



GEE WILLIAMS/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

CHECKING IN

A \$5,000 donation from the Berlin Chamber of Commerce was presented to the Town of Berlin from proceeds the organization received from downtown Berlin events in 2020. Pictured is Mayor Zack Tyndall, left, and Ryan Nellans, executive director of the Berlin Chamber. See story on page 6.

Fleetwood repays town for sick time

Pleads guilty to taking pay for unearned vacation too

(Dec. 15, 2022) Former Berlin Administrator Jeff Fleetwood pleaded guilty to embezzlement of town funds in Worcester County District Court on Tuesday, Dec. 13.

Appearing before District Court Judge Gerald Purnell, Fleetwood was sentenced to six months of incarceration with all but one month suspended.

Judge Purnell ruled that the remaining 30 days of Fleetwood's sentence will be served through in-home detention which starts Dec. 20.



Jeff Fleetwood says he is 'truly sorry'

He will also be required to perform 40 hours of community service as part of the sentence.

Fleetwood, age 64, lives in Delmar, Delaware, and is the current town administrator for his hometown.

In District Court Tuesday, Fleetwood turned over a personal check to the Town of Berlin in the amount of \$17,520 as restitution at the court proceeding.

This would cover the full amount he pleaded guilty to embezzling from the town in the spring of this year.

The state prosecutor stated that the embezzled funds represented falsely reported accrued sick leave for 240 hours plus an additional 80 hours of vacation pay.

"I am truly sorry to be here today. It's the first time in my life I have been in court for anything," Fleetwood told the court.

Fleetwood's attorney, Steve See FLEETWOOD Page 4

Fire dept. aims for FEMA grant

October finances maintain better-than-budget pace recorded throughout year

By Jack Chavez
Staff Writer

(Dec. 15, 2022) The Ocean Pines Volunteer Fire Department is looking to pursue the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant that FEMA offers.

General Manager John Viola indicated that the fire department will need to hire a grant writer to pursue it.

"This will be for additional staff in the upcoming budget cycle," Budget

and Finance Committee chair Dick Keiling said.

"The department added positions last year and this year they're looking to add fire staff. This grant could help provide funds for staffing for three years. It is a fairly competitive grant but (our committee) and the GM support pursuing it."

The department is expected to present the grant idea during the Ocean Pines Board of Directors regular meeting on Saturday.

Viola then talked about the proposed biking and walking trail, with praise given to the thoroughness of Patti Stevens's presentation to the board last month.

It's a complex process that involves state, county and Ocean Pines funding, Viola said, and he was not sure whether the association have enough answers to work with by the time budget review occurs in January.

The committee expects progress, at least, to be updated by that time, Keiling said.

"Detailed presentations on what we need have to happen; (we must determine) what costs there are to pursuing these initiatives," Keiling said. "We really like what we've heard and think these are good ideas to pursue for this community."

See ASSOCIATION Page 5

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JACK CHAVEZ/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

The Ocean Pines Racquet Sports Committee is hoping a new manager can take the reigns of the Racquet Center in 2023 to help meet the goal of adding more members.

Racquet Center looking for new manager to guide club

By Jack Chavez
Staff Writer

(Dec. 15, 2022) The Ocean Pines Racquet Sports Committee is looking forward to the possibility of hiring a manager to take over the Racquet Center on Manklin Creek Road.

During its meeting on Dec. 8, the committee discussed how a full-time manager could help the already popular center, committee chair Susan Morris said.

“What we need is a manager to bring everything (together),” she said. “We need even more activity, more fun, lots more activities in both paddle(ball) and tennis to bring it up to the level of our pickleball people. What we’ve found in the last 18 months is people have been drifting and moving from one sport to another. A lot of pickleball players come to play paddle(ball), paddle(ball) to tennis or pickle(ball). There’s really a lot of activity there. We want more.”

Morris said she envisions a manager would be the person who brings the know-how and “education” to the area to pique the interest of active people inside and outside of Ocean Pines.

“There’s going to be someone who has all three sports and can help us grow and bring more,” she said. “Hopefully, we’re going to advertise out of Ocean Pines to bring more sports people here.”

“This is the East Coast. We’ve got pools and racquet centers and golf courses and beaches and we want to bring more people in. We want some clinics to come in for paddle(ball), sometime during the year to bring

outside people, the same way they do with pickleball. Hopefully, we can do these things but we need the manager first.”

Morris said that Recreation and Parks Director Debbie Donahue estimated that the position could be filled by spring.

Another item discussed was the recent racquet sports survey in which Pines residents made clear that they’re happy to come and participate but find that the building itself is “in need,” Morris said.

“It certainly could use some uplift. Because things have been so busy in the summer we could use some restrooms. That’s something that came across on the survey. Restrooms, parking and upgrades to the building.”

“It’s a solid building but it looks a little sad.”



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Library hiring two for bookmobile project

By Jack Chavez
Staff Writer

(Dec. 15, 2022) The return of a library bookmobile appears imminent after the Worcester County Commissioners approved a mobile services coordinator and assistant for the project during their meeting on Dec. 6.

According to Library Director Jennifer Ranck, the coordinator will not be a new position but a transferred one. That individual will be in charge of supporting and operating the vehicle, coordinating its schedules, maintenance of the highly fluid inventory and networking within the community.

The part-time assistant position will be filled via the already-vacant Library Service Assistant position.

“We wanted a bookmobile so we can make it easier for people who can’t easily visit their branch to take advantage of library services and resources,” Ranck said earlier this week. “We don’t have a schedule established yet but we envision visiting long-term care facilities, senior living facilities, hopefully, schools and head-start (programs). We want to bring materials to the people and attend special events, like everything from Touch-a-Truck Day to parades to local fairs, festivals and maybe even some farmer’s markets.”



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

The return of a library bookmobile – similar to this one – appears imminent after the Worcester County Commissioners approved a mobile services coordinator and assistant for the project last week.

While the bookmobile will give much attention to underserved communities, it will be accessible for the entire county, Ranck added.

“Our job is to reach everything in the community,” she said.

Ranck said the idea and motivation for the bookmobile came during

the covid-19 pandemic lockdown when the library wasn’t able to reach certain populations. Through “some partnerships” with the Worcester County Arts Council, the library was

able to bring programs and activities to places such as the Harrison House in Snow Hill.

“(Those partnerships) were some See BOOKMOBILE Page 5

Fleetwood ‘deeply ashamed’

Continued from Page 1

Rakow, told the court his client is 64 years old and, “Jeff is deeply ashamed to be here today.”

During the court proceeding Kelsey Jensen, administrative assistant for Berlin’s Town Administrator, and Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall both testified that \$17,520 was embezzled from the town.

Jensen said she was both angry and uncomfortable testifying about the fraud in the court.

Jensen said she has been employed by the Town of Berlin for six years with two of those years working for Fleetwood as the town manager.

Jensen said after reviewing the

discrepancies between the time Fleetwood recorded and the payments, “I questioned the double-dipping, but there was no other plausible explanation.”

Jensen said her only explanation for this situation is, “Jeff did not like the mayor.”

Mayor Zack Tyndall also testified stating that the town administrator’s position, “carries an immense amount of public trust.”

Noting that Berlin has 5,026 residents, 272 businesses and 70 town employees, “it will take years for the Town of Berlin to regain trust.”

The mayor also said the town supported a reasonable amount of time for Fleetwood to be in incarceration.

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JACK CHAVEZ/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

The Ocean Pines Budget and Finance Committee is discussing the desire from other committees to increase membership at amenities, such as the Recreation Complex on Manklin Creek Road.

Association wants to boost membership in amenities

Continued from Page 1

The committee also discussed some of the guidance that the Strategic Planning Committee has provided for progress in 2023.

One of the biggest points is setting the association's sights on increasing amenity membership.

"The question there was really with the inflationary increase in labor and materials — how does that translate to fees for amenities?" Keiling said. "(Our committee) was saying we should be looking at amenities as we have done in the past. The revenues we get from increases in memberships. Pickleball (for example last

year grew 33 percent. Membership grows as revenue grows. (We must look at) fees for amenities and what's happening in other communities. How are they handling these issues? All that enters into the equation. (Our committee) is indicating that we should be concerned and careful on what we might do with increasing amenity memberships."

The October financial statement was ready for discussion, too.

Keiling reported another favorable month in an overall favorable year. The month's operating variance was favorable at \$77,000, which represents revenues reported at plus-\$52,000 and expenses coming in under, by \$25,000.

The year-to-date variance is favorable at \$824,000.

Total expenses are \$27,000 over budget, but Keiling pointed out that in a community the size of Ocean Pines, that dollar figure, which represents a 0.4 percent increase, is inconsequential.

For now, the Budget and Finance Committee is scheduled to meet again on Dec. 28. It will dive into next year's budget season in January.

Bookmobile will make rounds

Continued from Page 4

of our first realizations that there are people who can't get to us," she said.

The vehicle itself will be a Ford F350 pickup truck with each side of the vehicle able to open up. It's currently being constructed in Stevensville.

Ranck pointed out that it wasn't so much of a new service as it is a returning service — a similar vehicle operated in the county from the late 1960s to the middle of the 1980s.

"To my knowledge, Worcester will be the first system in Maryland to use this pop-up style vehicle," Ranck said. "We are very excited about extending our services through the bookmobile and increasing access to books and technology beyond the library walls. We are grateful to the Maryland State Library Agency for awarding the library \$100,000 (from an) ARPA grant through the Institute for Museum and Library Services."

The library plans to introduce the bookmobile in 2023.

