



## Board spikes racquet sports committee

### Group's false mold report, members activist approach leaves directors unhappy

**By Tara Fischer**  
Staff Writer

(April 25, 2024) The Ocean Pines' Racquet Sports Advisory Committee is no more, following its dissolution by Ocean Pines Association Board of Directors on Saturday.

The board's 6-1 vote to abolish the committee ended months of conflict

with the group over membership options and an apparently false report of the presence of mold in the racquet center building.

The committee has been mired in disputes with the OPA board going back to Feb. 29 when the board held a special meeting to discuss a racquet membership fee change.

Per the approved budget, residents could only purchase a combination of tennis, platform tennis, and pickleball. The negative response to that approach led to an agreement to

maintain the three-sport choice and reinstate single-sport options.

At a March 23 board meeting, however, committee member Suzanne Russell told association officials that the racquet center building contained mold. She used these allegations to urge the association to build a new facility instead of attempting to remedy the mold situation in the existing structure.

OPA closed the racquet center the following day to investigate the assertions but found no mold. Board Pres-

ident Rick Farr said the association spent \$10,000 on labor, materials, supplies, and services for the analysis.

Supporters of the committee argued against dissolving the volunteer body, contending that allowing it to continue was the right thing to do for the community.

"I am concerned about the board's alignment with the strategic plan," former Strategic Planning Advisory Committee Chair Bernie McGorry  
See RACQUET Page 4



STEVE GREEN/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

### COMMUNITY PIG ROAST

The Calvin B. Taylor House Museum hosted a pig roast with free live music and games last Saturday. The event, a fundraiser for the museum, was sponsored by the Burley Building Company, which cooked the pig, and featured brews by the Berlin Beer Co. Pictured is a crowd scene as well as live entertainment by Funk Shue.

## Council votes to maintain tax rate as is

### Additional savings found, longevity bonuses OK'd

**By Charlene Sharpe**  
Associate Editor

(April 25, 2024) Berlin's elected officials voted unanimously this week to adopt the current tax rate for the coming year.

The Berlin Town Council on Monday approved a tax rate for the coming year of \$0.8275 per \$100 of assessed land value, the same as it is now. The tax rate was increased last year from \$.815 to the current level. Unexpected healthcare and other insurance savings and budget adjustments made in recent weeks addressed the initially projected shortfall for fiscal year 2025.

"Thank you for not raising taxes," resident Mary Hedlesky said.

While no citizens weighed in on the proposed tax rate during Monday's public hearing, Mayor Zack Tyndall and council members had a lengthy discussion on the proposed budget before making the tax rate official.

"I think it's important to have that conversation together before we act  
See COUNCIL Page 4

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# Berlin commission approves siding for Main Street home

**By Charlene Sharpe**  
Associate Editor

(April 25, 2024) Historic district officials approved vinyl siding for a Formstone home on Main Street.

The Berlin Historic District Commission (HDC) voted unanimously last week to approve cedar impression vinyl siding for a Formstone home on South Main Street. While the homeowner initially wanted to add siding to just the damaged areas of Formstone, commission members said the whole house needed to be done.

“It’s going to have to be the whole house in order to secure the house,” commission member Mary Moore said.

Susan Wellman and Brittany Wellman approached the HDC last week seeking permission to add cedar impression vinyl siding to two sides of the Formstone house at 312 S. Main St. Susan Wellman said she’d talked to numerous contractors and masons when she realized she needed to address the failing Formstone on two sides of the house.

“There’s nobody alive that does Formstone anymore,” she said. Instead, she proposed replacing the areas with damaged Formstone with vinyl siding that looks like cedar shake.

Commission member Laura Stearns said she sympathized with Wellman but pointed out the house was historic and on Main Street.

“We have to make sure we make the right decision,” she said.

Stearns said she was worried that the house would look piecemeal with two sections covered in siding while the rest remained Formstone.

“I just feel like it all needs to be done at once,” she said.

Wellman said she couldn’t afford to do it all. Stearns maintained that members of the HDC were selected to protect the town’s historic areas.

“Being on the historic district isn’t the easiest because it doesn’t win friends,” she said.

Commission member Mary Moore said she agreed with Stearns. She said that because the Formstone was failing on more than one side, it was likely it all needed to be replaced.

“Who’s to say the front doesn’t start falling off?” she said. “We can’t have it look like a patchwork quilt.”

Commission member Carol Rose referenced the trouble Rayne’s Reef had when its owners tried to address failing Formstone. She said the home’s Formstone was old.

“It’s probably all compromised,” she said.

Wellman maintained that she didn’t have the money to demolish the Formstone all over the house and replace it with siding. Commission member Brian Robertson asked if potentially installing siding over the Formstone was an option. Other commission members urged Wellman to talk again

with contractors regarding options.

“You don’t want to destroy a nice Craftsman home,” Moore said.

Brittany Wellman said she would talk with the contractor again and asked if the commission would approve the cedar style siding if it was for the whole home. Stearns said she wasn’t opposed to that but felt that the commission should have further review of the details and trim that would accompany the siding.

“It would have to look like the era,” she said.

Stearns made a motion to approve the addition of new cedar style siding to the whole house and to continue the discussion of the front detail work. The commission voted unanimously to approve the motion.



CHARLENE SHARPE/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

The Berlin Historic Commission gave unanimous support to a South Main Street home seeking to add cedar impression vinyl siding.

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# Council finds savings in insurance expenses

Continued from Page 1

on a tax rate," Tyndall said.

Much of the talk related to ways that revenues could be adjusted to allow more funding for expenses such as fire and EMS service as well as providing longevity compensation for staff with more than 10 years of service.

The council agreed to adjust the projections for health reimbursement account utilization to provide additional revenue. While the town has budgeted for paying for 65% of the health reimbursement account utilization, multi-year trends show that the actual spending averages around 35%. As a result, the town's insurance consultant recommended adjusting the budgeted amount to 52%. Berlin officials agreed on a more modest adjustment to 55%. The change resulted in savings of \$40,000 for the general fund.

That funding, along with the increase in revenue the town is set to see related to increased property values, will help the municipality cover the cost of providing longevity payments to staff with more than 10 years of service. After lengthy discussion, officials agreed to provide staff with more than a decade of service with a one-time payment of \$100 per year of service to address the issues

of fairness associated with the creation of a step and grade system that did not account for years of service.

Tyndall said he also wanted the council to discuss the increased request for EMS funding from the Berlin Fire Company. The department requested \$605,000 for the coming fiscal year. While officials agreed last week to bump up their contribution to the fire service, they said this week they also wanted to increase their funding for EMS.

While they agreed not to pay for a new supervisor position, town council members did increase the town's contribution to EMS by \$75,000 with help from the county's grant, which the town asked be increased by 8% this spring.

Councilmembers acknowledged that the budget discussion had been lengthy but said they were pleased with addressing several key issues in the coming fiscal year.

"It's truly amazing," Councilman Jay Knerr said, praising staff for its support during the budget process. "Thank you all for making it happen."

Councilman Steve Green said he liked the transparency of the process even if ugly at times and was proud of what the council had accomplished.

"I'm very at peace with what we did tonight," he said.

Tyndall thanked Finance Director Natalie Saleh and the rest of municipal staff on their efforts and reminded those present that putting together the town's budget was one of the most important things elected officials did.

"Holistically we have a budget that is relatively conservative on most of our estimates," he said. "I think we've charted a path for fiscal year 25 that really is achievable and balanced. I appreciate that."

Moving forward, Saleh said she'd

like to see more citizens get involved in the budget process.

"It's their town," she said. "We need to hear from them."

Tyndall agreed and said ideas on how to increase citizen involvement and participation were being discussed during the town's strategic planning process, which is nearing completion.

The town's budget will formally be introduced May 13. A public hearing on the spending plan is set for May 28.

# Racquet sports committee dissolved in 6-1 board vote

Continued from Page 1

said. "We surveyed the community, and the number one issue was the lack of core values in this community. A motion to discontinue a committee is the opposite of what's in the strategic plan," McGorry said, asking the board not to be petty or punitive.

Committee Chair Cathryn Noble told the board that the mold concerns were recorded in a charging document from March 2023 and that previous Racquet Sports Director Tim Johnson had said that the building is outdated, too small and floods when it rains.

The committee chair then stepped down from her post, claiming her time on the committee was "the worst experience."

Director Jeff Heavner, however, countered that while he struggled with the decision, he supported the dissolution because the committee had "abandoned its mission."

"The general manager brought a plan to the board that was approved for a first-class renovated building,"

Heavner said. "A building that the racquet sports community welcomes. A building with new bathrooms, new check-in, new merchandise space, new meeting space, and one that does not leak when it rains ... I have talked to many in the racquet sports community, and all I have talked to do not want anything more than what we have planned and approved. Nobody wants significantly improved meeting spaces, showers, and kitchens. This manifesto promoted the will of a few."

Board Vice President Dr. Stuart Lakernick went further, saying the committee had "gone rogue."

The sole dissenting vote was cast by Steve Jacobs, who said that while the committee owed General Manager John Viola and the association an apology, the mistake could be forgiven.

