



TARA FISCHER/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Ocean Pines Association Board member Jeff Heavner is pictured addressing residents during a town hall meeting with representatives from Republic Services also seated at the center of the room to answer questions.

Early voting begins today in Worcester

County's registered voters continue rightward shift as 45% now Republicans

By Steve Green
Executive Editor

(Oct. 24, 2024) Based on the last 14 years of data, about one-tenth of Worcester County voters will participate in the state's early voting opportunity that begins Thursday ahead of the Nov. 5 presidential election day.

For the presidential general election, early voting across Maryland opens Thursday and runs through Thursday, Oct. 31. In Worcester County, the Roland E. Powell Convention Center is the sole early voting site and will be open from 7 a.m.-8 p.m. daily.

On the local election front, the most significant choices before voters have to do with two contested seats for the Worcester County Board of Education. The school board seats representing Districts 3 and 5, respectively, feature incumbents Dr. Jon Andes against Cheryl Middleton and Elena McComas against Dorothy Shelton-Leslie.

Andes's district includes parts of Berlin and West Ocean City and the entirety of South Point, while McComas's district includes most of the densely populated Ocean Pines community. The school board races are non-partisan so political party affiliation of the respective candidates are not included on the ballot.

In Worcester County, there are 42,577 registered voters eligible to let their voices be heard in the general election. Of those, 19,748 (47%) are Republican, while 13,586 are registered Democrats (32%). There are 9,070 unaffiliated, or independent, voters, representing 21% of the county's electorate.

Comparatively, in the 2020 presidential general election, there were 40,665 voters eligible in Worcester

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Trash collection bins downsized

Contractor agrees to permit OP customers to use smaller cans instead of heavier ones

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Oct. 24, 2024) The Ocean Pines trash collection vendor Republic Services is offering residents the option to use smaller bins for depositing household waste after issues arose with the contractor's transition to larger, heavier cans.

Republic Services, the community's contractor located in Delmar, recently adjusted its waste collection

model to require the utilization of new 95-gallon bins, discontinue the use of resident-owned smaller cans, and mandate that trash stored in Hefty or other plastic bags is not eligible for pick up.

Previously, some Ocean Pines citizens elected to use their own small bins for collection days rather than the Republic receptacles. The new regulations recently announced by the vendor initially made it so that using the new 95-gallon cans provided by the contractor, dropped off to households last month, would be the sole option for trash pick-up.

Many residents reached out to the

Ocean Pines Association regarding the modifications. Individuals cited a too-heavy and bulky container, complicated for some by physical limitations, and an inability to roll the larger cans over gravel driveways as their primary worries. Others have struggled to properly store and shield the new 95-gallon bins from the front view, a guideline required by the community's Declarations of Restrictions. As a result, a town hall was held on Friday, Oct. 18, where neighborhood citizens could address their concerns with Republic Services representatives.

See CONTRACTOR Page 7

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Far left, Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall is pictured with his wife Chelsea, son Charlie and Clerk Susan Braniecki after being sworn into his second term as mayor. Tyndall served a council term before becoming mayor. Left, Councilman Jack Orris officially begins his second term after his oath of office ceremony. SUBMITTED PHOTOS/ OC TODAY-DISPATCH

Newly elected town officials begin new terms of service

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Oct. 24, 2024) Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall and Councilmembers Jack Orris and Shaneka Nichols will officially serve the town until 2028.

On Tuesday, Oct. 15, the victors of the Oct. 1 mayoral and councilmember election were legally sworn into their roles.

Tyndall was sworn in by Worcester County Circuit Court clerk Susan R. Braniecki to serve another four years in the leadership role. He was initially voted in as mayor in 2020 and re-elected for a second stint on Oct. 1 in an unopposed race.

“It has been an honor to serve the people of the Town of Berlin,” Tyndall said. “It has been an honor to work

with our staff every day.”

Councilmember Orris (District 2), who ran as an unopposed incumbent, was sworn in Tuesday night, as was the District 3 incumbent Councilmember Nichols. Nichols defended her seat against challenger Daniel Packey in the recent election. Nichols came out on top, securing 62 votes, while Packey received four. The three officials will operate in their current positions for another four years.

Nichols said that she serves for the underrepresented Berlin individuals.

“It is not an easy task to sit here and to do this job ... but I do enjoy what I do, and I would not do this if it weren't for the fact that there are so many people like myself, mothers, parents, and

See BURRELL Page 4

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Berlin Council member Shaneka Nichols is pictured with her family after being sworn into her second term Tuesday night by Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall. SUBMITTED PHOTO/OC TODAY-DISPATCH

Burrell remains as council's VP

Continued from Page 3
 people of color who don't feel adequately represented when it comes to the Town of Berlin, or nationally, for that matter," she noted. "I sit here not just for me, but for those mothers, those working folks, those people who are at home right now ... feeding children or taking care of elderly who can't be present. I appreciate you placing me here again to be the voice for those."

Orris expressed his appreciation to the citizens of his district allowing him to continue to serve Berlin.

"It is an honor to be an elected official," he said. "It is an honor because of the people that we serve. I have to say thank you to everyone in District 2 for allowing me to serve and represent the town again. I am looking forward to another four years."

After the swearing-in formalities, Councilmember Dean Burrell, who represents District 4, was appointed to retain his role as vice president of the council.

Council members nominate each other or themselves to fill the position. Orris opted to throw his hat into the vice president ring. Burrell, who currently holds the role, also asked to be considered again.

Burrell and Orris voted for themselves. Nichols cast her vote for Orris. Councilmember At-Large Jay Knerr and Councilmember Steve Green (District 1) chose Burrell.

Green voted for Burrell to maintain his vice president status so the official may conclude his long commitment to public service with a bang. Burrell's current term ends on Oct. 13, 2026, when he plans to step down.

"This is certainly not personal," Green said. "...[Burrell] has stated his intention to fulfill his term and his intention to move away from public life at that point, and I think to show respect for him and his 30 years now in office that I'd like to see him round out his career of public service with another two-year term as vice president."

In a 3 to 2 vote, Burrell was again appointed to serve in the leadership role.

Vernon Corey Davis and Michelle Gillespie were also sworn into the Parks Commission Tuesday night. The group operates on staggered terms, including one—and two-year membership lengths. Both individuals have expressed interest in serving for at least two years, and to maintain fairness, their names will be drawn from a hat to decide how long each will act on the commission.

In a new tradition, Jamie Manaia, chairperson Andrea Weeg, Georgianna McElroy, and Victoria Spice Bauer were sworn into the Berlin Horticulture Advisory Committee. The members will serve for two years.

The council will meet in open session again on Monday, Oct. 28, at 7 p.m. at Town Hall.

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Berlin approves new special event dates added of late

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Oct. 24, 2024) Last week, the Berlin Town Council approved additional 2024 and 2025 town events.

For the updated 2024 schedule of events, Berlin added Pumpkins in the Park for Friday, Oct. 25, at 7 p.m. at the Stephen Decatur Park pond. The Halloween festivity, hosted by the town's Horticulture Advisory Committee, will feature pumpkins decorated by individuals, businesses, and families. Attendees will get to browse the gourds and vote for their favorite.

Pumpkins in the Park has also been scheduled for Friday, Oct. 24, 2025, again at the Stephen Decatur Park pond.

New dates for the pop-up Flower Street Farmers Market, Oct. 22 and 29, were added to the 2024 lineup. The market is held at the Flower Street Public Lot across from Henry Park. The events will also be held every Tuesday in 2025 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The pop-up sale, hosted by Cross Farms, accepts fresh produce vouchers through the Farmers Market Nutrition Program (PMNP) for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and seniors.

Councilmember Shaneka Nichols noted the program "is doing exactly what [Cross Farms] was hoping for."

She said the initiative began because some Berlin residents had vouchers for fresh fruits and vegetables with Cross Farms but could not access the usually scheduled farmer's market on Sundays on Main Street due to work and church schedules. The Flower Street Public Lot event was added to make it easier for those with limitations to reach.

"Many can't get across the highway to the farmers market on Sunday," Nichols said. "So, Cross Farms was going out and delivering to them... Now, having it centralized right there in that location, many of the patrons with this voucher can walk to the [pop-up] farmers market."

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Early voting begins in Worcester

Continued from Page 1

County – 18,275 Republican (45%), 14,134 Democrats (35%) and 7,565 unaffiliated (19%). Further, in the 2016 presidential election, of the 37,979 registered voters, the breakdown was Republican, 16,216, 43%; 14,431 Democratic, 38%; and 6,721 unaffiliated (18%).

Historically, general elections see higher voter turnouts than primaries due to political party affiliation limiting the number of voters to weigh in for contested races in the primaries. Additionally, presidential elections will draw more voters to the polls than gubernatorial elections, which are staggered as to not coincide.

In Worcester County, the primary turnout in May was 24.1% with 8,340 voters of the 34,536 eligible turning out. Statewide the primary election turnout was 19.7%. Breaking the primary down further, early voting attracted 1,240 voters for a 3.59% turnout of all registered voters in Worcester County (state average was 4.12%).

Dating back to 2010, early voting turnout figures in Worcester County have been difficult to trend, as different years bring varying turnout data.

For instance, in the 2022 gubernatorial general election, of Worcester County's 42,116 eligible voters, 4,171 turned out to take advantage of early voting (9.90%). After all votes were cast on election day and the provisional and absentee, the county's voter turnout was 45%.

In the 2022 gubernatorial primary election, where countywide turnout came to 29.8%, early voting was light at

3.70%, or 1,208, of the 32,654 eligible voters.

Early voting turnouts in previous elections were as follows with percentage of total voter turnout: 2020 presidential general election, 32.4%; 2020 presidential primary, no early voting due to the pandemic; 2018 gubernatorial general election, 17%; 2018 gubernatorial primary election, 6.535; 2016 presidential general election, 19.28%; 2016 presidential primary election, 7.55; 2014 gubernatorial general election, 9.63%; 2014 gubernatorial primary election, 3.85%; 2012 presidential general election, 7.8%; 2012 presidential primary election, 2.94%; 2010 gubernatorial general election, 7.8%; and 2010 gubernatorial primary election, 3.16%.

In a press release this week, the Maryland State Board of Elections reminded voters the deadline to request a mail-in ballot for the general election is approaching. To receive a mail-in ballot by mail, the request must be received (not just mailed) by Oct. 29. The deadline to request a web delivery mail-in ballot is Nov. 1. Mail-in ballots returned by mail must be postmarked by or before 8 p.m. on Election Day, Tuesday, Nov. 5.

To date, more than 816,000 Maryland voters – including 6,551 in Worcester – have requested mail-in ballots, which be secured through the state's elections website.

"I urge every voter who wants to cast a mail-in ballot to act before the approaching deadline," said Jared DeMarinis. "Mail-in ballots are a secure and convenient option for casting your vote."

Contractor relents on trash can requirement

Continued from Page 1

“The inability to use larger cans results in our residents using smaller cans, trash bags, or taking their trash to the Berlin Transfer Station,” OPA Board Member Jeff Heavner said. “The recent transition to larger cans and not allowing our residents to either use smaller cans or bagged trash is negatively impacting our community... Since the recent change, I’ve seen a substantial number of cans either left at the curb or placed in yards in full view. This is a safety hazard for walkers, runners, and bike riders.”