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Mayor and Town Council look at grain silo text amendment

By Gee Williams
Contributing Writer

(Dec. 15, 2022) A proposed text amendment to the Town of Berlin code to allow grain silos in shopping and general business districts was passed by the Berlin Council with a unanimous 5-0 vote at their December meeting.

As a result of the town council's approval, Burley Oak Brewery will now go before Berlin's Board of Zoning Appeals to determine if they can construct a grain storage silo at the brewery site on Old Ocean City Boulevard. The date for that hearing has not been determined.

Prior to the unanimous approval of the text amendment, the mayor and council heard presentations by brewery attorney Mark Cropper and Burley Oak Chief of Operations Adam Davis. Cropper told the Berlin Council that it was being asked to enact enabling legislation only and not the approval of a silo at the brewery.

"It allows for the property to make an application to the town for a special exception to the zoning code. With the council's approval, Cropper noted Burley Oak would then have to go before the Berlin Zoning Appeals Board to apply for a special exception.

Davis explained that employee safety would be the primary benefit of the silo. "There would be no more unloading of hundreds of pallets." He said hand unloading would be reduced by 80 to 90 percent per year. The proposed silo at the brewery will be 31.5 feet tall and 38 feet in diameter. "It will not be any taller than a typical tree in the back of the property," Davis said.

"There will not be any noise impact or odor," caused by using the silo, he added. Davis also said the silo would be used to store and transfer



GEE WILLIAMS/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

A Holly Jolly Christmas was present at Monday's Berlin Mayor and Council meeting as town Public Works Director Jimmy Charles attended spreading Christmas cheer and dressed in the spirit of the holidays.

about 500,000 pounds of grain for the brewing of beer each year.

Davis said neither a brand or a logo on the silo is anticipated. When asked by council members if the silo will be lit at night, Cropper said this would be an issue that will be decided by the Board of Zoning Appeals. He added that the text amendment is not specific to the Burley Oak property.

Council Vice-President Dean Burrell noted that as proposed, the construction of the silo would be addressed only as a special exception. "The brewery location is one of the possibilities," Burrell said. Davis explained that the brewery would only be receiving deliveries of grain between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. and not during the night when they could possibly disturb neighbors.

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Fire funding, SD park lights, more discussed

Fire company - EMS funding allocations

A change in the wording of Berlin's allocation of budgeted funds for fiscal year 2023 to the Berlin Fire Company and to Emergency Medical Services was also approved by a unanimous 5-0 vote of the Berlin Town Council. The change in the wording is to indicate the division of the \$525,000 allocated in this fiscal year's town budget.

The Berlin Fire Company is allocated \$116,960.82 in the current town budget and Emergency Medical Services is allocated \$408,039.18. The motion also specifies that the EMS budget allocation is split between operation funds and additional staff funds. EMS operation funding is allocated at \$283,039.18 and additional staff allocation funds total \$125,000.

"This request is being made by both entities," explained Town Administrator Mary Bohlen. The motion also specifies that no other changes will be made to the current FY 23 town budget allocation for Fire Company or EMS which totals \$525,000.

Mayor Zack Tyndall noted that the town is working with the D3 Corporation to get a separate web page online as soon as possible with the approved breakdown of funding between the fire department and emergency medical services. Natalie Saleh, Berlin Finance Director, said the total amounts allocated are the same as passed for this year's town budget, only the budget language will change.

Chamber New Year's Eve alcohol permit extended

Alcohol beverage sales on Main Street for Berlin's annual New Year's Eve celebration was extended from 8 p.m. to midnight by a unanimous 5-

0 vote by the Berlin Council. The measure was introduced by Councilman Steve Green after a presentation was made by Ryan Nellans, Executive Director of the Berlin Chamber of Commerce.

The early "kids' ball-drop" is scheduled at about 6 p.m. on New Year's Eve, Nellans explained. He noted that youngsters would no longer be on Main Street by the time alcohol would begin to be served at 8 p.m.

Nellans said the chamber wanted to have alcohol sales available during the time when music was being performed downtown on New Year's Eve. He added that the Chamber of Commerce sold only canned beer and malt wine on Main Street between Broad Street and Pitts Street.

Berlin gets SD park lights earlier than expected

New lights for Decatur Park arrived earlier than expected, reported Berlin Town Administrator Mary Bohlen. The monitoring system for the new lights will work the same as the current tennis court lights, except the tennis lights stay on until 11 p.m. Bohlen explained that if the new lights stop functioning this would be reported immediately online to the town through a satellite connection.

A council discussion followed about what time the new lights in the park should be shut off at night. Police Chief Arnold Downing said the new lights should be turned off earlier than 10 p.m. Councilmember Shanika Nichols recommended the shut off time could be adjusted seasonally to adjust for shorter daylight hours in cold weather months. She then recommended that 9 p.m. be the time when the new park lighting should be shut off in the council's

draft policy.

Sea Hawk Road reflective paint

After a brief discussion on the newly paved and painted Main Street, the Berlin mayor and council shifted their attention to another location. "It

may be beneficial to put reflective painting on Sea Hawk Road," Mayor Zack Tyndall said.

Public Works Director Jimmy Charles noted that road line painting will be done on Sea Hawk road adjacent to Stephen Decatur High and Middle Schools up to the Flower Street intersection.

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Board of Ed breaks down budget at meeting

PTA reps from each public school in county speak on importance of quality hires

By Jack Chavez

Staff Writer

(Dec. 15, 2022) Teachers, teachers, teachers.

That was the most common request on Dec. 6 as representatives from each of Worcester County's public schools made their requests to the board of education for the FY24.

The hour-long, in-person and live-streamed meeting began with an introduction from each member of the board, Superintendent Lou Taylor and Chief Financial Officer Vince Tolbert, the latter of whom broke down where the county stands with its funding as it heads into the next calendar year and, next spring, the next fiscal year.

"This year's budget totals \$123.3 million," Tolbert said. "Worcester County Public Schools continues to be highly dependent on our county commissioners for funding. Almost 75 percent of our funds come from the local government."

A graphic he presented showed that the state contributes about 16.7 percent and the federal government about 8.49 percent.

For neighboring counties like



Buckingham Elementary School, like every public school in Worcester County, sent a representative to the Board of Education meeting on Dec. 6 with the school's capital requests. Parent Kimberly Jackson thanked the board for its work on the Buckingham replacement project.

PHOTO COURTESY WORCESTER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS FACEBOOK

Dorchester and Somerset, "it's flipped," Tolbert said. "They probably get 75 percent of their funding from the state and very little from the county government."

FY23 expenditures are mostly taken up by three categories: instructional programs at 64.8 percent, spe-

cial education at 14.5 percent and operation of plant at 10.4 percent.

The unrestricted operating budget reflects what Tolbert described as the people-driven nature of a school system's business model — salaries and fixed charges take up 85.5 percent.

"If we're looking at making reductions or changes, it's people," Tolbert said. "We don't really have anywhere else to reduce our budget."

Some concerning numbers Tolbert also reported included a poverty rate that's four percent above the state av-

erage and the wealth per pupil sitting at \$6,600, the lowest in the state.

However, the wealth per pupil statistic runs counter to the wealth-based funding formula the State of Maryland uses that identifies Worcester County as the wealthiest in the state in terms of population as compared to the property tax assessable base, which is driven by the high property values and residential base in Ocean City.

Looking toward 2024, Tolbert said See TEACHERS Page 9

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Teachers technology access common refrains at meeting

Continued from Page 8
the school system will need to increase employee salaries to adhere to the upcoming Maryland Blueprint for Education mandate. Bus contract expenses will increase, too, as will employee health insurance rates.

“This (mandate) will be driving public education in Maryland for the next 10-plus years at an estimated cost of \$3.8 billion,” Tolbert reported. “It includes early childhood education, high quality and diverse teachers and leaders, college and career readiness pathways, more resources for all students and governance and accountability.”

And then, of course, there are the various requests of each public school to consider.

Every school wants the county to continue retaining quality teachers and ensuring Worcester County remains an attractive destination for teachers.

Other common refrains included maintaining student access to adequate technology and keeping classrooms small.

“Our teachers are committed to creating great citizens for this future community,” parent Emily Gelman of Showell Elementary School said. “Let’s invest in them and the community by offering a competitive salary to retain and recruit high-quality teachers.”

Buckingham Elementary School parent Kimberly Jackson thanked the board for its support in completing a feasibility study for a new school and asked that construction funding is maintained.

“In the future, it would be great to maintain these additions to continue meeting the needs of our student population,” Jackson said.

Other funding requests included replacing the pavement in front of the school and sidewalk and replacing the tennis courts at Berlin Intermediate School and stage floor repair at Stephen Decatur High School.

Stephen Decatur Middle School asked the board to continue emphasizing a 1:1 ratio of students to technological devices.

Decatur High parent Dr. Tammy

Donaway also pointed out how beneficial it would be if there’s any funding left over for classroom materials.

“We all know that our teachers put in that little extra — their own supplies with their own money — and we ask that you maintain the current funding levels for materials of instruction,” Donaway said. “But if there are any funds available, we’d love to see an increase. It’d be beneficial for both the teachers and the students.

“We know that the jobs our children have later in life are going to depend on the available technology. I think Worcester County really got it right implementing the iPads and keeping up with technology in the classroom.”



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

FALL FUN

The 10th grade held the annual Fall Fun Festival at Worcester Preparatory School on Oct. 26 for first through fifth grade students. Sophomores created their own game stations, and brought in candy, treats and prizes. Third graders Madelyn Tull, Amalia Gjiguria, Kingsley Giardina and Nora Rafinski are pictured with Upper School teacher/10th Grade Sponsor Hunter Causey.



