



PHOTO COURTESY OCEAN PINES ASSOCIATION

Eighty-year-old Lester Mason is pictured during his ride with Ocean City Cruzers Club President Ronnie Young in a 1929 Ford Roadster.

## Town council contest has one race left

### Tyndall returned as mayor, Orris remains unopposed

By Tara Fischer  
Staff Writer

(Sept. 5, 2024) With the filing deadline for town office passing last Friday, Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall and Councilman Jack Orris have unofficially been re-elected, while Council member Shaneka Nichols faces a familiar challenger for her second council term.

On Tuesday, Oct. 1, town residents will cast ballots in the municipal election for mayor and council members in District 2 and District 3.

The four-year terms of Mayor Zack Tyndall, Councilmember Jack Orris (District 2), and Council member Shaneka Nichols (District 3) have expired. The three incumbents have opted to defend their seats, and all but Nichols are running unopposed.

The only actual election will be in District 3 where voters will decide between Nichols and challenger Daniel Packey, whom she beat in 2020. Nichols captured 199 votes to take over the position left vacant by Elroy Brittingham, who retired from public office after 32 years. Packey, who was new to Berlin then, received 41 ballots.

Special Projects Administrator Kate Daub said the write-in candidate deadline is Tuesday, Sept. 24, at 4:30 p.m. These individuals will not appear on the printed ballot. This deadline is only thing standing between Tyndall securing his second term as mayor and Orris earning his second

See NICHOLS Page 6



Shaneka Nichols



Daniel Packey

## Twilight Wish gives pair a lift

### Foundation grants clients of developmental center opportunity to enjoy cars

(Sept. 5, 2024) Two Ocean Pines women made the dreams of two local seniors come true last Wednesday, thanks to the Twilight Wish Foundation.

Lester Mason, 80, and Chauncey Corbin, 70, have each been clients of the Worcester County Developmental Center for several decades. The center, in Newark has helped local people with intellectual disabilities find meaningful employment, gain independence, and increase their self-worth since 1973.

Mason, a WCDC resident for more than 30 years, can often be seen carrying a picture book of his favorite cars. Corbin, a resident at the center since 1999, also loves cars, but was

never able to get his driver's license because of an intellectual disability.

Both enjoy the Cruisin' Ocean City event where they can interact with classic cars, especially the hot rods.

Last Wednesday, Worcester County Twilight Wish Foundation Chapter Director Carolyn Dryzga and volunteer Barb Peletier introduced Mason and Corbin to Ocean City Cruzers Club President Ronnie Young – and his 1929 Ford Roadster.

Mason took a 10-minute ride in the classic hot rod and posed for pictures next to it. Corbin was a little shy, but still enjoyed touching the car and meeting Young.

Several clients posed for pictures with the car, and Mason and Corbin each received t-shirts, and certificates that read, "For Maintaining an Inspiring and Uplifting Spirit

and Dedication to Others. Know that others remember and care"

The Roadster itself has quite the history, built by Young and his father and brother more than 70 years ago.

"It was built from scratch," Young said. "My brother bought it in 1953, and when he went in the Marines my dad started on it with me, and it eventually moved on to me and I've kept it ever since," he said.

Young said building the car was a labor of love, and seeing it bring joy to others so many years later is deeply gratifying.

"It's terrific. I'm glad I could do this for somebody," he said. "I'm really glad I could help somebody out and help them make a wish come true."

Dryzga started the Worcester County chapter of the Twilight Foundation in March. The chapter worked with WCDC to grant a client's wish to

See VOLUNTEERS Page 7



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# Ocean Pines turning focus to fall activities

Fall Flea Market planned in addition to sports leagues; classes for youth, adults

**By Tara Fischer**  
Staff Writer

(Sept. 5, 2024) As summer cools down and the leaves start to fall, the Ocean Pines Association is gearing up to host autumnal events, classes, and sports leagues.

The Ocean Pines Fall Flea Market is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 21 from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. OPA's Recreation and Parks online page notes that the event will kick off, rain or shine, at White Horse Park and the community center.

"The indoor/outdoor flea market welcomed vendors selling gently used clothing, household items toys, jewelry, collectibles and more," the website says.

It is free to enter the market for shoppers. Vendor space can be rented and will include an eight-foot table and two chairs. To reserve an area or obtain additional information, individuals can call the recreation and parks department at 410-641-7052.

A Family Fun Night Bingo event is set for Friday, Sept. 27 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Admission is \$2 a person

and attendees will have the chance to win prizes. Ice cream will be for sale.

Ocean Pines is offering residents, young and older, the chance to enter sports leagues and classes this fall.

Cornhole is among the scheduled athletic events. The games will be held on Thursdays, beginning Nov. 7 and concluding on Jan. 9 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. It costs \$50 a person to join and there is a maximum of 16 teams or 32 people. Individuals are also eligible to sign up.

Participants should expect to play at minimum three games a week.

Young skateboarders will have the opportunity to learn from professional Matt Dove.

There will be two sessions, the first on Mondays and Tuesdays in September, and the second on Mondays and Tuesdays in October. The classes, which will go from 4:30 p.m. to 6 p.m., are open to boys and girls aged eight to 16.

The cost is \$145 a month for OPA residents and \$155 for non-residents. Participants are required to bring a skateboard, a helmet, and knee pads. To register, call the recreation and parks department at 410-641-7052.

The community is offering line dancing lessons with Lois Ingram on

Tuesdays from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. from Sept. 24 to Dec. 3. The classes are for individuals 18 and older and will cost Ocean Pines residents \$60 and non-residents \$75.

For parents looking to get their children involved in sports, OPA is offering a kid's instructional tee-ball clinic that will focus on softball and baseball skills.

The program, which will be held Tuesday nights from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Manklin Meadows Field, is open to boys and girls from four to six years old and will begin Sept. 10.

Community residents are required to pay \$40, while non-residents will be charged \$50.

A Pee Wee fall soccer league will also be offered by the Ocean Pines Recreation and Parks Department.

Four- to five-year-olds will play Tuesdays starting Sept. 10 and six- to eight-year-olds will play Thursdays starting Sept. 12. The events are expected to start at 6 p.m. and go to 6:45 p.m.

In preparation for Halloween, the fourth annual Ocean Pines Haunted House is scheduled for Friday, October 25 and Saturday, October 26 at the community center near White Horse Park.

The event is \$8 a person and will kick off at 7:30 p.m. and conclude around 9:30 p.m. each night. Organizers are looking for volunteers and actors.

To register for the upcoming programs or obtain more information, individuals can visit the Ocean Pines Recreation and Parks Department website or call 410-641-7052.

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# Berlin secures \$216K grant for playground

By Tara Fischer  
Staff Writer

(Sept. 5, 2024) The Maryland Board of Public Works approved the Town of Berlin's funding request of \$216,000 for the new playground equipment at Dr. William Henry Park last week.

The monetary reward is part of a \$2.7 million total Community Parks and Playgrounds Program package that the Maryland Department of Natural Resources is divvying up among 18 municipalities across the state.

According to DNR's website, the Community Parks and Playgrounds program "provides funding to municipal governments to restore existing and create new park and recreational facilities throughout the state."

The \$216,000 will be used to replace current structures at the park. Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall said that while the purple/green play unit for ages two to five at the front section of the playground closest to Flower Street and the blue two-bay swing will remain, the portion behind that, the equipment intended for five- to 12-year-olds, will be included in the renovation project.

"This investment will bring updated and safer play spaces for our children and families to enjoy," Tyndall said in a post on Facebook. "I look forward to seeing this project come to life and



SUBMITTED RENDERING/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

The colors and details of the proposed playground at Henry Park could change but the rendering above shows a potential schematic of the design.

continuing to enhance our town's recreational facilities."

The mayor said that the initiative is expected to cost slightly more than what the grant provided. It was reported last year that the project total will reach around \$240,000 and that the Town of Berlin will commit \$24,000 in matching funds to complete the endeavor.

Tyndall said the grant application to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources was submitted in August

2023. That same month, the town received a bid from Gametime, a construction company, for \$236,000 for new equipment compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

"This is something we have had on long-term planning documents," the mayor said. "When the opportunity arose to select a project, this one fit. We have been trying to keep it in good repair, but the equipment entering its last part of its useful life was next up on the list."

The Henry Park playground project can only break ground once the financial award letter has been processed. Tyndall hopes the work will begin in the spring of 2025 and be completed by National Night Out, typically at the beginning of August.

"Playgrounds are something our residents use daily," he said. "They are part of our community ... updating Henry Park will improve our neighborhoods. It will allow children to play after school. This is priceless."

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# Nichols faces Packey in District 3 contest

Continued from Page 1  
term on the council.

Nichols is a Worcester County Public Schools special education teacher. She has deep Berlin roots, as her family has lived on Flower Street for 10 generations. She is also a mother to six children and said she is focused on supporting the community's youth.

At the time of the last election, Nichols said constructing a community center was at the top of her priority list. She currently serves on the town's steering committee for the community center. The effort is inching closer through a partnership with the Berlin Community Improvement Association, SHOREUP! Inc., and the Worcester County Commissioners, where four parcels of Flower Street property have been combined to ac-

commodate a recreational building.

The site is the former home of Flower Street School, an African American education facility that operated in the first part of the 20th century.

The town was awarded \$100,000 from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's Community Development Block Grant last month for the center. An outline published online by community development department said the funds would be used for the project's preliminary architectural and engineering services.

Challenger Packey moved to Berlin in 2019. The candidate spent his career as an economics professor in the US and Australia and is currently listed on the Salisbury University website as an adjunct faculty mem-

ber.

Orris, the incumbent from District 2, has no challengers. The council member graduated from the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown with a political science degree and currently works at the Wicomico County Health Department.

The councilman's website outlines his priorities, including a budget process emphasizing opportunities to reduce expenses, parking, continuing to work and collaborate with the town's fire company and stormwater management, a passion of his during his first term.

"I ask questions," Orris said. "What is the reasoning behind the stuff we do? I bring a sense of curiosity ... If something is being brought to the council, I ask, 'Is it responsible, and is it reasonable?' I think that I bring a lot of information ...It comes down to an individual who wants to continue serving his community."

Tyndall, initially selected to serve in the position four years ago after serving as a council member for one term, is running for reelection unopposed.

In 2020, Tyndall opted to step down from his District 2 seat on the council and threw his hat into the mayoral ring. Tyndall received 69% of the 1,226 ballots cast to win in a

crowded field that included incumbent Gee Williams.

Tyndall began his career as a firefighter and paramedic with the Berlin Fire Company. The candidate's website states he has since moved into teaching prospective health professionals at the Richard A. Henson Medical Simulation Center at Salisbury University.

The mayor said his priorities remain affordability, community, and infrastructure. During his first four years in the position, Tyndall increased the unassigned fund balance — unallocated money — from \$15,782 in 2019 to \$3.2 million in 2024, established a Capital Reserve Fund, Health Insurance Reserve, LEOPS Stabilization Reserve, Debt Service Reserve Fund, Disaster Recovery Reserve Fund, and a Stabilization Reserve Fund.

He also secured a \$1.2 million grant to promote bike and pedestrian safety and improve the "interconnectability of neighborhoods and a grant for the implementation of hard-stop vehicular barricades for town events," added ping-pong tables to Burbage Park, and installed speed cameras in the Flower Street Neighborhood, among other community projects.