In response to the feedback, Republic Services will now allow residents to sign up for a smaller 36-gallon bin in place of the 95-gallon. The size-adjusted receptacles will be roughly 10 pounds lighter than the initial option and will be provided by the company. OPA members can contact the vendor at 443-210-3505 or Ocean Pines if they wish to receive the alternative. As the new containers must be specially ordered, they will take a few weeks to arrive.

Republic Services General Manager Anthony Spirito said that resident-owned containers and plastic bags were discontinued to improve safety and worker accommodations. Requiring customers to use the Republic-issued bins allows the trash collectors to

dump the contents in the truck via an electronic arm, which keeps them away from reckless drivers on the side of the road and protects their bodies from the constant strain caused by the repeated manual lifting necessary when garbage is stored in Hefty sacks or non-Republic Services cans.

“Our employees, when they are outside of the truck, are at risk of getting hit,” Spirito said. “...Our employees manually lifting these containers and putting them in the trucks is a wear and tear on their body. There was a time when our residential divers’ lifespans in the industry, right around the time they get to 40s or 50s, they are having knee surgeries, they are having shoulder surgeries, they are having back issues. We do not want our employees to have a 10–15-year window.”

Republic Services Municipal Manager Dominic Fulginiti clarified that despite the new rule, a few extra plastic bags will still be collected, provided they are placed next to the new containers. The sanitation workers will reload the bins with the miscellaneous sacks and use the automated arm or manually throw them into the truck if they’re light enough.

“When we put the carts out, the standard language is cart contents only,” he said. “However, we can collect extra bags. We would reload the

containers. That does not include bulk items or construction debris. But if you happen to have a wild, crazy Halloween party and you have 10 extra bags of cannoli dip, we are going to refill the container.”

Along with the smaller cans, Republic Services is upping its offerings by introducing an additional six-yard waste pickups throughout the fall. These days, there will be no limit to how many sacks may be collected, but the leaves must be organized in brown

paper bags. Currently, the sanitation company allows Ocean Pines residents to put out up to five leaf-filled containers for the two weekly collection days. This regular policy will act in conjunction with the new autumnal service.

“Anytime there is change, there is some chaos,” OPA General Manager John Viola said. “I know you do not want to hear that, but it is what we do with it, how we address it afterward, and I truly believe this team here and everybody else is addressing it.”

New Pumpkins in Park Friday

Continued from Page 6

Cross Farms will still deliver to those unable to access either market.

Council Vice President Dean Burrell added that for folks who attend church on Sundays, items have been picked over by the time or all sold before they can make it to the Main Street event. The Tuesday pop-ups allow these individuals another opportunity to purchase fresh produce and farmer’s market goodies.

Additionally, the arrival of the Christmas tree was approved for the town events calendar last week. Mayor Zack Tyndall said that the tree will be brought in via a public works truck and

will arrive at the Atlantic Hotel on Monday, Nov. 18, at 2 p.m.

The 2025 Christmas tree arrival has also been set for Monday, Nov. 7.

This year, the Merry Marketplace will be held on Saturdays, Nov. 30, Dec. 7, Dec. 14, and Dec. 21, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Welcome Center Parking Lot, where vendors will sell locally-made gifts.

In 2025, the Merry Marketplace will occur on Saturdays, Nov. 29, Dec. 6, Dec. 13, and Dec. 20.

The Berlin Town Council unanimously approved the updated calendar of events at its Tuesday, Oct. 15 meeting.

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Berlin officials discuss local hotel concerns

Nichols: 'We need to be more aware. That's what this all boils down to'

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Oct. 24, 2024) The Berlin Mayor and Council discussed the controversial Microtel hotel proposed for town last week.

The facility, a four-story, 78-unit building, brought to the town's planning commission by developers on March 13, is planned for the east side of Route 113 near Franklin Avenue, across the street from Berlin Intermediate School.

Since the idea was presented earlier this year, the hotel has been mired in controversy. The Berlin Planning Commission struggled to approve the facility because it lacked unique, historic charm like downtown. Members of the planning commission said the structure was too much like a "computer box" initially but efforts have been made by the developer to revise the designs to fit Berlin. Most planning commission members said two weeks ago they supported the new elevations.

The Berlin council met on Tuesday, Oct. 15, and the hotel issue was again raised. To avoid arguments over the look of new structures, the

town will adopt and modify the Worcester County design guidelines and rework them to fit Berlin.

The standards for Berlin will use phrases like "may" and "should" as well as "will" and "shall." Councilmember Jack Orris asked if these adjustments were still too flexible, but Mayor Zack Tyndall argued that the document is preliminary.

"Right now, we have nothing," he said. "When somebody wants to do a project in Berlin, it is like throwing something against the wall. You do know what to expect. This is a starting point...it helps tee up a developer with a potential conversation with the planning commission."

Orris proposed a joint meeting between the Berlin Mayor and Council and the planning commission to discuss this and other issues. Tyndall also recommended that infill development be a topic of the gathering.

"It would be good for us to understand what is available and what we would like to see," Tyndall said. "Some infill development has come up before the planning commission,

and I think we should all be on the same page."

The combined meeting will be scheduled for sometime early next year.

The placement of the Microtel has also stirred an uproar among Berlin officials and residents.

'It would be good for us to understand what is available and what we would like to see. Some infill development has come up before the planning commission, and I think we should all be on the same page.'

Mayor Zack Tyndall

Councilmember Shaneka Nichols said the location, across from the school and near a healing arts center, is not optimal.

"Somebody should have said, 'I do not think this is the right location,'" the councilmember maintained. "We missed the mark

here. We should have said this location is not good. I know it is planned. I know this is zoned commercial...but right across the street is a school. Right behind you is a daycare. There is a healing arts center nearby. Someone should have shown them some other spots. That is where we, as the Town of Berlin, completely missed the mark when it comes to this project."

While the hotel's proposed location is zoned commercial, Nichols said it was previously designated res-

idential. However, that was years ago, before any current member had been elected to the council.

Town Administrator Mary Bohlen argued that every potential issue is often not considered when making zoning guideline changes.

"When talking about zoning, look at the time when zoning was implemented, and folks who implemented the zoning at that time did it thoughtfully with the knowledge they had that day," she said. "They maybe did not anticipate some projects coming into small towns. But they did what they felt was right at the time. Later, a new group changed that zoning based on a new culture, philosophy, and business, and you may make additional changes. But it is very difficult to look at something and say, 'No one ever wanted that here,' because nobody may even think such a thing existed. Don't beat up past councils or yourself for every single possibility that could occur within a specific zoning. Sometimes, we do not know something is a problem until it arises."

Nichols said intentionally making decisions on zoning and project location is how to protect Berlin from unwanted structures.

"We need to be more aware," she said. "That's what this all boils down to."

Councilmember Steve Green prompted the Microtel conversation based on the topic gaining traction last week on the We Heart Berlin Facebook page. Residents expressed concerns about not being able to stop the hotel with at least one planning commission member saying the town's elected officials have not given the planning body the ability to address these sorts of projects.

At the project's initial planning commission meeting in March, Operator of Zenna Wellness Studio Chrissy Ehrhart, whose facility is close to the proposed hotel, said she was nervous about the dangers of sex trafficking, which she believes may be made possible by the potential 28-day stays permitted at the Microtel.

The potential problem is made more dire given its proximity to BIS and the Bundles of Joy daycare. Earlier last week, Ehrhart again voiced her concerns on Facebook, writing, "I did my diligence in researching and obtaining facts about this type of proposed business. If anyone took it seriously, this next step wouldn't even be a thought. It's disgusting to see the interest in monetary gain rather than preservation."

Despite concerns from residents, businesses, owners and officials, Microtel is set to move forward.

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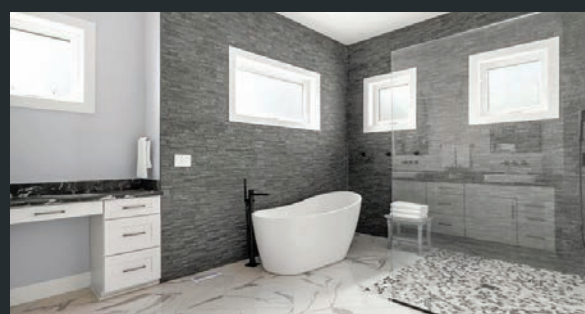
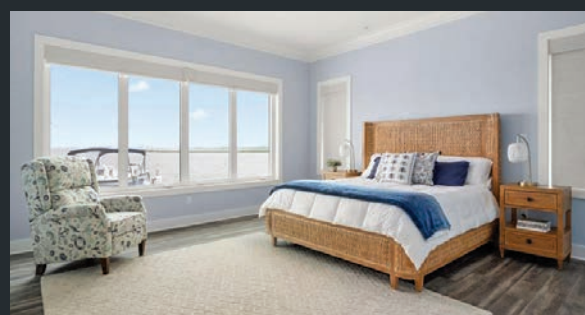
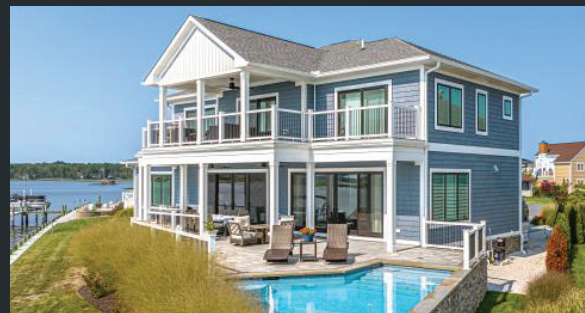


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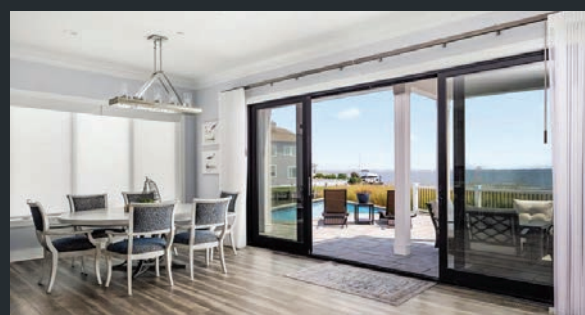
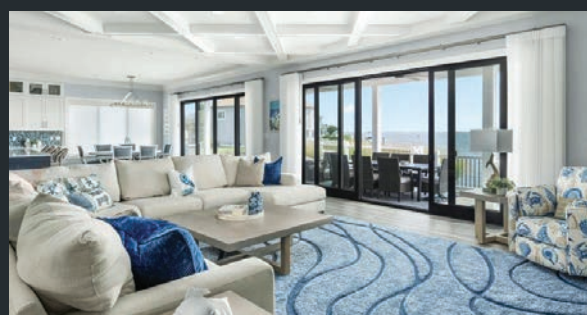
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Berlin waives fee for complex scoreboard

Pop Warner league's field enhancement funded by grant county obtained

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Oct. 24, 2024) The \$720 permit fee for the new Northern Worcester Athletic Complex scoreboard was waived by the Berlin Town Council last week.

South Dakota-based Daktronics Inc. was contracted to install the upgraded sign at the Northern Worcester Athletic Complex. The display will be used by Pop Warner Football, Beach Lacrosse, and other tournaments and leagues that may need the

space. The scorekeeping device is 18 feet long, eight feet wide, and 10 feet above grade. It was funded by a grant.