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Progress looks stalled in OP vs. Janasek case

Two sides remain far apart on settlement amount as possible Jan. court looms

By Jack Chavez
Staff Writer

(Dec. 15, 2022) Negotiation over the settlement between Tom Janasek and the Ocean Pines Association continued last week as the Ocean Pines Association Board of Directors convened in executive session with legal counsel to weigh the options.

Janasek seeks to recoup the money he spent defending himself after the association attempted to ban him from all of its amenities follow-

ing a confrontation between him and former director Josette Wheatley at the Ocean Pines Yacht Club in May.

Janasek argued in court that the board could not bar him from association amenities and sought to enjoin the board from imposing the ban, which the court agreed to do earlier this fall while the sides sought to settle the case.



Tom Janasek

The two sides remain far apart, however, leaving open the possibility that they will once again end up back in court on Jan. 25 to let Worcester

County Circuit Court Judge Beau Oglesby decide how much the OPA should compensate Janasek.

"Nothing — absolutely nothing," Janasek said when asked what he's heard from the directors. "I don't know what their deal is. Other than getting correspondence (that indicates they think) we have no case for any retribution.

Rumors abound as to how much the OPA offered Janasek and how much he actually paid for his legal counsel. Some individuals in the community have speculated that it offered \$2,000 while Janasek spent more than \$40,000.

While not confirming specific

numbers, Janasek said those estimates were more accurate than not.

"I haven't a clue what my lawyer bills are now but they're well over that," Janasek said. "I've talked to others in the community and nobody's upset that I'm going after my lawyer fees. It's not about me anymore — it's about what the board can do to a homeowner at any given time."

The next time both parties are scheduled to be in the same room as each other is Wednesday for a settlement conference at the courthouse in Snow Hill. They will not be in court itself.

OPA President Doug Parks said he could not comment on this story on advice from legal counsel.

No yard debris at Worcester recycling center

OP residents being asked to not bring bagged leaves and other outdoor waste

(Dec. 15, 2022) Ocean Pines residents are being asked to not drop off bagged leaves or other yard debris at the Worcester County Recycling Center, which could result in fines or violations from the county.

Leaves may be dropped off at the

Ocean Pines Public Works yard, which is next to the center.

Ocean Pines residents may bring leaves and yard debris in bulk or paper bags to the Public Works yard at 1 Firehouse Lane, near the south Fire Department. The yard will be open through Dec. 31, Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. until 3 p.m. The yard will be closed for drop off Dec. 23, 24 and 26.

Ocean Pines Public Works will col-

lect bagged leaves and other yard debris through Dec. 22, on opposite days from Republic Services collection days.

The department will only pick up leaves placed in paper bags that residents place curbside.

Republic Services will pick up paper and plastic bags on scheduled pick-up days, limit four bags of leaves per scheduled pick up. Republic Services will also accept branches tied in

bundles no longer than four feet.

The Worcester County Recycling Center accepts newspaper, mixed paper, magazines, glass, plastic, aluminum and bi-metal cans, cardboard, and textiles (clothing).

All other items are not allowed. The recycling station is not staffed but does have security cameras. Violators may be ticketed.

For more information, contact Public Works at 410-641-7425.

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December 24th at 3 p.m. with guest officiant, The Rev. Carl Mosley, of St. Paul's-Berlin Parish. Complimentary parking
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For further info: 410-251-2849

County Commissioner Briefs

By Jack Chavez
Staff Writer

(Dec. 15, 2022) The Worcester County Commissioners discussed the following during their Dec. 6 meeting:

Police protection

The commissioners approved the FY2023 state aid for police protection fund application. The grant is "ongoing and is intended to be used exclusively to provide adequate police protection throughout the counties and subdivisions of Maryland," read a memo from budget officer Kim Reynolds. The application states that the county would like to be considered for FY24 grant funding, but it does not determine how much funding the county will get.

Change orders

The commissioners approved two change orders to the Stephen Decatur Middle School addition project, totaling \$543,609. The first change is to replace the existing school PA and clock systems at \$381,917 and the second is to replace the existing school CCTV security system at \$161,692.

WCPS Superintendent Lou Taylor wrote in a memo that the school system firmly believes that addressing the aged (systems) will increase overall security and that it is a "sound funding decision."

Fund balance and CIP

The commissioners agreed to discuss the FY22 assigned fund balance and the requested capital improve-

ment program in January.

Public hearing

No citizens spoke for or against an application filed by Rauch Engineering, representing Riverview Mobile Home Park owner Jim Latchum, in pursuit of constructing wastewater treatment plant for stream discharge and modifications to the existing water treatment plant to serve an expansion of the existing park by 60 units. The plans for the Bishopville mobile home park require an amendment to the Worcester County Water and Sewerage comprehensive plan.

MACo

The commissioners confirmed that Chip Bertino and Jim Bunting would be the county representative and alternate, respectively, for the Maryland of Association of Counties. MACo's Legislative Committee meets frequently during the Maryland General Assembly session, which lasts from January to April.

Airport rep

Commissioner Joe Mitrecic was selected to be the Worcester County commissioner representative on the Wicomico County Airport Commission at the Salisbury-Ocean City-Wicomico Regional Airport. The commission consists of eight members, one of whom typically being the commissioner president or, as in Mitrecic's case, a designee. The commission meets monthly.

New OP Marine Corps League held first meeting on Dec. 8

(Dec. 15, 2022) The meeting of the "new" Ocean Pines Marine Corps League, Peacekeepers Detachment #1492 was held Dec. 8.

This was its first meeting with the signing of its charter and swearing-in of officers.

Marine Richard Poundsberry has been installed to serve as the commandant for the first year. Marines John Daddezio and John Whitehead have been chosen as senior vice commandant and junior vice commandant, respectively.

MCL Peacekeepers Detachment #1492 will meet every second Thursday of the month at the Ocean City Volunteer Fire Compant Station #5, 10124 Keyser Point Road, in West Ocean City.

The next meeting of the Peacekeepers Detachment will be held on Jan. 12, at 11 a.m. Any Marine, FMF corpsman or FMF chaplain interested in joining this new detachment, are welcomed.

For more information, contact Daddezio, jadaddezio@gmail.com, or Whitehead, naphar@aol.com.

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SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE
A group of Ocean Pines residents are collecting items to help stave off food insecurity in the community, with a goal of supplying local children with healthy weekend snacks for 30 weeks.

Group collecting food items for Head Start program in OP

(Dec. 15, 2022) A group of Ocean Pines residents are collecting items to help stave off food insecurity in the community, with a goal of supplying local children with healthy weekend snacks for 30 weeks.

Margit Novack and four neighbors in the Teal Bay neighborhood of Ocean Pines formed the group last year, dubbing themselves the "Teal Bay Mitzvah Team," after the Jewish word for good deeds.

Mitzvah Team member Helen Johnson said the group has already led several successful charitable campaigns. In 2021, members collected more than 1,000 pairs of shoes for their "Soles for Souls" campaign.

Later that year, they amassed more than 2,000 pairs of new socks

during a "Joy of Sox" drive. Donated items were then distributed during the holiday season to assisted living facilities, long term care facilities, Diakonia, and Worcester County GOLD.

The group also held a pet food drive for local animal shelters. Johnson said all three goals were met thanks to generous donations from local people.

"We just want to give back to the community and those in need in some way. We feel that we're all very fortunate, so we want to do what we can for others," she said. "We now are focusing on food insecurity, because we knew it was something that children in our community struggle with," Johnson continued. "There is poverty in this area and you're always

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DAY/TIME	ADDRESS	BR/BA	STYLE	PRICE	AGENCY/AGENT
Fri-Mon, 11am-4pm	Heron Harbour, 120th St., Bayside	1BR/2BR/3BR/4BR+	Condos, Towns & SF	-	Nanette Pavier/Holiday Real Estate
Saturday, 12-2pm	22404 Grebe Lane, Ocean View, DE	3BR/2.5 BA	Townhouse	\$649,900	The Warns Group/Long & Foster
Saturday, 10am-12pm	9 140th St. #3W, Ocean City	3BR/2BA	Condo	\$420,000	Anne-Marie & Rob Bouse/ReMax
Saturday, 1-3pm	11500 Coastal Hwy. #212, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	High-Rise	\$595,000	Anne-Marie & Rob Bouse/ReMax
Saturday, 10am-1pm	305 S. Heron Gull Ct., Ocean City	6BR/6BA/2HBA	Single Family	\$2,399,900	Nancy Reither-Smith/Coldwell Banker Realty

Pines residents doing their part to battle holiday hunger

hearing about the need.”

The Mitzvah Team started the latest drive on Facebook two months ago, asking for donations for the Berlin Head Start program.

Johnson said Head Start supplies food during the week, but “Come weekends, we don’t know what they have.”

“We thought it would be good to send them home with a little bag of food items, and we’re specifically collecting things suggested by a nutritionist with Head Start,” she said.

The Mitzvah Team is hoping to run the program for 30 weeks, with 30 lunch snacks per student donated and then distributed by the teachers for the children to take home.

They’ve done well so far, delivering 240 bags of food to Head Start over the first eight weeks.

“They [Head Start] were very excited. It’s a federal program, so we had to go through all the proper channels to do this,” Johnson said. “And we’re very happy that this has worked out, so far.”

Johnson said many people found it convenient to order items on Amazon.com and have them shipped directly to Novack at 2 Riverside Court in Ocean Pines.

“People can go online and order a

case of Ramen noodles, for example, for just \$15 or \$20 while having coffee in the morning. That goes a long way to help local kids,” Johnson said.