See TYNDALL Page 7

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# Tyndall has ambitious plans for his next term as mayor

Continued from Page 6

In terms of infrastructure, Tyndall's work as mayor since 2020 includes the replacement of Water Well #3, "a well that was constructed in the 1940s and helps provide drinking water to Berlin," updated street signs, "continued the transition of the power plant generators to natural gas through a \$425,000 grant," and used a \$500,000 grant for the Heron Park demolition project.

In his next term, Tyndall intends to address housing affordability, "advocate for changes in wastewater system operations to save taxpayers more than \$10 million in future capital costs," continue the Flower Street community center initiative, and enhance public spaces with artwork and landscaping.

He also hopes to update park amenities, like the new playground equipment at Dr. William Henry Park, promote community involvement through local events, complete the installation of advanced metering infrastructure for electric meters and fiber optic internet, replace lead water lines, and invest in aging water, sewer, stormwater, and electric infrastructure.

Tyndall said that he is satisfied with the current makeup of the

town's council.

"I think the current council and mayor's office have worked well together the last four years," he said. "My goal is that we can keep the team intact. We bring a lot of diverse backgrounds and opinions to the table ... We might not always agree, but we have great debates and come up with good solutions for Berlin through that process."

The District 3 polling site will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Oct. at St. Paul United Methodist Church at 405 Flower Street. Berlin residents must be registered with the Worcester County Board of Elections to cast their ballots.

Additionally, voters have the option to cast their ballots via mail or in person. According to Daub, if a resident is on the Maryland permanent mail-in voting list and intends to participate in the Berlin Municipal Election, a mail-in voting application must be submitted directly to the town and received by mail by 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 24, or received in person by Friday, Sept. 27, by 4 p.m. at Berlin Town Hall at 10 William Street.

Anyone with questions about the election can contact Daub at 410-641-4002 or [kdaub@berlin.gov](mailto:kdaub@berlin.gov).

# Volunteers fulfill pair's wishes

Continued from Page 1

meet Minnie Mouse in July, and in August helped a 95-year-old veteran dine at Harrison's Harbor Watch and watch boats from the White Marlin Open come in.

Peletier, a prolific local volunteer who was given the Sam Wilkinson Volunteer Award from Ocean Pines earlier this month, said she was eager to help this new cause.

"Carolyn told me about it, and I said, 'I'm in!'" she said. "It's been great so far. Everyone we approach has been so generous with their time."

Both were familiar with WCDC because of their prior volunteer experience.

"We've been going to nursing homes and visiting the Developmental Center, and just asked people to keep their ears open if they had anyone with a wish," Peletier said.

"We both feel that, if we can make somebody happy, it's a wonderful thing that we've discovered, and it's great that we can share this together," Dryzga said.

Dryzga said the Worcester Twilight Wish chapter is currently a two-person operation, but they will start to seek additional volunteers next year.

national nonprofit "whose mission is to honor and enrich the lives of seniors through intergenerational wish granting celebrations." Since 2003, the nonprofit has granted more than 6,100 wishes throughout the United States.

For more information on local opportunities through the Twilight Wish Foundation, contact Dryzga at [twfworca@gmail.com](mailto:twfworca@gmail.com) or call 302-889-0040 or 215-519-3670.

For more information on the organization, visit [www.twilightwish.org](http://www.twilightwish.org).



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# Berlin launches community center survey

By Tara Fischer  
Staff Writer

(Sept. 5, 2024) The process to develop Berlin's Community Center is continuing as the town is seeking input from the public on desired amenities and features.

The community center will be located at 130 Flower Street, formerly the site of Flower Street School, a learning institution that operated in the early 20th century. The goal is for the new recreational space to offer meeting rooms, services, and fitness and sports-related activities to which Berlin residents will have access.

Last month, the town was awarded \$100,000 from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's Community Development Block Grant for the initiative. The money will be used for preliminary architectural and engineering services.

"Not only are we just building a community center, but we're preserving a site of history for our town and our community that goes back generations," Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall said. "... there's that fabric of who we are and what we stand for. And we will bring that to life in our new community center."

Special Projects Administrator Kate Daub said efforts to create a

functional center are moving forward, as residents can now complete a survey on what kinds of activities they would like to see offered. The survey is in partnership with BEACON (Business, Economic, and Community Outreach Network) at Salisbury University) and is open to the public, not just Berlin residents.

The form includes options that participants can choose from, like fitness classes, arts and crafts workshops, health and wellness services, federal and state programs like WIC (the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), educational programs like job readiness and enrichment classes, social events like community meals and game nights, sports and recreation, summer camps and after school tutoring, and senior activities. On the survey, Berlin community members can also indicate which features they believe are important to include in the center, such as a gymnasium, a swimming pool, art studios, a kitchen, a computer lab, exercise equipment, and community gathering space.

Residents are to note how often and what timeframe they and their household expect to use the community center upon its completion.

Survey participants are encour-

To access the survey, you can use the QR code or the URL link below.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/5XW8L7K>



SUBMITTED IMAGE

A short survey, administered through Salisbury University's BEACON organization, will provide feedback to Berlin officials on what the public would like to see at the new community center.

aged to complete the form at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/5XW8L7K> or pick up a paper copy at Berlin Town Hall, the Berlin branch of the Worcester County Public Library, the Berlin First Baptist Church, Pentecostal Baptist Church, Church of Christ, St. Paul United Methodist Church, Buckingham Presbyterian Church, Saint Paul's Episcopal Church, Tyree ACME Church, or Temple Bat Yam.

The completed hard copy can be

returned to Berlin Town Hall in an envelope labeled with the BEACON return address. The survey will close on Friday, Oct. 4. The responses will be sent directly to the Salisbury University group to ensure no personal information is shared.

At the conclusion of the survey, responders who live in the Town of Berlin can enter a drawing to win one of five \$100 gift cards or a certificate for a scoop of Ice Cream from Island Creamery Main Street.

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This means that before you begin your home search, you have a valuable opportunity to sit down with your agent and discuss the many services they will provide, ensuring that you have a clear understanding of how they will assist you throughout the process. You'll also have the chance to determine a fair compensation structure that reflects the value and worth they bring to your real estate journey.

Regarding offers of compensation, Maryland REALTORS®, representing more than 28,000 members, and Coastal REALTORS®, serving Wicomico, Worcester, and Somerset counties, applaud efforts that contribute to transparency in the real estate transaction, likely the most complex purchase anyone will make in their lifetimes. Of the requirement for a written Buyer's Agreement, this is an "advocacy win" we fought for more than eight years ago: Maryland law has required this since October 2016.

Transparency helps to place today's homebuyers and sellers in the driver's seat as it provides clarity in the transaction and defines the roles and responsibilities for all parties involved. Sellers can search for a REALTOR® based on a variety of factors including sales volume, community knowledge, and more. Buyers can also find their ideal REALTOR®, looking at factors important to them: fiduciary skills, inspections expertise, referrals, etc. While both Buyer and Seller will have contractual and financial obligations to their respective agents' brokerages, commissions remain negotiable. The Buyer and Seller have the power to search for the REALTOR® who best serves their needs.

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# County tech school students will open new cafe Monday

**By Tara Fischer**  
Staff Writer

(Sept. 5, 2024) Worcester Technical High School's Culinary and Pastry Arts Department will officially open its teaching café at the TidalHealth Ocean Pines Campus on Monday. The café will offer baked goods, sandwiches, soups, and salads prepared by WTHS students to patients, staff, and OPA residents.

The Pines Café is located between the main lobby and the pharmacy in building number one of the Ocean Pines TidalHealth Campus, near the community's North Gate Entrance.

The food site is an interactive project created by Phil Cropper, the culinary and pastry arts program's head chef, to offer students real-life experi-

ence running a retail food business. The location will officially welcome customers starting Monday, September 9 at 9 a.m.

Cropper said he has been working on the space since June, updating the wallpaper retail area, installing new equipment, and stocking it with cookbooks and necessary culinary items in preparation for the grand opening.

One student, a senior in the cooking program, will be on-site during the café's hours of operation, typically 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday, to service patrons. The young learner will also be joined by two part-time managers who will act as mentors and daily overseers at the location.

The remaining students in the culinary and pastry program will work within WTHS to prepare the menu items.

"The school will act as a commissary, in a way," Cropper said.

The director hopes that his students will gain knowledge in entrepreneurship through the program, as well as proper knife skills, cooking techniques, menu development, basic bookkeeping, customer support, food safety and sanitation, culinary math, inventory management, leadership, and adaptability. The café is meant to provide juvenile chefs with real-world experience.

"WCPS has work-based learning opportunities ..., and The Pines Cafe is just another example of our commitment to growing our local workforce and meeting community needs," Worcester County Public School Career and Technology Education Coordinator Brian Phillips said in June.

Cropper curated the menu in collaboration with his 2023-2024 students. It includes turkey and provolone sandwiches, avocado toast, BLTs, paninis, coffee, tea, pastries, and more.

The chef said that the items may be adjusted and tweaked as he and his students receive feedback.

The café will operate similarly to  
See OCEAN Page 11



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

At least one student in the culinary program at Worcester Technical High School will be working at the new cafe from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. during the week.





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# Worcester County Chamber in OP seeking new director

(Sept. 5, 2024) The Worcester County Chamber of Commerce in Ocean Pines is looking for a new leader following the resignation of executive director Kerrie Bunting.

On Friday, Board Chair Derrick Elzey announced in a letter to chamber members that Bunting is leaving "to pursue an opportunity that aligns perfectly with the next chapter of her life."

"This decision was not made lightly, as her commitment to our chamber and the business community has always been a top priority," the letter said.

Bunting joined the chamber in September 2018, marking almost six years exactly in the position.

Elzey added in his letter that the chamber has "seen significant strides in economic development, community engagement, and partner support" under Bunting's support.

"Her passion for providing real-time updates and her visionary approach to economic growth have been instrumental in driving our chamber forward over the years," the letter said. "While it will be challenging to find someone as dedicated and innovative, we fully support her decision and wish her nothing but success in her future endeavors."

He went on to say he and his fellow board of directors will miss Bunting

and are committed to finding a new director who will continue her strong leadership foundation.

The letter said board members will keep the public up-to-date on efforts to find a new leader, and that interested candidates can send resumes to Elzey at [derrick@myberlinagent.com](mailto:derrick@myberlinagent.com) once the job description is posted.

## OP Yacht Club pool adds weekend, will now close Sept. 9

(Sept. 5, 2024) While the Ocean Pines Yacht Club Pool is currently closed, it will reopen for an extra three days this weekend before closing permanently for the season.

Hours will be 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., this Friday, Sept. 6 through Sunday, Sept. 8.

In an news release, General Manager John Viola credited aquatics department staff and said keeping the pool open later into the season will help enhance the customer experience.

"We were able to staff to make this possible, and we believe this will provide our homeowners with even more opportunities to enjoy our amenities," he said.

# Ocean Pines cafe set to open

Continued from Page 10

Panera Bread. Customers will order their food and beverages and receive them at a pick-up window. There will also be a grab-and-go area for pre-made meals.