The Berlin Town Council approved the agenda item to waive the permit fee at its Oct. 15 meeting. Councilmember Jack Orris made the motion, seconded by Councilmember Steve Green and unanimously passed by the municipal leaders.

"The sign will be where the football field is," Director of Recreation and Parks Kelly Rados said. "...If I am along the sidelines and the field is going lengthways, it will be caddy cornered in the back."

The Local Parks and Playground Infrastructure (LPPI) program fully funded the project. The sign itself

cost \$16,605. Including installation and shipping, the total price of the update reached \$43,855.

In a letter to the town from Deputy Director of Recreation and Parks Jacob Stephens on Sept. 30, the department requested that the permit fee of \$720 for the new sign be waived.

Rados said at the Oct. 15 meeting that eliminating the fee will allow the complex to use leftover LPPI grant funds for other amenities to complement the scoreboard project. Suggestions included bleachers or additional team benches.

The effort to get Pop Warner a new scoreboard has been in the works for a while. In August 2023, league rep-

resentatives asked the Worcester County Commissioners to donate a 30-year-old sign previously used on Stephen Decatur High School's football field to be repurposed for the Pop Warner space.

The local government at the time expressed concerns about using an old scoreboard and instead asked staff to research the possibility of purchasing a new device. At a July 2 meeting this year, the Worcester County Commissioners unanimously approved the purchase and installation of the updated sign.

"I know we have been working to get a new scoreboard up for the Pop Warner folks for a long time," Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall said.

Council pushes moratorium date to Jan. 15

Mayor says new planning director search continues after failed hiring attempts

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Oct. 24, 2024) The Berlin Town Council unanimously passed the extension of the temporary moratorium

on specific actions of the planning commission, including rezoning, annexation, and final site plan approval, until the start of next year.

The Berlin Mayor and Council agreed to stretch the moratorium, or temporary suspension, on the specific actions of the town's planning commission until Jan. 15. The decision was approved at the municipal lead-

ers' Tuesday, Oct. 15 meeting.

Town Administrator Mary Bohlen emphasized that the moratorium can be lifted at any point if deemed appropriate by the Berlin Mayor and Council. The pause was initially implemented in July after former planning director Dave Engelhart's passing in April so as not to overburden staff. Since then, Rick Baldwin

has provided consulting services to the group but cannot act as the final authority on site plans, annexation, and rezoning requests. The plan was to resume normal operations once the position had been filled and the candidate settled, yet the town has struggled to find a new person to fill the vacancy.

"Just so that everybody knows, we are not sitting on our hands in this process," Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall said. "We have extended offers to other candidates. We have been unsuccessful with those getting across the finish line."

However, things are looking up, and a new planning director may be imminent. The mayor maintained at the recent meeting that a potential new hire is coming in for "hopefully the final process" at the end of this month.

"It is looking favorable, and hopefully this will be the last time we have to extend it," he said.

Still, the council opted to push the moratorium until 2025 to give whoever is hired time to settle into the role as well as acknowledging the holiday season.

"I think extending it to January with the asterisk that we know we can pull it back if we do get somebody in and hit the ground running, but I also think we need to be realistic that we are in the middle of October and that time goes slow in this process," Councilmember Steve Green said.



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School board hears recap of summer academy programs

STATT program has grown since 2022 to 12 pathways and 120-plus participants

By **Tara Fischer**
Staff Writer

(Oct. 24, 2024) Worcester County Public Schools' summer academy and out-of-session programs continue to succeed.

At its Tuesday, Oct. 15 meeting, the Worcester County Board of Education heard a presentation from WCPS Coordinator of Instruction Tamara Mills on the system's most recent summer academy and STATT (Skilled Trades, Agriculture, Tourism, and Technology) program.

The summer academy initiative services elementary, middle, and high school students, bridging the gap for kids who may need or desire supplemental help and getting them ready for the year ahead. Mills said that last summer, while there was a decline in the number of white and African American participants, special needs and multilingual attendance increased.

"That is awesome because those are our main target groups, and we need to get those kids ready for the next grade," she said.

In addition to the standard reading, math, and science curriculum, the students were exposed to physical education, music, and/or art elements to break up the academia. Through a partnership with the Worcester County Arts Council, WCPS brought artists into the elementary schools to provide creative lessons. Farming and agricultural education was this year's theme and was also weaved into the summer academy as a primary component. For instance, Cross Farms, based in Berlin, partnered with the WCPS program.

"We know that agriculture is a big part of this area," Mills said. "We know that, ultimately, we need more students going into agriculture, farming, and aquaculture, so we did embed that."

The high school summer academy differs from the lower levels. Mills noted that ninth, 10th, 11th, and 12th graders in the program attend for only half a day. Additionally, SAT prep and driver's ed are offered.

According to Mills, the summer academy was funded last year through the local operating budget, the remaining grant amount from the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund, 21st Century Community Learning grants, left-

overs from the PreK Expansion Grant, and the early childhood Judy Center Grant.

"We are looking forward to searching for more grants and figuring out how we can fund next summer," the coordinator of instruction added.

Mills also presented to the board a recap of last summer's four-week STATT program, which is offered to rising students in grades eight through 12.

The initiative, funded by the Worcester County Commissioners, allows participants to explore pathways not offered in a typical school day. These include aquaculture, carpentry, plumbing, welding, culinary, 3D printing, masonry, robotics, digital art, laser cutting, fire science, and environmental/ agricultural science.

STATT was launched in 2022. Mills said that in its inaugural year, it had five pathways and approximately 60 attendees. Since then, it has grown to include 12 pathways and over 120 participants.

Mills said the program's mission was for 100% of the students to score 80% or higher in the STATT skills assessments. This year, however, the goal was narrowly missed, as only 90% hit that mark.

Mills maintained that she was still satisfied with the exam scores.

"Even though we did not meet that goal, I am excited and happy about 90% of our students having the skills necessary to progress in that profession," she said.


The STATT camp also included a "Lunch and Learn." Mills said that during an hour block, students spent 30 minutes eating and 30 minutes learning about a local business or trade. Representatives from Lower Shore Land Trust, Pocomoke River State Park, Marshall Creek Farms, the University of Maryland, Eastern Shore, and others were among this year's partners.

While student and parent satisfaction was high, with the young participants' average overall experience rating at 4.38/5 and guardians' reporting 4.74/5, camp organizers intend to rework the "Lunch and Learn" segment.

"Some kids really loved them, but some kids are just not responding to that quite as well as we hoped, so we want to continue improving and working on that," Mills said.

The STATT presentation and the plethora of pathways offered within the program were well-received by the board of education.

"I wish STATT camp had existed long ago when I was in high school," board member Dr. Jon Andes said.



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School construction funding deal approved

Buckingham Elementary will be replaced after state, county agree on financing

By Brian Shane
Staff Writer

(Oct. 24, 2024) Two long-awaited Worcester County school construction projects are officially moving forward after elected officials approved a funding plan that guarantees the county a record high \$50 million in state aid.

On Oct. 15, the county's Board of Commissioners approved a memorandum of understanding between the commissioners, the school board, and the state's Interagency Commission on School Construction. That state commission is the body providing the out-of-county funding.

The commissioners' unanimous vote sets in motion plans for a brand-new Buckingham Elementary School to open in September 2030 and a renovated or replaced Berlin Intermediate School by 2031.

"I think that it's time. The kids, the staff, the families deserve this new school," said Christina Welch, principal of Buckingham.

A 37-year veteran of Worcester County schools, Welch was a member of the planning workgroup that included state and local officials, who negotiated all summer with state school

construction officials on cost and square footage.

"We're doing wonderful things for kids in a building that doesn't hold enough capacity to do the things that are necessary in that space. So, we're excited that the Commissioners approved that today, the recommendation of the workgroup," she added.

Last month, the Board of Education approved that workgroup's recommendation to proceed with design and construction of a new Buckingham, followed by a renovated or replaced Berlin Intermediate, according to Superintendent Lou Taylor.

One early option reviewed by the workgroup was to combine two schools into one new building, which the team concluded was impossible because the land available would not accommodate a 1,200-student facility.

School leadership next will begin design of the Buckingham replacement school within 60 days, pending approval of another agreement with Maryland Stadium Authority for design funds, according to Taylor.

The Stadium Authority is scheduled to approve funding for design at its Dec. 3 meeting. School officials will start schematic design in December. By April, they should have a schematic design with a floor plan, a front elevation, and a site plan, according to Joe Price, facilities planner for the school system.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/OC TODAY-DISPATCH

Lou Taylor, superintendent of Worcester County Public Schools, addresses the Worcester County Board of Commissioners at its Oct. 15 meeting. The board voted to approve new terms that would fund construction of a new Buckingham Elementary School and Berlin Intermediate School.

School leaders detailed the project plans as follows: Buckingham's construction budget will be \$73.7 million. The state will provide \$25.8 million and the local share will be \$47.9 million. The building will not exceed 90,837 square feet with anticipated minimum total occupancy of 622 pre-K through Grade 4 students. The project would begin in May 2027.

For Berlin Intermediate, cost estimates hover around \$80 million,

though that figure is still preliminary. The state share will be roughly \$23 million and the county's cost at \$57 million.

Price also said that an architect for Berlin Intermediate will be selected by February, followed by a feasibility study in May with the architect's recommendation to renovate or build a replacement school.

Overall, the new Berlin Intermediate
See LONG Page 14

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Long process results in new Buckingham commitment

Continued from Page 12

ate won't exceed 94,220 square feet with an anticipated minimum occupancy of 628 students in Grades 5-6. The project will break ground in May 2029.

For both schools, the state-county funding agreement also dictates that each building will include up to 3,000 square feet of cooperative-use space with community organizations.

The superintendent noted that this agreement provides Worcester with a historic level of school construction funding from the state – \$48.9 million in for both projects. The last time the state contributed to a school replacement, it gave \$8.2 million, for the \$33.5 million Showell Elementary, which opened in 2021.

At least eight of the county's 14 schools "are of an age and physical condition that will require major capital investments in the coming ten to twenty years," the agreement notes.

Buckingham is more than 50 years old and has outlived its usefulness, according to school board president Todd Ferrante.

"After a while, you can only do so much to repair the infrastructure," he said. "When schools get to be that old, they usually rebuild them. The classrooms are smaller, there's not adequate

size. Certainly, the population has increased from when the school was built."

Ferrante added that school leaders have serious safety concerns with Buckingham's portable classrooms, which typically remain unlocked, with students back and forth from the main building all day.

Community members for years have been vocal supporters of a new Buckingham, noted Tom Simon, whose two young children attend the school. He was among many Berlin residents who joined a march through town in 2023 to advocate for the project and began a group called Worcester United.

"This is well overdue," he said. "Buckingham is the largest Title 1 school in Worcester County, meaning that, you know, there is a large percentage of students that qualify for free and reduced meals. So, there is a high concentration of poverty."

"Despite the building being old," Simon added, "what makes Buckingham so magical is the people inside of it. The teachers and everybody that puts so much love and work into that place, they deserve the same quality building and chance for the kids they have at Showell and Ocean City Elementary and other places in the county."

Basic needs donations sought for VAULToberfest

Worcester County GOLD offering private store for community members

(Oct. 10, 2024) Worcester County GOLD (Giving Other Lives Dignity), a local nonprofit organization, is seeking donations of new basic needs items for its annual "VAULToberfest" fundraiser.