“Our donations have slowed a little, and we know this is a hard time of year because everywhere you look people are wanting donations. So, we’re doing what we can to get the word out,” she added.

Snacks approved by the Head Start nutritionist include:

- Single serve fruit cups and squeezers
- Single serve Cheerios cups
- Instant oatmeal packs
- Granola bars with no peanuts
- Ramen noodles
- Small raisin boxes
- Fruit roll-ups
- Whole grain crackers
- Small popcorn bags
- Bobos fruit filled mini muffins
- Small bags of pretzels
- Bel Vita biscuits
- Teddy Grahams
- Dried apple chips

Items may be dropped off or shipped directly to Margit Novack, 2 Riverside Court, Ocean Pines, Maryland 21811.

For more information, contact Novack at margitnovack@gmail.com.

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Snapshots



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FALL FESTIVAL

The 10th grade held the annual Fall Fun Festival at Worcester Preparatory School on Oct. 26 for first through fifth grade students. Sophomores created their own game stations, and brought in candy, treats and prizes. (Above) First grader Eleanor Brown is excited to have her face painted. (Left) Fifth grader Michael Giardina, 10th grader Ryan Mann, second graders Emily Leiner and Isla Pippin, fifth grader Jack Hornung and third grader Knox Luttrell wait in line to have their fortunes told.



SUBMITTED PHOTOS/BAYSIDE GAZETTE



CELEBRATING VETS

Worcester Preparatory School's fourth and fifth grades came together in a musical performance to celebrate veterans on Nov. 11. (Above) Fifth grader Liam Doran puts the finishing touches on his email to a veteran thanking them for their service. (Left) Fifth grader Emma Sherrin was reunited with family friends, Ashton and Carsen Hyde of the U.S. Army, who both just returned from deployment.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

SUPPORTING SPCA

Worcester Prep seventh grader Chase Thompson presents a check to the SPCA for over \$900, a result of the fundraiser he spearheaded through his "Head of School for a Day" experience. He is pictured with Head of School Dr. John McDonald. Thompson acted as Head of School on Oct. 14. His parents purchased "Head of School for a Day" during the annual WPS Gala fundraiser auction this past April.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

PROGRAM TALK

The Worcester County Garden Club recently had a presentation by Lisa Massie, DPT, about her "Evolving with Motion" program, which promotes physical therapy and wellness. Members were given tips on how to prevent injuries when gardening. Pictured, from left, are Worcester County Garden Club First Vice President Joan LaHayne, Dr. Massie, and Worcester County Garden Club President Deb Young.

Snapshots



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

GRANT FUNDING

Schools in Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester counties received \$147,373 in grant funding through the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore's 2022 Education Grants Program. Funds will be distributed across 45 school-based programs.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

SUPPORTING DIAKONIA

Members of the Worcester Prep Upper School Volunteers Club donated their time on Nov. 6 at the Giant in Millville, Delaware, to collect supplies for Diakonia, the homeless shelter in West Ocean City. In just two hours, they filled an SUV with a variety of supplies including paper and canned goods as well as other items, that were later delivered to Diakonia. Pictured are Volunteers Club members Jackson Fernley, Sara Freih, Isabella Borsoni, Esi Mehilli, Izzy Huber and Elaina Elrick. Not pictured: Claire Windrow.



PHOTO COURTESY DAVID J. LANDIS, SR.

GUEST SPEAKER

Emily Thompsen, program coordinator for the Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Eastern Shore, was the guest speaker during the Kiwanis Club of Greater Ocean Pines-Ocean City's Nov. 16 meeting. She is pictured with Kiwanis Club President Bob Wolfing.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

COASTAL BAYS EXPERIENCE

Since 2002, a program started by Wayne Littleton, a group of volunteer captains support the Believe In Tomorrow Foundation. The captains and their mates take families with children experiencing life-threatening illnesses on boating excursions on the coastal bays. The trips, lasting two to three hours, consist of sight-seeing, fishing, exploring the shores of Assateague and crabbing. This year 28 families enjoyed the program during the summer months. The program is financially supported by the Ocean Pines Anglers. Boat owners interested in participating in the program, can contact Budd Heim at 410-726-1968 or Mary Brown at 410-245-2266. Pictured, from right, Heim, Ken Thompson, Scott Carstairs, Chuck Eder, Paul Fohner, Fred Stiehl, Jim Rorke, Ricky and Lanie Kerrigan, Bob Woodard, Carl Brown, John Dilworth, and Joan and John O'Dell. Not Pictured: Steve Fingles, Jimmy and MaryAnn Atchison, and Claude Lewis.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

The Worcester County Commissioners elected Commissioner Chip Bertino, right, to serve as president and Jim Bunting as vice president of the board on Dec. 6.

County Commissioners elect Bertino and Bunting to lead

(Dec. 15, 2022) The Worcester County Commissioners elected Commissioner Chip Bertino to serve as president and Jim Bunting to serve as vice president of the board on Dec. 6.

Bertino was elected to the board in 2014 to represent District Five, the Ocean Pines District, and he is serving his third term in office.

Bertino represents the County Commissioners on the Wor-Wic Community College Board of Trustees and on the Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) Legislative Committee.

He has been in the newspaper publishing business for more than 30 years.

He is a member and past president of the Ocean Pines Chamber of Commerce, past board member of the Worcester County Veterans Memorial at Ocean Pines, and he is co-author of the book "My Time, My Service" about the men and women honored at the memorial.

Bertino and his wife, Susan, have lived in Ocean Pines for nearly 30 years. They have three children and two grandchildren.

Bunting was elected to the board in 2010 to represent District Six, the Northern District, and is serving his fourth term in office.

He served as president for three consecutive years from 2014-2016.

He is a retired professional land

surveyor, and he owned and operated his own surveying and land planning business for 18 years.

He represents the commissioners on the Commission for Aging, the Water and Sewer Advisory Committee, and the Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) Legislative Committee.

Prior to becoming a commissioner, he served on the Worcester County Board of Zoning Appeals for six years, leading the board as chair for four years.

He served on the Worcester County Planning Commission for four years, leading the board as chair for three years. He also served on the Ocean Pines Comprehensive Planning Committee.

Bunting and his wife, Elisabeth, live in Bishopville. They have two grown children and one granddaughter.

The Board of Worcester County Commissioners is the seven-member legislative and executive branch of county government.

Each commissioner is elected to serve a four-year term, and one representative is elected from each of the seven election districts. The current board was elected to serve the 2022-2026 term.

The commissioners meet the first and third Tuesday of each month in the Worcester County Government Center in Snow Hill.

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Correction

The Mayor's New Year's event included in the "Celebrate the Holidays" insert of the Bayside Gazette is incorrect. The information for this year's event can be found at <https://www.ococean.com/events/mayor-s-new-year-event-2022>.

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SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Ocean Pines "Get Involved" toy drive is still collecting toys and will continue doing so until Dec. 19. Drop boxes are available at several locations in the community.

Toy drive asks Ocean Pines residents to 'Get Involved'

(Dec. 15, 2022) The Ocean Pines group "Get Involved" is collecting toys for area children through Dec. 19, with drop boxes available at several locations in the community.

The Get Involved group is in its second year of managing donation drives, having pulled off a trio of successful campaigns last year to collect food, toys and coats for local people in need.

This year, the group has already donated more than 1,000 pounds of food to Diakonia, a nonprofit that assists area homeless.

Organizer Esther Diller said the toy drive this year would benefit Toys for Tots.

"How this all started was, I didn't realize we had such a homeless population in this area – I was stunned when I found out the story," she said.

"I found out they camp out behind the outlets [in Ocean City] and in the woods, and I heard there were children as well as adults."

Diller said she reached out to leadership at Diakonia, and her worst fears were confirmed: homelessness is an underreported, but rampant issue in Worcester County.

"I never knew it had gotten this bad, and it really bothered me. In the bright lights of Ocean City and Worcester County, here we all these homeless people." Diller said. "It's such a tragedy."

"So, I thought we need to help not only the families and the parents, but I want to give something to the kids

See GET Page 18



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

This is the second year that Ocean Pines' "Get Involved" has taken place. Food is also accepted. The group has already donated more than 1,000 pounds of food to Diakonia.

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SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

The annual Student Government Association-sponsored food drive at Worcester Preparatory School started Nov. 15 and on Dec. 9, the Upper School gathered to sort and divide canned goods and non-perishable food items that will be donated to several local organizations. Pictured are juniors Esi Mehilli, Emma Crivella, Natalie Chadwell, Leby Becker and sophomore Danielle Carr.

SGA's annual food drive at Worcester Prep meets goals

(Dec. 15, 2022) The annual Student Government Association-sponsored food drive at Worcester Preparatory School started Nov. 15 and on Dec. 9, the Upper School gathered to sort and divide canned goods and non-perishable food items that will be donated to several local organizations.

This year, Worcester Prep had a special kickoff to the annual event.

In celebration of the school's 50th year, each homeroom set a goal to collect 50 canned goods in three days.

If the goal was met, that homeroom was allowed a dress down day, where students could wear red, white and blue instead of their traditional uniform.

That Friday, all home rooms See ANNUAL Page 19

'Get Involved' asking for OP help

Continued from Page 17
– to families with children who can't afford anything for the holidays," she added.

Get Involved is seeking new, unwrapped items for children of all ages.

Collection boxes are available at the Ocean Pines Administration Building lobby, as well as at the Yacht Club, the Golf Club, and at the south fire station.

Diller said volunteers have already collected several large boxes of donations.

