by the club. Discussion questions will be shared after each meeting. All titles are available on Hoopla and are appropriate for middle-grades

readers. 410-208-4014, <http://www.worcesterlibrary.org>

Sat., Dec. 29

CRAFTY SATURDAY MAKE & TAKE ‘BABY NEW YEAR’
Ocean Pines library, 11107 Cathell Road, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM. Create themed crafts using materials provided by the library. For all ages. <http://www.worcesterlibrary.org>

ANNUAL HOLIDAY MODEL TRAIN GARDEN
Pocomoke River Canoe Company, 2 River St., 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM. Featuring the Corddry Company Model Railroad Club. Free to the public.

PRESLEY, PERKINS, LEWIS & CASH
Ocean City Performing Arts Center, in the Ocean City convention center, 4001 Coastal Highway, 4:00 PM and 8 PM. Celebrating the music of Elvis Presley, Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis and Johnny Cash. Tickets cost \$29 and \$36 and are available at the OC Convention Center Box Office or www.ticketmaster.com. 410-289-2800, <https://www.presleyperkinslewiscash.com/audio-video>

Sun., Dec. 30

ANNUAL HOLIDAY MODEL TRAIN GARDEN
Pocomoke River Canoe Company, 2 River St., 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM. Featuring the Corddry Company Model Railroad Club. Free to the public.

Mon., Dec. 31

NOON YEAR’S EVE PARTY
Ocean City library, 10003 Coastal Highway, 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM. Celebrate the new year with crafts, snacks and a countdown to 12 o’clock noon. <http://www.worcesterlibrary.org>

NEW YEAR’S EVE IN BERLIN
Kids party and a special Berlin Kids Ball Drop from 5-6 p.m. with hot chocolate, cookies, dancing and the Berlin Bubble Stomp at 6 p.m. Outdoor bars open at 10 p.m. with the Burley Oak beer truck, wine and food vendors. Dancing and light show with Ocean98 DJs Big Al Reno and Schwab. <http://www.BerlinMainStreet.com>

NEW YEAR’S EVE CELEBRATION
Northside Park, 200 125th St., Ocean City, MD, 5:30 PM. Festivities begin at 5:30 p.m. inside the Winterfest Pavilion. The free fireworks display, which will begin promptly at midnight, will be accompanied by live entertainment, warm hot chocolate and the opportunity to ride through the Winterfest of Lights.

Hours for the Winterfest of Lights will be extended until midnight.

Tues., Jan. 1

25TH ANNUAL PENGUIN SWIM
Princess Royale Hotel, 9100 Coastal Highway, 1:00 PM. Registration/check-in held from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Activities for the whole family including carnival games, face painting, mermaids and more held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Bull on the Beach team will parade down the beach at 12:45 pm. from 94th Street. The swim begins at 1 p.m. All penguins will receive an official 2019 AGH Penguin Swim T-shirt for their \$25 registration fee. Prizes awarded for several categories including oldest, youngest, most money raised and best costumes from 1:15-2 p.m. Pre-registration and advance check-in held on New Year’s Eve in the Premier Lobby from 2-4 p.m. Proceeds support the Atlantic General Hospital. 410-641-9671, <http://www.facebook.com/penguin-swim>

MAYOR’S NEW YEAR’S DAY CONCERT
Ocean City Performing Arts Center, in the Ocean City conventtion center, 4001 Coastal Highway, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM. After a brief meet and greet with Ocean City elected officials and community partners, the concert will feature performances by local singer/songwriter Bryan Russo and a special performance by Baltimore’s Cardinal Shehan School Choir. Doors open for seating at 1:30 p.m. and concert begins at 1:45 p.m. Being a free concert, tickets will not be issued and seating will be first come, first served. Jessica Waters, , 410-289-8967

ILIA FEHRER - JUDY JOHNSON 2019 MEMORIAL BEACH WALK
Concession Stand at the Assateague State Park, 6915 Stephen Decatur Highway, 1:00 PM. Celebrate the legacy of Assateague Island on New Year’s Day. Participants are asked to wear clothes and shoes appropriate for the weather. Also bring water for drinking. Hot chocolate will be served. Personal mugs are encouraged. Info: Bill Weiland, billy@actforbays.org or call the Assateague Coastal Trust office at 410-629-1538. <http://www.ACTforBays.org/events-events>