Patrons will be able to order online at [thepinescafe.com](http://thepinescafe.com) and choose their pickup time from a list of 15-minute increments.

"This is great for people working in the Ocean Pines area to come in, grab their lunch, then head back to work,"

Cropper said.

Additionally, the space has 12 seats available for individuals who wish to enjoy their meal in the café.

After the overhead costs, all profits will be put back into WTHS's culinary program.

"We are excited to open," Cropper said. "It has been a dream since December last year, and now it is the start of the school year. We are ready to welcome customers through our doors."

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# Route 90 widening process paused for now

Young: 'sounds like they're heading towards a fiscal cliff with ... projections'

By Bryan P. Sears

Contributing Writer

(Sept. 5, 2024) Worcester County officials are scrambling for options — and money — after learning that state transportation officials are pausing a top transportation priority — the widening of Route 90 and the replacement of its two bridges.

Worcester is just one of the counties given tough news in the weeks leading up to Tuesday's release of an updated draft of the Consolidated Transportation Plan, the state's six-year transportation plan.

"The way it was explained is they're telling everybody to stop immediately wherever they are in the design process, the planning process, like hard stop," said Worcester County Administrative Officer Weston S. Young. "It sounds like they're heading towards a fiscal cliff with what their projections are now."

Worcester County leaders were told the Route 90 project will be "paused" when the state releases its draft plan for fiscal years 2025-2030.

"Route 90 was the one that was mentioned. We don't know of the

other projects that they were proposing to do in Worcester, which ones are getting stalled as well," said Young.

"We were told when the draft CTP comes out ... it will have this project along with a whole bunch of projects throughout the state — I don't know if the word is paused or deferred — because they can't afford it based on their projections," he said.

Young and Worcester County are not alone in the disappointing news. County leaders from around the state met with Transportation Secretary Paul Wiedefeld and his staff during the four-day Maryland Association of Counties summer conference in Ocean City.

The news on the transportation front was not good.

"It was not as bad as we thought," said Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich. "You could say it another way: It was better than we thought, but it's not good. I mean, basically, unless you've got a shovel in the ground, you're not going to see money to put shovels in the ground."

Elrich said it is not clear what projects will take a hit in Montgomery County.

"We didn't get a list of specific projects," he said. "Their basic message was, if there's a shovel in the ground that we made an investment in, that

funding is what we're going to be able to continue. They may not be able to continue planning for a project.

"If you delay planning, you just further delay even the time you can put a shovel in the ground. It was pretty clear that even shovel-ready projects aren't going in the ground with the amount of money they have," Elrich said.

Maryland continues to struggle to find funding for road and transit projects. Gas taxes and other revenues that make up the Transportation Trust Fund lag behind a seemingly endless supply of projects.

In December, Gov. Wes Moore and Wiedefeld delivered dire news at the winter MACO convention in Cambridge: A \$3.3 billion projected structural gap over six years between requests for transportation projects and available money meant tough cuts were coming and soon. Gobsacked county leaders left Cambridge worried about priority road projects and funding for local transportation networks.

Requests for transportation projects — roads, bridges, sidewalks, and transit — always outpace federal, state, and local funding sources. That \$3.3 billion estimate in December, while eye-popping, was always based on an unrealistic expectation that every jurisdiction would get every

project over the six-year period. Multiple sources with knowledge of current fiscal projections say the shortfall this year is much closer to \$1.3 billion.

Moore and the legislature added \$150 million from the state's rainy day fund to ease pressures on the transportation trust fund. The General Assembly also passed several targeted fee increases this spring meant to bolster the flagging fund, but the one-time infusion and targeted revenues were not expected to fully solve the issue.

"The Maryland Department of Transportation continues to face significant budgetary challenges due to slow economic growth, which places downward pressure on transportation revenues, alongside increased costs for materials and labor," Wiedefeld has said. "Last year, the Maryland Department of Transportation was able to balance the budget thanks to Gov. Moore's one-time \$150 million in funding and additional revenue sources passed by the General Assembly."

A blue-ribbon panel is expected to meet this year to develop recommendations before the start of the 2025 legislative session.

Elrich that with the state worried "about the ability even to fund prelim-

See STATE Page 14

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## State pauses 'Hail Mary' work

Continued from Page 12

inary planning for projects, not knowing what the basis of funding is going to be," the situation is "kind of what we expected."

"You know, there's no reason to believe that they suddenly saw a massive infusion of money into the state that would enable them to build the trust fund back up. So, you know, there are going to be efforts to put money into the trust fund, but it's not going to be the trust fund that they thought they had," Elrich said.

Wiedefeld said "stagnant economic growth combined with revenue forecasts for several important funding sources for the Department being revised downward leaves the Maryland Department of Transportation with limited state dollars to leverage federal funding for highway, transit, and aviation projects."

"Despite these challenges, the Maryland Department of Transportation continues to prioritize safety, maintaining the current system for Maryland families and businesses and reducing the number of deaths and serious injuries on our roads," Wiedefeld said.

On Tuesday, county leaders will get their first look at a draft of the state's Consolidated Transportation Plan. The document, updated annually, shows spending for projects in the pipeline and what will be funded over the next six years.

Wiedefeld and his staff then head out into the counties for feedback on what is most important to each jurisdiction.

In Worcester County, the Route 90 project remains their top priority.

"It's one of multiple requests we've given the state," Young said. "If we had to prioritize it, it's our No. 1. Gov. Hogan helped get it started, but we've always known we were going to have to fight to keep it in. So, this news is disappointing."

The highway and its bridges are nearly 50 years old. Worcester County officials want to "dualize" the highway and its bridges. An additional east and west traffic lane will likely mean replacing the existing spans over the St.

Martin River and Assawoman Bay.

"I call it a Hail Mary project," said Young. "It's going to be really expensive for us. When you compare it to mass transit, it's probably going to be a fraction of that, but it's a big request for the county to have. But if you've heard any of our statistics, 8 million unique visitors every year. That road is used frequently, and when there's an accident or like the sinkhole we had, or we need to get on or off the island for any reason, that is a choke point."

Young and other county leaders said state officials did offer a ray of hope — projects that require a match to leverage federal aid might move forward. But to do so, already cash-strapped counties will have to come up with the match.

"For these types of projects, we don't usually pay towards them," Young said.

"So, we're in an information gathering phase at this point, I would need to bring it to my commissioners," Young said. We haven't budgeted for this. We're two months into our fiscal year '25 budget. We would need to figure out how we would identify funding sources."

It's unclear how much of a match the counties would be required to contribute. Young thinks it could be as high as 25%.

"This is a new process for us," he said. "We just want to know, is it 20%? Is it 25%? What's the state's estimated costs are in our match, and then would the commissioners be willing to prioritize that over something else?"

Young said there is also the concern that in picking up the match, it sets a precedent of shifting project costs to the counties that were previously paid for by the state.

"I'm a professional civil engineer. The bridge section is just, it's going to be expensive. It's not just expanding a road," he said, adding that not finding the local funding may also be a poor option.

"There's also the project doesn't happen for a decade now because they stopped it," he said.

*(Republished from Maryland Matters)*



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# Pickleball Smash coming to Berlin Sept. 19

By Tara Fischer  
Staff Writer

(Sept. 5, 2024) Pickleball novices are invited to attend free community clinics to learn tips and tricks from volunteer coaches to expand their prowess.

PKLN, a Berlin-based Pickleball group, is hosting Pickleball Smash on Thursday, Sept. 19, at the Worcester Preparatory School's courts. It is open to anyone looking to learn the sport's basics, enhance their paddling techniques, or play a few friendly matches and drills with fellow community members.

The clinic is set to begin at 6 p.m. and end around 8 p.m. Paddles and balls will be provided.

Mike O'Malley, PKLN's founder, said the free event will be held monthly. The first clinic was held on August 1, attracting approximately 30 pickleball newbies. Paddles and starter sets were given away in a random drawing, and the coaches ran drills to get the beginners used to hitting soft shots over the net.

O'Malley said the Sept. 19 event will be similar but "bigger and better." Local vendors are expected to supply food and refreshments, and a curated music playlist will be played over a speaker.

A giveaway like the Aug. 1 event is

planned, except this time, with winners determined by competitions.

"We might have coaches come up with a game and see who the best player is," O'Malley said. "There are so many games we want to try, like Pickle Pong."

PKLN hopes to expand the regular clinics. While the first two were scheduled for Worcester Prep, organizers are looking to change it up each month and expand the event throughout Delmarva. Delaware, Chincoteague, and other spots on the Virginia shore are at the top of their list.

"I love Berlin, and Berlin will always be PKLN's home, but we want to spread it out," O'Malley said. "We are trying to appeal to a younger crowd, so we want to show up in different towns and get more people involved with pickleball ... all of Delmarva will be our initial target."

The coaches will be at each of the clinics. There are five instructors in total, two of which are twin brothers Kevin and Ben O'Malley (no relation to Mike O'Malley) from Berlin. The pair have been playing pickleball for roughly 10 years.

The brothers and O'Malley connected over their mutual passion for the sport and brainstormed how to

See EVENT Page 16



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Participants are pictured learning the game during the August pickleball event hosted by PKLN at Worcester Preparatory School's courts.

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# Sheriff's full-time requests passed

# Event looking to grow pickleball

### Crisafulli cites struggles with recruiting part-timers, OT expenses as reasoning

**By Bethany Hooper**  
Associate Editor

(Sept. 5, 2024) County leaders agreed last month to convert two part-time positions within the sheriff's department after learning that recent vacancies had resulted in soaring overtime costs.

Sheriff Matt Crisafulli came before the Worcester County Commissioners on Aug. 20 with a request to convert two part-time positions within his department to a full-time posting. While the conversion would cost the sheriff's office an additional \$11,493, he said it was far less than the overtime costs recorded when those part-time school resource officer positions went unfilled last school year.

"By converting these two part-time positions, it will have those positions filled," he told the commissioners, "And by that point, if granted, all of our schools will be covered. Therefore, the goal would be to dramatically cut down on the overtime."

Crisafulli noted the sheriff's office currently had two vacant part-time positions assigned to county schools. However, his department has no ap-

plicants to fill those vacancies.

"Also, to give you some context with the staffing challenges we faced last school year, we were responsible for filling 561 vacancies of school assignments within our schools and that caused a total of \$173,554.54 in overtime that was expanded," he explained. "Of that amount, \$151,857 was reimbursed to our county through grant funding, and that left a total of \$21,697.54 that came out of my FY24 budget. So we did the best we could to minimize the fiscal hit there."

Crisafulli added that part of the vacancies reported last year were due to unanticipated medical leave among full-time staff. And while the sheriff's office had no problems filling full-time positions, he said he did with part-time postings.

"By converting those two [positions] to full-time, it would not exceed \$11,493.04," he said. "That is our first request, to get our schools covered."

Crisafulli said he was also seeking the commissioners' permission to convert a detective position to a corporal position, a supervisory role that costs an additional \$7,404. He said the third conversion would allow for better oversight with the Worcester County Bureau of Investigation.

"The total cost for both of these requests is \$18,897.84," he said. "We took a look at our current operating budget, and this can be absorbed within the current budget."