"We just got a bunch of brand-new dolls, which is great, and there have been a lot of toys for the little ones as well, with stuff like building blocks, which is just awesome," she said. "We're not really picky about what

the toys are, as long as they're new and unwrapped."

Up next, Get Involved will host its second-annual coat drive from Dec. 26 through New Year's Day. Drop boxes will be available at the same four locations as the toy drive.

Gently used coats, along with new hats, gloves and socks, will go to Land's End Fellowship, which is run by a nondenominational church in Ocean City.

"Last year we were able to collect hundreds of coats, so we're really excited to be able to help that organization out. We are also looking for more organizations to donate to, so please reach out if anyone locally has a need," Diller said.

For more information, contact Diller at esmatt4@aol.com.



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SUBMITTED PHOTOS/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

(Top) Pictured are seniors Austin Gentry and Griffin Jones. (Above) Junior Moorea Phillips and sophomore Landon Schul help out.

Annual food drive by Worcester Prep SGA meets goals

Continued from Page 18 dressed down with every class achieving the goal.

Thanks to the SGA and all those who donated, nine local organizations in Maryland and Delaware will receive a large bundle of canned goods and non-perishable food items.

In addition, students also donated \$3 each to help buy meat products for holiday dinners.

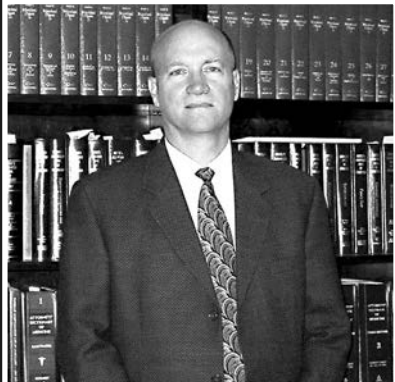
The following organizations will receive and distribute the food collected:

- Diakonia, Inc., West Ocean City
- Atlantic United Methodist Church, Ocean City
- The Joseph House, Salisbury
- Stevenson United Methodist Church Spirit Kitchen, Berlin
- The Seaford Community Food Closet, Seaford, Delaware
- Bethel Mariner Food Bank, Ocean View, Delaware
- Sunrise Church, Berlin,
- The Community Church at Ocean Pines
- HALO, Salisbury

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Opinion

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

Rough waters ahead for Black Eyed Susan

Hope floats. The Black Eyed Susan doesn't. At least not as a passenger vessel.

That's how it's been since the Town of Snow Hill bought the 111-foot paddlewheeler in 2021 for roughly \$350,000 with the help of a no-interest loan from county government.

Since that time, it's been one thing after another for the riverboat, with the most recent difficulty being its failure to pass muster with Coast Guard as a commercial cruiser.

Given all the boat's problems, it appears that Havre de Grace, its last home port, shipped its future troubles downstream before the Black Eyed Susan became the proverbial hole in the water into which one throws money.

But now, as Snow Hill residents and government ponder whether to sell or to keep steaming onward despite the expensive repairs the sternwheeler requires, their options are limited. Putting the Black Eyed Susan up for sale assumes that a market exists for it, especially at a price that would put some kind of dent in the town's debt.

At the same time, sticking to the course originally charted for it is going to require another major investment to bring the boat up to Coast Guard standards.

What all this really comes down to is whether paddlewheel boat rides up and down the Pocomoke River actually will post a net over expenses for an extended period.

Some hope exists for the project's advocates: the fact is many economic drivers end up costing far more than anyone expected and in surprising ways. Yet, they still manage to work.

The Town of Berlin's experience with revitalization proved that. Although the addition of new businesses and the reestablishment of a robust economy there seemed to arrive without a downside, the cost of that growth came due when the town finally was forced to address water and sewer rates it had been keeping artificially low to maintain community harmony while it rebuilt the downtown.

But hey, it worked out for Berlin, and the hope exists that it could work out for Snow Hill too.



County program receives \$225,000

Worcester Youth and Family Counseling to get money over years

(Dec. 15, 2022) Worcester Youth & Family Counseling Services was awarded \$225,000 over three years to recruit and retain behavioral health providers, according to the service's executive director, Dr. Jennifer Leggour, who said the grants will help the agency make its services available to more people.

This award is part of a larger \$7.9 million grant investment from CareFirst Blue-Cross BlueShield (CareFirst), the largest not-for-profit health plan in the mid-Atlantic region, to improve behavioral health outcomes for youth in its service area.

"With this grant, we will be able to recruit across the country to find excellent behavioral health providers," Leggour said. "We will also have the ability to offer incentives to those who work here, including a wellness room, paid CEUs, and self-care planning. With that, we hope to increase access to mental health care in

our community with providers who are healthy and well."

To identify needs and challenges affecting behavioral health in the region, CareFirst conducted interviews with community-based organizations. This process helped it to identify priority areas for the funding. These include:

- Addressing disparities for at-risk youth of color and LGBTQ youth or supporting programs that address the causes leading to higher prevalence of mental health and substance use disorders and reduce barriers to services.
- Expanding the behavioral health workforce or increasing the availability of trained behavioral health providers through recruitment, retention and incentives to expand access to qualified mental health professionals in areas with limited access.

Special considerations were given to organizations serving Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), disconnected youth, persons experiencing homelessness, populations with limited Eng-

lish proficiency, structurally disinvested communities, justice-involved individuals, LGBTQ populations, low-income communities, rural communities, and other marginalized communities.

Worcester Youth and Family Counseling Services is a non-profit organization serving the community since 1975 located in Berlin.

From a small company to the two-time winner of the "Best Counseling" award for Worcester County, the service has been at the heart of what is really happening in the families and homes in Worcester County by reaching the people who need help.

Through programs that include comprehensive mental health counseling, youth mentoring, family resource navigation, youth camps, and small groups for specialized populations, the agency is increasing awareness about mental health, advocating for abused and neglected children, providing community resources and education, and truly making a difference in the lives of the people in the community, Leggour said.

BAYSIDE GAZETTE

11934 Ocean Gateway, Suite 6, Ocean City, Md. 21842
Phone: 410-723-6397 / Fax: 410-723-6511.

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Email Letters to the Editor to editor@baysidegazette.com.

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. 15

CPAP MASK FITTING

Atlantic General Hospital's Sleep Disorders Diagnostic Center, 9733 Healthway Drive, Berlin. Free mask fitting clinic for patients who are having trouble adjusting to their CPAP equipment. By appointment only: Robin Rohlfing, 410-641-9726.

STEM THURSDAYS

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Drop in any time during the day to use your creativity and build using one of the STEM building kits. For ages 4 years and older. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

STORY TIME 'WHAT WE WEAR'

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 10:30 a.m. Stories, songs and rhymes. For ages 2-5 years. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org

OCEAN CITY BOOK OF THE MONTH: 'BEARTOWN' BY FREDRIK BACKMAN

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Join the group with coffee as they discuss the book of the month. Copies available at the library. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

GENEALOGY WORKSHOP

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 11 a.m. The workshop starts with a 20-minute lesson on genealogy research followed by a Q&A session. Bring your family information. Register: www.worcesterlibrary.org.

WORCESTER COUNTY GOVERNMENT JOB FAIR

Worcester County Human Resources, 1 W. Market St., Snow Hill, 12-3 p.m. Computers will be available for job seekers to complete and submit applications onsite. For a list of jobs: <https://worcesterhr.co.worcester.md.us/>. Info: Ann Hankins, 410-632-0090.

GIFT WRAPPING PARTY

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 301 Market St., 2-4 p.m. Wrap together using brown parchment paper and red and white twine. Decorative stamps and all other supplies included. Light refreshments served. 410-957-0878, www.worcesterlibrary.org

ZUMBA FOR ALL

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 4:30-5:30 p.m. Join certified Zumba instructor Joyce Landsman for an hour of movement. These classes uplift and improve mood. Register: www.worcesterlibrary.org under "Events." 410-641-0650

WORCESTER NAACP ZOOM MEETING

Held via Zoom, 6-7:30 p.m. Please join the

group as they share memories of Worcester County African American history. Stories about Henry's Hotel are also being sought. All memories appreciated. 410-213-1956

WINTER SOLSTICE

Held via Zoom, 6:30 p.m. Enjoy a festive talk about an ancient holiday, celebrated world-wide, and enjoy a guided meditation to get into the season. Registration required: 443-783-6164. www.worcesterlibrary.org.

BEACH SINGLES-55 PLUS

Thursdays - Harpoon Hanna's, 39064 Harpoon Road, Fenwick Island, DE, 4-6 p.m. Info: 302-436-9577 or BeachSingles.org

Fri., Dec. 16

HOLIDAY HAPPY HOUR: HOT CHOCOLATE BAR

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 2-4 p.m. Mingle with neighbors with free hot chocolate and an array of accompaniments to create your own special treat. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

BERLIN BOOK OF THE MONTH: 'OONA OUT OF ORDER' BY MARGARITA MONTIMORE

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 2 p.m. Copies of the book are available at the Berlin branch circulation desk. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS BINGO

Knights of Columbus - Columbus Hall, 9901 Coastal Highway, Ocean City. (Building behind St. Luke's Church.) Doors open at 5 p.m., games begin at 6:30 p.m. Refreshments offered for sale. Play every game for \$25. 410-524-7994, <http://www.koc9053.com>

OCEAN 98 LISTENER & SEACRETS CUSTOMER APPRECIATION CHRISTMAS PARTY

Seacrets, 117 49th St., Ocean City, 5-10 p.m. Showcasing many bands, drink specials, complimentary buffet, door prizes, Chinese auction, free admission (must be at least 21 years). 50/50 raffle for "Cash for College Fund." Toys for Tots collection.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT AND CAROL SING-ALONG

Stevenson United Methodist Church, 123 N. Main St., Berlin, 6:30 p.m. Featuring Ty Thompson, SUMC Director of Music, organist; SUMC Handbell Choir; SUMC Parise Band; and singing duo, Selah Wilson and Amanda Jones. Free admission. Offering benefits HALO. haloministry.org

A HOGWARTS HOLIDAY

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 301 Market St., 6:30-7:30 p.m. Join the group for Harry Potter themed crafts and games. Costumes encouraged. Families welcome to attend this free event. Registration required: www.worcesterlibrary.org

library.org under "Events." 410-957-0878

Sat., Dec. 17

WALK WITH A DOC

South Gate Pond, Ocean Pines, 9 a.m. An Atlantic General representative will give a brief discussion, then will lead the group for a walk around the park's trail. The first 10 participants to arrive will receive \$10 WalMart gift cards.