"These people are volunteers," he said. "People on the committee may be guilty of being over-enthusiastic at best. They screwed up. None of that is justification in my mind for eliminating the committee."

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# Two new Berlin restaurants granted license transfers

By Charlene Sharpe  
Associate Editor

(April 25, 2024) The board that oversees alcoholic beverage licenses in Worcester County approved plans for a trio of businesses in Berlin last week.

The Worcester County Board of License Commissioners (BLC) approved license transfers for two new businesses and granted a beer and wine license to existing shop Jun & Juice.

“The Buzz Meadery is our company and we’d like to sell the mead at our other company Jun & Juice,” owner Megan Hines said.

On Wednesday the board approved a Class A beer and wine carryout license for Jun & Juice as well as license transfers for two new es-

tablishments, Reverie Arbor and Wine Bar and BourAgave Bourbon and Tequila Joint. Reverie, to be located at 7 S. Main St., is being opened by Tara Talbot in the former location of Health Freedom.

A bit further north on Main Street, Oaked 110’s Heather Welch is partnering with longtime Liquid Assets team member Megan Newberger to open BourAgave in the former location of Boxcar on Main. While the ground floor layout of the facility is expected to be similar to what it was before, they told the BLC they were planning to utilize the second floor as well. They’ll be setting up a small bar, lounge areas and seating at tables on the second floor. The upstairs space will also be used for private parties and special events.

Attorney Joe Moore told the board the restaurant would be open from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. during the week and from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. on weekends, as the facility is expected to serve brunch. While the facility will offer live entertainment, Welch said it would primarily be on the second floor so it wouldn’t disturb dinner service.

“We’re very particular about the noise,” she said. “I don’t want to run out the customers.”

# Worcester County job fair on May 1

(April 25, 2024) Local job seekers can meet prospective employers from across Worcester County and choose from hundreds of seasonal and year-round jobs at the Worcester County Job Fair next month.

The fair is set 3-6 p.m., May 1, at the Pocomoke Fair Grounds Building.

The fair is free and open to the public. No registration is required. Come prepared and ready to network and take the next step.

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Worcester County Tourism and Economic Development is hosting the event in partnership with the Pocomoke Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Great Pocomoke City Fair.

For more information, contact WCTED Workforce Development Specialist Nancy Schwendeman at nschwendeman@co.worcester.md.us or (410) 632-3112 x2120.

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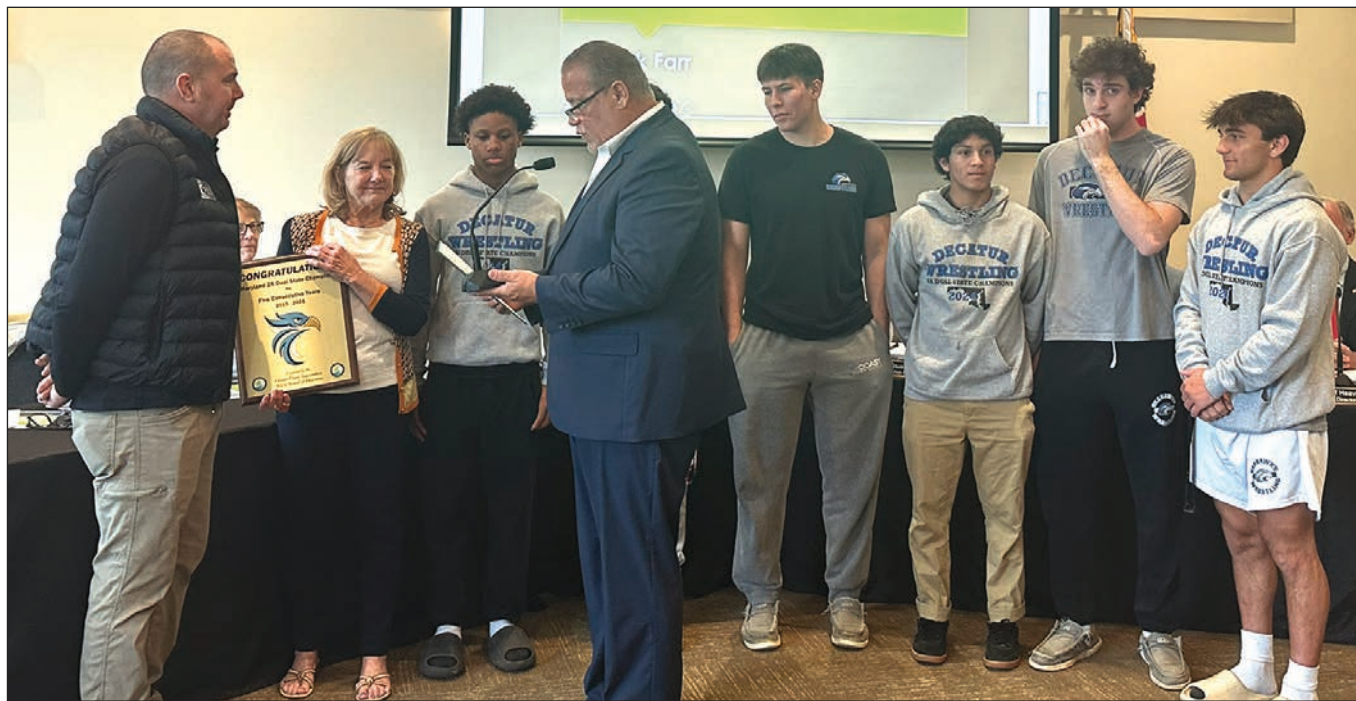
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TARA FISCHER/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

The Ocean Pines Board of Directors recognized the Stephen Decatur High School wrestling team for its fifth straight state championship title at their April 20 public meeting.

# New police officer sworn in, state champs honored

By Tara Fischer  
Staff Writer

(April 25, 2024) At last weekend's Ocean Pines Association Board of Directors meeting, the governing body swore in a familiar face as a new police officer, discussed traffic concerns and recognized the Stephen Decatur High School wrestling team.

The newest Ocean Pines officer, Freddie Howard, served the Ocean City Police Department for 25 years, Ocean Pines Police Department (OPPD) Chief Tim Robinson said. He was a seasonal employee for three years, left to work full-time with the Hurlock Police Department, but returned to Ocean City in 1999.

According to a press release by OPA Public Relations and Marketing Director Josh Davis, Howard worked as a domestic violence investigator, police recruitment officer, and K-9 handler throughout his career with Ocean City. The officer received the Excellent Police Performance Award in 2002 and 2018, the Meritorious Service Award, and the Worcester County Commissioners Award in 2003. Howard was named the Neighborhood Watch Police Officer of the Year in 2005.



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TARA FISCHER/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

After a 25-year career with the Ocean City Police Department, Freddie Howard was sworn in to the Ocean Pines Police Department at the OPA Board of Directors meeting on April 20. President Rick Farr said the ceremony is a new community tradition.



TARA FISCHER/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

The Ocean Pines Association Board of Directors hosted a meeting on Saturday, April 20, where the governing body and General Manager John Viola discussed ongoing initiatives, such as the Yacht Club Tiki Bar, financials and maintenance, and voted on new business, such as the establishment of a historical work group.

# Former OC police officer joins Pines' force

OPA President Rick Farr conducted the swearing in ceremony, which he said would be a new tradition in Ocean Pines.

Robinson also spoke at the meeting and said the OPPD had reviewed signage in the neighborhood, particularly median strip signals. The markings are currently at every crossover. The department intends to eliminate a few, citing Ocean Parkway beautification efforts.

The chief urged drivers to keep

these spaces clear. "If traffic is backed up for whatever reason, try to make sure you keep those crossovers open so people can get through there," he said.

Additionally, the board recognized the SDHS wrestlers for their fifth consecutive state championship with a plaque presentation. The team won over Damascus 52-50 on Feb. 10 during the Maryland Athletic Association Class 2A State Championship.

OPA President Rick Farr praised

the athletes, noting that they "exhibited unparalleled dedication, resilience, and exceptional sportsmanship throughout a perfect season...their relentless pursuit of excellence and unwavering team spirit led them to an extraordinary run of victories across several years, clinching their fifth-consecutive wrestling State Championship."

"The perseverance, talent, and outstanding leadership displayed by each member of the team, coaching

staff, and all those who supported them have brought immense pride and honor to the Stephen Decatur High School and the community of Ocean Pines; and their triumph stands as a testament to the power of teamwork, determination, and commitment to achieving greatness both on and off the mat," he continued.

According to the OPA release, the Seahawk's five-title run is the second longest in Maryland wrestling history.

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CHARLENE SHARPE/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

BEACON Director John Hickman is pictured during the April 17 strategic plan draft review at St. Paul's United Methodist Church on Flower Street.

# Affordable housing options discussed at input session

**By Charlene Sharpe**

Associate Editor

(April 25, 2024) Talk of affordability highlighted a strategic planning input session in Berlin recently.