The VAULT (Vast Amounts of Useful Little Things) is a room in GOLD's office where eligible residents can privately shop for necessities like diapers, wipes, car seats, clothing, household items, hygiene products, and shelf-stable food.

"In Snow Hill and Pocomoke, 50% of households don't earn enough to afford their basic needs, with even more one step away from an emergency. Last year, GOLD's VAULT served 227 households with \$20,000 worth of items we believe all people should have access to," said GOLD Executive Director Nick Cranford.

According to Cranford, "Our clients are referred to us by agents

employed with our fourteen community partners including the Department of Social Services, Health Department, and Diakonia. During our over 25 years of experience in Worcester County, we've developed strong relationships and an effective and efficient system for impactful and immediate assistance. Our neighbors are desperate for help, so we're asking for donations of items to keep the VAULT's shelves from going bare."

To support this fundraising effort, supporters can drop off items at GOLD's office at 201 River Street in Snow Hill, Md, 21863 on weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., or you can visit their website at www.WorcesterGOLD.org to donate online or shop their Walmart or Amazon registries and have items shipped directly to GOLD's office.

Worcester County GOLD is a nonprofit organization improving the quality of life for Worcester County residents living in low-income circumstances by providing emergency financial assistance and items to meet basic needs.

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Security cameras lead list of school capital priorities

By Tara Fischer
Staff Writer

(Oct. 24, 2024) The Worcester County Board of Education is requesting small capital expenditures from the local government.

Chief Operations and Human Relations Officer Dr. Dwayne Abt said that in years when the Worcester County government has supplemental funding, the school system is permitted to request one-time capital expenditures of less than \$250,000 per project. In collaboration with Maintenance and Operations Manager Sam Slacum, Abt presented the 20-item list of potential initiatives to the school board at their Tuesday, Oct. 15 meeting.

The request includes updated security cameras for Buckingham Elementary School, Showell Elementary School, the Board of Education office, and security vestibules for Ocean City Elementary School, Berlin Intermediate School, BES, Snow Hill Middle School, Cedar Chapel Special School, and Pocomoke Middle School.

Additionally, the board hopes to receive local funding for new radios for all schools, water heaters at Stephen Decatur Middle School, and exhaust fan replacements at Snow Hill Elementary School, Pocomoke Elementary School, PMS, SHMS, and CCSS.

Slacum said that Shawn Goddard, the manager of school safety, reviewed many of the security items included in the request, such as the cameras and vestibules.

"A lot of these items are direct products of our school safety committee as well as school safety best practices," Slacum added.

Board of Education member Katie

Addis asked how new security cameras at BES would move forward, given the school's impending reconstruction.

Slacum maintained that the devices would equip the school while the new facility was being built.

"The cameras there are well beyond their useful life spans," he said. "We have a security gap in that school. The harsh reality is that we are five years before a new Buckingham falls out of the sky. During the in-between time, we felt it was prudent to look at putting a security camera system in that school."

The operations manager assured that the equipment would be reused upon the completion of the new BES.

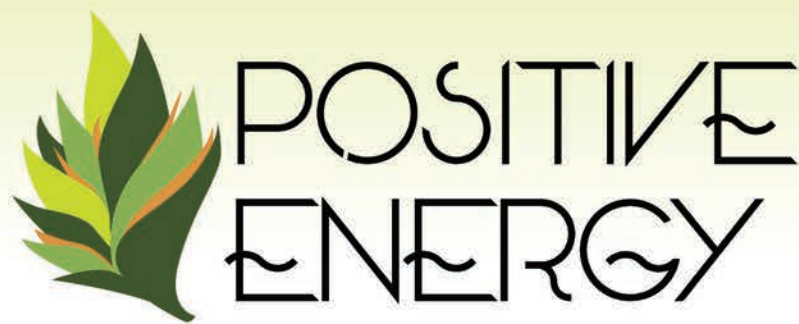
"All of the equipment installed... can be repurposed or kept as spare parts, but they will not be discarded or thrown away," he said.

If approved, the proposed radios will also improve school safety. According to Shawn Goddard, the potential funding will buy 35 "phenomenal" devices for each school, guaranteeing quality communication between staff in daily and emergency situations.

Each school has its own set of radios, and some are better than others. The upgrade will eliminate dead spots for all buildings, which remains an issue with the older devices.

While Worcester County Public Schools officials refined the expenditure request list in collaboration with the Worcester County government, Superintendent Lou Taylor maintained that the commissioners had yet to approve the project funding, which totals \$1,170,446 for all 20. Still, the commissioners will turn them over for consideration.

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Surplus approved for after-school programs

By **Brian Shane**
Staff Writer

(Oct. 25, 2024) An educational budget surplus from the prior fiscal year will fund after-school programs at some north-end public schools for the current school year.

Starting Nov. 1, Worcester County schools will get to allocate \$228,907 toward after-school programs at Ocean City Elementary, Stephen Decatur High, and Showell Elementary School.

Worcester County Public Schools Superintendent Lou Taylor asked the Worcester County Board of Commissioners at its Oct. 15 meeting to reallocate a fiscal year 2024 budget overage for after-school activities. The commissioners approved this by a 5-2 vote, with Commissioners Caryn Abbott and Jim Bunting voting nay.

The money will cover \$154,000 in employee salaries, \$73,000 in transportation, and \$1,300 in materials of instruction, according to Tamara Mills, coordinator of instruction for Worcester County Public Schools. She attended this meeting and explained this cost breakdown to the commissioners.

Mills also noted that gas prices and bus driver pay raises have driven up transportation costs in recent years.

Taylor said during the prior school year, money for after-school programs was cut from the Board of Education budget due to Maintenance of Effort – the law that says per-pupil spending may not fall behind from year to year. This school year, money for after-school activities was cut to fulfill the negotiated salary agree-

ment with teachers and employees.

The school board ended up getting grant funding to cover the cost of after-school programs, according to Vince Tolbert, the school system's finance officer. He also attended the meeting and shared this information directly with the commissioners.

Tolbert said the school board will ask for a restoration of about \$421,000 in after-school funding in its upcoming budget for fiscal year 2026. He also mentioned how, in the last two budget years, some surplus funding would have gone toward teacher retirement funds, but that was not the case this year.

Also during this meeting, the commissioners asked school officials about the cost of summer school programs. Mills said it costs about

\$750,000 to run summer school in Worcester County; the cost runs higher compared to after-school activities because the days are longer and more students attend.

Mills also said it's difficult to project not only the exact number of students who will show up to summer school from day-to-day, but whether special education students will enroll. A special education student in summer school will require a special education teacher, which adds to staffing costs, she said.

Summer school is "centered around instruction and working with the needs of our children," Taylor told the commissioners.

The Board of Education's operating budget for fiscal 2024 was about \$126 million.

Berlin will host Fall Just Walk event Nov. 8

(Oct. 25, 2024) The annual Fall Just Walk event will be held on Friday, Nov. 8.

The walk kicks off at Stephen Decatur Park and covers a scenic 4.5-mile route through downtown Berlin. To light up the night, all participants are asked to bring and wear glow-in-the-dark gear. A

limited supply of glow items will also be available at registration.

Representatives from the Worcester County Health Department and the Atlantic General Health System will be on-site to offer blood pressure checks, prediabetes screenings, health information, and free giveaways.

Pre-register by contacting Special Projects Administrator Kate Daub at 410-641-4002 or

kdaub@berlinmd.gov. Day-of registration will begin at 5 p.m. at Stephen Decatur Park, located at 130 Tripoli Street, with the walk starting promptly at 5:30 p.m. The event is

family-friendly and strollers and leashed dogs are welcome!

All participants will receive a free raffle entry for a chance to win a Berlin Basket filled with local goodies.

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Outdoor space coming to Berlin restaurant

By Brian Shane
Staff Writer

(Oct. 25, 2024) A Berlin restaurant and distillery is making plans to extend its footprint to a new family-friendly and expansive outdoor space.

Forgotten 50 Distilling, located on Old Ocean City Boulevard, on Oct. 16 received approval from Worcester County's Board of License Commissioners to expand its licensed premises to include 54,450 square feet of existing backyard.

Dotted by old-growth trees, the fenced-in acreage would be home to live entertainment on a small stage, cornhole, picnic tables, and an outdoor bar, according to owner Eric Fiori.

"When we built the original building, we got a bunch of rocks from the Adirondacks, and we re-used them. We made some tables out of them. Our idea is to do as much natural seating and kind of natural setting as we can in that area," Fiori said.

The 3,500 square foot restaurant opened about a year ago. Its interior décor, with the look and feel of a cozy village square, evokes a sense of the past – and that's on purpose, Fiori said.

"This was a 1940s Plymouth car dealership," he said. "The front area

where the bar is, that was the actual showroom. It was important that we stayed with the '40s, '50s theme, that we capture that."

The restaurant already has a patio with outdoor seating. For this new outdoor space, which will be kid-friendly and dog-friendly, Fiori said he'll start soliciting ideas from his guests as to its details.

"We are going to let our customer base decide what they want it to be," he said. "We're excited about the outdoor area and the potential that's going to have."

The outdoor space at Forgotten 50 will be open from April through October, from 11:30 a.m. to dusk. A sliding gate will separate the parking area from the outdoor area when it's not in use.

Fiori, who is also an elected member of the Worcester County Board of Commissioners, also runs two local boat dealerships.

Also at the Oct. 16 Board of License Commissioners meeting, the board granted a liquor license expansion to Ember Restaurant and Blue Crabhouse in Ocean City. Owner Cole Taustin came before the board asking to include an existing 6,000 square foot arcade into the liquor license footprint, so dinner guests can legally walk through the



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

A 1.25-acre space behind Forgotten 50 will be home to a new outdoor venue where alcohol may be served. Worcester County's liquor licensing board approved of the change to the restaurant's liquor license at its Oct. 16 meeting.

gaming space with drinks in hand.

"This isn't like an arcade on the boardwalk where kids walk in off the street – every single person who goes to this arcade is with their family eating dinner," said attorney Mark Cropper, representing Embers before the board.

"It is incredibly cumbersome that folks with an alcoholic beverage, let their children go play, (and) have to

stop and leave it on a windowsill to grab their kids," he said.

The board also cited three establishments for selling alcohol to a minor: Sello's Oven & Bar, Lighthouse Sound Restaurant, and Leon's at the Beach. Sello's and Lighthouse Sound both received letters of reprimand for their file. Leon's at the Beach had its liquor license suspended until Nov. 1.

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Annual scenic film festival announced for OC Nov. 14

Assateague Coastal Trust has presented event for 14 years; tickets now available

(Oct. 25, 2024) For the 14th consecutive year, Assateague Coastal Trust (ACT), will present the internationally acclaimed Wild & Scenic Film Festival (WSFF) at Seacrets in Ocean City on Thursday, Nov. 14. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. with the program beginning at 7 p.m.

The WSFF showcases films that celebrate the beauty of the planet and highlight the pressing environmental challenges faced today. This year's festival will feature 12 inspiring short films, including "A Journey Upstream," a film that explores the critical relationship between the Chesapeake Bay's fishing industry and the health of the bay's watershed. The film addresses the challenges of maintaining water quality while sup-

porting a thriving local industry, offering insights into how communities balance economic and environmental needs.

In addition to the films, guests will have the opportunity to participate in silent and live auctions, featuring gift baskets and items generously donated by local businesses, restaurants, and artists. Event specials will be available throughout the evening, creating a vibrant and engaging atmosphere.