SPORTS DAY AT THE BEACH

Westside Rt. 50 Shopping Center - next to Hooper's Crab House, 12913 Ocean Gateway, W. Ocean City, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Sports cards and memorabilia show. Buy-Sell-Trade sports cards, supplies, autographs, collectibles, jerseys. Silent auction 10am-3pm. Raffles, 50/50, & more! Al Bumbry will be signing autographs. 443-978-0680

FREE CARRIAGE RIDES & SANTA

Historic Downtown Berlin, 124 N. Main St. Saturdays and Sundays, Dec. 3-18, featuring free carriage rides from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and meet Santa at Kringle Kottage located at Calvin B. Taylor Museum, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. BerlinMainStreet.com

WINTER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Learn about the winter solstice with Lily Maratea through a yogic movement story and craft. For ages 4 years and older. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

MERRY MARKETPLACE IN BRRRLIN

The Buzz Meadery, 21 Jefferson St., Berlin, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Sip and shop. Many of the Berlin Farmers Market vendors will be participating in Merry Marketplace at The Berlin Commons Buzz Meadery on Jefferson Street.

GIFT WRAPPING PARTY

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 1-2:30 p.m. Come wrap together. The library will provide classic wrapping using brown parchment paper and red and white twine. Decorative stamps and other supplies included. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

FARMERS & ARTISANS MARKET

Saturdays until Feb. 25 - White Horse Park, 239 Ocean Parkway, 9 a.m. to noon. Shop for everything from fresh local produce to unique handmade artisan goods. Open to the public.

Sun., Dec. 18

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICE

Bethany United Methodist Church, 8648 Stephen Decatur Highway, Berlin, 4-5 p.m. Readings, carols, communion and candle lighting. 410-641-2186

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Community Church at Ocean Pines, 11227 Racetrack Road, Berlin, 6 p.m. Join the group

to honor someone you've lost. 410-641-5433

FREE CARRIAGE RIDES & SANTA

Historic Downtown Berlin, 124 N. Main St. Saturdays and Sundays, Dec. 3-18, featuring free carriage rides from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and meet Santa at Kringle Kottage located at Calvin B. Taylor Museum, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. BerlinMainStreet.com

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES MEETING

Sundays - Berlin Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, 212 West St., Berlin, 10 a.m. www.jw.org

Mon., Dec. 19

STORY TIME 'SNOWMEN'

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Stories, songs, movement and more all about snowmen. For ages 2-5 years. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

GREAT BOOKS DISCUSSION

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 2:30 p.m. Focusing on "The Man Who Would Be King" by Rudyard Kipling. This group meets twice a month to discuss selections recommended by the Great Books Foundation. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

GIFT WRAPPING PARTY

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 5-7 p.m. Come wrap together. Brown parchment paper, red and white twine, decorative stamps and more provided. Light refreshments served. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org

TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY OF BERLIN - GROUP #169

Atlantic General Hospital, Conference Room 1, 9733 Healthway Drive, Berlin, 5-6:30 p.m. T.O.P.S. is a weekly support and educational group promoting weight loss and living a healthy lifestyle. Rose Campion, 410-641-0157.

ROMANCE BOOK CLUB: 'THE HOLIDAY TRAP'

The Buzzed Word, 11805 Coastal Highway, Unit C, Ocean City, 6 p.m. Join the Ocean City Library for an afternoon of Queer Romance and Wine. The December book is "The Holiday Trap" by Roan Parrish. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

DELMARVA WOMEN'S A CAPELLA CHORUS

Mondays - Ocean Pines Community Center, 239 Ocean Parkway, 6:00-8:00 p.m. All ladies who love to sing invited. Mary, 410-629-9383 or Carol, 302-242-7062.

Tues., Dec. 20

STORY TIME 'HAPPY HOLIDAYS'

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke
Continued on Page 23

Cuisine

Reminiscing about BLTs while growing up

Sometimes it pays to keep it simple.

As I had written a few weeks ago about Anton Ego's rata-touille and my own childhood reminiscence with Chef Kern's souse (reminding me of my dear old dad), it can be the simplest of things that take us back to a by-gone era in our



By Paul Suplee,
MBA, CEC, PC-3

minds.

It is important that all of us "elders" stick to our guns and retell the tales of our lives as time moves forward.

Unfortunately, if we don't, things will be forgotten. Sharing only helps to fortify the memories of earlier days and years.

Whether it's remembering sitting at a table with 10 people every day for dinner (I am the youngest of eight children), or being relegated to the kid's table at Thanksgiving, shunned from proper company because I was 6, these are all amazing and relevant memories that I wish never to forget.

When I was around that ripe age of 6, I would run into the kitchen after dropping my books in the foyer after a grueling day of school and pop a pan on the stove.

That was my mom's queue (her jewelry workshop was in the basement and when she heard that, she knew she would have to intercept).

She used to tell me that by the time she got to the top of the stairs, I already had the pan heating, and the butter, eggs and milk out to make some scrambled eggs for myself.

I imagine that I had the seasonings out and lined up as well, but that could be a touch of revisionism on my part. I won't claim that to be true.

A first-grader. What in the world? I'm still not sure how I never burnt the house down, but that close-call award goes to my brother who decided to try smoking cigarettes out back.

Luckily, the damage was not bad at all as I recall, but I'm pretty sure that he got in a lot of trouble for that.

As the years went on, it was only natural that I would gravitate to cooking as a career.

Luckily, I had parents who shared my sick and ill-advised dreams so I followed my passion and continued on to accomplish a fair number of



things.

Throughout the accomplishments, the good times and bad, the achievements and the losses and everything else that life throws at so many of us, it is safe to say that I have changed.

My children have changed. That is the very natural growth and progression of life, and we either embrace it or allow it to eat us alive.

As circumstances change, they leave us uncertain as to the future, and it really is up to us to take the next step, which in this case is as easy as taking a break and making a BLT.

No, a sandwich won't pay your bills or fix all of your problems, but it can sure put a smile on your face when you take that first bite.

I could easily have written about a peanut butter, banana and Fluffer Nutter sandwich on Wonder Bread and it would have had the same effect.

These were my go-tos as a kid; my must-haves after my boss (teacher) grilled me about missing my deadline (not doing my homework). I already had the worker's mindset and I was 6.

Through it all, I learned to progress my skills beyond these simple sandwiches, but I would not trade

the memories for anything. They represent where I was as a child, and sometimes our mind just runs with the simplicity of a delicious sandwich takes us away to a different time.

Yes we have changed, and yes we can never truly be like we were, but we can always have our moment.

As Tom Wait so famously wrote, "It was a train that took me away from here, but a train can't bring me home."

BLT

Makes 4 sandwiches (or 2 mean sized ones)

8 slices multi-grain bread (white bread if you're a traditionalist)

1# Good quality bacon

8 slices good quality tomato (buy hot house this time of year)

1 head romaine lettuce, cleaned

As much Mayo as you think you need

• We have to talk about the choice of bread, whether to toast or not and of course the type of bacon, so saddle up

• When I was growing up, it was Wonder Bread, untoasted, no exception. Now I like multigrain (not plain

wheat) with a lot of mayonnaise

• Toasting is 100 percent up to you.

• Bacon comes in many forms. Look for a thick cut, unless you like it crumbly and overly crispy; then go for the thin. Also, try to look for nitrate- and nitrite-free so that at least you can pretend that it's healthy

• I prefer to cook my bacon in the oven. Much less grease splattering, a more even cooking throughout and simply more control over the whole process

• Bake at 350F on a lined or sprayed baking pan until done. Some people like it crumbly, while folks like me prefer it to feel cooked but still tender

• Remove and drain. Now, mayonnaise as a rule acts to 'waterproof' the bread, preventing it from getting overly soggy. So, schmear some mayo on the top and bottom pieces and build your sandwich

• Serve immediately

— Paul Suplee is the owner of boxcar40, boxcar on main, boxcar crafted events and sportfish catering.
www.boxcarrestaurants.com

Calendar

Continued from Page 21
Branch, 301 Market St., 10:30 a.m. Stories, games and crafts to celebrate the holiday season. For ages 2-5 years. 410-957-0878, www.worcesterlibrary.org

PARACHUTE FUN

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 10:30 a.m. Get your exercise and play with the library's parachute. Games and music will add to the fun. For ages 2-5 years. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

OC KNITTING GROUP

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m.-noon. Bring whatever project you are working on. The group welcomes drop-ins and new members. They are making winter accessories that are available at the library for those in need. www.worcesterlibrary.org, 410-524-1818

BLOCK PARTY

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 11 a.m. Babies, toddlers and preschoolers are welcome to play with blocks and other toys while socializing with other families. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org

AURORA BOREALIS DRAWINGS

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 301 Market St., 3:30 p.m. Create a

unique drawing by exploring the use of different mediums. For ages 11 years and older. 410-957-0878, www.worcesterlibrary.org

GIFT WRAPPING PARTY

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 4-6 p.m. Come wrap together. Brown parchment paper, red and white twine, decorative stamps and more provided. Light refreshments served. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

BEACH HEROES-OC

Tuesdays - Volunteer beach clean-up group meets from 9-10 a.m., year-round. Trash bags, grippers and gloves provided. Check the Facebook page "Beach Heroes-OC" for weekly meeting locations. All are welcome.