Representatives of Salisbury's University's BEACON (Business, Economic and Community Outreach Network) reviewed the latest draft of the town's comprehensive plan with residents last week at a meeting at St. Paul United Methodist Church. Many of the comments related to affordability and just why it was included as an action step in the strategic plan driving strategy related to retaining a small-town feel.

"Nationwide nobody can define what affordable housing is," resident Chris Denny said.

BEACON's John Hickman outlined the draft strategic plan for dozens of residents at the church last Wednesday. The plan's mission statement talks about how the community envisions a town where heritage, culture, resilience, friendliness and well-being serve as guiding principles fostering a vibrant and inclusive community. There are six driving strategies, with ensuing action steps, that are meant to help the town fulfil its mission. While some strategies focus on fostering a community where all are welcome and improving infrastructure, one that generated significant discussion last week related to retaining a small town feel and providing opportunities for a diverse community to live and thrive in Berlin. The action step of studying affordability generated numerous questions and comments. Denny asked Hickman to define affordable.

"I cannot," Hickman said. "That's part of why that action step is in there. That discussion came up in the broader discussions with this which led to this being an action step and looking at all of the aspects around af-

fordability."

Councilman Steve Green said affordability was hard to define because it was house by house and sometimes year by year.

"I look forward to exploring that," he said.

Denny said it was a question nobody seemed to answer. Another resident in the crowd said she thought affordability meant that people who were from a community—not just those who came to the area from big cities—should be able to buy houses there.

"That's what we need to figure out," she said. "How do you make it so the people that actually live in the area can afford a house they can actually keep and maintain."

Others said there was a need for senior housing. Some said young adults couldn't afford to return to the area after they attended college. Resident Gabe Purnell said there was also a need for affordable housing for those who were single and living on only their own income. He said Diakonia, the local shelter, was overrun.

"They can't expand, county government said no," Purnell said. "It'll be a few years before they'll be able to expand so we're really in a crisis."

Mayor Zack Tyndall said that while affordability was complicated to define, the conversation showed that there were a variety of different factors that played into it. While age and income level play a part, he said impacts of everything from zoning to internet speed could also effect affordability and opportunities for local residents.

"I think there's a lot of things that go into this but first and foremost we've got to put it front and center and say it's a challenge, lets figure it out," Tyndall said. "I think it's going to take a lot of these different meetings and conversations about how we get there. It should be front and center."

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# Worcester chamber remains committed to name change

Pines pulls corporate sponsorship over concerns with new approach

(April 25, 2024) The controversy surrounding the Ocean Pines Association's decision to cut ties with the Worcester Chamber of Commerce in Ocean Pines, formerly the Ocean Pines Chamber of Commerce, was re-hashed as the community prepared to host the OPA Season Kickoff Expo.

The mission of a chamber of commerce is to advocate for the community's businesses. Companies that are part of these organizations have access to perks like mentorships, information on relevant legislative issues and marketing trends, discounts and referrals. As nonprofits, these groups receive financial support from sponsorships.

Ocean Downs Casino, Carousel Oceanfront Resort, Krause Companies, and Gateway Subaru are a few of the Worcester County group's corporate sponsors. The chamber also has partnerships with 47 ABC and CQI Associates.

The WCCC was established in 1975, and Ocean Pines acted as a benefactor until January of this year. The OPA cut ties after the group placed less emphasis on the residential community in its official new title and instead encompassed a larger area. The name was changed from the Ocean Pines Chamber of Commerce to the Worcester County Chamber of Commerce in Ocean Pines.

"Ocean Pines is a unique portion of the county because it is not a municipality...and businesses are not inside of Ocean Pines," chamber President Kerrie Bunting said. "To encourage businesses to supply services and products to residents and visitors of Ocean Pines, we have to go outside of Ocean Pines. We have to solicit services from our entire region."

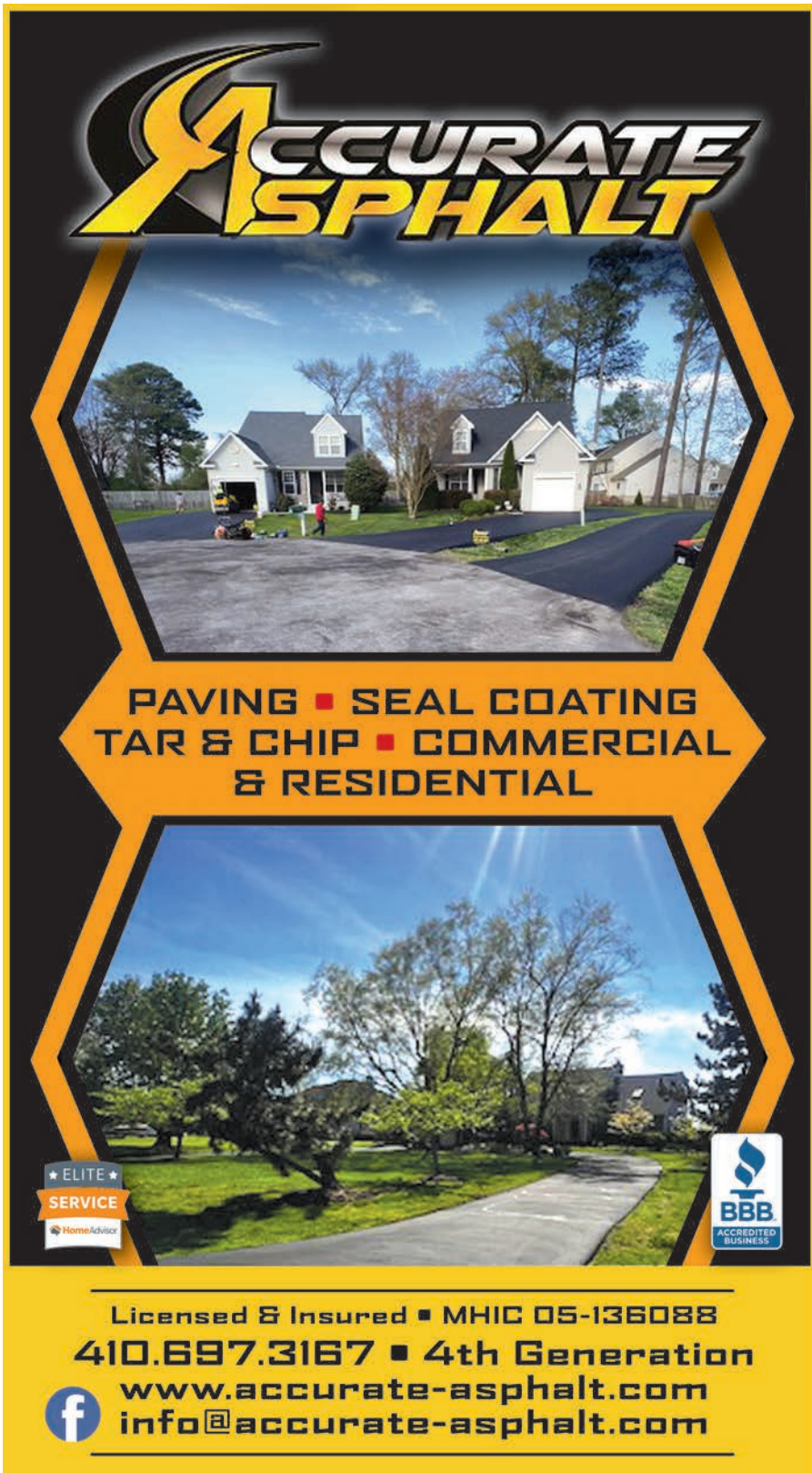
Bunting also noted that the group is sometimes mistaken for the homeowners association and hopes that adjusting its name will alleviate confusion. The articles of amendment of submitted in November to change the title. When the president and her team learned that OPA residents and personnel believed them to be turning their back on the neighborhood, they added "in Ocean Pines" to the official label.

OPA leaders remained dissatisfied with the modification and decided to terminate their sponsorship. Bunting said she was notified of the partnership dissolution in early January via an email from Ocean Pines Public Relations and Marketing Director Josh Davis.

"We did not feel that the name change adequately captured the relationship and the history between the chamber and Ocean Pines," OPA General Manager John Viola said. "OPA leadership had multiple discussions with chamber leadership and asked them to reconsider the change. OPA cut ties when those discussions did not yield any progress."

Ocean Pines was a corporate sponsor of the chamber before the split. Bunting said that the community would give a certain amount of money to the nonprofit and in return it got benefits associated with membership. WCCC promoted its events, amenities and news. OPA also had an

**'...its footprint covers much more than Ocean Pines and is a great tool for business networking.'**  
resident Beverly Bromley



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# Bunting looking ahead to more growth, better service

ad in the business directory.

The chamber president maintained that the branding switch was the right choice.

"This community has far outgrown anyone's imagination from 1975," she said. "If you don't evolve, you become stagnant and useless to anyone. We are proud of our successes and look forward to further growth and the ability to serve our community better."

Conversations about the terminated partnership circulated on the Ocean Pines Forum as the neighborhood geared up for last weekend's Season Kickoff Expo, designed to showcase the community's amenities, clubs, committees, and businesses.