"This festival is a natural extension of Assateague Coastal Trust's mission to inspire people to take action for the environment," said Assateague Coastkeeper Taylor Swanson. "Through film, we hope to spark a deeper love for nature and encourage community activism to protect our coastal waters."

Individual tickets will be \$25 with a bundle of five available for \$100. Advance tickets are available now at www.actforbays.org/wsff.

OC-Berlin Rotary Club sets Merry Marketplace dates

(Oct. 25, 2024) Merry Marketplace, a holiday market organized and coordinated by the Ocean City-Berlin Rotary Club and sponsored by Berlin Main Street, will take place on the four Saturdays following Thanksgiving, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., next to the Welcome Center at 14 S. Main Street.

Visitors will have the opportunity to shop from a variety of vendors offering handmade and homemade items, perfect for holiday gifts.

The market will also feature seasonal treats like roasted chestnuts

and hot chocolate, and a special edition "Brrrlin" mug will be available for purchase.

All proceeds from vendor space rentals and hot chocolate sales will support the Rotary Club's charitable initiatives, including high school scholarships, the 'adopted' PreK3 classes at local elementary schools, and other community donations.

Vendor spaces are still available. For more information or to apply, please contact the Ocean City-Berlin Rotary Club at ocberlinrotary@gmail.com.



JR. SEAHAWKS WRESTLING

2024-2025 SEASON

****SEASON STARTS****
NOVEMBER 11TH, 2024

MONDAYS AND THURSDAYS

BEGINNERS: 5:30-6:30PM
ADVANCED: 6:45-7:45PM
(2 OR MORE YEARS EXPERIENCE)

*ALL WRESTLERS MUST OBTAIN A USA WRESTLING MEMBERSHIP (OR RENEW EXSISTING EACH YEAR)

*IN PERSON REGISTRATION CHECK IN OCTOBER 30TH AND NOVEMBER 7TH FROM 6-8PM

*CONFIRM REGISTRATION AND USA MEMB. AND PICK UP TRAINING SHIRT

*CHECK OUT NEW SEASON GEAR

***REGISTRATION INCLUDES 5 MONTHS OF TRAINING**

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Saturday, November 2
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Ocean Pines Community Center
239 Ocean Parkway in Ocean Pines

Pine'eer Craft Club Bake Sale
Food Available in the
Kiwanis Cafe (in the Marlin Room)
Free Admission and Free Parking

Sponsored by the Ocean Pines
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Snapshots



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SCHOOL DONATES OLD COMPUTERS

Worcester Preparatory School is proud to announce its continued partnership with Lumiere University in Haiti through the donation of retired computer equipment. For several years, WPS alumnus Garvey Heiderman has facilitated the delivery of these machines. This year, following the renovation of the WPS Lower School computer lab, the school was able to donate 20 Mac Desktops to Lumiere University. While these computers may no longer meet the software demands of WPS classrooms, they remain perfectly suited to support educational programs at the Haitian university. WPS remains committed to seeking innovative ways to repurpose resources for the betterment of both our local & global communities. Founded in 1970, WPS is a private, independent Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12 School, located in Berlin, Maryland. Approximately 500 students from Maryland, Delaware and Virginia attend. For more information about WPS, please visit www.worcesterprep.org or call 410.641.3575. (Left) WPS alumnus, Garvey Heiderman, loads a box of computer monitors donated by WPS onto the boat. (Right) WPS Technology staff, Mandi Carmean and Jerry Woroniecki, wheel out a cart of retired computer monitors to be donated.



(Left) WPS alumnus Garvey Heiderman carefully loads the donated computers into the back of his work vehicle. (Right) WPS Director of Technology Mandi Carmean and Heiderman discuss the specifics of the fourth annual donation.



STUDENT LEARNING

On September 26th, students in Mrs. Marshall's first grade Class at Ocean City Elementary School celebrated John Chapman's birthday. The students read about how he got the nickname Johnny Appleseed, explored different apple tastes, and experimented with different apple treats.

SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Snapshots



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

GUEST SPEAKER WELCOMED

Pine'er Craft Club President Sharon Puser was the guest speaker at a recent Kiwanis Club of Ocean Pines-Ocean City meeting. Pictured, from left, are Candy Foreman and Diane Denk, two Kiwanians who are also crafters, Puser and Kiwanis Club President Bob Wolfig. Puser shared the club was formed 50 years ago and that all the items they sell in the store, the Artisan Gift Shop located in White Horse Park of Ocean Pines, are handmade. The club currently has about 60 members, some of whom are not crafters but help in club activities and come from all over the local area. The next big event is the "Holiday Craft Fair" on Saturday, Nov. 2, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. in the Ocean Pines Community Center.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

FUNDS RAISED FOR CHARITY

Worcester Preparatory School is proud to announce that it has successfully raised over \$2,000 for *Marlins for Mason* through a special dress-down day held on September 25, 2024. Students donned purple attire to show their support for local 5-year-old Mason Prather, who is bravely living with Dravet Syndrome, a severe form of epilepsy. The fundraising initiative, organized by senior student Jayden Scopp, aimed to raise awareness and support research for a cure for Dravet Syndrome. "It's inspiring to see our entire school community come together for such a vital cause," said Scopp. "We hope that our efforts can contribute to finding a cure for Mason and others affected by this condition." WPS Head of Upper School Carol Evans stands with the Prather family, Jayden Scopp, and WPS Head of School Dr. John McDonald.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

SHRED EVENT HELD

St. Paul's Episcopal Berlin held its second annual document shredding event in the St. Paul's parking lot on Sept. 14. Many people came out with boxes of personal documents to shred. As part of the shredding event, St. Paul's collected canned goods to donate to Spirit Kitchen. With such a great turnout, the church had many boxes of food to give to Spirit Kitchen to help support the worthy cause.

ATTENTION WORCESTER COUNTY RESIDENTS ONLY!!! FREE Household Hazardous Waste Collection

**Saturday, October 26, 2024
10 AM-2 PM**

Collections to be held at
**CENTRAL LANDFILL
7091 CENTRAL SITE LANE
NEWARK, MD 21841**

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

WHAT WILL BE ACCEPTED:

- Computers & Laptops (No Other Electronics)
- Gasoline • Gas/Oil Mixtures • Fuels • Acids
- Cleaners • Solvents • Automotive Fluids • Bleach
- Ammonia • Pool Chemicals • Pesticides
- Dark Room Supplies • CFL Light Bulbs • Batteries
- Insecticides • Herbicides • Oil-Based Paints
- Thinners • Turpentine • Wood Preservatives
- Wood Strippers • Etc.

All of these materials will go to a
HAZ MAT disposal site.

Dispose of **solidified** water based paint in trash.
(to solidify – add dirt, sand, kitty litter, mulch, etc.)

THESE ITEMS WILL BE ACCEPTED AT

**CENTRAL LANDFILL
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OCTOBER 26, 2024 10AM-2PM**

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 - Mouse • Printers • Modems • Scanners • Cables
 - Misc. Computer Parts • VCR's • CD Player's
 - Calculators • Cell Phones • Radios • Stereos
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- ELECTRONICS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**

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**No Materials will be accepted from
Business, Industrial or Commercial Sources.**

Opinion

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

Voters, do your jobs and make it count

Worcester County voters, in this end of the county at least, have the option of casting their ballots now instead of waiting until election day on Nov. 5.

Whether they take advantage of this opportunity, of course, depends on their willingness to travel from home or work to the Ocean City convention center, the county's sole early voting site, to avoid waiting in line on the official day of decision, the first Tuesday in November.

Since early voting is supposedly all about convenience, the selection of Ocean City as the location best suited to serve the entire county is more than a little ironic. Still, a little inconvenience in voting hardly measures up to some of the real sacrifices people have made over time to gain the right to vote at all.

Whether it's voting early or waiting until election day, this participation in the democratic process is the only thing all voting age Americans are invited to do on the country's behalf. And yes, despite assertions that it doesn't matter who people vote for as long as they vote, it does make a difference.

Many times, voters will throw away their votes by going with their own write-in candidates rather than choose between two contestants who are unappealing to them.

This accomplishes nothing, other than turn over the decision-making to everyone else. In a way, voting should be viewed as like showing up at a restaurant hoping to have dinner at a window seat but having to settle for the "best available" instead.

Many people in Worcester will find themselves in that situation starting today as they contemplate their choices. We encourage them to engage fully in this quadrennial exercise by not wasting their votes in contests where they have doubts or concerns, and instead go with the best available.

With the number of democracies around the world declining, it is incumbent upon all registered voters in this country to keep this one strong by voting and that means making those votes count.

Letters

Clearing the record on school misinformation

Editor,

As Superintendent of Worcester County Public Schools, I feel it is necessary to address the rhetoric and misinformation about our schools that is circulating throughout this election cycle. While candidates are entitled to their own opinions, I will not stand idly by while our students, teachers, and staff are attacked with hateful and inaccurate discourse.

To learn that some Board of Education candidates and their supporters have referred to our school system as a "swamp" that needs to be drained or implied that our dedicated teachers are "poisonous apples" or used hateful language against some of our most vulnerable students is beyond distasteful or demeaning. This rhetoric clearly shows a willful ignorance to what is actually occurring in our schools simply to mislead community members who are not connected to or informed about our schools in order to gain votes on election day.

So, let's clear the record:

Worcester County Public Schools is the highest performing school system in the State of Maryland. While we acknowledge there is always more work to do, our success is the envy of the State, and you can see it for yourself on the Maryland State Report Card website (<https://reportcard.msde.maryland.gov>). To get a first-hand perspective on how we support students' success, I encourage you to speak with your neighbors and friends who are actual parents/guardians in our school system.

Worcester County Public Schools continues to provide safe and welcoming learning environments for all students. Our data continues to trend in a positive direction in terms of school safety with 2023-2024 data showing a 28% decrease in incidents. Our work in implementing Standard Response Protocols for safety incidents was recently highlighted by the Maryland Center for School Safety.

Worcester County Public Schools has robust policies and procedures in place to vet and review instructional and school library materials. All instructional and school library materials are vetted prior to being implemented by our school system. Additionally, families that have concerns about any materials have a process available to them to initiate a review of said material. Parents/guardians also have the right to restrict what their child(ren) are able to check out from the school library as a part of this process.

Lastly, in Worcester County Public Schools, we believe every student is deserving of respect and care. I want to use this opportunity to impress upon everyone in our community that as we talk about issues related to students or any subset of students, at the heart of these discussions are children. No child should be villainized or looked at as less than a valued member of their school community. To that end, any accommodations made for children in our schools are done in compliance with the law while ensuring the safety and well-being of all students. A great example of this is the availability of a private restroom(s) to all children at all schools.

While I could continue, I hope that instead, you will take this information and use it as a springboard to educate yourself on the non-partisan candidates running for election to the Worcester County Board of Education. Reach out to them, find out where they stand on the important issues facing our schools today, and cast your vote on November 5, (or before) for those you feel best represent the path forward for our school system.

*Louis H. Taylor
Newark*

The future of county's schools at stake in election

Editor,

As the Worcester County Board of Education election approaches, it's crucial to focus on what's best for our schools. Re-electing experienced leaders for these seats is key to ensuring our schools receive the support they need to thrive.

During their time on the board, the incumbents have faced numerous challenges, including funding shortages and debates over educational priorities. They have consistently advocated for small class sizes, adequate funding, and a commitment to high-quality education for all students in Worcester County.