While Commissioner Joe Mitrecic made a motion to approve the conversions, he requested that the sheriff come before the commissioners with such changes prior to budget adoption. When asked if the sheriff's office still had part-time positions, Crisafulli said it did but that it was trying to convert those positions to full-time.

"We've converted many part-time positions to full-time because as they leave we don't have a pool to select from," he replied. "We have steadily been working on converting. My goal, in the long run, would be to have all part-time positions converted to full-time and hopefully still have the full-time applications coming in."

After further discussion, the commissioners voted 7-0 to approve the conversion requests. The commissioners last week also voted to approve two new positions within the emergency services department – an assistant chief of electronic services, with a salary range of \$116,000 to \$154,000, and an emergency communications QA/QI specialist, with a salary range between \$77,000 and \$85,000.

Continued from Page 15  
"get more paddles in hands and bounced around the logistics of a free community clinic," the founder said. "From there, the first PKLN Community Smash event was born."

The primary mission of PKLN is to bring Pickleball to the Berlin and Delmarva areas.

The program was launched earlier this year. Organizers hope to continue their community smash clinics, host a charity tournament in October, and expand PKLN in 2025.

The organization's website, [pklnpickleball.com](http://pklnpickleball.com), and Instagram and Facebook pages provide schedules, tournament and clinic updates, and additional information.

Pickleball is the fastest-growing sport in the United States. According to a Sports and Fitness Industry Association report, participation in the game has grown an average of 158.6% over the last three years.

"There is an ease and appeal of getting out there, and in the outdoors, with people you love having fun," O'Malley said. "It is easy for anyone to pick up. People as young as six, for example, can compete... It is just a weird pop feeling on the paddle that is addicting. It gets you hooked."



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DELAWARE BOTANIC GARDENS AT PEPPER CREEK

Photo by Anne Mosher



# Decatur Middle recognized by Apple for innovative ways

(Sept. 5, 2024) Worcester County Public Schools officials announced last week that Stephen Decatur Middle School has been recognized as an Apple Distinguished School for 2024-27 for its commitment to continuous innovation in education and using Apple products to create exemplary learning practices.

According to a news release from the school system, Apple Distinguished Schools are recognized as some of the most innovative in the world. They are centers of leadership and educational excellence, with a clear vision for how technology-rich environments support learning goals.

At SDMS, teachers incorporate technology into their lessons, empowering students to lead, learn, and thrive, to discover new opportunities, and to make their world a better place.

“Our school believes firmly that instruction is at its best when we inspire our students to be creative, collaborative, critical thinkers,” Theresa Torpey, principal of Stephen Decatur Middle School, said in the release. “The use of Apple technology in our classrooms does all of this and also empowers our students to not only engage with their learning, but to take ownership of it.”

The selection of SDMS as an Apple Distinguished School highlights the school’s success as innovators and creators of compelling learning environments that engage students and provides tangible evidence of academic achievement.

“I continue to be amazed how our schools are successfully infusing technology into their instructional practice to more effectively reach this generation of learners,” Superintendent of Schools Lou Taylor said. “We began the journey to bring cutting edge technology to our schools in 2020, and to have now four of our schools be named Apple Distinguished Schools within that time demonstrates how impactful this investment is for our both our students and staff.”

The three-year designation as an Apple Distinguished School comes with the expectations that SDMS will continuously innovate and explore cutting-edge opportunities for using technology to design the future of education.

The school joins Berlin Intermediate School, which was named an Apple Distinguished School for 2022-25 and will reapply for another distinction this school year. Pocomoke and Snow Hill high schools were also named Apple Distinguished Schools for 2023-26.

Students and staff at all four schools will work with members of the Apple Education team, along with a worldwide network of school leaders, to investigate and support the integration of new education products, curriculum and services, and inspire others. The schools can renew the distinctions during the last year of the recognition terms by demonstrating continued growth in innovative learning with integrated technology.

# AGH announces free flu clinics

(Sept. 5, 2024) As a service to the community, Atlantic General Hospital & Health System is once again providing community flu vaccination with a series of free clinics for people ages 13 and older.

No appointment is required. Clinic dates are subject to change based upon flu vaccine availability.

The schedule is as follows:

- 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Sept. 26, St. Mary Star of the Sea Holy Savior Catholic Church at 1705 Philadelphia Ave. in Ocean City
- 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Oct. 2, Stevenson United Methodist Church at 123 N. Main St. in Berlin
- 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Oct. 3, Pocomoke City Volunteer Fire Company at 1410 Market St. in Pocomoke
- 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Oct. 4, Ocean Pines Community Center at 235 Ocean Parkway in Ocean Pines
- 8 a.m. to noon, Oct. 5 and 19 Gudelsky Family Medical Center (Drive-Thru) at 10614 Racetrack Road in Ocean Pines

High-dose vaccines are also available at the clinics for patients 65 older and will be billed to Medicare or private insurance.

For updates on the Atlantic General Hospital Community Flu Clinics, including new clinic dates, visit [agh.care/flu](http://agh.care/flu).

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# Saute Café arsonist's life sentence reduced

By **Bethany Hooper**  
Associate Editor

(Sept. 5, 2024) A Worcester County judge last week reduced a convicted arsonist's life sentence to 10 days after serving nearly four decades in prison for his role in a restaurant fire that claimed the life of an Ocean City firefighter.

While acknowledging the tough decision before him, Worcester County Circuit Court Judge Beau Oglesby last Wednesday opined that David Chris Ball, 58, was deserving of another chance within society after being incarcerated for nearly 39 years. Ball, convicted of arson and first-degree murder following a 1983 fire that killed Ocean City firefighter Jeff Dieter, sought an early release under Maryland's Juvenile Restoration Act. "The saddest part for me in this case is I can't give Mr. Dieter a second

chance ...," the judge said during this week's hearing. "I can give Mr. Ball a second chance."

In 2021, the Maryland General Assembly passed the Juvenile Restoration Act, which, among other things, created a pathway for individuals who have served at least 20 years of a life sentence for a crime they committed as a minor to seek a reduction of their sentence. To that end, Ball's legal team at American University Washington College of Law came before the court in June with a request to reduce their client's life sentence to time already served.

In his oral opinion this week, Oglesby said he found Ball to be of no danger to the public, and that it was in the best interest of justice for his sentence to be reduced. He said the court was also tasked with considering 11 factors, including Ball's age at the time of the crime, any

mental or behavioral issues, and the nature of the offense, to name a few.

"This isn't a situation where there was an intent to kill," he said. "This wasn't a situation where there was any premeditation or any animosity toward the victim ..."

Attorneys for the defense have acknowledged that on July 16, 1983, a 17-year-old Ball intentionally set fire to the Sauté Cafe in uptown Ocean City, leading to Dieter's death while fighting the blaze. The defense attorneys, however, maintained that their client had no intention of hurting or killing anyone. They also pointed to Ball's incarceration records, educational and work achievements, and involvement in several prison programs such as Alternatives to Violence and the Lifers Group. Four witnesses also took the stand in June to support Ball's release from prison.

At that time, however, the prosecution argued that Ball was not ready to rejoin society and posed a threat to public safety. Worcester County Assistant State's Attorney Lynn Nixon pointed to Ball's history of fire setting behaviors, both before and after the Sauté Cafe fire, as well as the impact Dieter's death had on the community. Those arguments were also supported by the state's witnesses, Dieter's niece and one of Dieter's former colleagues.

Upon consideration of the facts in the case, the hours of testimony presented in June, and the scientific and medical evidence provided to the court, Oglesby said this week he would grant Ball's request by giving him 14,128 days of credit toward a 14,138-day sentence. The remaining 10 days of his sentence

will be served at the Maryland Correctional Institution, after which time he will be released to the TIME Organization in Baltimore, which will oversee his reentry into society.

Ball was also placed on five years of supervised probation, during which time he will be required to complete mental health and substance abuse evaluations, among other things. Oglesby concluded his remarks by acknowledging the eight firefighters present during last week's proceedings. He said he was glad they were present to hear first-hand his reasoning behind granting Ball's request.

"My respect and admiration of first responders, of firefighters, is without limit," he said.

Following a year-long investigation into the arson fire that took Dieter's life, Ball was charged in August of 1984 and later confessed to setting the blaze, according to old newspaper accounts. However, the charges were dropped in 1985 after the defense claimed Ball's confession was coerced.

In 1986, the case against Ball was reopened, and that October he entered an Alford plea, for which he was convicted and given a life sentence with all but 10 years suspended without the possibility of parole. Two years later, Ball sought post-conviction relief on the grounds his legal counsel provided him incorrect information. From there, his conviction was vacated, and a new trial was set.

In 1989, following four days of arguments, a jury found Ball guilty of first-degree murder and first-degree arson. He was sentenced to life in prison later that fall.

# Berlin day care worker faces child abuse, assault charges

By **Bethany Hooper**  
Associate Editor

(Sept. 5, 2024) Charges have been filed against a former Berlin Activities Depot employee following an incident earlier this month.

Last Tuesday, Lionel Evans, 57, of Princess Anne, was arrested on one felony charge of second-degree child abuse and one misdemeanor charge of second-degree assault following an investigation into an incident that occurred at the Berlin Activities Depot playground Aug. 13. Steve Rakow, attorney for Mark and Carmella Solito, the facility's owner, said his clients have cooperated through the investigation and have since notified parents of Evans's arrest.

"Mr. Evans was initially suspended from his position while law enforcement conducted its investigation into the allegations, which is only fair to him," he said in a statement Wednesday. "Mr. Evans is now no longer employed by Berlin Activities Depot. The

Solitos published a notice to parents today – the day after the arrest."

According to charging documents, an investigation was launched earlier this month after a parent of a four-year-old attending the Berlin Activities Depot had contacted Berlin police about an incident that occurred on the playground Aug. 13. The parent told officers Evans had grabbed his child by the back of his neck, leaving a red mark, scratches and bruising. The parent said the child was not listening and had run away from Evans on the playground.

"Child protective services was contacted and a forensic interview was conducted on August 14, 2024," a statement of charges reads. "The child disclosed during the interview that he had marks on his neck. The child stated that Lionel (Evans) did it while he was playing on the playground. The child stated that Lionel (Evans) put his hand around the

See THIRD Page 19

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# Third center worker faces charges

Continued from Page 18

child's neck and that it caused his neck to hurt. The child stated that afterwards, he was crying and Lionel stated to the child he was going to be in timeout for what he did."

Police report that footage obtained from the Berlin Activities Depot showed the child running toward the playground equipment and Evans chasing after him. According to charging documents, Evans grabbed the child by the back of the neck, and the child fell to the ground.

"Evans is seen forcefully grabbing the child's right upper arm and lifting him to his feet," a statement of charges reads. "Evans is seen speaking with the child briefly, but there is no sound. Evans escorts the child to the picnic table area; the child is holding the back of his neck while being escorted."

During the course of the investigation, officers attempted to speak with Evans, who denied grabbing the child by the back of the neck, according to charging documents. Rakow said this week the Solitos had also reviewed video surveillance footage after learning of the incident and had reported the matter to the Office of Child Care and the Department of Social Services.

"At about that same time, the Solitos were contacted by the Berlin Police

Department, which was conducting an investigation into the incident based on a complaint made by the child's parents," he said in a statement. "The Solitos complied with the subpoena request for surveillance video."