According to Bunting, the chamber has hosted a similar event since 2020 but opted against it this year once notified of the Ocean Pines function and hoped to work with the neighborhood's team of volunteers. However, the president was told that OPA strictly conducted the kickoff and that the chamber would not be directly involved. Instead, the chamber paid a fee to be an exhibitor at the expo, where they secured five new partners.

"I work in Salisbury and have clients throughout the area," resident

Beverly Bromley added to the forum on April 18. "The Worcester County Chamber provides relevant and helpful information that affects businesses all over Worcester and neighboring counties. Most businesses are members of multiple chambers...its footprint covers much more than Ocean Pines and is a great tool for business networking."

Brandon Carroll, co-owner of Ocean Pines Handyman, expressed similar sentiments on the forum, arguing that dropping Ocean Pines from the name does not mean the chamber no longer supports the community's businesses.

Founder and moderator of the forum, Joe Reynolds, supports the association's decision to end the collaboration, writing that the chamber "deserted its name, roots, and integrity."

Bunting claimed that since the separation, the chamber has garnered more attention and partners and is more significant than ever.

"Unfortunately, the OPA has decided to dissolve our longstanding partnership," she said. "However, our chamber was started here and will stay here, and we continue to support this community no matter what."

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# Pocomoke library project gets \$3.9M in state funding

By Charlene Sharpe  
Associate Editor

(April 25, 2024) Pocomoke residents could have access to a new library by late 2025.

County staff this week provided an update to the Worcester County Commissioners regarding the new library set to replace the aging Pocomoke facility. Officials were pleased to learn this month the state will be funding \$3.9 million of the project.

"Obviously everyone's pleased with the way we're going forward at this point," Commissioner Chip Bertino said.

A progress report presented to the commissioners this week outlined plans for the new 12,365 square foot facility planned for the current library site in Pocomoke. The new building, which will feature parking to the west side of the structure, has been designed to be open, airy and inviting, according to the report.

"The main entry is proposed on the southwest corner to a gallery lobby space off of which are the restrooms, community space, and library," the report reads. "Upon entry from this the service counter is straight ahead, children's area to the

left, collections and reading areas to the right, and workrooms and utility areas behind the counter. Beyond the adult stacks are teen areas, reading areas, and a designated maker space, which is also accessible directly from the lobby. This level also includes some special collections, two small meeting or study rooms, and a local history room. The design allows the multipurpose community space to accommodate meetings when the library areas are closed and locked."

The site plan, which includes 37 parking spaces, also features a children's porch as well as raingardens and landscaping around the building.

Worcester County Library Director Jennifer Ranck told the commissioners this week she'd been working on the new library since 2019 and was happy to see it moving forward. When asked if the county could expect any more than the \$3.9 million from the state, she said she could apply for another grant for furnishings for the new facility.

As far as the timeline for the building, staff said the goal was to bid the project in the summer and to have construction start in October with the goal to finish in late 2025 or 2026.



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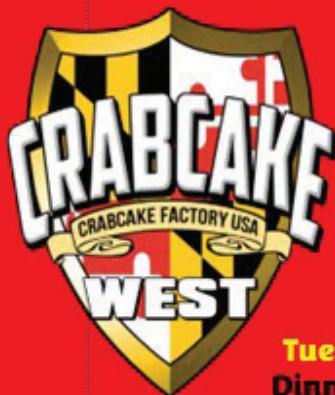
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# OP Yacht Club tiki bar expansion continues

## Manager's monthly report includes update on racquet building renovation efforts

**By Tara Fischer**  
Staff Writer

(April 25, 2024) Ocean Pines Association General Manager John Viola provided his monthly report on the community's financials, initiatives and maintenance, while also discussing new business and committee appointments.

The expansion of the Yacht Club's tiki bar is on track. Viola maintained that the association expects operations to begin by Memorial Day, as the concrete work has concluded. Framing and electrical efforts are currently in progress.

The general manager also updated the planned pavilion at Veterans Memorial Park. The project is expected to be finished by Veterans Day, and former board member Frank Brown will aid with the design work while The Wayland Company handles the construction.

Viola discussed the racquet sports building renovations. "We're shifting gears a little," he said. "However, the board has instructed me ... to continue with what's been approved, and we are still focused on that."

The approved renovations prioritize expanding the bathrooms, pro shop, and director's office and improving staff visibility of the courts.

The general manager touched on the community's financial standing. March reports show \$148,000 favorability. Golf is also expected to secure \$40,000 in profits this year after depreciation.

"The golf course pays for itself, and the golf course will pay for the new irrigation system," Viola said.

The Ocean Pines Beach Club's maintenance efforts were also discussed. According to Viola, the bathrooms were renovated in 2018, and the interior restaurant area was repainted last fall. The entire deck is also scheduled for replacement over the next few years.

Pelican Underground will reline drainage pipes at several locations, including the golf course, White Horse Drive, Capetown Road, 57 Ocean Parkway, 22 Harpoon Road, and 192 Teal Circle.

The community has used "cured-in-place" pipe replacement, a cheaper, less invasive, and more durable method than traditional in-

stallation, for five years.

"This is something I believe was never addressed," Viola said. "This is key to why the drainage is better."

The new electric sign was installed at the North Gate on April 16 and rotated through news and event announcements. The general manager said that the structure's cost totaled

\$26,558. This includes surveying, permits, and landscaping.

Golf membership is increasing, clay renovations and new support beam installation

began this week at the racquet center, and outdoor pools are being cleaned for the summer. Swim lessons at the Sports Core pool are scheduled through May.

New programs, like yoga, martial arts, skateboarding, paint classes, disc golf, and cornhole leagues, are being offered by the community's recreation and park staff.

Senior Executive Office Manager Linda Martin gave an IT update. The Wi-Fi was upgraded at the Yacht Club, and microphones and slide presentations for board meetings have been improved.

Director Elaine Brady led the mo-

tion to add plaques with the names and descriptions of Anna Foulz and Phyllis East, who inspired the names for the Ann Foulz and East Rooms at the Ocean Pines Community Center, respectively. The proposed initiative passed in a unanimous vote from the board.

Brady also advocated for the creation of a historical work group. The team would be responsible for adequately obtaining, storing, preserving, and showcasing historical photographs and documents about the community.

"We are going to lose this institutional knowledge and not only our past documents of the last 50 or 60 years, but we need to ensure we have documents going forward because, in two or three generations from now, everything we're doing is going to be considered historical," the director said.

OPA Board President Rick Farr also announced advisory committee appointments. Wesley Blakeslee will begin his second term in strategic planning, Michael Galello will commence his first term in architectural review, and Robert Long will start his third term in golf.

The next meeting of the OPA board of directors is scheduled for Saturday, May 18, at 9 a.m. in the Clubhouse Meeting room.

**'The golf course pays for itself, and the golf course will pay for the new irrigation system.'**

Ocean Pines Association General Manager John Viola

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# OPA's Viola details two internal promotions

## Accounting, public works department personnel changes announced

By **Tara Fischer**  
Staff Writer

(April 25, 2024) The Ocean Pines Association General Manager John Viola announced on April 18 that Public Works Director Eddie Wells and Accounting Manager Mark Swift had been promoted to new positions.

Wells, the current public works director, has been upgraded to the senior director of public works.

"Eddie will take on enhanced responsibility for strategic planning, DMA Reserve Study, and pivotal initiatives in addition to his existing

Public Works duties," Viola said in a press release issued by Public Relations and Marketing Director Josh Davis. "With a proven track record of driving operational excellence and implementing innovative solutions, Wells is well-positioned to lead the Public Works department to new heights."

Additionally, Swift, the Accounting Manager of the Finance Department, has been promoted to assistant controller.

"Mark brings a vast range of knowledge to OPA, and he continues to develop his skills," Director of Finance, Controller Steve Phillips, said in the release. "He has taken on increased responsibility over the past two years and continues to be a key

employee of OPA."

Swift worked in public accounting in Salisbury for 10 years. During his tenure there, the OPA employee said he was an auditor for homeowner and condo associations before transitioning to the deputy treasurer with Fruitland for seven years. He came to Ocean Pines in April 2022.

As the accounting manager, Swift was responsible for financial reporting and assisting with the annual budget and audit processes. As the assistant controller, he will now also evaluate and develop operating procedures and maintain internal controls for the association's accounting function.

Swift was officially appointed to his new position on April 8. "My ex-

perience has been valuable," he said. "I was able to hit the ground running and start contributing sooner because of my familiarity with HOAs and some of the departments we have here."

Swift noted that he hopes to achieve efficiency in his new role and is grateful to Ocean Pines leadership for the opportunity.

"I am very pleased to make this announcement," Viola said. "Recognizing our staff continues to be one of my favorite parts of the job. Eddie and Mark both earned this and as I structure the organization to meet the needs of the coming years, I hope to be able to make a few more announcements like this down the road."

# Coastal trust native plant sale slated May 4

## Advance online orders available until April 30 to guarantee choices

(April 25, 2024) The Assateague Coastal Trust is hosting its 25th Annual Native Plant Sale next month.