In contrast, some challengers seem more focused on national political rhetoric than addressing the real issues facing our schools. They have yet to engage in meaningful discussions about local needs like teacher shortages and the effects of underfunding on classrooms.

This is a non-partisan election, and the focus should be on providing the best educational opportunities for our children, not on state-level distractions. As voters, we must look beyond divisive issues and consider what truly benefits our students and community.

Let's ensure our school board is led by individuals who prioritize education, advocate for necessary funding, and stand up for the future of Worcester County.

*Richard P. Taylor
Ocean Pines*

BAYSIDE GAZETTE

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Exercise helps Pines woman battle cancer

Dawn Ament credits focus on working out as means to be 'defiant' with diagnosis

By Brian Shane
Staff Writer

(Oct. 24, 2024) Dawn Ament has been to Africa three times. She's jumped out of a plane and navigated whitewater rapids on the Colorado River. She's even making plans to climb the ruins of an ancient Mayan pyramid in Mexico.

"I have never been one to shy away from a good challenge and adventure," she said.

But Dawn's latest adventure is her scariest and most personal yet: after beating a breast cancer diagnosis five years ago, her doctors say the cancer has returned.

The place where she's found a way to stay physically healthy and maintain a positive outlook, however, is a lot closer to home than any of her adventures: her local fitness center.

"I've gotten into lately doing a little bit of CrossFit type stuff – lifting and doing burpees and ridiculous things that a 70-year-old woman shouldn't be doing," she said. "But I do them anyway and that's always been my way."

Dawn goes every other day to Planet Fitness in West Ocean City, where she does yoga and stretching to accompany her cardio and weight training. In two years, she managed to shed 50 pounds off her 190-pound frame.

"I look in the mirror and I'm amazed," she remarked. "I'm probably in better shape than I was in my 30s, as far as strength and all. And I was really strong back then."

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Breast cancer will affect one in 8 women in the U.S in their lifetime, according to the National Breast Cancer Foundation.

But recent research offers some hope. It seems to indicate that exercise is a powerful way to ward off the effects of a cancer diagnosis.

Exercise may make chemotherapy

more effective, in part by reducing levels of inflammation and encouraging the creation of new blood vessels, according to a report from the American Society of Clinical Oncology.

And, while cancer weakens the immune system, exercise strengthens it, boosting the circulation of immune cells that fight back against cancer, the report shows.

That study resulted from an analysis of more than 100 clinical trials that examined the link between exercise and cancer treatment. One outcome is helping patients coming out of surgery recover faster with fewer complications.

A Baltimore native who makes her home in Ocean Pines, Dawn said her journey toward a new outlook toward exercise began in 2018. After a routine mammogram, doctors found a malignant lump.

Radiation treatment was successful, even as Dawn continued to work as a cardiac electrophysiology nurse through the COVID-19 pandemic. She stayed cancer-free for five years.

But, earlier this year, another mammogram showed that the breast cancer had returned.

"I had to do radiation again, get started back on my oral chemo again. Then, they started looking at other things and found a lump in my abdomen," she said. "It turned out I had cancer in my kidney, just to really make this an all-inclusive event. They had to remove the kidney."

"That's when I had a pretty significant boo-hoo," she added. "Exercise helped me with coping with everything, because I was just getting slammed. Every time I turned around, they kept finding something else."

Still, she feels that her exercise did help in her recovery, both physically and mentally. She was back on her feet in a week after her nephrectomy.

At the gym, Dawn's routine involves 45 minutes of cardio on a treadmill or elliptical, and then 15 minutes of lifting free weights. She's been comforted by new friends at the



Dawn Ament (right) says support from her friend Andra McKown (left) at Planet Fitness has helped her through a heavy emotional toll taken by her cancer diagnosis. SUBMITTED PHOTO/ BAYSIDE GAZETTE

gym who have guided her through her latest diagnosis. She calls them "my support team."

That includes Andra McKown, who works at the fitness center front desk. She and Dawn have grown close over the last two years.

"Dawn was coming in a lot. I noticed a big change in her weight. I could tell she had been working out," McKown said.

"Then one day I saw her in the bathroom, and she was crying. I asked her what was going on and if she was OK. She told me about her journey with cancer. I told her I'd pray for her. Since then, we've been friends, talking every day. She's an in-

spiration to me," she said.

Dawn will officially retire from nursing at the end of this year, a career that started when she was a teenage candy striper at Union Memorial Hospital in Baltimore. Soon, she and her husband Larry will take a road trip to New Orleans and the Florida Keys.

And she still has those Mayan ruins on her to-do list.

"I've always been pretty defiant – I spent Ocean's Calling at the festival," she said. "I refuse to stop living. And I think that's my big rallying cry. Being part of this gym and being fit helps me be defiant in the face of this diagnosis."



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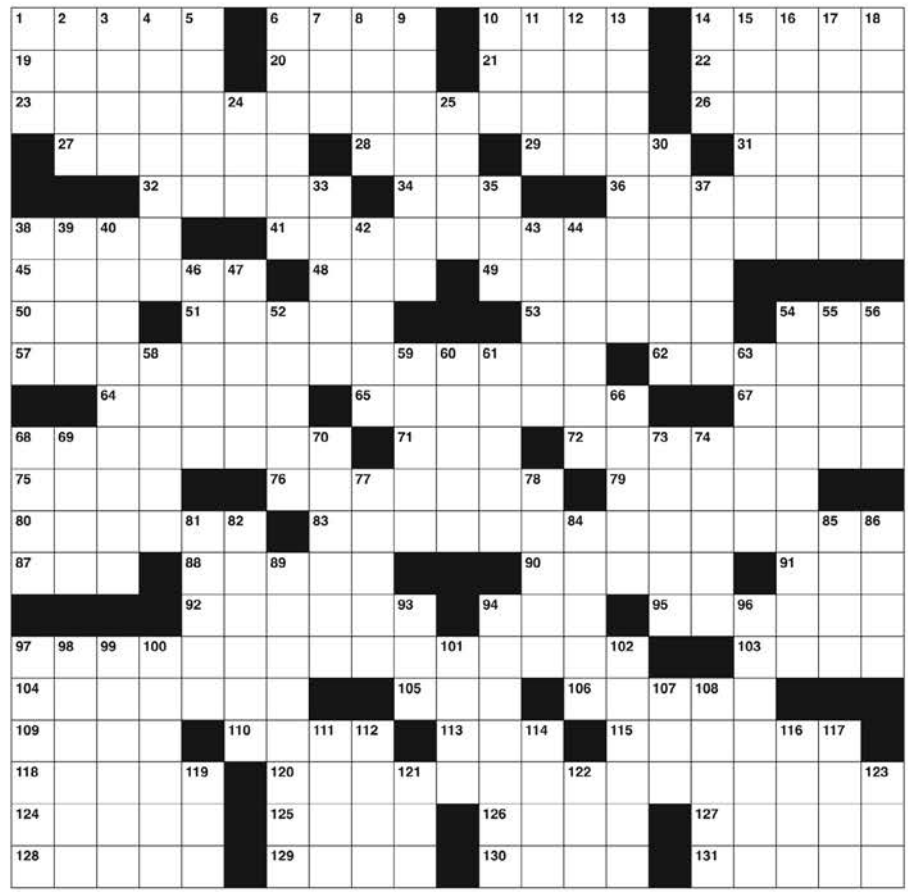
Puzzles

MANUAL DEXTERITY

BY GARY LARSON AND DOUG PETERSON / EDITED BY JOEL FAGLIANO

Gary Larson is a retired stand-up comedian from Edmonds, Wash. Doug Peterson is a professional crossword constructor from Pasadena, Calif. One of them is not the creator of "The Far Side," and the other is not the head coach of the Jacksonville Jaguars. They will, however, consider pretending to be if it means a better table at a restaurant.

- ACROSS**
- 1 Massive stars
 - 6 Associate of the gods (Pothon and Himeros (Longing and Desire))
 - 10 Train in the Washington-Baltimore area
 - 14 Distortions in the space-time continuum
 - 19 Got by
 - 20 Blow
 - 21 Surname of three baseball brothers
 - 22 Turn away
 - 23 Title for a tutorial on musical composition?
 - 26 Interior design
 - 27 Susan who wrote "The Orchid Thief"
 - 28 Actress Gardner
 - 29 Tickle Me Elmo maker
 - 31 How many elements on the periodic table have the letter "J" in their names
 - 32 Impromptu
 - 34 Spot for a stud
 - 36 Put into motion
 - 38 Underworld thug
 - 41 ... a primer on playing dreidel?
 - 45 In the center of
 - 48 Some I.C.U. workers
 - 49 Alternative to Hinge or Bumble
- 50 On which Maya Rudolph has played Kamala Harris, in brief
- 51 Enjoys a lazy Sunday, say
- 53 2020 nonfiction best seller subtitled "The Origins of Our Discontents"
- 54 Over or under
- 57 ... a volume on vapor dynamics?
- 62 Calm
- 64 Aware of
- 65 Bodies of work
- 67 Touched down
- 68 Farewell performance
- 71 Slugger's stat
- 72 Stereotypical prom experience
- 75 Trough call
- 76 "Go us!"
- 79 Free of extra charges
- 80 Uncovers
- 83 ... a step-by-step guide for throwing breaking balls?
- 87 Keep in the cellar, perhaps
- 88 Symbols of toughness, in a simile
- 90 Barrel-shaped containers
- 91 ... Le Gallienne, star of 1920s Broadway
- 92 Sheets and pillowcases
- 94 Joule division
- 95 Salts
- 97 ... a handbook on raising kids?
- 103 Email button
- 104 It's going around
- 105 "Here a ____, there a ____, everywhere a ____"
- 106 Lock
- 109 Be extremely angry
- 110 Model's need
- 113 Simpson's judge
- 115 Come (to)
- 118 Light ditties
- 120 ... a D.I.Y. manual on other D.I.Y. manuals?
- 124 Panache
- 125 Repetitive sound
- 126 Apartment building V.I.P.
- 127 Newspaper section
- 128 Delectable
- 129 "____ the Limit" (Notorious B.I.G. song)
- 130 Edict issuer in "Fiddler on the Roof"
- 131 Shangri-las
- DOWN**
- 1 Texter's shrug
 - 2 Pet for Pebbles, in cartoons
 - 3 It will all come out in the wash
 - 4 Flood-prone area
 - 5 Competed in a biathlon
 - 6 What has some holiday spirit?
 - 7 Tired routine
 - 8 Workplace regulator, for short
 - 9 Ford's only Supreme Court appointee
 - 10 Easy ____ (longtime Kraft product)
 - 11 Loads
 - 12 Golfer McLroy
 - 13 Signs with lines
 - 14 Bunch of bills
 - 15 Any of the light blue properties in Monopoly
 - 16 Apply more varnish to
 - 17 "Right this second!"
 - 18 Recipient of 21 Academy Award acting nominations
 - 24 "Uh-uh"
 - 25 ____ paneer (Indian dish)
 - 30 Some chamber groups
 - 33 Island off Greece's northwest coast
 - 35 Balderdash
 - 37 Substitute for "E" on a license plate, maybe
 - 38 [Did he really just say that!?!]
 - 39 High-end hotel chain
 - 40 Garage job
 - 42 Creative spark, informally
 - 43 Parish priest
 - 44 Cloisonné material
 - 46 Docking spots
 - 47 Spanish for "foolish"
 - 52 Serious suffering
 - 54 "Seriously ..."
 - 55 Sooner State city
 - 56 Béret bearer
 - 58 "Come Dancing" band, with "the"
 - 59 King maker?
 - 60 Potato, yam or cassava
 - 61 Water brand whose name is an adjective in reverse
 - 63 Harder to come by
 - 66 Turns state's evidence
 - 68 Beverage one shouldn't shake well before serving
 - 69 Kristen formerly of 50-Across
 - 70 Ship's kitchen
 - 73 Pokes fun at
 - 74 Worth having
 - 77 Kind of question
 - 78 Lead-in to brewery
 - 81 Like the leftmost candle until the final night of Hanukkah
 - 82 Looking discomfited
 - 84 Incessantly bother
 - 85 Level
 - 86 Navajo painting medium
 - 89 Thankless types
 - 93 Bottom of some columns
 - 94 Self-centered sort
 - 96 Taken for granted
 - 97 The Holy Grail, e.g.
 - 98 Beethoven's third symphony
 - 99 Govt.-backed investments
 - 100 Attack, medieval-style
 - 101 Churn up
 - 102 Stock-exchange worker
 - 107 Earthbound bird
 - 108 River to the English Channel
 - 111 Bulletin-board piece
 - 112 Hurting
 - 114 ____ probandi (burden of proof)
 - 116 ____ Owl, one of the superheroes in "Watchmen"
 - 117 Fork-tailed bird
 - 119 Dump
 - 121 Decks, in brief
 - 122 Fig. of interest to an admissions department
 - 123 Castaway's call