Evans was arrested on charges of child abuse and assault Tuesday and has since been released on bond. A preliminary hearing has been scheduled for Sept. 27 in Worcester County District Court.

Evans's arrest comes on the heels of another child abuse investigation, which resulted in two former daycare workers at the Berlin facility being arrested earlier this year. On Aug. 19, Worcester County Circuit Court Judge Brian Shockley found Heather Ward, 40, of Berlin, guilty of nine counts of second-degree assault on which she had tendered an Alford plea, which acknowledges that the state has enough evidence to prove Ward guilty beyond a reasonable doubt should the case proceed to trial. The remaining 81 counts in her case, including 10 felony charges, were not prosecuted as part of Ward's plea agreement with the state. In June, a second classroom worker, Catherine Deutsch, 32, of Berlin, was arrested on 11 charges of failure to report child abuse/neglect and four charges of neglect of a minor.

In a message to parents sent Wednesday, Carmella Solito provided additional details on this month's incident.

"On August 13, during outdoor playtime, an incident occurred on our playground," the message reads. "A child tripped while playing and then threw rubber pellets from the safety surface at other children. One of our staff members, a gymnastics coach, intervened to redirect the child's behavior and separate the child from the group for a timeout. As the coach attempted to detain the child, the child ran from the coach. While running away, the child tripped, resulting in a minor scrape. We want to assure you that our coach followed our standard protocols for managing children's behavior and ensuring playground safety. Thankfully, the child will be OK."

The message noted that the child's parents had contacted police following the incident. And after a police review of security footage, the employee was taken into custody Aug. 27.

"Our center remains committed to providing the highest standard of care for your children," the message reads. "We are continuously evaluating and improving our practices to ensure we meet and exceed all safety and care requirements set forth by the state of Maryland for childcare."

# Ocean Pines man arrested after tire slash and assault

(Sept. 5, 2024) An Ocean Pines man is facing vandalism and assault charges after puncturing a neighbor's tire and punching the neighbor in the face at a home on Newport Drive late last week.



Joseph R. Pavese

According to a news release from the Ocean Pines Police, Joseph R. Pavese, 38, reportedly used a screwdriver, unprovoked, to puncture a tire on his neighbor's vehicle, which the neighbor saw, around

5 p.m., last Thursday, Aug. 29. The neighbor called the police and went outside, and Pavese "punched him in the face with a closed fist," according to the release.

The release said police learned through an investigation that Pavese's actions were apparently unprovoked. They arrested him and took him to the police department, where he was processed on charges of malicious destruction of property and second-degree assault and taken in front of the district court commissioner for an initial appearance. Pavese was subsequently detained in the Worcester County Detention Center without bond.

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# Opinion

Please send all letters and other editorial submissions to [editor@baysidegazette.com](mailto:editor@baysidegazette.com) by 5 p.m. Monday.

## Nichols for council

Daniel Packey, who is seeking to unseat Shaneka Nichols as the District 3 representative on the Berlin Town Council in the Oct. 1 municipal election, has a good resume except for one thing: he isn't from here.

As much as that sounds like small town parochialism, it really isn't. It's simply a short way of saying that regardless of what Packey might bring to the table with his doctorate in economics, his experience in business and his world travels, he cannot know the community as well as lifelong resident Nichols.

Knowing and understanding one's constituency is the most important factor in holding public office at the municipal level, and coming from a family whose presence in the community goes back for 10 generations, Nichols has the right credentials for the job.

No disrespect to Packey, but life experience trumps academic experience in local public service. We support returning Shaneka Nichols to the Town Council for another four years.

## A truly good deed

Another example of outstanding community service was in evidence last week when Worcester County Twilight Wish Foundation Chapter Director Carolyn Dryzga and Barb Peletier lined up a little show and tell — and ride — for two long-time clients of the Worcester County Developmental Center who love cars.

Volunteers Dryzga and Peletier made arrangements with Ocean City Cruzers Club President Ronnie Young last Wednesday to give the clients an up-close look and ride in his 1929 Ford Roadster.

That was just a supremely nice thing to do, and at a time when "nice" sometimes seems to be in short supply, Dryzga and Peletier have reminded us that we're still in pretty good shape here at home.

## Worcester achieves AAA bond rating

### Upgrade will provide improving borrowing costs for projects

(Sept. 5, 2024) Fitch Ratings, one of three major credit rating agencies, has upgraded Worcester County's Issuer Default Rating and general obligation bonds to AAA.

In the rating commentary, a news release said Fitch recognized the county's financial resilience, for both revenues and expenditures, as well as the planned build-up of reserves in recent years as key rat-

ings drivers for the upgrade. The county's ability to manage long term debt and related liabilities was also cited as being well above comparable counties and Fitch concluded that the county's credit outlook is "Stable."

"We're very pleased that our conservative management of taxpayer money and county assets has been recognized in this elevated rating that will improve our ability to borrow money at a reduced cost," Worcester County Commissioner Chip Bertino said in the release.

Those better borrowing

costs will serve the county well as major capital projects advance, Finance Director Phil Thompson said.

"The recent rating upgrade from AA to AAA from Fitch Ratings rewards us for years of prudent fiscal management and responsible budget decisions," Thompson said in the release.

"This rating will provide lower borrowing costs that the county will use to provide needed capital projects including schools and infrastructure improvements that will provide long lasting benefits to the residents of Worcester County."

## Md. finalizes general election ballots

### Public can preview choices on website

(Sept. 5, 2024) The Maryland State Board of Elections announced Monday that the 2024 presidential general election ballots have been certified and posted for review on the board's website any elections.maryland.gov/elections/2024/index.html#pballots.

Following the close of the judicial review of the certified ballots Wednesday, board of elections members were set to review verified submissions from registered state voters and make any necessary changes before beginning the ballot printing

process.

In honor of National Voter Registration Month this September, board of elections members also encourage eligible residents who are not registered to vote to do so using the online registration system at voterservices.elections.maryland.gov/OnlineVoterRegistration/InstructionsStep1.

The site also allows voters to change party affiliations, update their addresses, and update their names if they have changed.

A voter registration form can also be printed (in English or Spanish) and submitted to the office of residents' local boards of elections by

visiting elections.maryland.gov/about/county\_boards.html.

For the 2024 presidential general election, registered voters can cast ballots in one of three different ways: early in-person at select locations, via mail-in ballots, or in-person on Election Day at their designated polling places. Mail-in ballots can be requested online at voterservices.elections.maryland.gov/OnlineMailinRequest/InstructionsStep1.

Marylanders interested in serving as election judges may visit SBE's election judge webpage at elections.maryland.gov/get\_involved/election\_judges.html.

## Residents can comment on bike study

(Sept. 5, 2024) Worcester County Public Works officials invite area residents and visitors to comment on a recently completed bicycle-pedestrian path feasibility study.

The study addresses a proposal to develop a hiking and biking trail on Route 611 from Route 50 to Assateague State Park. To view the study, visit [co.worcester.md.us](http://co.worcester.md.us). Under Important Links, click on "MD 611 Feasibility Report."

"The main purposes of the study were to determine which side of MD Rt. 611 would best be suited for a path, what it would cost to design and construct the path, and what regulatory needs exist if the project receives the greenlight to move forward," WCPW Director Dallas Baker said in a news release. "We are currently working to secure grant funding to cover the design and construction costs."

The study was conducted

by McCormick Taylor and funded with grants from the Maryland Department of Transportation. The completed study does not guarantee the path will be designed or built, although grant applications have been submitted to MDOT for the initial design.

Submit comments to Charde Tunnell at [ctunnell@co.worcester.md.us](mailto:ctunnell@co.worcester.md.us) by Sept. 30. For more information, call WCPW at 410-632-5623.

# BAYSIDE GAZETTE



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PHOTO COURTESY OCEAN CITY-BERLIN OPTIMIST CLUB  
**Ocean City-Berlin Optimist Club members Sharon Sorrentino and Cindy Malament are pictured at the club's recent annual golf tournament, where they checked in golfers and sold tickets.**

## Local Optimists raised \$17K for scholarship fund

(Sept. 5, 2024) The Ocean City-Berlin Optimist Club recent held its annual golf tournament at Ocean City Golf Club, Newport Bay course. The tournament raised funds for the club's youth foundation, which provides scholarships to Stephen Decatur High School students.

Thanks to the 56 golfers who participated, and to sponsors throughout the community, nearly \$17,000 was raised. Charles Smith has been running the tournament for 14 years and, in that time, the club has placed over \$200,000 in the foundation.

## Lower Shore Land Trust will add two program specialists

(Sept. 5, 2024) The Lower Shore Land Trust recently hired two new program specialists.

According to a news release, Maddie Mowl, will be serving as a program specialist through the Chesapeake Bay Trust's Chesapeake Conservation and Climate Corps Program, and Brooke Orr will serve as a program specialist through Salisbury University's ShoreCorps AmeriCorps Program.



**Maddie Mowl**



**Brooke Orr**

Both Mowl and Orr are recent graduates of Salisbury University's environmental studies program.

During her senior year at Salisbury University, Mowl served as a communications and outreach intern at the land trust, making a mark with her enthusiasm and creativity. She graduated this past spring a bachelor's in environmental studies and a minor in outdoor education leadership.

With a bachelor's degree in environmental Studies and a minor in urban and regional planning from Salisbury University, the release said Orr is looking for ways to blend her interests in conservation, planning, and interpretation. Her time at Salisbury University was marked by extensive research, leadership, and collaboration.

Matt Heim, the executive director of the trust, expressed excitement about welcoming the new staff members.

"It's incredibly rewarding to see such talented and passionate individuals like Maddie and Brooke join our organization, especially as recent graduates of Salisbury University, where I also began my journey in the environ-

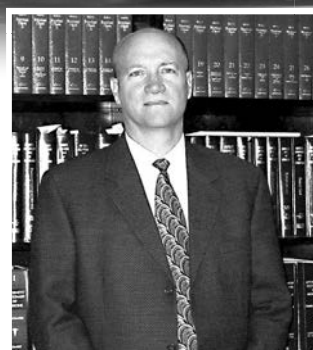
mental field," he said in the release. "It's always great to keep talent close to home here on the Shore. Drawing on the exceptional talent from Salisbury University is a testament to the strength of their Environmental Studies program and its alignment with our goals at LSLT, and the conservation community in the region."

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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., Sept. 5

### CPAP MASK FITTING

Atlantic General Hospital's Sleep Disorders Diagnostic Center, 9733 Healthway Drive, Berlin. Free to patients who are having trouble adjusting to their CPAP equipment. Appointments required: Robin Rohlfing, 410-641-9726.

### TOWN CATS ADOPTION EVENT

PetSmart, 11330 Samuel Bowen Blvd., Berlin. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Town Cats adoption event.