Set 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., May 4, at the ACT building, located at 10959 Worcester Highway in Berlin, the sale celebrates "the significance of thoughtfully cultivated backyard gardens in supporting critical pollinator species and the overall ecosystem," according to a press release.

Native plants play a pivotal role in the Eastern Shore landscaping, offering essential habitat for birds, insects, and pollinators while decreasing reliance on pesticides and fertilizers due to their self-sustaining nature. Designing a new garden or adding plants to an existing one can also contribute to buffer areas, a crucial concept in the watershed, as buffers reduce land surface runoff and filter pollutants before they enter our waterways.

This year, the release said the land

trust is unveiling an expanded inventory of 18 new native sun and shade pollinator species, carefully curated to enhance eco-positivity and mindfulness in gardens.

Executive Director, Brenda Davis, is excited to offer garden enthusiasts a diverse array of options for their landscaping needs with the emphasis on the importance of creating resilient and vibrant ecosystems.

The plants have been specifically chosen to attract and support pollinators, such as butterflies and bees, while promoting sustainability and biodiversity in garden spaces.

The trust is also partnering with a local, organic farm, "Herbs, Spices and Everything Nice," to provide a variety of vegetables, including heirloom tomato varieties, peppers, and herbs.

This year's event will also feature Go Green OC & Ocean Compost, which will be available for donations while supplies last.

Online orders will be available until April 30 and are strongly encouraged to guarantee plant avail-



PHOTO COURTESY ASSATEAGUE COASTAL TRUST

**A wild bleeding heart plant is pictured. From April through June, light to dark pink flowers bloom on ferny green foliage of the plant, with some flowers showing up through the summer.**

ability for spring gardens. Limited quantities will be available to buy on the day of the event. Proceeds from the sale will support the trust's mission to ensure clean waterways, litter free beaches, and a healthy community through education and conservation efforts along the regional

coastline, the release.

For more information, including the online order form and native plant guide, visit [ACTforbays.org](http://ACTforbays.org). For inquiries regarding order pickup or sponsorship opportunities, contact Debbi Dean at [outreach@actforbays.org](mailto:outreach@actforbays.org).

# Local education group offering scholarships

## County graduating seniors encouraged to apply before deadline slated for May 5

(April 25, 2024) Children or grandchildren of current Worcester County Education Support Professional Association members graduating from Worcester County high schools have the opportunity to receive a Bernard Ayers scholarship to help with college costs.

The association represents educa-

tion support professionals, including educational assistants, nurses, secretaries, custodial/maintenance staff, computer technicians, tech coaches, and cafeteria staff for Worcester County Public Schools.

Affiliated with the Maryland State Education Association and the National Education Association, the association is dedicated to supporting members through initiatives such as the Bernard Ayers scholarship program.

Eligible applicants must plan to at-

tend college full-time in the academic year which the scholarship is awarded. Interested students should submit the following documentation:

- A completed application signed by the applicant and the support professional association member
- A copy of the applicant's college acceptance letter
- One letter of recommendation from a WCPS teacher, administrator, or guidance counselor
- A double-spaced essay, typed, with a maximum length of 300 words,

titled "The Impact of My Education on Humanity"

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- A copy of the applicant's college acceptance letter
- One letter of recommendation from a WCPS teacher, administrator, or guidance counselor

The deadline for submissions is May 5. Completed applications must be turned in to Ivory P. Smith Sr., Scholarship Committee, 12828 Center Drive, Ocean City, Md. 21842.



# Snapshots



CHARLENE SHARPE/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

## RECORD STORE DAY

Solid crowds were seen all day on Saturday for the first "Vintage and Vinyl in Berlin" event celebrating Record Store Day. Berlin Arts and Entertainment District in partnership with Sound Storm Records produced the event, showcasing not only vinyl records but also vintage clothing, books and more. Live music by Journos, above right, was also featured.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

## MEALS ON WHEELS CELEBRATED

Each March, "March for Meals" proclamations throughout the nation celebrate the historic day in 1972 when a national nutrition program for seniors was added to the Older Americans Act. At a recent meeting, Worcester County Commissioners Caryn Abbott, Jim Bunting, Joe Mitrecic, Chip Bertino, Eric Fiori, Ted Elder, and Diana Purnell presented the March For Meals proclamation to Terrell Crosby, the kitchen assistant at the Worcester Commission on Aging who helps with the production of more than 700 meals per week. The organization is responsible for the Meals On Wheels and Congregate Meals programs in Worcester County.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

## ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS

Showell Elementary fourth graders Saylor Miller and Colton Ward, two of the American Legion Auxiliary Synepuxent Unit 166's Americanism Essay Contest winners, pose together for a photo after an awards ceremony held recently at the Legion's headquarters in Ocean City. The contest invited local school children to write essays pertaining to the theme, "What does Freedom mean to me?" and the best entries were chosen as winners.



# BZA gives special exception to AGH benefit

**By Charlene Sharpe**  
Associate Editor

(April 25, 2024) County officials approved plans for Atlantic General Hospital's annual anniversary celebration.

The Worcester County Board of Zoning Appeals voted unanimously April 11 to approve a special exception that will allow the Atlantic General Hospital (AGH) 31st Anniversary Celebration to be held at the home of George and Emily Tunis in Martha's Landing on May 9.

"This is our largest fundraiser of the year," Emily Tunis said. "This event brings anywhere from \$150,000 to \$200,000 for the foundation which goes directly to the hospital to support operations and equipment and education programs that helps enhance the healthcare and accessibility of healthcare to our local community."

Tunis and attorney Kristina Watkowski approached the board last week seeking a special exception for a

transient use to allow a special event in the R-3 multifamily district. They explained when the tent would be set up, how neighbors had been notified and whether traffic would be an issue. Tunis said there was no reason there should be cars parked on Old Bridge Road because attendees were parking at the park and ride lot and taking a shuttle to the event.

When asked what would happen if a significant storm arrived on the day of the event, Tunis said there was no rain date planned. It was pointed out that the fire marshal would be reviewing event plans and could weigh in if there was inclement weather.

While the board this month granted the special exception for AGH, next month it's set to review a special exception request from TidalHealth for its annual fundraiser, which is planned for property owned by Kevin Myers. While both events have been held locally for

years, this is the first time they've been required to seek a special exception from the board of zoning appeals. Hugh Cropper, Myers' attorney, questioned the need for the additional step in the event planning process, particularly since the transient use distinction has been typically used for temporary but continuous uses, such as handicap ramps. Cropper believes the board of zoning appeals should have some discretion when it comes to special events for nonprofits.

"Regarding public policy, but I can tell you as the former chairman of the board of AGH, and my wife being on the development committee for many, many years, it is virtually impossible to find a suitable location for these events in Worcester County," he wrote in an email to Jennifer Keener, the county's director of development review and permitting. "Kevin Myers has hosted several of these events, apparently without approvals over the past years, and they have all been successful. There has never been a complaint. I stand to be corrected, but I have seen most, if not all, of the county commissioners, state delegates, senators, etc. at all of these events."

According to Keener, the transient use designation applies to a "use which does not otherwise conform to district regulations." She said in her response to Cropper that the board of appeals has in the past approved similar events

planned for properties that didn't have commercial zoning. She noted that her department also issues special event permits for outdoor transient events such as bike week and fishing tournaments.

When contacted this week, county staff said the special event process was being followed the way it should be. While some events might have been missed in the past, when the use of land is not consistent with its zoning, that is considered a transient use which needs special exception approval. With the board of zoning appeals considering the request, neighbors and other members of the public have the opportunity to share any concerns they might have with what is proposed.

"The county permitting departments have been implementing permitting workflow to more efficiently issue permits and keep things from falling through the cracks," Chief Administrative Officer Weston Young said. "In this process, it was determined transient uses, like nonprofit fundraisers, have been getting approval from the liquor licensing staff but not the zoning staff. While a fundraiser for a hospital is a positive thing for the community, in our code it does require a special exception from the board of zoning appeals due to it not being consistent with our residential zoning districts. It should have been enforced in the past and can always be changed in the future."



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# State 'penalizing us twice' with Buckingham

Board of Education plans to appeal IAC's decision on capacity policy change

By **Tara Fischer**  
Staff Writer

(April 25, 2024) The Worcester County Board of Education discussed financial roadblocks to Buckingham Elementary School's replacement project and new planned safety implementations.

At the April 4 meeting with the Worcester County Commissioners and the school board, Executive Director of the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) Alex Donahue stated that to uphold equity in the distribution of school construction support, the group could not provide Worcester County with additional funds to build larger schools to maintain small class sizes. The policy leaves no state money for the Buckingham Elementary replacement project.

At the April 16 meeting, Worcester County Public Schools Facilities Planner Joe Price displayed a chart detailing the construction of Ocean City Elementary School (OCES) and Showell Elementary School (SES) to provide context for the dilemma. The presentation examined state and local funding participation, school sizes, and regional and state-rated capacities.