DELMARVA DANCING

Tuesdays - Selbyville Elks Lodge 2173, 13324 Worcester Highway, Bishopville, 5:30-9 p.m. Dance to the sounds of the '50s, '60s, '70s and more. A \$5 donation benefits Veterans and local charities. All are welcome. Charlie, 410-465-0445

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES MEETING

Tuesdays - Berlin Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, 212 West St., Berlin, 7 p.m. www.jw.org

TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY

Tuesdays - Worcester County Health Department, 9730 Healthway Drive, Berlin, 3:30-4:30 p.m. TOPS is a weekly support and education group promoting weight loss and a healthy lifestyle. 410-289-4725

OC KNITTING CLUB

Tuesdays - Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m.

ARGENTINE TANGO PRACTICE

Tuesdays - Experienced dancers and others interested in watching or learning more are welcome, 7-9:30 p.m. No partner required. Info: TangobytheBeach.com.

Wed., Dec. 21

BIARIATRIC SUPPORT GROUP

Held via Zoom, on the third and fourth Wednesdays of each month, for surgical patients. Atlantic General Bariatrics Center, 410-641-9568

EASTERN SHORE SEWISTS

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 10 a.m. Join the group as they promote the needle arts through sewing education, activities and textile crafts. For artisans of all skill levels. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

CREATIVE KIDS CORNER

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Come create a winter craft at the library or take it with you. Most supplies included. For ages 4 years and older. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

John H. "Jack" Burbage, Jr. Regional Cancer Care Center, 9707 Healthway Drive, Berlin, 1-2 p.m. For survivors and current patients battling breast cancer. Women Supporting Women, 410-548-7880

GIFT WRAPPING PARTY

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 2-4 p.m. Come wrap together. Brown parchment paper, red and white twine, decorative stamps and more provided. Light refreshments served. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

STROKE SUPPORT GROUP

Atlantic General Neurology, 314 Franklin Ave., Suite 104, Berlin, 3-4 p.m. For stroke survivors, family and friends. 410-641-4765, bglime@atlanticgeneral.org

POM POM ORNAMENTS

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 3:30 p.m. Make decorations out of pom poms and clear baubles. For children ages 6 years and older. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

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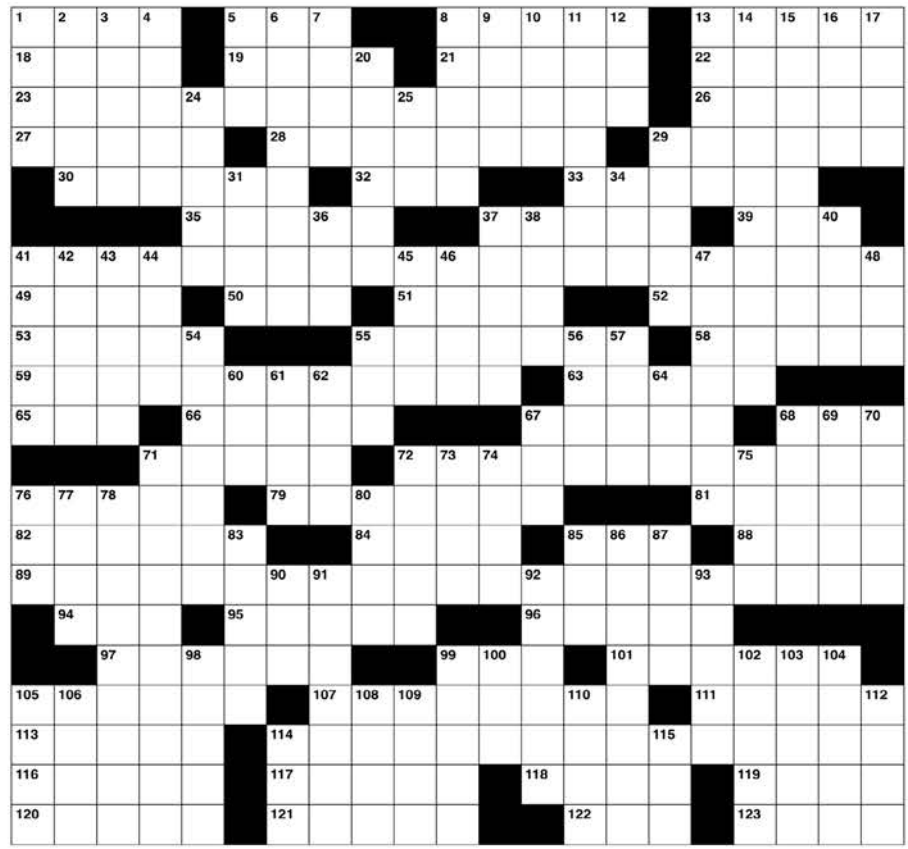
Puzzles

GOSSIP SESSION

BY GUSTIE OWENS / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Gustie Owens, of New York City, is a research assistant at MDRC, a nonprofit education and social policy research organization. She has been solving crosswords since middle school. Once, in history class, her teacher announced to her from across the room, "12-Across is ALLIGATOR." She realized that the puzzle she was doing was reflected in her glasses. Last spring, while a senior at Barnard, she was a member of The Times's first Diverse Crossword Constructor Fellowship program. This is her first puzzle for the paper. — W.S.

- ACROSS**
- 1 Concerning sights at beaches
 - 5 Badly
 - 8 Catherine O'Hara's role on "Schitt's Creek"
 - 13 Get in the loop?
 - 18 Smart _____
 - 19 Regard
 - 21 Regarding
 - 22 "Gotcha," more informally
 - 23 A lover of gossip, the Netflix user ...
 - 26 Savage
 - 27 Actor Channing
 - 28 Defense of a history paper?
 - 29 Andy who voiced Gollum in "The Lord of the Rings"
 - 30 Goal of some criminal justice advocacy groups
 - 32 Honey
 - 33 Flower cultivated by the Aztecs
 - 35 Like a dream scenario
 - 37 "Bodak Yellow" rapper _____ B
 - 39 Farm share inits.
 - 41 The smoothie-bar worker ...
 - 49 Food thickener
 - 50 Ending with book or boor
 - 51 Home of the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize winner Shirin Ebadi
 - 52 Hang loose
 - 53 Proportion
- DOWN**
- 111 Sneeze guard?
 - 113 _____ acid
 - 114 And the up-and-coming trial judge ...
 - 116 Red animal in the 2022 Pixar film "Turning Red"
 - 117 Home of the rides Frozen Ever After and Remy's Ratatouille Adventure
 - 118 Big name in party cups
 - 119 "Peter Pan" pirate
 - 120 Teenage torment
 - 121 Toots
 - 122 "That's a big _____"
 - 123 Baking-soda unit: Abbr.
- ACROSS**
- 54 Cretan-born painter who was a leader of the Spanish Renaissance
 - 58 Anti-anxiety drug with a palindromic name
 - 59 The Boston Harbor worker ...
 - 63 Denim jacket adornment
 - 65 Farm female
 - 66 Assembly kit piece
 - 67 "Woot woot!"
 - 68 Print maker
 - 71 Clock-changing time, for daylight saving time
 - 72 The cooking-show contestant ...
 - 76 "_____ bleu!"
 - 79 Draws out
 - 81 Currency exchange option
 - 82 _____ Questionnaire, character assessment that might ask "What is your idea of perfect happiness?"
 - 84 Plane prefix
 - 85 Big name in wings
 - 88 Words after break or shake
 - 89 The athlete in the locker room ...
 - 94 "_____ is never finished, only abandoned": Leonardo da Vinci
 - 95 Puts in order
 - 96 New York City's mayor after de Blasio
 - 97 Auction actions
 - 99 Bag
 - 101 Useless
 - 105 Small lump
 - 107 Wash with a spray
- DOWN**
- 1 What many do during Ramadan and Yom Kippur
 - 2 Representative Omar
 - 3 "Suh-weet!"
 - 4 Second- or third-stringer
 - 5 Things that may be checked at the door, for short
 - 6 Handouts at some protests
 - 7 Former "Tonight Show" host
 - 8 Econ subfield
 - 9 It's used to tune an orchestra
 - 10 Money promises
 - 11 Gets fully depleted
 - 12 Football box score abbr.
 - 13 Print issue?
 - 14 Best-selling Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie novel whose protagonist leaves Nigeria for a U.S. university
 - 15 "Hang loose" hand gesture
 - 16 Avid assent in Acapulco
 - 17 Goes (for)
 - 20 High-end countertop choice
 - 24 Communicate with, in a way
 - 25 Silicon Valley exec
 - 29 Drew away
 - 31 Savory rice cake of southern India
 - 34 Chime in
 - 36 "That feels good!"
 - 37 One-named collaborator with Missy Elliott on "1, 2 Step" and "Lose Control"
 - 38 Teenage torment
 - 40 Penne _____ vodka
 - 41 Tough
 - 42 Clearly stunned
 - 43 Audited a class, perhaps
 - 44 Edible piece from a pomegranate
 - 45 Suddenly say "I don't" to, say
 - 46 Push
 - 47 Auditing guideline
 - 48 Dr. Ruth's field
 - 54 Where Wells Fargo got its start
 - 55 Delicacy with kabayaki sauce
 - 56 47-Down experts, for short
 - 57 Home of Wheeler Army Airfield
 - 60 Phillipa of Broadway's "Hamilton"
 - 61 What comes before the night before Christmas?
 - 62 Half: Prefix
 - 64 Dreidel, e.g.
 - 67 Times of one's life: Abbr.
 - 68 Medicare section that covers prescription drugs
 - 69 Francophile's love
 - 70 Like some old-money Americans
 - 71 Some sources of old money
 - 72 Loses layers
 - 73 Grammy-nominated Amos
 - 74 "_____ out?" (question to a pet)
 - 75 Bankrupt, say
 - 76 Destination for a "Treat yourself" day
 - 77 Opera highlight
 - 78 Wearing down
 - 80 Part of PRNDL
 - 83 How March may be written
 - 85 Syd tha _____, onetime hip-hop moniker
 - 86 Some fall weather attire
 - 87 _____ pants
 - 90 Musical skill
 - 91 Fit
 - 92 They must be avoided at all times
 - 93 Welcome, with "in"
 - 98 Ice cream treat
 - 99 Fits, as matryoshka dolls
 - 100 Big inits. in home security
 - 102 Nightmarish address, for short
 - 103 Slangy thing that may be "dropped" in a serious relationship
 - 104 Sweat spots
 - 105 Spot for Golden State estates
 - 106 U.N. member classified as a sultanate
 - 108 In times past
 - 109 Subway map dot
 - 110 "No way!"
 - 112 Mourn, maybe
 - 114 It's designed to catch bugs
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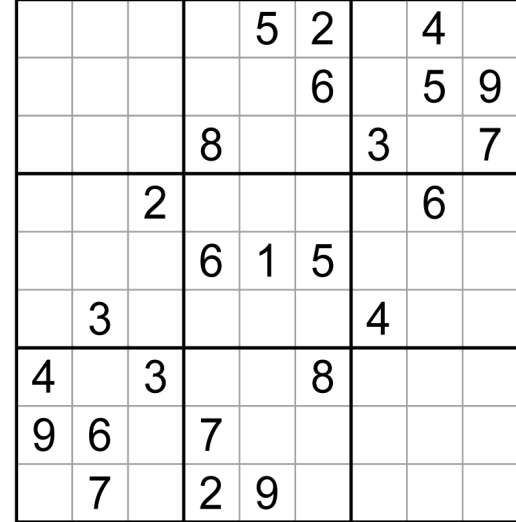
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HARD - 12