- 68 Beverage one shouldn't shake well before serving
- 69 Kristen formerly of 50-Across
- 70 Ship's kitchen
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- 112 Hurting
- 114 ____ probandi (burden of proof)
- 116 ____ Owl, one of the superheroes in "Watchmen"
- 117 Fork-tailed bird
- 119 Dump
- 121 Decks, in brief
- 122 Fig. of interest to an admissions department
- 123 Castaway's call

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© Puzzles by Pappocom

HARD - 15

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.

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

Answers to last week's puzzles

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

S	L	E	P	T	I	N	M	A	D	A	M	E	X	A	O	K								
U	P	A	N	D	A	T	E	M	O	N	E	N	A	M	E	B	Y	E						
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							N	O	A	H				P	O	O	R		A	R	A	B	Y	
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S	H	E	E	N	A		N	B	A		S	W	E	A	R	J	A	R	S					
N	A	A	N				S	U	I	T	E	S				S	C	I	O	N	S			
							D	O	N	T	S	T	A	R	T	W	I	T	H	M	E			
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O	T	S					A	L	L	Y	O	U	N	E	E	D	I	S	L	O	V	E		
M	C	C	O				U	N	P	C					O	L	A	S						
P	U	L	L	Y	O	U	R	S	E	L	F	T	O	G	E	T	H	E	R					
R	E	D	S	U	N		C	A	L	I	P	E	R	S		N	A	P						
F	A	C	E				I	C	E	S		A	M	I		A	L	I	A					
E	T	A					Y	O	U	C	A	N	T	W	I	N	T	H	E	M	A	L	L	
N	O	R					A	U	R	O	R	A	E		D	E	M	O	N	I	C	A	L	
D	R	S					P	I	L	L	A	G	E		S	I	N	G	L	E	T			

Nonfiction author panel stated for library

(Oct. 24, 2024) Four local authors will discuss an array of topics, from spirituality to military history, at the second annual Nonfiction Author Panel at the Ocean Pines Branch of Worcester County Library on Wednesday, Oct. 30, at 6 p.m.

Tom Rapsas embarked on a spiritual quest at an early age, reading Buddhist and Christian teachings as well as everything from spirituality bestsellers to self-help newspaper columns. His blog appears on the New Visions Channel of Patheos.com.

In Wake Up Call: Daily Insights for

the Spiritually Curious, Rapsas presents stories aimed particularly toward the spiritual novice, affirming that true wisdom comes from many sources. Thomas Moore, author of Care of the Soul, noted, "This book will stir you."

Art educator Joanne K. Guilfoil has authored several illustrated and photographic books about Delmarva, including Chickens on Delmarva: 100 Years of Backyard Flocks, Farms, and Friends, chronicling chicken farming in the U.S. since the early-1900s, highlighting Delmarva.

Guilfoil's Flying Over Delmarva details the history of regional aviation, and she has written several children's books. She is a co-author of The Making of the World's Largest Billfishing Tournament: The First 50 Years of the White Marlin Open.

Caroline Hee Jeon Gale will discuss her book of nonfiction poetry, My Friend Bipolar, which describes her experiences with bipolar disorder as a young girl, and how she came to coexist with the condition through a better understanding.

In only his sixth bombing mission

over Germany during World War II, Richard Loveless found himself in a predicament that put his courage and faith to the test. Fifty years ago, Jim Loveless promised his father that his story would never be lost, and, in 2023, Loveless kept his vow with the release of Avoiding Muddy Foxholes.

The event is sponsored by the Friends of the Ocean Pines Library. For information on all Worcester County Library programs, please check out the Events page at worcesterlibrary.org.

Prescription delivery service now offered

(Oct. 24, 2024) Atlantic General Hospital announced a new partnership with ScriptDrop, a leader in prescription delivery solutions, to offer same-day prescription deliveries for patients of its Berlin and Ocean Pines AGHRx RediScripts Pharmacy locations.

This service, available Monday through Friday, is provided at no cost to patients within a predefined delivery radius, offering a convenient and timely way for patients to receive their medications.

The partnership with ScriptDrop was chosen due to the platform's ability to accommodate fluctuating patient volumes and changing delivery addresses, giving

Atlantic General Hospital the flexibility it needs to meet the varying demands of its patient population. By streamlining prescription access, this collaboration is designed to support better patient outcomes, ensuring patients can stay adherent to their medication regimen.

"With the launch of our new same-day prescription delivery service, we're not just providing convenience; we're meeting a vital community need in Berlin and Ocean Pines," said Jeff Kukel, Pharm.D. "When building out the service offerings in our new pharmacy location just outside Ocean Pines, Atlantic General Health System's providers cited

lack of transportation as a significant barrier to effective healthcare for many of their patients and identified same-day home medication delivery as a top priority. This initiative ensures that everyone has easy access to their medications, enhancing health outcomes and fostering a stronger, healthier community. We're thrilled to be working with ScriptDrop."

According to a recent survey, 82% of patients report that prescription delivery helps them remain adherent to their medication plans. This increased adherence can play a significant role in reducing hospital readmissions, improving long-term health outcomes for the com-

munity Atlantic General Hospital serves. "We are excited to work alongside Atlantic General Hospital to improve medication access for their patients," said Amanda Epp, CEO of ScriptDrop. "Our goal is to provide a seamless, reliable solution that enhances patient adherence and contributes to overall health, helping people stay on track with their treatments and avoid unnecessary hospital visits."

The service offers two-hour prescription deliveries for urgent needs and same-day delivery for less urgent requests, at no additional cost to patients who live within 15 miles of one of the AGHRx RediScripts Pharmacy locations.



OPEN HOUSES

Oct. 24 - Oct. 31



DAY/TIME	ADDRESS	BR/BA	STYLE	PRICE	AGENT/AGENCY
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
Friday Noon-2pm	12 Garrett Drive, Ocean Pines	3BR/2BA	Single Family	\$439,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Fri & Sat 11am-4pm	13 44th St. Units 402 & 403, Ocean City	1BR/1BA	Condo	\$299,900/\$319,900	Jeff Bridge/REMAX Shore4U Division
Friday 12:30-2:30pm	424 Lark Lane Unit E303, Ocean City	2BR/1BA	Condo	\$278,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Fri & Sat 10am-1pm	103 125th St.-#105	3BR/2.5BA	Condo	\$529,900	Terri Moran/Coldwell Banker Realty
Friday 2-4pm	11603 Windward Drive, Unit A Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$429,900	Katie Landon/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 10am-Noon	19 Liberty St., Ocean Pines	3BR/2BA	Single Family	\$404,900	Katie Landon/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 10am-Noon	43 Seabreeze Rd, Ocean Pines	3BR/2BA	Single Family	\$450,000	Power of 2 Team/Hileman Real Estate
Saturday 11am-1pm	424 Lark Lane Unit E303, Ocean City	2BR/1BA	Condo	\$278,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 11am-1pm	8 60th St. #301 Meridian	4BR/3.5BA	Condo	\$899,900	Lauren Bunting/Keller Williams Realty of Delmarva
Saturday 1:30-3:30pm	73 King Richard Road, Berlin	4BR/2.5BA	Single Family	\$769,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Saturday 11am-1pm	35025 Main St., Pittsville, MD	5BR/5.5BA	Single Family	\$770,000	Alex Hodges/Cottage Street Realty, LLC
Saturday 1-3pm	172 Seafarer Lane, Ocean Pines	3BR/2.5BA	Single Family	\$444,900	Power of 2 Team/Hileman Real Estate
Sunday 10am-Noon	11603 Windward Dr., Unit A, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$429,900	Katie Landon/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 10am-1pm	36238 Waterleaf Way, Selbyville	3BR/2.5BA	Townhome	\$734,999	Karen Russo/Long & Foster Real Estate
Sunday Noon-2pm	36937 Creekhaven Drive, Selbyville	4BR/2.5BA	Single Family	\$759,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 1-3pm	73 King Richard Road, Berlin	4BR/2.5BA	Single Family	\$769,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Sunday 1-3pm	108 20th Street, #2027, Ocean City	2BR/2BA	Condo	\$339,900	Katie Landon/Coldwell Banker Realty
Tuesday 11am-1pm	424 Lark Lane Unit E303, Ocean City	2BR/1BA	Condo	\$278,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty
Tuesday 1:30-3:30pm	73 King Richard Road, Berlin	4BR/2.5BA	Single Family	\$769,900	Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty

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Calendar

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

Thurs., Oct. 24

SUNFEST

Hugh T. Cropper Inlet Parking Lot, 809 S. Atlantic Ave., Ocean City, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Music, arts & crafts, food, kid-friendly activities, tractor rides, craft beer, Halloween Beach Maze, Howl-O-Ween Pet Parade, Trunk or Treat and more. Free admission. <https://www.ocean.com/sunfest/>

OCEAN CITY CANDIDATES FORUM

American Legion Synepuxent Post 166, 2308 Philadelphia Ave., Ocean City, 6 p.m. Community Candidates Form with Ocean City Mayor and City Council Candidates. This will be a moderated event and is open to the public. Questions can be submitted to ALCandForum@gmail.com. 443-497-6894

NARFE (NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEE) MEETING

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10 a.m. Speaker will be Anne Healey of CareFirst Blue Cross Blue Shield. Karleen Hagan, 703-729-2103

REPUBLICAN WOMEN OF WORCESTER COUNTY'S OCTOBER MEETING AND LUNCHEON

Worcester Technical High School, 6270 Worcester Highway, Newark, 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Guest speaker will be Brigadier General (Ret.) John Tiechert, a recent Maryland Senate candidate. Cost is \$25 and is all inclusive. To sign up: gop-womenofwc@gmail.com.