Price's breakdown showed that the state approved constructing a 47,080-square-foot SES, completed in 2020. The finalized building exceeded 102,000 square feet to avoid the implementation of portable classrooms. Local funds accounted for 78.3% of the total cost, which was \$48,518,782.

WCPS Chief Financial Officer Vince Tolbert maintained that based

on enrollment projections and capacity estimations, the IAC has determined there are open seats at the other elementary schools, which they call "adjacent" facilities. The state will not fund a new Buckingham Elementary School given the extra room.

"They are penalizing us twice," Tolbert said. "Once, by not giving us enough money to build increased square footage, and then the second time by not giving us any money for Buckingham because of the adjacent seats...Buckingham Elementary, our highest poverty school at the northern end with the highest minority population, is getting treated inequitably by the state through their funding formula."

Former WCPS Superintendent and current board member Dr. Jon Andes argued that if the school system limited the expansion of SES to what the state recommended, students would be "crammed into every corner." The state-rated capacity for Showell was 850, while the local estimation hovered around 640.

"If we had built the six projects that I was involved in at state-rated capacity, we would have portables at every single school," Andes said. "It makes absolutely no sense. It is counterintuitive why you would open a new school and then put portables out back."

The IAC's capacity evaluation was based on a class size of 23 to 25 students. WCPS prefers to limit this number to 18 pupils per room.

The board has decided to continue advocating for state funds to replace Buckingham. Andes offered a motion "to go to the IAC to appeal for a change in their policy for funding the school system at state-rated capacity, which they have done for both Ocean City Elementary and

Showell. We want to take not only an appeal with the board, but we want to include our county commissioners and our state delegation in that appeal." The gesture was approved.

WCPS Maintenance and Operations Manager Sam Slacum was also present at the April 16 meeting to request approval for additional projects, like replacing the fire alarm system at Berlin Intermediate School.

The update is expected to cost \$223,346 and will include the ability to announce live and prerecorded messages for fire evacuations and shelter-in-place. The funding for the initiative is being provided by the local government and is scheduled for summer 2024.

Additionally, WCPS Coordinator

of Safety and Security Shawn Goddard sought the board of education's support to secure front doors and vestibules with access control and door intercoms at Stephen Decatur Middle School, Stephen Decatur High School, OCES, BIS, Buckingham Elementary School, SES, Worcester Technical High School, Snow Hill High School, Snow Hill Middle School, Cedar Chapel Special School, Pocomoke High School, Pocomoke Middle School, and the board's central office.

The project will include exterior door cameras with two-way intercom capabilities to screen visitors safely before allowing them access to the building. The local Worcester County government will fund it with \$224,687. Implementation is scheduled for summer 2024.



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## OPEN HOUSES

April 25 - May 2



| 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     |
| Friday Noon-3pm            | 12346 Old Bridge Rd, West OC           | 3BR/2BA          | Single Family      | starting at \$239,750 | Shelly Wilson/Salt Life Community      |
| Friday Noon-3pm            | 12346 Old Bridge Rd, West OC           | 2BR/1BA          | Single Family      | starting at \$179,900 | Shelly Wilson/Salt Life Community      |
| Saturday & Sunday 10am-1pm | 11000 Coastal Hwy, Capri #1703, OC     | 2BR/2BA          | Condo              | \$539,900             | Monica McNamara/Coldwell Banker Realty |
| Saturday 1-3pm             | 103 Mumfords Landing Rd, Ocean Pines   | 4BR/3.5BA        | Single Family      | \$659,900             | Sandy Dougan/BHHS PenFed Realty        |
| Saturday 11am-2pm          | 13 Chatham Court, Parke at Ocean Pines | 3BR/2BA          | Single Family      | \$479,000             | Debbie Bennington/BHHS PenFed Realty   |
| Saturday 1:30-3:30pm       | 304 S. Heron Gull Court                | 4BR/4.5BA        | Single Family      | \$1,399,900           | Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty   |
| Sunday Noon-2pm            | 13905 Lighthouse Avenue, Ocean City    | 3BR/2.5BA        | Single Family      | \$899,900             | Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty   |
| Sunday 1:30-3:30pm         | 13 131st Street #105 Ocean City        | 2BR/2BA          | Condo              | \$479,900             | Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty   |





# Opinion

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

## Committee's mistake

The decision to dissolve the Racquet Sports Advisory Committee shouldn't have been that difficult for the Ocean Pines Association Board of Directors considering the committee's metamorphosis from an advisory group to a body of confrontational activists.

The committee's departure from the organizational scene was not because it disagreed with the directors' decisions on racquet sports matters, but was because it became fiercely oppositional and, instead of advising the board, attempted to dictate to it.

The right or wrong of its stances are beside the point. The committee's mistake was that some of its members began to think that the size and enthusiasm of the club's membership gave it the ability to challenge the board.

The fact is, however, a group that attempts to thwart the decisions of the body that created it is asking for trouble.

## About those bonuses

Although some members of the public might see the longevity bonuses the Berlin mayor and council will be giving their employees as redundant, since they'll be getting pay increases anyway, they do make sense.

In the course of establishing a step pay structure like many governments use, some of the town's employees landed in the same pay grade as someone with less time in service. Although there's something to be said for the "that's-the-way-the-cookie-crumbles" argument, that doesn't keep affected employees from grumbling and doesn't acknowledge their loyalty.

The one-time bonus the mayor and council have approved is a financial patch to cover that step pay donut hole, and it shows employees they do appreciate their years of service.

These things happen sometimes when pay structures are rearranged, and the town's decision in this instance was a perfectly acceptable way of handling it.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Pictured with honoree Jim Mathias, center, front, are Jim Richardson, Gabe Purnell, Rosie Dennis, Tish Michel, Vicky Wallace and Patty Wallace; and back, Tim Tarr, Cherie McNett, Martin Radinsky, Tom Schuster and Diana Purnell.

## Former mayor, senator celebrated

### Mathias receives lifetime achievement award for service

(April 19, 2024) The Democratic Central Committee of Worcester County presented Jim Mathias with a Lifetime Achievement Award at its Kennedy King Annual dinner April 11.

Mathias was recognized at the event as a dedicated Democrat, public servant and esteemed leader who has tirelessly served the people of Maryland for decades. According to a release after the event, "Mathias is a man whose deep-rooted connection to the Eastern Shore

community, unwavering commitment to public service, and impressive political career make him a true champion of the people."

After being born and raised in Baltimore, Mathias took on his first summer job at Ponzetti's Pizza on the Boardwalk and he and his father went on to establish a successful amusement and arcade business in downtown Ocean City. In 1978, he married Kathleen "Kathy" Arlee Petry, with whom he proudly shares two children, Lauren and Trevor. In 1987, he began his political career by serving on the Ocean City Board of Zoning Appeals. He was elected as an Ocean City

councilman in 1990 and later served as mayor of Ocean City from 1996 to 2006.

In 2006, Jim's political journey led him to the Maryland House of Delegates, where he represented District 38B. He later served in the Maryland State Senate from 2011 to 2019, where he distinguished himself as a dedicated and effective legislator.

His committee involvements included The Governor's Task Force on Eastern Shore Economic Development, Critical Area Commission for the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bay, Mary-

See MATHIAS Page 19

**BAYSIDE GAZETTE**

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## Letter

### Pines board needs to put attention on canals' health

Editor,

Because we allow our residents to fertilize their lawns and blow grass into the canals we are destroying our waterways.

This spring algae blooms have been worse than ever. We should be able to see to the bottom and see grasses growing but all we have is muck from the dead algae.

Phosphorus and nitrates are killing everything. We need to stop this before it's too late if it isn't already. Pass a bylaw

or something restricting use and if caught it's a fine of \$500. Hit them where it hit hurts.

The same with trees. There is a big tree service cutting down extra trees without permission and acting like they are playing nice but they are not doing what they are supposed to and no one is checking on them. We came here to be on the water and it is so unhealthy in our canals. The board has a responsibility to clean them up you don't seem to care. Please consider taking action before it's too late.

*Karen Baldwin  
Ocean Pines*





A frog is pictured clinging to a tree on the local Illia Fehrer Nature Preserve. PHOTO COURTESY MARYLAND COASTAL BAYS PROGRAM

# Coastal Bays Program seeks 40 herp search volunteers

(April 25, 2024) Maryland Coastal Bays Program staff are seeking about 40 volunteers to help conduct a scientific survey on May 4 on the Illia Fehrer Nature Preserve to learn more about the reptile and amphibian (herp) species that inhabit the watershed.

The survey will require a small amount of homework, as volunteers will be asked to review the survey protocol and be given some resources to browse before the survey date.

This is a perfect opportunity for people interested in learning more about herps living in the local watershed, who want to spend a few hours outside in a beautiful, forested wet-

land area, or who just love to have fun with other community members.

MCBP staff will provide all volunteers with the necessary gear to conduct the survey. Volunteers are asked to bring reusable water bottles, boots or close-toed shoes that can get muddy/wet, and to wear appropriate clothing (long pants). There will be a bathroom on site.