### STORY TIME: THE PIGEON HAS TO GO TO SCHOOL

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10:30 a.m. It's back to school for the pigeon. Songs, crafts and a story. For ages 2-5 years. 410-208-4014, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### STORY TIME 'GO FISH'

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](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### CHESS CLUB

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Come play chess and bring your board. 410-524-1818, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### POCOMOKE BOOK CLUB: 'THE LEISURE SEEKER' BY MICHAEL ZADOORIAN

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 301 Market St., 2 p.m. 410-957-0878, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### MAGIC THE GATHERING

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 3:30 p.m. Battle it out with sorcery, dragons and giants. Experienced and novice players welcome. BYOC recommended. For ages 12-18 years. 410-208-4014, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### BEACH SINGLE 55 PLUS MEET AND GREET

Thursdays - Nick's Kitchen + Bar, 14410 Coastal Hwy., Ocean City, 4-6 p.m. 215-385-4993, [BeachSingles.org](http://BeachSingles.org)

## Fri., Sept. 6

### WINE FEST

Hugh T. Cropper Inlet Parking Lot, 809 S. Atlantic Ave., Ocean City, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Featuring artisans and crafters, Delmarva food specialties and flip flop favorites performing on the oceanfront stage. Tickets include a wine glass and wine samples with photo ID. [www.winefest.com](http://www.winefest.com), 410-280-3306

### TOWN CATS ADOPTION EVENT

PetSmart, 11330 Samuel Bowen Blvd., Berlin. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Town Cats adoption event.

### MAHJONG CLUB

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

### FIRST FRIDAY BLOCK PARTY

Art League of Ocean City, 502 94th St., 5-7 p.m. Featuring new exhibits, food and refreshments, live music, children's games, raffles, community weaving, artist demos and make and take crafts. Free event. [www.artleagueofoceancity.org](http://www.artleagueofoceancity.org)

### KIGHTS OF COLUMBUS BINGO

Fridays - Knights of Columbus, 9901 Coastal Highway, behind St. Luke's Church. Doors open at 5 p.m., bingo starts at 6:30 p.m. Light snacks available before bingo and at intermission. 410-524-7994

## Sat., Sept. 7

### WINE FEST

Hugh T. Cropper Inlet Parking Lot, 809 S. Atlantic Ave., Ocean City, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Featuring artisans and crafters, Delmarva food specialties and flip flop favorites performing on the oceanfront stage. Tickets include a wine glass and wine samples with photo ID. [www.winefest.com](http://www.winefest.com), 410-280-3306

### BERLIN SMALL TOWN BLOCK PARTY

Historic Downtown Berlin, 124 N. Main St., Berlin, 12-6 p.m. Free, family-friendly event. Local live music, bounce houses and slides, local craft beverages, curated mouth-melting hot sauces and Hot Wing Trivia. <https://www.facebook.com/events/1031595321735272>

### OSG MID-ATLANTIC REGIONAL - STRONGEST MAN/WOMAN COMPETITION

Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Impressive events such as: the Log and Axle Press, Circus Dumbbell, Axle Deadlift, Sandbag Toss, Timber Frame Carry and the famous Husafell Carry. [www.strongman.games/2024-osg-midatlantic-regional](http://www.strongman.games/2024-osg-midatlantic-regional), 919-389-2270

### SHOWELL VFD YARD SALE & CHICKEN BBQ

Showell Volunteer Fire Department, 11620 Worcester Highway, Showell, 8 a.m.-noon. Cost is \$12 for chicken, chips, soda and a roll. Cost for yard sale table is \$10. Set up starting at 6:30 a.m.

### Reserve tables:

[showellvfdauxiliary@gmail.com](mailto:showellvfdauxiliary@gmail.com).

### ANNUAL DOGGIE SWIM

Mumford's Landing Pool, 7351 Yacht Club Drive, Ocean Pines. Small dogs (under 20 lbs.) from 10-10:30 a.m. All dogs from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Cost is \$8 per dog. Handlers must be at least 18 years of age. Benefits Wor. Co. Humane Society. Rain date Sept. 14. 410-641-5255

### SATURDAY WRITERS

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 10 a.m.-11:59 p.m. Novice and established writers gather to share their writing projects. Structure includes critiques and appreciation, market leads and writing exercises. Drop ins welcome. 410-641-0650

### CRAFTY SATURDAY: FALL FEELS

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10 a.m. Can you see the changes fall has brought? Create some fall crafts and celebrate the new season. For ages 0-11 years. 410-208-4014, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### TOWN CATS ADOPTION EVENT

PetSmart, 11330 Samuel Bowen Blvd., Berlin. 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Town Cats adoption event.

### BARBEQUE SPARERIBS / FRIED CHICKEN / BAKED CHICKEN PLATTERS TO GO

Calvary United Methodist Church, 8607 Ironshire Station Road, Berlin, 10:30 a.m. BBQ ribs, two sides and roll for \$15. Fried chicken, two sides and roll for \$12. Baked chicken, two sides and roll, \$12. Also corn bread, drinks, bread pudding, pies, cakes, etc.

### BEARHOLE FARMS FALL ART FESTIVAL

Bearhole Farms, 37756 Bear Hole Road, Selbyville, 11:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Featuring plein air artists, artist booths, music entertainment, food and more. Rain or shine. Free admission and parking. [bearholefarms@gmail.com](mailto:bearholefarms@gmail.com), [www.bearholefarms.com](http://www.bearholefarms.com), 302-542-1885

### CHICKEN SALAD AND SHRIMP SALAD CARRYOUT

Bishopville Volunteer Fire Department, 10709 Bishopville Road, Bishopville, 12-2 p.m. Homemade chicken salad cost is \$8 per pint. Homemade shrimp salad cost is \$15 per pint. Preorder by Sept. 1: 619-922-9950.

### PORT CITY QUARTET CONCERT

Back Creek Fellowship Church, 11707 Back Creek Road, Bishopville, 7 p.m. Port City Quartet will present a gospel music concert. Pastor Paul Sherwood, 443-523-5116

### '80S PARTY WITH DELOREANS

Fenwick Inn, 1200 Coastal Highway,

Fenwick Island, 7-10:30 p.m. Featuring the Deloreans. Tickets available on eventbrite or by calling or at the door.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-deloreans-80s-tribute-band-at-fenwick-inn-tickets-921714923147>

### FARMERS & ARTISANS MARKET

Saturdays - 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., Sept. 8

### OSG MID-ATLANTIC REGIONAL - STRONGEST MAN/WOMAN COMPETITION

Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Impressive events such as: the Log and Axle Press, Circus Dumbbell, Axle Deadlift, Sandbag Toss, Timber Frame Carry and the famous Husafell Carry. [www.strongman.games/2024-osg-midatlantic-regional](http://www.strongman.games/2024-osg-midatlantic-regional), 919-389-2270

### FREE CONCERT ON THE LAWN

Calvin B. Taylor House, 208 N. Main St., Berlin, 6 p.m. Featuring 80's Party with Full Circle. Also Totally Awesome Outfit Contest. [www.taylorhousemuseum.org](http://www.taylorhousemuseum.org)

### FLOUNDER POUNDER

Bahia Marina at Fish Tales, 2107 Herring Way, Ocean City, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Participants may fish from their own boat or rent a skiff, skimmer or pontoon from the marina. This tournament is great for the kids. Free to watch, fees to enter tournament. [www.ocfishsales.com](http://www.ocfishsales.com), 410-430-1157

### BERLIN FARMERS MARKET

Sundays through October - Pitts Street, Commerce Street and Main Street, Berlin, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., rain or shine. Featuring more than 50 farmers, bakers, growers, brewers, food cultivators, distillers, creators and artists. Also free kids art projects, petting zoo, face painting and live music. <https://berlinmainstreet.com/farmersmarket/>

### BERLIN FLEA MARKET

Sundays - Uptown Emporium Parking Lot, 13 S. Main St., Berlin, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Vendor opportunities available. Julie, 410-726-9012; Bill, 410-629-9656

### SEWING FOR A CAUSE

Sundays - Buckingham Presbyterian Church, 20 S. Main St., Berlin, 10:30 a.m. to noon. Learn how to sew while making a difference. 410-641-0234

### 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)



# Calendar

## Mon., Sept. 9

### STORY TIME: BACK TO SCHOOL

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)

### WRITING FOR WELLNESS

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 1:30 p.m. Writing about stressful experiences like illness may boost health and psychological well-being. Uses exercises to stimulate creative expression. 410-208-4014, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### TRUE CRIME BOOK CLUB: 'A MURDER IN HOLLYWOOD' BY CASEY SHERMAN

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 2 p.m. Join in for an afternoon of true crime. 410-524-1818, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### MONDAY MOVIE MATINEE

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 2 p.m. Come see a movie you might not have had a chance to see in the theaters. Light refreshments provided. 410-208-4014, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### GENEALOGY RESEARCH

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 3-6 p.m. Need help finding your roots? Come by the library and the local history librarian can help you navigate the print and online sources. 410-632-3495, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### WARHAMMER

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 4 p.m. Use the library's armies or bring your own. Tutorials and demos will be available, so novice and veteran players alike are welcome. For ages 12-18 years. 410-641-0650, [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., Sept. 10

### STORY TIME WITH A HERO

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 10:30 a.m. Story time featuring a community hero. For ages 0-5 years. 410-641-0650, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### STORY TIME @ THE DELMARVA DISCOVERY MUSEUM

Delmarva Discovery Museum, 2 Market St., Pocomoke City, 10:30 a.m. Stories, crafts and a visit with the animals. A different animal will be featured every month. For ages 0-5 years. 410-957-0878, [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)

### PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP

Atlantic General Neurology at the Atlantic Health Center, 9714 Healthway Drive, Berlin, 3:15-4 p.m. Providing discussions and support, along with education on exercise, nutrition, coping techniques, medications and developments in treatment. Kay Kinnikin, 410-641-4765, [kkinnikin@atlanticgeneral.org](mailto:kkinnikin@atlanticgeneral.org)

### ONE MARYLAND ONE BOOK DISCUSSION: 'WHAT STORM, WHAT THUNDER'

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 4:30 p.m. Join in for this community read. Copies of the book are available at the library circulation desk. 410-524-1818, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### BOOK CLUB: 'IN THE HEART OF THE SEA' BY NATHANIEL PHILBRICK

Tides & Vine, 106 W. Green St., Snow Hill, 5:30 p.m. An evening of books and wine. Stop by the library to pick up a book anytime, then meet for a discussion at Tides & Vine. Must be at least 21 years of age. 410-632-0650, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### SAFE BOATING COURSE

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 6-9 p.m. Held Sept. 10-12, 6-9 p.m. Cost is \$20 for all three evenings. Register: Barry Cohen, 410-935-4807, [CGAUXOC@gmail.com](mailto:CGAUXOC@gmail.com).

### SONG CELEBRATION

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 6 p.m. Bring a song you love to the library and share it with other players and writers in a welcoming and encouraging space. Originals encouraged. Listeners welcome. 410-641-0650,

[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

### 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](http://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](mailto: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](http://www.htcanglican.org/activities).