Wed., Jan. 2

HYPERTENSION CLINICS
Sponsored by Atlantic General Hospital and takes place at Rite Aid, 10119 Old Ocean City Blvd., Berlin and at Rite Aid, 11011 Manklin Creek Road, Ocean Pines, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM. Free blood pressure screening and health information.,

Michelle, , 410-641-9268,

DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP
Ocean Pines library, 11107 Cathell Road, 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM. Sponsored by Atlantic General Hospital, the group is open to the public and meets on the first Wednesday of each month. AGH Diabetes Outpatient Education program, 410-208-9761

ONGOING EVENTS

WINTERFEST OF LIGHTS
Northside Park, 200 125th St., and throughout Ocean City. Featuring a 50-foot Christmas tree, more than one million holiday lights and hundreds of animated light displays throughout Northside Park. The Winterfest Village pavilion offers hot chocolate, photos with Santa and the Winterfest Express. Admission to board the train is \$5 for adults and free to children 11 years and younger. The event runs through Dec. 31. Hours are Sunday through Thursday, 5:30-9:30 p.m. and Friday and Saturday, 5:30-10:30 p.m.

BOOK A LIBRARIAN
Any branch, through December. Need some one-on-one help with your resume, job application, E-Reader or basic computer skills? Contact your closest library branch to schedule a personal appointment. www.worcesterlibrary.org

FIRST STATE DETACHMENT OF THE MARINE CORPS LEAGUE MONTHLY MEETINGS
Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of each month at Ocean City American Legion Post, 2308 Philadelphia Ave., Ocean City, at noon. Open to all fellow Marines and FMF Corpsmen. Info: firststatemarines.org

THE SHEPHERDS CROOK
St. Paul’s by the Sea Episcopal Church, 302 N. Baltimore Ave. in the DeWees Hall. Open Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to noon. Offering dry food goods with NOEL carry out lunches on Saturdays. Use the DeWees Hall north entrance door located at the top of the driveway. Info: 410-289-3453. Volunteers contact Jane Ellis, 540-808-6055.

‘ACHIEVING SURGICAL WEIGHT LOSS SUCCESS’ SEMINAR
Atlantic General Bariatric Center Conference Room, 10231 Old Ocean City Blvd., Suite 207, Berlin. Takes place the first Monday of each month at 1 p.m. This is a free, in-person seminar. Additional opportunities are also available in the form of an online webinar. Register: 410-641-9568.

Snapshots



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

SPORTS AWARDS

(Left) Worcester Prep Upper School students who won awards during the fall soccer season, from left, are Jacob Meakin (Varsity Golf Most Improved), Colin Miller (Varsity Golf MVP), Matt Durkin (Varsity Golf Coaches Award), Henry Taboh (Varsity Soccer Coaches Award), Vincent Petrera (Varsity Soccer MVP), Graham Hammond (Varsity Soccer Most Improved), Enzo Zechiel (Varsity Cross Country Coaches Award), Graham McColgan (Varsity Cross Country MVP) and Graham McCabe (Varsity Cross Country Most Improved). (Right) Worcester Prep Upper School students who won awards during the fall soccer season, in front, from left, are Abby Reynolds (JV Volleyball Coaches Award), Ava Gerachis (JV Volleyball Most Improved), Jenna Elrick (JV Volleyball MVP), Hailee Arrington (Varsity Field Hockey MVP), Virginia Bateman (Varsity Field Hockey Coaches Award), Kat McCormick (Varsity Field Hockey Most Improved), and in back, Hailey Merritt (Varsity Volleyball MVP), Maria Deckmann (Varsity Volleyball Coaches Award), Julia Godwin (Varsity Volleyball MVP), Alannah Curtis (Varsity Soccer Most Improved), Gracie Gardner (Varsity Soccer Coaches Award), Delaney Abercrombie (Varsity Soccer MVP), Myranda Beebe (Varsity Cross Country MVP), Quinn McColgan (Varsity Cross Country Most Improved) and Hannah Merritt (Varsity Cross Country Coaches Award).