Register for the event online at: [docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdCwol1DWpsjkdBOX9dPIFdyKUPCiimSwVmCqOl31GupY3\\_BQ/view-form](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdCwol1DWpsjkdBOX9dPIFdyKUPCiimSwVmCqOl31GupY3_BQ/view-form)

For questions about the event, email Kelsey Poisal at [kpoisal@md-coastalbays.org](mailto:kpoisal@md-coastalbays.org).

# Mathias honored by committee

Continued from Page 18  
land Tourism Development Board, Lower Eastern Shore Mayors Association, Lower Eastern Shore Children's Center Advisory Board, Worcester County Delegation, Governor's Commission on Small Business, Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland, Joint Committee on Ending Homelessness, and The Maryland Veterans Caucus.

Outside of politics, Mathias has made significant contributions to Worcester County. He is a charter member of the Knights of Columbus #9053, is a life member of the Ocean City Volunteer Fire Company, past chair of the Worcester County Ambulance Service Committee as well as past chair of the Ocean City Humane Society Commission. He has served on the Maryland Critical Area Commission, the Maryland Tourism Development Board and was the state chairman in 2004 of the Walk America for the March of Dimes.

Mathias currently serves as the Director of Governmental Relations at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore.

"Jim Mathias's political career is a testament to his deep-rooted commitment to public service and his ability to connect with and represent

the people he serves. His tenure as a community volunteer, mayor of Ocean City and his service in the Maryland General Assembly have left a lasting impact on the Eastern Shore Community and the state," the media release said.

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Mayor floating lease with BFC on potential parking lot

Fire company proposed use of grass area during ARPA funding request process

By Charlene Sharpe Associate Editor

(April 25, 2024) Town officials are hoping to work with the Berlin Fire Company to create another parking area.

Mayor Zack Tyndall this week asked Berlin Fire Company leadership to determine if the department would consider leasing some of its property behind the station to the town so it could be used for parking.

"We'll revisit that with the fire company," said David Fitzgerald, president of the Berlin Fire Company.

During a quarterly presentation from the fire company this week, Tyndall brought up the issue of parking. Lack of available parking in Berlin is a common complaint among visitors, particularly as the town's special event season is underway. The fire company currently offers parking in its lot and on the grass behind headquarters in exchange for a donation during special events. Fire company officials have said it's hard to speculate how much they'll actually

receive in donations as it varies each event and is weather dependent.

As a result, after this week's presentation from Fitzgerald, Tyndall said he thought the town and the fire company could work together to improve the parking situation. Tyndall said he'd like to propose the town lease the grassy space behind headquarters for overflow parking. If the town leased the land, it could be improved and potentially metered, Tyndall said. He said revenue from the meters could go toward the fire company's capital equipment costs. He asked that Fitzgerald take the concept back to the fire company.

Fitzgerald said he'd have the fire company's attorney reach out to the town's attorney to discuss the concept and then would take it to the membership.

In 2021, the fire company proposed improving the grass area with American Rescue Plan Act funds. While the project was not pursued, the department wanted to spend about \$228,000 designing and building a parking lot and the associated stormwater facilities. It was estimated at the time the lot could accommodate approximately 100 spots.

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# Career fair set to highlight developmental center jobs

(April 25, 2024) The Worcester County Developmental Center is hosting its 2024 Spring Job Fair, a career fair for open jobs in various different departments of the center, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., April 30, at 8545 Newark Road in Newark.

Visit [wcdcservices.org](http://wcdcservices.org) "About" and "Employment" tabs for more job information.

The event will include light refreshments, raffles, and giveaways for attendees as they learn about the benefits, growth opportunities and work environment opportunities within the development center.

Attendees are asked to bring driving records and professional references. The event will be held indoors

and outdoors in the back parking lot.

The Worcester County Developmental Center empowers adults with developmental and physical disabilities to be productive, responsible, and participating members of the community by identifying, enhancing, and creating opportunities so all individuals can achieve their highest level of economic and social independence.

Anyone seeking employment who is unable to attend the fair, email a resume to [kjones@wcdcservices.org](mailto:kjones@wcdcservices.org) or fax to 667-288-6064.

Developmental center staff will be conducting walk-in interviews from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., every Tuesday, until fully staffed.

# County seeking nominations for volunteer spirit awards

(April 25, 2024) To honor volunteers whose contributions help improve the local quality of life, Worcester County residents are invited to nominate individuals, organizations, and businesses for the Volunteer Spirit of Worcester County awards.

The nomination period opened April 1 and will close at 4:30 p.m., May 31.

"When residents volunteer in Worcester County, they are contributing to the community's well-being as well as their own," Human Resources Specialist Kelly Brinkley said in a news release. "Volunteers who give of their time to local nonprofits have a sense of joy and positivity in their lives whether they volunteer virtually or in-person. Volunteers are creating a stronger connection in the community. It's a win-win for everyone."

Volunteer spirit nominations will be accepted for each of the following eight categories, with one winner to be chosen from each: individual, group/team, emerging leader, faith-based, nonprofit volunteer program, local business, veteran, and lifetime achievement.

Nominees should reside in and represent the volunteer spirit of Worcester County. Nomination forms are available at [worcestervolunteer.org](http://worcestervolunteer.org). Click on "News" on the site.

Completed forms may be submitted to the Human Resources Office, Room 1301 in the Worcester County Government Center in Snow Hill, or by contacting Brinkley at 410-632-0090 or [kbrinkley@co.worcester.md.us](mailto:kbrinkley@co.worcester.md.us).

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To highlight the outstanding services of the volunteers, the Worcester County commissioners will be presenting the award winners at its Aug. 20 meeting.

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# Calendar

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

## Thurs., April 25

### STORYTIME: POETRY

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10:30 a.m. Discover your inner poet to create a poem of your own and learn about poetry. For ages 2-5 years. 410-208-4014, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### FIRESIDE CHAT

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 3 p.m. A popular and entertaining book discussion featuring books you have read and want to share. 410-641-0650, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### ZUMBA

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 5 p.m. Join Zumba instructor Joyce Landsman for an hour of movement. These classes uplift and improve mood. Registration required: 410-524-1818. [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### INTRO TO SPEC TENNIS CLINIC

Ocean Pines Racquet Center, 11443 Manklin Creek Road, 6 p.m. Takes place April 25 and May 4. Free clinic. All abilities welcome and paddle provided. Register: [oppaddle2020@gmail.com](mailto:oppaddle2020@gmail.com). 410-641-7052

### BEACH SINGLE 55 PLUS MEET AND GREET

Thursdays - Harpoon Hanna's, 39064 Harpoon Road, Fenwick Island, DE, 4-6 p.m. 302-436-9577, [BeachSingles.org](http://BeachSingles.org).

## Fri., April 26

### 53RD ANNUAL WARD WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WILDFOWL CARVING COMPETITION & ART FESTIVAL

Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Highly decorative works of art to functional hunting decoys. Multi-day pass costs \$10; seniors and students, \$8; free to those 11 years and younger. [kclattenburg@wardfdn.org](mailto:kclattenburg@wardfdn.org), <https://wardfdn.org>

### MAHJONG CLUB

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Fun morning of playing tile Mahjong. Feel free to bring your own tile set. 410-524-1818, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### CHAIR YOGA

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 3 p.m. Nicole Young, certified yoga instructor, helps participants stretch in a safe and low impact manner. 410-208-4014, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

## Sat., April 27

### 23RD ANNUAL BOARDWALKIN' FOR PETS

Boardwalk at the Inlet, 809 S. Atlantic Ave., Ocean City, 8:30 a.m. Start a fundraiser to benefit the Worcester County Humane Society today! New this year are: Pawspport Pass, Doggie Dig and After Pawty. <https://worcestercounty-humaneociety.org>

### 53RD ANNUAL WARD WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WILDFOWL CARVING COMPETITION & ART FESTIVAL

Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Highly decorative works of art to functional hunting decoys. Multi-day pass costs \$10; seniors and students, \$8; free to those 11 years and younger. [kclattenburg@wardfdn.org](mailto:kclattenburg@wardfdn.org), <https://wardfdn.org>

### ANIME OCEAN CITY

Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Featuring a curated collection of celebrity guests, artists, vendors and more. Tickets: <https://animeoceancity.com>.

### ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT BREAKFAST BUFFET

Whaleysville United Methodist, 11716 Sheppards Crossing Road, Whaleysville, 7-10 a.m. Buffet will include pancakes, bacon, sausage, scrapple, scrambled eggs, chipped beef, hash brown potatoes, toast, fruit and assorted beverages. Cost is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children.

### WORLD TAI CHI DAY

Northside Park, 200 125th St., Ocean City, 10 a.m. World Tai Chi Day demonstration and participation. Kim Reed, 410-213-2822

### CRAFTY SATURDAY: EARTH DAY STORY TIME AND CRAFT

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10 a.m. Learn about taking care of our world and join in helping clean up our Earth. All ages. 410-208-4014, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### 11TH ANNUAL BOARDWALK FUNDRAISER WALK: EVERY CHILD IS A MASTERPIECE!