STORY TIME: 'THE LITTLE OLD LADY WHO WASN'T AFRAID OF ANYTHING'

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10:30 a.m. Everyone is afraid of something — except for this little old lady. Or is she? See what gives her the willies. For ages 2-5 years. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

PLAY TIME

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 10:30 a.m. Join in for a variety of activities and toys. Play and socialize with other families. For ages 2-5 years. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org

MAKE AND LEARN: CYANOTYPES

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 301 Market St., 2 p.m. Learn about the invention of the cyanotype, photo paper that turns blue when exposed to light, and make your own. Registration required: 410-957-0878. www.worcesterlibrary.org

LET'S TALK MOVIES - 'HALLOWEEN'

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 2 p.m.

Month movie club, where the group discusses timeless classics and newer box office hits. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

ENGINEERING CHALLENGE: TALLEST PAPER TOWER

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 3:30 p.m. Build the tallest tower possible using nothing but paper and tape. Test your engineering skills during the MD STEM Festival event. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org

CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT; EMPOWERING CAREGIVERS SYMPOSIUM - OPENING PARTY & FUNDRAISER

Art League of Ocean City, 502 94th St., 6-8 p.m. Tickets for Opening Party (\$50), Symposium (\$20), bundle (\$65). Tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/creative-engagement-empowering-caregivers-symposium-tickets-909348274167?aff=0ddtdtcreator>. 410-524-9433

BEACH SINGLE 55 PLUS MEET AND GREET

Thursdays - Harpoon Hanna's, Fenwick Island, DE, 4-6 p.m. 215-385-4993, BeachSingles.org

Fri., Oct. 25

SUNFEST

Hugh T. Cropper Inlet Parking Lot, 809 S. Atlantic Ave., Ocean City, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Music, arts & crafts, food, kid-friendly activities, tractor rides, craft beer, Halloween Beach Maze, Howl-O-Ween Pet Parade, Trunk or Treat and more. Free admission. <https://www.ocean.com/sunfest/>

OCEAN PINES 4TH ANNUAL HAUNTED HOUSE

Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Cost is \$8 per person. Volunteers and actors needed. Debbie Donahue, 410-641-7052, ddonahue@oceanpines.org, oceanpines.org

CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT; EMPOWERING CAREGIVERS SYMPOSIUM - OPENING PARTY & FUNDRAISER

Art League of Ocean City, 502 94th St., 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Tickets for Opening Party (\$50), Symposium (\$20), bundle (\$65). Tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/creative-engagement-empowering-caregivers-symposium-tickets-909348274167?aff=0ddtdtcreator>. 410-524-9433

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, [\[brary.org\]\(http://brary.org\)](http://www.worcesterli-</p>
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HOMESCHOOL CREATIVE WRITING

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 11 a.m. A creative writing program that will help students with their vocabulary, imaginative thinking and social enrichment. For ages 8 years and older. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org

HOMESCHOOL CAFÉ

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 1:30 p.m. Come see what's brewing at the library and join in on some STEAM activities. For ages 6-11 years. 410-208-4014, <http://www.worcesterlibrary.org>

HAUNTED CREEK ADVENTURE

Beach Bum West-O, 12308 Old Bridge Road, West Ocean City, 6-9 p.m. Local brews, food and a haunted trail. Bounce house, face painting, fall themed games and crafts for kids. Cost is \$5 for adults and free to those 4 years and younger. <https://beachbumwesto.com>, 410-213-1441

COCKTAILS AND CONVERSATION WITH OPA OFFICIALS

Ocean Pines Yacht Club, 1 Mumfords Landing Road, 6-8 p.m. Cocktails and conversation with OP Board of Directors, GM and various department heads and staff in a casual setting. Happy hour prices. Fundraiser for 31st Annual AGH Penguin Swim.

CHESAPEAKE GHOST TOURS: INTO THE HAUNTED FOREST

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 301 Market St., 7 p.m. Tour includes a night time walk through the haunted forest and a walk through town with stories of Pocomoke's haunted history. Registration required: 410-957-0878, www.worcesterlibrary.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., Oct. 26

SUNFEST

Hugh T. Cropper Inlet Parking Lot, 809 S. Atlantic Ave., Ocean City, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Music, arts & crafts, food, kid-friendly activities, tractor rides, craft beer, Halloween Beach Maze, Howl-O-Ween Pet Parade, Trunk or Treat and more. Free admission. <https://www.ocean.com/sunfest/>

HALLOWEEN/FALL FESTIVAL

White Horse Park, 235 Ocean Parkway, Ocean Pines, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Carnival

games, costume contests, face painting and food and refreshments. Free event. Volunteers needed. 410-641-4052, www.oceanpines.org

OCEAN PINES 4TH ANNUAL HAUNTED HOUSE

Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Cost is \$8 per person. Volunteers and actors needed. Debbie Donahue, 410-641-7052, ddonahue@oceanpines.org, oceanpines.org

ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT BREAKFAST BUFFET

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

OC RECREATION BOOSTERS' SWING FOR YOUTH GOLF OPEN

Eagle's Landing Golf Course, 12367 Eagles Nest Road, Berlin, 10 a.m. Four-person Florida scramble with all-inclusive price of \$150 per player, \$600 per team. <https://oceancitymd.gov/oc/departments/recreation-parks/>, 410-213-7277

CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT; EMPOWERING CAREGIVERS SYMPOSIUM - OPENING PARTY & FUNDRAISER

Art League of Ocean City, 502 94th St., 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Tickets for Opening Party (\$50), Symposium (\$20), bundle (\$65). Tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/creative-engagement-empowering-caregivers-symposium-tickets-909348274167?aff=0ddtdtcreator>, 410-524-9433

FREE COMMUNITY FLU CLINIC

Snow Hill Volunteer Fire Dept, 4718 Snow Hill Road, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Providing flu vaccinations for those ages 13 years and older. No appointment required. High-dose vaccines available and billed to Medicare or insurance for those 65 years and older. www.agh.care/flu

BERLIN ROTARY CLUB BASKET BINGO

American Legion Synepuxent Post 166, 2308 Philadelphia Ave., Ocean City, 2-5 p.m. Doors open at 1:30 p.m. Cost is \$25 in advance or \$30 at the door. Tickets: www.ocberlinrotary.com, ocberlinrotary@gmail.com.

KANGA-BOO!

Coastal Wilds, 34215 Peppers Corner Road, Frankford, Del., 3-7 p.m. Trick or Treat through the park, spooky animals maze, games, glow sticks, pumpkin decorating and carving station. Bring your own pumpkin. Limited supply for sale. Tickets: www.coastalwilds.org.

HALLOWEEN IN THE FOREST

Furnace Town Historic Site (Nassawango

Calendar

Iron Furnace), 3816 Old Furnace Road, Snow Hill, 5-7:30 p.m. A family-friendly evening of Halloween fun in the enchanting setting of the Pocomoke forest with activities and treats for children. www.furnacetown.org/events

HAUNTED CREEK ADVENTURE

Beach Bum West-O, 12308 Old Bridge Road, West Ocean City, 6-9 p.m. Local brews, food and a haunted trail. Bounce house, face painting, fall themed games and crafts for kids. Cost is \$5 for adults and free to those 4 years and younger. <https://beachbumwesto.com>, 410-213-1441

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., Oct. 27

SUNFEST

Hugh T. Cropper Inlet Parking Lot, 809 S. Atlantic Ave., Ocean City, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Music, arts & crafts, food, kid-friendly activities, tractor rides, craft beer, Halloween Beach Maze, Howl-O-Ween Pet Parade, Trunk or Treat and more. Free admission. <https://www.ocean.com/sunfest/>

ANNUAL HALLOWEEN SPOOK OUT PARTY

Northside Park Ballfield, 200 125th St., Ocean City, 1-3 p.m. Featuring carnival games, a corn maze, a costume parade and plenty of tasty snacks. Participants are required to bring one full bag of individually wrapped candy per child. Rain or shine. 410-250-0125

TRUNK OR TREAT

Wilson Community Church, 10722 Bishopville Road, Bishopville, 1-4 p.m. Fun, food, fellowship, games and door prizes. All are welcome. Candy donations accepted. Mary Feeheley, 302-858-2051

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

THE ART OF BERLIN

Sundays through October - The Berlin Welcome Center Lot, 14 S. Main St., 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The Merry Haven presents A Local Makers Market.

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

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://berlinmain-street.com/farmersmarket/>

Mon., Oct. 28

STORY TIME: HALLOWEEN COSTUME PARTY

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Wear your favorite costume and join in for crafts, songs and stories all about Halloween. For ages 0-5 years. 410-524-1818, 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

DOCTOR MADDOCKTER'S HAUNTED LABORATORY

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 2-5:30 p.m. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

MAGIC MONDAY

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 5 p.m. Magic the Gathering meet-up, fourth Monday of the month. Teens and adults only. 410-632-3495, 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 Campion, 410-641-0157

BOOBS & BUBBLY: MAKING STRIDES FOR BREAST CANCER

Crawl St. Tavern, 19 Wicomico St., Ocean City, 6-10 p.m. Enjoy drink specials, a complimentary nacho bar and exciting raffles. <https://crawlstreet.com>, 443-373-2756, marketing@sharpsoc.com

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

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., Oct. 29

POP-UP FARMERS MARKET

Flower St. Field across from Henry Park, 125 Flower St., Berlin, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP - WIC & seniors) checks and WIC Fruit & Vegetable checks welcome here.

STORY TIME: HALLOWEEN COSTUME PARTY

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 301 Market St., 10:30 a.m. Dress up in your favorite costume and join in for stories, songs and crafts. For ages 0-5 years. 410-957-0878, www.worcesterlibrary.org

SENSORY PLAY TIME

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 10:30 a.m. Sensory play encourages learning through exploration. For ages 0-5 years. 410-641-0650, 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

DOCTOR MADDOCKTER'S HAUNTED LABORATORY

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 2-5:30 p.m. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

CHAIR YOGA

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 2 p.m. Certified yoga instructor, Therese O'Boyle, teaches this class that stretches and strengthens in a gentle manner. Registration required: 410-524-1818. www.worcesterlibrary.org

HALLOWEEN STEAM!

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 4:30 p.m. Join in for some candy corn chemistry, stream your own spider web and build a boney bridge. For ages 6-11 years. 410-208-4014, 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

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.

ZUMBA TONING TUESDAYS

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

WEIGHT MANAGEMENT AND WELLNESS GROUP

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

Wed., Oct. 30

PLAY TIME

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10 a.m. Join in for imaginative play and social interaction. For ages 0-5 years. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

COFFEE & CRAFTS - PUMPKIN GARLAND

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Looking for some Fall decor? This one is as easy as pumpkin pie. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

DOCTOR MADDOCKTER'S HAUNTED LABORATORY

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 1-7 p.m. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

ENGINEERING CHALLENGE: RIGAMAJIG

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 301 Market St., 4 p.m. Use the library's Rigamajig building kit to complete the challenges. For ages 6-11 years. 410-957-0878, www.worcesterlibrary.org

NONFICTION AUTHOR PANEL

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 6 p.m. Local authors, Tom Rapsas, Joanne K. Guilfoil, Caroline Hee Jeon Gale and Jim Lovelless, will discuss an array of topics, from spirituality to military history. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

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.kiwanisofopoc.org.

Classified

MARKETPLACE

Call **410-723-6397**
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Classifieds appear in **OC Today-Dispatch & Bayside Gazette** each week and online at oceancitytoday.com & baysideoc.com



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