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

NEW RABBI

Rabbi Estelle Gottman Mills, left, was formally installed as the new rabbi of Temple Bat Yam in Berlin on Nov. 10. Joining in the consecration of Rabbi Mills as the new Rabbi was Rabbi Sharyn Henry of Temple Rodef Shalom in Pittsburgh and Fr. Matthew D'Amario O.P., Rector of St. Paul's by the Sea Church in Ocean City.



PHOTO COURTESY D.J. LANDIS, SR.

DONATIONS TO DIAKONIA

Walmart and Kiwanis work together to provide turkeys for Diakonia. Pictured is Eddie Marvel, Wal-mart Meat Manager who helped Kiwanis Club of Greater Ocean Pines-Ocean City Chair Barb Peletier load the turkeys for her to deliver to Diakonia in West Ocean City. The club has made this annual event.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

GIVING BACK

The Synepuxent Post #166 American Legion and Unit #166 American Legion Auxiliary of Ocean City have donated to Atlantic General Hospital's community flu clinics. Rosie and Sarge Garlitz presented the checks for the second year in a row during an Atlantic General Hospital community flu clinic at Holy Savior Catholic Church, Oct. 25. Rosie Garlitz is the chair of community service for Unit #166 of the American Legion Auxiliary of Ocean City and Sarge is the public relations officer for Post #166 and the commander of the American Legion's South Eastern Shore District. The presented \$1,100 to Tracey Mullineaux, BSN, RN, employee health and wellness coordinator.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

OFFICERS INSTALLED

The Ocean City/Berlin Leo Club recently installed new officers for the 2018-19 year. The Leo Club is a youth group sponsored by the Ocean City Lions Club and is based at Stephen Decatur High School in Berlin. Every year the Leos assist the OC Lions in raising awareness and funds for its many eyesight programs, including the National Lions Leader Dogs for the Blind program. The Leo Club is also involved with the Wounded Warriors Supply Drive and various food and clothing drives around the community. Picture, from left are Treasurer Logan Townsend, President Kennedy Duke, Vice President Samantha Short and Secretary Halle Friedman.



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Sat. & Sun. 11-2pm	Muirfield Lane., River Run	3-4BR/2-3.5BA	Single Family	\$399,900-\$479,900	Ed Wehnert/Coldwell Banker
Sat. & Sun. 11-4pm	29 Boatwain Dr., Ocean Pines	3BR/2BA	Single Family	\$459,000	Greg Steen/Steen Realty
Sat. & Sun. 11-4pm	9801 Mooring View Lane, Unit 33, OC	3BR/2.5BA	Duplex/Townhouse	From \$299,900	Kathleen Clark/Monogram Realty
Saturday 10-1pm	44 Moonraker Rd., Ocean Pines	3BR/2BA	Single Family	\$216,500	Donna Frankowski/Shamrock Realty
Saturday 10-1	5 W. Mallard Dr., Ocean Pines	3BR/2.5BA	Single Family	\$474,000	Lauren Buchanan/PO2 Hileman
Saturday 10-1	3736 Village Trail, Snow Hill	4BR/3BA	Single Family	\$389,900	Taylor Bakke/PO2 Hileman
Saturday 10-1	1105 Points Reach, Ocean Pines	3BR/2BA	Condo	\$344,900	Cameron Drew/PO2 Hileman
Saturday 10-1	1-214 Friendship Rd., Berlin	3BR/2.5BA	Single Family	\$347,777	Terri Bradford/PO2 Hileman
Sunday Noon-2	109 Central Parke, The Parke OP	5BR/3BA	Single Family	\$324,900	Lauren Bunting/Bunting Realty
Sunday Noon-2	181 Jamestown Rd., #6 Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$245,000	Lauren Bunting/Bunting Realty

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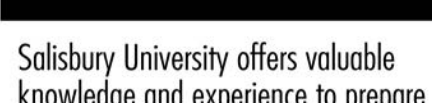


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