Caroline St. Stage, 2 N. Atlantic Ave., Ocean City, 12-2 p.m. Donations are \$25 per individual or \$100 per team of four. Registration required: <https://thecrick-etcenter.com/event/11th-annual-boardwalk-fundraiser-walk-every-child-is-a-masterpiece/>.

### JAZZIFIED POP WITH ABE OVADIA

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 1 p.m. A unique fusion of pop and rock tunes presented in a captivating jazz content.

This innovative performance offers a fresh perspective on familiar melodies. 410-524-1818, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### FARMERS & ARTISANS MARKET

Saturdays - White Horse Park, 239 Ocean Parkway, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Shop for everything from fresh local produce to unique handmade artisan goods. Open to the public.

## Sun., April 28

### 53RD ANNUAL WARD WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WILDFOWL CARVING COMPETITION & ART FESTIVAL

Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Highly decorative works of art to functional hunting decoys. Multi-day pass costs \$10; seniors and students, \$8; free to those 11 years and younger. [kclattenburg@wardfdn.org](mailto:kclattenburg@wardfdn.org), <https://wardfdn.org>

### ANIME OCEAN CITY

Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Featuring a curated collection of celebrity guests, artists, vendors and more. Tickets: <https://animeoceancity.com>.

### BISHOP'S ANNUAL VISITATION

St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 3 Church St., Berlin, 9:30 a.m. The Bishop will make his annual visitation. There will be one service at 9:30 a.m. where Chris and Evan Todd will be welcomed into the Episcopal Church through confirmation. Potluck to follow.

### THE REAL HOPE SINGERS IN CONCERT

Bowen & Trinity United Methodist Church, 8426 Newark Road, Newark, 3 p.m. The Real Hope Singers will be in concert. A light luncheon will follow in the fellowship hall.

### JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES MEETING

Sundays - Berlin Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, 212 West St., Berlin, 10 a.m. [www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org)

## Mon., April 29

### WSW BASEBALL FEVER

Women Supporting Women, 1320 Belmont Ave., Salisbury. Tickets \$20. WSW raffle for 2 Washington National tickets to any home game during the 2024 season. 410-548-7880

### PLAY TIME

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10 a.m. A variety of activities and toys. Play and socialize with other families. For ages 0-5 years. 410-208-4014, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### STORY TIME: LEAPING FROGS

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Crafts, songs and stories. For ages 0-5 years. 410-524-1818, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### T.O.P.S. OF BERLIN - GROUP #169

Atlantic General Hospital, Conference Room 1, 9733 Healthway Drive, Berlin, 5-6:30 p.m. Take Off Pounds Sensibly is a weekly support and educational group promoting weight loss and living a healthy lifestyle. Rose Champion, 410-641-0157

### BRIDGE

Mondays - Ocean City 50plus Center, 104 41st Street, Ocean City, 12:30-3:30 p.m. Reserve a spot: Tish, 410-804-3971. [www.Worcoa.org/oceancity](http://www.Worcoa.org/oceancity)

### 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.

### OVEREATER'S ANONYMOUS

Mondays - Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 7-8 p.m. No dues or fees. 410-459-9100

## Tues., April 30

### FREE PLAY DAY AND CRAFTS

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 10:30 a.m. Make some new friends with play and improve language and motor skill development. For ages 2-5 years. 410-641-0650, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### OC KNITTING GROUP

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Do you love to knit or crochet? Bring whatever project you happen to be working on. 410-524-1818, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://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.

### JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES MEETING

Tuesdays - Berlin Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, 212 West St., Berlin, 7 p.m. [www.jw.org](http://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



# Calendar

## 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.

## ZUMBA TONING TUESDAYS

Tuesdays - Northside Park, 200 125th St., Ocean City, 5:30 p.m. Zumba with optional light weights. zumbajoyceoc@gmail.com

## WEIGHT MANAGEMENT AND WELLNESS GROUP

Tuesdays - Holy Trinity Cathedral, 11021 Worcester Highway, 2-2:45 p.m. Use the weight loss program/app/plan of your choice. Free and open to everyone. 410-641-4882, www.htcanglican.org/activities.

## Wed., May 1

## DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 1:30-2:30 p.m. The group provides discussion and education on the topic of diabetes. Patti Yocubik, 410-641-4217, pyocubik@at-

lanticgeneral.org

## BARIATRIC SUPPORT GROUP

Takes place the first and second Wednesdays of each month. For non-surgical patients. Atlantic General Bariatric Center, 410-641-9568

## BABY TIME

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10 a.m. Have fun making music, singing songs and playing. For ages 0-2 years. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

## LEI DAY

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 2 p.m. Learn a brief history of Lei Day in Hawaii while making silk ribbon leis to celebrate. Registration required. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

## PAINT & SIP

Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway, 6-8 p.m. Cost is \$27. Wine and crackers included. Register: 410-641-7052.

## KIWANIS BINGO NIGHT

The Sterling Tavern, 119 N. Main St., Berlin, 6-9 p.m. Playing cards, chance auction and a 50/50. Food will be available. Bingo proceeds to go the Kiwanis Club's local Community Programs.

## CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP

John H. "Jack" Burbage, Jr. Regional Cancer Care Center, 9707 Healthway Drive, Berlin, 6-7 p.m. A safe place for caregivers who share similar challenges and rewards of providing care for adults who have serious illnesses. Nicole, nfy@atlanticgeneral.org, 410-641-2626

## KIWANIS CLUB MEETING

Wednesdays - Ocean Pines Community Center, Assateague Room, 239 Ocean Parkway, 8 a.m. Doors open at 7:30 a.m. Third Wednesday meetings are offsite and will be updated monthly on the website and Facebook. Guests are welcome. www.kiwanisofopoc.org

## ONGOING EVENTS

### OCEAN CITY RESTAURANT WEEK

Held April 14-28. Participating restaurants are given the freedom to offer whatever best fits for their restaurant at this time. Several will offer fixed-price menu options others may offer great deals. Reservations are recommended. https://oceancityrestaurantweek.com

### BALTIMORE ORIOLES VS. PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES BUS TRIP

Bus trip to Camden Yards on June 16. Pick up at Ocean Pines Community Center at 8:30 a.m. Game time at 1:35 p.m.

Tickets cost \$120 per person and includes transportation, a seat in the picnic perch, (section 284) and all-you-can-eat Picnic Perch food. Tickets: 410-641-7052.

## TEEN STEAM STATION

Berlin library, 13 Harrison Ave., during May. Each hands-on activity will focus on art, math, science, engineering or technology. Create jewelry using binary code, construct a flying glider, design your own city out of recycled material and more Challenges will change each week. For ages 11 years and older.

## ARTISAN DAYS

Furnace Town, 3816 Old Furnace Rd, Snow Hill, on the first Saturdays from April to September. There will be volunteers showcasing their unique historical talents.

## OCEAN CITY - BERLIN ROTARY CLUB

Don's Seafood and Chop House, South Gate, Ocean Pines, 6 p.m., on the first and third Wednesday of each month. ocberlinrotary@gmail.com

## 2024 JUST WALK CHALLENGE

Get the most miles of physical activity between Jan. 1 to Dec. 31 and be crowned the Just Walk Worcester Champion of 2024. Sign-up for Just Walk Worcester and report your monthly miles: https://justwalkworces-ter.org/. 410-632-1100, Ext. 1110

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by Monday 5 p.m.

Classifieds appear in **OC Today-Dispatch & Bayside Gazette** each week and online at [oceancitytoday.com](http://oceancitytoday.com) & [baysideoc.com](http://baysideoc.com)



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[Karen@ocpurifiers.com](mailto:Karen@ocpurifiers.com).

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Both positions require ability to lift 40 pounds and climb ladders. Preferred candidates are computer literate and mechanically inclined with boating experience.  
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Looking for bartenders, cashiers, cooks, housekeepers, activities attendants, front desk agents, security, and maintenance!  
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YARD SALE

COMMUNITY YARD SALE - Berlin, Decatur Farm, off Route 113 across from Stephen Decatur Park - Saturday, May 4th, 8am to noon. Homeowners will be setting up in front of their homes, so the sale is community wide.

OC Marlin Club Nautical Flea Market Saturday, May 4th. Rods, reels, coating accessories, tackle, nautical items and more. 7:30-11am. Come and shop or rent a space. \$30 per space. Call 443-614-7260. Proceeds of space rental go to OC Marlin Club Scholarship Fund.

YARD SALE

Oyster Harbor Community Wide Yard Sale. Whisper Trace Dr. May 11, 2024, 8am to 1pm. Rain date: May 18, 2024.

ESTATE SALE

Estate Tag Sale April 27 & 28, 9:00am-4:00pm, 12619 Old Bridge Road, West Ocean City. Furniture, appliances, vintage, collectibles, housewares, holiday, yard and garden, cottage furnishings and fishing gear. Cash only.

MISC./OTHER

Should he be punished? A tango to start the dance? She might just demure.

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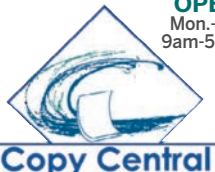
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