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

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



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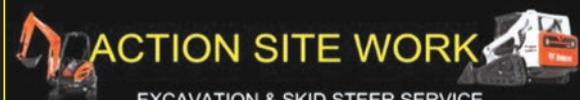
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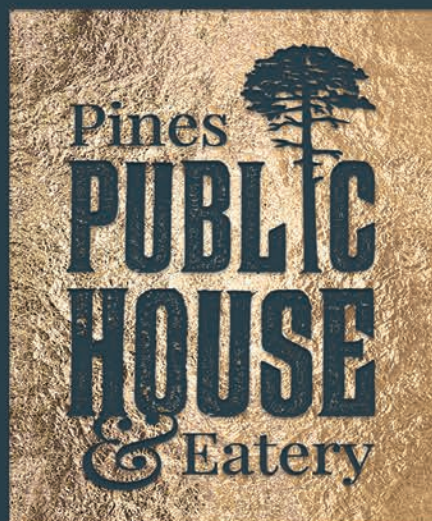
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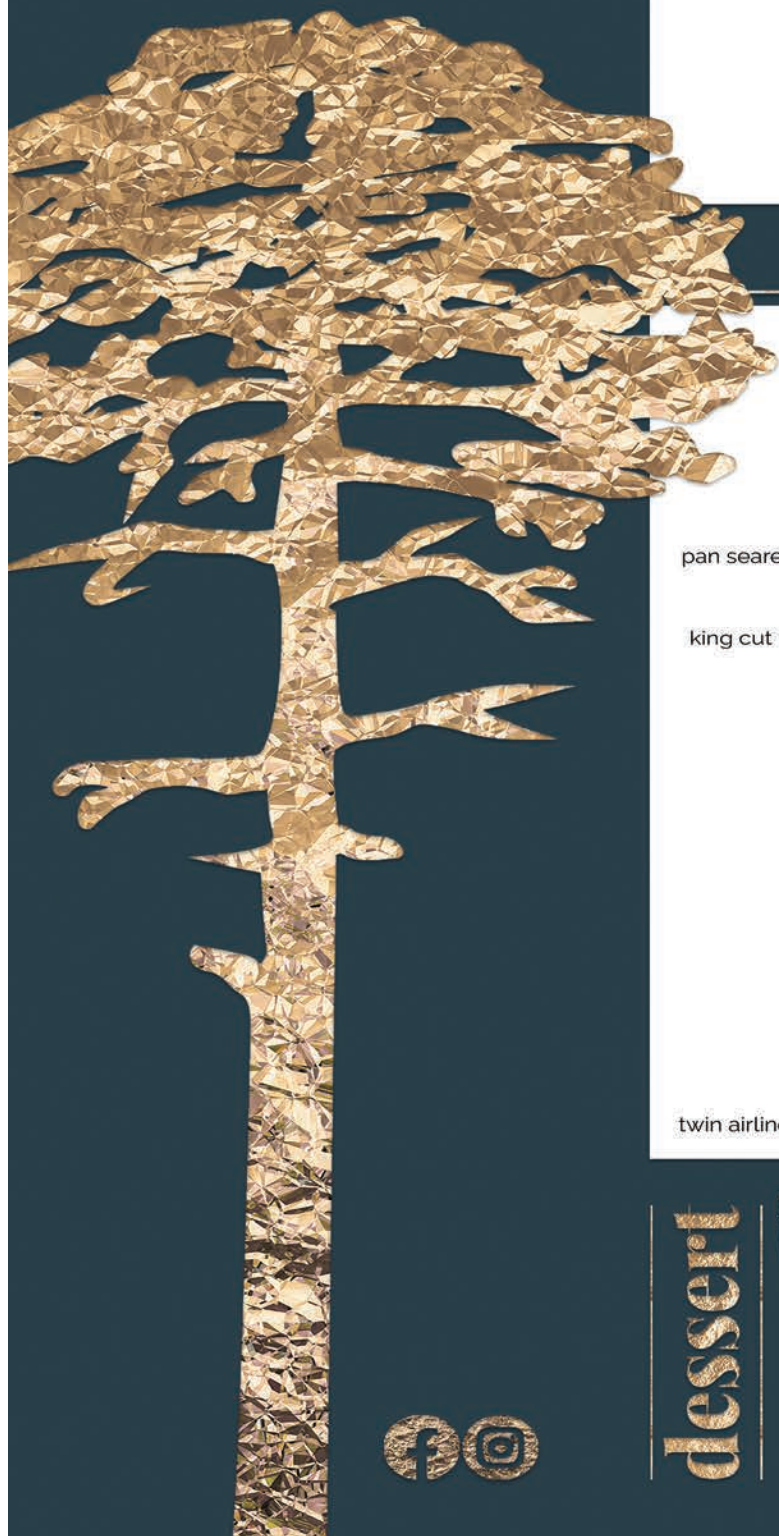
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Berries & Bubbles | 11
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Grilled Radicchio & Artichoke | 11
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shaved fennel • smoked almond dust

Pines Caesar Salad | 11
chopped romaine • sliced brussel sprouts • julienned kale
caesar dressing • grated & sliced parmesan • crostini

starters

Charcuterie Board | 17
chef's cheeses & meats of the day • accoutrements • crostini

Crab Cake Trio | 16
trio of fried crab cakes • sriracha aioli • tartar sauce • cocktail sauce

Shrimp Cocktail | 15
five jumbo shrimp court bullion poached • cocktail sauce • lemon wedges

Smoked Fish & Crab Dip | 14
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Beef Carpaccio | 17
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entrees

Chilean Sea Bass | 36
oven roasted • risotto • pan roasted brussel sprouts
fried prosciutto • pan sauce

Crab Cakes 39
sautéed fingerling potatoes • grilled broccolini • caper aioli

Scallops | 39
pan seared diver scallops • fennel roasted beet & pine nut salad • brown butter • cauliflower purée

Prime New York Strip | 39
king cut • whipped yukon gold potatoes • fried onions • grilled asparagus • garlic rosemary butter

Dry Aged Filet Mignon | 39
black pepper & sea salt roasted • bordelaise sauce • grilled asparagus
whipped sweet & russet potatoes

Rack of Lamb | 37
oven roasted • mint jelly • whipped potatoes • grilled asparagus
whipped yukon gold potatoes

Pork Ossobuco | 32
slow roasted & pulled pork • traditional new year's black eyed peas
jasmine rice • braised cabbage & bacon

Duck Tsukim Ramen | 29
slow roasted & pulled duck • good luck noodles • rich broth
ramen egg • grilled bok choi • corn • leeks

Coq Au Vin | 31
twin airline chicken breasts • heirloom winter vegetables • roasted sweet potatoes • red wine sauce

dessert

Flowerless Chocolate Tower Cake | 10
decadent chocolate cake • belgian ganache • vanilla cream • cocoa dusted

Lemon Bar | 10
classic new england recipe • vanilla cream • candied raspberries

New York Cheesecake | 10
housemade • vanilla sweet cream • macerated blueberries