## Wed., Sept. 11

### OC BIKEFEST

Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City. Featuring Vendor Village and food and beverages from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. The Ocean City Inlet will feature concerts, Wall of Death, official merch, food and beverage from 3-11 p.m. <https://ocbikefest.com>

### 2024 9/11 PARADE OF BROTHERS BOARDWALK RIDE

Firefighters Memorial, 10 S. Boardwalk, Ocean City, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Red Knights Motorcycle Club 9/11 Parade of Brothers motorcycle ride down the Boardwalk to honor 9/11 victims. Cost is \$20 per motorcycle. 610-470-6071, [mikefiazzo@gmail.com](mailto:mikefiazzo@gmail.com)

### BIARIATRIC SUPPORT GROUP

Online Zoom call on the first and second Wednesday 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. Songs, stories and giggles. For ages 0-2 years. 410-208-4014, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### TRIVIA

Snow Hill 50plus Center, 4767 Snow Hill Road, 11 a.m. The group will be playing Maryland History Trivia with Erin. 410-632-0650, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### MERRY MAKERS: VEGETABLE PRINTING KITCHEN TOWELS

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 11 a.m. In this adult craft class, the group will use cut vegetables and paint to print kitchen towels. All supplies provided. Registration required: 410-208-4014. [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### NATURE WALK & ART JOURNALS

Cypress Park, 7 Bridge St., Pocomoke City, 2:30 p.m. Meet at the pavilion, take a walk on the nature trail and stop and sketch what you observe. Materials provided. Weather permitting. Registration necessary: 410-957-0878. For all ages.

### UNIVERSAL YUMS

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 3:30 p.m. Are all snacks created equal? Taste test some snacks from around the world and find out. All food provided. For ages 12-18 years. 410-208-4014, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### TABLE TOP ROLE PLAYING GAME

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 5 p.m. Come play a selected role-playing game for adults and teens. Registration required: 410-632-0650. [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### FLAMENCO FUEGO: AN ELECTRIFYING EVENING WITH GLADIUS

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 5:30 p.m. This all ages program has been described as an original performance where "Carlos Santana meets Eddie Van Halen." 443-783-6164, [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org)

### SQUARE DANCE LESSONS

Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway, 7-8:30 p.m. Starting Sept. 11, the first four lessons are free. After that continue with a 12-week course for \$4 per person, per session. Couples and singles welcome. Barbara, 908-229-8799; Dee, 302-222-4448

### KIWANIS CLUB MEETING

*Wednesdays* - Ocean Pines Community Center, 239 Ocean Parkway, 8 a.m. Doors open at 7:30 a.m. Third Wednesday meetings are offsite and information can be found on the website and Facebook. [www.kiwanisofpopc.org](http://www.kiwanisofpopc.org)



# Local mobile food vendor rules questioned

## County regulations viewed as more stringent than surrounding jurisdictions

**By Bethany Hooper**  
Associate Editor

(Sept. 5, 2024) County officials say they will work with the local health department to address concerns from mobile food vendors regarding equipment certification.

Worcester County Health Officer Becky Jones came before the Worcester County Commissioners on Aug. 20 to discuss the health department's regulations on mobile food vendors, specifically its regulations on mobile equipment. While officials reportedly receiving several complaints from mobile vendors regarding their inability to participate in county events, they said they were willing to work with them to find a resolution.

"Our focus has and continues to be finding workable solutions without compromising or jeopardizing the health and safety of our community," Jones said.

Worcester County Chief Administrative Officer Weston Young told the commissioners last week the county had received several complaints from food vendors who wanted to participate in this year's Great Pocomoke

and Worcester County fairs, but could not do so because they struggled to secure the necessary county approvals. While the state code requires National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) – or equivalent – certification on equipment, the vendors say they can continue to operate in other surrounding counties.

"While each vendor's situation is unique, a common theme amongst all of them was the ability and ease to operate in all four counties that surround us, but not in Worcester," he said.

In his memo to the commissioners, Young noted that state code grants local health departments the ability to allow food equipment without an NSF certification, so long as it is not harmful to public health and is consistent with industry standards. He said it was likely the code section neighboring counties used to allow such equipment.

Somerset County food operator John Applegate said as much in his presentation to the commissioners last week. He said that while he was allowed to operate his mobile smoker in neighboring counties – including Somerset, Wicomico and Dorchester – he could not do so without a NSF certification in Worcester. Applegate added that he had reached out to

three certification agencies, including NSF, only to learn they cannot certify mobile smokers. Even if they could, he said it would cost several thousand dollars.

"I can go to every county, I just can't go to Worcester County because I don't have NSF approval," he explained. "And I can't get it NSF approved, because I have a pull-behind smoker."

Acknowledging the issue with mobile smokers, Jones suggested three possible solutions – a reciprocity agreement with other health departments, a dedicated certification day in which industry experts could be available to evaluate equipment, or having environmental health staff trained to certify equipment themselves.

"As we explore these or any other options, I would ask that we keep in mind the 15 operators who utilize smokers and are currently licensed in our county and the other additional five vendors who participate in temporary events. These 20 entities have adhered to and are compliant with COMAR as it relates to their smoker equipment," she said. "Please remember that certification of equipment is just part of the overall approval process. The proposed applicant would also have to comply with other parts of the code to include regula-

tions regarding safe food storage, transport and preparation, as well as assuring potable water cleaning, sewage disposal and, of course, hand hygiene."

Environmental Health Food Programs Supervisor Ryan Hayward clarified that of the 15 licensed, year-round operators, none utilized mobile smokers. He added that five temporary vendors did.

"The five [vendors] tow them around on trailers but they are NSF or equivalent [certified]," he said.

Several commissioners questioned the fees associated with NSF certifications and event permits, as well as the regulations that are applied to mobile vendors but not other food-service operators. Jones said the health department was willing to work with the community and had done so in previous years when concerns were raised regarding permit fees. She added that the health department hasn't denied applicants wishing to operate mobile smokers, but that conversations did not continue once they learned of the requirements.

"Quite often it is, I don't get the answer that I want, then I end the conversation. It's not, come in, let's talk this through or even stay on the phone with us and have a little bit

See HEALTH Page 27

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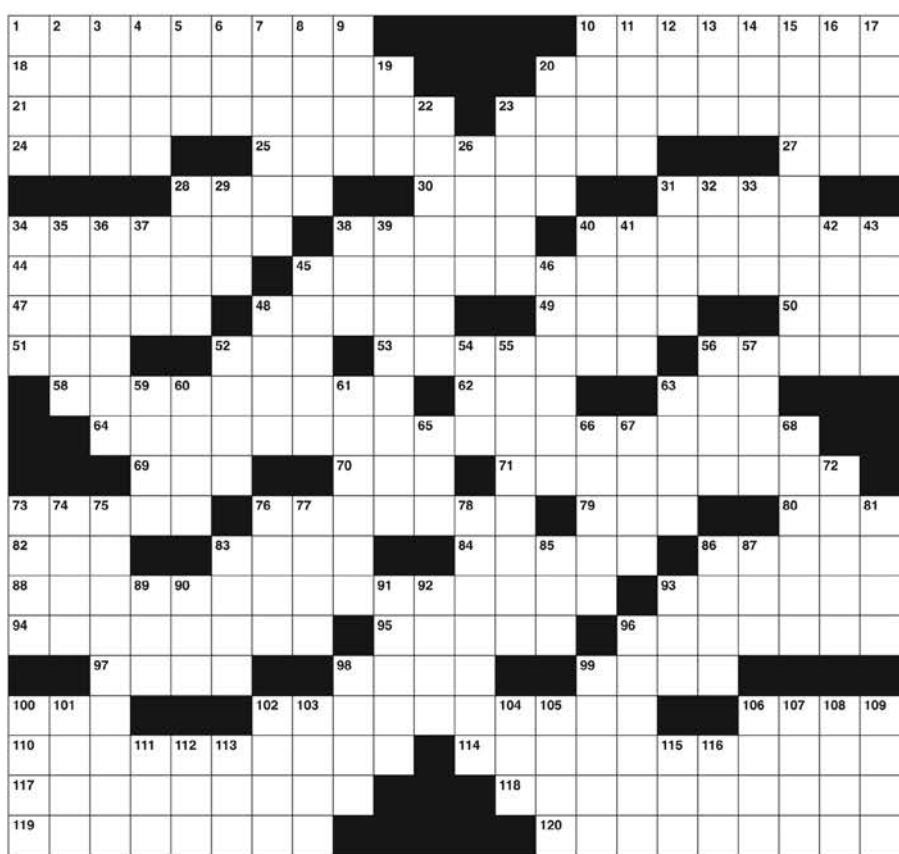


# Puzzles

## IS THERE AN ECHO IN HERE? BY JOHN KUGELMAN / EDITED BY JOEL FAGLIANO

John Kugelman, of Gainesville, Va., is a software engineer and musician. His puzzles often have a playful sense of humor to them, a style he attributes to his crossword-constructing "North Star," the great Patrick Berry. About Patrick, he writes, "He doesn't have a flashy gimmick behind every puzzle; it's just how well he pulls off the simple themes." This puzzle likewise has a simple concept, pulled off quite cleverly.

- ACROSS**
- 1 Loses one's shirt, say
  - 10 Primarily studies
  - 18 City with a cowboy-hat-wearing replica of the Eiffel Tower
  - 20 Videography option on a smartphone
  - 21 "Tsk, tsk"?
  - 23 Buddy-buddy?
  - 24 Resistance units
  - 25 What "Ten-four" and "Over" are used in
  - 27 \_\_\_\_\_liver oil (dietary supplement)
  - 28 Honnold who was the first to free-solo climb El Capitan
  - 30 Exploit
  - 31 Sight at Sydney's yearly Festival of the Winds
  - 34 "You're on!"
  - 38 Paper-saving invoice
  - 40 They keep people in the dark
  - 44 [Knock, knock]?
  - 45 11?
  - 47 First-tier, as a celeb
  - 48 Thudding noise
  - 49 Diamond authorities
  - 50 Go (for)
  - 51 Word used three times in the Postal Service creed
  - 52 Sen. or rep., e.g.
  - 53 Up to
- DOWN**
- 56 N.W.A.'s "Straight \_\_\_\_\_ Compton"
  - 58 Owl or whippoorwill, e.g.
  - 62 Big step for a start-up, for short
  - 63 "Now I get it!"
  - 64 Pooh-pooh?
  - 69 Wrap up
  - 70 Sch. with campuses in Abu Dhabi and Shanghai
  - 71 Places to let out anger by smashing objects
  - 73 Built (on)
  - 76 Core exercise done lying down
  - 79 Queer identity, for short
  - 80 Output of some refrigerators
  - 82 Word often followed by a Roman numeral
  - 83 Helping hand
  - 84 Show up, perhaps
  - 86 Else
  - 88 Tut-tut?
  - 93 "Ow! Ow!?"
  - 94 Buccaneer's buddies
  - 95 Park worker?
  - 96 "That much is obvious"
  - 97 Ran out of juice
  - 98 The Lincoln Memorial appeared on it until 2008
  - 99 Tangled masses of hair
  - 100 One of the Mannings
  - 102 George Lucas's original surname for Luke Skywalker
  - 106 Shock proof?
  - 110 "OK, OK"?
  - 114 "Hubba, hubba!"?
  - 117 Outpouring of ideas
  - 118 Seasonal workers in suits
  - 119 Official beer of the Boston Red Sox, familiarly
  - 120 On the comeback trail
- DOWN**
- 1 Swept style
  - 2 Chemical formula for ly
  - 3 Oil container
  - 4 Needles
  - 5 Night-school subj.
  - 6 Basilica of \_\_\_\_\_ Anne de Detroit (historic Michigan landmark)
  - 7 "Three may keep a \_\_\_\_\_ if two of them are dead": Benjamin Franklin
  - 8 Over-the-counter brand that promises "Guaranteed relief every time"
  - 9 Put forth
  - 10 Flaky mineral
  - 11 Wild
  - 12 "Friends" star, to friends
  - 13 Antediluvian
  - 14 Run into
  - 15 Carnival attraction that propels its riders sky-high
  - 16 "\_\_\_\_\_" in analogies
  - 17 Call for
  - 19 Half a rhyming genre name
  - 20 Steaming, with "off"
  - 22 Alaskan salmon hunters
  - 23 Hulled wheat
  - 26 Mirror image?
  - 28 Be next to
  - 29 MGM's aptly named mascot
  - 31 Nine credited roles in "Barbie"
  - 32 Texter's hedge
  - 33 Bit of ink, familiarly
  - 34 Home of Kurdistan's easternmost regions
  - 35 Raven claw
  - 36 Vital spark
  - 37 Plugs
  - 38 Brian in the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame
  - 39 Big name in allergy medication
  - 40 Humorist Bombeck
  - 41 Talks incessantly
  - 42 Didn't spoil
  - 43 Mlle. of Madrid
  - 45 Basic skateboarding trick
  - 46 Jovian moon
  - 48 Kind of salad with hard-boiled eggs
  - 52 What cognitive behavioral therapy can treat, in brief
  - 54 It bears no etymological relation to "conifer," surprisingly
  - 55 Camera opening
  - 56 State with a five-sided flag
  - 57 "That's just ... wrong"
  - 59 Clarified butter
  - 60 Rear
  - 61 Park worker
  - 63 Por \_\_\_\_\_ lado (on the other hand: Sp.)
  - 65 Fashion designer Anna
  - 66 "By Jove!"
  - 67 Lead-in to nautical
  - 68 Key of Mozart's Symphony No. 40
  - 72 Glower
  - 73 Part of a baby's nighttime routine
  - 74 Hurt
  - 75 Filming innovation used in "The Shining"
  - 76 Choice for a twist
  - 77 Häagen-Dazs shelfmate
  - 78 Ball that just grazes the bat, perhaps
  - 81 Online crafts marketplace
  - 83 Betwixt
  - 85 Explosive inits.
  - 86 Corsica and Réunion
  - 87 Part of 115-Down: Abbr.
  - 89 PET scan alternative
  - 90 Uintah Basin people
  - 91 Word in the mnemonic E-G-B-D-F
  - 92 Deliberately try to fail, informally
  - 93 Key near Ctrl
  - 96 "O Tannenbaum" and others
  - 98 "Li'l Abner" cartoonist
  - 99 Haggard fellow?
  - 100 Abates
  - 101 "Good Morning America" co-host Spencer
  - 102 Dirty film
  - 103 Some turkeys and tabbies
  - 104 Hasty getaway
  - 105 "Success has always been the greatest \_\_\_\_\_": Nietzsche
  - 106 Group of buffalo
  - 107 Payment before a deal
  - 108 Big supporter, in modern slang
  - 109 Quiet "Hey!"
  - 111 Telluride maker
  - 112 Sturm \_\_\_\_\_ Drang
  - 113 Initialism for exhibitionism
  - 115 Seminoles' sch.
  - 116 Tiger's target



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## su | do | ku

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### HARD - 22

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.

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

### Answers to last week's puzzles

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

CARD	BASAL	CLANG	ASST
AGAR	ULTRA	OSCAR	RACE
SUMO	ROOMY	BUMPER	CARS
HAPPY	NEWYEAR	ESTA	RAT
TAS	RNA	ACTIN	
MOMA	EAST	HAM	YENTE
DOWAGERS	YES	NEON	
LOSEHEART	PARSEC	ANNE	
ACCRA	SOU	AHA	TRON
SKA	DELTORO	EATERS	
SET	ROLLER	COASTER	NOT
IDOTOO	RESPAWN	NAE	
HOWL	EEL	ACE	SWEDE
WANE	OILERS	CHESTHAIR	
PAIN	PEONY	HATERADE	
MATCH	STY	UBER	MICS
TREES	PSI	OVA	
SEA	RUGS	RESETTLEMENT	
WATERSLIDE	MAORI	OREO	
AMEN	HALOS	ORGAN	LIMP
PSST	IDLES	LLAMA	ENOS



# Pocomoke water project gets state funding

## Board of Public Works approves \$777,000 for line, pipe improvements

(Sept. 5, 2024) The Maryland Board of Public Works last week approved up to \$777,000 for the improvements to the water transmission and distribution system in Pocomoke City.

“Clean drinking water is a priority for public health and safety,” Sen.

Mary Beth Carozza (R-38), said in a news release. “I am glad to see this funding has come through for Pocomoke to be used to improve the overall water quality for local residents.”

Carozza represents Pocomoke City and surrounding areas,

The Pocomoke City Water Line Improvements project consists of cleaning, inspecting, lining and replacing water mains; replacement of pipes, fit-

tings, and various valves; and all associated appurtenances in various parts of Pocomoke City.

Phases 1 and 2 of the project are set to handle the cured-in-place pipe lining, and Phases 3 and 4 would handle replacements of distribution lines. Pocomoke City’s water source is the Pocomoke Aquifer, which is accessed through drilling wells — about 140 feet in depth — and pumping the water to the surface for distribution.

Pocomoke City staff routinely monitor for contaminants in the drinking water per federal and state law, and the new grant will assist in complying with the Safe Drinking Water Act, the release said.

The Board of Public Works consists of the governor, comptroller, and the treasurer, and is responsible for the expenditure of all capital appropriations and the superintendence of nearly all state public works projects.

# Health officer explains county’s regulations

Continued from Page 24

more in depth conversation ...,” she told the commissioners. “I think it just has to be a greater meaningful conversation, to say, OK, partner with us so that we can support you, whoever your entity is and, and getting to that endpoint, again, as long as we are not sacrificing the health and safety of our community because that’s what we’re charged to do.”

Young also highlighted the limited number of food trucks licensed in Worcester County. He said it contin-

ued to be a struggle to secure vendors for county events and tournaments. He also referenced an instance in which a local food vendor was denied a temporary license for a baseball tournament last fall, as they had already participated in a similar event months prior. He said the health department had a policy regarding recurring events.

“The reason I put this out there is we’re leaning towards having tournaments and events almost every weekend,” he said.

Acknowledging the issues at hand, Commissioner Chip Bertino suggested they hold another work session with the health department in the coming weeks. Many of the commissioners said they wanted to see changes that made it easier for vendors to do business in Worcester County.

“To be clear, the county commissioners don’t have oversight as to what the health department can and can’t approve, nor do we have say over their procedures to approve or

not approve, certify or not certify, an establishment or a piece of equipment,” Bertino said. “I think we need to understand that. But I think we have also received from the health officer that there is very much a willingness to work with what we’re trying to accomplish, for being able to move forward and see if there are opportunities with reciprocity or other options that were presented to make Worcester County more viable and more competitive than our neighbors.”



## OPEN HOUSES

Sept. 5 - Sept. 12



DAY/TIME	ADDRESS	BR/BA	STYLE	PRICE	AGENT/AGENCY
Daily 11am-3pm	14 82nd Street, Ocean City	4BR/3BA	Townhomes	from \$800,000's	Dan Clayland/Coldwell Banker Realty
Fri-Sun 10am-4pm	Memory Lane, Harbour Court, West OC	3BR/4BR/5BR/6BR	Single Family	from \$799,900	Joe Wilson/Coastal Life Realty
Fri-Mon 11am-4pm	Heron Harbour, 120th St., Bayside	1BR/2BR/3BR/4BR+	Condos, Towns & SF	-	Nanette Pavier/Holiday Real Estate
Mon-Fri 9am-4pm, Sat 11am-4pm	12346 Old Bridge Rd, West OC	3BR/2BA	Single Family	starting at \$239,750	Shelly Wilson/Salt Life Community
Mon-Fri 9am-4pm, Sat 11am-4pm	12346 Old Bridge Rd, West OC	2BR/1BA	Single Family	starting at \$179,900	Shelly Wilson/Salt Life Community
Saturday 10am-Noon	353 Schooner Lane, Berlin	3BR/2.5 BA	Single Family	\$314,900	Debbie Hileman/Hileman Real Estate
Saturday 2-4pm	36 Juneway Lane, Ocean Pines	5/6BR/4BA	Single Family	\$639,900	Debbie Hileman/Hileman Real Estate
Saturday 11am-1pm	13416 Jefferson Ave., Ocean City	5BR/4BA	Single Family	\$999,000	Kim Heany/BHHS PenFed Realty
Friday 11am-1pm	13110 Coastal Hwy. #903 Braemar Towers, OC	2 BR/2BA	Condo	\$550,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 10am-1pm	11604 Coastal Hwy., Unit 1406, Ocean City	2BR/2 BA	Condo	\$789,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 11am-1pm	8814 Hunting Hound Rd, Berlin	3BR/3BA	Single Family	\$649,995	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 1-3pm	377 Walnut Hill Dr., Berlin	3BR/3.5BA	Single Family	\$734,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 2-4pm	733 Bradley Road, Ocean City	5BR/6BA/2 Half BA	Single Family	\$2,950,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 10am-Noon	377 Walnut Hill Dr., Berlin	3BR/3.5BA	Single Family	\$734,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 11am-1pm	11604 Coastal Hwy., Unit 1406, Ocean City	2BR/2 BA	Condo	\$789,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 1-3pm	11602 S. Hills Drive, Berlin	5BR/4.5BA	Single Family	\$1,849,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Tuesday 10am-1pm	377 Walnut Hill Dr., Berlin	3BR/3.5BA	Single Family	\$734,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Wednesday 11am-1pm	304 S. Heron Gull Court, Ocean City	4BR/4.5BA	Single Family	\$1,399,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Wednesday 2-4pm	733 Bradley Road, Ocean City	5BR/6BA/2 Half BA	Single Family	\$2,950,000	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday Noon-2pm	108 Park Side Circle, Berlin	4BR/3.5BA	Single Family	\$725,000	Justin Damadio/Iron Valley Real Estate
Saturday 1-3pm	8800 Coastal Hwy Unit #802, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$620,000	Team Bouse/ReMax Advantage Realty
Friday 12:30-5pm	2 28th St. #804 Ocean City	3BR/3BA	Condo	\$1,150,000	Terry Riley/Shore4U Real Estate
Sunday 10:30am-3:30pm	2 28th St. #804 Ocean City	3BR/3BA	Condo	\$1,150,000	Terry Riley/Shore4U Real Estate

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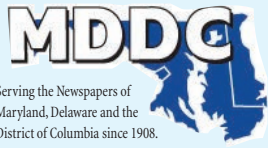
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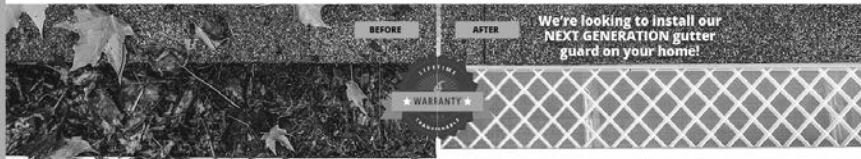
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